

April

1997

THE CANOE SPORT MAGAZINE FOR THE NINETIES

# Canoe

F O C U S

No. 106 £2.00

British Canoe Union  
**Development Plan**

**Snow Leopard  
Expedition**

**Cape Farewell  
Expedition**

**Round up from the NEC**



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Issue 106  
April 1997

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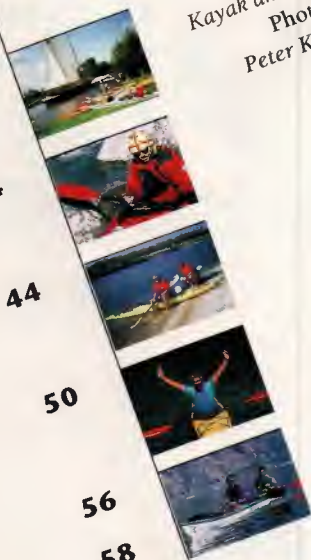
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Front Cover  
Kayak and Companion  
Photo:  
Peter Knowles



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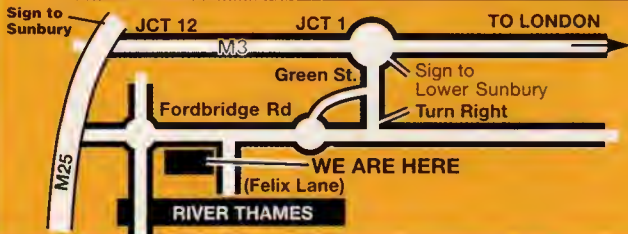
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# Sports Aid

## The new situation...

**E**xisting National/International Sports Aid Foundation grants will carry through until end of March and it is anticipated that the new revenue grants from the National Lottery will take over from April.

The BCU have been asked to submit their Squad lists for consideration and these have been sent in for all disciplines recognised by Sports Council for Performance Planning.

Although, the exact process and machinery has still to be established at the time of going to press, it is anticipated that applications on behalf of younger paddlers, and any which are considered to be under the criterion for a grant from the National Lottery, will be automatically referred to the Sports Aid Foundation. Applications which they consider to be below their criteria will then be referred on to the Regional SAF companies.

As further information comes to light with regard to the situation, members will be informed through *Canoe Focus*.

### Facilities Strategy

The Bell Cornwall Partnership were the successful tenderers for the BCU Facilities strategy and have already commenced work. All clubs should have received a club questionnaire and I urge any club who has not returned the completed form to do so as soon as possible. Thanks go to BCU Club Precision Drifters of Corsham for their assistance in the questionnaires compilation.

### National Marathon Championships 1998

The Marathon Committee would like to hear from clubs who want to organise and run the 1998 National Marathon Team and Individual Championships. The event is superb and last year attracted 650 competitors which was the largest event for many years. Should your club wish to apply to hold this event please contact *Alan Laws, Chairman BCU Marathon Committee, c/o Weller,*

*Russell and Laws, 17 Main Ridge West, Boston, Lincolnshire PE21 6SS*

### BCU Top Up Elite Grants

To alleviate the pressure on the SAF elite athletes who are still owed grant money relating to the period ended 31 March the BCU Executive Committee have paid the second instalment of SAF grants from BCU funds. This will be refunded to the BCU by the SAF at a later date.

### FSA Support Canoe Sailors

Thanks go to the Foundation for Sport and The Arts who kindly supported the Canoe Sailing Team in attending the World Championships in Australia.

### International Canoe Exhibition

Thanks to everyone who played a part in this years International

Canoe Exhibition. The BCU stand was designed and sponsored by SD Systems of High Wycombe and brought the whole of the BCU together for the first time!

The event was again a major success and it is likely that the format will be revised for future years. Please write in with any comments you may have.

### BCU Web Site

The BCU Web Site was previewed at the Sports Convention in March and the full site will be up and running by the end of April, more detail will appear in the next issue.

The site is being written and sponsored by Nickelodeon Interactive Ltd who are a well established company based in Hertfordshire.

### Trevor Bailey Award

Congratulations to Alan Baker the recipient of the 1997 Trevor Bailey Award for endeavour which was presented by the Bailey family and the BCU's President Albert Woods at the International Canoe Exhibition, (See Exhibition News later in this issue).

### BCU AGM

Following the nominations to BCU Council I am pleased to welcome back onto Council our President Albert Woods and Treasurer Jerry Rogers together with members David Gent, Alan Laws and Roger Fox who were all elected unopposed.

Sadly, the occasion of Annual General Meetings saw the retirement of two Councillors, Helen Mullineux and Kevin Mansell. In particular I would like to single out the work of Helen Mullineux who retired after 6 years as an elected member of Council. Helen always made an outstanding contribution to the BCU.

**Paul Owen**  
Chief Executive



# Junior Surf Champion - Graeme Brooks

Right: Graeme Brooks, surf kayaker from Blyth receives his Northern Electric Foundation for Sport Promising Talent Award from Northern Electric Engineer Brian Atkinson



16 year old Graeme Brooks from Northumberland, the British and Scottish champion, has been awarded the Northern Electric Foundation for Sport Promising Talent Award. Along with the award comes a cheque for £1000 plus £500 in clothing from 'View From'. Graeme's achievement this year includes winning his two major titles in the same week. He won the Scottish Junior title at Thurso, and also came third in the open contest. The next weekend he travelled to Sennen Cove in Cornwall to compete in the British Championship. Here he took first place, beating very strong challenges from the other competitors. In all he travelled over 2000 miles to win these titles. This year the North East is host to two ranking competitions. The World Championship's held at Thurso in Scotland this year, happens to be Graeme's favourite venue, and he is hoping to do really well on the East break. He would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone concerned in helping him get this far, and he promises to repay them in the coming year with even more trophies.

## February Competition Result

...and the lucky winner is Mrs J. Church of Birmingham. We wish you many years of happy paddling.

## All Clubs & BCU Committees

A number of Marler Hayley display boards are available from the BCU office, free of charge to anyone who can come and collect them. Please ring the office to arrange collection on 0115 9821100 and this offer ends 30th April.

## Marathon - Sprint Racing Yearbook Amendment

Please note the date for the Descenso International del Sella Ribadesella Descent in Spain should read Saturday 9th August. All other details as published.

## Open Canoe Association of Great Britain

OCAGB Chairwoman Val Ottley and members of the Council were delighted to meet so many open canoeists present and future at their stand during the International Canoe Exhibition. They increased their membership by 40. Whilst there they took the opportunity to talk to Andrew Ainsworth who has offered OCAGB members a discount on paddles and will support the Association by meeting the postage cost of one of their 1997 journals. Their Annual rally will be held at the Hereford and Worcester County Youth Sailing Centre, Upton Warren, Bromsgrove, from 3-5 May. This will be an ideal opportunity for beginners to learn how to canoe and try different types of craft. There will also be a giant slalom, advanced instruction, canal tours and the opportunity to take the Aquatic First Aid course. The OCAGB Axe Vale Canoe Club's famous sea experience will be held as usual at Axmouth on the 5th and 6th July contact Margaret Evans, 30 Bishops Avenue, Worcester WR3 8XG.

## Wild Water Racing - Yearbook Amendments and Additions

Change of address - River Awe race 4 May - Race organiser Fraser Gormal, 56 Mill House Drive, Glasgow GL20 0NE. Please send all entries to this new address. Thank You. **Tryweryn Wild Water Race** - 13 July Start 10.30, late entries until Sat 19.00 at Tyn Cornel Campsite (race start). Start above campsite bridge, finish above Bala Mill Falls. **WWW on the WWW**. The wild water racing page on the World Wide Web site should read as follows: [http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Chris\\_Bolton/www.htm](http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Chris_Bolton/www.htm). please amend WWR yearbook entry as necessary.

## Derwent Dash Wild Water Race U14/U16 Ranking

After a gap of two years over 50 boats entered for this excellent novice race from Darley Bridge to Matlock Bath. It was a somewhat raw morning but acceptable for early February and the low water level meant that all could warm up working hard on the first stretch to Matlock Bridge. After removal of offending branches jammed against the railway bridge, the river was easily passable. The good showing of juniors especially under 14s had Wavehoppers arriving from all round. The race passed without incident and many good times were recorded. Congratulations to the winners: Under 14 Karen Dicken and Edward Dean, Under 16 Lydia Chapman and Peter Turnbull. David Taylor and Tina Parsons recorded the best overall male and female times of the day. Thanks to the Square and Compass at Darley Bridge for providing the car park and accommodation for the prize giving. Nigel Stevenson and his team organised the race very smoothly and have already finalised the date for next year: Saturday 7 February 1998, Book now! (Eds note: The cream cakes as prizes are worth it!)

# The Junior Kayaks

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# Sea Paddle-ability Symposium a Success



Above: Tim Fish (in blue) and Laurent Rouillet help Claudi Bouchis into his kayak at Broadstairs.

Below: Laurent Rouillet, Pascal Perrot and Claudi Bouchis with French Garde du Cote liaison on exchange to Langdon.



Delegates, able bodied and disabled canoeists from six different countries attended the symposium giving it an international flavour. Delegates came from Spain, Israel, France, Ireland, Guernsey, UK and included Carme Adell the Spanish ex-sprint canoe champion and para-olympic judge. The event was aimed at drawing together paddlers with a disability and their coaches from different countries to improve and develop coaching techniques. The event was held at St Margaret's Resort, near Dover in October. Sponsored by Inter-Action Leisure Ltd, Perception, Pyranha and Arethusa Venture Centre. Delegates took part in a packed four day programme involving practical sessions in the pool, surf sessions and a short sea trip. The sea trip also linked in with a coast guard and life boat exercise involving the offshore lifeboats which escorted the delegates. Theory sessions included equipment design and adaptation, attitudes and medical backgrounds to disability, coaching techniques and pooling of knowledge with international networking. The next symposium is due to take place in Guernsey this year, details can be obtained from the BCU Disability Panel.

## River Eden Tour 5 May- Cancelled

The River Eden tour scheduled for 5 May has to be cancelled as the organisers have made a mistake and there is no access in either April or May. They apologise for any inconvenience caused and welcome paddlers to attend any of our other tours as detailed in the BCU yearbook. The River Eden can be paddled at other times as detailed in February's Canoe Focus.

## Book Finders

If you have been feeling disillusioned in your search for canoeing titles C & D Davis offer a book finding service specialising in canoeing titles. Send an SAE for their mail order list. They also produce a 22 page, A4 checklist of English language canoeing books, which may prove useful to collectors. The cost of a copy is £3. Write to C & D Davis, 9 Great Burrow Rise, Northam, Bideford EX39 1TB

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# Herts Young Mariners Music Project

Last year Herts Young Mariners Base, Cheshunt, held a music project in which young people have written many songs with a water sports theme. One of the songs 'So Pawlata can wait' talks about the processes that someone would go through if they were in a closed cockpit kayak going over low brace, high brace, sculling for support, then a roll technique (Pawlata). The song is written to the music of 'Don't look back in anger' by Oasis. Sing along if you wish: 'Put in a low brace for support, but the water I caught, just flowed away. Then I slipped into a high brace, but couldn't keep up the pace, so I sculled support. Now I start Pawlata from the depths. But when I went over I only took a breath. Now I know I've gotta get out of here soon. Stretched out for the black becket, get the apron from the deck, I aint ever goon get back upright, yeah! So Pawlata can wait, I know its too late cos I've taken my deck off. Now I'm falling down, stretch the surface tension I'm popping out.'

## Standards for Canoes and Kayaks

The British Standards Institution announces the publication of: BS 7852: 1997 Code of practice for design of canoes and kayaks. Not applicable to surf/wave skis, sit on top kayaks, inflatable canoes, inflatable kayaks, or canoes and kayaks designed specially for competition. Supersedes BS MA 91: Part 1: 1981 and BS MA 91: Part 2: 1981. Price: BSI members £23.50 non-members £47.00. All standards can be purchased from BSI Customer Services by phoning 0181 996 7000 or faxing 0181 996 7001.

## Great Britain Canoe Slalom Teams

As we are anticipating additional funding in the near future, we are planning to recruit an Assistant National Teams' Coach. This position will be based in Nottingham. Interested parties who hold coaching qualifications are asked to send CV with sae for further details when available, to the *BCU Slalom Development Officer, Daisyfield, Inglewhite Road, Goosnargh, Preston. PR3 2EB.*

# Roofrack Checks

We have recently received a report from one of our members that his roofrack failed and all four boats he was carrying ended up sliding down the dual carriageway. In this case, it was a brand new roofrack, and he is pursuing the matter with the manufacturer. We would urge anyone who carries boats to keep a check on their racks, especially those that have been on your car for some time. Look for hairline stress cracks and ensure that they are regularly tightened. Boats are too expensive to end up as missiles down the motorway!

## South West Region - Regional Newsletter

A message to all BCU members and members of affiliated clubs, have you seen a copy of our regional newsletter? If you would like a complimentary copy and an opportunity to have a regular subscription (four copies per year) please contact the Editor, *Veronica Westlake, 22 Golden Vale, Churchdown, Gloucester GL3 2LU Tel: 01452 531218*





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**River Usk Canoe Race 13 July**

Start Newbridge on Usk, finish Hanbury Arms Hotel, Caerleon. Distance 7 miles, start 1330 hours. Everyone welcome. For details contact *Martin Beer, 15 Firkbank Crescent, Newport, S Wales Tel: 01633 257612*

**Leeds & Liverpool Canoe Marathon - August Bank Holiday**

127 miles of waterway! The fastest time to complete this transpennine route is expected to be about 17 hours. British Waterways manages the waterway and it is working with the Merseyside Youth Challenge Trust to handle the marathon. For more detail contact *Jim Swindells 01942 242239 or mobile 0860 459632 or Bill Whiteside on 0151 428 9758*

**Scottish Paddlers Leukaemia Event - 25 May**

Sunday 25 May. Your opportunity to raise funds for leukaemia research in Scotland. Paddle 13 miles on the Tay, raise sponsorship, have fun. For more information contact *Bill and Joyce Cook, Marlefield, Kelso, Borders TDS 8ED Tel: 01573 440296 Fax: 01573 440302*

**Disability Awareness Training 21/22 June**

A Disability Awareness Training Course is to be held at Bryanston School, Blandford, Dorset over the weekend of 21&22 June. The course is to be run by the regional team and costs £35. For further information please send an sae to *Dave Cooke, BCU SW Disabled Persons Rep, 61 Acacia Gardens, Bathpool, Taunton, Somerset, TA2 8TA.*

**What's On • What's On • What's On • What's On**

**Canolfan Tryweryn Events 1997**

**26 April** - Slalom on the Graveyard. Tour-International site to Bala 9am-3pm. Wildwater Race International site to Bala 3pm to 6pm  
**27 April** - Slalom on the Graveyard. Wildwater Race and Training - International site to Bala 9am to 6pm.  
**24 May** - Tour, Graveyard to Bala 9am-3pm. Wildwater Race Graveyard to Bala 3pm - 6pm.  
**25 May** - Wildwater Race - Graveyard to Bala 9am-12pm. Tour Graveyard to Bala 12pm-6pm  
**7 & 8 June** - Slalom-Graveyard. Open International Site.  
**21 June** Coaching Service - Graveyard. Slalom International site. Tour-Chapel Falls to Bala.  
**22 June** -Coaching Service - Graveyard. Slalom, International site. Tour Chapel Falls to Bala.  
**12 July** Slalom- Graveyard. Rodeo-International Site. Wildwater Race Training-Chapel Falls to Bala Mill. Slalom Bala Mill.  
**13 July** - Slalom-Graveyard. Rodeo-International Site. Wildwater Race Training-Chapel Falls to Bala Mill. Slalom Bala Mill.  
**26 & 27 July** - Open Graveyard and International Site  
**16 & 17 August** - Open Graveyard and International Site.  
**13 & 14 September** - Coaching Festival and Snowdonia Open Canoe Symposium - Graveyard to Bala.

**Touring in the Eastern Region**

**6 April** - Essex River Blackwater, contact Mike Roberts 01621 817062  
**6 July** - Cambs, River Cam, Baits Bite to Ely contact David Green 01223 262410  
**28 September** - Suffolk, river Stow, beginning at Sudbury, contact Mike Dodd 01787 373290

**Open Canoe Sailing Group - Events**

**26/27 April** - Start the Season. Rudyard, Staffordshire, contact Doug Farrington 01925 262883, John Shuttleworth 0161 4272346  
**10/11 May** - Coastal Canoeing. Kircudbright, Dumfries, contact Keith Morris 015395 34638  
**24/31 May** - Spring Weekend/week. Coniston Cumbria contact Kevin Leahy 015395 35979 or Andy Sallabank 01229 581880  
**8/9 June** - Training Workshop. Coniston, Cumbria, contact Keith Morris 015395 34638  
**14/15 June** - Poole Harbour. Clavel Point, Dorset, contact Roy Niblett 01425 274459  
**28/29 June** - Welsh Weekend. Bala, Gwynedd, contact Lis Woods 01248 364180  
**19/20 July** - The Lakes Classic, Ullswater, Cumbria, contact Dave Stubbs 015395 34631 or Tony Ball 015395 33659  
**16-25 Aug** - Scottish Weekend. Loch Lomond Strathclyde. Contact Dave and Marie Baskeyfield 01782 373903

**Dragon Boat Racing Events**

**27 April** - BDA National League, Salford Quays Manchester.  
**3-4 May** - Robin Hood River Challenge, River Trent, Nottingham  
**11 May** - BDA National League, Surrey Docks, London  
**18 May** - BDA National League, Edgbaston, Birmingham  
**1 June** - BDA National League, Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff  
**29 June** - BDA National League, Southampton  
**13 July** - BDA National League, Exeter

20 July BDA National League, Royal Albert Docks. For details of the events above and other Dragon Boat events contact: *The BDA Treasurer, 13 The Prebend, Northend, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV33 OTR Tel: 01295 770629*

**The 1st Norwegian Sea Kayak Symposium**

The event will take place 40km north of Bergen and the symposium will be held on Saturday and Sunday. Costs about £50 for accommodation and dinner Friday and Sat evening. For those who are interested in kayaking, tours will start between islands on Thursday and Friday, £15 per night will be added on for this. Most lectures will be in Norwegian! Final signing up date 7 April. Contact: *Norwegian Canoe Association, Tel: 47 6715 4600 Fax: 47 6713 3335*

**Boston Charter - 11 May**

Following last years success Boston Canoe Club are holding another Charter Event on 11th May. The 1996 event attracted interest from far and wide and we are hoping for increased entries this year. The event was set up to commemorate a Royal charter being granted by Henry VIII to the town of Boston. Many local clubs laid on special events in 1995 to mark the 450th anniversary. The canoe club did likewise and have continued it since. It is an 8 mile circular trip with 4 portages. The route takes in the town centre past the famous Boston Stump on a tidal section followed by sections on various drains back to the River Witham. There are several classes so that those who wish to race may do so and those who just want some fun can enjoy it. There are marshals posted at each portage to show the way. Trophies are provided for each class and a bar-b-que and refreshments are available. For further details contact *Richard Davies 01205 359540*

**The Basingstoke Canal Challenge - 11 May**

Now in its sixth year this popular charity event is again raising funds for 'Boats for the Handicapped'. Suitable for all ages and abilities from the DW trainers to the casual paddler. The Challenge was started in 1992 by Kit Price and Arran Steel, Arran then 14 paddled 40 miles as part of his 'Project Trident' personal challenge award. Entrants now paddle slightly less distances of 9, 18 and 31 miles but all starting from King John's Castle in Odiham. The participants for the full 31 miles finish at the Wey Navigation with 29 portages, 28 in the last 12 miles through the remarkable 'Brookwood flight' which is a real challenge! Other less strenuous challenges are the fun paddle of 9 miles to finish at Fleet Wharf and the 18 miles 'tester' paddle with these participants finishing at the Canal Centre in Mychett. Supporters and or entrants for this challenge raise money for boats and equipment to enable the physically disadvantaged to enjoy being on the water. Several small boats have already been launched and equipped for the handicapped person and helper. The current project is to complete the fitting out of 'Madam Butterfly'. This narrow boat, which sleeps 7 people, was launched in the summer of 1995 by Prunella Scales and Timothy West keen supporters of canal boating for all. For entry forms and further details contact: *Doreen Steel 01252 617315 or Alan Mansfield 01252 524400*

**West Cornwall Sea Kayak Experience - 24 May**

The Penzance Canoe Club are hosting the above event on Saturday 24 May. As well as the race there will be supporting trips in W Cornwall over the Bank Holiday

weekend and evening socials. A 12 mile sea race in Mount's Bay is the main event on the Saturday, with a full weekend programme, for more details send an SAE to *Richard Uren, Trescroman, Heamoor, Penzance Tel: 01736 51082.*

**Canoe Trip - Shopping Trip to Kidderminster 8 June**

To help Stourbridge Arm Canoe Club celebrate its 10th birthday you are invited to join us on a shopping trip to Kidderminster on Sunday 8th June. We shall assemble at Ashwood Park Activity Centre, Wordsley at 10am. There will be ferry arrangements so that drivers can take cars to the finish in Kidderminster and return. Changing room and toilets will be available. The trip will be along the Stourbridge Canal to Stourton and there onto the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal through Kinner to Kidderminster. The scenery is attractive with many interesting sights, including two of the shortest tunnels on the canal network and some excellent canal-side pubs. The trip finishes at Sainsburys superstore, whose carpark we shall be using. The store is open until 4pm and has a coffee shop open until 3.30pm. The overall distance is 10 miles with 11 easily portaged locks. Further details from: *Stephen Masters on 01384 293122.*

**Coquet Canoe Club Round the Island Race 15 June**

Coquet Island lies 1 mile offshore from the small harbour of Amble on the beautiful coast of Northumberland. There are 3 races of different levels:  
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**Wild Water Canoe Fest - Tryweryn 12/13 July Rodeo - National Selection Event.**

See the experts in action. River Running Competition, if you run rivers then this is for you. All boat types welcome including C2's and K2s. Short boat Rodeo, for those who have a spud, probe, micro bat etc. White Water Safety Competition, a simple safety competition for river runners. Lilo or inner tube race if we can arrange it! Paddle juggling and balancing competition, dry! Evening events to be announced. Trade stands and demo boats. Plastic boat repairs if we can sort it! Maybe a graphic artist on hand to paint designs on your boat, equipment or face! Pyranha Razor to be raffled, boat donated by Pyranha. Interested, keep up to date by visiting our website <http://www.xyal.demon.co.uk/wetfun/> E mail [hairym@bitsmart.com](mailto:hairym@bitsmart.com) Tel: 01588 640419 Mail Tryweryn Rodeo, *Wernantglas, Newcastle on Clun, Craven Arms, SY7 8QY SAE please.*



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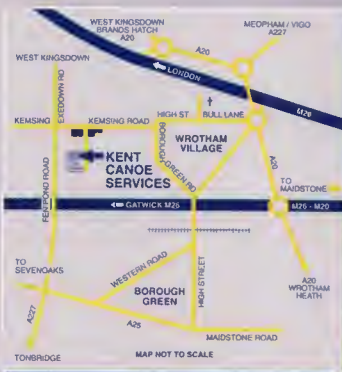


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# Going Dutch

The best thing about the Netherlands is without doubt the people but for a placid water canoe tourist the water comes a close second. Endless miles of canals, lakes and small rivers free from the restriction of licences and shared happily with the fishing fraternity.

**T**he S & O tour, which is now an ICF tour, takes place in the first full week of August. It is run jointly by the Winsum and Gronigen canoe clubs and each year that I have been on it I have found the organisation to be excellent. The seven day tour is over the rivers, canals and lakes in the area of Gronigen in the North West.

It starts and finishes on a good camp site at Winsum close to the canoe clubhouse and each participant is given a handbook (in English if you wish) that describes the daily route in detail with maps and historical notes and advice on shopping, eating and sightseeing. Each day there is a choice of routes, short, medium and long. The long is not for the faint hearted being typically 40 km with two portages. Yes, the Netherlands are not quite as flat as some people would have you believe. If you buy one of the excellent water maps you can deviate from the official routes but you are required to book out each morning, indicate your route and book in each evening when you arrive so that the organisers will know if you are missing and, with luck, where you are. Of course, it is unlikely that you will get lost in this densely populated country. Each of the camp sites is right by the water.

There is a land based support team who will carry your baggage for you so you can bring your picnic table and chairs making this a very civilised event. Arriving on the first Sunday at lunch time is a good play as the Winsum camp site is included in the cost for that night. Although the tour proper starts on Monday you need to register at the club house in the afternoon. This is a good time to get to know who is on the tour, possibly to meet

## The 1996 Stat en Ommeland Tour



old friends and have a snack in the clubhouse. Providing that you have made arrangements in advance you do not have to bring a canoe with you as you can hire one from the club.

Monday is day one of the tour proper. After putting our luggage on the wagon and registering our chosen route we get onto the water for a short speech of encouragement and a massed departure for Zoutkamp at 10.30. By 11.00 some of the Dutch will have hit their first coffee pause/snack break. Coffee pauses are a fundamental feature of Dutch canoeing technique and happily there are plenty of riverside facilities for this purpose. Zoutkamp is a nice old fishing port now some distance from the sea and no longer in commercial use. Many of the water ways are along old watercourses winding through attractive countryside. Don't imagine that Holland is all long straight canals.

### Water Wolf

Tuesday offers a choice of routes that take you through another old watercourse or via a giant dewatering pump called the Water Wolf. This year Dutch television covered the first couple of hours of the trip and we had the opportunity to watch the video at a later stop. Part of today's journey is on the giant Van Starckenborg canal with seagoing ships. Great care is needed not to shoot out of a small side channel into the main canal or to get too close to the metal shuttering on the banks as the big ships pass. Tonight's campsite lays on a cheery camp fire in the evening.

Wednesday starts with a crossing of the Leekstermeer. Due to the wind direction there is a fearsome chop making the crossing uncomfortable. This is not uncommon on these large shallow lakes. The lovely old town of Gronigen is approached from different directions depending on the route chosen and circumnavigated by a ring canal system. A couple of changes in level are involved as the camp site is approached via a small lock. Two nights were spent at this site.

Thursday is a rest day with various activities laid on. I chose to walk several miles to Gronigen

and back. This is a lovely town and one of my favourites with three good camping shops. There is a fine maritime museum and many historic buildings, a legacy of the great days of Dutch sail trading with the Far East. There is also a controversial new museum built at huge cost and containing very little. A monumental waste of money in my uncultured view.

Friday has one route via a nature reserve, another via a huge old manor house at Slochteren. Either way the large lake Schildtmeer is to be faced, but the wind was kind this year and the crossing was calm. The longer route via the old port of Delftzijl involves two awkward portages. You need your canoe trolley here and preferably to be with someone. Appingedam is well worth getting out for a quick look as you pass through to the campsite at Ekenstein.

On Saturday the various routes are through very windy canals and old water courses and past old mills. At the Ten Post camp site an indoor barbecue is included, this is a good time to exchange addresses etc. and plan trips for next year as, tomorrow, many participants will take the short route and leave for home as soon as they reach Winsum.

Sunday, the last day, starts with a lock that only opens four times in the day. This causes a mass start. Soon you reach the ancient hamlet of Westerwijtwerd. Here there is a strange 'cafe' in the lounge of an old smithy. The husband and wife owners open when there and sell whatever they have got. It is an old and dying tradition and feels like dropping in to relatives for tea. Very few of these cafes are left in Holland. Arriving at Winsum it is time for the last farewells before heading home.

I can't praise the hospitality of the Dutch people highly enough. If you go alone you can be sure you will not be lonely. Almost all the Dutch speak excellent English from a young age but are very appreciative if you try to speak some Dutch. Personally I liked the country and people so much on my first visit that I went to night classes to learn the language. It must be one of the easier European languages to learn although classes are hard to find.

To reserve a place for 1997 contact:

Martin van Delden

Cie. Int. Stad & Ommelandtocht

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Or you can contact

me for a chat on

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# Snow Leopard

1. Kathmandu. Start of the trip. On the way to catch the no.63 bus to Nepalgang.

2. Nepali locals talk to Paul Mackenzie.

3. Local people are poor subsistence farmers, very friendly - they couldn't believe these crazy foreigners and came running to watch us!

4. Chisapani altitude 195m. The end of our paddle from the mountains to the plains. Gianlucca's grin sums up one of the best river trips any of us have done. We ended as strong friends and our choice of equipment proved excellent with no damaged boats or paddles.

5. The upper river was almost continuous grade 4-5 and pretty 'chunky'.

6. We cheated and chartered a light plane to carry the 4 kayaks, gear and ourselves into Dolpo - otherwise a two week walk from the nearest road.

7. We really enjoyed the companionship of our porters. There was just the 3 of them and the 4 of us with no 'sirdar' or guide to translate, but we managed just fine and were really sorry when it was time to leave them. Their bonus was a gift of all the old warm weather gear that we now didn't need or have room for.

8. "Namaste" - Gianlucca makes friends with a local girl.

9. 300km of fantastic white water ahead of us!

10. The no.63 bus back to Kathmandu - hot showers, clean sheets and good food!

## Introduction

For the last five years I've dreamed of running the Bheri river in western Nepal - it was the last of the big rivers still

unrun and it looked an exciting challenge. An international team headed by friend Gery Moffat ran the upper river (the Thule Bheri) for the first time last year and were filmed for American T.V. They came back with reports of a fantastic river and helped us plan a full descent from the mountains to the plains in November 1996.



**Kayaking in Nepal**

As many kayakers know, Nepal is a great destination for multi-day kayak trips - most rivers are much easier than the one described here. 'White Water Nepal' by Peter Knowles is an inspiring and authoritative guidebook that gives you all the information you need to plan your own

trip and is available from BCU Supplies. Pete's company also produce a single sheet W.W. Nepal annual newsletter - send a S.A.E. if you would like a free copy - Rivers Publishing, 125 Hook Rise South, Surbiton, Surrey, KT6 7NA.

**Article by Peter Knowles - Photos by 'The Team'.**

**The Team:**

all strong expedition kayakers with extensive Himalayan experience - Paul Mackenzie, Peter Knowles, Stuart Woodward, Gianluca Ricci.

**Costs - approx. cost per person £**

- Air fare London - Kathmandu return 435
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- Visa and permits 50
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- Food for the river 50
- Porters 30
- Air charter Nepalgang - Dolpo 100
- Buses and taxis 15
- Total (for 28 days) £850

**Many thanks**

to our chosen equipment suppliers: **Perception:** Overflow kayaks. **Palm:** Extreme buoyancy aids, dry tops, and spraydecks. **HF:** dry bags. North Cape: Fleece and thermals. **Lendal:** Mania paddles (splits). **Suzy:** Throw bags.

**Other help:**

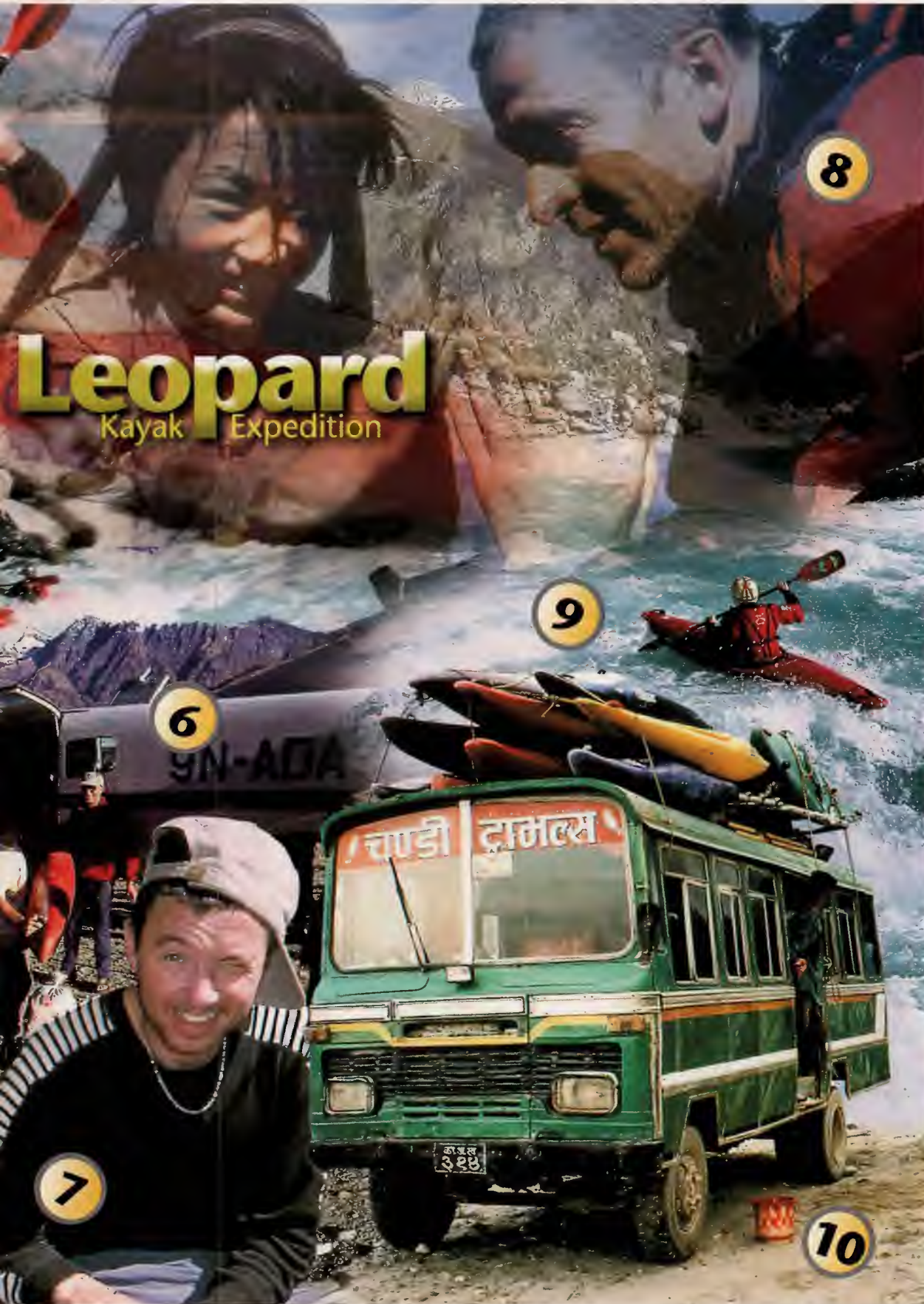
BCU Expeditions Committee, Charlie Muncie, Doug Ammons, Gerry Moffat, Equator Expeditions, Angad Himal.

**My worst moments**

1. Getting back looped and well and truly trashed in a nasty rocky hole.
2. Watching from the bank as Paul capsized in a grade 5 rapid and then was washed towards a grade 7 below. He rolled up just in time to make the last eddy!

**My best moments**

Around the campfire with friends and porters.



Article by  
Lawrence  
Chapman -  
grade 2 Kayak  
Examiner and  
NVQ Assessor

# Low Brace Turn

I am as guilty as anyone. I have had a lot of problems trying to understand why my clients have difficulty applying the low brace turn on their first attempt at moving water. Invariably it ends up with at least a wobble over the eddy line and often a capsize. Does this sound familiar?

**T**he Low Brace Turn is a safe turn for the introduction to moving water. The turn provides stability and support over the eddy line. Can you remember your 1st low brace turn (LBT) on moving water? It probably felt anything but stable. I would like to take a few minutes to explain a possible solution. To do this I feel it is important to study the way it is often taught.

I believe that breaking the technique down into its composite strokes can lead to problems, if it is not approached from the right direction. I think that this can be remedied by altering the order in which each of the composite strokes is coached. Traditionally the Low Brace Turn (LBT) is coached as: sweep, edge, low brace. I can see myself now, shouting these - instructions to those desperately trying not to fall in.

The initial question to be answered is: during the sweep phase what should the edge on the kayak be? Onto or away from the sweep? I believe that the edge should be away from the sweep (Fig. 1.). However most novices do drop their edge when placing the sweep which gives them problems when they need to alter the edge as they need the low brace. The result is that the novice has to change edges mid technique which is not only tricky for the novice but also another factor to think about.

A novice who dips the kayak towards the sweep of the LBT is allowing two problems; the first is that it is difficult to change the edge resulting in at least a wobble as they cross the eddy line, second the edging of the kayak will also help induce the turn. If the kayak is edged towards the sweep the turn is induced against the direction of that sweep. Confused? Your kayak will be too. (see fig.2)

If the kayak is edged away from the sweep a turn in the desired direction will be induced from the start.

So next time you are coaching the Low Brace Turn try thinking of it as: edge, sweep, low brace. In this way the edge is held constant through the stroke, which in turn makes the stroke more stable. There is a slight drawback, the sweep is more difficult to do when you are edging the opposite way. So this needs practising on flat water. It should also reflect the way we teach and coach the sweep stroke. The sweep stroke is arguably the most important building block for other strokes. It is therefore important that the learner is aware of its importance from the start.

**Summary.**

The low brace turn is often difficult to master partly due to the fact that it is often the first "technique" taught to the novice white water paddler. The LBT requires the linking of several strokes which can often prove challenging given that the concept of linking strokes is often alien to the novice. Think about learning to drive where a conscious thought is required to change gear, look in the mirror, steer etc. The same problems of too many things to think about at once occur with learning techniques in canoeing. Therefore every step should be taken by the coach to enable the learner to link the strokes

To coach an effective LBT paddlers need to paddle with good speed and apply edge to the kayak (fig. 3.). The second stage is to maintain the edge and complete a full sweep (fig. 1.) and thirdly still keep the edge maintained and move the paddle across the kayak into a low brace (fig. 4.)

I find this works for me, but you'll need to make your own mind up

I have played with this a lot in general purpose and white water kayaks. What I would like to do is spend some time on it in an open canoe.

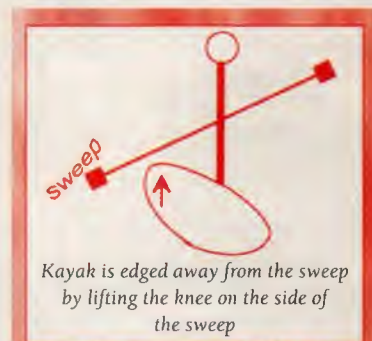


Figure 1



Figure 2

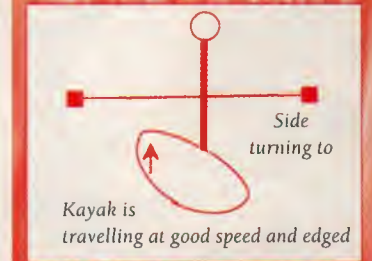


Figure 3

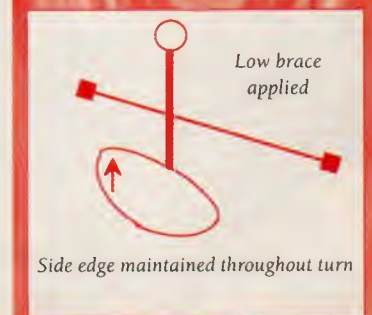



Figure 4





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# Canoes for Pleasure

Dear Canoe Focus



**At the great risk of being ridiculed by the young and 'Dynamic' members of the BCU. I have to write expressing my concerns over the future of this great pastime.**

**Over the past few years we have witnessed a great upsurge of specialised equipment and the conquering of many waters that were once thought impossible. I have no complaints in this area. My concern is revealed in 'CoDe' and 'Canoe Focus'. They are full of articles, diagrams and letters all of the same theme; Ultimate fitness programmes, dynamic techniques, power strokes etc. I have to ask the question, is there anyone out there who like me canoes for pleasure, who actually enjoys the rivers and seas of our land? It appears to me, that too many fellow members are concerned with personal achievement and notoriety than the progression and pleasure of the sport.**

**I have introduced, through the Education and youth system, hundreds of young people to canoeing. Some are teaching through the BCU themselves. I gave them all one piece of advice, "enjoy your canoeing". Competition is a good thing, but an unhealthy obsession with success does nothing but destroy the individual.**

*Trevor A Manning*

**Editors Comment: Thank you for your letter, I believe that all those people out there striving to be the best are still enjoying themselves otherwise they would 'nt have the dedication that is required to be the best! However, I know there are many paddlers out there who paddle purely for pleasure, unfortunately they all seem to be having such a good time that they don't appear to have time to write an article to tell us all about it, unless of course, you know someone who may like to send me something?**

## Kayakobabble!!

Dear Canoe Focus

In response to Simons letter about Boofing; I would first like to ask. Does he kayak more clearly than he writes, or do Team D employ Top Babblers, rather than Top Paddlers? I also enclose what I hope to be a clearer description of the term 'Boof'!

### "Fast Boof".

A 'Boof' is a method of running any size of drop in such a way that you land your Kayak flat. (On large drops there is a considerable risk of back damage).

Used mainly to avoid hitting the bottom of the river, thus preventing vertical pins or impact damage.

The 'Boof' technique can also be used to avoid some types of stopper (depends on the drop).

The reason that the particular manoeuvre is called a 'Boof' is because of the sound that is created upon landing. (Sometimes).

I should imagine the term 'Fast Boof' purely means that you perform the 'Boof' whilst moving quickly down the river!

Simon I may not have understood your ramblings but like the editor I did enjoy the cartoons!!

*Patch.*

Your opportunity to write in and comment on what is going on in canoeing today

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## Celtic Watersports Festival 1996

Dear Canoe Focus

I was pleased to read the report of the Celtic Watersports Festival. It's a special event and must surely grow. However, may I make some additions to the reporters copy, how did I guess he was a welshman!

Graham Hancock represented Cornwall and some mention might have been made of Jenny Bowden and Tina Dunstone, the stoutest male hearts in long skirts who

helped make up Cornwall's first ever Polo team in the murky waters around Pembroke Castle - Who knows what dragons that contained! The team improved only conceding 3 goals to Galicia in the last game and will do even better in 97.

Have you guessed, I'm' a Cornishman but I must admit that your coastline is in parts, as good as ours.

Thanks for a great week.

*Roger Thomas, Hayle CC*

## Round Great Britain Canoe Challenge

Dear Canoe Focus

Thank you for an interesting article in the last edition of Focus on the Round Great Britain Canoe Challenge which raised over £53,000 for the Charity 'Sparks'. Sadly, an opportunity was lost to point out that this expedition was part-sponsored by the Jubilee Canoeing Foundation, the BCU's very own Charity, so may I use this letter to set the record straight?

JCF exists to support and promote ventures for youth canoeing and canoeing for disabled people. the trustees

meet twice a year to consider applications for help, and try, through making relatively modest grants, to support a large number of projects. We have limited financial reserves to draw upon and welcome donations from clubs or individuals who would like to support the work we do.

Expeditions like the Round Great Britain Canoe Challenge are, as you wrote, 'an inspiration to many'. The Jubilee Canoeing Foundation will continue to do what it can to enable such projects to inspire and challenge us all.

*Puffin Pocock, Trustee of JCF*

## Electronic Kayak Alarm

Dear Canoe Focus

I am a second year industrial design student at DeMontford University, Leicester, and a keen Kayaker. For my end year project I am trying to design an electronic kayak alarm. At present though I am struggling to find some research in to the various issues concerned with the use of the device.

Essentially I need to establish a need for the product. I have looked through all the old issues of Focus to provide some statistical information, but I have had little luck in gathering any other information, such as how many people recover their lost boats? Or how bad the problem really is? Are there any places around the country that are more

prone to canoe stealing? Why are they so bad?

From speaking to a number of paddlers, the need for such a product is out there, and has a wider implication for other water users, especially windsurfers.

Any avenue of investigation you could suggest on this subject would be greatly appreciated.

*Many thanks, Will Tutton, TSI (White Water)*

*Editors Comment: If anybody can be of assistance to Will, please write to him direct at: Church House, Burton, South Wirral, Cheshire L64 5TQ*

Dear Canoe Focus

In reference to my letter, dated 16th December 1996, regarding a missing spray deck. It has now arrived through the post. I thought that you might like to know in order to free up any space that you have filled in either publication. I still don't know who sent it! Thanking you for any time and effort put into this matter.

*Graham Hydes*

**River Wye Navigation Order**

The Public Inquiry is to open on the 22nd April at Hereford. The BCU is preparing for this. We have now had the meeting with the Department that I mentioned in the February issue of Canoe Focus. Also discussions have taken place with the Environment Agency on the BCU objections. By the time you read this the EA will have made public the amendments they will be putting forward to the Inquiry to meet the objections made to the Order. We are optimistic that these changes will meet some of the BCUs concerns. However, they could be challenged at the Inquiry. *John Westlake, LAO for the River Wye in England, 33 Golden Vale, Churchdown, Gloucester GL3 2LUY Tel/Fax: 01452 531218*

**British Canoe Union - Access Arrangements. Bassenthwaite Lake National Nature Reserve**

**I**n a recent meeting with the Cumbrian Derwent Owner's Association I sat listening to the terms required by the owners for a canoe agreement for the lower stretch of the river. I was surprised when the Lake District National Park management team for Bassenthwaite Lake stated that canoeists have a very poor track record of keeping to agreements!

Although we have had regular meetings with "the Park" regarding Bassenthwaite I was concerned, embarrassed and disappointed to hear that we have such a poor reputation without having heard more than an isolated case before. I await details from them but feel it vital that paddlers appreciate the access conditions in place for Bassenthwaite and the Middle section of the Derwent.

In Cumbria all other agreements work very well and engender superb riparian relations. We are keen to promote responsible access arrangements through good practice and it is particularly sad to find that we have such a poor reputation with a body which should be one of our allies.

**The Details Bassenthwaite Lake**  
The lake is designated a National Nature Reserve, being of national ecological importance. It's aquatic plant life, vegetated margins, wildfowl and fish populations rank it as one of the most productive lakes in the county.

**Local Access Officers**

- Derwent Catchment down to Bassenthwaite *Steve Lenartowicz, 4 Lower Gale, Ambleside. Cumbria LA22 0BD.*
- Bassenthwaite to the Sea *Tony Kavanagh, Random Patch, Little Clifton. Workington. Cumbria CA14 1YR.*

**Access / Egress Points**

Peil Wyke car park and harbour Blackstock Point and Hursthole Point Via the R.Derwent - subject to access agreement ( contact LAO). No access via Ouse Bridge Car Parking due to erosion control work.

Permits all canoeing on the lake requires a permit from the Lake District National Park through various outlets - their own Blencathra Centre at Threlkeld or Discovery Centre, Lake Road Keswick. The Swan



Hotel at Thornthwaite, Scotgate Caravan Site at Braithwaite or Herdwick Croft at Ouse Bridge. Cost £2.50 individual or £4 group. Under 16's free.

Canoeists code of practice of not entering reed beds or of creating undue disturbance is obviously of importance when canoeing in a National Nature Reserve. The vegetated margins and some bays are closed to

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canoeing. The whole of the south end, the large bay and delta area at the mouth of the Derwent are particularly sensitive and restricted. Canoe passage is allowed but with the following conditions:

1. Canoeing in the restricted zone is only permitted for passage through.
2. If continuing down the lake clear the restricted area along the eastern shore in order to minimise disturbance.
3. Do not linger or create disturbance after Low Stock Bridge ( the last bridge) in the restricted zone.
4. No paddling up into the bays at this south end of the lake, even if weather conditions make open lake paddling serious. An alternative egress is available at Low Stock Bridge, carrying out of the lane to the main road.
5. If heading for the west shore to egress onto the A66 road paddle well clear of the river mouth by a couple of hundred metres, along the eastern shore before heading west. Blackstock Point is the most southerly point where egress may be made.
6. Permits should be available when asked by the lake wardening team and will help improve our reputation.

## Rivers Mole and Sussex Ouse

Work on improving access to the Rivers Mole and Sussex Ouse is currently taking place. If any club or individual canoeist has paddled these rivers and has any information that could assist us in improving the current arrangements, eg contact names, fishing clubs, landowners names and addresses please send details to the RAO Noel Humphrey at 29 Aylett Road, South Norwood, London SE25 4JY. The region is holding an access officers training day in the South East on Sunday 18th May. All LAOs will be contacted directly. Anyone else in the region who is interested in access and perhaps joining 'the team' will be most welcome. Please contact RAO for details

## Chester Weir Sluice

Chester Weir Sluice had been in disrepair for many years but as a consequence of the drought was all of a sudden boarded up and the water shut off. This meant that the growing Chester Rodeo had lost its venue. We then learnt that this was going to be a permanent situation. The loss of water through this sluice actually has a major effect up stream as far as the Tryweryn, as one third of the river(4.5 Cumecs) actually went through the sluice! Contact was quickly made to try to get the gate back for the Chester Canoe Fest in August but unfortunately there were many problems to overcome before we could get permission.

The weir is a listed building, owned by Chester Council, with water extraction by North West Water, with flood control implications, fisheries implications and from the Environment Agency. After long and careful negotiation with the help of the RCO Derek Brooks I am pleased to announce they have given Permission to lower the gate on the following dates;

5/6th April Chester Rodeo, 21/22 June, 23/24th August Chester Canoe Fest, 20/21st September and 13/14th December.

Only two of those dates have a planned event so there are three vacant slots to be filled. There may be a small cost for the man to do the opening and shutting of the gate and there are two important restrictions. The first is that there is no responsibility on the various authorities for activities held there. And above all else **nobody, absolutely nobody** paddles through the tunnel that leads to the sluice. All access to the outfall must be from the level below the outfall.

Its now up to the locals and others to make use of this refurbished facility. The first rodeo and rodeo training details are available from Affinity 0161 833 1500 or Derek Brooks 01244 765870. Last year we had to close the book because there were too many on the training sessions so early booking is required.

SteveWales

## New LAO for the River Thames

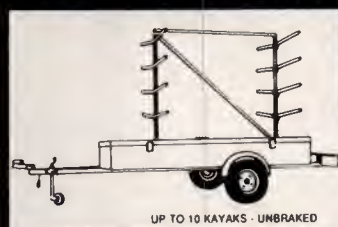
The new LAO for the River Thames is: *Henry Blythe, 23 High Street, Thame, Oxon, OX9 2BZ*

## Access to the Middle Derwent.

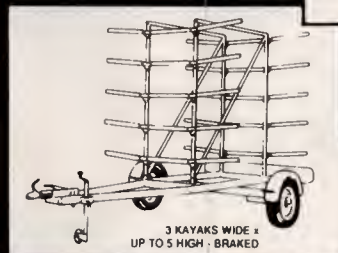
Access is available from the R. Greta or from Derwentwater for all canoeists with the following time zoning :

- 1st November - 31st March Open.
  - 1st April - 31st July Open until 4p.m. i.e. no-one on the water after 4p.m.
  - 1st August - 31st October Closed to canoeing.
- Mike Mills RAO Cumbria*

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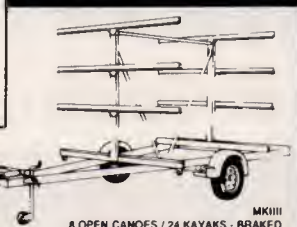


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# Born 'n' Bred to Rip 'n' Shred

# YAK Unveils New Range of Paddles

**A**t the International Canoe Exhibition this year, YAK unveiled its new range of paddles. All YAK paddles feature a symmetrical design with a

slight dihedral face for reduced flutter and optimum power.

Manufactured with an aluminium insert to avoid wear and tear on the high impact edges.

The Atak is the premier paddle in the range, and has been designed for the whitewater or rodeo paddler who requires strong lightweight equipment. The blade is carbon/kevlar construction and the lightweight shaft of carbon fibre combining strength and durability.

The Inka is designed for the professional user, again using a carb/kevlar blade coupled with a seamless aluminium shaft. The shaft of the Inka has a large handgrip for maximum grip and extra warmth.

The Aztek built for all year round whitewater and instructional use. The blade is constructed using high specification epoxy resins with a spheritex core to aid stiffness, combined with the aluminium shaft as used in the Inca.

Also available from YAK this year is the new Paddle Mitt constructed from 3mm black neoprene and finished at each side with elastic, enabling it to grip to the paddle shaft, keeping the water out and the warmth in.

Moving on to the other end of the canoeists body, YAK also have a new range of watersports footwear. The Yak-Trak Max Boot



and the Yak-Trak shoe. For more detail and prices on all the above contact YAK Crewsaver Ltd, Mumby Road, Gosport, Hants, PO12 1AQ  
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# Avoncraft

**GRUMMAN CANOES.** After more than 50 years of manufacture Grumman Canoes has recently changed its name to 'Marathon', which is, in fact, the town in up State New York where the boats have been made since 1952. Many readers will be aware that Grumman is part of a vast multi faceted American company and

the boat department was only one small part of this operation. As the parent company was continuing to expand in other areas it was decided, in the best interests of the canoe division, to allow a management buy out. The new company has been formed by the core of highly specialised and experienced designers,

technicians and manufacturers who have been producing the boats at Marathon for many years.

Quality and designs will remain identical and although each craft will be called Marathon a 'G' designation will be marked on all models in recognition of the canoes' heritage. In addition the road outside of the plant has now been renamed 'Grumman Way' in memory of the contribution Grumman has made to the town of Marathon.

Avoncraft will continue to market this famous brand under its new name 'Marathon'.



**P&H**

P&H have assigned three brand managers they are: Peter Orton for Gorilla (aggressive paddles for aggressive paddlers). Perran Shreeve for Revenge (performance polo kayaks) and Julian Patrick for P&H Sea Kayaks. Peter Orton is also now a Director of P&H. We offer them all our congratulations and wish them continued success.

# New Nookie Waterproof Garments



Not only were Nookie the winners of the best stand at the recent International Canoe Exhibition but they have also produced a new range of waterproof garments which are suitable not only for paddling but for snowboarding, mountain biking, walking, climbing and more. The new droptail anorak is already proving popular with marathon paddlers as a training cag. Manufactured from waterproof and breathable 'Exeat' it has taped seams, lycra/neoprene neck and wrist seals and a zipped front pocket. It also has a detachable storm hood. For sea kayaking and



touring the lower part can be folded up inside to leave the length suitable for use with a spraydeck. Available at £75. Nookie have also developed a new latex dry-seal which has a higher resistance to perishing and UV degradation, they will be used in all Nookie dry clothing immediately at no extra cost. For more detail contact: Nookie, Unit 4a, Ottery Business Park, Tavistock, Devon PL19 8NS Tel: 01822 618688

# Pyranha Foam Boaters

At the International Canoe Exhibition this year, you may have seen some strange little people on the Pyranha stand (no not the staff!), Foam Boaters. Foam boat kits, are, I predict, going to be the next biggest craze for kids and adults alike. (Full review in the next issue). The foam boat course constructed initially for fun (and for the strange little

individuals and certainly proved popular at the NEC. The course can be altered by moving the rocks to form stoppers, flat spin spots and a great rodeo hole.

Pyranha have also launched a number of new boats for 1997, many of which will be reviewed over the next few issues of Canoe Focus, in the June issue we will be featuring the Razor, I think you are going to like it! In the meantime if you require any further information on Pyranha products contact: *Pyranha Mouldings Ltd, Marina Village, Preston Brook, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 3DW Tel: 01928 716666 Fax: 01928 714399*

people) has proved to be in great demand with schools, traders and



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# Paddles

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## Yak Atak

### ATAK TECHNICAL INFORMATION

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#### CONSTRUCTION

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**SHAFT** Ultra lightweight Carbon Fibre combining strength with flexibility.

## Yak Inka

### INKA TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Strong but light, ideal for demands of the professional user.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**BLADE** High impact resistant Carbon Kevlar, as per ATAK

**SHAFT** Strong and durable seamless aluminium extrusion with large handgrip.

## Yak Aztek

### AZTEK TECHNICAL INFORMATION

An excellent paddle for all round whitewater and instructional use

#### CONSTRUCTION

**BLADE** Hand laid using epoxy resins with spheritex core to aid stiffness.

**SHAFT** Strong and durable seamless aluminium extrusion with large handgrip.



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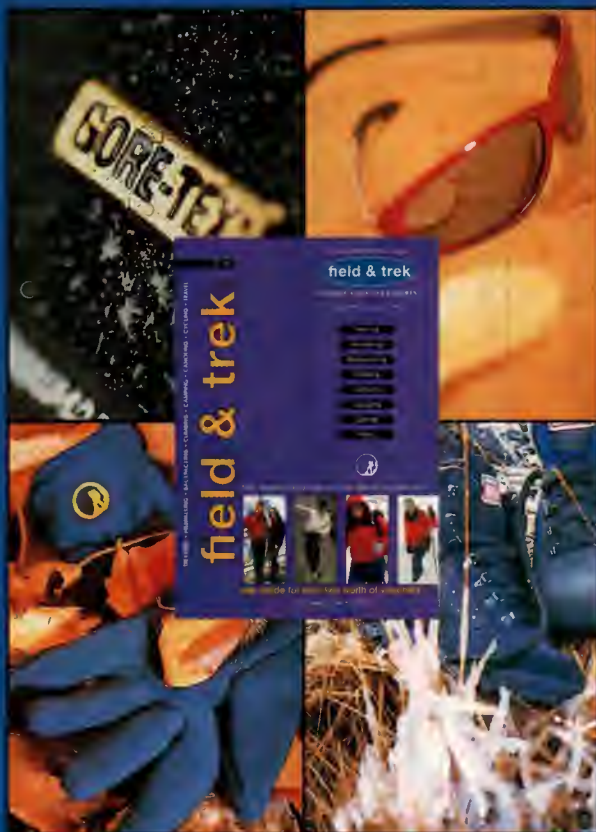
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CF05

# Young People's Programme

An Update by  
Anne Ferguson,  
BCU Youth  
Development  
Officer

## Club Packs Launched

By the time you receive this copy of Canoe Focus, twelve workshops will have been held across England and if someone from your club attended one of these, they would have received the new Club Pack.

### The purpose of this pack is two-fold

- To provide clubs with current information and help with key issues
- To share examples of good practice between clubs

We intend this to be a living document that will be added to on a yearly basis. You and your club have a key role to play in its success, so please send me any examples of things that work well in your club. The more that we share knowledge and information the better we can all become.

We would like to state our thanks to NatWest who have kindly sponsored the pack and who, as part of their commitment to helping clubs become more efficient and effective, will from time to time include articles in this magazine on 'Managing the Money'.

### Workshops

As you will know, I have been running a series of workshops across the country. This has been a valuable experience in that it has provided me with the opportunity of meeting you, the key people that make things happen within clubs, as well as gaining an understanding of what work is being carried out at local level. I would like to thank you for coming along and hope that you can see more clearly where we intend to go with the Young People's Programme. Please remember that if you have any suggestions on what the BCU can provide to help you with your work with young people, please write and let me know.



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# New Developments at the Teesside White Water Course

**N**ew developments at the Teesside White Water Course at Stockton will enhance its facilities and increase its capacity. The course, which is operated by Teesside Development Corporation, will have its new facilities in use in the spring time for the main canoeing season.

The course, which is already recognised on the international canoeing circuit, will be modified to provide a new section of rapid water and to provide further capacity for slalom training. New looping pools will be provided to improve rodeo canoeing.

Len Smith, who manages the course for the Development Corporation said: "The new facilities will make it possible for more paddlers to use the centre. At present we have three major rapids, but after the modifications there will be four and this will create an important expansion in capacity. Paddlers from all parts of the North of England and also from Scotland are regular users and we will need this capacity.

We have a strong programme of

events in the coming year, including competitions for international paddlers who are eager to experience our white water. The Teesside course now has an international reputation and the planned enhancement will add to this".

The white water section has been closed since Monday 3 February to enable engineering work by Tarmac Construction to go ahead and will reopen in the spring. But calm water activities on the river will continue and the centre, cafe and shop will stay open to provide facilities for calm water paddlers and visitors.

Top rank slalom paddlers who train at the centre will continue their activity, using the river for distance training and doing their white water training on the Upper Tees near Barnard Castle.

"We encourage our top flight paddlers to gain experience over as wide a variety of water as possible", said Mr Smith. "Training on the Upper Tees will form part of that experience".

Beginners, improvers and intermediate canoeing instruction will continue at the centre, using the warm

up lake and quiet water above the Tees Barrage. Schools will be taking advantage of this from April onwards.

The first major event after the white water course reopens will be the first of a series of Tees Rodeos and in May there will be an international Touch the Water meeting.

The Touch the Water event is part of a new international series being coordinated by Richard Fox, five-times world slalom champion. The Teesside course is included in a circuit taking in Germany, France, the United States and possibly Brazil.

"Our inclusion reflects our status", said Mr Smith "Richard Fox is quite keen on Teesside and our new facilities will make us even better."

Competitors participate in slalom, river racing and rodeo to gain points and some of the top international paddlers are expected. An attractive element is that there is also an opportunity for ordinary canoeists to take part and say they've paddled alongside the stars. Last year there were 430 relative beginners on the flat water and this is good for their morale.

**Teesside White Water Course to close temporarily for additional features to be built, but paddlers continue to enjoy their sport.**

**For further information contact**

**Fiona Blackwell,  
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# 1996 Summary of the Year

By David Gent, Chairman, BCU Council and Executive Committee.

Canoeing is all about having an enjoyable and productive time on the water. In the 1995/96 period this has been central to all the work that BCU members have undertaken on behalf of the sport.

Paddlers have continued to stress the need for canoeing to attract and retain more young people to the sport. With this in mind, "Paddlesport" - the biggest development programme of all time for young people - was conceived last year. It is still in its development stage but has already gained national approval and looks set to be a success.

Access to water is as difficult as ever but it has moved forward on two fronts in particular. The BCU licence has been extended and the BCU's network of local access officers have served the sport well in 1996 by responding better than any other sport to the Environment Agency planning documents on river catchments.

Britain has maintained its status as the world's number one canoeing nation across the competitive disciplines. Gold medals won in marathon, polo and slalom - especially in the women's competitions - are a credit to the individuals and all their support teams. We are a British sport succeeding at the very highest levels.

Ever greater demands have been made of the Coaching Service by the paddlers. Revisions to the tests and awards have been launched and this is, truly, an area the of which the sport can be proud. The BCU has encouraged all coaches to get involved and help support the national coaching programmes.

On the marketing front, moving the International Canoe Exhibition to Birmingham proved a success in increasing the awareness of canoeing to a whole new market. Internal BCU publications have also been improved and more information targeted at clubs.

BCU membership in England topped 20,000 for the first time ever in 1996 and this remains the critical issue in our growth. It is vital that the membership remains attractive to members.

No decisions have yet been taken but a positive consensus is developing on how the BCU should structure itself to define more clearly its UK and England functions. 1997 will see clear proposals emerge.

Finally, canoeing and the BCU would have achieved little without all the unpaid volunteers working to ensure that canoeing is a sport everyone can enjoy.



Canoe Polo action

## 1997 - Key Objectives and Plans

By David Gent, Chairman, BCU Council and Executive Committee

**The Mission Statement:**

*More people canoeing with the BCU more often*

This is what the BCU aims to do on an on-going basis and 1997 is no exception.

Young people are the main focus of the BCU's activities and events. 1997 sees the launch of 'Paddlesport', a range of BCU products and services to help clubs and others attract and retain more young people into the sport. Creating and maintaining an information flow to young people and members is of utmost importance. As the Internet and e-mail continue to grow the BCU has its finger on the pulse. Watch out for the BCU web site coming on stream in mid '97.

Access to water will take a leap forward, with the first ever comprehensive facility strategy for canoeing in England. This is not a document for the shelf but one to provide hard facts to argue for funding out of the lottery, and other sources, to increase access to water.

Lottery revenue funding, for which the BCU has already submitted its performance plans, will also ensure, in 1997, that the BCU world champions are better funded than ever. Real cash will also be targeted at helping those young people who have the talent to succeed.

Coaching will continue to expand as the review of the Coaching Service is completed and BCU resources are focused on helping those young people who have the talent to succeed.

Finally, the BCU remains committed to its clubs. New national development programmes will be targeted through local meetings to ensure clubs get better support for all the events and activities they organise which make canoeing happen in the UK.

1997 looks set to be a busy year both on and off the water for canoeing.

# A Year in The BCU's achievement and

## Access

- Medway and Anglian rivers licences secured.
- A strong working relationship has been achieved with the Environment Agency and input has been provided to Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPS).
- 24 Regional and Local Access Officers trained
- 150 lobbyists recruited for the Wye Navigation Order lobby.
- "Earning a Welcome" approach launched at Canoe Exhibition.
- Access information policy updated.

## Coaching

- Revised syllabi and system of tests and awards launched.
- Programme of updating existing examiners completed.
- Directory of tests and awards completed and circulated to all with coaching qualifications.
- First canoeing S/NVQ at level 2 awarded.
- Support groups formed for the national coaches for Polo and Wild Water Racing.
- Review of placid water support material completed.
- Availability of coaches to run 'in house' coaching training/education courses advertised to clubs.

## Priority Groups

- Consultant appointed to establish machinery for better recruitment and retention of young people, with particular regard to establishing the Top Club scheme within canoeing.
- Liaison with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award undertaken to seek more use of canoeing for expeditions.
- Good response achieved from advertising in school/youth publications.
- National Committee for canoeing for people with a disability separated from the coaching advisory panel and advisory groups for each discipline.
- Training commenced in manual handling techniques to meet the implications of the EU Directive on Manual Handling.
- Equal Opportunities strategy agreed.
- Apprenticeship scheme for women examiners continued.

## Publicity and Information

- Matchtight Media appointed as consultants resulting in improved media coverage for canoeing.
- Publicity training seminar held in April.
- International Canoe Exhibition relaunched at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham.
- Continuing improvement in the BCU Yearbook, "Canoe Focus" - the BCU's magazine - as well as literature for members.
- Two issues of 'Current Affairs' newsletter for committees and clubs.
- Greater television coverage than ever before.
- Sponsorship consultant's proposals under consideration.
- Trade links strengthened.

## Membership

- Individual membership in England has topped 20,000 and in the UK is now 24,337.
- The total number of affiliated clubs is static.
- A review of the membership structure in England has commenced, with particular consideration being given to clubs, young people and the objectives of the new development plan.

# Headlines

## performance record for 1996



Left: Andrew & Stephen Train, 1996 C2 World Marathon Champions and Olympic Finalists (Sprint) Right: Lyn Simpson, 1995 Womens K1 World Champion and 1996 World Cup Champion

## Competition

### World Championship Medal Winners

|                         |                              |        |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|--------|
| Womens Polo Team        |                              | Gold   |
| Junior Womens K1 Slalom | Helen Reeves                 | Gold   |
| Mens K2 Marathon        | Ivan Lawler / Steve Harris   | Gold   |
| Mens C2 Marathon        | Stephen Train / Andrew Train | Gold   |
| Womens K1 Marathon      | Anna Hemmings                | Silver |
| Canoe Sailing           | Robin Wood                   | Gold   |
| Canoe Sailing           | Mark Goodchild               | Silver |

### World Cup Medal Winners

|                         |                                |        |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| Junior Mens K2 Marathon | Daniel Golder / Damien Chapman | Silver |
| Womens K1 Slalom        | Lyn Simpson                    | Gold   |

- BCU President re-elected European Canoe Association President.
- BCU well represented on major international committees.

## Recreation

- 100,000 people on the water.
- More schools and youth centres becoming involved.

Below: Ivan Lawler and Steve Harris, 1993 and 1996 K2 World Marathon Champions.



# Eight Pillars built on Sound Finance

By Paul Owen, BCU Chief Executive.

The British Canoe Union formulated eight strategic objectives for its Development Plan covering the years 1993 - 1997. Improved finances figured highly amongst these. Without extra funds the BCU would not have been able to reach other targets for increased participation and membership, the development of new services and the maintenance of Britain's competitive status internationally.

## The Objectives

### Improved access to water

Each year increasing numbers of waterways require licences to navigate. The BCU licence now enables members to enjoy 2625 miles of waterway and the BCU has made every effort to ensure the best possible deal for its membership.

Local access officers have been given negotiation skills training and the BCU has joined the Parliamentary Waterways Group to gain contact with MPs and Peers.

As a result, the BCU has negotiated increased access agreements with riparian owners. It has been a key consultee in the development of waterway planning for the management of river corridors and a facilities strategy is being prepared for future requirements.

### An improved coaching service

The BCU's tests and awards have been constantly evaluated and updated including on-going and growing National Council for Vocational Qualifications approval.

National Development Coaches have been appointed for Marathon and Wild Water racing with a focus, too, on development of Placid Water coaches. Agreements have been reached to allow the BCU to take advantage of Further Education Funding to appoint a Coaching Development Officer.

The BCU's competitive disciplines are also well advanced in the production of World Class Performance Plans.

### Increased priority group participation

More women have become involved in BCU decision-making.

A newly-appointed young people's development officer has led to new resource material for this target group as well as "paddlesport" officers to support clubs in making links with schools.

Through publications and teaching resources, the BCU has continued to promote actively canoeing to people with a disability, holding the first international symposium in 1995 and sending BCU teams to international regattas.

### Improved BCU publicity and information

The BCU has already taken major strides to improve canoeing's image and is working with consultants on new strategies for sponsorship of a cogent, corporate body offering exploitation opportunities across a range from leisure to elite competitive sport. Key developments have also included:

A re-sited and improved International Canoe Exhibition; the appointment of PR and media advisors; enhanced trade relations, television and media coverage; improved information provision to members and member clubs. Creation of Web information network.

### Increased BCU Membership

Individual BCU Membership has grown by 18% during the Development Plan period.

### Development of the Competition Excellence Programme

Investment in performers has continued to be a key element through subsistence awards, with SAF help, to elite and potential future elite canoeists as well as funding for squads to prepare for, and attend, international events:

| Discipline      | Canoeists                            | Title                                 |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Sprint Racing   | Timothy Brabants / Paul Darby-Dowman | 1995 World Junior Champions (K2 1000) |
| Canoe Slalom    | Richard Fox                          | 1993 World Champion K1                |
|                 | Lynn Simpson                         | 1995 World Champion K1                |
|                 | Helen Reeve                          | 1996 World Junior Champion K1         |
| Marathon Racing | Ivan Lawler / Steve Harris           | 1994 and 1996 World Champions K2      |
|                 | Stephen and Andrew Train             | 1996 World Champions C2               |
| Canoe Polo      | Ladies' Team                         | 1996 World Champion                   |
| Canoe Sailing   | Robin Wood                           | 1993 and 1996 World Champion          |

The BCU has hosted three world championships during this period in the disciplines of Canoe Polo (inaugural event), Slalom and Wild Water.

### Increased participation in recreation canoeing

During the Development Plan period Rodeo has been developed into a fully-competitive sport and development plans have been produced for Canoe Life Guarding and Sea Touring.

### An improved BCU financial position

A 51% increase in turnover to £1.8m has enabled the BCU to establish central reserves of £250,000 from a deficit of £125,000 - an improvement of 300%. By 31 October 1996, in combination with committee and regional funds, total reserves stood at £596,000. And the central bank account has moved from £85,000 overdrawn to £639,000 in credit - a nine-fold improvement.

The BCU has introduced more effective financial monitoring systems and improved the utilisation of resources. National Audit Office inspection successfully completed.



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Tel: 01772 786571

# National Inter-Regional Pool Slalom

**T**he second National Inter-Regional Pool Slalom held at Coventry on 16th February was a very tight competition eventually won by Wales from the South, closely followed by West Midlands and the South West.

There were some outstanding performances

throughout the day culminating in Neil Buckley's 56.40 sec Mens Kayak winning time beating Etienne Stott into second place 57.52 sec. Toby Morgan won the Premier Canadian event in 58.55 sec with Tim Trollope second. The ladies champion was Nerys Rowlands from Wales in 65.02 with Amy Casson from the North in second place. A close contest

in the C2 event finished with James and Andrew Roden beating Ian Banfield and Matt Dodson by 1 sec.

The organisers feel that this is an important competition as it brings the new competitors, in fact 3 paddlers were doing their first ever event, into direct contact and competition with our top Premier paddlers. "All 10 regions who took part supplied at least one judge or official and we were very grateful to those who gave their time to help us", said Ken Trollope. "Maybe a few more people will now realise that this is a friendly sport with time for all classes and divisions".

Report by Sue Trollope

# Slalom Snippets

## Slalom Yearbook

Oops - sorry about the late publication of the Slalom Yearbook! Having ordered the printing for mid-January, the amendments necessary following various rule changes just weren't finished in time. What about the 1998 version? Well, it's up to you as we are seeking your views on format, content, size etc. If you have ideas on the way forward for the future, please let us know by June of this year. Perhaps you're looking for just a calendar of events with information on bib arrangements and an update on rule changes or maybe you'd rather stay with the current style. Is it time for change? Please remember that there are financial constraints too.

All competitors ranked in the 1996 season should have received their copy of the book in late February - please remember that it's your responsibility to inform your Ranking Compiler of any change of address - there is no direct link with the BCU membership computer!

## Slalom in Norfolk

Yes, it is really happening. The fifth Eastern Region winter slalom series was hosted by the Dereham Canoe Group and 64 competitors braved the February cold. The Norfolk Open championships were combined with this final of the mini-series and the winners were:

K1M Phil Jenkins from Lowestoft; K1 Women Sue Warne from Proteus; C1 Mark Wilkinson, pictured left, with the crew from Leaping Frogs and Messrs Pike and Leahy taking first C2.

## Olympic Games 2000

Did you complete and send off the petition as enclosed with the last issue of Canoe Focus? Richard Fox MBE and member of the International Canoe Federation Slalom Committee is working hard to generate publicity in the attempts to reverse the decision to omit Canoe Slalom in the Sydney Games - no more news yet.

## No Fee Increases

You'll be happy to hear that once again, there are no entry fee increases this year and in future, the only increase will be commensurate with the RPI.

## Div 3 events

We hope that you experienced white water paddlers have noted that you can come into slalom at a Div 3 event and compete alongside the ranked competitors in an open event. If you enjoy it, it will then be possible for you to apply for Ranking status, using your result. Good news - if you haven't quite got round to joining the BCU, you can take out 'taster' weekend membership and try canoe slalom.

## 1997 British Teams

Selection events will be taking place as usual for Junior, Intermediates and Seniors in late Spring. Selection is based on results from designated events and in our discipline, there is no discretion. This year, only the current women's World Champion, Lynn Simpson has been pre-selected to the Senior Team and that is because of outstanding performance, future medal potential and results in 1997. Currently, Lynn is training in Germany and we all wish her well in her defence of her World Championship title in Brazil in late September. Competitors



Lynn Simpson

and/or their parents/supporters who are confused with selection procedures can always obtain clarification - phone the Slalom Development Officer. If you're just starting out on the bottom rung of the ladder, it often seems like a maze!

## New 'Getting Started in Slalom' packs

are now available - a simple guide for those of you interested in having a go at slalom (available from the Slalom Development Officer). We've said this before, but you'll be surprised about your improvement in boat control after learning slalom skills. If you're off to the Alps this summer, do try to fit in a few slalom events before you go. The Slalom Skills Award have been revamped, so if you're into test and badges, this is for you.

## Blue Peter

Full marks to the GBR Junior Winter Squad - Tom, Tim and James were great in the Blue Peter programme shot at Holme Pierrepont and shown in late February.

## Judges

For those of you who prefer to patrol the river bank, here's a reminder that we always need judges to officiate at events and coaches to impart knowledge and skill and even motivate. Our discipline has structured training for both these activities - do find out - its just a 'phone call away.

Below: Mark Wilkinson, winner of the C1 category at the Norfolk Open Slalom Championships



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Participants are encouraged to use the BCU Touring Logbook. Mileage on any type of water may be included but the emphasis must be on inland touring. Where two or more paddlers share a craft both may record the mileage paddled together in their own logbook. The Touring Awards are open to BCU members and non-members.

### 1. The Elementary Certificate

This is intended to encourage beginners attending outdoor pursuits courses and holidays to interest themselves in canoe touring, and to go on to earn another touring award. It can be awarded on completion of 15 miles paddled during the instructional event. The Certificate which is to be found in the centre of the BCU Touring Logbook will be completed and signed by the event leader. A small low cost badge will be obtainable for issue by event leaders, along with the certificate, if they wish.

### 2. The Strand Touring Awards

These awards are related to the mileage paddled in any period of 12 months. To claim an award the logbook recording the mileage claimed together with the fee must be sent to the Award Administrator. A badge and certificate will be awarded and the logbook returned.

- Strand Bronze Touring Award for paddling 100 miles.
- Strand Silver Touring Award for paddling 250 miles.
- Strand Gold Touring Award for paddling 500 miles.

### 3. The British Canoe Union Touring Awards

The mileage being much greater than the Strand annual awards no time limits are set. All logged miles will count including mileage for which Strand or previous BCU Awards have been obtained. To claim an award the logbook together with the fee must be sent to the Award Administrator as soon as possible after the completion of the specified mileage. A badge and certificate will be awarded and the logbook returned.

As BCU Touring Log Books were only introduced in 1985, where senior paddlers can reasonably demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Committee that they have paddled at least 5000 miles, the BCU Gold Award can be awarded

- BCU Bronze Touring Award on completion of 1000 miles.
- BCU Silver Touring Award on completion of 2000 miles.

- BCU Gold Touring Award on completion of 5000 miles.

It is the wish of the Touring and Recreation Committee that BCU Gold Touring Awards should, wherever possible, be presented at the International Canoe Exhibition.

### 4. The Strand Inter-Club Touring Trophy competition

This trophy is for an annual competition between BCU Affiliated Clubs and the winner will be the club with the highest number of points. The points are awarded for the total number of miles paddled by the competing club's members plus further points for Strand and BCU Touring Awards won by those members during the calendar year. The competing club's members do not have to be BCU Full Members. A paddler may only support one club each year.

Club entries for the Trophy must be made on the official entry form obtainable from the Award Administrator, or photocopies of it, and must be received by the Award Administrator by the 15th January in any year. Club officials should hold their members supporting logbooks until the end of January as the winning club may be called upon to substantiate their entry. There is no entry fee proposed at present for the Strand Inter-Club Touring Trophy competition.

The Strand Interclub Trophy will be presented, whenever possible, at the International Canoe Exhibition



## The Strand Inter-Club Touring Award Shield

Now in its eight year, the Strand Club Trophy was presented to Barbara Simmons, on behalf of Westel Canoe Club, who are based on the Thames, by Mike Twiggs the new Chairman of BCU Touring and Recreation Committee, for paddling the greatest number of miles in the National Award Scheme for the second year running. The photograph shows Jeff & Barbara Simmons proudly holding the Club Touring Shield.



## Nookie - Best Stand Award

Nookie have won the Best Stand Award for the second year running, with a tin "surf shack" design complete with brickwork and a fireplace with chimney! The photograph shows Bill Mattos receiving the award from the show organiser Peter Ingram.



## Trevor Bailey Award

The Trevor Bailey Award for Endeavour was this year presented to Alan Baker of Croesyceiliog Canoe Club. Alan is the founder member of the club which is now over twenty years old. Amongst other things, he has helped many hundreds of people to learn to canoe, many of whom have gone on to become instructors themselves. The award which takes the form of a decanter was presented by the family of Trevor Bailey the late Director of the BCU and the BCU's President Albert Woods.

Right: Margaret Bailey presents Alan Baker with the Trevor Bailey Award for Endeavour



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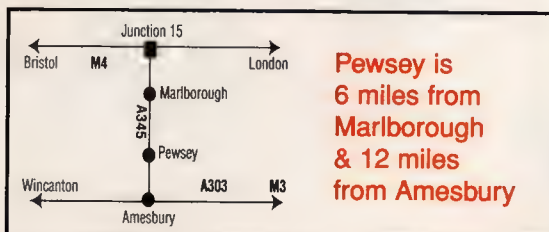
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NATIONAL CANOEING EXHIBITION

Article by  
Helen Smith

# 11th Playboater Thames Weir Hurley Rodeo

Despite desperately low water levels in the preceding months, the weekend of 30th November and 1st December yielded good water conditions and a huge and successful fun rodeo. Good old Hurley Weir on the River Thames it rarely lets us down!

In fact, the 12 gates format gave rise to some bizarre new forms of "street boating"... Rail slides, cross-deck edge grabs and step jumps all started to appear on the judges score sheets.

A record number of paddlers turned up for this usually smaller, and purely fun, competition. 106 paddlers (in 142 class entries) battled it out furiously over the 2 days (and nights!) to produce winners in all the usual categories as well as some not quite so familiar!

The final round of the competition took the form of a 20 person "super-final"... Initially, everybody (men and women alike) paddled together strutting their stuff until after 10 minutes the judges began to eliminate people at the rate of one every minute. In true fun competition style, nobody took this

too seriously and in due course various suitably humorous titles were awarded to some of those who were knocked out. The remaining 7 paddlers were separated on a "OK you guys - have a huge fight in the hole, and the winner is the last one to survive." basis!! Yeah, our spraydecks say "Thank you very much Mr. Judge!!"

After a wild weekend both on and off the water the following results were eventually thrashed out...

### A Big Thank You

We would like to say thank you to the following people and organisations, without whose help and support the event would not have been possible...

**Organiser:** Shaun Baker.

**Sponsors:** PlayBoater, PlayBoating UK, YAK, Wild Water and La Ola.

**Helpers:** Helen, Anna, Jules, Simon, Simon and Simon, Hippy Dave, Mike, Martin, Chris and Chris, Rob and Vicky. With help from / in co-operation with: Environment Agency (Thames Division); Lock Keepers - Brian and Jeff; SAS Institute; Harleyford Estate; 21st Maidenhead Scout Group; Hurley Village Assn. And thank you to anyone I have forgotten to mention and of course to all you paddlers for coming along and taking part.



Above right:  
Chris Jesus Gould  
"tail railslide"

Photo:  
Jason Smith

Below:  
Shaun Baker  
Photo:  
Heather Gunn



## RESULTS

### FLOAT

1st Shaun Baker

**Best Trick:**

Simon Edwards

**Most Consistent:**

Chris Lowe

**Most Tenacious:**

Andy Phillips

**Mass Destruction of Equipment:**

Chris Jesus Gould

### NOVICE

1st Steve Doone

2nd Toby Saxton

3rd Steve Clarke

### DECKED CI

1st Pete Orton

2nd Mike Fletcher

3rd Chris Cherrill

### SQUIRT

1st Chris Taudevin

2nd Justin Snell

3rd Martin Pogmore

### OPEN CANOE

1st James Weir

2nd Pete Orton

3rd Rob Dixon

### INTERNATIONAL RULES EVENT

1st Simon Westgarth

2nd Andy Phillips

3rd Andy Stuart

### LADIES

1st Helen Taylor

2nd Louise Wigmore

3rd Paula O'Donnell

### BEST JUNIOR

Tom Desbruslais



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#### White Water Safety and Rescue Course BCU/SCA Approved

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#### Open Canoe Lochs & Mountain

5 day: 31 Aug-5 September  
Fee: £280

#### Open Canoe Skills

5 day: 6-11 July 7-12 September  
Fee: £280

#### Level Two & Three Coach Training (Open Canoe, Kayak)

Open Canoe  
2 day: 30 May-1 June 19-21 Sept

Kayak  
2 day: 16-18 May 12-14 Sept

Fee: £82

#### Level Two & Three Coach Assessment (Kayak, Open Canoe)

Open Canoe One or Two Days  
Dates: 30 May-1 June, 19-21 September

Kayak  
Dates: 16-18 May, 12-14 September

Fee: Price on application

#### Level Five Coach Training

6 day: 11-17 Oct  
Fee: £377

#### Coaching Composite Course (Inland Kayak) 5 day

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Fee: £263

#### 5 Day Level III Coach Assessment (Inland Kayak)

5 day: 3-8 Aug 5-10 Oct  
Fee: £263

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6 day: 26 July-2 Aug 2 Aug - 9 Aug  
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These courses will be run in a site specific way and the emphasis of these advanced level courses will be about learning to play the river.

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Designed to be an introduction to sea kayaking for those who already have a basic grasp of kayak handling, whether on the sea, on flat water or on inland rivers. The aim of the course will be to build on these basic skills and develop them as befitting a salty sea dog. Conditions permitting, we would hope to look at the specialised areas of boat handling, group control, rescues, rough water paddling, surf, navigation, expedition paddling and night paddling.

British Canoe Union Star Tests 1-4 will be available on this course.

The only pre-requisite of this course are 10 days paddling, including being comfortable on some rough open water.

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Further to Andy Middleton's article 'Did you hear what I said', published in October 1996, Terry Hailwood provides the following information.

Article by Terry Hailwood (Ear Wigs by Play Boater are also available from B.C.U. Supplies.)

# External Extostosis - Implications for Coaches

**K**nowledge of the condition *External extostosis of the auditory canal*, (more commonly called swimmers or surfers ear) is thankfully now widespread.

*Extostosis* is defined in *Blacks Medical Dictionary* as: "An out growth from a bone; it may be due to chronic inflammation, constant pressure or tension on the bone."

In the case of the ear, this 'out growth', usually in the form of three bony 'lumps', closes up the ear canal in front of the ear drum, therefore affecting hearing. On a personal point this causes a lot of pain after rolling in cold water, largely due to having water trapped behind the growths. This causes a build up of pressure for quite some time after getting off the water.

Stuart Wagstaff says in his article in *CoDe* magazine No 64: "It has been proven by work carried out in the 1950's and 60's that cold water does cause these growths."

These growths obviously take time to develop. Someone like myself, who has had these growths removed, has been playing/trashing in rivers and surf for over ten years. It was too late for me to take any preventative measures,

as the condition was not known to be relevant to paddlers until recently. Now the news is out, it can be very easy to take steps to prevent the operation.

Without wanting to sound like an alarmist, I would recommend anything to avoid having to go through the operation. I spoke to Shaun Baker early in 1995 whilst waiting for my turn for the 'big drill'. I wrongly thought that it couldn't be so bad, as he seemed to be soon back on the water, strutting his stuff as normal. I was not however, prepared for the pain after the operation to remove the bones. It took over six weeks until I was allowed to go back on the water, even now things are not back to normal, and I am supposed to be keeping the ear dry! And to think I have this to look forward to again on the other ear. I apologise for sounding a whinge bag but I wish to stress the importance of early prevention.

Prevention is simple. Exclude cold water from the ears. A lot of rodeo paddlers, (who are at high risk due to the nature of their game), have adopted the 'Ear Wig', which is a neoprene skull cap worn under the helmet. From experimenting with

various ways of excluding water from my ears, I have found this the most successful, as you do not lose as much hearing as you do with ear plugs. (This is an important consideration for the 'white water coach.') The 'Ear Wig' does not keep your ear completely dry, but importantly it stops the constant 'jetting' in of cold water which causes so much damage.

The question now is how to educate our paddlers? I personally felt a prat at first wearing an 'Ear Wig' under my helmet, which probably stems from taking the mickey out of a friend years ago who wore a neoprene diving hood under his helmet in the winter, & who by the way has no problem with his ears now! I always wear the hood now when playing. Even after the operation the bones start growing back.

'Swimmers ear', is not only used as the common name for extostosis of the ear, but is also used to describe *Otitis Media*. This is an infection of the middle ear. The medical dictionary says: "a probable cause of this is swimming and diving where water and infected secretions are forced up the Eustachian tube into the middle ear."

The Eustachian tube goes from the middle ear i.e. behind the ear drum to the nose. Quite often playing holes and surfing waves results in water 'jetting' up the nose! So, again we are at risk, but yet again there is a prevention; the dreaded 'nose clip', (another item of scorn & derision

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amongst paddlers.)

To add more confusion there is a third condition, also called 'swimmers ear'. Dr. K.W. Kizer, (an American paddler and Dr.), in his article *White Water Medicine*, uses the same name to describe *External Otitis*. This is an infection of the ear canal. He suggests that: "repeated exposure to water macerates the skin and raise the pH to neutral. The reduction of acidity makes the canal a favourable environment for bacteria that can cause external otitis." A prevention he suggests, is the:

"application of a mixture of equal parts of rubbing alcohol and white vinegar, which I put in a squirt bottle or dropper. The alcohol helps dry out the canal and the acetic acid lowers the pH to normal." This is possibly where most paddlers go wrong by drinking the alcohol after paddling.

The B.C.U. in the new 'white water safety course', raises the issue of 'swimmers ear' under 'Long term Health and safety issues.' This goes some way to help raising awareness. I feel the implication for coaches goes beyond raising awareness.

This is where implications for coaches and river leaders come in. Even after being told by Doctors to use ear plugs, I

came up with the excuse that I could not, as I needed to hear my groups on the water. This definitely was just an excuse, as stated earlier, hearing with the 'Ear Wig' is not reduced that much. I also used to think wearing ear plugs affected my balance and therefore my performance. Watching rodeo paddlers wearing 'Ear Wigs' shot that excuse out of the window.

I now feel the implications are more to health and safety of our students. I have briefly outlined two preventative measures for conditions of swimmers ear, the wearing of something to prevent water entering the ear, and /or Eustachian tube. As we have both the knowledge of the conditions, and ways of preventing it, are we as coaches providing a full **Duty of Care?** (The legal obligation to take reasonable care; to avoid causing damage.) In these scary days of litigation, this must be cause for concern.

In the case of coaching adults, it should be enough to advise them of the possible long term affects. This is covered under the *Volenti non fit injuria* clause, which translate from the Latin: "No wrong is done to one who consents," Or in legal speak: "The defence

that the plaintiff consented to the injury or (more usually) to the risk of being injured. Knowledge of the risk of injury is not sufficient; there must also be (even if only by implication) full and free consent to bear the risk. A plaintiff who has assumed the risk of injury has no action if the injury occurs."

Looking back at duty of care, we would not dream of letting an adult on the water in a white water coaching session, who had under volenti chosen not to wear a helmet, so why would this be different to offering them nose clips and ear plugs? The volenti clause does not apply to under 18 year olds, so should we be insisting, when coaching this age group in white water and surf situations, that they "take precautions"!?

I have not set out to provide answers to these questions, I just wish to play devils advocate. I hope I never see the day when one of us is in court being sued by an ex student who has developed 'swimmers ear'.

I do believe we should do more to educate the next generation of paddlers to prevent them contracting a condition that is a result of the sport, and does so much to hinder the enjoyment of "Playing the River!"

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Article supplied  
by *Dave Andrews*,  
Chairman Bath  
Canoe Club

# Bath Pulteney Weir-Petition

**B**ath Canoe club are launching a campaign to get the notorious bath Pulteney Weir made safe. Presently in the centre of the World Heritage site's famous horse weir are three stoppers, caused by the pourover in the centre of the weir. This has already killed one canoeist, and several freelance swimmers. As a result the weir is never used by club members, and so what could be a great training facility is essentially out of bounds.

In conjunction with the BCU's weir committee (i.e Dr George Parr, of Nottingham University, who designed the eponymous white water course) they have devised a simple means of taming it, and want the local council to take action. This would make the weir safer and would create a great training

and fun facility.

Coincidentally plans by the Environment Agency to replace a hideous sluice gate adjacent to the main weir with a simple weir are afoot, and the Agency have agreed in principle to make this as canoe friendly as possible. The Club therefore want to install a canoe slalom/rodeo course behind this weir, which would neatly fit in behind the island, and are therefore looking for lottery/millennium funding.

Please therefore, wherever you are from, copy out the wording of this petition, and get as many people to sign it as possible. If you are a canoe shop please put some in your shop. As you fill up each sheet, copy some more off and send to us. Please keep this going until further notice, as this effort will take several years to reach fruition.

The only objection so far to the plan has been concerns expressed over fish ascending the modified weir. There is interestingly, some doubt that fish can

ascend the weir as it is at present, whereas it is know for certain that fish are ascending the Nottingham course, and therefore the planned slalom course could overcome this difficulty by in fact being the fish pass.

## Petition Wording as follows:

We the undersigned, call upon Bath and North East Somerset Council to **a)** support plans for the elimination of the fatal hydraulic conditions - the 'stopper', existing at the centre of Pulteney weir (which will not affect its appearance), **b)** support investigations into the provision of canoe friendly water falls (rapids) behind the new weirs proposed by the Environment Agency to replace the existing sluices at Pulteney and Locksbrook, **c)** provide up to £5,000 to pay for engineering studies into such matters, **d)** support attempts to obtain lottery or other funding to carry out the necessary engineering works.

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All Proceeds to  
Guide Dogs for  
the Blind  
Association

# Doggy Paddle 13th April 1997

**C**alling all Marathon Clubs, Wild Water Racers, open Boaters, Recreational Paddlers and any Youth Organisations who canoe, we need your support now. Paddle this beautiful scenic route which takes you along the River Avon on this the 9th annual Doggy Paddle to be held on Sunday 13 April. Join the hundreds of canoeists who have previously paddled this 19 miles, at a relaxing pace, or use the event as a good training ground.

Only once a year is this section of river from Leamington Spa to Stratford paddleable, passing beneath Warwick Castle, through various National Trust and deer parks.

Start at Edmundscote Sports Field and finish at Stratford Recreational Ground, a total of 19 miles with weirs (grade1). Recreational start is at 10.00am and the race start is at 12pm. Classes: Race; Adult and Junior. Recreational; Open Singles and Doubles. Kayak, general purpose. Last departure of the shuttle bus will be 5.30pm.

Course outline: At about 10.00am get in above or below the weir at Edmundscote Sports Ground depending on your ability or nerve, then paddle a short distance along the Leam until it enters the Avon.

Continuing on downstream you soon pass under Warwick Bridge which leads the way beneath Warwick Castle to the next weir where the portage is clearly marked on river left.

After a few miles the river flows past Barford Mill where a small shallow rapid runs slowly under the bridge. Ideal for a first coffee stop or early lunch.

Not too long now to the next weir, Hampton Lucy Mill, where there is a portage on the right hand side just

before the Mill.

Soon after you pass through Charlote House, beware the deer gates don't catch you out, a limbo technique could be useful, you will see the large country manor on river left and the joining of the river Deane with a rocky weir at its mouth.

A couple of miles after Charlote Park you will find another weir at Alveston, be careful at this weir, you are close to the finish, if you have stayed dry up to now, you may not wish to chance your luck here!

The river then meanders down towards Stratford Bridge which carries the major A34 across the Avon, immediately downwards is the confluence with the Stratford canal. A short distance further you exit opposite the Stratford Theatre on the left hand bank.

This is the 'sign-off' point and drivers have the opportunity to use the courtesy shuttle bus to return to their cars. Prizes and awards will be given out at the end at around 4.30pm.

However, this run isn't about racing, it isn't about prizes - what it is about is being able to run this section of river and help the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

The race is a fun event with no placings available. There will be a grand prix start at 12 noon with first to sign in at the finish out of each class winning.

There are prizes of canoeing equipment up for grabs donated by Perception.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank 'Doggy Paddle John' for all the hard work he has put into this event over the last eight years: we hope to continue the good work and raise the money for the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. We look for support from

past paddlers and look forward to welcoming new ones.

A few words from The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association: For eight years now the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association has benefited from the proceeds of this annual Doggy Paddle along the Rivers Leam and Avon. This has raised thousands of pounds to help with the breeding, rearing and training of guide dogs. The Association relies entirely on voluntary donations to support it's work of providing nearly 900 guide dogs every year as well as supporting its existing 4,500 Guide Dog Owners and helping visually impaired people generally in a wide variety of different ways.

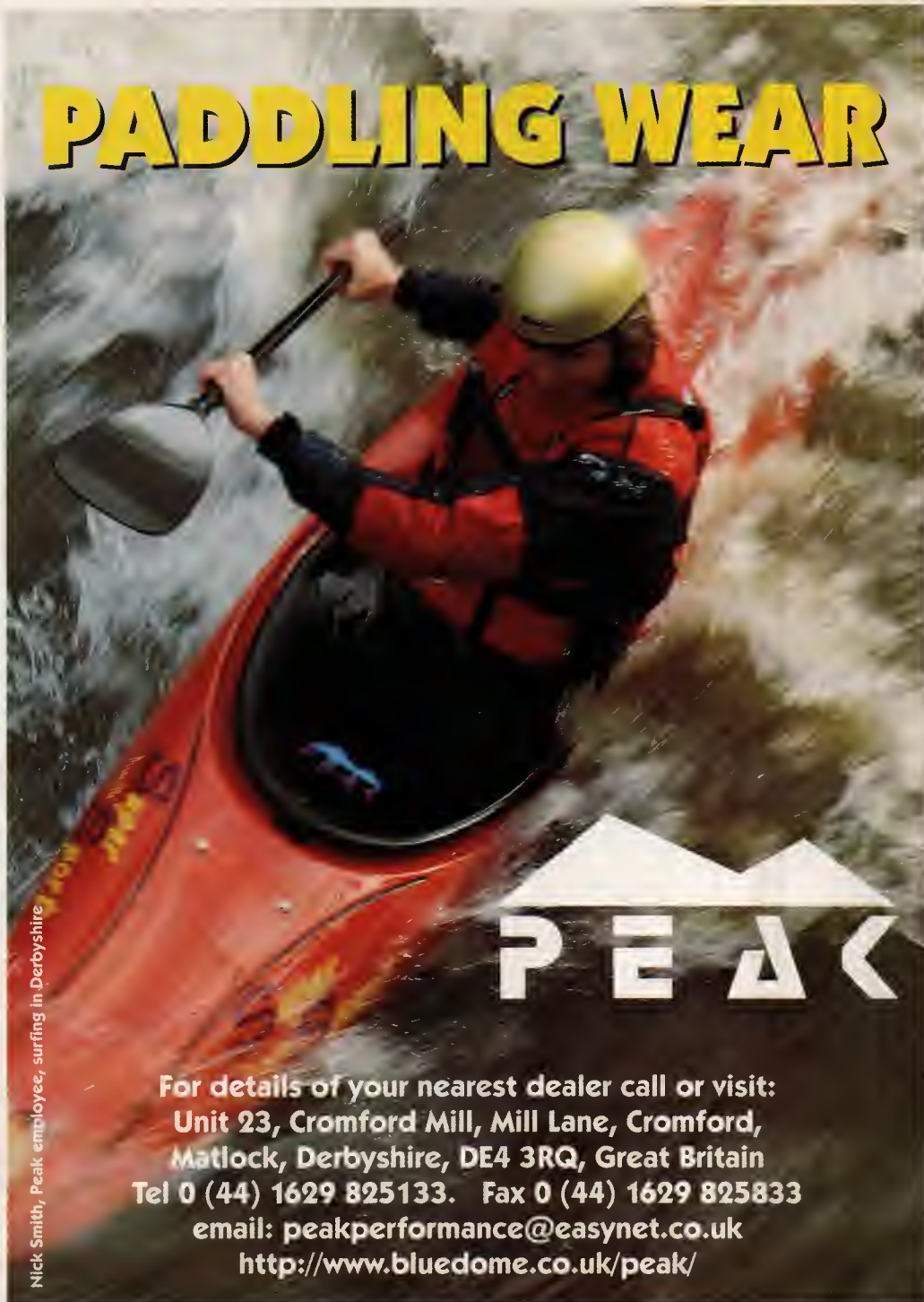
The Association breeds over a thousand puppies every year which are then placed with Puppy Walkers who bring them up in their homes until they are old enough to train. When the young dogs are about twelve months old they go into one of the Association's fifteen training centres for about nine months for professional training. The last four weeks of this is spent with the blind person living in at the centre and having to work with his or her guide dog. Once the dog and owner have completed their training, the Association provides aftercare and support services throughout the life of the guide dog.

The Association also helps visually impaired people in a variety of other ways e.g. by providing rehabilitation services, an activate group and by support researching into the causes and prevention of blindness. We are extremely grateful to all those who have participated in the Doggy paddle in recent years and who have supported out work through their efforts.



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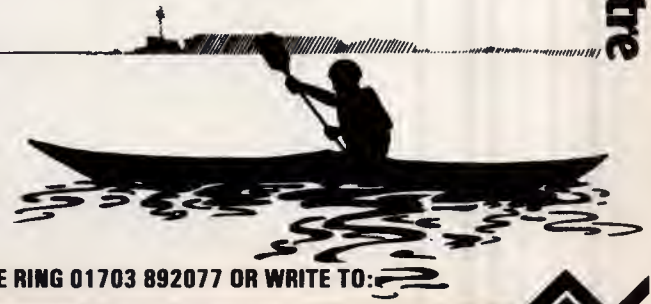
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# Crocodiles

**The Zambezi is Africa's fourth longest River after the Nile, The Zaire (Congo) and the Niger. It encompasses many people's vision of Africa, with links to Livingstone and the great natural wonder of the world, the Victoria Falls.**

Shearwater Adventures, who had us running grade 5 after 5 hours of practice.

### Minimum Support Possible

Justin and I discussed and planned the trip in detail. We had decided to keep the team to 2 early on, mainly to keep the potential for group conflict to a minimum as we were determined to enjoy the trip and to do it with the minimum support possible.

Only having two on a trip goes against safety recommendations laid out in any adventure guide, but we both agreed that we would always take the safe option on the water and as we both had considerable expedition experience we were

confident that, barring a freak accident, we could manage, and so we did.

After driving for 3 days through the centre of Zambia we arrived at the source. We received permission from Chief Ikelenge to walk over his land, and so set off. We had to walk the first 70 kms from the source, which is just a small spring set in a little gully. We both had huge blisters after the first days walking having completed 40kms over tufted grass, bogs and thick woodland we even ran some of it with our packs on our backs as it proved less painful. We eventually got into the kayaks on the third day and had to portage seven times in 15kms, with shallow rapids,

waterfalls and dams set up as fish traps blocking the route.

We finally reached the Angola border where on advice from every one imaginable we got out and drove round. The River travels 200kms through Angola before re-entering Zambia and in the interests of our health we went round. Our life expectancy according to some, had we gone into Angola, was less than a day. Driving down with friends running a recce for

Tongabezi Expeditions, we were dropped at Chavuma, the southern Angola/Zambia border. This was the start of the first main leg of the trip, 700kms to Victoria Falls.

### Magic of the River

It felt great to be on the water and doing what we had been dreaming about and planning for so long. We slept on beautiful sand banks, learnt to identify the woodland and river birds by their appearance and calls. The magic of the river soon took a hold and regardless of the aches and pains brought on by 8 hours paddling a day, we both woke up looking forward to the next day and to what it would bring.

After a week we had a slight hiccup when Justin contracted Malaria. He was laid up for 3 days. Potentially a major problem it proved to be only a short delay at a little fishing camp, called Tiger camp. I fished and sorted out our equipment and Justin sweated it out.

As the journey progressed we learnt

**I**t was with this rather romanticised view of the Zambezi that in 1991 I decided that I would like to kayak from source to sea. However it was not until 1996 that I had the opportunity to make the dream a reality. On the 11 July 1996 Justin Matterson and I set off for the source of the great River in the Northern corner of Western Zambia to raise money for the Leukaemia Research Fund.

I had met Justin a year earlier when he came out to Zimbabwe as my deputy whilst I was leading an expedition for the youth development charity, Raleigh International. He has an impressive record of expeditions throughout the world and seemed to be the obvious partner for the trip. I mentioned it to him and he was very keen having been playing with the idea of canoeing down a river in South America. So the planning started in earnest a year in advance with the ordering and shipping of the canoes to Zimbabwe. We relied heavily on advice from friends working as canoe instructors on the Raleigh expedition, as neither of us had ever canoed anything bigger than grade 2 before. We ended up buying Pyranha mountain 300's for the big white water in the Batoka gorge and Prijon explorers for the flat. These were shipped out courtesy of Raleigh, we ordered all the canoe kit, bought the food, talked to lots of people, organised special insurance and fitted in a little training. In fact we managed about 15 hours training in total and learned the hard way with

Article by

Rupert FitzMaurice

greetings in the local languages and every day would have a number of brief chats with fisherman and people living by the river. They were always punctuated with lots of miming, smiling and laughter. These brief exchanges were a great tonic throughout the trip and often we would meet a family in the middle of nowhere and we would share stories, photographs and cups of tea. It was a feature of every part of the river that the people were welcoming, happy and curious. Because we lived on and beside the river as they did, we had a

waves and had a brilliant 5 days. We swapped back into the Prijons at the end of the gorge and set off up Lake Kariba.

Kariba was a very different experience as we had force 5/6 winds and big waves to deal with for 3 days. We paddled the 250 Km lake in 6.5 days and really enjoyed the dramatic scenery, the Tonga people and seeing the herds of game which spent the day grazing along the shore. It was while on the lake that our food intake started to go up. We ate a huge bowl of porridge each morning, had a tea break soup and noodles

for lunch and about 1lb of rice at night with soya mince. We boiled up the tea and soup each night and it would stay hot enough in our thermoses to avoid cooking in the

day. Our routine was almost exactly the same each day. Up at sunrise (6am) on the water by 7.30, tea at 10am, lunch at 1pm and usually we found a place to camp around 4.30pm. Justin

# & Kayaks

shared experience which in some way broke down any barriers to communication. The cry of 'How far' would often be shouted from the bank we would normally reply with the name of the last or

next major town and they would reply 'ahh but it is too far, eeh'.

## Victoria Falls

We arrived at the Victoria falls after 21 days paddling and on the day we had scheduled. We crossed into Zimbabwe, swapped into the Pyranhas and set off down the gorge. The gorge was a big obstacle for us as we had not run it from the top before and were both very apprehensive. Once we had set off it all went well as we were so much stronger after our three weeks on the water. We found the smaller kayaks so agile and manoeuvrable that we ripped into the



Below:

Local people meet us on the northern Zambia/Angola border





**Above:**

*Local children come over to find out what we are up to.*

**Spectacularly Beautiful**

The river never failed to interest and excite us. From Kariba we paddled to the Mozambique border through Mana Pools National Park. It is spectacularly beautiful. Not only is it a world heritage site but it is also crammed with game. Elephants cross the river into and out of Zambia, Buffalo, Hippo and Waterbuck inhabit the many grassy islands and the variety of birdlife was comparable with anywhere else on the trip. It was a great thrill to take a break on the shore and find elephant feeding off a tree 50 metres away and to drift off to sleep with the sound of Leopard coughing or Lion roaring in the background. On September 8th we cleared immigration at Zumbo and paddled into Mozambique and onto Lake Caboro Bassa, the second man made lake of the trip and Lake Kariba, over 250km long. The first few days were a misery with reed lining the shore and clumps of water hyacinth blocking channels. We found it almost impossible to get onto the shore, so took breaks on the water. Camps were made

would make a fire and I would record the GPS position. The rest of the evening was spent cooking, with about 20 mins put aside to write diaries read or in my case update the taped diary that I produced for the BBC. By 8pm we would be asleep.

within inches of the water as we could not get further in land. This is a practice to be avoided as it makes one very vulnerable to crocodile attacks, which is exactly what happened on day three of our journey on the lake.

We had made an earlier start than usual and set off before sunrise to make the most of the calm water and light winds that pick up during the day. I felt a bump to the back of my kayak, I looked round thinking I had dropped in a trough, onto a submerged tree. The head of a very large croc was a foot from the back of the kayak with its mouth open. It was around 15 ft long and as I tried to think what I could do to protect myself, it slid beneath the surface. We had been warned that a croc in the area had taken 5 people off their dug out canoes and a hunter had told Justin and I that

*Victoria Falls*



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it would have a go at us. We had not believed him! Once I had registered what was going on (I felt as though I was in a film) I yelled at Justin and shot past him. I paddled like mad 600m to the nearest shore. In the next 45 mins I had 3 cigarettes and drank endless cups of tea. I loaded the speargun and strapped a knife to my waist. I rationalised that it was a freak accident and would not happen again. So we set off. I was very nervous and had so much adrenaline still pumping around my body that I shot ahead of Justin.

**Naked Aggression and such Big Crocs**

After 4km I pulled onto a beach for an early breakfast and a rest. As I got out, Justin yelled 'watch out' I turned to see another huge croc 5 metres away with its head at a 45° angle out of the water. It turned and headed for Justin who was whacking the water with his paddle. The croc kept moving towards Justin and finally dipped back into the water and out of sight. We were both nervous at this stage as nowhere else on the trip had we experienced such naked aggression and such big crocs. We had both spent a lot of time in the bush and on rivers in Africa and had never seen anything like it before. The croc patrolled off the beach for 5 hours waiting for us to go. We eventually portaged around to another beach and set off from there. The rest of the trip on the lake

was uneventful and it became more beautiful and canoe friendly as we moved up it.

We arrived at the dam at Songo where we met a missionary and French charity worker who, between them, arranged for a group of scouts to help us carry the canoes for three hours down into the gorge on the far side of the dam. This was an interesting leg as a few people said the stretch to Tete was unrunnable. Only one person had attempted it and he had come out 4 times and had sent his kayak through rapids while he clambered round. The river rose 12 feet in under an hour as they opened the gates in the dam. It created huge whirlpools and boils. We both survived having been part sucked under a number of times. On arrival in Tete we had to sort out extensions to our visas which took two days, so we sampled a few local ales before moving on.

**Memorable for Many Reasons**

The rest of the journey was memorable for many reasons, the great people we met living



Above: Barotse Plain, Zambia

by the river, the exceptional birdlife and most notably the scars of war. The villages and towns which looked idyllic from a distance transformed as we approached into crumbling, bullet ridden buildings, all falling down, scarred by fire and left to disintegrate further. As we approached the sea we both felt conflicting emotions. Our life of three months was about to finish, we would be leaving the river and all it had come to mean to us. There is a quality of life and a rhythm to it that cannot be recaptured and when we finally reached the sea we greeted it with big grins but also in silence. We reached the Indian Ocean on the 4th October having had the trip of a lifetime and having both realised a long held dream.

An advertisement for Phoenix of Nottingham kayaking equipment. The main image is a close-up of a red kayak with the text 'PHOENIX OF NOTTINGHAM' printed on it. To the right, a list of activities is shown: Recreation, Rodeo, Slalom, Surf, Polo, Sprint, Marathon, Sea Kayaking, and Touring. At the bottom left, the telephone number 'Telephone 0115 9816 815' is displayed.

All books and videos reviewed here are available from BCU Supplies unless otherwise stated. Ring 0116 283 0659 and ask for a brochure if you have not received one in your Focus mailing. Please note that all books and videos reviewed in this magazine are the personal opinion of the reviewer, not necessarily that of the BCU.

All reviews by Wendy Blackman

**New Zealand White Water - 100 Great Kayaking Runs**

Written by Graham Charles, published by Craig Potton Publishing. Available in the near future from BCU Supplies. ISBN 0-908802-36-6

This book covers moderate to hair-raising trips for kayaks.



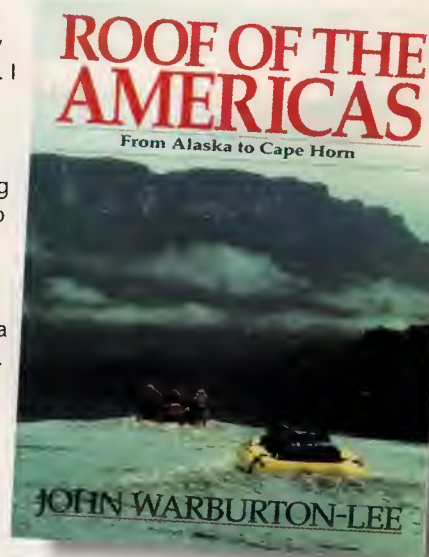
Information is provided on grades, access, shuttle distances and much more. Each river covered has a small information box for easy reference. The author includes many anecdotes and top tips, some sensible, such as "always be looking ahead and scouting for trees across the

river" and some humorous, such as, "Sandflies bite your bum when nude sunbathing" all stuff you need to know! An excellent book, highly recommended to anyone planning a trip to NZ.

**Roof of the Americas**

Written by John Warburton-Lee, published by Swan Hill Press £19.95. ISBN 1-85310-522-8.

Covers an expedition from Alaska to Cape Horn. A military expedition featuring trekking 2,000 miles, using amongst other things dog sleds, mountaineering, and tackling 225 miles of wild water by kayak on the Colorado River, to trailing through dense jungle in Guyana. This book contains spectacular photography, all shots being taken by the author. A very informative report of the expedition, but written in a very military manner. I feel that this book would be excellent for anyone planning an expedition to the Americas, but for entertainment value I found it a bit heavy going. I felt I should be standing to attention throughout. The photography is definitely worth looking at.



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### Canoe Slalom 1996

Available from Kycan Video Productions, 19 Millhouse Lane, Croft, Warrington Tel: 01925 764818. 1 hour duration.

This video features highlights from the 1996 canoe slalom season, from Olympic selection and premier division events. It started very slowly at Grandtully at a very low river level, and goes through events at Teesside and the Tryweryn. I did not feel that the camera work in this video was



particularly good, often a long way from the action. It got better towards the end, probably because in the Tryweryn coverage the camera got closer to the action and the water was bigger, showing the slalom skills more to an advantage. To be honest I've seen better.

### Wild Water Rodeo

Also from Kycan Video Productions. 30 mins duration.

Features film from the Jose Cuervo Wild Water Rodeo series events in 1996, filmed at Nottingham and Teesside. This time the camera work was too close to the action and most of the time you had excellent shots of the paddlers body and smiling face, but you couldn't see what the boat was doing, which is essential in any Rodeo coverage. It also suffered



from a lack of decent lively music. I'm afraid I don't feel that either of the videos did justice to two very exciting and vibrant sports. But that's my opinion. Make up your own mind.



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**It was a cool and grey morning so launching was not an inviting prospect. This could not possibly detract, however, from the grandeur of the Geneva skyline, complete with its giant fountain, when seen across the clear waters of the lake.**

However, I fell thankfully into a rhythm and the distance began to slip away, little by little, under my hull. I found myself passing a succession of large palatial residences with signs prohibiting landing and warning of the presence of packs of dogs. All of these properties had immaculately maintained grounds, but the houses were closed up and sat brooding in tightly-shuttered silence. The whole area seemed to be in hibernation, but it had an ominous atmosphere and so I decided to keep a discrete distance out from the bank! Arriving at a narrow strip of

Although the sun remained hidden, it had now become warm and I was dehydrating rapidly. I landed at a spot where a small road reached the lake. I now found myself in a different country; although both ends and the North side of the lake are Swiss, most of the Southern shore is part of France. The frontier had been imperceptible from the water, but I had now crossed it and the atmosphere had completely changed. Here there was free access to a shingle beach and I sat with a lemonade on the terrace of a cafe and watched two French families who were trying to teach each other how to sail using an old windsurfer and a small boat.

**Delightful Mediaeval Villages**

After a break, I found that I was quickly able to reach the elusive promontory. It turned out to be perfectly normal; it was just visible from a long way off! Soon afterwards, I came to two delightful mediaeval villages. These had, of course, been carefully manicured and stage-managed for the tourist trade, but they were beautiful nonetheless. Even the throng of people in the narrow streets and the modern sail cruisers in the old fishing harbours could not spoil the aspect of these delightful places when seen from the lake, with the ancient brown stonework reflected in the rippling clear water

I entered the widest area of the lake and the water stretched away into the distance as an endless-seeming sheet of undulating silver. For now, however, I turned to the South, into the start of a giant bay and towards our campsite where Jeannie was waiting. I encountered a headwind during the final couple of kilometres and I arrived exhausted at the end of the first day.

We were awoken by rain hammering against

the walls of our tent and realised that conditions had turned stormy. Bad weather continued into the next day and, since Lake Geneva is large enough to become very rough at times of storm, it was clear that continuing was unwise. Day two became officially designated as a rest day and we used the spare time to scout ahead for meeting and pick-up points for the remaining two thirds of the journey.

The following morning dawned bright and the lake had regained its long slow wavelets and its glassy shine. This was a relief, as the next leg began with an open crossing of a wide bay to a distant forested



I gazed down the long expanse towards the horizon and my objective, Villeneuve, 100 or so kilometres to the East. I entered the harbour and noticed a significant current at the point where the water funnels into the River Rhone to leave the lake. I tried to paddle under the famous fountain, but I found that I was prevented from doing so by a gale force downdraft. I could, though, penetrate far enough to get totally drenched by the falling spray! I landed at the jetty outside the Grand Casino and, unnoticed amongst the luxury yachts, I took some photographs to mark the true start of my journey.

**Semi-joke**

The idea of a sponsored paddle along the length of Lake Geneva had started as a semi-joke during a discussion of fund raising possibilities at Hornsea Outdoor Centre, but I had somehow ended up by talking myself into actually attempting it! I was paddling alone, but with my wife Jeannie in support by road. We had decided to work from one centrally located campsite and to avoid excessive confusion over pick-up points and timings by only meeting once, or at the most twice, each day. I was thus likely to be afloat for long hours alone with my own thoughts, but after a busy and demanding year this was not an unwelcome prospect!

**Article by  
Jerry Tracey**

The first couple of kilometres seemed long and hard.

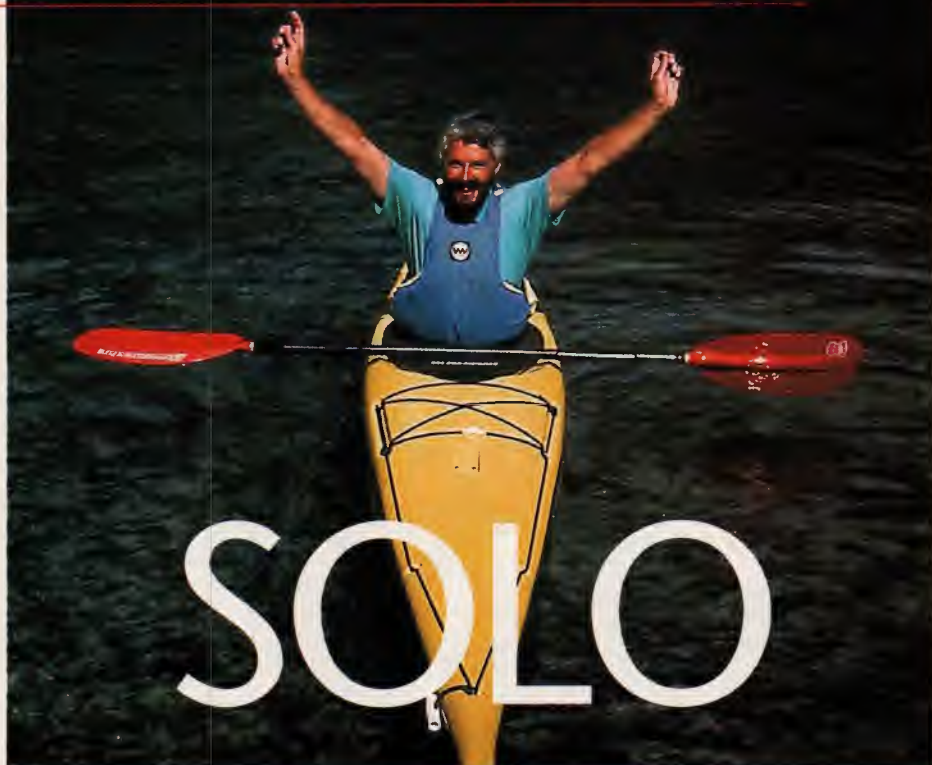
public park sandwiched in amongst the succession of mansions I went ashore for a rest and a mouthful of thermos coffee. When I moved on, the curve of the shore caused Geneva to drop from sight behind me. On the horizon there was now a long promontory with a distinctive clump of poplar trees at its end. This looked very easy to reach. An hour later, however, it was still there, lurking on the skyline and I had become convinced that it was moving away into the distance so as to always keep a stretch of water in front of me.



Top:  
The way ahead  
Above:  
Montreux  
Below:  
The end



# Lake Geneva: End to End



headland. The crossing passed remarkably quickly and easily. A helpful factor was the presence now of stunning mountain scenery ahead of me and to my right. I passed the attractive town of Thonon-les-Bains, which could be seen in the distance climbing up amongst the trees of a long hillside.

I landed at an isolated shingle beach for a rest and drank the whole of one of my reserve bottles of mineral water in one go!

At length, I was ready to move on. My route now involved closely hugging the French bank, although I moved a little further out when I encountered a nudist beach! I passed the mouth of the River Dranse and then I began to meet dinghies and pedal boats as I came into Amphion-les-Bains.

Next came the long classic resort area of Evian-les-Bains. I passed grand hotels and luxury yachts, but there were also many groups of people having fun in and around the water. Everyone whom I met was very friendly, but I thought that my ability to communicate in French had suddenly deserted me at a small waterside bar, until I realised that I was in fact trying to converse with a German!

## Conversation turned to Rugby

Beyond the Evian area, the shoreline became very

attractive as forested mountain slopes drew in close to the lake. I was beginning to tire by the time that I reached the village of Meillerie; paddling onward had now become a chore and I was glad that this was our agreed meeting point for the finish of the day. As I glided into the small haven, I was greeted by two raucous Frenchmen who were working their way through a series of bottles that they had lined up on the harbour wall. As soon as they discovered that I was English, the conversation turned to Rugby and it was only after a considerable time and several drinks that Jeannie and I could tear ourselves away!

The following morning conditions again appeared settled; although there was an early chill, it felt like a day that would become hot and bright. In view of the quiet state of the lake, I now decided on a bold move; a diagonal crossing to Vevey on the Swiss side would significantly shorten the final stage of the trip and would also allow me to visit Montreux. This would give a nice sense of completion to the journey, but it would involve a solo open crossing of at least 15 kilometres.

Once clear of the French shore, I encountered a slight breeze and a gentle swell, but there was nothing to cause serious problems, apart from a strong sense of exposure and

isolation. I was amazed when I looked back from somewhere in the middle part of the lake; Meillerie had now been reduced to a cluster of tiny dots which clung to the foot of an impressive mountain that loomed high above the water. The crossing continued smoothly, apart from an eerie feeling of being lost and adrift totally alone in the midst of an immensity of open space. At length, individual houses on the Vevey waterfront became visible, but they now seemed to take an eternity to finally come within reach. Then, just when I had become resigned to having to keep up rhythmic paddling forever, I found myself, almost suddenly, floating in gently lapping waves a few yards off the Swiss shore.

I had arrived, landing proved to be something of a problem, since, in contrast to the French side, there did not appear to be any areas of public beach. Eventually I managed to land at a lakeside park behind a yacht harbour and I sat for ages on a bench in welcome shade, eating, drinking and resting. I now noticed another difference from the coast that I had left. I had grown used to constant interest all along the French bank and I had become quite accustomed to dealing with questions and friendly banter from those whom I met or passed; here, however, everyone just went on quietly going about their business and behaved as if I was totally invisible. I had been half expecting some official interest and I was carrying my passport as a precaution, but this type of attention was also absent. This complete lack of reaction to my arrival alone directly from France by kayak was, I have to admit, something of an anti-climax!

I moved onward, this time with land on my left as I headed to the East along the Swiss shore, past scenes of idyllic marina living which could have come from a colour supplement, or even a James Bond film! The well-known Riviera-style skyline of Montreux came into view as I rounded a promontory. Bells from several hillside churches were ringing out over the bay as I glided across, which gave me a nice sense of arrival.

## Ancient Stone Fortress

My journey was nearly complete now I made a final halt at Chateau Chillon, an ancient stone fortress built right at the water's edge on a rocky outcrop beneath the mountains.

At last, I was there at Villeneuve and I had paddled from one end of Lake Geneva to the other.

Travelling by kayak on this very large lake was an interesting experience. It felt like a strange mix between inland and sea canoeing and it was adventurous in a different way to a journey in a wilderness area. Despite the presence of a large population around its shores, the lake remains pristine and sparkling and a visit to it is recommended. Throughout the whole distance, I did not encounter a single instance of pollution, not even oil from boats or floating litter; this reflects great credit on the French and Swiss authorities and on all of the people who live and work along the shoreline.

With the Lake Geneva project now concluded, Jeannie and I went on holiday in Central Switzerland. Some more paddling was involved, together this time on a beautiful turquoise lake high in the mountains; that, however, is a different story!



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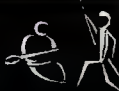
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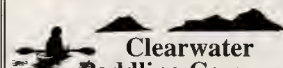
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# 1996 Cape Farewell Expedition

A change in the rotor blade tempo and the helicopter vibrated into a stationary 100 metres above Nanortalik's heliport. From the helicopters windows we could see small bergy bits in the bay, carcasses of seals by the shore-side market and our crate which contained the two double 'Aleut' sea kayaks.

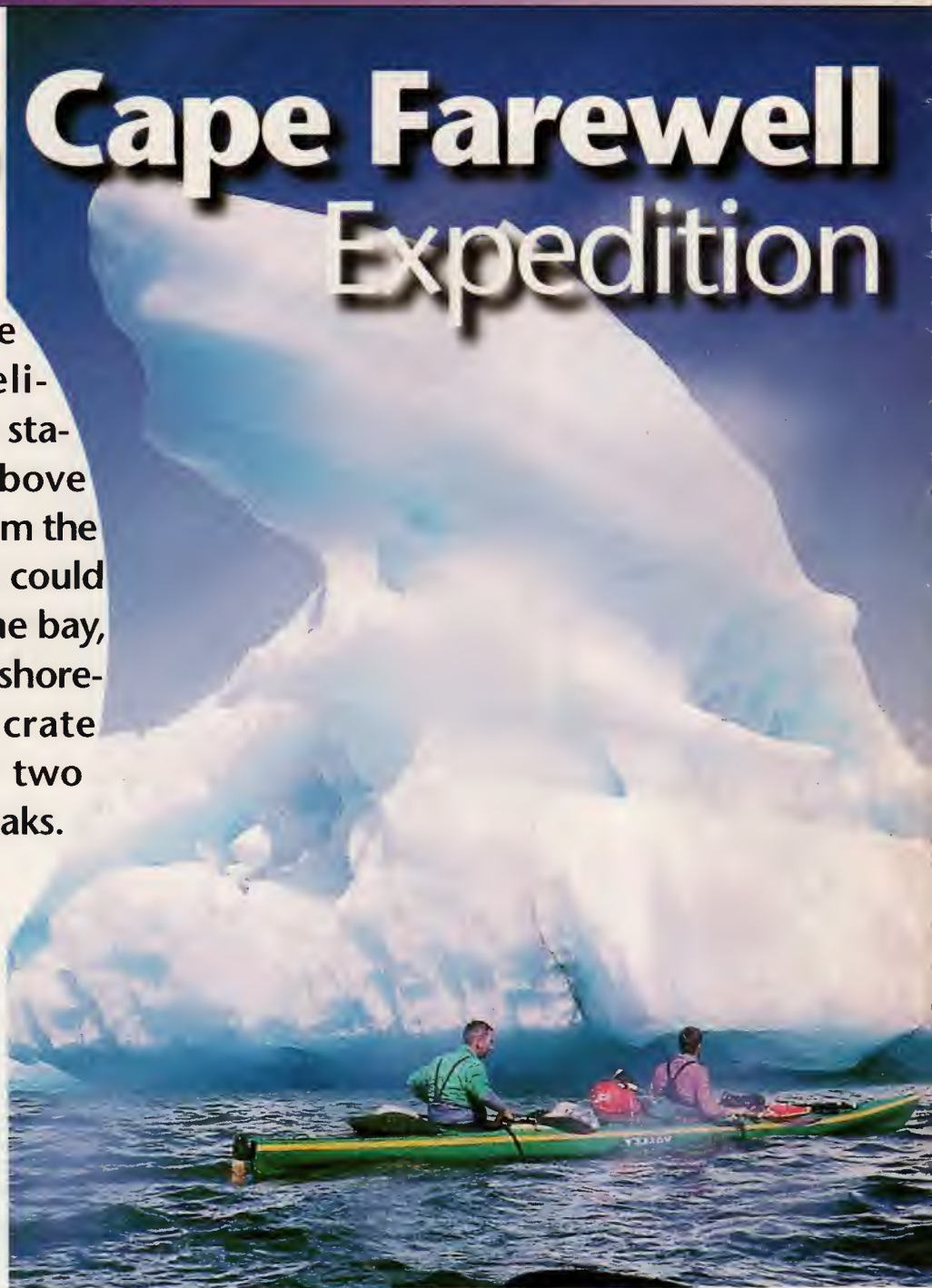
**I**t was perched on top of a container on the jetty and there was damage to two of the sides and some of the wooden planks had caved in. Seeing the damaged crate which we had so carefully packed three months ago caused some anxiety, feelings of excitement and trepidation greeted us in Nanortalik, South East Greenland. This was to be the start of our sea kayaking journey.

But it was far from the start of the expedition. It was three years ago, whilst sailing in this area that the 1996 Cape Farewell sea kayak expedition was conceived. Like any expedition, the start often produces a range of feelings, and returning to Greenland found me smiling inwardly with excitement, as we too attempted to paddle around Cape Farewell (the "Cape Horn of the North" or "Hells corner" as the Americans in world war 2 called this area) in double sea kayaks.

The flight from Glasgow via Iceland was smooth and uneventful, however the first time all expedition members had come together and some planning issues were still being resolved as we boarded the flight.

Flying into Greenland is breathtaking, a coastline littered with icebergs, bergy bits and debris from colliding ice. The background is equally awesome, jagged towering peaks some of which are snow covered marking the edge of the icecap; the white blanket which covers the interior of Greenland. As we paddled from Nanortalik on the last day of June, we had already witnessed the village manhauling a fin whale up rocky slabs and dissecting it. It was like going to a butchers and witnessing a party or feast as local children chewed pieces of skin/blubber, a delicacy called mattak. Crossing the bay we could hear occasional gunshot and the hum of outboard engines as local seal hunters sped past in their aluminium hulled boats.

For the first seven days we paddled along a coastline with colossal mountain peaks reaching straight out of the sea and barren rock



archipelagos dotted with icebergs and smaller bergy bits which shine with sporadic glitter even when the weather was overcast.

### More Like A Cannon

It takes time to get into the routine of camping/travelling and we had the added demands of trying to interpret the local weather conditions and coming to terms with carrying hired Winchester rifle. Our gun dated back to WW1 and was more like a cannon... 'I think we were more afraid of the gun than of the thought of meeting a polar bear, initially'.

As we rounded headlands and moved closer to Cape Farewell, the weather became more hostile, and the opportunities to land diminished. Local land/sea effects combined with the icecap's presence, strengthened the wind considerably, especially in the afternoons. On one occasion a simple two mile paddle to collect water turned into an epic as wind gusting down mountain slopes actually

lifted water from the seas surface. We were to afraid to gain shelter behind grounded bergs, and the sea was alive with tumbling, growling pieces of ice. It took us nearly three hours due to the wind conditions and difficulty of trying to land on a steep rocky shoreline with a confused swell.

The damaged crate which had allowed water to enter and ruin some of our dehydrated food, focused our attention on the four day menu which had to be doctored. By day eight we had a clear picture of our vitals and we were adding more chilli and curry powder every time...if only we had more garlic!

Nicknames emerged, banter developed and confidence grew as

we became aware of individual paddling habits, campcraft skills and boat handling characteristics. Although both rudder stocks were broken as we misjudged turning circles, using cable ties and heated needles we were able to repair them fully. The only other technical problems came with the Palm Goretex Drysuits





and Coleman Stoves. The latter gave us problems partially due to contaminated fuel, and a sticky control valve, however the drysuits, which were fantastic and worth the investment, were effected by powerful UV effect and two of the neck seals perished. Although repairable at the time we all thought that the heaviest duty neckseal would be valuable next time.

Rounding Cape Farewell was truly amazing, and like many sea kayaking trips when you most want photographic records, you least want to take your hands off the paddle. After four hours of paddling on ice littered seas with toilet desires high, there was nowhere to land, so a rafted urinal was constructed. There is nothing more off-putting than trying to urinate whilst being watched by three people in close proximity. Laughter does not help either and the promise of no photographs was not upheld by everyone... there is nothing like friendly blackmail.

Nine hours later we landed at a fly infested camping spot, and we celebrated with Whiskey, Port and fruit cake. We also knew that this was the East coast now and the likelihood of meeting polar bears would increase as we headed in a North-easterly direction.

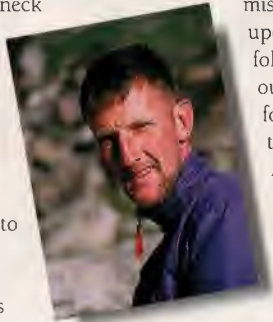
Threading our way up the South East part of the Cape Farewell region was simply fantastic. Rocky spires everywhere, green oasis's wherever streams crossed a relatively flat area, and seals and whales surfaced in the distance. We weaved our way through inlets, narrow fjords and ice strewn coastline towards the Eastern entrance to Price Christian Sound, aiming for the radio station which was so hospitable in 1993 when Tom and I sailed here. We weren't to be disappointed and we spent two great days showering, eating fresh food and sharing stories about Greenland with the base crew, Danish geologists and visiting yacht crews. One of the crew had just received a plastic Skerrey and wanted some instruction and how to Eskimo roll, so we obliged, and within 45 minutes in less than warm sea temperatures we had success. There is nothing like cold water focusing the mind!

## Amazing Fjord System

Without any real hold ups due to weather we paddled along this amazing fjord system stopping at some of the most fantastic camping spots imaginable. With giant rock faces, sweeping glaciers and a beach seemingly designed for peaceful walks, reflection and 'boule', we were obliged not to rush by. With replenished chocolate supplies thanks to the radio stations generosity we decided to explore this area further instead of rushing to the village of 'Augpilotok'. We spent the next four days paddling North up fjords which had multiple glaciers feeding directly into the sea. Ice would carve off at regular intervals, and we would often hear a rumbling, crashing roar before seeing where the next avalanche would occur. Needless to say, we kept a safe distance from icefalls and tried to observe a general rule using iceberg height as a measure of safe distance to approach. After witnessing a small iceberg roll and obliterate a beach which we had contemplated as a launch spot, caution and ice knowledge continued to guide us.

Augpilotok, and our emergency food bag which we had been robbed gave us an immediate dislike of our return to civilisation and a desire to

return to the sanctuary of the hostile landscape. When we finally found out what had happened to the half eaten bag, we were relieved. A group of stranded Slovakian climbers were mistakenly given our food bag, and upon realising the mistake the following day, the courier retrieved our bag and left it in the post office for us. The climbers must have thought it was Christmas! Augpilotok was also the place where we finally met the Greenlandic paddlers who had paddled down the West coast for 2000 miles collecting stories and knowledge from Inuit hunters.



We paddled out early one morning unaware that they had just retreated from Cape Farewell. We were to spend a great day with them later in the Nanortalik sharing amazing stories about traditional kayak hunting and eating local Inuit food. Eating dried fish, seal and whale as well as dried seal intestine is not an easy task for a vegetarian!

## Twelve fin whales

Paddling back towards Nanortalik was a time to reflect and rounding the headland towards Nanortalik four days later with only five miles to go we had a welcome party! Twelve fin whales surfaced all around the kayaks and for 30 minutes we paddled within five metres of these beautiful creatures. It was like the icing on the



cake and we could not have wished for a more perfect ending to the trip... little did we know what was to follow!

Arriving back we met the greenlanders who paddled within five kilometres of Cape Farewell before retreating to Augpilotok. After debating what to do with the remaining six days, we spent the next day being hosted by these three female paddlers and trying out each others kayaks and sharing our experiences on a kayak trip to an old settlement and neighbouring islands.

## HC Peterson

We paddled for the next three days in order to experience Greenlands thermal spring (it's not a pretty site watching four semi naked English paddlers running across the tundra to jump into a luke warm pool). This was followed by a twelve hour ferry journey to Qatortok, to meet the famous kayakist and historian, HC Peterson and members of the local kayak club. Its hard to put into words their understanding, knowledge and kayak experience, sufficient to say watching an eighteen year old demonstrate thirty different types of kayak role, one of which with his arms crossed...it was fantastic,

truly amazing.

As ever, we left already trying to savour the feelings and experiences by talking about past highlights, current excitements and future expeditions. We were longing for our home comforts, friends and loved ones and yet already missing the tranquillity of paddling in one of the most beautiful places in the world.

Many expeditions occur not just because of peoples desires, but thanks to the support of many. The expedition is certainly one of those. Whether the patience of partners or the ability of companies to respond and discuss our problems and suggest ways to assist, they have all helped and we are indebted to those who have contributed in kind and support.



**Thank you**  
**British Canoe Union,**  
**Winston Churchill Foundation,**  
**Gino Watkins Trust,**  
**Palm International, Stagecraft, Tagent Expeditions Ltd, Valley Canoe Products.**

## Expedition Members

**Keith Ball**  
**Mike Bartle - author of this article:**  
**John Driver - photographer:**  
**Tom Turner**

# Six Canoeists

On the 17th February this year six canoeists from Bradford & Ilkley Community College, set off on a 200 mile canoe trip from The Bridge Inn, in Silsden in West Yorkshire, to Birmingham in time to be at the canoe exhibition at the NEC on 22 February.

In November of 1996 a poster advertising the BCUs 1997 International Canoe Exhibition, inspired Alain Cook and myself to organise a canoe expedition from West Yorkshire down to the NEC in Birmingham where it was going to be held.

After checking that it would be possible to paddle continuously from W Yorkshire to Birmingham using the inland waterways, we then went to organise the event.

The group was broken down into three

## The team

**Darren Edmondson, Alain Cook, David Keane, Mark Leyland, Robbie Taylor, Matt Livingstone, Lynne Chapman; the driver) would like to thank: The BCU, YAK, Mobile Adventure, Practical car and van hire, JET petrol, NEC, The Lord Mayor of Bradford, The Lord Mayor and Mayoress of Solihull, Ilkley College Student Union, Neil Jones (the one with the broken hand), family members of the team who kindly fed, watered and accommodated the team and friends and family who all supported us.**

Article by  
Darren Edmondson

teams of two paddlers, and we were to cover the distance in a relay style. Mobile Adventure, in Leicester kindly provided us with two open canoes along

# Paddle To Birmingham For Charity

with the paddles and the trolleys. We also had YAK providing us with buoyancy aids and cags.

We were hoping to raise £1000 for two charities which are Marie Curie Cancer Care and ASBAH (Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus).

To gain as much publicity as possible was to our advantage. Although we did not have as much interest as we hoped we did manage to have articles printed in five different newspapers and a radio interview from West Midlands radio station.

It was also arranged for the Lord Mayor of Bradford to send us on our way, and for the Lord Mayor and Mayoress of Solihull to greet us at the NEC at the end of our journey, along with other local newspapers, the BCU, YAK and other supporters of the team.

The week before the event was tense, but morale was high and the team was looking forward to an adventurous and enjoyable week. The first set back of the trip was when a team member unfortunately broke his hand the day before we were due to leave, fortunately a replacement was found, who was quickly briefed and then ready to go.

## Day one

The first team were waved off by the Lord Mayor of Bradford from Silsden in West Yorkshire who

were due to do the first fourteen miles of the journey. The day was going well for the team until the weather changed for the worse when the second team took over. This was our first experience of extreme weather conditions, the main problem being the strong head winds adding time to our journey. The day came to an end at 2300 hours, 3 hours later than estimated and 3 miles behind schedule. This was not a perfect first day.

## Day two

We had a late start due to technical difficulties with our alarm clocks! We were tired but enthusiastic and hoping for a better day. We did not get this, the wind was still the main problem for us to such a degree that it was impossible to paddle, which resulted in us having to use the tow paths with the canoe on a trolley, which added even more time to the trip.

## Day three

The day started on the outskirts of Stoke, but first we had to find the missing wheel which had fallen off one of the trolleys the night before! The weather had thankfully improved which meant a better day. We managed to make the day more interesting by paddling down the River Trent instead of the canal. This made it possible to make up the lost three miles from the first day due to assisting current flow of the river.

## Day four

A good days paddle after a late start due to parking difficulties with the minibus! The weather was fine and everyone was in good spirit except for aching muscles.

## Day five

An excellent day had by all with time even to spare for a well deserved trip to the pub. We arrived in Birmingham at 1700 hours; the end of our journey. We were all looking forward to a nights entertainment to celebrate our achievement.

## Day six

The Lord Mayor and Mayoress of Solihull were at the NEC to greet us and congratulate us on our achievement along with representatives from the media, the BCU and YAK. Following this we spent the rest of the afternoon walking around the exhibition.

Overall, reflecting back on the weeks events the whole team worked well together to achieve our goal in raising money for the two charities. The trip was an adventure for all and a great success for a worthy cause. It has not only given us a sense of fulfilment but has inspired to go on to greater things.



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