

October

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Issue 109 October 1997

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Japanese White Water
Rafting.
Picture: Colin Hill

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Your contributions make Focus happen. The quality and variety of news, articles, reports and photographs depend on the submission of material from you. Very few contributors are professional writers and photographers. Please don't be put off writing because you have no experience! Canoe Focus is all about canoeist to canoeist dialogue: a paddler's magazine written by paddlers. PC Technical Information. Contributions are acceptable in clear handwriting or typed (double spaced), PC (3.5 or 5.25) disks can be read from most Word Processing programmes especially if saved as an ASCII file. Transparencies (colour slide). Artwork and line drawings should be clear and large. All material is accepted on the understanding that the BCU and it's agents cannot be held liable or responsible for loss or damage, although every care and effort is taken to safeguard material. Next Copy date is the 20th OCTOBER 1997. Material arriving at FOCUS after this date cannot be included in the December issue.

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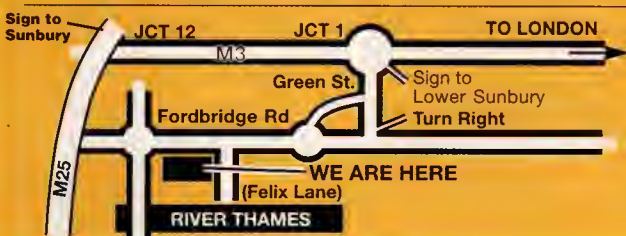
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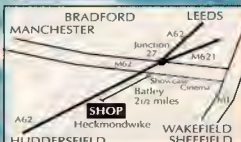
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Olympic Slalom Sydney 2000

The good, no, great news is that Canoe Slalom is back in the Olympic Programme for Sydney 2000. Following a period of intense negotiations the ICF team led by five times World Canoe Slalom Champion Richard Fox achieved what was beginning to look like the impossible dream. Richard has devoted the last year to working on the reinstatement of the discipline. He has travelled the World lobbying Olympic Officials. The announcement was made by the International Olympic Committee and the go ahead has been given to build an artificial city centre slalom course costing \$6 million.

Di Lawler who has been the leading organiser of all the Sprint Racing Regattas at Holme Pierrepont during the past sixteen years has called it a day. Although Di retires from regatta organisation I am sure that she will remain an active member of the flatwater racing community. Thanks Di.

BCU Development Plan 1997 - 2001

The British Canoe Union Development Plan 1997 - 2001 has been completed and is with the UK and English Sports Councils. The plan is ambitious yet achievable and once funding has been agreed it is intended to road show the development plan throughout the country. The plan will be formally launched at the Paddlefest meeting in November see below:

Paddlefest November 1st & 2nd

Preparations for the paddlefest are in place and the weekend will be the first of many such 'active' gatherings. The objective of the weekend is to bring together as many paddlers as possible, with a wide range of paddling interests, so as to create a fun multi-discipline event, featuring elements of competition and coaching as well as 'have a go' sessions, there will be a trade show, presentations and lectures and even a car boot sale opportunity. Full details in this Canoe Focus.

BCU Membership Package

The new membership rates that will apply from 1 November 1997 have been kept in line with inflation and are as follows:

Comprehensive	
Life	£418.00
Adult (full)	£ 28.00
Under 18 (Youth)	£ 16.50
Additional Family members	£ 15.50
Basic	
Adult	£ 17.00
Under 18	£ 10.50
Family	£ 9.25

Congratulations

Britain's Marathon Canoeists had a brilliant World Cup Finals in Copenhagen. Three Gold medals, a silver and a bronze gave the Great Britain team top position in the medal table. With reigning C2 World Champions Steve and Andrew Train being joined on the winners rostrum by Sonja Bapty and Tricia Davey Ladies K2 and Anna Hemmings Ladies K1. Ivan Lawler and Steve Harris were beaten into second place in the mens K2 by eighteen inches, the smallest of margins and Tim Brabants took the Bronze medal in the Mens K1 competition.

It was a double success for Steve and Andrew Train as earlier in the week they had competed in the Sprint Racing World Championships in Canada where they achieved the Bronze medal in the Olympic category of C2 1000m.

At the time of writing although not of reading! The Canoe Slalom team are preparing to depart for the World Championships in Brazil and the Canoe Polo team for their European Championships in Germany. Their results will follow in a future edition of Canoe Focus.

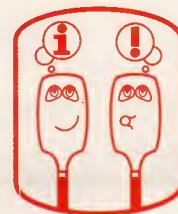
Canoe exhibition 1998

The 1998 International Canoe Exhibition will be held at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham during the weekend of 21st/22nd February coinciding with the final weekend of the National, Boat, Caravan and Leisure show.

Naturally, we are keen to encourage more individual canoeists to attend and I am pleased to say that with encouragement and support of the National Boat, Caravan and Leisure show we plan to utilize the lake at the NEC. An event open to anyone on the day is being planned and it is anticipated that considerable cash prizes will be available for a timed competition - further details available in a future edition of Canoe Focus

A Very Big Thank You

Long serving Slalom Development Officer Sue Wharton retires from her current post in November. Sue, your contribution has been immense and you will be a hard act to follow. All the best for the future and thank you.



Paul Owen
Chief Executive

Late News

The Junior Slalom team have just returned from the Junior European Championships in Poland. Congratulations to Laura Blakeman Gold Medal and the Junior Men's K1 team - Gold Medal. Tom Patterson, Alan Cardy and James Hounslow.



National Coaching Foundation

John Stevens has been appointed as the Chief Executive of the National Coaching Foundation. Previously Assistant Director (Education, Leisure and Libraries) for the East Riding of Yorkshire Council he will take up his post this month.

Hearing Dogs for the Deaf

John Bull has written to thank all those who helped raise £1100 for the Hearing Dogs for the Deaf, by sponsoring in the London Marathon.

Danger Warning - High Speed Catamaran

Further to the notice in the August edition of Canoe Focus, Pat Ramsey, Chairman of BCU - Suffolk has given this update...The information included in the August edition had been issued by the Harwich Haven Authority. This information was most relevant to other largish vessels using the same shipping lanes, so I would like to draw attention to further facts and serious development.

Firstly, people unfamiliar with shipping routes for the ports of Harwich and Felixstowe, which operate from opposite banks at the mouth of the Stour, could be under the impression that vessels leaving the ports head straight out across the North Sea. Due to the numerous large sandbanks the shipping lanes actually follow the coastline northwards for a number of miles and do not head towards Europe until they reach Sole Bay, near Southwold. Shipping can be clearly seen from the beaches.

Secondly, from the article it would seem that providing other vessels did not cross astern closer than 250 metres all would be well. This is most definitely not the case. The 'Stena Discovery' is producing very, very large wash waves which are causing very significant surges of water onto the beaches

alongside the shipping lanes. Holiday makers, especially children playing at the water's edge have been knocked over and possessions swept into the sea. The inshore fishermen at Aldeburgh have repeatedly experienced dangerous sea conditions caused by these wash waves. The worst incident happened on the 14 August when, in flat calm conditions, a wave of some twelve feet was reported. A mother interviewed on local radio who saw this wall of water heading towards her two children, described how she grabbed them and ran up the beach at Felixstowe, only to turn and see her belongings, previously some distance from the water, afloat. The significance for canoeists on the sea is obvious, and very worrying, as this is an area where many try paddling on the sea for the first time in general purpose kayaks.

Suffolk Coastal District Council, who have the misfortune to be the local authority for the relevant coastline have already placed notices every few yards along the beach to warn of this unexpected wave action which occurs some ten to twenty minutes after the ferry has passed. The biggest waves have occurred as it approaches Harwich where it is scheduled to arrive at 0955 hour and 1850 daily, although

obviously it enters the shipping lanes up to an hour earlier. The waves have been less significant when it leaves Harwich again some fifty minutes later. However the height of the waves and strength associated with the surges varies tremendously between one sailing to the next. It is requested than any observations of unexpected wave action in the area be reported to Stena Line and/or the Harwich Haven Authority.

Stena Line have called in experts from the US to investigate the problems so I do not think that it is re-occurrences of the incident in the Menai Straits when the Captain 'put his foot down' because he was running late! I have watched the 'Stena Discovery' and it passed all other vessels, some very large and powerful, like they were standing still. There was a distinct increase in wave height and a change in wave direction, for about two to three minutes, some fifteen minutes after it passed.

The effect on the very unstable local coastline can only be guessed at, as prevailing north easterly winds over the last three winters have added several yards to the rate of erosion which was already averaging a foot a year.

Pat Ramsey - Chairman BCU Suffolk

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North Sea Crossing - New Record

On Sunday 17th August Rod Cooke and Simon Worsley set off from Southwold on the East Coast to paddle across the North Sea to Zeebrugge. The voyage took 20 hours and 7 minutes which they are claiming as the fastest crossing by a double sea kayak. Using a Sea Voyager built by Kirton Kayaks they had a rough start caused by the thermals giving a force 3 to 4, it was touch and go as to whether they would continue but they made it, although 20 miles from Zeebrugge they once again encountered heavy seas with 3 to 4 foot waves hampering their progress. One of the most difficult moments came at the finish when they had to scramble aboard their support craft up scramble nets in the rough conditions. Rod and Simon have raised in excess of £1500 for the James Paget Hospital, Great Yarmouth, scanner appeal. A full account of their voyage will follow in the December issue of Canoe Focus.

Hull International Canoe Polo Challenge

Princes Quay provided the setting for the seventh annual international Canoe Polo Challenge, the event attracted hundreds of spectators including the Lord Mayor of Hull. The two days of competition saw fifty four teams from all over Great Britain and as far away as Holland battling for a place in one of the four final matches. In Division 1 The Humberiders went home with the trophy after scoring the winning goal against Meridians just seconds before full time in a 4-3 victory. The GB U21 C team took victory in division 2. The Rebels went on to beat Martlett Cougars B team to take away the division 3 trophy and in the Ladies league West Lothian triumphed over Aberfan Amazons in the final. The event was organised by Kingston Kayak Club and sponsored by Hull City Council Sports Development.

Paddling in Zimbabwe

Richard Boddington (front cover pin-up from June Canoe Focus) has sent the following information on paddling in Zimbabwe....The Zambezi is of course the river for which Zimbabwe is famous, from the 20 foot standing waves and raft eating stopper of the Batoka Gorge below Victoria Falls to the wildlife paradise of the tranquil lower Zambezi, there is something to suit every paddler. Organising a rafting trip on the Zambezi is easier than falling off a log. Turn up at Victoria Falls and you are inundated with rafting companies, offering trips from half a day to a five day 120km epic. Kayaking the gorge is slightly more tricky (both physically and logistically), and unless you take your own boat then it may take some organisation. Rafting companies are naturally reluctant to lend out their kayaks to any Tom, Dick or Harry so some kind of prior negotiation may well be called for. For the paddler who likes to explore at a slightly gentler place then the multi day canoe safaris on the lower section of the Zambezi are unmissable. Nothing can beat drifting gently down the river in a Canadian Canoe, putting in the occasional stroke to avoid the odd hippo, watch elephant, buffalo and lions just yards away from the bank. Many trip options are available. In the Eastern Highlands there are a number of steep, low volume and technical rivers hidden away in spectacular scenery. The best time to paddle in the Highlands is from November to April which is the warm wet season. May to September is the best time for the Batoka Gorge on the Zambezi. If any one would like further information on paddling in the area please contact Richard at Muvimi Safaris, PO Box 2233, Harare, Zimbabwe. Tel: 00 263 4 793 107 Fax: 00 263 4 704 960

BCU Yearbook Amendments and Additions

Please amend your BCU yearbooks as follows: . Page 3 BCU Lifeguards Secretary is Phillipa Gilbert, 43 Hillside, Westfield Road, Hoddesdon, Herts EN11 8RN. Page 19 Proteus Canoe Club's Secretary has moved: Julie Boardman, White Hall Farm, Ramsey Road, Sarcet, Peterborough PE7 3DR 01733 844 359. Page 60 River Access, David Herd LAO for the Ribble correct Tel No: 01200 428108. Page 61 Access, Steve Batty the Local Access Officer for the River Wear has moved to; 129 Rydal Road, Garden Farm Estate, Chester Le Street, Co Durham BH2 3D Tel: 0191 388 4938. Page 75 Andy Squirrel should be added as the National Training Officer for BCU Lifeguards, please also amend his new address, on pages 65 Youth Panel and Page 38 SW Region, to; Andy Squirrel, The Oak Dray, 386 Goathill Village, Sherbourne, Dorset DT9 5JD. And finally Page 119, Approved Centres, the following centre should be included; Albany Park Canoe and Sailing Centre, Albany Mews, Albany Park Road, Kingston Upon Thames, KT2 5SL. Tel: 0181 549 3066

LDCC Win Dragon Boat Race

London Docklands Development Corporation paddled their way to victory in the annual Docklands 5-0 Charity Dragon Boat Race, beating the 1996 champions The British Airways Hurricanes into second place. The winning team was presented with the coveted Dragons Head trophy and the runners up with the Dragons Tail.

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International Canoe Sailing - Stop Press

Simon Allen won the Silver medal and John Ellis gained 4th place in the Europa Cup (European Championship) in Gothenburg, Sweden. Congratulations.

FSA Grant for Fife Canoeists

Fife Canoeing Activities' Group have recently been awarded a grant of £3,750 from the Foundation for Sport and the Arts for the purchase of six white water kayaks and equipment.

From River Banks to Jeff Banks



British Fashion Designer Jeff Banks, former presenter of BBC's Clothes Show, recently visited the British Canoe Union Office in Nottingham. His challenge is to design river wear for Citroen sponsored slalomist, Helen Barnes. We look forward to seeing the outcome.

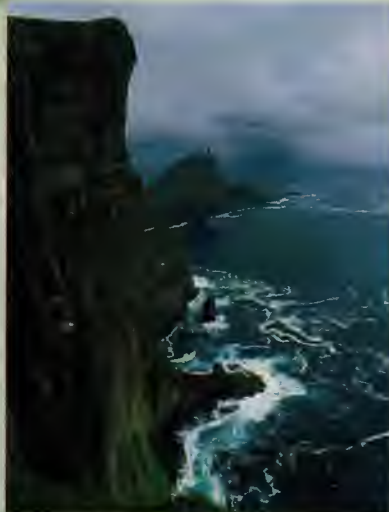
Adur Canoe Club - FSA Grant

Adur Canoe Club based in Shoreham have recently received a new fleet of 4 open canoes, purchased with a grant generously provided by the Foundation for Sport and the Arts. The club aims to introduce a wider range of people to paddling. The club meets at the Adur Centre by the Norfolk Bridge in Shoreham at 9.45am every Sunday morning except Christmas Day. Activities include weekday evening sessions, regular pool training, white water, rodeo and canoe camping trips. Call 01903 209309 any evening for details.

Canoe Polo Season

Throughout the summer season the GB Polo Teams have been competing with credit at a number of European events, the placings for the GB teams are as follows: Essen, Germany, 1st GB Men's A Team, 4th GB Men's B Team. 1st Ladies GB A Team with the B team in 4th. The U21 teams also played with confidence finishing in 7th and 10th overall. In the Flanders Cup GB A team were runners up to France and the B team finished an excellent third.

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River Leven Open Days

River Leven (Cumbria) open days for this season are: November 2nd, 16th and 23rd. December 7th and 14th. January 25th 1998. February 8th and 15th. March 8th and 29th. All of these dates are Sundays. The system will remain the same as in previous years, i.e. numbers limited to sixty on the water, all paddlers to wear a bib. Bibs are bookable up to two weeks in advance. Bookings to be made by telephone from: Sten or Angela Sture 01229 582257. Please note the phone number has changed. The cost is £1 per bib per day with a £5 deposit per bib. All money payable on the day.

North Tyne Div A Wild Water Race

Please note that the Division A Wild Water Race scheduled for Saturday 8th November has been moved to Saturday 22nd November, this is to avoid a clash with the Tyne Tour. All entries for the Wild Water Race should be sent to Iain Clough, 15 Heron Gate, Guisborough, Cleveland, TS14 8PG.

Ardeche Marathon

The International Marathon on the Ardeche River takes place on November 8th to November 11th 1997. There are a number of events over these few days. The marathon is 35kms in length and has classes for K2, K1, C1, C2 and C4. There is also an Adidas Adventure Challenge consisting of 10km mountain bike race, 4km run and 4km canoe race. A youth race (11 to 16 year olds) will also be held over a 6km course. For more details contact: Vallon Plein Air, Marathon des Gorges de L'Ardeche, BP12, 07150 Vallon Pont D'Arc. Tel: 33 4 75 37 12 94 Fax: 33 4 75 88 07 07.

Slalom Snippets

Slalom Committee AGM

Clubs are reminded that the Slalom Committee AGM is on Saturday 22 November- Motions for debate to be with the Secretary by 24 October as per constitution. Remember this is your sport!

Stuart Meakins

Has moved house - Stuart is C2 Div 4 Ranking Compiler and his new address is: 8 Marlborough Close, Oaklands, Welwyn AL6 0UG.

World Cup Results:

Gareth Marriott won overall bronze; Paul Ratcliffe, overall 4th place - there were 6 individual World Cup medals this year, but the disappointing factor was participation. Other nations too, are suffering from lack of funds and it has to be said that this was not the most successful of years for the series or indeed, for GBR! Newcomers to the team, Tim Morrison, Rob Turner and Ian Banfield/Matt Dodson gained valuable experience and as we speak, the Senior Team is working together on their last training camp before the World Championships which this year, are to be held in Brazil in late September - Good luck to you all!

Slalom Calendar 1998

Either some of you are sleeping or there just isn't the interest - come on, prove us wrong! Club Reps are urged to forward those Calendar returns to Dave Royle, Co-ordinator Event Management. If you're not sure what to do, give Dave a call.

Junior World Championships 2002

How many of you know that we are bidding to host this event? It's something to aim for and will put slalom on the map once more in the UK!

Canolfan Tryweryn

We are pleased to tell you that the Centre has been granted BCU National Centre status and the Slalom supported its bid - now its your turn to support the Centre - there's so much enthusiasm there!

And finally -

Several long serving volunteers will not be seeking re-election at the forthcoming AGM - Barry Peake as current Chairman has had an involvement in Canoe slalom for the past 12 years or so; Graham Bowman as Treasurer and John Pooley, Secretary, whilst being involved for a little less time, have also decided to call it a day - we must thank these Officers for all their efforts over the years - they have all given their time selflessly and put the interests of you, the paddler first, even though on occasion, you may have found it difficult to understand their decisions!

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Saturday at the 1997 Tryweryn Rodeo was crammed with more events than was conceivably thought possible. However Dave "Hairy" Ayres and his team seemed to cope admirably well with the influx of paddlers. The day started with the short boat event. It took a while to get going, but eventually the final took place at Chapel Falls, which proved to have the same recirculatory abilities as always, out-powering a number of paddlers if concentration lapsed for more than a split second. It was eventually won by Tim Thomas in a borrowed boat.

On the elbow, the junior and novice heats were well under way. Some confusion reigned as to who was supposed to be where and exactly when; with four paddlers in the first heat, nine in the second and around 20 in the third! But things were sorted and finalists selected, and by now the judges were well behind schedule - but we wouldn't have it any other way!! The junior final took place at the NRA Bridge, and was packed with action, being won by Andrew Macdonald.

Eurocraft were on hand supplying an armada of inflatables, used by just about everyone during the course of the weekend. There was only one scheduled inflatable event, but this proved to be so popular that a second

TRYWERYN



Rob Dixon - OC1 Wharfedale

Jon Smith - mens K1 Final

RODEO 97 - 12/13 JULY

event was hastily inserted into the already packed Sunday programme.

The extreme river run took place in the Graveyard section of the river. The course was devised to test paddlers to their limits, with few people completing the entire course. Many thanks to Loel Collins and his team for their creativity in laying out the course. The main river running event kicked

off at 3.30. The runs started at the top of the ski jump, with competitors having to break out half way down and surf the wave, then proceed to the bottom where they had to touch an inflatable Loel Collins before tackling the main stopper. Two rolls were then required one standard, one obscurely called a trick roll. Things became surreal from this point, with paddlers



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Jason Cooper - Mens K1 Final



Neil Thompson - C1

having to grab a foam hand in an eddy and hit a few plastic ducks, then paddle further on down to nudge a spider under Stone bridge. Blasting and paddle rescuing were next on the list of skills, and the run finished with chucking a throw bag at the judges in the bottom hut. Needless to say, most competitors completed this particular task as a minimum!

The party was under way by the time we arrived on site on Saturday evening. Unfortunately, the food and music that had been arranged was cancelled at the last minute, but the ever resourceful canoeists made their own entertainment, with Hippy Dave and Shaun Baker leading an impromptu jam session. Pub style games started to appear as if by magic, such things as a paddle juggling competition, won by our very own Hairy (note - don't lend Hairy your paddle. He thinks it's a pogo stick.), and picking up pieces of boxes with your teeth. Naturally, reasonably large amounts of alcohol were consumed by most.

Sunday started bright and possibly a little too early for some with the open float boat heats at the NRA bridge and the junior, novice and OC1 river runs at the International Site. The last task on the OC1 was supposed to be chucking the throw-bags, as with the standard run, however a lack of throw-bag meant improvisation was necessary. Thankfully, the judges got out of the way of the paddle in time to save their feet!

The decked C1 final took place at the NRA bridge, the paddlers having done the river run alongside the main K1ers. Although about six people had entered the event, it looked for a while as if nobody would show up. However four eventually arrived, and put on an excellent show of boating skills. Neil Thompson was awarded first prize after an extremely good all round performance. OC1 had only three competitors, but provided the usual entertainment. The hole play event took place at the NRA bridge where flying lessons seemed to be the order of the day. First prize was awarded to Rob Dixon after a close-run contest. The novice final was next on the list, and was won by Drew Prosser after some excellent paddling at the NRA bridge, with Bled Lloyd taking second place.

The squirt event took place at the infamous Fingers, with Daz Clarkson showing us all how its done. Hazel Wilson claimed a well deserved second place with her gutsy approach to the otherwise all-male event. The ladies final was the usual frenzy of activity and crowd support, and plenty of encouragement came from the paddlers themselves. Helen Taylor took first prize and Caron Geal was awarded second.

The Open Float Boat final took place in two locations, both the Elbow and the NRA site, with the paddlers having to mix both their surfing and vertical skills for two very different sites. Paddler of the weekend had to be Andy Phillips, who seemed unreachable, having won the extreme river run, the river skills and the overall prize. He went away a happy man with the Tryweryn Rodeo Championships Trophy that he will cherish for the next 11 months.

Thanks

Many thanks to the sponsors, Pyranha, Palm, Cotswold, Eurocraft, White Water Consultancy, Gorilla Paddles, Mobile Adventure, Yak, Rouge, Xcaliber Blades, Canolfan Tryweryn, Bushsports, Playboater, Can carve designs, Playboating UK, Environmental Agency, White Water the Canoe Centre, St John Ambulance, Bala Sea Cadets and the Cafe staffed by Anne and Allan, who make this event possible.



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Young Peoples Programme - Putting the Jigsaw Together

As you will know from previous articles in Canoe Focus, we have tried to keep you up to date with all the developments that have been taking place. We felt that it would be

worthwhile stepping back and once again showing where all the new bits and pieces fit together and when we hope that they will become available. As you will see, much of

what we have been doing has been the 'Participation' end of the scale. This can be seen through the new Paddlers Challenge Logbook.

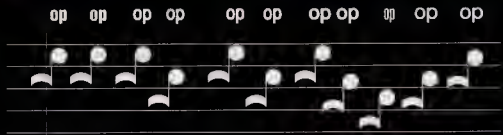
PADDLER DEVELOPMENT Tools developed to date	STARTING OUT & PADDLING REGULARLY	MAKING A COMMITMENT	FOCUSING ON PERFORMANCE	GOING FOR GOLD	
<p>1. Paddlepower Young Paddler Scheme</p> <p><i>* Please note in England this will potentially replace the SCA Rainbow Scheme</i></p>	<p>For: 7-11 yrs Delivered by: Centres, Clubs, Youth Orgs. Purpose: To develop good paddling skills in the early stages retaining children's interest</p>		<p>Situation Update</p> <p>Nos</p> <p>1-4 Extensive pilot Autumn 1997, development of workshop tutors, launch ICE 1998.</p> <p>6 Piloting of Top Club Pack underway with PDOs - first accreditation by Jan 1998.</p> <p>7 Available Jan 1998</p> <p>8 7 in place from Jan 1998</p> <p>9 Complete and second edition available Sept. 1997.</p> <p>Results Showing Already From Paddlesport Posts</p> <p>The new Paddlesport Development Officers have been busy since starting their new jobs. Some notable key achievements so far are:</p> <p>Nottingham/Derby/Leicester (Angela Hampton)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A new young paddlers Saturday club (lakeside Adventure Base) started at the Waterside Centre, Holme Pierrepont. ● A new Slalom group meeting at the artificial course. ● Plans in place to establish a new polo pitch on the Winfield Pool. <p>Chester/Manchester/Liverpool (John Davies)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In Chester area, a new Div 4/5 slalom event was held with around 100 paddlers attending. Of these only 12 were local (What's happened to all those who would like to try out slalom in Chester!) WWR taster session held and event to be held in August/September. Link established with special needs centre. ● Linking clubs to share common sites in the Marple area. ● Work to focus more on the Liverpool and Manchester areas over the autumn/winter. <p>Worcester/Hereford (Graham Campbell)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Extended event programme with mini sprint and marathon events held at Worcester, Hereford and Fladbury. ● Intends to stage a mini flat water slalom. ● Schools/Local Authority/club links established at Worcester. ● Work to extend into Hereford during autumn/winter. <p>London & Thames Valley (Sue Hornby)</p> <p>Sue started in post on 1st July and so her first month has been spent checking out what is happening in the area and deciding where she can work most effectively. It is too early to expect significant achievements but we are sure that there will be news for you in the next edition.</p> <p>All Paddlesport Officers are in the process of developing a quality junior club directory for their area so any child, parent, school, teacher or coach that wishes to find a quality junior club in their area, will be provided with the RIGHT information. The directory will contain information such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Club name ● Preferred Canoeing disciplines ● Age range catered for ● Number of junior members ● Junior organiser contact name, address and telephone number ● Junior session time and venue. <p>It is also intended that the PDOs will develop a junior newsheet for the area that will keep youngsters up to date on what is happening where and when and feature articles that are important to them. We would also like to get a second hand boat 'Exchange & Mart' off the ground in these areas, as it is often the purchase/use of boats that prevents a youngster from paddling regularly. There is much to do. The 4 individuals are going to be busy.</p> <p>New Paddlesport Posts. There are going to be 3 more Paddlesport posts up for grabs. Rather than decide internally where the post should be placed, the BCU Executive has decided to allocate the posts through a bidding process and so all BCU regions, clubs and disciplines have been circulated with the details regarding the eligibility criteria and Application. The BCU Executive will then decide in October where the posts will</p>		
<p>2. Paddlepower Logbook NEW</p>	<p>For: Those completing YPS & older children Delivered by: Pref: 'Club' - based groups Purpose: To encourage the young people to apply their new skills by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● practising their paddling regularly ● taking part in events ● Working on and improving their own performance 				
<p>3. Paddlesport Activity Cards NEW</p>	<p>For: Teachers, Instructors and Coaches. Delivered by: Key tutors as part of a workshop Aim: To provide support material for introductory sessions. It consists of 14 activities selected by coaches as the best in terms of key skills, enjoyment and opportunity for progression, for any young paddler starting out the aim of the pack</p>				
<p>4 Paddlepower Workshop NEW</p>	<p>For: Teachers, Coaches, Club Helpers, (workshop can be customised to the group) Delivered by: Key tutors. Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To consider key issues around young people ● To be introduced to Paddlesport ● To be introduced to the Paddlepower Schemes and Activity Cards. 				
<p>5 Star Tests Existing</p>	<p>For: Older paddlers. Delivered by: Centres, Clubs, Schools, Youth Organisations. Purpose: to assess proficiency in key paddling skills and knowledge.</p>				
<p>6 Top Club</p>	<p>For: Those clubs that want to develop young paddlers. Delivered by: PDOs who check clubs against criteria & club ambitions or any club who wishes to apply. Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To quality assure clubs that do good work with young people & want to do further work with them and inform key partners (schools, Local Authorities etc.) of that status. ● To encourage more clubs to work with young people. ● To show clubs the role they have to play in developing a young paddler. ● 2 types of TOP CLUB - Top Community Club and Top Performance Club 				
<p>7 Promotional Video & Presentation Pack NEW</p>	<p>For: All clubs and centres, youth organisations & schools involved in outreach work. Delivered by: Any individual or group. Purpose: To attract and motivate youngster to become involved in and stay in the sport.</p>				
<p>8 Paddlesport Development Officers</p>	<p>For: All canoeing providers within certain areas. Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To create paddling communities - linking clubs, schools, centres, youth organisations together. ● To set up more low level events ● To help clubs work to TOP Club status, & nominate clubs. ● Support clubs in accessing funding ● To assist in setting up talent identification opportunities and development programmes. 				
<p>9 Club Pack - NEW</p>	<p>For all clubs in supporting their work.</p>				

Applications for the Jobs
It is hoped that the new posts will be appointed and start on 1 Jan 1998. The next edition of Canoe Focus is not due until the end of the year and so it will

NOT be possible to advertise in the same way as we did last time round. It is intended to have a special circulation to all clubs with the job description and details.

If You or Anyone You Know May be Interested in one of the Posts.
Please contact the BCU and we will send you details of the jobs and their location as soon as they become available. It is

envisaged that the closing date for applications will be mid November and interviews during late November, early December.



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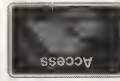
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Did you see our Tyrone Boat Paddled by Ray Mears on BBC2?

Article by Paul Bolton

Matanuska

A DAY TRIP TO

'Paul!', shouted my friend Sweaty (a nickname that has no bearing on his personal qualities), 'good news, I've found a place that rents canoes, when you land tomorrow we can go and check them out.' Great, I thought, with mild trepidation, at last my plans to do some canoeing whilst in Alaska were coming together.

Every year my RAF Squadron spends 2-3 weeks at Elmendorf Air Force Base. Normally, when in Alaska, we fly intensively, this year we were deployed over the July 4th holiday, and the Americans were kind enough to close the base for 4 days, giving us no choice but to find some alternative pursuits to fill our time. The rest of the guys fancied doing some white-water rafting, so if we could combine both trips, Sweaty and I would have a river guide and safety boat, and the rafters would have someone to recover lost kit and take some interesting photos. Sweaty and I set off to Alaska Kayak to hire some kit. It was well stocked with a range of plastic fun-boats, but mainly had sea-kayaks and large open Canadians.

Alaska's rivers are Glacial-fed and only go into spate during and after periods of exceptional warmth. The rivers were all in spate returning glacial water to the sea. Roger from the hire shop's final words of reassurance, as he waved my indemnity forms were 'the rivers running about 4 times its normal level for this time of year, so the paddling's great, but you guys sure be careful to miss them holes, they're seriously bad fun.' A deep swallow and nod knowingly.

The Matanuska lies 3 hours north of Anchorage, and the journey is spectacular, with large valleys and huge snow covered peaks in abundance. We met up with the guides, changed and left our kit at the finish and all piled back into the wagons to drive to the start point. We had 3 guides, one for each raft. One of them, Ron, was an experienced canoeist. He briefed us on the river: 'There are some huge stoppers today, but none of them are lethal, you'll be able to get out of one end or the other. When you see a big white rock on the right bank though, go left. On the right is a massive hole that is swallowing rafts and I'm pretty sure a canoe will not make it, don't worry though its easy to see. If in doubt go left and you'll be fine.' Time for another deep swallow.

We got onto the water to try our boats out.

They were both American designs, plastic and slightly shorter than a Dancer. Both of reasonable volume, though mine had a flattened back and both were very manoeuvrable, stable and I felt instantly at one with mine. We all wore dry suits, otherwise hypothermia for a swimmer could be a problem in seconds. The air temperature was by now up into the

We had about 3 miles to run on the tributary before we joined the main Matanuska river. The tributary travelled through some spectacular scenery and the water was flowing just fast enough to make it fun and allowed us to test the handling characteristics of these strange kayaks a little more. After a couple of miles the background noise started to build significantly. I started to rack my brains for an explanation as the only road in the vicinity was very quiet and the train track was many miles away. Suddenly reality dawned, it was the Matanuska! We rounded a bend on the tributary and there it was. A huge angry river powering past at huge speed. To the left, about a mile and a half away was the glacier itself. The rafts broke out and we followed suit. Ron had one last briefing: 'this is it guys, don't forget to keep left at the big white rock and with luck I'll see you at the lunch stop'. Sweaty and I waited for all the rafts to go as we wanted a clear view of the river ahead and after a truly agonising wait, I led us off.

The speed of the water took me by surprise, but fortunately I got the line I wanted. We paddled into a moderate sized gorge and the river narrowed and

high twenties, so the occasional splash of freezing water was quite welcome. We had all launched into a slow moving tributary, which reminded me of the Dee, above the Serpent's Tail. A glacial river differs from a normal one in so far as it is the colour of liquid concrete, and it takes a while to read the river as the colours can be confusing. Apparently because the water is so opaque, it cannot support plant life and therefore, has no animal life at all.

steepened. I hit a big stopper, and as it impacted my chest I stopped dead and was winded from the sheer force of the impact. The stopper started to pull me back in, but fortunately adrenaline still favoured me and two massive strokes of (for me) unbelievable power pulled me clear. I was expecting a spell of rapids followed by some flatter water, but this was not the case. The river was in spate so much that the rapids were continuous with very few break-outs. The cold was extremely tiring and it wasn't long before my arms started to complain. I hit countless stoppers, each one feeling like a solid rugby tackle, most stopping the canoe dead, requiring



THE uska

a huge paddling frenzy to break free. There were massive standing waves and huge haystacks. One series of three were so tall that my shortened kayak would not ride them but punched through the middle of each. I was so disorientated by the 3 hits and the debilitating cold that I started to set up for a roll, only to break out into brilliant sunshine. I continuously tried to shake the water from my eyes to see that damned white rock. Everything I'd experienced so far made me determined to miss that big hole. We rounded another bend and whilst on top of a wave I glanced ahead and saw some huge stoppers. I thought I'd picked a good course through them but I had missed the tell tale smoothness of a submerged rock. Too late I realised my mistake and dropped into a wall of water and at about 45 degrees to a massive stopper. I managed to stay upright, but the force of the water was unbelievable and instantly the canoe stood up on its stern. Gravity won and it crashed down, luckily at a perfect 90 degrees to the stopper. I needed no second chance and went into paddling-frenzy mode again. For what seemed like a week nothing happened and then inch by inch the canoe broke free. I paddled clear and angled the canoe to get a look at Sweaty, but unfortunately he was upside down. At least he was clear of the stopper. I hit another series of haystacks and stoppers and finally found a breakout. I spotted Sweaty and a few powerful strokes later he joined me in the break-out. Sweaty has a way with words and proved it by swearing consecutively for 52 times and incredibly never repeating the same word. I took this as meaning all was well and I broke in again to catch up with the rafters.

The river was unrelenting, after a long series of rapids I spotted all the rafts in the first large breakout I had seen. I joined them and was relieved to learn that this was the lunch stop. We had paddled just over 5 miles of continuous rapids in freezing water and I was feeling it. Sweaty appeared and looked exhausted. He had rolled six times and found it hard going. He was

shaking a lot but assured me that it was just the effects of an adrenaline overdose. During a wonderful lunch I asked Ron how far it was to the big white rock. I had been examining every pebble so far for signs of whiteness as I was determined to miss that hole. When Ron told me it was about 3 miles upstream I went all cold even though it was about 28 degrees!! Somehow I had completely missed a 40 tonne white monolith that can be seen from over 30 miles away!!

Lunch was over all too soon. Sweaty said he wanted to reshoot the fall just above our lunch spot so we carried the canoes upstream for 200 yards and set off. We rejoined the rafters and continued downstream. We immediately hit a large series of waves and haystacks one of which flipped me 180 degrees so I was facing upstream. I dropped sideways into a large stopper and was instantly capsized. The temperature difference was colossal and instantly I had a massive crushing headache. I set up for a roll as quickly as possible, before everything was in position, up popped this lovely little kayak. I was getting to like it a lot. I understood now why Sweaty looked so bad. My dunking had really knocked me for six. For some reason I was having difficulty breathing properly, and felt instantly exhausted. I battled on and my confidence started to increase.

We approached a road bridge, and from 200 yards away I saw the cars stop and their occupants rush to the edge to wave us on. I managed to wave as we were swept under the bridge and was met by spectacular cheers and cries from those above. I was determined not to go in again and was getting used to the huge rugby tackling stoppers. We rounded a few more bends and then saw Ron and the rafts in a breakout by a small beach. I broke out and was pleasantly surprised to learn that this was the end. We had covered about 12 river miles, nine of them being on moving white water. The longest rapid we shot was a little over 5 miles and between us we had rolled 7 times. Most



importantly, we had survived. Ron came to meet us and was soon telling us of the other great paddling rivers in Alaska. Ron caught us at a weak moment, when we were still euphoric at finishing, and managed to get us to agree to shoot Six Mile Canyon, when we go back next year. In his words '6 miles of the finest white water paddling in North America, with continuous grade 5, you guys have just got to do it.' Stupidly we both nodded like the experts we were not. At least this time we have a year to train before next years visit, so who knows, this could be chapter one of 'Adventures with Sweaty!!!'

'ADVENTURES WITH SWEATY!!!'



River Wye the Proposed Navigation Order

Management of Access

Article by
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Churchdown,
Gloucester
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01452 531218

As is well known the BCU as the Governing Body accepts the principle of management of limited resources. This should be on an equitable basis with due regard to all legitimate interests and sustainability of the environment.

There is a finite number of miles of paddleable water in the UK. That which can be legally paddled is only a percentage of that mileage. This is due to the constraints of the law and the absence of access agreements.

As the Governing Body, the BCU, which is in receipt of public funding must operate within the law. The access team take all opportunities to try to influence a change in the law to benefit all canoeists.

There are many water oriented recreational activities apart from canoeing that have legitimate claims to use the water and with the present social changes and the increase in leisure time one can predict more activity as there is in canoeing.

Clearly the future must be shared use of the limited water we have on a fair shares for all basis. To achieve this, whilst good will and informal

processes have their place, the time inevitably comes when more formal management becomes necessary. The reality is that this is happening whether we like it or not and to be involved in and to influence the management process is seen by the BCU as the way forward.

The Wye

The Wye used to be a commercial navigation with locks and weirs. Around 1850 with the advent of the railways the commercial traffic declined and since then the river has renaturalised into what is seen by responsible canoeists as a beautiful, tranquil environment ideal for training, recreation and touring. As one of my 'contacts' wrote "it is the closest thing in the UK to wilderness paddling".

Users will know the river has changed even over the last few years - low flows - less salmon - siltation etc. There are various reasons for these changes both natural and man made and for future generations we must preserve the wildlife, including the fish, the flora and fauna and water quality to retain this beauty. In the long term planned action will be

needed to achieve this.

Over the years formal and informal management has developed, i.e. the river is an SSSI and is being considered for SAC status (Special Area of Conservation). The Gloucester Harbour Trustees are the Navigation Authority for the river below Bigsweir Bridge. Also various statutory bodies have powers in respect to the river catchment and its use.

In respect of canoeing there are formal voluntary access agreements on the upper Wye. There are public landing sites such as at Brockweir and Hay. There are established sites for access where riparian owners allow their land to be used, i.e. The Toll Bridge at Whitney and at Glasbury Common. Many canoeists have contact with farmers and riparian owners where they camp and are permitted access.

Other river interests have grown up such as the River Wye Preservation Trust and organisations representing riparian owners and angling interests.

Since the Wye Project in the early 1990's these have all been brought together by formation of the WYE FORUM a user group where the many users, wildlife interests, riparian owners, angling interests, English Nature and many others can work together for everyone's benefit. WyeMAG (a political group) has an input. Both this and the FORUM are sponsored by the Environment Agency who take away the views expressed.

There are also other initiatives such as the WYE FOUNDATION which is



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improving the upper tributaries to allow salmon to increase. Also the present BCU negotiations to try to secure the Symonds Yat Rapid for canoeing which would allow them to be improved - environmentally - for our use and remove an area of potential conflict.

With all the pressures of use and Tourism on the catchment informal and formal management will become vital. The BCU believes that even if the Environment Agency is confirmed as the Navigation Authority, which is considered a better outcome than perhaps finishing with several different navigation authorities, the present arrangement should continue and the powers the Agency would have should not be exercised until these arrangements prove ineffective. This view is well known to the Agency.

The Draft Order

The NRA undertook an informal consultation from October 1995 and applied for a formal Order to become the Navigation Authority for the Wye and the Lugg in March 1996.

Since the original consultation document, whilst arguing that formal powers were premature, we have been continually in discussion and negotiation with the NRA, the EA and the Parliamentary Agents to improve, for the benefit of all canoeists, both the original draft Order at the end of 1995 and the formal draft Order which was the subject of the Public Inquiry. Once the Order had been applied for it was necessary to follow to the letter

the formal procedure of legal objections, statement of case, proof of evidence and the presentation of our case at the Public Inquiry.

The whole process has involved our legal advisors, Counsel, and the Sports Council as well as the very many Contacts who have given me the benefit of their opinions. This process in common with other objectors resulted in the EA promoting some 50 amendments to the proposed Order. Some of which addressed BCU concerns particularly where it is essential that canoeists have a formal right to be consulted over the exercise of powers under the Order.

It is an enabling Order which gives the EA powers to manage the rivers. If it is confirmed in its present form there are some important matters for canoeists:

- Many powers would have to be exercised in consultation with the Wye Navigation Advisory Committee, a statutory committee set up by the Order on which the BCU and WCA would each have a right to a seat.
- Some powers - such as Bylaws - would need formal Ministerial approval only after the process of public participation as applied to the Order.
- The Order now specifically excludes the right to build new locks and weirs.
- Serious legal concerns about the replacement right of navigation will be addressed satisfactorily.
- On the emotive issue of charges it

is recognised that any package of management powers cannot exclude a power to raise money. There would not be a charge for navigating and using the river. Charges for services and facilities are matters to be dealt with if the power to charge is exercised. Canoeists will have a right to express formal opinions through the WNAC. Our experience so far of other EA Advisory Committees and our negotiations on the Wye shows that the Agency ream respond to a sound argument and voting power is not all it is about.

- We recognise the need to repeal various old Acts of Parliament. However, the Agency responded to our argument to save clauses that relate to the rights of navigation.
- The original proposals for Navigation permits and an "Upper Wye Permitting Committee" were dropped.
- We have made clear that failure to have the right to seats on the WNAC and thus to remove our right to be consulted is central to our entire case.

One More Thank You

I have one more thank you - to Veronica, my wife, who has spent so many hours typing all the paperwork I have produced over the last two years, not only for this Order but for the Access and the other BCU matters in which I am involved. Also for all her patience and support in becoming so involved in what is happening.

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British Canoe Slalom The Way Forward

Canoe Slalom is a Club-based sport - these Clubs are the Slalom Committee and decide on policy at the AGM held in November each year.

We hope that sufficient Clubs showed interest and attend a meeting to finalise proposals from Manchester Canoe Club's paper below for this year's AGM to be held on 22 November.

A New Format For Slalom

To provide easier access to events for all. Particularly Clubs, Families, Schools & Youth Groups.

Clubs willing to support this move and wishing to be involved in the creation should contact: Manchester Canoe Club, 2 The Ceal, Compstall, Stockport, SK6 5LQ Tel: 0161 427 7324.

The Multi-Divisional Event to include Div.2 down to Div. 5

A Basic Outline.

Event Courses need to be Graded and published in Event Details, e.g. a Div.2 Site would be Graded 2, but at somewhere like Holme Pierrepont the organiser would have to specify and guarantee the grade that is being aimed for. Events not matching the advertised grading would be liable to be removed from the Calendar.

Entries accepted from anyone in Div 2. To Div. 5

Results for each Division to be calculated separately.

Ranking System for end of year promotion.

Promotion "on the day" only applicable to those classes at the advertised course grade.

Team Events on Saturday with Club Teams comprised of any Divisions.

Some Advantages

- 1 More potential entries.
- 2 Greater opportunity for Individuals, Clubs and Families to attend events, and to share expenses.
- 3 Paddlers can choose their water difficulty. This could prevent the losses that occur when paddlers are promoted beyond their ability; would allow direct access to exciting water for those who consider themselves capable; and cater for the more mature/heavier paddler impeded by shallow water courses.
- 4 Revitalise the Team event, sadly missed by many.
- 5 Improve Club allegiance, (A BCU Sports Council objective)
- 6 Provide improved coaching opportunities through experienced paddlers assisting the newcomers.

Problems

The usual criticism is - how do you cater for all capabilities on one course?

Probably the most successful event is the Inter-Club event held at Cardington. Here all Divisions compete happily against their peers from Prem. down to Div 5. Why then is this not possible at all events? The Veterans Division has a similar system, why not for all Competitors from Div 2. to Div. 5? Canoe Sprint, Marathon and WWR cater for all capabilities, practically every other sport does as well. Why not Slalom?

For those who don't like the idea **nothing has changed** they can still attend their events as they always have.

How Would You Judge It?

The Inter-Club system is that every Club has to provide at least one Judge. This could be used but has to be modified to include an input from those who do not belong to Clubs. We would suggest that any Team must provide a judge. (This allows any 4 paddlers/supporters to decide between themselves who will judge that weekend. Those independents wishing to take part in the Team event could also form teams. Those putting in a scratch entry would be expected to provide a judge).

Requirements

As it is necessary to limit the number of Clubs attending (no more than 2 Club Representatives per Club) Clubs are asked to submit any criticisms on the basic outline below and state why they consider their Club should be represented. (Negative criticism without a positive solution will be unhelpful).

We do need input from both dedicated Slalom Clubs and those for whom Slalom is just another form of canoeing.

Although the initial brief is to create a Multi-Divisional System for Divisions 2 to 5 it can be shown that there are some advantages to be had by considering the Pyramid Approach recommended by the Working Party and tailoring it into an integrated system. Therefore possible changes to Premier and Division 1 will be outlined and may be presented as separate motions to the AGM.

The Nitty Gritty

The following points need to be considered, further points may arise from Clubs replies. The items in italics are not integral to the Multi-Divisional system but may be discussed if their is sufficient time and a consensus of opinion is that further Motions should be put to the AGM.

- 1 Set up a small committee to ensure Course Grading is consistent under normal conditions.
- 2 Entries to events limited to 150 plus previous two weeks promotees. (This is to prevent over-subscription to popular events and discourage late entries).
- 3 Entry fees to be determined by the Grade of Course set. (This is to ease the

load on organisers, and encourage use of lower graded courses).

4 Team Entries open to any Div 2-5 paddler. Full and Individual Entries to Team events must be accompanied by a Judges Entry - paddler or non-paddler.

5 Teams to be awarded inverse number of points. Clubs accumulating the greatest number of points awarded a Team Prize. Points collected throughout the year to determine entry into Inter-Club Event.

6 Determine a promotional system. (Consider reverting to Percentage System of Ranking. This provides a more accurate indication of the relative abilities of paddlers, and removes the need to decide what constitutes a Quorate Event. (A single paddler would receive 100% which recognises their attendance by would not affect year end promotions).

7 Determine the number of Promotions 'on the day' to provide an acceptable level of incentive without over filling higher divisions. "On the day" promotions limited to Div 3 to Div 5. Competitors when competing on their relevant course difficulty. Any competitor in a lower Division whose result would have given x% if paddling in a higher Division also promoted)

8 Div 2 to Div 1 promotion to be determined by a series of 'Selection' events, the number to be promoted to be equal to the number demoted. (Preferably on Div.1 sites left vacant after combining of Div 1 and Prem. This would also benefit the first demotees as they would still be paddling the courses they enjoy and also offer some advantage to them when seeking re-promotion).

9 Although the Multi-Divisional system could be introduced under the current calendar format it would be beneficial if Multi-Divisional events were no closer than 100 miles apart on any one weekend. (This means ... an event within 50 miles of most paddlers every weekend, the necessity of early entry into popular events, and a residue of paddlers for the less popular events). It would also be beneficial if there were no Multi-Divisional event within 200 miles of a Prem/Div 1 event. (This is to encourage support and judging at these events).

The Multi-Divisional System expands paddler choice and benefits social arrangements. Owing to the short time available to us it is essential for clubs to offer their opinions and services immediately.



Current Problems

- Need to attend specific events
- Difficult to make Group arrangements
- Paddlers promoted beyond their desires.
- No incentive for those who have reached their peak.
- Double events result in over-promotion and regretted loss of Team Event.
- Club Coaches unable to attend all events
- Club members unable to assist at a Club promotion if attending their Ranking Event.
- There are rarely sufficient judges.
- High running costs of Slalom.

Multi-Div Solution

- All/most events open to entry.
- Groups can enter the same events
- Paddlers choose level of difficulty.
- Club prestige takes over from pursuit of Individual honours.
- Increased numbers provide events income. Team events offer Club prestige.
- Greater opportunity to coach all club members. Incentive for better paddlers to coach the lesser paddlers.
- Clubs can set a calendar of events at which members compete or assist.
- Judging must be an integral part of any system.
- By combining Div.1 and Prem. Timing and Section Judging costs could be reduced. Availability of Section Judges alleviated.

British Canoe Slalom

The Way Forward



Article by
Sue Wharton, SDO

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7th Junior World Canoe Racing Championships

Lahti, Finland. 20-22 July.



There were 45 nations competing in the 7th Junior World Racing Championships which were held on a 1300m long natural lake in Lahti, which is 60 miles north of Helsinki.

All of the Great Britain Team reached the semi-finals, in their respective events, where they were eliminated. Competitors were entered in all of the Junior Men Kayaks events. They raced over 500m and 1000m on the 9 lane course. The only Great Britain Junior woman competing was Abigail Cattle (Reading). Her 4th position in the 500m semi-final in a time of 2 minutes 06.664 seconds brought her within 2 seconds of qualifying for the final and was only 4 seconds down on the winner of her semi-final. Abigail will still be a junior at the time of the next Junior World Championships, which are to be held in Croatia in two years time.

Damien Chapman (Nottingham) achieved his best result in the 500m singles but this was 4 seconds away from qualifying for the final.

The double kayak of Daniel Matthews and Paul Prestwood, both from Gaily, achieved their best ever time of 3 minutes 37.444 seconds in the 1000m semi-final. This was 5.6 seconds behind the slowest qualifier in their semi-final. Both of these paddlers will still be juniors for next years Junior European

Championships to be held in Nykoping, Sweden.

The K4 crew of Peter Burbridge (Reading), Keith Moule (Chelmsford), Adam Kennedy (Fladbury) and Richard Darby-Dowman (Elmbridge) contains three paddlers who will still be juniors in future years. Taking part in such a major event will have been a useful experience for them.

The competitors were supported by Trevor Weatherall, Russell Jones, Ron Thorogood and Teresa Bland who are looking forward, with such a young team, to their performances in the future.

Of the 45 competing nations 12 won medals, 7 of these won gold medals. The most medals were won by Hungary (98), second was Poland with 7 and joint third with 6 were Russia and Germany. The Ukraine came fourth with 5 and fifth was Rumania with 4. There were only 3 countries not in the former European bloc who won medals, Denmark won one gold, Spain won 2 silver and Argentina won a silver and a bronze

Laurence Oliver - Manager



Right: Danny Matthews and Paul Prestwood



Above: Abigail Cattle



Above: Damien Chapman



The 1997 Paddling Challenge

Royal Canoe Club hosted over 70 paddlers for the races held on 26 July. The Master race was first and was won by Andy Morton from Scotland. He managed to fend off strong challenges from John West of Wey and Lynn Williams of Royal. The Senior and Junior Ladies Paddling Challenge Cup followed. The race being held over a 5000 metre course. The first lady to win this trophy was Anna Hemmings of Elmbridge. The junior races saw the spoils divided between Elmbridge and Royal.

The Paddling Challenge race had the best entry of the afternoon with over 30 paddlers on the start line. After a frantic first 1500 metres, Tim Brabants and James Block broke away from a chasing group of Duncan Blyth, Duncan Roeser, Steve Baker, James Clark and Scott Hynds. This group managed to drop Hynds - but this was not as impressive as Brabants dropping Block on the last lap to finish some 100 metres ahead. Blyth was able to lead the chasing group home to take third place. Thanks to the generous support of Fuller Smith and Turner (the club's beer suppliers) there was prize money for the winners.

The evening started with an open C2 race in 'one design' boats. The Club has 15 of these Pyranha boats which are a copy of the original C2s that were raced in the early part of the century. Being more streamlined than standard touring C2s they provided an exciting race. Experience was the key and former World Bronze medallists Mike Phillip and John Griffiths won the prize pot of nearly £50. The day was rounded off with a BBQ and entertainment from a jazz band.

Next year we hope to run the Paddling Challenge races on the same weekend as the Royal Regatta. With camping facilities available at the Club, this should make a journey worthwhile for many more people.

Sprint Regatta At Royal

Sat 2nd August saw the resurrection of the Royal Sprint Regatta held on the Thames at Teddington.

This event however has evolved a long way from the days of 'dodging the Merry Thames' and 'jumping on the wash of the nearest competitor'. This year saw held starts, a buoyed course and closure of the river. The result was a well organised, orderly regatta, almost resembling those at Nottingham. With the exception of the weather, which was perfect! The racing, especially that in Men's A, was equally as high class and exciting. Grayson Bourne winning 3 events.

The regatta was well supported and not just by local clubs. The ladies filled 4 boats in the K4 final, as did the senior A men. Quite a spectacle for those enjoying a Saturday afternoon constitutional along the Thames.

Local regattas might be the way forward to promoting sprint racing, making it cheaper and more enjoyable than trekking to Nottingham and enduring often unfavourable conditions. Royal would like to thank everyone for their support and hope to develop this into a prestigious event in the calendar. **Article by James Clark**

Selected results.

- Senior Men K1.** 1. Watkins. 2. Lewis 3. Farrell.
- Women K1.** 1. B Train. 2. A Hemmings 3. R Train
- Girls ABC K1.** 1. Hunter 2. Spencer 3. Matilda
- Boys ABC K1.** 1. Seaford 2. Bury 3. Bale
- Girls D K1.** 1. Goodall 2. Ferrier 3. Dale
- Vet Men K1.** 1. Farrell 2. Hunter 3. Wetherall
- Elite Mens K4** 1. Van Someren/Battershell/Bourne/Darby-Dowman
2. Roeser/Clark/Watkins/Train
3. Wynne/Shaw/Pickett/Burgoyne



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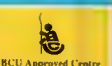
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The Scottish Marathon SERIES REPORT

This summer saw the inauguration of an attractive new series of marathon and 10k events in Scotland; in fact, five events held over only eight days at the end of June. In its first year the entries were fairly substantial with over 40 paddlers in some races, including a fair number of competitors who had travelled up from south of the border.

Loch Ken is only 50 miles from Carlisle, so it makes a reasonably accessible venue for the first two events held over the first weekend. What is more, the start and finish points for both events are right beside a first class campsite with excellent facilities. Tents can be pitched and cars parked within thirty metres of the start line! The first race, a modest 10k race, is on Saturday evening, to allow those travelling long distances plenty of time to reach Loch Ken. Those with nightmare memories of the Hasler event at Loch Ken in 1996 can rest assured that such gales are actually quite rare in this part of Scotland. What is more the loch is really no more than a wide river with many bends and islands, so any waves are usually of



minimal height. It is actually much flatter than the Thames!

After the first weekend, visitors have two days in which to drive to Loch Lomond, some 130 miles north of Loch Ken. Loch Lomond is definitely worth a visit with its many islands, some of which are inhabited. One island even boasts a nudist colony

(those wishing to investigate further should send a SAE and a cheque for £25 to the author of this article, who will then disclose the name of the island) Another island has a beautiful sandy beach for bathing, another a pub, and yet another has a flock/herd or whatever, of wallabies! They are about as difficult to spot as the nudists.

Article by Brian Chapman



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The Wednesday night race on Loch Lomond is followed by a visit to the local pub in Drymen which serves first class bar suppers well away from the depredation of the Scottish midges. The week finishes with a visit to the River Tay. The crystal clear waters of the Tay pass through the most beautiful countryside from Dunkeld to the 'fair city' of Perth. But the last event is a fairly tough marathon of 23 miles which includes the Stanley to Thistle grade 2 to 3 white water section used in the winter for river racing. In 1969 the Tay was the venue for the British Marathon Championships and for many years in the seventies and eighties the Dunkeld to Perth section was the last stage of a tough four-stage, two-day marathon from the west end of Loch Tay to Perth. Those who have taken part in this memorable event will be interested to learn that we hope to resurrect the event to mark the end of the millennium.

So get your diaries out now and book a week's racing in Scotland in the last week of June - you won't regret it.



Further information on the 1998 series can be obtained from: **Andy Morton, 3 Park Place, DOLLAR, FK14 7AA. (01259 742288)**



Results summary - 1997 series.

1st race 10k on Loch Ken 21st June

1st Jaames Clark	45.00
2nd Ian Wynne	45.01
3rd Alan Tordoff	45.01
4th Andy Morton	45.17

2nd race K2 Marathon on Loch Ken 22nd June

1st Clark/Wynne	1.29.20
2nd Caven/Kelly	1.29.20
3rd Morton/Tordoff	1.29.26
4th Grimmwood/Kelly	1.29.30

3rd race K1 Marathon on Loch Lomond 25th June

1st Alan Tordoff	1.05.15
2nd Andy Morton	1.05.19
3rd Ian Wynne	1.06.00
4th Andy Kelly	1.06.05

4th race 10k on the River Tay 27th June

1st Alan Tordoff	39.45
2nd Richard Lang	39.46
3rd Andy Morton	40.24
4th Ian Wynne	42.20

5th race 23 mile Marathon on the River Tay 29th June

1st Alan Tordoff	2.27.31
2nd James Clark	2.28.04
3rd Andy Morton	2.28.14
4th Richrad Lang	2.29.27

Short course winners: (open to division 4 paddlers and below + vets) 3k

21 June	Matthew Yost	Loch Ken
22 June	Les Kirkpatrick	Loch Lomond
25 June	Andrew Preston	Tay
29 June	Stuart Smith	

Royal Canoe Club Kingston Marathon 1997

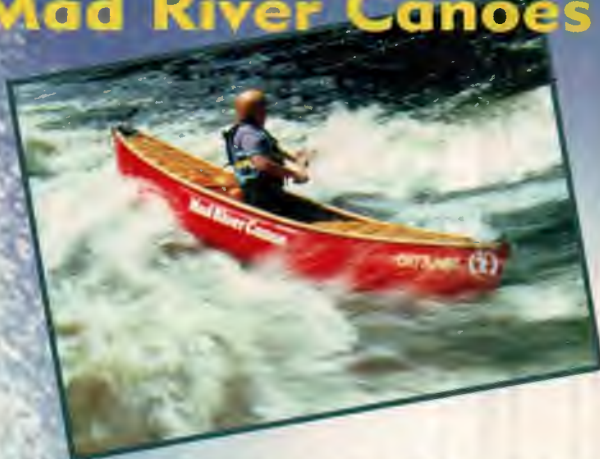
216 people lined up on the various start lines for the race. The top level juniors and seniors were competing in assessment races over 15 miles while normal divisions were offered for other competitors. There were large entries from the London and South East Clubs as this was the final Hasler qualifier of the year. The course produced some fairly challenging conditions as the weather was warm and there were plenty of pleasure cruisers! One of the more notable results was that of Ivan Lawler and Helen Gilby managing 4th place in the senior men's assessment race. Each competitor received a free lunch provided by Manuels Bakers as well as other goodies. The prizes of embroidered polo shirts and towels were presented to the winners by former double World Champion Jeremy West and Andrew Trotman, one of the event's sponsors.

Thanks are due to all those who made the event so successful - especially the following sponsors: Bentalls, Willis Corroon Credit, Dodge Group, Kirton Kayaks, Eclipse Racing, Trotman and Bushy Park Lodge.

Article by James Clark

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BRONWYDD, CARMARTHEN, WALES. SA33 6BE

A few years ago I was given VIP treatment when I flew to Japan to appear on TV. Nice hotels, nice guided tours and nice appearance fee.

This visit however was under slightly different circumstances, so waking up in a grave yard in the centre of Tokyo, brought home just how far removed this trip was from the five star hotel one I had had last time. The grave yard was the only free, quiet spot I could find in the early hours of the seemingly never sleeping city. The other rafting guides, who had also travelled down from the small town of Minakami (which is two hours north of Tokyo) where we were based, had decided to not sleep at all but to dance the night away at one of the many night-clubs in the seedy area of Rappongi. About 8AM, I started to hear their shouts, as they tried to find me. So I jumped over the spiked fence of my unusual bedroom and together we proceeded to the TV station. This was our reason for our trip to Tokyo, interviews for a popular TV show called 'Challenger on Fire' that gives away a cash prize for a competition each week. We had heard that the next one would involve whitewater and inflatable canoes which sounded like a raft guide's calling.

Just about all the rafting guides from the company went down for the interview which I guess summed up the season so far. The lure of Yen had brought many guides over from Australia and NZ, but the season was a bit of a flop, with a lot of promises from the rafting company so far not being fulfilled. The Kiwi boys had started calling themselves 'Once Were Rafters' as the days went by with no work. (Japan has a five month rafting season starting in June, with two peak months just like the Austrian season. The Tonegawa river has three, gorge sections, each two hour trips, grade 3-4+ and is quite challenging in high water while a real drag when it's low in August!). The interviews were fun, there were lots of competitive kayakers there as well, trying to get on prime time TV. Twenty teams got through, and a week later we were gathered beside the Tonegawa (gawa meaning river) to be told about our challenge.

It was set up on a 200 metre, grade 4 section of the river. Using two man inflatable kayaks, with cameras strapped to the front and the back, we were given a time limit of one minute. The idea was to head down through the gates chasing a life ring that was dropped in the water half way down the course at the same time that we set off. The ring had to be carried across the finish line in under 60 seconds to win. The first team to successfully complete the course received the one million Yen (£5000). If nobody achieved the course then there were no winners.

Myself and Phil were the only two serious kayakers from our company. Phil was training up for the Zambezi race and was

Article and photos by Colin Hill

Challenger on

Fire

short of cash for travelling to Africa. I was making plans to travel on to another rafting destination and as always in need of flight money. We decided to join together as a team. We had drawn position 12 from the hat and had to wait for the other teams to go before us, we weren't allowed to watch, in case we picked up any tips from the other teams mistakes. We sat nervously for one and a half hours wondering if we would even get a chance. There were a few big screams from the spectators but we heard no news. Then it was our go, we were led to the start of the river where we told that nobody had won or even been close so far. A short interview for the cameras before we put on the river and then we quickly went over our 'elaborate' plans. Paddle hard, Phil to grab the ring... the electronic bleeper counted down, we looked across at the start gate, it was a hard ferry just to make it through there and apparently three teams had missed it due to the weight of the cameras on the boat. I wish I was in my Razor with my Gorilla Grips, but nobody was really supposed to win this, Michael Jordan won last year for shooting baskets which is fair enough I guess.

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEEEEEEP. Once through the gate we knew the fastest line down the rapid, so we decided to go for that and just hope the ring wouldn't be surfed anywhere. I was in the back so I couldn't see the ring. I just paddled and in what seemed like no time at all we were dropping down into the last wave chain, we should have got the ring by now! Then we saw it, washed into the last eddy and pushed against a wall. We spun in, slammed the wall, Phil jumped to the front of the boat and grabbed for the ring. I started to frantically back paddle, as I saw the clock at 54 seconds and ticking, we were almost at the finish line. In a last attempt to beat the clock, I threw myself backwards as I was the first person to cross over the line. I looked up at the clock - 59 seconds!!! The way we reacted, you would of thought it was a million pounds, which I guess to us it was as good as. Screaming we jumped into the water (to the horror of the TV safety divers on stand-by in case someone ripped off their buoyancy aid and swam to the bottom, I guess). We were called over to the side where spectators were watching the other river guides going wild (as we promised to throw a party if we won). I grinned at the camera saying 'my wife is going to love me for this'.

Another week passed before catching the bullet train down to the studio again to appear on the TV show. Boy I love being on TV, they showed the race on a big screen, which they then slid back, lots of smoke, lights and music. I walked out into the centre of the studio to the cheers of the audience, sporting my Palm T-shirt! Phil had to fly back to Oz to train so I had to answer lots of sensible questions from the two 'comedian' presenters about the great sport of pogo-sticking through a field of land mines, and a few about kayaking. Of course they phoned up the next day to let us know that 10% is taken off for tax!!

The season did eventually pick up for the rafting companies, although the river was really low by the end, the companies I am told are negotiating with the water authorities to try and buy water releases from the dam. Well Sianara Japan, off to Nepal again for a season with Ultimate Descents.



Thank-you

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Further information about kayaking in Japan can be obtained from;

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All summer Mushroom and Paul had been going on about how great Australia was, so I decided to see what it was like for myself. Contrary to popular belief, it's not all kangaroos, snakes and sharks. It also rains and can be freezing cold.

Well, my planned year of kayaking and raft guiding wasn't a complete success as I had my boat and equipment stolen in my first week in Australia and one weekend I had to spend almost as much money on jug fines as I had earned. However, I did meet some really nice people who went out of their way to make sure I was able to sample some of the best boating down under, and I did manage to get in some pretty wild river days.

Mushroom had mentioned a river called the Gwyder which he reckoned was the best river in Oz and said that I should definitely check it out. The Gwyder is a dam controlled river and it hadn't released in the last four years as there'd been a bit of drought. However, this year the dam was full and the river was up. There was a distinct lack of water in the Nymboida river where I was working so the Boss decided that we could go for a staff jolly under the somewhat dubious heading of "staff training". Just to make sure that we all made it back we had to tag along with a commercial trip which was going out that week.

Treading on cactus

To get to the "put in" on most rivers in Oz is a bit of a drive. This was no exception. We also got lost, which meant that we were stumbling around in the dark at the campsite, treading on cactus and trying not to find a snake in our sleeping bags.

We got up far too early the next morning to find that it was a lovely sunny day. With the minimum faff we pumped rafts, had breaky, met punters and did the shuttle. We even found out the river level from the nice man at the power station. Now, just to be different, Australia has yet another volume measurement for canoeists etc. to get their head round - "megs" or megalitres per day. Apparently it's a power station thing.

Grave faces and hushed voices

The river was running at 60,000 megas. This caused the guides to huddle together with grave faces and hushed voices (never a good sign). I hastily tried to convert 60,000 megas into cumecs without the aid of a calculator. In case you think I'm smart enough to do this in my head, I should explain that we were trying to do long division with a stick in the dirt. Initially I came up with 9 cumecs which couldn't be right; then I came up with 9,000 cumecs which was a bit scary. I later

discovered that the correct figure was about 700 cumecs.

Article by
Neil Newton Taylor

BIG W



Driving through the holes on Tombstone Rapid

All photos by Neil Newton Taylor

We went and had a look at the first of three rapids which led into one another, "Real Trouble", "More Trouble" and "Big Trouble". The Boss decided that everyone was going to walk the first one as it had a monster hole which would be a bit tricky to miss and swimming the next two rapids wouldn't be much fun. So we all made a big show of being really upset and happily started carrying the boats down the bank.

Say "oh, s—t" loudly

I had the dubious honour of guiding the first few rapids, mainly because nobody really wanted to. We'd had a bit of a chat about what we were going to do. Lots of "right, lads, this is it. No holding on or getting down on this river. This is big boys' stuff. We need to paddle the whole time." Well that lasted through "More Trouble" but "Big Trouble" consisted of another really big hole where the best line is to run guts pretty much in the middle. From the top of the ramp two things were apparent: (i) it looked an awful long way down and (ii) there was an excessively large hole at the bottom. I did what I normally do in these circumstances - say "oh, s—t" loudly and shout for the boys to get down.

We swapped the guiding around quite a lot,

which made the trip much more exciting as Mimo, Scotty and Noah hadn't really guided on big water before and they couldn't quite get to grips with the "need forward speed to get through the holes" concept. On several occasions we somehow found ourselves upright after drifting mostly sideways and backwards through the big stuff only for someone to say "I got a bit nervous when you shouted 'Oh, my God, we're all going to die' back there". 'You were nervous' I thought.

We portaged a fair few rapids and then watched Jeff and Regan, the photo and video boaters respectively, running them. We reached our campsite by early afternoon. All the gear was brought in by 4WD so we didn't have to carry it, which was excellent. This gave us plenty of time to sit around in the sun recounting stories of the day's epics whilst eating and drinking

Vast number of snakes and spiders

The next day was still incredibly sunny. Noah had failed to chat up any of the girls despite an awful lot of hard work in the evening. Before long we were off again. In a few places the forest had grown across the riverbed when the river had been dried out. This produced two very interesting rapids - Jungle Run and Triffids, a nice

UNDER N

ATER



grade 2 rapid on which you spend a lot of time dodging branches and hoping that you won't fall out and get strained. You also try not to think about the vast number of snakes and spiders which might live in the trees.

More exciting rapids, big portages around Dead End Falls and the very impressive Sapphire Falls all gave us the feeling that we were not just on a river trip but on our very own "Indiana Jones" adventure. Rapids followed rapid and all too soon we were nearing the end of the trip. Everyone had done really well and unfortunately we were getting just a little too cocky for our own good.

The Boss shouted back to us that "the next one's Equaliser; it's pretty calm afterwards so we'll just run down, eh?". I said that I would do safety so that I had an excuse to have a better look. I might be pretty stupid sometimes when I'm kayaking but you can't roll a raft back up. Just as I walked round a boulder to get into to a good position with the throw bag, I saw the first boat drift by, upside down. I only had to wait a few seconds before the second boat came through, also upside down, obviously coming to "rescue" the first boat. There were also some twenty people in the water, all having gone for an unexpected swim at the same time!

MOD

The next guide, Cas, decided that discretion was the better part of valour and managed to do a lovely sneaky line down the left. I was torn between being sensible and being stupid. It only took a bit of egging on from Jeff for me to be convinced, despite evidence to the contrary, that running down the centre would work just fine.

It took quite a bit more creativity (and a fair amount of time) to convince the rest of the crew that down the middle of the river was the best choice. Normally having a boatload of guides is a complete nightmare as nobody wants to do the same thing. However, when the odds are against you having everybody understand what you're doing and reacting early enough makes all the difference.

We cruised out of the eddy and lined it up. There were a few cross currents at the top which put me off my line a bit but it was too late to do anything about it so we just powered down, threw in the highside and held on. Against the odds we stayed upright and drifted down to the other boats, cheering loudly. By this time the guides had managed to flip over the two upturned rafts and we didn't have to pick up any of the swimmers. This was something of a relief as we didn't have room for another twenty people in our raft.

We spent the final few kms on cloud nine; we'd been lucky and we were thinking of the jug fines our fellow guides would be treating us with that evening.

Well, that was about it on the Gwyder and it was back to the Nymboida to see how many times I could fall out of the raft whilst being videoed. I'd just like to thank Boris and Drew for giving me jobs and everybody that I met who lent me boats, gave me



Running guts on Equaliser Rapid



Regan missing the tide on 'Real Trouble'



Hitting the hole at 'Big Trouble'

International Jug Rules:

This is a system brought in for guides to repay their colleagues for bailing them out when they screw up. It converts what would seem a hazardous moment for some people into a very happy one (at least for everyone else).

It consists of four main areas:

- flipping the raft
- wrapping (getting horribly stuck on a rock so that you have to be helped off it) swimming (falling out the back); and
- miscellaneous (which can be anything from leaving your helmet at home to crashing the 4WD).

Every time a guide commits an "offence" he has to buy jugs of beer at the pub on the way home. That's why everyone cheers so loudly when a boat goes over, the guide tries so hard to get a boat unwrapped by himself and everybody laughs so much when the guide falls out.



Friends of Allonby's

For the past six years Friends of Allonby Canoe Club has been running major Canoe Polo Tournaments during the summer at Dukes Dock, part of the renowned Albert Dock Complex in the heart of Liverpool. This year the 6th Merseyside International was held on 7th/8th June, and just five weeks later the 4th Liverpool International was held on 12th/13th July. 50 Teams attended the first Tournament and 45 the second. Despite the fact that a number of teams played in both events, a total of 76 different teams competed this year.

During the course of both weekends many thousands of people visiting the Albert Dock Complex stopped to watch the games and were obviously enthralled by the speed, skill and canoeing abilities of the players, and were amused and surprised that the rules allow players to capsize their opponents when in possession of the ball.

As in previous years, the Merseyside International was one of the highlights of the annual Mersey River Festival during which a lot of interesting water and land based events take place in, and around, the Albert Dock Complex and on both sides of the Mersey throughout two consecutive weekends. Because of the high number of teams competing, the Tournament was run in four separate Classes with the preliminary round of games in Classes 1-3 being played in mini-leagues, with Class 4 being played on a straight league basis with each team playing all of the others.

The newly formed Wales Ladies 'A' finished top of Class 4 on their first outing followed by the very good Youth Team from Glanford and Scunthorpe, with Caledonian Ladies (the unofficial Scotland Junior Ladies team) taking third place. In Class 3 the combined team from Ribble finished in first place ahead of Scotland Youth 'A', and the ever improving Dreamers from Regents Canoe Club in London taking third spot. The excellent Scotland Under 21 side took first place in Class 2, with Tynemouth in second place

followed by Harefield 'A', a scratch team put together specially for the Tournament. National Division 1 teams dominated Class 1 with Viking 'A' from Derby emerging worthy winners from Scotland's Woodmill in second place, and Wimps 'A' from Stratford on Avon in third place.

We were very pleased that local

Below: France 'B' in white boats tangle with Great Britain U21 'A' in red boats

Below middle: Colin Davis from Westbeach (red boat No. 2) fights for advantage over a France 'B' player

Below bottom: Brian Moore from Woodmill (red helmet) confronts 'Kiwi' from Ireland 'A'



Cable TV Channel One covered the Tournament and the following evening we had a five minute prime time slot featuring the Class 1 Final and interviews with Viking's Captain - Colin Davis, and Friends of Allonby's Press Officer - Frank Vaughan.

Traditionally, the two Great Britain Ladies Teams and three Great Britain Under 21 Teams attend the Liverpool International each July. This year we were also very pleased to attract France 'B' for the first time, together with top French Club - Thury Harcourt who attended last year's tournament. In addition, we were delighted to welcome many old and new friends from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales to make it a truly international event.

Unfortunately we had a number of 'no shows' with several teams failing to attend without notice which necessitated frantic modification to the Game Plans for three out of the four Classes. However, the changes didn't detract from the quality of the subsequent matches which were enjoyed by players and spectators alike.

Class 4 was dominated by Ex-Presidents, a team made up of students from Loughborough and Newcastle Universities. The very good youth team Viking 'Y' finished in second place and were followed by London University 'B'. In Class 3, Wimps 'B' finished in first place from Dreamers (who keep on getting better and better) and Rebels from Aberfan in third place.

Meridian 'B' from London took the Class 2 Final from Great Britain Under 21 'C', and home team Friends of Allonby Mixed which included three youth players finished in third place after winning their play-off game against World Champions, Great Britain Ladies 'A'.

In Class 1, France 'B' and Westbeach (a scratch team made up of five Great Britain players) emerged from the preliminary mini-leagues as likely protagonists for the eventual Final, and so it turned out to be. The Final was actually played about an hour before

Article by
Gerry McCusker
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4th Merseyside International Results

Class 1

- 1st Westbeach
- 2nd France B
- 3rd Wimps A
- 4th GB U21 B
- 5th Woodmill
- 6th Meridian A
- 7th Ireland A
- 8th Derby Rammers
- 9th Thury Harcourt
- 10th GB U21 A
- 11th Linlithgow
- 12th Scotland U21
- 13th Avon A

Class 2

- 1st Meridian B
- 2nd GB U21 C
- 3rd Friends of Allonby Mixed
- 4th GB Ladies A
- 5th Viking X
- 6th St. Albans D
- 7th Wales A
- 8th Friends of Allonby B
- 9th Manchester A
- 10th Letchworth Lynx
- 11th Scorpions

Class 3

- 1st Wimps B
- 2nd Dreamers
- 3rd Rebels
- 4th Bury
- 5th London University A
- 6th Pennine B
- 7th GB Ladies B
- 8th Matlock
- 9th Kingsway
- 10th Letchworth Ladies
- 11th Wimpy Dragons
- 12th Celtic Warriors
- 13th Wales Ladies A
- 14th Drumchapel and Clydebank

Class 4

- 1st Ex Presidents
- 2nd Viking Y
- 3rd London University B
- 4th Bury Youth
- 5th Old Speckled Hens
- 6th Friends of Allonby Youth B
- 7th Friends of Allonby Ladies

6th Merseyside International Results

- 1st Viking A
- 2nd Woodmill
- 3rd Wimps A
- 4th St. Johns
- 5th South Shore
- 6th Meridian
- 7th Ireland A
- 8th Derby Rammers
- 9th Humbersiders
- 10th Stubbers A
- 11th Luton Tigers A
- 12th Friends of Allonby A
- 13th Avon A
- 14th Ireland B

Class 2

- 1st Scotland U21
- 2nd Tynemouth
- 3rd Harefield A
- 4th Letchworth Lynx
- 5th Viking B
- 6th Friends of Allonby B
- 7th Stubbers B
- 8th Wales A
- 9th Wimps B
- 10th Braintree
- 11th SOAK
- 12th Manchester
- 13th Gladiators
- 14th Zeneca Zombies

Class 3

- 1st Ribble
- 2nd Scotland Youth A
- 3rd Dreamers
- 4th London University A
- 5th Friends of Allonby C
- 6th Wales Youth
- 7th Scorpions
- 8th Battersea Dogs
- 9th Kingsway
- 10th York University
- 11th Scotland Ladies
- 12th Manchester New Boys
- 13th Sunderland University
- 14th London University B

Class 4

- 1st Wales Ladies A
- 2nd Glanford & Scunthorpe Y
- 3rd Caledonian Ladies
- 4th The Pink Ladies
- 5th Friends of Allonby Ladies
- 6th The Ringers
- 7th Old Speckled Hens
- 8th York University Ladies



the Great Britain U21 'A' v. Wimps 'A' play-off for third place (won by Wimps) because the French Team had to leave early to ensure they could get to Portsmouth in time to catch the only ferry back home that night.

In bright sunshine France 'B' and Westbeach, two really fabulous teams, churned the water of Dukes Dock into a mass of seething white froth as the rapid fire action moved from one end of the pitch to the other in a matter of seconds. The French took an early lead then stretched it to 2-0 to the obvious delight of their Coach, their girlfriends, and their countrymen from Thury Harcourt. However, despite this early setback, the five man Westbeach Team of Colin Davis, Stuart Moffitt, twins Graham and Ramsay Bayne, and Andy Petrie kept up the pressure and constantly attacked the French goal. Their efforts were eventually rewarded and they went into a well deserved half time break trailing by a single goal.

The second half started just as the first had done before, with ex-Prem slalom paddler Stuart Moffitt blasting down the pitch to win the sprint from his French opponent. The game subsequently progressed at breakneck speed with wave upon wave of white French boats attacking the Westbeach goal, followed by lightning counter attacks by the incredibly fast Westbeach players. Something had to give and it was the French defence which finally

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Above: No. 2 for Ireland 'A' attacking Wimps 'A'

cracked to level the scoreline to 2-2.

Clearly stimulated by their goal, the Westbeach players appeared to throw themselves into overdrive. Time after time they carved huge holes in the French defence and were duly rewarded with a third and fourth goal in quick succession. By this time, the French supporters had understandably fallen silent as they witnessed the final minutes of this truly fabulous game. With the seconds running out, Westbeach threw themselves into a final assault and were suitably rewarded with a superb goal to take the Class 1 Final with a scoreline of 5-2.

Friends of Allonby is an 'open' canoe club with members participating in most of the paddlesport disciplines. Despite the fact that only about 35% have an interest in Polo, many of our other members turn out year after year to help run our Internationals and make them so enjoyable for players and spectators alike. If you want to see Canoe Polo played at the highest level let me extend an invitation to all Focus readers to next year's tournaments - 7th Merseyside International on 13th/14th June 1998 and 5th Liverpool International on 18th/19th July 1998. See you there!



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A New Beginning for Plas Y Brenin brings many Privileges for **BCU Members**



On the first of January 1997, the Sports Council awarded the management contract for Plas y Brenin to the Mountain Training Trust (MTT).

MTT is a non profit making company set up by the key National Governing Bodies of Sport involved at Plas Y Brenin (the British Mountaineering Council, the Mountain Leader Training Board and the United Kingdom Mountain training Board.)

Over the five year term of the contract MTT aim to:

- Make the National Mountain Centre more accessible by offering new training opportunities for those who lead and

coach others in the wild and remote places of Britain and for individual climbers and canoeists who want to improve their performance.

- Make the Centre more relevant to the changing world of outdoor pursuits.
- Manage the Centre in a cost effective way so that training can be offered at the most affordable price possible.

MTT believe that the new partnership arrangement with the Sports Council will provide a model for sports development in the future and will guarantee Plas Y Brenin's place at the centre of mountaineering and canoeing developments in the United Kingdom.

Iain Peter has been appointed as the new Chief Executive and has made significant steps to implement the above aims. For canoeists who are full members of the BCU or WCA, they are willing to offer a number of discounts:

To obtain further information and your pack of discount vouchers please write to: Plas Y Brenin. The National Mountain Centre, Capel Curig, Gwynedd, LL24 OET or telephone 01690 720214. Giving your membership number in both cases.

These benefits include;

- 10% off the price of all canoe courses (except the level 5 course)
- B&B for £5 (Once only and dependant on space. Normally this will be available during the winter months. Thereafter £10 for members.)
- A half price bar meal.
- Free use of canoe rolling pool (The pool will be free to clubs or groups who have qualified staff.)
- Free admission to the evening lecture programme.
- Free conference facilities for any BCU registered club or approved centre.
- Free access to the lake and grade 2 rapid at the centre and 1 mile section of river below. (Prior arrangement needed)
- Discounted use of the self catering bunkhouse (up to 16 people)

These are quite substantial benefits to BCU/WCA members and we thank the Chief Executive and MTT for their enlightened attitude to canoeing at the Centre, and hope that members will take advantage of the many benefits that the Brenin has to offer.



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There we were, warm and comfortable, chatting over coffee during the British Christian Outdoor Centres Conference, last January at the YMCA National Centre, Lakeside: 'So how about a Scottish canoe camping trip, taking in a few Lochs and rivers on the way?'

After a long night drive and a quick bivi by the car - we eventually arrived at Dalwhinnie at 10.30 on Monday morning. We were relieved to find an excellent track along the north west side of the Loch which provided problem-free access. Having unpacked the car, we were grateful for a friendly offer of a safe place to park it for the next 5 days and we set off on the first leg of the trip just after midday.

Highest village in the highlands

Given that Dalwhinnie claims to be the highest village in the highlands, and we had heard that snow ploughs were needed to get through on the access road we used right up to June last year, the weather could not have been kinder to us that April afternoon. A light breeze followed us, giving that little bit of encouragement which makes such a difference at the start of a trip. The temperature was approximately 10° and the sun was shining. What a privilege!

We wanted to get some distance behind us while the weather was favourable - so we paddled nearly the length of the Loch that first afternoon and evening. Dave was paddling a light, graceful Reynard Tourer (made from light but strong diolen), which had been very well used but expertly repaired several times. I was in a new, heavier Old Town Scout made from cross linked plastic. We were both aware that the boats might not be too well matched, mine being slower on the Lochs and Dave's being less robust on the rocky rivers. We were pleasantly surprised on that first

evening by how well the Scout tracked and kept up with Dave's Tourer, a favourable impression which continued with us as we paddled on many different types of water - from the placid Lochs to the largish rapids of Grand Tully (grade 3). Not only was the boat reasonably fast on placid water, it also proved to be robust and manoeuvrable on moving water. Also, the high gunwales helped keep out water in big waves which flooded into Dave's boat. The only modification I will make before a similar trip will be to lower the thwarts which are supplied very high (the result of high gunwales). I found this limited the flexibility of the body for the extreme trunk rotation required for the crossdeck strokes and the compound backwater. But I digress.

As evening wore on, the following wind picked up to force 3-4 and having rafted the boats together we made rapid progress, surfing the small white capped waves, until we rounded a headland and entered the bay at Ben Alder Cottage. The bothy, though already in use, was a welcome sight - and we pitched our tent on the excellent camping field nearby.

A typical trangia rehydrated meal, and Dave's provision of a bag of Tesco's red (a wine box without the box) set us up for the night - and the rest of the trip!

After an excellent if much needed night's sleep and grapefruits and Alpen for breakfast, we set off from the bothy at a very reasonable 10.30ish, our boats the only slight disturbance on a sun-drenched mirror, reflecting the pine woods on the shore and the snow capped mountains above. 'What a day'.

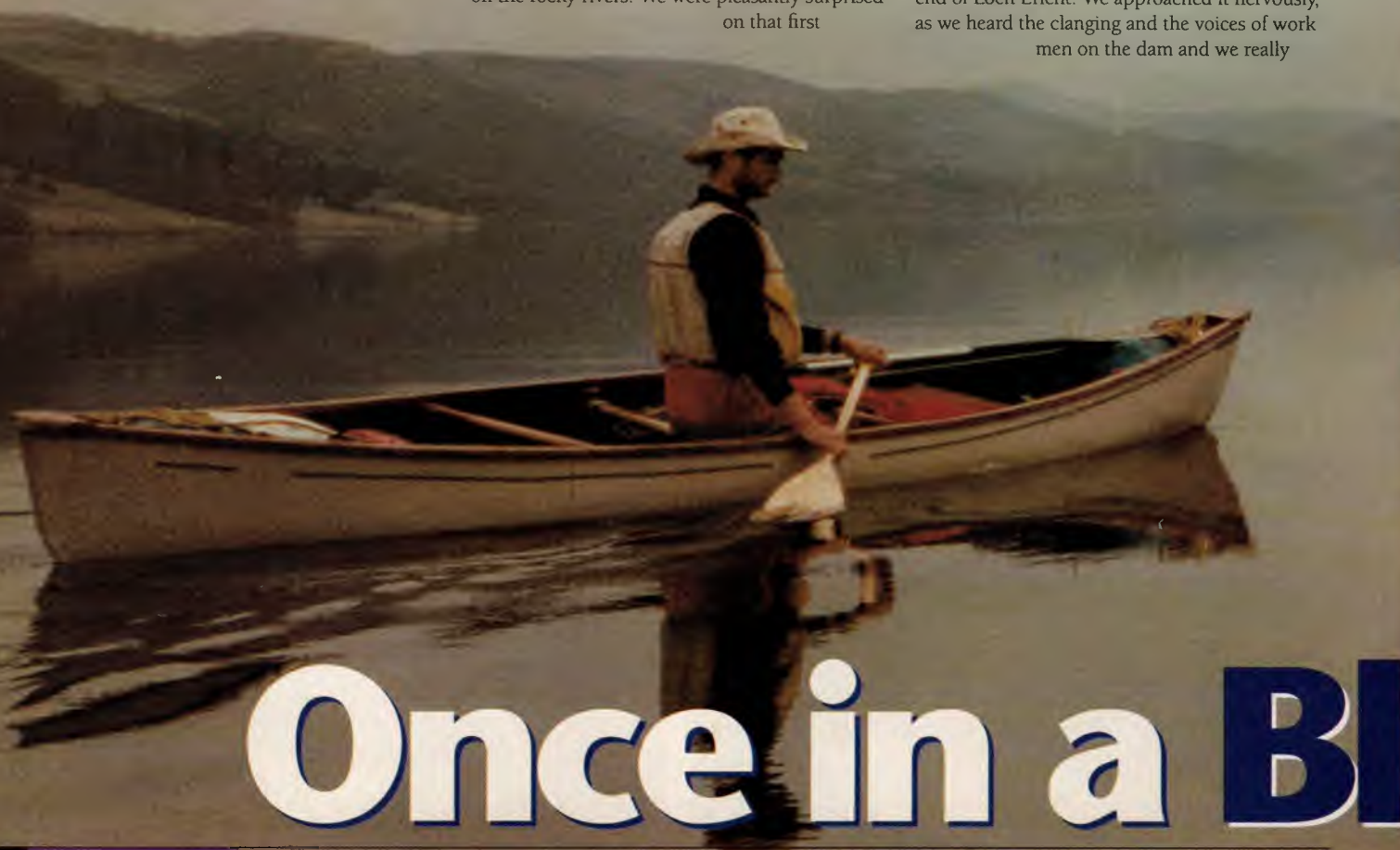
Each of us paddled with his own thoughts for a while. Dave made for the middle of the Loch, whilst I was entranced by the warm, green beauty of the wooded shore and the heavy scent of resin on the air.

By midday we had reached the dam at the far end of Loch Ericht. We approached it nervously, as we heard the clanging and the voices of workmen on the dam and we really

Rather than the usual meaningless 'Yeah we must do it some time', one or two phone calls over the next few weeks and things started to take shape. It looked as if the trip might actually happen.

Dave Ritchie, a veteran of several trips in Scotland, Northern Canada and Nepal, and currently a youth worker at Mansfield Outdoor Centre in Essex, had plenty of experience. I was the rookie of the team - but was raring to go - and had a whole barrel full of home-made flapjacks and chocolate squares which would, I knew, get us through most scrapes!

Our plan? To leave the car at Dalwhinnie, at the northern end of Loch Ericht, paddle the 25km length of the Loch, then down the River Ericht onto Loch Rannoch. Head east to join the River Tummel and follow it through Loch Dunalastair and Loch Tummel, getting out at Queen's view, just above the Linn o' Tummel, a grade V gorge which would doubtless have treated our open boats with the same relish with which we devoured Tessa's flapjacks.



Once in a Bl

didn't want to be sent back the way we had come. We beached and were relieved that we had no problem with obstructive officials. Time to try my new boat on the moving water of the River Ericht. What water? We were amazed and shocked to see there was no River Ericht - just a line of boulders where the river used to flow. It is now diverted into giant pipes and used to power the hair dryers and kettles of Stirling and Edinburgh- or somewhere. What do we do now? It was a good 6km walk and a drop of at least a couple of hundred metres down to our next assured water - Loch Rannoch.

No river to paddle on

As it happened the workmen on the dam were leaving just as we were steeling ourselves for the long walk down to Loch Rannoch. I flagged them down. "We were planning to canoe down to the Loch but there's no river to paddle on. If we could stick our packs (of which we had several) in your vans, we'll carry the boats." The driver replied, "Stick the boats on the roof!" I looked up and both their vehicles were fitted with sturdy roof racks. RESULT.

As we bumped down the 6 km track to the shore of Loch Rannoch I asked how often they were up working on that dam. "Once in a Blue Moon" came the reply. They had seen a fault on the screen at the control station that morning and came up to find that there was, in fact, no problem. Dave and I looked at each other amazed. Someone up there was definitely looking after us!

It seemed amazing to be suddenly sitting on the sun drenched beach beside Loch Rannoch enjoying lunch when we should have been struggling down a dirt track with 70lbs of canoe on our necks, and then heading back up for three packs apiece. But here we were. After lunch it was time to contemplate the paddle east down the length of Loch Rannoch. The wind had backed 90°

since our north-south stretch down Loch Ericht yesterday and once again it was directly behind us. Here was the perfect opportunity to rig up a sail which we did using two canoe poles, the tent flysheet and a length of spare rope. We sailed the length of the loch and arrived at Kinloch Rannoch by late afternoon. Another rehydrated hash, an excellent camp site and yet more Alpen and we were back on the water again - having skipped over our second dam of the trip and joined the River Tummell. We were delighted to find that there was plenty of water in this river and it was great to be on moving water for the first time since we had left Dalwhinnie.

Almost too low to paddle

We hit no real obstacles until a large dam after Loch Dunalastair which we managed to portage round. There were one or two interesting weirs to negotiate and a few none-too-threatening rapids, although we did have to portage two sets of falls. The river was, in fact, almost too low to paddle, but it provided plenty of poling practice.

We reached Tummel Bridge by evening, leaving the last grade 3 rapid, for the following morning. Thence an easy but delightful loch paddle to our get out at Queen's View.

The beauty of this trip for anyone else who may be considering a 5 day Scottish trip was the ease of the shuttle with only one vehicle. It was a short jog (4km) from the get out to the A9 at Pitlochry and a single hitch up to Dalwhinnie and the car. In all this took about three hours.

However, this would not solve the problem of what to do at the Loch Ericht dam. Remember, those guys in the Land Rovers are only up there 'once in a blue moon'.



ue Moon



Jonathan Cox is director of Fair Glade Trust, an Oxfordshire-based Christian charity providing outdoor education courses and holidays for young people.

1st Annual Paddfest '97

Paddfest '97 a weekend paddle bash based in Nottingham over the weekend of 1st/2nd November 1997. The first of many such 'active' gatherings. The objective of the weekend is to bring together as many paddlers, with as wide a range of paddling interests as possible so as to create a fun, multi discipline event, featuring elements of competition, coaching sessions and clinics, access clinics, 'have a go/ try a boat' sessions, presentations and lectures, doing your own thing, along with a trade exhibition, car boot sale and of course paddfest party.

Five programmes will be running providing wide ranging and varied activity from which you can choose, mix and match to create your own itinerary. Come along and view, or come along and be fully involved. Come for one day or come for both, the choice is yours.

'Paddfest' Peak white water challenge

We are looking for a true whitewater champion, and we want everyone out there to try for the glory - racers pitted against river bashers, Rodeo shreddz ripping it alongside slalom stick chasers!!

The challenge is on and will commence with a head to head down river race, the ability to run a clean fast line a necessity for success... Follow that with a floodlit rodeo - a relaxed party atmosphere on the wildest parts

of the river! Then rise to the challenge of the extreme slalom, pushing your ability to use all the river features in the most interesting way.

The only stipulation we put on all of this is that everybody uses a production plastic boat in all races, so levelling the scores for everybody, and upping the fun!! For anyone without a plastic boat, demos will be available all weekend, from Pyranha and Perception.

Can you dig it?

We are looking for, that all round Whitewater Champion....! Show us what you are made of.... indeed, impress us!!

There will be classes for both ladies and juniors running alongside an open event, the main focus of the events being towards creating a fun environment on the river. If you don't smile, you won't win!! Prizes will be awarded for the top three places in all disciplines, as well as spot prizes for 'special achievements' throughout all stages of the event.

'Paddfest' - Pyranha Coaching symposium

The 'Paddfest' Pyranha Coaching Symposium will provide key note speakers along with a mix of indoor and outdoor sessions covering topical aspects of coaching development. An 'excellence' programme will provide opportunities to join in on coaching sessions, run by experienced coaches, covering areas of skill / technique

development and paddlesport psychology.

The Coaching Symposium programme will repeat itself on both days so that you will be able to select the appropriate times and clinics to fit in with participation in the Whitewater Challenge, casual paddling, lectures, trade show visits etc.

One day and half day clinics will also be available... Open Canoe / Open Canoe Sailing / slalom / Sprint / Rodeo / land locked sea paddling and Surf to mention just a few... Your chance to try out a new or little experienced aspect of paddlesport.

'Get in touch/ Stay in touch' programme.

The 'Paddfest' 'Get in touch/ Stay in touch' programme will provide you with opportunities to drop in on BCU 'surgeries' run by members of BCU Executive and Council...

...The BCU and structural change/the BCU and Communication/the BCU and Finding the funds / the BCU and Young People / the BCU and Access and facility strategy / the BCU Performance Plan...

...your chance to find out what is happening with the overall development of paddlesport, discuss and comment on strategic issues and development plans for the new millennium.

'Paddfest' Access Programme

Key members of the BCU Access Committee will be at the weekend for annual Regional Access Officer Training. There will be several



For further details please contact
Mr Tom Shaw, Duchy College, Stoke
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TELEPHONE 01579 370769



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ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITY INSTRUCTOR COURSE

Duchy College also offers this 2 year practical course for
students over 18 who want to become Outdoor Pursuits Instructors.

opportunities in the programme for all those present over the weekend to participate in open sessions on access matters. All will be welcome to come along and find out what is happening on the access front, express their views and join in discussions.

'Paddfest' Trade Show and Car boot sale.

Open to the public at specific times over the weekend the Paddfest Trade show will provide you with an opportunity to visit Britains top paddlesport manufacturers to view and discuss developments in paddling gear, maybe get the low down on what new designs may emerge in '98 and covet new bits of kit, all safe in the knowledge that on this occasion you can't spend - at least not on new gear. Many of you, however, may well be in search of cheap gear, many of you will no doubt have gear to move on. The Car Boot sale will be the thing for you. Register your car, bring along your cast off/ excess paddling gear and set up in the car boot sale area.

In addition to all of this there will be a programme of presentations and lectures running so that you can balance your own day/ weekend programme between indoor and outdoor sessions / competition and coaching sessions, doing your own thing (free paddling sessions available on the slalom course) partying and having a good time.

'Paddfest 97' provides two full days of paddlesport activity and if that's not enough to either encourage you to join us or to make you feel that there would be enough to keep you entertained then consider the

paddfest bonfire party and disco on Saturday night - the paddlesport social event of the year.

'Paddfest' Admin

Peak Whitewater Challenge - Entry for the event is £15 for the whole schedule, including a limited edition T shirt and the paddfest party. The aim of the event is to find a full and worthy champion of all! For an entry number (limited to a total of 120) and full details of the event timings etc., please return the completed form.

Pyranha Coaching Symposium and All other events - The Symposium fee, which covers entry to all other aspects of the weekend is £10 per person (£5.00 per day) if pre-paid and £15 (£10 per day) if paid on arrival. Inclusive in these costs are entry to any or all aspects of the coaching programme and clinics / the get in touch/stay in touch programme / the access programme and of course the party!

If wishing to pre-register for these aspects of the weekend please indicate so on the form below and return with your booking fee.

The Symposium and Competition fees do not include accommodation and food. The Holme Pierrepont Campsite will be open for the weekend and for those less hardy an accommodation list will be provided. (Unfortunately there will be no accommodation available in the main centre).

Admission to the Paddfest Party is free and open to all. Food and drink will be available for purchase.

On receipt of your booking form we will forward further details of the weekend programme.

Paddfest 97
1/2 November Booking Form

- Please book me a place at the paddfest weekend 1/2 November 1997.
- I wish to attend the Coaching Symposium and associated programme only and enclose the £10 fee (£5 per day)
- If booking one day only please indicate which day.
SAT SUN
- I wish to attend the Competition Programme Only and enclose the £15 fee
- I wish to attend both the Competition and the Coaching and associated programme and enclose the £25 fee.
(£20 if booking only one day at the coaching Symposium
SAT SUN (please indicate which day)
- I wish to reserve a space at the Car Boot Sale I enclose £3 for one pitch. SUNDAY ONLY

Name.....
Address.....
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Post Code..... Tel No
Date of Birth SIGNED.....

Please make cheques payable to the British Canoe Union and return with booking form to **Paddfest 97, BCU Headquarters, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 5AS**



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Paddlefest (provisional) Programme of Events - Saturday 01 November

COACHING	COMPETITION	BCU KEEP IN TOUCH	TRADE EVENTS	PERSONAL PERFORMANCE CLINICS & COURSE
<p>08.30 Registration 09.15 Opening Address 09.30</p> <p>Manual Heading Disability Awareness BCU Coaching Service Update Young Paddlers Scheme</p> <p>11.15 Keynote Speech 12.30 - 2.00</p> <p>Coaching Resources Women in Canoeing Environmental Issues NVQ's and Child Protection</p> <p>2.30 - 5.00 Excellence Clinics</p> <p>Transferable Skills - (Slalom-Recreation) - (Sprint-Recreation) Coaching Young Paddlers Functional Biomechanics The Coaching Process Canoe Sport Psychology Acquisition of Motor Skills Coaching/ Assessing 3 & 4* Inner Game of Coaching</p>	<p>08.30</p> <p>Registration at Current Trends</p> <p>09.00</p> <p>Open Use of White Water Course and Sprint Course</p> <p>11.00 Competitions</p> <p>River Race Raft Race</p> <p>12.30</p> <p>Polo Demo & clinic Winfield Pool</p> <p>2.00</p> <p>Open use of White Water Course and Sprint Course</p> <p>4.30 - 8.00</p> <p>Floodlit Rodeo</p>	<p>10.00</p> <p>BCU and Structural Change</p> <p>1.00</p> <p>BCU and Communication</p> <p>2.30</p> <p>BCU and Finding the Funds</p> <p>4.00</p> <p>BCU and Young People</p> <p>5.15</p> <p>BCU and Performance plan</p> <p>7.15</p> <p>BCU Access Strategy</p>	<p>08.30</p> <p>Regional Access Officer Training (Closed Session)</p> <p>11.30</p> <p>Access (Open Debate)</p> <p>1.00</p> <p>Regional Access Officer Training (Closed Session)</p>	<p>08.30 Registration 09.00 - 11.00</p> <p>Bell Boating Sea Kayaking DW Clinic Surf Clinic Advanced White Water Workshop Rodeo & Playboating Skills Open Canoe Open Water Skills Forward Paddling (Sprint) Canoe Sailing Intro to Slalom Coaching Intro to Wild Water Racing</p> <p>2.00 - 4.30</p> <p>Bell Boating Sea Kayaking Canoe Sailing DW Clinic Surf Clinic Advanced White Water Workshop Rodeo & Playboating Skills Open Canoe Moving Water Skills Forward Paddling (Sprint) Intro to Slalom Coaching Intro to Wild Water Racing</p>

7.30 pm - 8.30 pm: Evening Lecture
 8.30 pm late : Bonfire Party
 Demonstration Boats available ALL DAY



Paddlefest (provisional) Programme of Events - Sunday 02 November

COACHING	COMPETITION	BCU KEEP IN TOUCH	TRADE EVENTS	PERSONAL PERFORMANCE CLINICS & COURSE
<p>08.30 Registration 09.15 Opening Address 09.30</p> <p>Manual Heading Disability Awareness Environmental Issues Women in canoeing</p> <p>11.15 Keynote Speech 12.30 - 2.00</p> <p>BCU Coaching Service Update Young Paddlers Scheme NVQ's & Child Protection Coaching Resources</p> <p>2.30 - 5.00 Excellence Clinics</p> <p>Transferable Skills - (Slalom-Recreation) - (Sprint-Recreation) Coaching Young Paddlers Functional Biomechanics The Coaching Process Canoe Sport Psychology Acquisition of Motor Skills Coaching/ Assessing 3 & 4* Inner Game of Coaching</p>	<p>08.30</p> <p>Registration at Current Trends</p> <p>09.00</p> <p>Open Use of White Water Course and Sprint Course</p> <p>11.00 Competitions</p> <p>Extreme Slalom</p> <p>12.30</p> <p>Polo Demo & clinic Winfield Pool</p> <p>3.00</p> <p>Open use of White Water Course and Sprint Course</p> <p>4.30 Prize Giving</p> <p>Individual/Team Overall Champion</p>	<p>08.30</p> <p>BCU Access Strategy</p> <p>09.30</p> <p>BCU Performance plan</p> <p>10.45</p> <p>BCU & Young People</p> <p>11.45</p> <p>BCU and Finding the Funds</p> <p>1.30</p> <p>BCU and Communication</p> <p>2.30</p> <p>BCU and Finding the Funds</p>	<p>08.30</p> <p>Regional Access Officer Training (Closed Session)</p> <p>11.00</p> <p>Access (Open Debate)</p> <p>1.30</p> <p>Regional Access Officer Training (Closed Session)</p>	<p>10.30</p> <p>Car Boot Sale</p> <p>2.00 TRADE SHOW</p> <p>Open to the public</p>

HAVE YOU THE Experience?

There are many organised annual canoe events, where paddlers gather together to take advantage of specially arranged river access agreements and water releases, usually guaranteeing excellent canoeing conditions. In addition, side stalls, trade stands and entertainment are laid on for when the water activities cease or it goes dark.

The events, which cater for all ages and experience levels, are great opportunities for the experienced, but are beginners missing out? As a beginner, I am familiar with the very basics of canoeing; paddling in a straight line, turning, and exiting when capsized. My water time is limited to a few sessions in a pool and several runs down a local white water course. I am an amateur! Furthermore, I do not belong to a canoe club.

Beginners, as with any technical sport, can be put off attending large gatherings for fear of being embarrassed by their lack of experience and the ability of the more able canoeists, especially if they are not part of a group.

I decided to 'test the water' and attend the 1996 Tyne Tour to see whether novices can participate in such events without being intimidated by their inexperience. I was accompanied by my girlfriend, a more experienced canoeist.

Situated to the east of the meeting point of the North and South Tyne rivers, the two main focal points of the weekend, Hexham in Northumberland is the base for the Tyne Tour, which caters to over 1000 paddlers each year. Several tributary rivers are also used.

We travelled on the Friday, arriving to an almost empty campsite. By morning the local park was awash with tents and canoes. The weather was bright, but there was a strong wind. There had been odd showers overnight and these continued throughout the weekend.

My partner decided that, as a gentle introduction, we should drive to Haydon Bridge, some 9.5 miles along the South Tyne. The trip back to Hexham is classified as Grade II-III, and listed as being ideal for groups. As we arrived, a

group of around eight were passing our entry point, having set out from further upstream earlier in the day.

Upon entering the water we found that the wind was strong enough to pose a problem in exposed places. In addition, the shallow depth of the river in certain areas made for difficult paddling.

We shortly caught up with the group in front as they played in the rapids. We got talking and they invited us to join them. They made us feel like group members within a short space of time and even offered to share their lunch with us, although we had eaten before we set out.

The trip was a slow, leisurely affair with calm sections interspersed by small stretches of rapids, allowing play opportunities. There was always someone watching over the group in case of a mishap. In all, the descent passed without incident and, although I had backache from three hours in a boat, we arrived at the campsite safe and dry. I then took a lift back to the car park at Haydon Bridge, via the organised shuttle service, to retrieve the car.

Later we met up with friends from Burnley Canoe Club (BCC) and spent the evening in the nearby sports centre enjoying the organised entertainment's and bar. We were invited to join them the following day for some playboating at Barrasford, on the North Tyne.

Morning dawned and we drove to meet BCC at Barrasford. It looked fast and difficult to the novice's eye and at this point, I decided that I didn't have the experience to tackle it. To be fair, there was no feeling of peer pressure to participate and so I spent the day taking photographs of the others. We arrived back at the campsite late in the afternoon, packed up, and made the return trip to Bolton.

Certain conclusions can be drawn from my experience. In general, if novices wish to attend such events, then it is better to do so as part of an organised group, although there is no reason for them not to attend as a member of a small party. I would advise against paddling alone. There



appears to be a 'pull together' attitude among the groups with many willing to allow others to tag along. A chat to a fellow canoeist in the pub over a pint can lead to any number of opportunities - I learned a few things from the other group members on the weekend, and practice only increases ability.

The Tyne Tour can cater for all experience levels as there are several sections that are well within the capabilities of beginners. Of course, the non-canoeing activities make the weekend a good social event and I found that the general camaraderie among paddlers should serve to encourage a novice to continue in the sport and further broaden its appeal as a recreational activity for all.

Seeing others dancing in stoppers and thoroughly enjoying themselves certainly made me wish I was at a level where I could do it myself.

Tyne Tour '97 is to be held on 7th - 9th November 1997. The price of a ticket is £10.00. All proceeds go to the further development of canoeing and to promote the sport as a recreational activity for all. The usual attractions will be there and further details can be obtained by sending an A4 SAE to: Tyne Tour '97 c/o The Watershed Unit 1 Elliott Terrace Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE4 6UP

Article by Simon Edlington



Yakety Yak Letters Page is sponsored by Yak/Crewsaver. If you provide the star letter, you could be the lucky winner of one of these buoyancy aids.



Sea Kayak Safety

Dear Canoe Focus
 I notice that Sea Kayak manufacturers now offer bulkhead options to reduce the volume of the central (cockpit) compartment, making it easier to empty of water. Slanted or curved bulkheads immediately behind the seat are available to achieve this. Recognition of the problem is a welcome development, but I have long wondered why the main manufacturers do not offer a 'pod' as the ultimate answer.

The pod is an integral seat and lower body moulding, like a small hull within the hull, sealed to the cockpit rim. The volume of water a pod holds is so small that a pump is necessary. Also, a pod can be drained simply by turning the boat on its side. Furthermore, a pod is extremely comfortable and very secure for thigh/knee bracing. So far as I know, only the Sea Tiger has this feature as standard, and I am not aware of any manufacturer who offers it as an option.

I would be interested in comment, especially from manufacturers.
 Geoff Miller.



Regional Tours and Events

Dear Canoe Focus

Having been the Regional Touring Officer for several years I have been in the position to both organise my own, and take part in many, if not all of the WM Regional Tours at some time or other, as well as quite a few from other regions.

I have noticed over the past few years that more and more events not only in the West Midlands, but in other regions are becoming Charity Events, whereby the organising body decide on a charity and obviously promote it as a way of raising funds for that charity concerned, such as Mencap, British Heart Foundation and the Guide Dogs for the Blind etc.

I am also chief instructor at the Ackers Activity Centre based in Birmingham, an inner city outdoor centre catering for all those who wish to take part in not only canoeing but climbing and skiing etc. With clients ranging from able bodied fit youngsters to those that are disabled, whether it be blind, deaf, mental or physical disability, all of whom gain a great deal of pleasure from the activities they participate in.

You may wonder where all this is leading to, well, a year or so ago I realised that all these charity events are great fund-raisers for those concerned and obviously the money goes a long way to helping purchase various machines etc. And help make life easier for those with a disability.

But what about those people that the money is raised for, who get so much pleasure from a simple trip along a canal, why can't an event be organised for them, an actual BCU Regional or National Tour that caters for disabled people and helpers, whereby boats

and time are donated free by Instructors and Centres and as many people with a disability can be on the water at the same time having fun and also probably fund-raising at the same time.

Obviously this would take a lot of organisation and good will from centres and instructors alike to donate boats or their time free of charge, but I am sure if you have worked with disabled people in the past you will know what rewards it reaps.

I have already mentioned this at both Regional and National Touring Committee meetings in the past and have had good feedback and am now looking to anyone who may be interested in trying to get this show off the ground to contact me to see if we can make it work.

At the Ackers we have also had many dealings with women only groups and it is surprising how many women, especially single mothers who would like to have a go at an activity such as canoeing but seem to feel unable to because of lack of knowledge or the threat of being over ruled by males.

I know that there is a big push by those concerned to get more females into boats and become instructors etc. but perhaps they should be taught to walk before they sprint, again talking to certain female members of the WM Region, a female and children only tour would cater for many mums who just want a gentle paddle with their offspring.

Again if there is anyone who might wish to help organise such a tour perhaps they could, and leave us males on the bank for a day.

Dave Bateman - West Midlands Regional Touring Officer

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Low Brace Turn

Dear Canoe Focus

Low Brace Turn - June 97 issue. Another point on 'tilting a boat to help it turn' - short fat rockered boats don't want to go in straight lines; left to their own devices, they will always turn. Paddling along, every stroke tends to start turning the boat (which you correct with your next stroke, of course). Between taking one blade out of the water and putting the other one in, the boat will be turning slowly.

If you keep your boat flat, you barely notice this. However, if you tilt your boat, and it doesn't matter which side you tilt it to, it will accelerate the already existing turn. In other words, it keeps turning in the same direction, but faster. Don't take my word for this - go out and try it.

Long thin boats perform differently, as we all know.

The teaching point that comes from this is; tell your novice waltzers to stop rocking the boat.

Vic Brown

Cherwell Canoe Club

Dear Canoe Focus

Just a short note to congratulate Cherwell Canoe Club who hosted the Div 3 canoe slalom event on July 5/6th at Holme Pierrepont. The event was very well organised and friendly.

It provided a fabulous opportunity for many paddlers and spectators to enjoy the many challenges of the sport and really work on river running skills. The combination of the different courses provided interest on both days with the Rodeo on Saturday evening enhancing the entertainment.

The support Perception gave to the event was excellent, with many people trying out their range of boats.

Once again, can we congratulate Cherwell Canoe Club for their efforts.

Chris and Barbara Buggy

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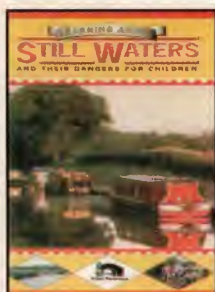
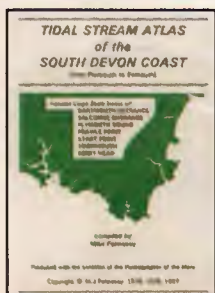
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RIVERSIDE SHOP at MILE END MILL



**Reviewed by
Wendy Blackman
unless otherwise
stated.**



Wild and Complicated Freedom

Available from BCU Supplies at £19.99
This video follows Cathal McCosker and Leon Harris on their circumnavigation of Ireland by Sea Kayak. Produced for the open market it is not directly aimed at the sea paddler, therefore the paddling content is only a minor part of this compilation. However, this is a very pleasant, easy to watch video, with music recorded at events they attended along the way. It provides a wonderful insight into the spirit of the Irish countryside and its people. Relaxing and humorous.

Canoeing Expeditions for People with Disabilities

By Geoff Smedley - Available from BCU Supplies £5.50
An excellent guide compiled by Geoff Smedley, author of Canoeing for Disabled People. Contributions to this publication have been made by a number of well known personalities such as Dave Manby and Steve Devlin. Offering advice to disabled people who are considering embarking on water borne expeditions, and also for people who are including disabled people in their team. Covers everything from motivation, travel and transport, administration, access, safety, medical emergencies, artificial limbs and much more. A comprehensive list of recommended reading and useful addresses round off the publication. A comprehensive and informative production which is excellent value.

Tidal Stream Atlas, South Devon Coast
ISBN 0 9530656 0 X
Compiled by Mike Fennessy

It's good to see this little gem back in print. First published in 1978 it gave me great insight into the world of tidal streams and their effects in conjunction with natural features and more importantly, upon me as a canoeist. Collated by Mike Fennessy, (a former BCU Sea Coach) who is still held in high regards by many sea canoeists in the South West. This is one of the few nautical publications covering this area with the small craft user in mind. Presented in A5 format the third edition follows the same easy to understand layout as the preceding publications. 13 chartlets represent tidal states relative to HW Devonport with tidal stream arrows of varying sizes reflecting their strength and direction. Detailed inserts also indicate tidal conditions in the ports of: Plymouth, Salcombe, Dartmouth and Teignmouth. More importantly, for the

sea touring canoeist, similar inserts show tidal states off Berry Head, Prawle and Start Point. Mike's Explanatory Notes on factors effecting tidal conditions, the little snippets of information and helpful tips makes this one of the best publications a canoeists could buy. A sister publication: Tidal Stream Atlas of South Cornwall Coast (Penzance to Plymouth) compiled by the same author is also available. Both are in paperback format, priced at £6.30 each and obtainable by post from: Sea Chest Nautical Bookshop, Queen Anne Battery Marina, Plymouth PL4 OLP Tel: 01752 222012. Mike advises me he is currently working on a real-time simulation of the Atlas for PC use and a general book on tides and tidal streams. I wonder if any manufacturers have produced a dry bag which will accommodate a laptop yet?

Reviewed by Nigel Hingston - Level 3 Sea Coach

Learning About Still Waters and their dangers for children
Produced by and available from British Waterways.

This video has been produced mainly for use within schools, but it would be of use in canoe clubs and youth organisations. The storyline follows a group of young people playing around a canal area during their summer holidays. The 18 minute video is designed with 11 to 16 year olds in mind and outlines some of the dangers that can be found in and around still waters. A reasonable story, which would benefit by being accompanied by group discussions on safety and rescue. *Contact British Waterways, Willow Grange, Church Road, Watford, Herts WD1 3QA Tel: 01923 226422*

Guide to Careers in Outdoor Education, Development Training and Recreation

ISBN 1 898555 02 8
Compiled by The National Association for Outdoor Education - Cost £3.50 inc p&p.

A 43 page booklet designed to assist anyone looking for a career in outdoor education. It gives information on college and university courses, NVQ's and work experience, National Governing Body Awards and much more. An excellent publication with lots of useful contact addresses and advice. A must for anyone interested in a new career. *Copies are available from The UK Outdoor Institute, Eastgate House, Princesshay, Exeter, Devon EX1 1LY Tel: 01392 272372 Fax: 01392 413163.*

A Boater's Guide to Navigation Signs

Produced by and available from the Environment Agency
This useful little leaflet shows all the symbols that you need to know about when paddling on a navigation. Available from all local Environment Agency Offices or call the EA general enquiry line on 0645 333 111. It also comes on a waterproof polypropylene card which you can keep with you for easy reference.

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Reviewed By Andy Goodsell



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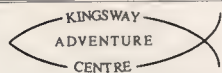
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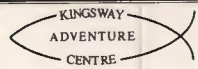
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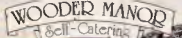
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28th	Mally Johnson	GBR	15.11.70
31st	Dave Taylor	GBR	15.14.03
33rd	Jamie Christie	GBR	15.20.81

C1 Men

1st	Vladi Panato	ITA	15.38.77
2nd	Mirko Spelli	ITA	15.44.39
3rd	Zeljko Petric	CRO	15.47.86
18th	Rob Pumphrey	GBR	16.30.20
25th	James Lee	GBR	16.41.92
30th	Paul Anderson	GBR	17.55.51
DNS	Lee Pike		

K1 Ladies

1st	Sabine Eicherberger	SUI	15.46.02
2nd	Anne B Crochet	FRA	15.49.23
3rd	Anne Fleur Sautour	FRA	15.52.05
17th	Yael Chance	GBR	16.38.45
20th	Cynthia Berry	GBR	16.47.13
21st	Debbie Hales	GBR	16.53.19

C2

1st	Val/Slucik	SVK	15.09.12
2nd	Grega/Sutek	SVK	15.15.86
3rd	Edin/Derouineau	FRA	15.23.96

International came first on the program. The juniors all faired well and looked good down the rapids. The International turned out to be a qualifying race for a sprint which was to be the final event of the champs. The top 15 from each class qualifying for the final. John qualified in 7th place and Nigel squeezed in to take the 15th place.

Friday saw the junior champs and the senior non stop. In the juniors, Joel came through the last split 2 minutes from the finish in 9th with a lot of encouragement from the bank, he pulled back 3 places to take 6th, only 6 seconds off a medal. Nicola attacked the course with style and gained the top British spot in 19th with Lynne and Alex close behind.

Seniors

Saturday saw the seniors doing their stuff with an extra 10 cumecs of water for them to play with. Malcolm gained his best international result taking 27th, 22 seconds down on Ian in 17th. Better things were expected of Jamie, but losing his tonsils recently in an Italian hospital didn't help his cause. Yael gained the best British result, 17th, after Cynthia rolled and broke out to arrive 20th. Rob took 18th closely followed by James in 25th only 11 seconds down. Paul did well to make it down on his stitched knee.

Britain only had one team entry of Jamie, Dave and Ian who took 6th place.

The final event was the Grand Prix sprint with John and Nigel representing us. They finished 11th and 13th respectively. Good results considering the top ten from the Europeans were entered as well.

The team would like to thank Andy Goodsell for coming out and managing the team for us.

A non-funded team of Seniors; 4K1M, 4C1M and 3K1L. Juniors 2K1M, 3K1L plus a large number of other

British paddlers trekked across France to take part in the White Water Racing European Championships or the International race, which was to take place alongside the main event.

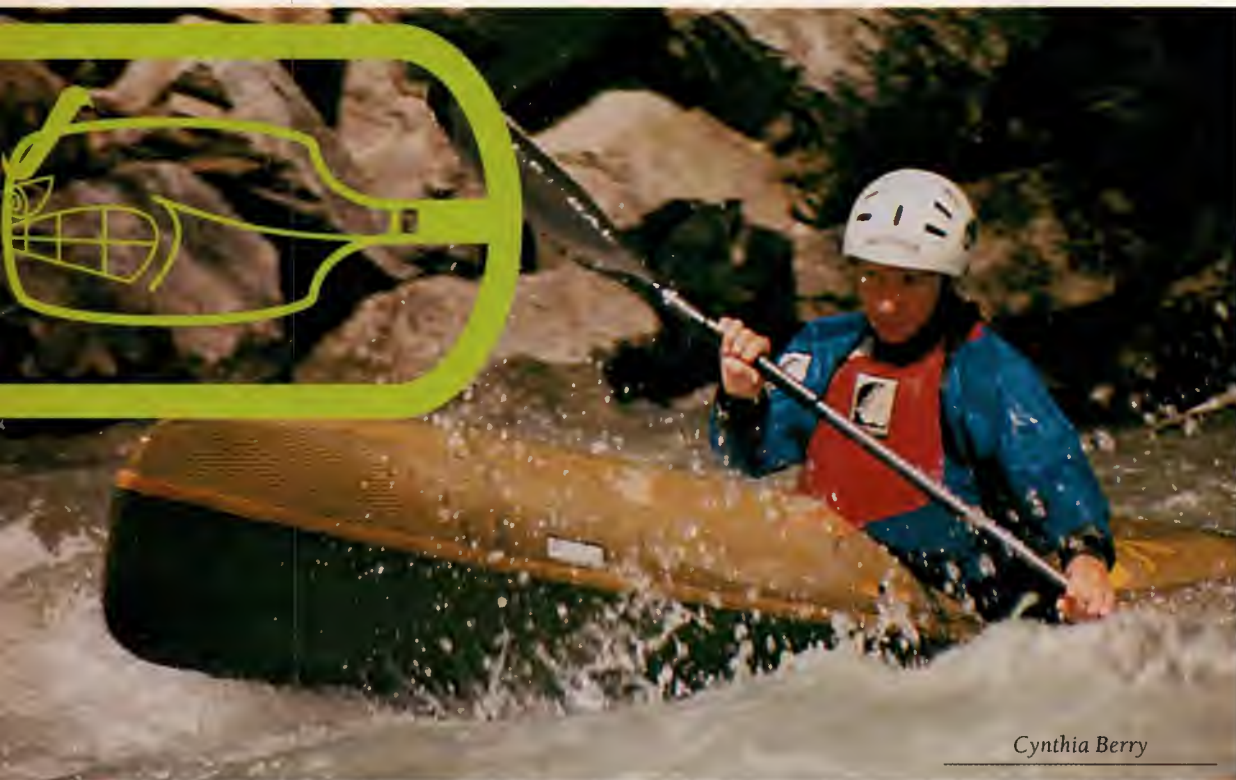
For those who have never heard of or been to Bourg, it's situated in the south east of France, very close to the Italian border at an altitude of around 800m and surrounded by very big mountains. It is very popular with skiers in winter, but in the spring and summer it's a brilliant place to go canoeing. The water is controlled by the hydro station just above Bourg so whether the weather is hot or cold there is always good water. The race course is 10km down stream from Bourg. It starts at Balentre and the first 4 minutes is continuous grade III, followed by 3 minutes of flat, and then the final 8 minutes is grade III with quite a lot of grade IV. The total race takes around 15 minutes.

All of the team had arrived in Bourg by Sunday evening and were all soon on the river learning routes, some were more successful than others (how are the stitches Paul?). The Junior non stop and the



Jamie Christie

Article by
Jamie Christie who
 would like to
 thank Rasdex for
 their help this
 year.



Cynthia Berry

New Developments

Hot Gossip! Howard Blackman has been appointed National Wild Water Racing Development Coach, replacing Andy Parry.

Howard 33, has been involved in canoeing for almost 20 years. Firstly gaining valuable skills competing in Slalom, under the guidance of Mike Thompson (Deputy Director at Bowles Outdoor Centre).

With the onset of maturity Howard took up the sport of skiing, of course competing, it's in the Blackman's blood! But also

teaching slalom skiing at various centres abroad and in the UK. Canoeing was never far from his thoughts and the Devizes to Westminster race satisfied his needs for three consecutive years.

Big brother Neil introduced Howard to the sport of Wild Water Racing and since then he has never looked back. After some success in K1 the brothers decided to train together in the Canadian Doubles class. They both trained hard and could

often be heard discussing lines and C2 techniques on and off the river, the training paid off and in 1994 they came away with a bronze medal at the World Championships held in Bala, North Wales. 1996 saw them race the World Championships on the Sanna in Austria gaining 11th place overall, the highest placed British Crew. During this time he also managed to gain his level 3 Wild Water Racing Coaches award, and has introduced many paddlers from his own club and others into the sport.

Howard's role commenced on 1st September and he is already hard at work, his main aims are simple:

- 1 To create more regular participation in Wild Water Racing.
- 2 More opportunities for all ages and classes.
- 3 Higher standards of coaching.
- 4 Greater awareness of Wild Water Racing.

Wild Water Racing is fun, friendly and not just for the fanatic. Race your own race, or race to win, make friends, with Wild Water Racing.

If you or your club would like help of any kind regarding Wild Water Racing then please contact Howard Blackman on: 01283 517375 or write to him at 18 Newton Road, Burton on Trent, Staffs DE15 0TX. After all Howard is there to help you! If he cannot help then he knows a man who can!



Above: Howard Blackman who has been appointed National Wild Water Racing Development Coach



Above: Howard Blackman in action

Scottish Sea Kayaking Symposium

Symposia have been going on now for many years and they continue to attract a great following both from old and new aficionados (or is it old and young?).

The Scottish Symposium held over the weekend of May 23rd / 25th highlighted all that is good about these kind of events, there were beginners and experts alike, young, old and dogs! The range of activities on offer was huge, the Scottish welcome warm and the weather well, it couldn't have been better. With bags packed with hats and gloves, waterproofs and wellies, jumpers and trousers we arrived at Laargs ready for the ferry beginning to realise we were over packed and under sun screened!

Friday night saw the troops arriving from near and far, across the waters of the Clyde to the small island of Cumbrae where we were the guests of the National Scottish Watersports Centre. The centre normally caters for around 40 customers but once every two years around 200 kayakers converge on the centre, putting tents up on any spare flattish ground, including the verges and staying in the comfortable cabins. This year catering was a slight worry for the organisers. When they arrived on the Wednesday before the weekend there was a shell where the kitchen should be, but with promises that all would be complete by the Friday. Amazingly by Friday, there was a kitchen, in place, a sparkling new and a chef eager to try it out. I'm not certain I would want to sort out teething problems on a new kitchen with 200 hungry kayakers but wonders were performed and meals arrived at the right time each day and of a very acceptable standard especially the lunches.

Saturday morning dawned bright and calm and the indoor sessions started to look rather empty with the practical on water work being very popular, the same time 2 years previously you couldn't move in the slide shows as the winds howled outside! The

range of sessions was impressive with something for all abilities and all interests. At any one time there were 9 sessions to choose from, ranging from slide shows from Antarctica to the Arctic and the Solomon Islands to the Channel Islands, also practical seminars on navigation and the weather, cooking and geology

and for those who have seen them all before there were a variety of new ideas. Out on the water you could learn about paddling forwards, rescuing, alternative strokes or just go for a paddle, it was impressive to see around 30 people learning advanced sea kayak techniques, what are they any way?

The beach took on a festival air with all the boats laid out for people to try and everyone outside chatting and enjoying the sun, shorts and sun cream would have been much more useful than all those waterproofs. Lunch breaks were a time for catching up and topping up the tan!

The evening saw the key note lecture by Roy Dumble and Hilary Chisholm, two New Zealanders who are over for a few months to explore and enjoy some paddling here and Canada. They talked about their home waters and wetted everyones appetites for a trip down under where the water is warm, the sea clear and outfitters are ready to rent out gear to anyone. They then moved on to show some spectacular slides of the Auckland Islands, not as everyone thought somewhere near the city of Auckland but right down in the South Atlantic about half way from New Zealand to Antarctica, in the middle of the Southern Ocean. To get there it was a 500 mile boat journey. The islands are strictly controlled and a conservation area so no camping is allowed. Each day they slept on the ship with tourists, scientists and conservationists and then were lowered down on a crane in their kayaks and would spend the day paddling and then back to the ship in the evening. Many of the places were so environmentally sensitive that they couldn't even land, but they had spectacular slides of the wildlife, penguins, albatross and numerous other sea birds and some interesting stories of the history of the area. It looked an amazing area to explore.

Once this was over it was time for the serious business of the Ceilidh. This is what really distinguishes the Scottish Sea Symposium from all others, the sight of all those local lad's knees as they career kilted around the floor is something not to be missed. The idea of ceilidhs is participation and it is then you find all the hidden talent, from singing to spice girls look-a-likes to poets and dancers

but the evening surely belonged to Jed the dog. Silence reigned as he took to the stage and as he heard the first strains of Pavarotti his ears cocked and the singing began. He wailed his way through a number of verses, pausing at the right times for effect and breath. Grown men were seen to cry, eminent coaches had tears rolling down their cheeks. It was a difficult act to follow! From then on the party really began with the Irish contingent following the true Celtic traditions and entertaining the crowds. With a few interludes for some aerobic activity in the form of Scottish dances the evening continued with song, dance and even a Maori war chant care of our New Zealand friends. Rumour has it that some never made it to bed, these Scots have an amazing ability to stay up late most of us Sassenachs had already fallen by the wayside.

Sunday dawned bright and sunny and the same huge range of activities were on offer. The morning began with the sight of the male of the species, stripping to the waist and performing the maori war (or was it fertility) dance to clear a way the cobwebs and start the day in the right frame of mind. Again the on water activities proved to be the most popular with the sun beating down on us and Al Fresco eating being the order of the day. In the evening Tony Ford gave a lecture on Whale Hunting from a kayak, a fascinating subject which he has been researching, looking at the links between the different whale hunting groups from Japan, through the Aleutians and into Canada. Then it was back to the social activity but less energetic than the night before.

Monday and still the sun shone, was this really Scotland? Many people started to drift away during the day, some up to Arduaine for more paddling and for some unfortunate souls it was time to head back south or north to work. An interesting fact was that the paddlers from Shetland were actually further away from home than us Channel Islanders, that really makes you realise what a big place Scotland is.

The organisation over the weekend was brilliant, the centre is an ideal spot for an event such as this and the hard work of the organisers was all worth the effort. Thanks must go to Gordon Brown, the coordinator, all his team of blue shirts and to Rachel, his wife, as I know how many phone calls they must of had over the weeks before.

If you have never been to a sea kayaking symposium then why not think about it. They cater for all types and abilities and are a great way to meet new paddlers. Scotland will be holding their next one in 1999 and if you can't wait that long we will be holding one in Jersey in 1998 over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend in May and we will try to lay on the same weather.



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

