

THE CANOE SPORT MAGAZINE FOR THE NINETIES

# canoe

## focus

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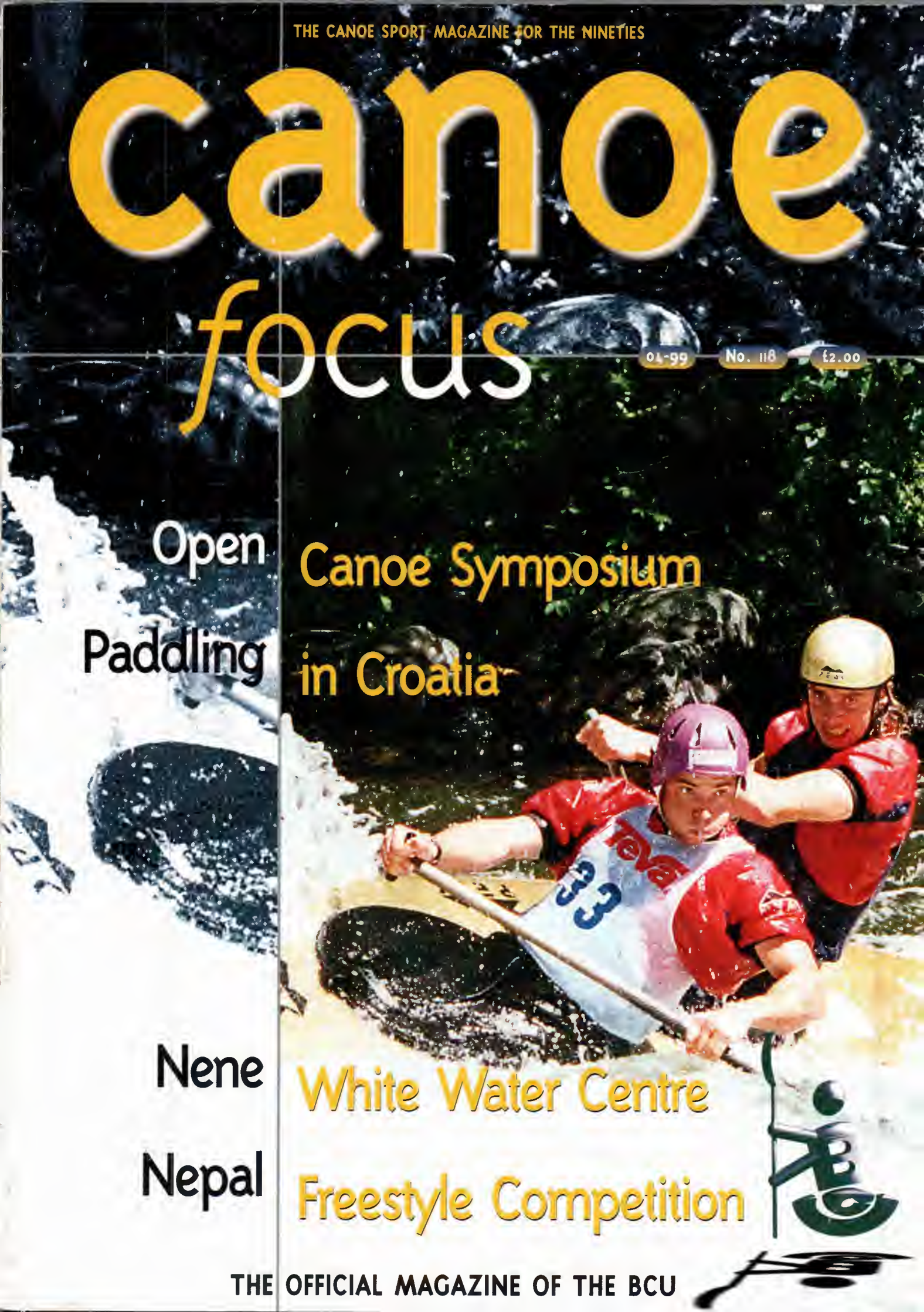
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### Canoe Focus

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**5 Comment**  
From Chief Executive Paul Owen



**6 Noticeboard**  
Catch-up with what has been happening

**12 NVQs**  
BCU awards in NVQs

**16 Access**  
Symonds Yat update

**32 NEC**  
Round up from the International canoe Exhibition

**47 Young Paddlers Programme**  
Three new Paddlepower Development posts



**18 Blazing Paddles in Scotland**  
White Water Open Canoeing

**20 Nene White Water Centre**  
Construction update

**22 Sydney Olympic Slalom Course**  
Construction update

**24 Crossed Wires and the Titanic**  
Paddling technique

**34 Scottish Open Canoe Symposium**  
Inaugural Scottish event

**38 Croatia**  
Post-war paddling

**48 Cornwall**  
Me, Lee and the River 'T'



**14 Freestyle**  
International from Nepal

**26 World Class Performance Plan Pages**  
Round up of the latest events: Chase the Champions from the NEC,  
UK Sports Institute, Sports Psychology and Ian Rospin interview



**16 Video Review**  
White Water Self Defence

**50 Paddler's Gear**  
New equipment

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# World Class Performance

**A**s we closed for press with this edition of Canoe Focus we received the news that the BCU's new World Class Performance Plan has been agreed. This will take the three disciplines involved: Sprint Racing, Canoe Slalom and Marathon Racing on with World Class Performance funding for a further year. Planning figures have been agreed until 2001. This edition of Canoe Focus contains advertisements for several of the new jobs that have been created.



## BCU AGM

Following the nominations to BCU Council (now BCU Board) I am pleased to welcome back our President, Albert Woods, elected for a further two years and Treasurer Jerry Rogers, together with Directors David Gent, Roger Fox and Alan Laws.

Ralph Tyas was elected by acclamation to become a Vice President the Union's highest honour. Ralph's services to Canoe Sport and the BCU has been immense with particular interest in Recreation, Access and Constitutional issues.

Two special motions were discussed and passed. The first, an extension to the objects described in the Memorandum of Association which allows the BCU to benefit from grants available from the landfill tax. These will particularly help with the work in facilities development.

The second special motion was to replace the Articles of Association with a new version. The new Articles confirm Councillors as Directors and members of the Board, and they allow BCU employees to be elected as members of any BCU Committees with the exception of the BCU Board or the Executive Committee.

## International Canoe Exhibition

The completion of this years highly successful International Canoe Exhibition saw the retirement of Exhibition Organiser, Peter Ingram after fourteen years service with the canoe show. Peter has made a significant contribution to both the BCU and the show over the years and will be sadly missed - Thank you Peter!

## Colin Kempson - Award of Honour

Congratulations to Colin Kempson who was awarded the BCU Award of Honour at the March Council meeting. Colin has worked tirelessly as an elected member of Council, Chair of Touring and most recently Chair of Access.

## BCU Facilities Strategy

The BCU Facilities Strategy has been completed and it will be available for distribution by mid April. The Strategy sets the strategic framework for canoeing facilities development over the next few years.

## UKSI

The United Kingdom Sports Institute Network in England was finally launched by Sport England (the new name for English Sports Council) in March. The Sport England announcement revealed ten English Centres including Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham. This will provide an opportunity to include the BCU's desire for a National Canoeing Development Centre.

## Finally

On behalf of the BCU Staff, I would like to wish everyone a very Happy Easter.

Paul Owen  
Chief Executive





## West Midlands Newsletter

Live in the West Midlands Region? but not in a club. Then get a copy of the Regional Newsletter to check the latest dates and regional events. E mail Stephen Brown and receive one by return. Email your request to be placed on the mailing list to [ufai8@lea.birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:ufai8@lea.birmingham.gov.uk)

or send stamped self-addressed envelopes to *Phil Ascough, Upton Warren Centre, Upton Warren, Bromsgrove Worcs.*

The newsletter is anticipated to print 6 times a year with the first one out in late March.

# Strand Inter-Club Touring Award Shield For 1998 (2pm Sat 27th Feb at the International Canoe Exhibition)



The Strand Club Trophy, now in it's tenth year, was presented to Jeff Simmons, (Centre) on behalf of Westel Canoe Club, who are based on the Thames, by Mike

Twiggs the chairman of British Canoe Union Touring and Recreation Committee, for paddling the greatest number of miles in the National Award Scheme for the fourth year running. We will prepare a smaller replica shield for a permanent memento that they can keep when they have to pass on the shield.

Club	Miles Paddled	No of Awards	Award Points	Total
Westel Canoe	14183	35	2025	16208
Camping	4625	6	300	4925
Paramount	3362	2	200	3562

Framed certificates were also presented by Mike to the runners up, Roger Green (right) the Chairman of the Canoe Camping Club, who have re-entered the competition for the first time since they won it in its very first year in 1989. Also to Dave Perry (left) for the Club Paramount who were in third place. The competition is open to all clubs and groups and not only to BCU members. Come on the rest of you canoeists out there, get your records together and take it off them next year.  
Mike Hubbard



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# 1999 BCU National Canoe Polo Championships



**T**he Bank Holiday weekend of 28-30 May sees the second outdoor 'International' style format for the National Canoe Polo

championships hosted and sponsored again by the Paddle Sport Company at the Park Farm Estate, Compton Verney in Warwickshire. The first outdoor championships

in 1998 was a resounding success attracting over 70 teams to battle for the UK's top polo title. The unique format of this event, where teams from all four UK divisions compete side by side for a placing in the National Championships

allows teams to play in mini leagues against teams of the same standard but with the opportunity, in theory, to progress upwards into higher leagues and go all the way to the final.

Continuous play takes place on three pitches over the three day bank holiday providing the perfect spectator event for those who miss the Championships that used to be held at the Crystal Palace Canoe Exhibition some years ago. The social atmosphere is completed with camping and caravan facilities on the lakeside and a large marquee with full catering facilities and a bar courtesy of The Main Event, a professional outdoor events company who are co-sponsoring the event this year along with the Stratford On Avon District Council. There will be specialist polo trade stands in attendance and of course the Paddle Sport shop will be open all weekend.

Don't miss this event. Make a date in your diary now.



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## Adventure Whitewater

Adventure Whitewater still have spaces available for their Nepal and Bhutan trips in the autumn. New for 2000, they are running trips to New Zealand and Peru do register your interest early. Phil and friends had a great time meeting many on the Adventure Whitewater stand at the highly successful Canoe Exhibition and are looking forward to paddling with them in the future. Contact **Adventure Whitewater** on 01992 712006 or phil@adventure-whitewater.com

# Nene Whitewater Centre.



This June will herald the opening of the Nene Whitewater Centre and Whitewater Course. Located in the South East of Northampton, off the junction of the A45 & A428 (Bedford Rd), and 5 minutes from the M1 junction 15, the Whitewater course is the UK's first of it's kind. 3 electric pumps will pump water through and down a 300-metre channel, 5 metres wide connected by 5 pools. Casual and group users

of the Whitewater Course can paddle reliable whitewater all year round, with the facility being floodlit throughout the winter. Access for all' has been incorporated in the design the whole facility, the Centre building has a lift, easy car parking, a cafeteria, changing rooms and showers. The surrounding area boasts wide, easy accessible footpaths.

The Whitewater Course has been designed with the play-boater in mind. The exit pool is 10 metres from the entry pool, the obstacles can be moved to add variety to the course, and the depth of the main channel into the pools will allow for freestyle moves to be made without the fear of bottoming out!

The Whitewater Course will be capable of hosting a range of Canoe Sport competitions and events, and lecture and training room facilities. The Centre Building (The 8th Earl Spencer Centre for Young People) will be home to Northamptonshire Clubs for Young People, Northampton Canoe & Kayak Club, Northampton Rowing Club, and The Nene Whitewater Centre Ltd. The Centre will also be a 'test centre' for Eskimo Kayaks, and Perception 'Raceline' kayaks.

The development of all aspects of Canoe Sport will be focused upon at the Centre, and a wide and varied range of BCU Skills & Coach Education Courses will be available. The Centre will also operate a Whitewater Rafting activity, however it is intended to keep casual users and rafters apart, thus allowing slalom gates to be moved out of the way for rafters, and to avoid canoeists from getting squashed!

See page 20 for an update on the construction.

run ashore or long journey home, which can be dogged by weather hazards just as daunting as those we meet at sea. Copies of the Marinecall 1999 English Channel Tide Tables are available, free of charge, from **TIS plc, Avalon House, 57-63 Scrutton Street, London, EC2A 4PF; tel 0870 6004242.**

## New Info Directory from Weathercall Eclipses Competition

Whether you're planning a cruise in UK waters, a business trip to Central America, a European skiing expedition or planting up patio tubs, good weather information could make all the difference. Don't be left in the dark.

Weathercall - a phone and fax data service operated by The Information Service - has produced a new, free, full-colour, 6 page, credit card-sized directory of a comprehensive range of weather services for the UK and across the world, including the Eclipse Service which enables callers to track the century's last total solar eclipse and make plans to witness it. A total of 117 numbers in a directory the size of your plastic.

You're probably already used to relying on Marinecall's meteorological information for your maritime excursions but The Information Service's portfolio of Weathercall facilities could help you plan so much more, so much more effectively to make the most of all your leisuretime activities. And the succinct and easy-to-use Weathercall directory shows you how.

Marinecall Select provides 5-day forecasts for 16 coastal inshore areas for the professional and leisure sailor perfect

for planning your itinerary for a weekend cruise or honing tactics for that all important race. Combined with the Eclipse Service, Marinecall's weather services should help to you be in the best place at the best time to view this amazing natural phenomenon in August 1999.

The Weathercall directory includes a map of the UK divided into 27 areas and shows, at

a glance, the telephone number to call for area-specific 7-day forecasts and the number to use to obtain today's forecast by fax. A 10-day national forecast is also available by phone or fax.

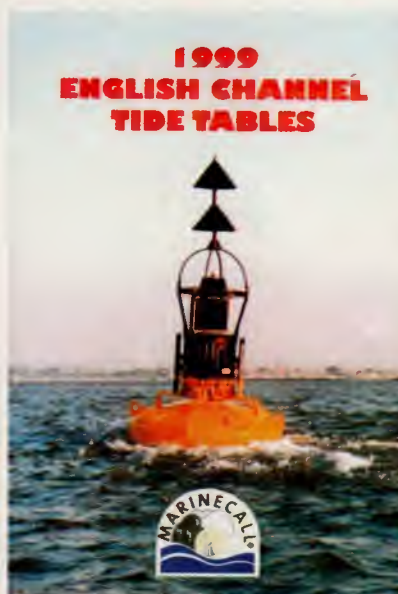
# MARINECALL 1999 English Channel Tide Tables

Marinecall, a division of The Information Service - famous for its telephone and fax weather services for yachtsmen and seafarers - has come up with a free pocket-size publication, which should find its way onto every sea-going vessel plying the waters of the English Channel.

The handily-sized, 64 page publication covers full tidal information for the ports of Dover, Portsmouth and Plymouth. In addition, Marinecall has had the good sense to include Cherbourg and St Malo as well - invaluable for those using tidal stream information based on continental data.

The format is extremely clear; heights of high and low water are given and the confusion, which can affect continental summertime adjustments, should be easily avoided.

Naturally, the full list of Marinecall contact numbers is included plus all access numbers for Weathercall services covering UK inland areas - useful for that



## Free New Zealand Flights

Pyranha are offering free plane tickets from the UK to New Zealand for the 1999 World Championships to any paddler who qualifies for the UK team paddling a Pyranha boat at all the selection events, regardless of sponsorship.

Paddlers must achieve the following places to qualify. Placing will be taken from the BCU Freestyle Committee Team List and according to their selection procedure.

- MK1 top 3 places
- K1W top 2 places
- K1J top 2 places

Paddlers who receive free tickets will be required to paddle a Pyranha boat at the 1999 World Championships.



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- YAK Ocoee, zipfront, strapped jacket, soft foam. **£34.00**

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# What's On



Andy Morton

## Scottish Marathon Series

### 1999

Want to mix a holiday in Scotland with some excellent paddling? Then the Scottish Marathon Series, held during the last week of June, is for you. The event takes the same format as in previous years: five races in eight days, with over sixty competitors expected. Two of the events are 10K races, one on flat water and one down the rapids of the Tay. So boats with understern and overstern options are best for this game, unless you are one of the fortunate few with a choice of boat for each event. The rapids of the Tay are grade 2 to 3 and are not for the faint hearted, but there is plenty of time in the week to check them out before the race.



Phillip Owen

Along with the two 10K events are three marathons of mixed lengths: 8, 12 and 23 miles respectively. The first two are barely long enough to merit the title marathon, but three marathons of 20+ miles would be regarded by most as a bit OTT, so the distances are kept fairly reasonable to allow as many as possible to participate.



G Chisholm

As it is, by the time competitors get to the last event of the week - the big Tay race - many are fairly near their own limit of endurance. For those paddlers in divisions 4 or below, shorter races are offered at all the marathon events, so there is something for everyone.



Louise Entwistle

The races are scheduled to allow easy travel for those coming long distances. So the first event, a 10K on Loch Ken, only fifty miles or so from Carlisle, is late on Saturday afternoon. Loch Lomond is also one of the venues. The one-hour race on the bonny banks is held on Wednesday evening. The weather can be very mixed, so expect anything from a gloriously calm sunny evening to a force five blowing in your face for 4 miles! Further Information: **Andy Morton, 3 Park Place, Dollar, FK14 7AA. Tel: 01259 742288 (answerphone).**

## Riverside Canoe Club 25 Year Reunion

Riverside Canoe Club is planning to hold a Reunion of Riverside Members from over 20 years ago. We are planning a BIG REUNION PARTY on Sunday, 27th June 1999. If you can help us contact old Riverside Members we need to hear from you!

Give us a ring, fax or send e-mail. Contact **Dave Holmes at Riverside Canoeing Centre, Donnington Bridge, Oxford. OX4 4AZ. Tel 01865 248673. Fax. 01865 792390 E mail Riverside.Oxford@btinternet.com**

## National Marathon Championships 10&11 July 1999

The National Marathon Championships will take place at St Neot's on the River Ouse, between Cambridge and Bedford. The location is ideally situated just off the A1 close to the new A14, linking the M1/M6 to the A1 with easy travelling time for most paddlers.

The site has excellent camping facilities and is within walking distance of the town centre. There is excellent access to the river and all races start and finish in the same area. The course has an excellent portage for paddlers and spectators but no portage for Div. 9.

Racing is in different divisions for K1, K2, C1 & C2 with individual and team prizes available. All marathon clubs have been sent details, so look on your club notice board for further details and the information pack or contact **Cambridgeshire Canoeing Association on 01480 862244.**

Paddle at the National Championships and represent your club.



## Coquet Canoe Club Salt Water Weekend June 12/13th 1999

All Canoe Clubs and paddlers are invited to a weekend of paddlesport at Amble, Northumberland, this summer.

Camp next to the River Coquet Estuary or just turn up on a daily basis. There are several activities planned, designed to provide something for everyone.

**For juniors:**

a minislalom and obstacle event.

**For touring paddlers:**

an opportunity to paddle the Coquet estuary, guided trip around Coquet Island to see the wildlife, information to help more experienced paddlers plan their own trip to the Farne Islands or up the local coastline (Craster, Dunstanburgh...)

**For racers:**

The "Round Coquet Island" races, comprising: Saturday...a 10 mile sea kayak event for experienced paddlers only. Sunday...a choice of shorter courses, 5.5 miles/ 3.5 miles/ 2.5 miles - sea kayak and GP classes.

There is always an extensive pool of prizes for these events, donated by many generous sponsors. (Not all competitors take the race seriously, many do it just for fun)

**For everyone:**

BBQ on Saturday night and a lecture/slide show on sea paddling. We hope also to offer coaching sessions, try a boat sessions, trade stands, Bell boating etc.

If your club juniors are members of the BCU paddlepower scheme, this weekend offers them a chance to meet many of the challenges they need to try.

More Details From: **Vic Brown, 27 The Turn, Loansdean, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2DU (01670 513544)**

## Conwy Ascent 99

June 4th will be the last chance to have a go at the Conwy Ascent in the Twentieth Century and indeed this Millennium. So to celebrate the coming of the next Millennium entries will be limited to the first 2000 paddlers.

The usual format of a tourist trial and a race will be followed and the super slick organisation will be in place. Twentieth Century prizes and momentos will be awarded to celebrate the outgoing Millennium (you will be able to show them off to your grandchildren! Or if you have a complete set you could even take



them along to the antiques roadshow!).

Seriously though, The Conwy Ascent is going from strength to strength and is certainly the event to be seen at. It offers something for everybody and always proves to be a good day out, ask someone who's been before.

This year's organiser is: **Jude Foulger, Tan Y Rhiwiau, Iolyn Park, Conwy, LL32 8UX. Tel: (01492) 593226.** A Stamped addressed envelope would be appreciated.

### 7th World Marathon Championships - Hungary 28th/1st August 1999

Supporters package has been put together by International Adventure. The cost is £350 plus taxes of £27, made up as follows:-

Depart Wednesday 28th July - 5 Nights Half Board in a twin room with ensuite facilities at the Hotel Raba in Gyor. This Hotel is in the centre of Gyor within 1500 metres of the event start and finish as well as the portage and turns 4 & 5.

The only additional charge that may occur will possibly be for the transfer between Budapest and Gyor. If people would like to have a short stay in Budapest, then this can be arranged. If prices appeal to you, please contact **International Adventure. Tel: 01767 650312 (24 hours).**

### 1999 River Usk Canoe Race Sunday 19th September

Start: Newbridge on Usk

Finish: Hanbury Arms Hotel, Caerleon

Distance: 7 Miles

Start time: 14.00 hrs

Everyone welcome. Contact: **Martin Beer, 15 Firbank Crescent, Newport, S.Wales. NP9 7QR. Tel: 01633 257612**

Montgomery Meander & Dingy Dawdle - Sunday 13th June 1999.

Start: Aberbechan

Time: 10:30 am

Finish: Penllwyn Lodges

For Further information & entry forms

contact: **Colin Venus, Cefn Y Garn Uchaf, Trefenter, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 4HJ. Tel: 01974 272628, e-mail CHCVENUS@btinternet.com**

### 4th Annual Paddle Round The Pier '99 Incorporating the Pier to Pier Paddle Race.

**Brighton: Sunday June 6th  
1999**

In Aid of The Royal Alexandra Hospital for Sick Children's Rocking Horse Appeal & Surfers against Sewage.

Paddlers are allocated a prize draw number for every £10 they raise in sponsorship. Once the quarter mile circuit of the West Pier is completed paddlers assemble for the 'Grand Prize Draw'. Prizes include, surfboards, wetsuits, windsurfboards, bodyboards to hats and T-Shirts. The organisers have also managed to arrange prizes from Perception and White Water Consultancy International

The Pier to Pier race is indeed a race. Starting from the beach on the eastern side of the Palace Pier, out to the end of the pier then across to the west Pier, then to the beach.

For further Information contact: **Dave "Sandals" Samuel, 30 Goldstone Villas, Hove, East Sussex. BN3 3RQ. Tel/Fax 01273 820470. E-mail samuel.hillier@btinternet.com**



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Article by  
Nigel Timmins

**NVQ's in Canoeing? What are they? How do I obtain one? How do they sit in relation to the BCU awards? What are the advantages?**



# BCU Awards and NVQ's

**P**ertinent questions for all canoeing coaches, particularly those engaged in full or part time coaching work and their employers. The National Standards for Coaching Teaching and Instructing NVQ's have changed recently, and the BCU has, as an Approved NVQ Centre awarded it's first Level 2 NVQ to these new standards.

NVQ's are recognised National Qualifications awarded by the major Awarding Bodies e.g. RSA, City and Guilds, Edexcel and SQA. Candidates are assessed in the workplace using assessors connected to an Approved Centre. The Approved Centre can be any organisation, as long as it meets the stringent requirements as laid down by the awarding Bodies and QCA. (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, the regulatory body for all qualifications in England.)

The BCU Nottingham office is an Approved Centre with City and Guilds, and the BCU North West region, may well apply to become an Approved Centre with RSA.

All NVQ Assessors for Canoe Coaching awards have to hold Nationally recognised technical qualifications as well as the NVQ assessor award, so they are both technically competent and knowledgeable regarding the NVQ systems. There is also a quality assurance system, of Internal and External Verification.

## **So what is the major difference between an NVQ level 2 and a BCU Level 2 award?**

The BCU Level 2 Coaching award is assessed against the Coaching, Teaching and Instructing National Occupational Standards and is discipline specific, relying on the candidate gaining some technical skills, knowledge and understanding via a process of BCU training, with a consolidation period before going for assessment. The assessment is a 'one off' assessment, normally carried out away from the candidates work place. This has proved

to be an effective system that is cheap for all involved and identifies a candidate as being at a basic safe level, on which they can build.

An NVQ is assessed against the same National Occupational Standards in the general context of canoeing and candidates can gain the skills, knowledge and understanding in any way they wish. Candidates however, must prove competence over a period of time and be assessed in their workplace. This is probably the major difference as the phrase 'over a period of time' means they must be assessed at least twice and probably more to enable competence to be fully shown. They must also be assessed with real students in their workplace. Therefore NVQ's fit the employment situation very neatly, particularly when there is an NVQ assessor on site.

Both the BCU and SPRITO (The National Training Organisation for Sport Recreation and Allied Occupations) recommend that employers take on staff with NGB qualifications, (or will require them to gain an NGB qualification soon after starting work.) This is for the benefit of the employee in that they will have third party insurance. For the employer it will enable them to meet legal Health and Safety requirements (e.g. Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996). Employers then really have a duty to their employees, to offer further training and recognition of their developing competence. Therefore an NVQ is a good way of helping those competencies of staff be recognised, and helps with their life long learning. A concept, that is being developed and encouraged by the present government. The BCU fully supports all employees and employers in this concept and the BCU is in the process of developing services to support its delivery.

As mentioned earlier we have an interesting precedent being promoted in the North West whereby the region becomes an NVQ Approved Centre. This

should help to encourage more canoeists and canoeing within the region and have an important spin off, in that it will help the BCU region, by generally promoting coaching for all. At first there is to be a trial period with a BCU Approved Commercial Centre and BCU 'Top Club'. There are plans for expansion of this if it proves successful. This experiment will help to encourage the staff at the two sites to become NVQ qualified. They will gain their BCU award as they work towards their full NVQ, enabling the coaches to get real work experience totally independently, so being able to develop their own coaching styles and practices.

An NVQ Level 2 therefore gives the coach recognition of their competence with particular reference to their work place and having been assessed at least twice it will re assure their employer of the continuing high standards of the coach. The BCU award should be seen as an important step on the route to a full NVQ. Both awards recognising in different ways certain canoeing competencies, but giving credit for the full range of competencies displayed by a canoeing coach in a working situation.

There is therefore clearly a role for the BCU award that gives a discipline specific credit to a coaches skill, and meets basic legal and employment requirements. Link this with an NVQ, and you have an award that is understood and recognised by anyone in the Sport and Recreation industry and more to the point is fully supported by the N. G. B. for the Sport of Canoeing.

The BCU as an NVQ Approved Centre has just recently awarded an NVQ Level 2 in Coaching, Canoeing to Richard Mackie from Southend Marine Activity Centre. This was the first to the new National Standards and we would like to congratulate him and wish him all the best for the future.



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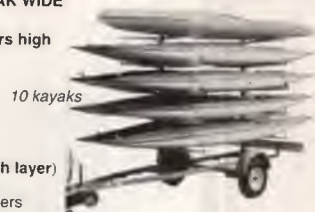
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Article by  
Peter Packard

# International Free

When 14 countries from around the globe meet in one spot to compete for first place as rodeo champion, it's no surprise that anxiety levels rise, egos inflate and performance adrenaline pumps. Nothing less than impressive was expected and nothing less than spectacular was received.



**T**he Date - 28 November 1998. The Venue - Bhothe Kosi, Eastern Nepal. A technical, fast moving river which confident & expert paddlers revel in. The play hole in use looked irritated, yet it provided a positive holding pocket and easy spectating. A frenzy of introductions in pigeon English, with accents in German, Norwegian, Italian, French, Australian, American, New Zealand, Irish, Nepalese, Austrian, Scottish and a few less discernible, was like a pack of dogs on heat. Rarely do so many kayakers meet,

but when they do there's verbal diarrhoea aplenty, especially regarding rivers.

## The heat is on

The rules explained, competitors took to the open air changing rooms and kitted up. There were 5 classes - Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Women & Nepali. Every competitor was judged on their first six entries into the hole. With each entry lasting no more than one minute. A perception 3-D was first prize for the Nepali class, donated by the sponsors. Other class prizes were perfunctory. Nepal, the fourth poorest country in the world, seemed in greater 'need' for their prize, and just a chance to compete was reward enough.

A panel of 3 judges called up the intermediates first, and the cheering began. First attempts were tentative & short-lived, but the moves hotted up rapidly. The hard faced French & Italian contingency threw themselves in. Pulling off some quality tail squirts, loops and pop-outs. The Englishman looked fluid and relaxed, hanging in the wave with ease. Smiling as the stopper spat him out. To the disappointment of voyeuristic crowds there were no swimmers. Simply a hard act to follow. The pressure to perform had awoken even the most placid of competitive spirits.

The women hit the water next, a total of three. All hard willed and smiling. Did they have something to prove? They impressed the spectators regardless.





# -Style Rodeo



on. Held in the stopper sideways, the command to direct the boat sometimes took a while. Looks of panicked joy and desperation became more entertaining. The 5 competitors took a few mouthfuls, popped out, looped and performed some exceptional, seamless flat spins. Moments of sheer perfection flashed between frantic water fights. The strain started to show minutes toward the end and faces showed relief

Manoeuvring comfortably in the wave, rolling up in its face, flat spinning and pulling off some clean pop-outs. The endurance shown was unusual and impressive. All lasses were American, illustrating that maybe an extra steak and a doughnut is the way forward! With their exhibition genes in full flow the display was occasionally painful, yet always captivating. The crowd roared with the culmination of their heat.

### Kayakers heaven

The afternoon stayed hot. Caps and shades were uniform. Cameramen hung from a precipice to capture the best shot. The classic Himalayan foothill landscape provided a sense of calm. By now lunch and a few beers had settled the global mix into full conversation.

Novice class followed. This time even the judges were expecting a rescue or two. Having had minimal warm-up the amateur sportsmen appeared controlled. Initial attempts lasted 5 seconds before ejection. However energy spawned from upper torsos and the battle was

as shouts to finish echoed. A 'no swim' situation made judges wonder where the real novices were.

### Style and grace

Heats 1 & 2 of the Nepali class came next and never have such fearless faces been seen so close to a stopper of that size. They were enjoying themselves too much! Totally relaxed, they did not appear to be overtly concerned about the potential prize. However this image was soon saturated by obvious determination. Repeat tail squirts, crisp pop-outs, rolls in the hole, flat spins and a mixture of the above illuminated their desire to win. A joy to watch. The advanced class took to the water soon after the Nepalese. Needless to say these boys gave us a spectacular showing of 'how it's done'. Minimal strokes were used to articulate the committed freestyle moves. The specialised boats hugged, caressed and simply made love to the wave. With numerous vertical cartwheels, holding pop-outs, effortless flat spins and back



It was over and the prize ceremony ended this momentous event.

### The winners were as follows:

Novice	Dan Tebay	English
Intermediate	Simon Fowler	English
Women	Buffy Bailey	American
Advanced	Shane Benedict	American
Nepali	Min Mugar	Hmmm let me think!!

A thank you must go to the sponsors of this event, Perception Boats and Palm Equipment. also to the organisers, Peter Knowles and Dave Allardice. In all, the occasion lived up to expectations and provided an arena for world-class kayaking. It brought together the best of the best and opened the door to a gross intoxication of the liver. Marvellous!!

surfing. The German, Bernd Sommer even pulled off a mystery move, sending him under water for several seconds before he reappeared downstream with a deserved look of reverence across his face. Damn he's good!!

### Judgment round

The finale heat took precedence over the flirtatious smiles, and egotistical stories. The last chance to exhibit everything you had. To show off your capabilities into a condensed few minutes. The display was exceptional. Multiple cartwheels from American number one Shane Benedict, an aerial pop out from novice class, Dan Tebay, integrated with a cheesy grin. Tail squirts and back loops from the Nepalese. The women's class delivered non-stop rolls and pop-outs, flat spins and...Oh, you don't want to hear it! Blah, blah, blah. The list goes on. Superb, world class and a whole lot more.



# Symonds Yat Rapids

The National Appeal now stands at £34,000. Not £13,000 as erroneously quoted in the February Issue. We still need donations, pledges & letters of support.

The Lottery Sports Fund has to be a "last port of call" we need to be able to satisfy the Lottery Unit that we have explored all avenues.

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*John Westlake LAO for the River Wye in England. 33 Golden Vale, Churchdown, Gloucester, GL3 2LU. Tel/Fax 01452 531218*

## Reviews: Video

### "White Water Self Defence"

- Kent Ford £24.95

Kent Ford has produced some very good skill and performance paddling videos in the past, and I was looking forward to reviewing his contribution to the ever increasing supply of white water safety and rescue material. As I read the video box, it pleased me to understand that the content of the program was going to be about preventing problems, as well as providing solutions.

My first impressions of "White Water Self Defence" was of a light hearted, tongue in cheek approach to some important and often contentious issues. The video is 65 minutes long, and is broken down into sections covering topics such as; swimming rapids, throwing ropes and extricating pinned boats. In order to make best use of the video, it should be watched in short sections, rather than from start to finish. A viewer might still have to watch a section two or three times if they are to retain all of the relevant points made.

Despite being a little cheesy in places, I felt the initial information given was sound, with well known strategies for swimming rapids were clearly demonstrated through video footage, they have even produced some computer simulations!

Despite the encouraging blurb on the box, and the All-American cheerfulness of the presenters, I soon became disappointed with my purchase. The video deals almost exclusively with kayakers, and although the strategies illustrated are transferable, it would have been nice to see an open boat here and there. The section on incident prevention is too short, and lacks depth, and the subsequent sections show rescue techniques not recommended by the BCU. I feel some of the strategies shown may increase the likelihood of hazardous situations occurring and becoming serious.

The sections on throw lines and chest harnesses showed some dodgy techniques and I cringed several times as I watched the video. There are several rescue methods illustrated that have been advised against recently. Although opinions on what are safe techniques vary, some of the methods illustrated do not fall in line with current thinking on safety and rescue principals in the UK and do not conform to BCU policy on white water safety. Techniques promoted included the use of;

- Σ Ropes which don't conform to the clean rope principal
- Σ Chest harnesses for towing.
- Σ Rope wound around hands in order to obtain a better grip.

After watching the video, one might easily be left with the impression that it's OK to stick your hands through rope loops, tow swamped boats on moving water with a chest harness, and use throw lines with knots, and loops in. I felt that despite the description on the box, this video failed to drive home the message of safety, rather than rescue and that prevention is better than a cure. This is a missed opportunity to produce something other than yet another average white water rescue video.

## In Summary

Although humorous in places, and technically correct on the whole, I was disappointed with Mr Ford's latest offerings. Sections of video might be useful when shown as part of a rescue course, and canoeing centres might consider adding this video to their library so it can be used to illustrate both good and bad techniques. However, people buying this video in order to become safer paddlers and get up to speed with white water safety skills may well get the wrong end of the stick. At nearly twenty-five quid, they would do better putting their cash towards buying Franco Ferrero's excellent book, or attending a BCU White Water Safety Course.

N. Wilford (Wilf)

## Patagonia's New Spring/Summer 1999 catalogue

Patagonia is pleased to present our Spring/Summer 1999 catalogue. In addition to wonderful colours in old favourites such as the Synchronic® Snap-T, Stretch Triplet Jackets, and the brilliantly performing Capilene®, new products and features include the following:

- In the ENDURANCE line we have revised the Velocity Shells with a new water-repellent, totally windproof incredibly breathable, extremely durable and quick drying fabric with Encapsil technology, revised the Women's Capilena Tank design so that it is a beautiful arid neat climbing top, and introduced the Capilene® treated Terra Jerseys for running and cycling.

- In SHELLS we are pleased to announce the arrival of the Torrentshell Jacket and Pants for anything and everything from day walks to trekking abroad. Made from soft, breathable and lightweight fabric these are totally waterproof fully seam taped and coated with Deluge, a radically improved DWR (durable water repellent) finish. Additionally they come at the keen price of £159.95 for the jacket, and £99.95 for the pants.

- SPORTSWEAR now includes the Gill Pants and Shorts, our popular style now made from a more technical fabric: light, tough and quick-drying Supplex nylon which makes them ideal as travel wear. Our great new Jeans Jacket comes in cool colours balsamic, tuscan orange, and classic navy at a very cool £79.95.

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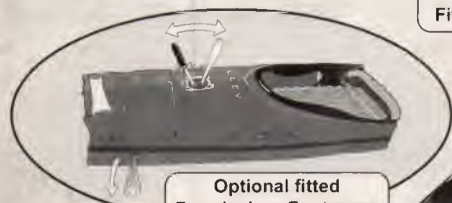
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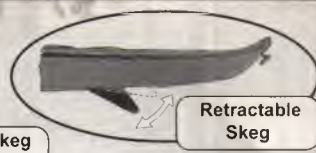
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A position has become available for a committed adventure education professional to join the Adventure Division Department, based at our Head Office. The role is varied and will involve travel in both the UK and overseas.

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Above: Ian Duffy,  
River Roy

**T**he first time we had met was at the Tryweryn, this was also the first time I had paddled with any other White Water Open boaters (WWOC1), so it was a learning experience for me. Ken and Stuart have been paddling together for many years and I have been paddling WWOC1 since 1995, when I bought a Dagger Occoe from a Canadian at the world championships in Augsburg, I also own a Savage Skeeter, which is even more radical than my cut down Occoe. The organisers of the event suggested we needed an identity to distinguish us from the many other groups and goings on that weekend. Blazing Saddles was born a motley bunch of Open Boaters with varying degrees of skill.

Below: The team  
left - right  
Stuart Gibbon  
Brian Watson  
Ian Duffy  
Ken Hughes

Not satisfied with just a weekend on the Tryweryn we decided to lay on a few trips for specialist open boaters later on that year. Late

# BLAZING in Scotland

It all started when Ken, Stuart and I were requested to set up a specialist open boat (WWOC1) course on the River Tryweryn at Bala, North Wales, for the 1998 Tryweryn coaching festival.

December we saddled up and travelled to Onich, a small village between Fort William and Glencoe in bonny Scotland. The meeting venue was the Inchtree bunkhouse, adjacent to the Four Seasons Bistro and Bar, ask for the jolly jock who goes by the name of Paddy.

Our advanced party of two arrived on the Sunday evening, with the rest due to arrive on the following night. This would cause us a logistics problem with the shuttle at the start and finish of Mondays paddling, however this was soon resolved all thanks to our fellow bunkhouse guests from Sheffield University here on a five star training course. Later that evening after copious amounts of beer and poor jokes were exchanged in the local pub, they decided that the Spean Gorge was the best bet for the 21st. As this is my first visit north of the border, I made tentative enquiries into the suitability of the River Spean for a WWOC1, a few people said it could be a bit tight for an open boat, but I was not deterred.

## Monday 21/12

We arrived at Spean Bridge and slowly motivated ourselves to get onto the river. Initially it was quite boney until we reached the gorge section some lkm down river, at this point the level was quite good with a few nice grade III rapids which proved fun and a good warm up spot for what was to come.

This led onto the first rapid Headbanger IV this was about 1.5 to 2.0 metre drop, the safety set up was essential and very kindly supplied by the

Sheffield crew, where they were doing their 5\* training. The organisation of the safety set up was good, they had an intelligent throw line set up, with spotters to support them and John was in an eddy at the bottom of the rapid to take photos, and be a chase boat if the need arose. I closed my eyes in the eddy above Headbanger and visualised the line I was going to take. I opened my eyes took a breath and put in four powerful strokes, leant back and flew over the drop clearing the worst part of the stopper and getting a reasonably dry line. I had done drops like this numerous times in a kayak before but this was a first for me in an Open Canoe, I was very satisfied in the thought that I know what I am capable of in an Open Canoe. The next rapid was the Cauldron a very tight grade IV, that is very tight for a spud to get round let alone my Occoe which is just over 3 metres in length. But it does have the speed and agility to turn as quickly as a spud, whether I had the speed and agility is another matter. Anyway I set off and a few very fast strokes and I was clear of the two tight 90° bends, all I could think off was not damaging the boat, they cost a lot of money you know!

On our return to the bunkhouse John ignited the coal burner to thaw us all out, it had been snowing for most of the day, after warming through the Sheffield crew departed and we settled down to a good curry (ding), then off to the pub for a few bevs. We had left instructions for Stuart, Brian, Ken and Mark on how to get to the Corren ferry bar, but after our fourth pint started to wonder where they had got to, probably lost trying to follow my instructions. Apparently Stuart and Brian had popped into the Cak Hagg, a well-known climbers bar in Glencoe and Ken and Mark were wondering around outside looking for the entrance. When they did eventually arrive at 10 to 11.00 we managed to persuade the barman to stay open a bit longer so we could all have a couple of pints. Then it was back to the bunkhouse to find where Ken had stashed his whisky, not surprising that it took a while to get going the next morning.



# SADDLES

**Below:** Ian Duffy, River Garry

**Middle:** Stuart Gibbon, River Garry

**Bottom:** Stuart Gibbon, River Roy

## Tuesday 22/12

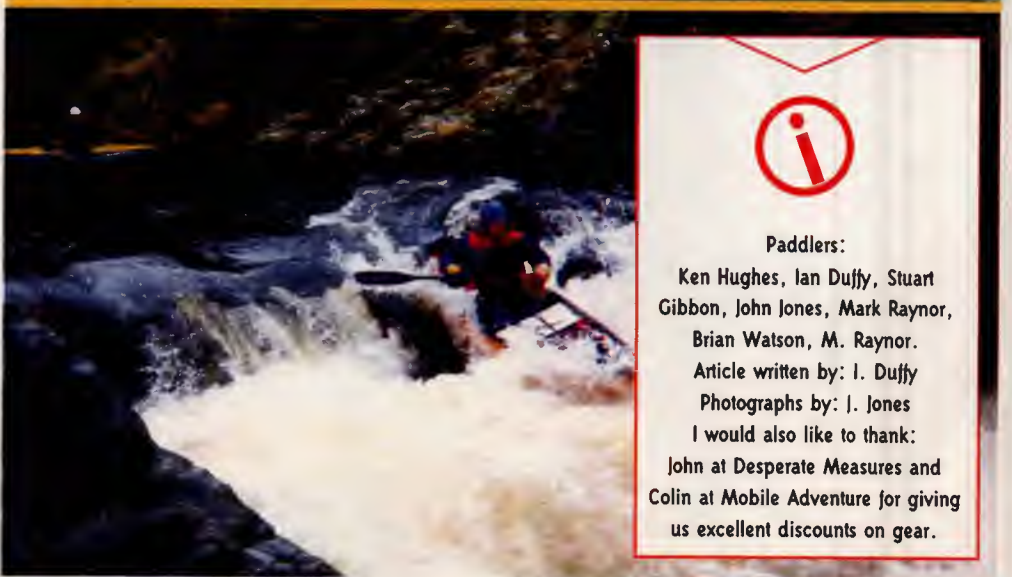
The river Garry 45 minutes drive from our accommodation, this river is fed by Loch Garry which has a dam release every Tuesday, the section paddled was from the Loch to White Bridge about 4km. We ran this section twice, spending at least two to three hours at one playspot and after numerous 360's, front and back surf's with a minimum of one swim each. We carried on down stream to the egress at white bridge where Ken proved he had a good roll after surfing a wave that was a little to steep. This had been a good day's playboating. Our next stop was to find an eating house in Fort William, as I come from Birmingham renowned to be the UK's leading curry city, it was my job to literally sniff out the most suitable curry house. Difficult when most the restaurants are called Ben Nevis something! We opted for the one called Everest, with prices as steep as the mountain it is named after unfortunately the quality was very poor. However all was not lost our secret weapon Brian negotiated a good discount, we finished off the evening in a pub closer to our base. Philosophical discussions covering most subjects such as canoeing, sex, canoeing, effects of drugs on society and more canoeing, you know the usual stuff.

## Wednesday 23/12 The River Roy.

It started as one of those days where we all questioned why! Why are we doing this, it was snowing and blowing a veritable blizzard the weather can only be described as Baltic. But we decided to go ahead after spending some thirty minutes jumping around like a bunch of lunatics trying to keep warm whilst the others sorted the ferry. I must admit I did feel warmer once we had started paddling. We gained access to the river at Wish You Were Here IV, the next rapid being Roosters Tail IV, luckily there were no mishaps on the central rock, the next section was Archavady Gorge IV followed by a grade V section. The first part of this section due to the extent of the undercut on the river right, was portaged by all of the group, We paddled the second part which was a 1.5 metre drop followed by an 'S' bend. I think I can speak for everyone that the hardest part of the day was the carry out at Stone Bridge, especially if you have an open boat on your back or you opt for dragging it up a very slippery slope.

We concluded the day at the nearest Little Chef over steaming mugs of overpriced coffee and fish and chips. We pondered on how Ken managed to break his Werner CI blade again, apparently indestructible they say! obviously Werner have not met Ken.

Watch this space for the next adventure with the Blazing Saddles open boat paddlers.



### Paddlers:

Ken Hughes, Ian Duffy, Stuart Gibbon, John Jones, Mark Raynor, Brian Watson, M. Raynor.

Article written by: I. Duffy

Photographs by: J. Jones

I would also like to thank:

John at Desperate Measures and Colin at Mobile Adventure for giving us excellent discounts on gear.



# Northampton White Water Centre

Construction is well advanced and on time. Testing/Landscaping to take place early June.  
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**Report By Paul Ratcliffe**

# The Olympic games - Sydney 2000





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An article for Canoe Focus by Andrew Morton

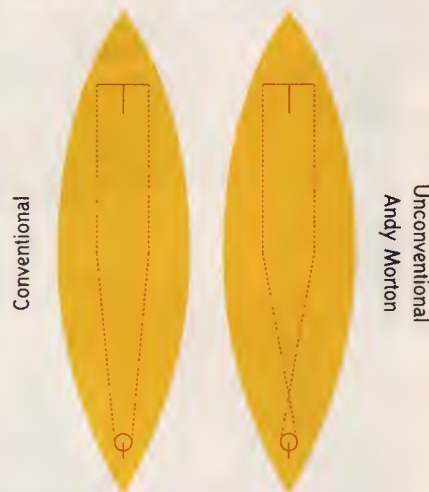
# CROSSED WIRES and the TITANIC

Andrew Morton won his first marathon in Scotland in 1967 and last year won a bronze medal at the World Marathon Championships in South Africa, in the over 50s Master class. He works as an examiner in Biology with the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

**T**he article is written, in part, in response to an article in No 117 on Kayak Techniques.

What I noticed, as I paddled my Ki many years ago, was that when I pulled, for example, my right hand paddle through the water, my toes tended to push the T bar to the left, so turning the rudder ever so slightly to the left. Now a pull on the right hand paddle has the effect of turning the boat to the left. So here I was, turning the boat to the left with both my paddles and my feet. The solution seemed simple - swap the wires over. So that a right pull on the paddle produced a slight right correction on the rudder as a result of the movement of my toes, and vice versa on the left side. Would the two effects cancel one another out and would I have a boat which ran straighter and quicker? Unfortunately, the experiment came close to a disaster because of my cerebellum. It was impossible to tell if there was an improvement because, for the first few days of paddling I was all over the place and just about fell in on more than one occasion. I had not realised how automated my steering had become and how difficult it was going to be to retrain that part of my brain so good at learning to automate and co-ordinate complex muscular tasks. Have you ever tried these trick bikes where the steering works in the opposite way to normal?

So for many weeks I had difficulty steering in races when the going got tough. Wash-hanging in particular needs instant and constant adjustment of rudder to maintain position, often in stressful conditions. However, I persevered and eventually



mastered the technique. But the question you are all asking is, "Did it work?" and the answer, sadly, is "I haven't a clue." The differences are so slight they would probably be impossible to measure, and it was equally impossible for me to swap wires over and over again to try to obtain some kind of comparison. However, the logic seems inescapable, and also, there is the purist in me which sees my system much more like that of a yacht tiller, where a move to the left, turns the boat to the right. So at least aesthetically, I was happy with the outcome.

**Are there any other advantages or disadvantages?** Well apart from being regarded as a bit of a crank, which I can cope with, the system makes it impossible for others to paddle in my kayaks and also makes it impossible for me to paddle other's kayaks, unless I open the hatch and swap the wires over with a screw driver, which is not a lot of fun, and sometimes bloody impossible.

So, my crossed wires should probably be consigned to the bottom of the ocean, rather like the Titanic. But if there is an aspiring kayak racer about to embark upon an Olympic career, perhaps now is the time to turn to starboard when you're told to turn to port, because it might just give you that extra half second.... and the gold medal. Check your toe action next time you go for a paddle, and keep a watch for icebergs!



I suppose I've had my head in the sand on this one, but no one has yet explained to me why the helmsman on the Titanic turned the ship's wheel to port (anti-clockwise) when he was commanded to turn to starboard. In fact, I believe he was turning the wheel correctly, because the ice-berg struck the Titanic on the starboard side, but I would have thought he should have been commanded to turn hard to port, not hard to starboard. Perhaps this was a later command to try to stop the stern sliding round to the starboard side, or perhaps the producer just got his wires crossed. Can someone help me? Answers on a postcard to .....

I always receive the occasional jibe at canoeing events when it is discovered that I too have literally, and not metaphorically, crossed wires. I changed them years ago, so long ago in fact I cannot remember exactly when, and I was reminded again of the reason for doing this when I read an article by Lauder and Kemecsey in issue 117 of 'Canoe Focus'. So I thought it time I ought to explain myself, and come 'out' as it were, in the canoeing world.

The article, much of which I did not understand, was on Kayak techniques in which the authors described 'snaking' as an undesirable consequence of bad paddling technique. In brief, the boat yaws (that's the correct term) instead of running dead straight. It does so inevitably because of the alternate pulling of the paddles on each side of the hull. This clearly ought to be minimised, because it represents wasted effort - the boat ought to go forwards, not sideways. Fish have the same problem as they thrash their tails from side to side, and evolution has come up with a variety of interesting design features which minimise this effect. The simplest way to reduce yawing in a kayak is to keep the paddles as near to the boat as is reasonable and this is done by holding the loom nearer to the vertical during each stroke. I'm not very good at this and it was with this in mind I crossed my wires and my fingers many years ago.

Kayak marathon boats are set up with the rudder wires running parallel down either side of the boat, so that a movement of the T bar to the left causes the rudder to turn to the left, the stern to move right and the boat to turn to the left. If you think that's confusing, watch the 'Titanic' again!





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## View from the Performance Department

### UK Sports Institute

On Monday 1 March 1999, Chris Smith MP, Secretary of State and Tony Banks MP, Minister for Sport announced the ten English Network Centres that constitute the English part of the UK Sports Institute (UKSI). The aim of the UKSI is to provide our best sportsmen and women with the facilities and support services they need to compete and win at the highest levels. The UK Sports Institute will have its headquarters in Sheffield, developing, co-ordinating and improving standards in coaching, sports medicine and sports science. The key to the success of the UKSI is likely to be the twin track approach of a nationally directed programme with local delivery to athletes and coaches throughout the UK.

### The English Network

The UKSI in England will constitute ten National Network Centres, each with its own supporting network in each region. The National Network England will complement the World Class Performance Programme by providing an integrated package of services and facilities for our top sportsmen and women (able bodied and disabled). The Government has indicated the level of funding available for the UKSI HQ at Sheffield and the Network Centres in England. The capital funds available are in the region of £140m with a further £20m of revenue funding. Clearly, the enhancement of facilities within the Network Centres will be a major priority.

Holme Pierrepont will be the co-ordinating focal point for the National Network Centre serving the East Midlands and we look forward to the possibility of the facilities for Canoeing being improved over the next few years. A

number of the other Network Centres in England have listed Canoeing as a priority sport, in terms of facilities, and the possibility of improved facilities for Canoeing throughout England is an exciting prospect.

### UKSI - The Rest of the Network

UKSI in Northern Ireland - The Sports Council for Northern Ireland continue to work towards the creation of a UKSI Network Centre in Northern Ireland.

UKSI in Scotland - In Scotland, seven sports have been selected to be part of the Scottish Institute of Sport. Individual athletes from sports outside the initial seven sports, who have competed at the highest level, will have the opportunity to become institute athletes. Access for elite athletes, including Canoeists, is currently being developed through the Area Institutes in Scotland.

UKSI Wales - The nerve centre of the UKSI in Wales is the Welsh Institute of Sport. The Plas Menai National Watersports Centre and the National Whitewater Centre at Canolfan Tryweryn are closely linked to the Institute.

In addition, a network of support is being developed, throughout Wales, including sports science, medicine and coach support.

Over the next few years, the UKSI will assist the BCU and our top performers to reach the targets we have set, through our World Class Performance Plan, in terms of medals at World Championships. However, in terms of the Olympic Games, the UKSI facilities and services are likely to have a major impact in our preparations for the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens.

# World



On the weekend of the International Canoe Exhibition at the NEC, Birmingham, BCU World Class Performance hosted the Chase the Champions Ergo Challenge.

This year saw a new format to the event with paddlers being able to pit their strengths against some of our countries finest athletes.

On Saturday we were pleased to welcome to the stand, five times World Champion Ivan Lawler. Many eager young paddlers visiting the Young Peoples stand next door were able to get that much wanted autograph. Tim Brabants and Paul Darby-Dowman the 1995 Junior World Champions were also present along with Ross Sabbiterton, the 1998 World Championship finalist

Ross and Paul proved to be a big attraction when they decided to race head to head with Ross coming out slightly on top with 1072 against Paul's 1030.

However, the overall fastest time on Saturday went to Wild Water Racer Mark Gray with 110. Mark took away the overall prize of a 'Nookie' fleece.

On Sunday the event once again proved to be one of the major attractions of the weekend with many paddlers queuing to take their turn against the Champions. Whilst the many spectators in the nearby café area cheered them on.

Sunday's World Class Performance athletes were Rachel, Rebecca, and Mark Train accompanied by Mark Hoile. The two Mark's proved to be real showmen and played to the crowd, the head to head challenge pulling the biggest crowd of the weekend. Mark Train proved to be the fastest with 1112 with Mark Hoile coming in with 960. However, Mr Hoile was not happy with this result and decided he could do better, so he did. After a short rest he clambered back on to the machine to put in the fastest time over the whole weekend with a remarkable 1148.

The autograph hunters were out once again and Rachel and Rebecca provided signed postcards for the keen youngsters.

Many of the paddlers taking part in the event over the weekend were given top tips on padding technique from the BCU Performance



### National Network England





# Class Performance

## Chase the Champions



Director, John Anderson and Barney Wainwright a sports physiologist, with Dave Enoch providing the enthusiasm and timing for Saturday's event.

The World Class Performance athletes are now preparing themselves for their selection events and are training hard towards their ultimate goal, Sydney 2000. We wish them well.

Thank you to all those who supported the event, the Performance athletes, those paddlers who put themselves through agony for the enjoyment of the spectators and Peak, Phoenix of Nottingham, Pyranha, RasDex and the United Kingdom Sports Council for the sponsored prizes.

**Wendy Blackman**  
PA to the Performance Director



**Right:** Five times world champion Ivan Lawler  
**Far right:** Rebecca Train  
**Below:** Mark Train  
**Below right:** Rachel Train  
**All pictures:** Matchtight Media





Article by  
Dr. Costas  
Karageorghis  
& Prof. Peter Terry  
Accredited Sport &  
Exercise  
Psychologists

# Attentional Control in Canoeing

**E**very top athlete understands the benefits of getting their thoughts under control. World Champion paddler, Ivan Lawler, has described attentional control as one of the most important skills for a world class canoeist. A definition of attentional control was provided by the American sport psychologist, Dr. Robert Singer, "An individual's readiness in a particular situation to selectively perceive and process information". Displaying a high level of attentional control is the same as having excellent powers of concentration.

The key word in Dr. Singer's definition is "selectively". In sport, the ability to focus on what is important and to ignore the rest can separate the champions from the also-rans. Therefore, it can be appreciated that maximising your ability to attend to important details, will likely lead to better performance. This article will be of interest to all paddlers and coaches. You will be introduced to some of the benefits, theory, measurements, and ways of improving attentional control.

## How can attentional control help your performance?

Having established that during sports performance there is nothing more important than paying attention to the task at hand, it is possible to work upon specific aspects of attention which address particular situations. Therefore, through development of all or some of the following areas, it is likely that your overall performance will improve:

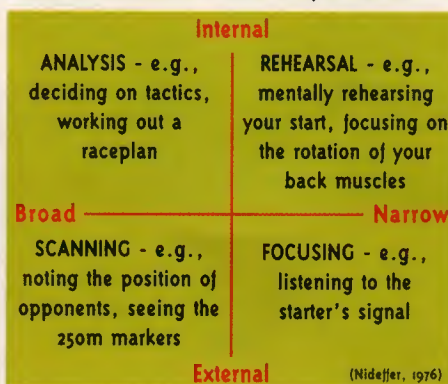
- Reacting quickly
- Reading the tactics of others
- Focusing upon a specific object or paddler
- Focusing on your own thoughts/feelings
- Blocking out irrelevant information
- Controlling your emotions
- Memorising training routines or technical details

As you may have guessed from reading this list, different types of situations in canoeing require different types of attentional skills. For example, the "tunnel vision" required to succeed in a sprint race is different from the "scanning" required to master the tactics of a marathon race.

## How does attention actually work?

A pioneer of research into attention was the American psychologist, Dr. Robert Nideffer, who in 1976 suggested that four types of attentional focus can be attained. Specifically, he proposed that attention has two dimensions of direction and width which are independent of each other. Width refers to whether you have a narrow focus in which you concentrate on a specific thought or object, or a broad focus in which you are aware of many things at once. For example, listening for the starter's signal requires a very narrow focus, whereas scanning to see what other paddlers are doing requires a wide focus. Direction refers to whether you focus externally to objects outside your body, such as this article, or internally on your own thoughts and feelings. Hence, a paddler's attentional focus will vary between the following four styles: broad-internal, broad-external, narrow-internal or narrow-external. Different situations and events will call for different types of attentional focus. Spend a few minutes considering the attentional demands of your event using Figure 1 which shows the dimensions of attention:

**Figure 1**  
The two dimensions of attention



## How can attention be measured?

There is a pen and paper test devised by Dr. Nideffer designed to measure general attentional characteristics. This is known as the Test of Attentional and Interpersonal Style (TAIS) and there are now numerous sport-specific versions of TAIS available. These include tests for tennis, basketball, shooting and baseball, although unfortunately not canoeing. Another pen and paper test is known as the Concentration Grid. This provides a measure of how effectively you can scan a large amount of information to pick out relevant elements. A grid of one hundred randomly positioned numbers (1-100) is presented to you for one minute in which time, starting on a specified number, you cross off as many consecutive numbers as possible. There are also a large number of laboratory tests which can measure specific aspects of attentional control such as reaction time, arousal and memory. All of these measurement techniques should be available through your sport psychologist.

## A Six Point Plan to Improve Attentional Control

If you practice these six sample exercises regularly, you should notice significant improvements in your powers of concentration. Remember that goal setting is critical in any sphere of human achievement. Therefore, set challenging and measurable goals which will facilitate your progress.

### Exercise 1 - Identifying Attentional Distracters

Being aware of the type of irrelevant cues which break your flow will help you to gauge when your mind is drifting off-track. Divide a piece of paper into two equal columns. Head one side "Relevant Details" and the other side "Distracters". List all the relevant attentional details for your event in the first column and, in the second, list those thoughts or environmental cues which tend to distract you. Typical examples of distracters include other competitors or adverse weather conditions. Further, important occasions in sport can lead to poor attentional control through over-arousal: butterflies, increased heart rate, negative thoughts, etc. To use an old soccer cliché, it is essential to "play the match and not the occasion".

### Exercise 2 - Thought Replacement

This exercise entails replacing any negative thought you have with regard to performance with a positive one.

This process encourages you to focus on the positive aspects of the job at hand rather than on any distracting thoughts or feelings. When things are not going to plan in competition or you have a bad draw, it is critical to remain positive. An example of thought replacement would be, "the conditions are really dreadful today and I don't feel like going out on the water" replaced by the thought, "the conditions are the same for everybody and if I stay positive, I'll be able to do well".

### Exercise 3 - Holding an Image

This exercise develops the skill of maintaining concentration on a specific object for extended periods. Think of an object from canoeing such as your paddle or boat and attempt to visualise it in every detail. Notice its colour, shape, texture and what is in the background. When you have a clear image in your mind, start a stopwatch and if the image fades, stop the watch. With time and practice, attempt to gradually increase your concentration span.

### Exercise 4 - Centering

This technique involves focusing attention on the centre of the body, the area just behind your navel (your belly button). This can have a calming and controlling effect during any situation when you become over-aroused and concentration may lapse. Stand still, close your eyes, breathe evenly, notice that as you breathe in, upper body tension increases and as you exhale, there is a calmer, sinking feeling. Inhale deeply from your abdomen and as you exhale, notice how heavy, calm and in control you feel. A useful tip for the coaches is that when working with children, it is advantageous to refer to this exercise as "Jelly Belly".

### Exercise 5 - Pre-event Routine

A precise routine which puts you in the correct frame of mind to compete at your best is worth its weight in gold. This routine may begin from the time you wake up and run through to the end of competition. Staying in control of the five-minute period before the start may have a decisive effect on your performance. Having a pre-rehearsed routine will enable you to feel in control and to be well prepared for the task at hand. Focusing on the here and now i.e., what you are involved in at the present moment, is a precursor to success particularly in situations where things are not going your way.

### Exercise 6 - "Mr. Concentration"

This is a fun exercise which requires the presence, or rather intrusion, of some training partners. The objective is for the training partners to attempt to distract you during a crucial part of your game in a practice situation. The ability to maintain attentional control in training should rub off onto competition. "Mr. Concentration" is typically used in situations such as sprint starts. A coach can be used to grade each trial out of 10. This adds a competitive element which will add to the appeal of the exercise.

## Summary

Being in control of your mind is a key to successful performance. It is hoped that from the information presented in this article you will be able to scrutinise and effectively apply the attentional control techniques to your event. The favoured excuse of "I felt good going into the race, but I just seemed to lose my concentration on the day" should now become a redundant statement for all you paddlers out there.

The authors are BASES Accredited Sport Psychologists and work as consultants for the BCU. Contact: **Brunel University, Osterley Campus, Borough Road, Isleworth, Middlesex, TW7 5DU. Tel: 0181-891 0121, Fax: 0181-891 8269 Email: costas.karageorghis@brunel.ac.uk & peter.terry@brunel.ac.uk**



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Last year the British Slalom Team had a great year with a collection of medals from most of the major internationals. One crew who found themselves very close to the rostrum, but unfortunately didn't make it in 98 as a consequence of a penalty at the world cup final, was that of Stuart Bowman and Nick Smith. Ian Raspin talks to the best C2 prospect Britain has seen for at least ten years.

**B**oth Nick (back) and Stuart (front) began their canoeing careers in kayaks. Nick with the local scout group down in Stratford before joining Stratford Canoe Club under the watchful eye of Paul Brain and the Arrowsmith family. While Stu was finding his feet, or should it be paddles, with Telford CC. Stu points out, initially the main incentive for canoeing was not for the enjoyment of it, but purely so he could escape the older lads after calling them names!

On reaching their teens both turned to the canadian class for an extra challenge. However Stu, inspired by the Wetzig brothers at his new club in Leicester, also continued with his kayaking aspirations (reaching the Premier Division). However the failure to reach the Junior GB squad in his last junior year proved to be the conclusion of his days in a kayak and he dedicated himself to the canadian boat. Unlike Stu, Nick lived as much for the social side of the sport and was jumping into any boat that took his fancy - increasingly the C2.

Having both reached the Premier division in C1, in October 96 the two, initially as part of a bet, jumped into a C2 together. However with the demise of their efforts in C1 the national team selection start list for 97 saw the first inclusion of the C2 crew of Smith and Bowman.

**Q1:** In order to aspire to any worthwhile challenge you have to be dedicated to the cause. This inevitably means at times intense pressure and stress. How do you ensure you don't act or say anything on these occasions that undermine your relationship?

**A1:** When we started we didn't really sit down and put together a code of behaviour. But the fact that we are fairly level headed and easy going means we rarely go off the deep end with each other. We did agree that anything we did or said would be for the enhancement of our performance and for no other reason. Even when things haven't gone well, we still manage to be constructive in our discussions. Although we both have big aspirations, we've always made one of our key objectives to be, to have fun. Something Stu would like to remind certain past junior coaches the importance of. And we believe this has been a big help.

# Riding the Wa



# aters of Change

**Q2: What are your canoeing aspirations other than just having fun, and what is it that motivates you in pursuit of these?**

A2: For 1999 the most important task we have is to qualify for a place in the Olympics. If we can do this by placing inside the top 5 at the World Championships in La Seu D'Urgel in September we would be very happy and if in the top 3 we'd be 'well pleased'.

Our ultimate goal would have to be an Olympic medal, as we'd imagine would be any athletes. If we were to achieve this we'd feel we had pretty much arrived.

In terms of motivation; to keep improving and having fun is one of our biggest motivations. But also, and we feel this is probably the case for a number of canadian paddlers, is the drive to prove to a number of the influential individuals within our sport who, 5 years ago wrote us off as 'wasters', that they were wrong.

**Q3: In Britain the C2 class has had some bad press. It was almost seen as the class you race in if you can't hold your own in any other. Why do you think this is and what may change it?**

A3: Britain for at least the last 20 years has been seen as predominantly as a kayak nation. All the major successes have come repeatedly in the kayak class. The consequence of this seems to be that the role models and inspiration for any up and coming youngsters comes from the kayaks. If you look to eastern Europe however the strongest class by far are the canadians and this is largely due to the success over the last 10 years of the Czech crew of Siniak and Rohan.

We would like to think that if we can continue to progress in the manor we have, then maybe one day we will inspire a new era of youngsters to take up the challenge of canadian boating and be instrumental in establishing the classes the status they deserve.

**Q4: What has the introduction of the World Class Performance Funding Program meant to you, and what would be the implications if, for whatever reason, it was cut?**

A4: At the end of 1996 we made a conscious decision to commit ourselves to the goal of

becoming the best we could in a C2. At that time we were prepared to sacrifice everything other than the 'means' to allow us to prepare in order to do this. Unfortunately those means, primarily, work created restraints. The Lottery funding has allowed us an uncompromised opportunity to try and realise our true potential.

If, for whatever reason, things were to revert to how they were, we would firstly have to return to training only once per day. We'd be unable to travel abroad to prepare on the sites of the major races. And we would no longer have access to the Sports Medicine and Science program we now rely on. Basically it would be the equivalent of sitting on the start line against our fellow competitors with access to only one paddle.

**Q5: Do you feel that athletes in receipt of a grant have a responsibility to put something back into the sport? For instance in France athletes have to become involved with a coaching program for juniors and are also**

**required to attend a number of lower division event.**

A5: The simple answer to this is yes. Both of us feel an agreed list of conditions should come hand in hand with any grant. Most athletes we feel would be receptive to this, but at present there is nobody co-ordinating such a program.

**Q6: If you were trying to sell the idea of paddling C2 to somebody, what would be your biggest selling point?**

A6: The kick and sense of satisfaction you feel when you succeed in sport is second to none and victory in C1 is sweet. But the thrill you experience when as a team you work in perfect harmony and execute the moves you planned so precisely, is twice as sweet as any individual victory.

**Q7: Finally. What do you feel has been the one major contributing factor that has enabled you to get where you are?**

A7: There have been many things that have helped us reach the level we have from parental support to sheer determination. But possibly the most important has got to be the camaraderie that exists within the C1 class. We both feel that if it wasn't for the strong friendship and support that exists between 'the boys', we would probably have dropped out long ago.





# How Much Buoyancy?

From empty plastic bottles to 'CEN' in 35 years

In this series of articles 'Wild-Water' founder and Grand Canyon River Runner, Film and video maker and Photographer Chris Hawkesworth attempts to decode the mysteries of the Buoyancy Aid.

## Background

**I**n the Yorkshire River mists of the early sixties, the beginning of Canoeing as far as I am concerned. Safety and gear were not the issues or the sophistication that they are today. Our gear was borrowed from non canoeing activities. Helmets from Ice Hockey, Cags from Walking, spray decks were El Cheepo Nylon and Buoyancy Aids were a nuisance.

We paddled all sorts of Rivers and we simply didn't know or care for safety issues. There were no throw lines or harnesses. Many boats had grab loops and no buoyancy in them, or, at best a few air bags of doubtful containment. In those days the kayaks were KW3's, 4's and 7's, all glassfibre and more importantly for us Leeds CC river runners you could use your Kayak for both Rivers and Competition.

The only Buoyancy Aid (BA) rule was that of the International Canoe Federation (ICF). The grey haired gods of the Slalom and Wild Water Racing Committee had decided in their wisdom that in International Competition a Buoyancy Aid had to support a 6 kg weight.

To this the BCU paid lip service and us keen type Slalomists made up our own buoyancy aids out of Empty Squeezy bottles then inflatable cushions became available through George Reardon of the Canoe Centre Twickenham. To comply with the rules we would set off at the start of a competition with air in them. But we let out the air to make the device less bulky and (of course less buoyant) so that we could wriggle under and around slalom poles without picking up any iBody Touchi penalties. It was with these totally inadequate devices by todays standards that during the early 60's we made many first descents of rivers both in the UK and elsewhere.

The French company Flotherchoc made a BA that consisted of vertical strings of Air Filled Sachets. These were widely worn on the continent.



Inspired by this Company Harry Calverley founded his company Harishoc. Harry worked out that if you took a PVC sachet string and replaced the car shampoo or other contents with air you could imitate the Flotherchoc. Harry and his wife Rene made up kits of component parts on their kitchen table.

My mother sewed up one of the kits up for me and since Harry and Rene did not make up the finished product. I bought more kits and my mother made yet more and I started selling them. After a while shortcomings began to appear. The Sachets started to go down after a year or so and their sharp corners came through the Nylon outer coverings.

At that time Harry's son and daughter, Ray and Leslie were very keen Slalom Paddlers and both became their respective class National Champions. They would come home in Harry's blue viva van after a competition to make up BA kits. Their house was stacked from top to bottom.

Leslie at the time was dating another top slalomist, Dick Barrett a member of Manchester and Leeds CC who during one of our River runs became stuck in his KW3 in the fish pass that takes the River Ribble around the weir at Settle. Unable to escape he eventually drowned. His unfortunate death was at the inquest put down to a swivel type footrest widely in use at the time and now discontinued. I had and still have my doubts. Myself and a number of other top paddlers of the day were there and the whole incident had a profound affect not only on the paddlers involved but also on the wider paddling fraternity.

Safety became a more important issue and both Harishoc and the now Wild-Water were working on foam replacement for the PVC sachet strings. Subsequently two new closed cell foams appeared on the market PVC and Polyethylene. Harishoc and Wild-Water were the UK and not to understate the situation world pioneers of these foam techniques and the Harishoc Gold Label and the Wild-Water Shortie are still around today.

I relate the above to put into context what follows. In the late sixties the argument over what BA to wear, how much buoyancy or none at all, raged just as much as it does today. Paddlers personal preferences went up and down

Leeds CC Slalom team  
L to R. Chris Hawkesworth, Mark Markham, John Fell circa 1963.

by Chris Hawkesworth.  
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on buoyancy with the same regularity as fashion did with girls skirts.

Eventually the newly formed trade association, the British Canoe Manufacturers Association (BCMA now known as the Association of Canoe Trades (ACT)) and the BCU got together and developed their own regulations for BA's embodying the ICF 6kg rule.

## The relevant rules at the time were:-

The ICF rule that was simple and to be fair had stood the test of time.

It said that your BA had to support a 6kg lead weight when tested at an international event. The rule was the same for all sizes of Paddler. The tests at the 70's Muotatal World Championships consisted of placing the BA into a string shopping bag with 6kg of Cast Iron weights. Putting the whole lot into the village horse trough. If it floated it passed, if it sank it failed. This rule though better policed is still in force today.

The only other rules at that time that came anywhere close to canoeists requirements were the Ship and Boat Builders National Federation (SBBNF).

These were graded by person size with the buoyancy requirement for the larger sizes being a lot more than paddlers required. Add that to fees for testing plus a turnover based subscription to the SBBNF and canoeists weren't interested.

The only British Standards Institution (BSI) regulation was BS 3595-1969. A product to this standard was the Horse Collar iOttersporti combined foam and Oral inflation one size Lifejacket. It was this product that Centers and the Forces used in the 70's and early 80's. The upsurge of the Closed Cell foam BA's finally pushed it off the market by the mid 80's.







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Article by  
by Penny  
Campbell

# Open Canoe Symp



The Abernethy Trust outdoor centre at Ardeonaig in Perthshire was the destination for nearly 100 canoeists on September 25th, for the inaugural Scottish Open Canoe Symposium. The weekend promised to be one providing opportunities for anyone and everyone to take part in a range of workshops on the Loch or River Tay, and also to try something new.

**T**ents of equipment and trailers of demo boats were also set up at the Ardeonaig site on Loch Tay, their availability due to the assistance of Carlisle Canoes, White Water Consultancy and Mobile Adventure. As up at the Centre people

were setting up tents, finding their rooms or signing in for workshops the following day, the folk band Faer Company struck up for their first concert of the weekend.

And so Saturday dawned bright and sunny. Before splitting into our smaller,

specific workshop groups for the day, everyone gathered at the loch side to watch as Karen Knight, World Canoe Freestyle Champion, over especially to demonstrate freestyle in UK, performed two of her routines as well as demonstrating a few moves in a partial explanation of her sport. Using a variety of precise paddle strokes and balancing in a manner more familiar to a gymnastic mat, Karen was able to manoeuvre her canoe through the water effortlessly, each graceful stroke flowing to become another in the choreographed manner that she has used to become World Champion. This short chapter of the Symposium, and the following workshops, which Karen led tirelessly and enthusiastically, became the talking point of





# osium

the weekend. Most of us mere mortals found we needed all our concentration merely to stay inside the canoes during the freestyle workshops: our wobbly, jerky, and stuttering movement contrasting starkly with her balance, style and poise. Throughout it all Karen remained smiling and sympathetic as our excuses ran thick and fast; "my legs are too long", "my feet are too big", "my centre of gravity is in the wrong place . . .

Other workshops which ran at the loch side over the weekend included coaching - 2\* skills, 3 \* skills, refining forward paddling style, poling, lining, and those of a more 'experimental' nature - including improvised sailing (in which a variety of sailing rigs and methods with different sail shapes and sizes for a variety of conditions were demonstrated), comparing canoe design and performance, flat water rescues, and also introductory sessions for beginners and families, some of whom 'happened' on the Symposium as they drove past. In addition to all of these, there were several different canoes and paddles brought by Jim Wilson of

Carlisle Canoes, Huw Evans of White Water Consultancy and Colin Broadway of Mobile Adventure and made available for use. Many of these proved too tempting to ignore, and thanks to the support of trade representatives the demo boats were almost constantly in use on the Loch or river. For many of us this type of forum is the only opportunity we have to see and try such a large variety of canoes from a number of manufacturers.

### Introduction to moving water

The upper and middle stretches of the River Tay were used by Coaches facilitating a number of different workshops that provided an introduction to moving water, or more specific coaching to enhance and refine existing skills. Due to the generous rainfall directly previous to the weekend, the water in the Loch and river was at an excellent level to provide sufficient challenge and excitement for every workshop session, regardless of the standard or experience of the participants. The SCA - Grandtully stretch proved popular, with 4 workshops starting there on the Saturday to explore different aspects of canoeing on moving water. While some were being coached on intermediate or advanced doubles paddling, others worked on their solo paddling skills, whilst the really hardy (foolhardy?) had a wet day of moving water safety and rescue. This particular group proved themselves to be highly motivated and committed to exploring this subject to its



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fullest potential, demonstrated by the way that one doubles canoe sacrificed their Grandtully descent in order to pin their canoe across the main flow of water just above the Top Rock, providing a fitting - and entertaining, end to the day for them and those of us loading our trailers in the car park. Throughout the

weekend the Grandtully rapids were saturated with playboaters - sometimes in a playboat, often not. The workshops, run by Pete Orton, European Playboat Champion, gave the canoeists an opportunity to play in the waves in a number of tiny canoes - some looking suspiciously like kayaks in length and shape.

The participants were obvious as the remainder of their weekend was spent nursing pulled muscles and emptying water out of their ears.

#### Resume of canoeing in Scotland

The Saturday evening was spent at the Kenmore Hotel where participants of different workshops were able to compare notes, and decide what to do the following day: Stuart Bell, as guest speaker for the evening, gave a resume of canoeing in Scotland as he has observed it, describing changes as equipment and its availability has developed. He reminded us of our need to be aware of our responsibilities for the environment we travel into and through, highlighting that as we introduce others to the sport, we could be increasing the impact we have. This, he pointed out is more and more likely as canoeing becomes more popular and accessible, so if we anticipate having a natural and unspoilt environment in which we could take others canoeing, we need to be willing to help in its restoration and preservation. A short video had been made from footage taken at each of the workshops during the day, which gave a good overall view of the Symposium as a single event. The folk band Faer Company provided excellent music as the evening wore on, with stories of particular manoeuvres and escapes from crashing waves becoming more and more dramatic. The



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'freestyle excuses' by now took a different tack; "my paddle was too long", "the canoe was too narrow", "the matting was too slippery"...

On Sunday further workshops gave delegates the opportunity to take part in those they had missed on the Saturday. And so, the

Sunday afternoon found the 100ish canoeists gathered at Ardeonaig, preparing to play 'trailer slalom' in the car park for the final time, reflecting on the things we had done and the canoes we wanted to get for Christmas.



Many thanks are due to many people for their contributions in ensuring this Scottish Symposium ran smoothly. The weekend was organised and headed up by Stephen Macdonald who has since left Ardeonaig to establish 'Beyond Adventure' in Aberfeldy, thanks to him without whose hard work and commitment this event would not have got off the ground. He was assisted by a number of Canoe Coaches who willingly and generously gave their time to attend and facilitate workshops. Thanks also to Jim Wilson and Huw Evans for bringing demo boats and other equipment for canoeists to try (and buy!). Karen Knight's visit, kit and demo was organised by Colin Broadway, many thanks to him for all that required. Last but not least we extend our thanks to Karen, who won us over with her charm and welcoming manner, always patient, always willing to chat, always smiling. And so we sit back and look forward to the next Open Canoe Symposium ..... Watch this space!

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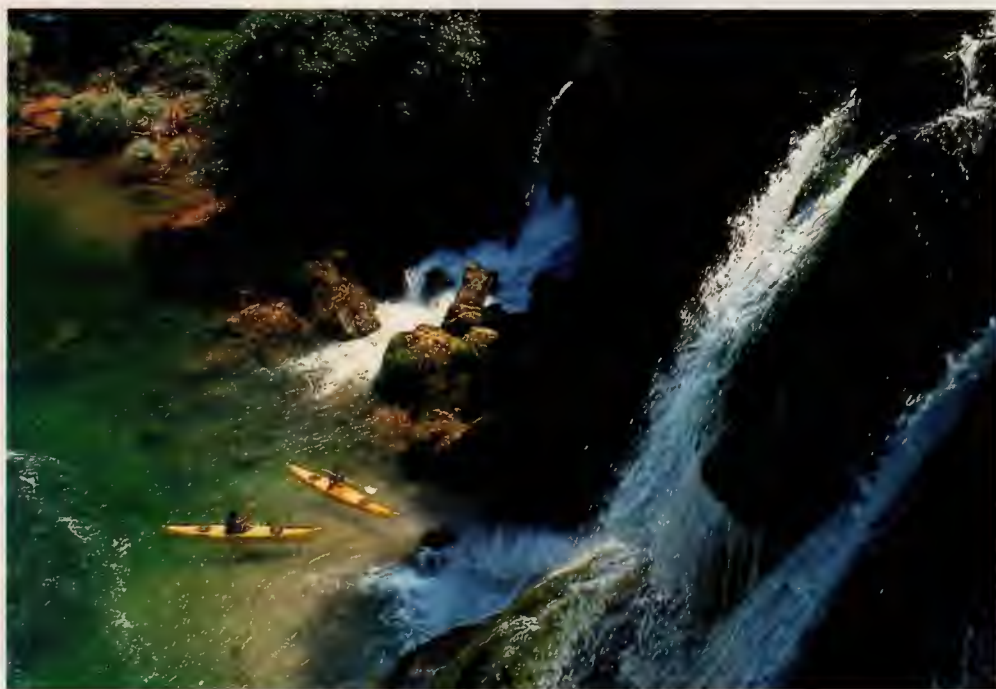
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Article by  
Zeljko Kelemen

# Croatia: Post War

After the fights between cowboys, Indians and bandits in making of German Western movies in early sixties, the rivers and lakes of Croatia saw real fights with real bullets in the early nineties. Now it's history but it has left its scars on some rivers as well.



Above: Zrmanja

Far right: Cetina

Below: Krka River  
National Park

**B**eing an underdeveloped country is not always as bad as it may seem. It can depend on one's definition of "values". If clear, green and wild rivers are rated high, Croatia is the place to take your kayak to! Paddlers from Europe used to visit these beauties often until the situation in the area became more turbulent in politics than in the wild rivers. Very few kayakers came in the 90's and rivers have changed a bit during war years (1991-1995). Now they are even more beautiful than before and easier to access.

An organisation called "Riverfree", founded in 1989, has made a lot of efforts to protect Croatian rivers from damming and pollution and allowing free access for recreational paddlers. Well organised and environmentally conscious river touring is their tool to protect the rivers in their free flowing condition. Riverfree has also helped founding new canoe, kayak and rafting clubs in Delnice, Ogulin, Karlovac, Slunj, Obrovac, Šibenik and Omiš – the number of white water clubs has tripled and sea kayaking is taking off. The greatest challenge is yet to come as the country is now open to foreign

investors: hydroelectric power plants are among the safest investments!

Political changes have affected river touring as well. The greatest part of the best paddling section of Kupa River is a border with Slovenia now. Before going on the river it is recommended to report to the police to avoid possible bureaucratic problems. Make sure to carry the right currency in your waterproof pocket before deciding whether to have a beer in Slovenian or Croatian pub:

TOLAR is usual currency on the left bank and KUNA on the right. There are new paved roads, inns, restaurants, camps and hotels plus organised raft and canoe trips and rentals now. The first 6 km of the

river are in Croatia and are within the new borders of Risnjak National Park. This is still a virgin area and the river is even more clear and green than before.

The best part of Dobra river is now open to canoeists and organised rafting trips. The dam releases up to 50 m<sup>3</sup> of water per second creating big holes and waves – up to grade 5 but not dangerous. Water release schedules and access information are available from Riverfree. The neighbour river - beautiful Mreznica and its numerous waterfalls are now under special protection as a nature park. The popular campsite by Milka's mill is open again, with excellent bean soup and warm home made bread just like before.

A part of the waterfall on next river - Korana - was damaged by explosion that destroyed the mill on it. The rest of the river in canyon is as beautiful as ever. Except for the first section to Martin Brod (which flows in Croatia) and middle section (around Bihac, in Bosnia) the rest of Una River is a border between the two countries, including the section around Štrbacki Buk (20-metre waterfall). It still is one of the best paddling destinations in Europe. As interest in rodeo and squirt boating grew rapidly in the 90's, this river will become even more popular. Bosnian and Croatian kayakers and rafters are now jointly organising trips and will gladly help fellow paddlers reach the best sections.

Most of the people living around Zrmanja and Krupa have left their villages. Zrmanja is now even cleaner and more beautiful – you may drink its water without fear. There are organised canoe, kayak and rafting trips and new regulations are being prepared to protect the water quality and travertine waterfalls. Nothing is drastically changed on Zrmanja's tributary, the Krupa – it is still one of the least known, warmest and most beautiful rivers in Europe. Its travertine waterfalls grew a couple



# River Report



of centimeters in the past years.

Further South, Krka River National Park has extended its borders almost to Knin. A lot of garbage from that town was thrown into the river during occupation period. It is much cleaner already, and the park authorities will allow organised and private canoeing trips. Some waterfalls have fallen down of natural causes, one of them leaving great piece of white water and play holes behind.

Young commercial rafting business fought and won the battle for more water release from dams on Cetina river. Now it is great for paddling, even better than before. Riverfree has a canoeing base in inexpensive hotel by the sea near Zadar - for day trips to

ivers in Dalmatia (Cetina, Krka, Zrmanja, Krupa) and provides permits, shuttle transport, boat rentals, guides. There are four national parks in the circle of 150 km around it – Paklenica (canyons in Velebit Mountain), Plitvice (16 lakes and dozens of waterfalls), Kornati (100 islands) and Krka River.

Two more national parks are great for sea kayaking – the island of Mljet with its two warm salt water lakes in the South by Dubrovnik and 13 Brijuni Islands in the North by Pula. Beside natural beauties the Adriatic has excellent sea kayaking conditions. Storms are rare and predictable, big waves as well. No sharks, big tides or



More information about river and sea paddling in Croatia can be found at well illustrated web site [www.croatia-adventureatlas.com](http://www.croatia-adventureatlas.com) or tel: (+385 1 6124 300) fax (+385 1 6111 696). A paddling slide-show screen saver on the site is available to download and it's free.

strong currents. The water is warm, blue and clear and sophisticated sea kayaker will enjoy the preserved old tradition, architecture and culture. A pleasant way to explore the islands is on an old wooden motor sailer yacht where your kayak or bicycle travels with you. No need to pack every morning or build a camp every evening as your bed and food will follow you. Croatia has all it takes to become the premier European paddling destination in the beginning of the new millennium!

**Main pic:** Adriatic Sea (sea kayaks cruise aboard an old timer motor sailer)

**Below:** Krupa



**Above:** Zrmanja

**Left:** Una (between Croatia and Bosnia)



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**LOST/FOUND/STOLEN**

**Lost on the Spear**, Purple Stunt bat with yellow nose cone. On 2 Jan 99. Tel: Ivan 01286 871169  
**Lost on River Tryweryn**, at Bala on Saturday 20 February '99. White Asymmetric bladed Werner Paddles with Blue Shaft, Name E & BCU No. on blades. If found contact Usha Sharma on 0181 406 5234 (answerphone)  
**Lost at Appletree Wick Falls**, on 07-02-99 Schlegel paddles, red and green Topline. Hyde 01482 666799  
**Stolen, 4 Plastic Skerry sea kayaks**, stolen from small charity in Skelmersdale Lanes 15<sup>1/2</sup> March. 3 Turquoise, 1 red all with ocean cockpits. Reward for recovery. Tel: John 01695 632434  
**Stolen - Pyranha Micro bat**, purple colour, standard spec, rope grab loops & no air bags. Serial No. ydww 612 AE 1. Stolen from Gilesgate in Durham 7.00pm 5.2.99. This canoe is a much loved toy and I would love to have it back, if you hear of it's whereabouts, please contact me or Durham police - crime number BD/4160/99. Tel: 0191 3862437

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Would you like a

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Tel: 01253 352525 Fax: 01253 356955 e-mail: nst@nstgroup.co.uk



## Wanted...

Are you a keen paddler? Then why not train and qualify as a BCU Level 2 Coach (and beyond) before working as an instructor at one of our children's activity centres in Britain, France or Spain.

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For more information, contact us at: Recruitment Department: 820 Alton Court, Penyard Lane, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5GL Telephone: 01989 767833. E-mail: recruitment@pgl.co.uk

www.pgl.co.uk/personnel

Accommodation

Qualifications

Fun

Meals

Training



## ...Keen Paddlers

## EDUCATION AND LEISURE SERVICES

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A leisure management qualification, other NGB Awards and a UK Driving licence would be an advantage.

**Application forms and further information from the Recruitment Office, Room 235, Guildhall 2, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 1EU. Telephone 0181 547 4601 (answerphone). Website: <http://www.kingston.gov.uk>**

**Please quote vacancy reference 510040.**

**Minicom users only 0181 547 5162.**

**Closing date: 30th April 1999.**

Please note there are also part-time vacancies for Kayak Canoe Sailing Instructors for the period April to September.

Please apply directly to Jon Handley, Centre Manager at the Sailing Centre on telephone 0181 549 3066.



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## GRAFHAM water centre

Great Adventures offers an extensive range of Outdoor Adventurous Activities for the Education, Libraries and Heritage Division of Cambridgeshire County Council.

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There are temporary vacancies based at our **Campsite** at **Birchover** in the **Peak District of Derbyshire**. Contracts are from 15 May to 27 July 1999 and for shorter periods.

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**Catering Assistants** and **Chefs** are also required at **Birchover** for the same period. You should hold, as a minimum, the basic food hygiene certificate.

**Sailing, Windsurfing and Canoeing Instructors** are also required at **Grafham Water Centre** for periods between May and September 1999.

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For an application pack contact **Christina Devoti, Great Adventures, Grafham Water Centre, Perry, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE18 0BX. Tel: (01480) 810521 Fax: (01480) 812739. Closing date for receipt of applications is 16 April 1999.**

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For an application form and further information contact:  
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Department 120,  
Village Camps, 1260 Nyon,  
Switzerland.  
Fax 0041 22 990 9494.

- River Leaders
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- Chefs/Support Staff
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Instructors will be based at one of our Centres in Wales, the Lake District or Scotland.

Interview days will be held during the year and the next will be in April 1999 at the Outward Bound® Ullswater Centre.

**Please apply in writing enclosing a CV to:**

Kate Jones, PA to the Divisional Managing Director

The Outward Bound® Trust, Watermillock, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 0JL

SITUATIONS VACANT

# WANTED!

## WATERSPORTS INSTRUCTORS

We need lots of energetic young people to work as watersports instructors at our outdoor adventure centres for children in the UK and at Center Parcs villages in Europe from January 1999. Canoeists ideally should be at least Level 2 Coach Trainee (Canoe or Kayak) however if you are keen paddler we also organise BCU training and assessment courses during the season. All instructors also receive training leading to other land based National Governing Body qualifications. If you are a keen canoeist give us a call today for a recruitment pack.





**Call 01305 835966 (24 Hrs) Fax 01305 834070**

SITUATIONS VACANT

## KAYAKING INSTRUCTORS REQUIRED...

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**Please apply with your CV to Wild Island (CF), Solwaybank, Canonbie, Dumfriesshire, Scotland DG14 0XS.**

### Senior Instructor

To join our management team  
Permanent post from March 1999  
Centre experience essential  
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Must have Level 3 Coach canoe or Kayak  
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Sense of Humour/Adaptability  
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Tel: 01749 812307 Fax: 01749 812706  
E mail: millonthebrue@compuserve.com

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**Please contact Clive Richley on 01584 640889**

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# Perception Regional Youth Slalom

112 eager young paddlers from Clubs, Centres, Schools and Scout groups turned up to the Crystal Palace pool in SE London in January to test their skills around a 14 gate course in the main pool.

The slalom formed part of a weekend of Paddlesport at the pool with a polo competition on the Sunday. We introduced the events last year as part of the BCU Paddlesport programme to encourage participation in slalom and to give a focus to winter paddling for young people in Greater London and the surrounding areas. Such had been the popularity of last year's one day event that it had been expanded to the two days this year, made possible by funding from the English Sports Council and manufacturers. In the case of the slalom this was Perception Kayaks.

The event is run on a similar format to the London Youth Games slalom with two parallel courses running the length of the 50

mts pool. Competitors race head to head down the pool, spin around the bottom pool and then return through the gates up the same side with the results based on fastest time plus penalties and all paddlers using the same Perception Reflex kayaks.

There were some excellent performances that would have left any talent scout for slalom rubbing their hands with delight at such promising paddling - with some notable youths beating ranked slalom paddlers! A stunning run by Fabian Bunting (Divi U18) of 68 seconds clear for Islington Boat Club showed his class and provided an inspiration for the other paddler. Whilst during the lunch break GB Youth Squad member Andy Milton gave a classy display for the teams of how the course could be paddled. In the Under 18 female group a close tussle (and repeat from last year's event) for first and second place saw Jo Powell the victor 83.2 with Laura Thackerberry second with 91 seconds and in the Under 12 class it was great to see so many competing - a total of 43 - with many of these under 10 years of age.

Great performances and team participation added up to a great event. Many thanks to our many supporters and helpers including members of Shepperton Canoe Club, Canalside Centre and Waveriders.

## Club Prize

1st Hillingdon CC  
2nd Ealing CC  
3rd Waveriders

## Centre Prize

1st Royal Victoria Docks  
2nd Surrey Docks  
3rd Westminster Boating Base

## School Prize

1st Dulwich CP School  
2nd Sedgemoor School

## Individual prizes Under 12 Boys

1st Martin Perkins - Ealing CC  
2nd Luke Banks - Waveriders  
3rd Andrew Chetwood - Dulwich CP School

## Under 15 Boys

1st Nicki Leonida - Hillingdon  
2nd Chris Leonida - Hillingdon  
3rd Jamie Cole - Royal Docks

## Under 18 Boys

1st Fabian Bunting - Islington  
2nd David Holtham - Westminster BB  
3rd Jon Clarey - Dulwich CP School

## Under 12 Girls

1st Beth Powell - Waveriders  
2nd Elizabeth Stanistas - Barking & Dagenham  
3rd Maria Nicholls - Barking & Dagenham

## Under 15 Girls

1st Elizabeth Clamp - Waveriders  
2nd Sarah Holtam - Westminster BB  
3rd Kate King - Wallington & Carshalton Scouts

## Under 18 Girls

1st Jo Powell - Waveriders  
2nd Laura Thackerberry - Royal Vic Docks  
3rd Natalie Reed - Royal Vic Docks



# Pyranha Youth Polo Competition

Crystal Palace is an ideal venue for the polo competition - the 50 metre pool providing a real challenge both tactically and physically to the young competitors (normally restricted to smaller pools). The competition proved to be just as exciting as the slalom the day before with 113 competitors making up the 18 teams fighting it out to get to the finals. Teams were split into 3 groups - Under 14, 16, & 18 teams progressing from heats to semi's and then to the finals, with reps giving a second chance to losers of the heats.

There were some tough games in the heats and reps with draws being decided by a "golden goal". I.e. first team to score wins (following the recent spate of penalty shootouts the young paddlers were well aware of what they had to do and this certainly added to the tension and excitement. All the finals were exciting games but particularly in the under 16 group with last year's winners Tadpoles desperate to retain the title from Dix (who paddle at the same club: Tandridge). With one of their regular players having to sit on the sidelines unable to play having broken his fingers from playing football earlier in the week - Tadpoles had their work cut out against such worthy opponents - it was a close fight - but Tadpoles came out victorious again.

The event was fortunate to have the expertise of top polo coaches Paul Hammond and Andy Pumphrey who controlled the games and gave valuable feedback to trainee referees throughout the day. During the lunch break some of our top team players gave a thrilling and exhausting demonstration of a top class polo game and it certainly seemed some lessons were learnt from this by the teams playing in the afternoon.

In addition to the English Sports Council funding Pyranha supplied the boats for the event and donated a polo boat, which Dulwich College Preparatory School bought to add to their fleet of Pyranha RX300's. Thanks to these bodies for supporting the event along with the BCU and the many helpers on the day. Barking and Dagenham, Dulwich CP School and Tandridge for supply of equipment.

Sue Hornby Paddlesport Development Officer West Thames/London

## Results:

### Under 14

1st  
Dolphins (Dulwich CP School)  
2nd  
Barking & Dagenham Adventure Club  
3rd  
Waveriders  
4th  
Ealing Canoe Club

### Under 16

1st  
Tadpoles  
2nd  
Dix  
3rd  
Barking & Shadwell  
4th  
Sharks (Dulwich CPS)

### Under 18

1st  
Meridian  
2nd  
Edmonton  
3rd  
Waveriders  
4th  
Eagles (Addlestone CC)

The Dolphins on the start line



## PADDLEPOWER WORKSHOPS

Date	Venue	Contact	Telephone
24/4/99	Woodmill Southampton	Adrian Barker	0118 926 7806
22/5/99	Riverside Oxford	Adrian Barker	0118 926 7806
28/4/99 & 05/05/99	North Notts	George Oliver	0115 9142610
15/05/99	W. Yorks	Michol Kendrick	01924 510727
24/4/99	Cuckmere Valley CC	Sue Hornby	0181 941 2714
19/06/99	Maidstone	Sue Hornby	0181 941 2714
April 99	Stafford	Jonathon Davies	01244 390451
10/04/99	Bedford	Chris Wilde	01234 405317



# Me and Lee and



**H**aving carefully selected a suitable time of year the pressure was now on to choose the right river. We could consider its length, ideally long enough for a 3 day paddle; we could look at location, ideally in Cornwall so we wouldn't have to cross the border; or we could use that tried and trusted scientific method and simply choose a letter. How about "T" I suggested.

I'm sure every past explorer has used similar methods. When Hillary fancied climbing a mountain I bet he just reached into the scrabble bag and pulled out an "E", for Scott it was "S" and Columbus got an "A". It just so happened that me and Lee pulled out a T. "That's handy" smiled Lee "No need to go abroad then!"

So the river "T" it was. Preparations could begin in earnest. Based on the fact that we have both lived through several Februarys and have paddled down one or two rivers in our time we were confident that our choice of equipment and provisions would be thoughtfully assembled some chance! We took a 6 foot square bivi sheet in place of a tent, five ex-industrial ice cream containers (large) instead of dry bags, enough food for a fortnight and enough water for a day and a half.

As explorers we had a few things to learn, but we were keen. We had a river, we had the gear and

February is a great little month for exploring. There's the sort of frost that freezes your gloves whilst you've still got them on, there's the sort of rain that penetrates the driest of dry suits and the sort of wind that laughs at everything you do both on and off the river. Yep, February is a great little month for exploring.

we had a boat. Well we nearly had a boat, it just needed the gentle touch of a blow torch, five feet of aluminium tube, a steel pipe, several assorted nuts and bolts and a very large hammer. It was once a Coleman but now it was well and truly ours.

It was early when we departed Cornwall and cold! We drove for what seemed like minutes arriving at our point of

departure still shrouded in darkness. Lights could be seen in the far distance but the river was black and foreboding, narrow yet running with a purpose. We loaded our vessel with as much care as is possible in pitch darkness and paddled silently off on our voyage of discovery. 50 metres later we hit a tree and waited for it to lighten up.

The early morning haze hadn't the power to break the frost around us. As water splashed into the boat it instantly froze locking everything in its icy grasp. Our gloves froze to our paddles and to our stubby home-made wooded poles, which were proving their worth in this shallow and tree blocked section of the river. The morning followed a pattern of paddle, punt and haul out as obstacles brought down in floods a week before blocked our path. Our progress was painfully slow and our hands painfully cold. Due to the number of trees blocking our way we were also filling up with assorted foliage. By mid-day we looked





# the river 'T'

more like a couple of Alaskan lumberjacks with a kindling fetish than a couple of idiot canoeists exploring the North Devon Hinterland.

Mid day was a high point, for the sun. It was almost, although not quite, warm, for a minute or two and then it got cold again. Breaking into our rations we gorged on bread rolls, cheese spread and sweet piccalilli, bananas, chocolate and home made energy bars. Like I said we had food for a fortnight and we only expected to be out a couple of days, mind you our drinking water was already looking low.

The afternoon improved. The river reached an optimum size and flow that would keep the most skillful of tandem paddlers occupied and focused. Its course turning, twisting and snaking through rich pasture creating dramatic river cliffs. Always eroding away the soil that ancient trees were once safe to grow in. And now these trees hung on for perhaps just one more flood sharpening our wits, as on more than just one occasion we

were caught in a lazy approach to yet another turn ending in a seemingly magnetic attraction to an over hanging semi-submerged canoe wrecker. Thankfully the gunwales held as did our balance and we finished the day intact.

## A question needed answering

By 4am during a sleepless, star lit night a question needed answering. Why I wondered, is it that no matter how careful you are to choose exactly where to lay your sleeping bag you will always find yourself lying on some lump in the ground that makes sleep in any position almost impossible. Mind you it was Lee's idea to bring a bivi sheet instead of a tent and I will hate him for it forever. I have to say that I have never been so uncomfortable in my life. You could be kind and just blame the lumpy nature of the field or you could be honest and say u I can live with the lumps but its the fact that should I fall asleep I'll bloody well freeze to death" that is keeping me awake. And yet there are good things to say about that camping (survival) experience, if



only my brain would thaw out and I could remember.

The next day started with a discussion on portions. We were both in agreement that the whole concept of a 40-gram portion of cereal for breakfast was ridiculous. Instead you should take your average box of Alpen and split it into two, each serving when soaked in boiling powdered milk having just enough calorific value to get your average frozen solid canoeist up and moving, not to mention their bowls.

To be honest the second day wasn't quite as cold as the first instead it just rained! The river widened as substantial tributaries added to the flow. Fishing ladders and shooting parties marked the edge of civilisation as the width of the river grew and the water took on a milky quality. Funny that as the dairy factory was still down stream!

The river continued its meandering course and as its size grew so our progress seemed actually to slow. No longer did one turn follow another but instead great sweeping curves took forever to complete. At very long last we encountered a weir, then another and another and that was that. The bridges that had once carried trains and were now the domain of cyclists came to an end and we found ourselves entering the tidal zone and our final planning cock-up!

There are good times to paddle down a tideway and there are bad times and these times, oddly enough, relate strongly to the tide. You'd have thought that this final critical stage would have been extensively researched, that perhaps a tide table had been consulted, or perhaps calculated from a walk across a Cornish beach the week before last when it felt to the observer that the tide was, more or less, out. I will only say that the wind and rain were not the only things against us as we struggled through shallow channels towards our goal.

And beyond the ancient and new bridges, that span the mouth of this majestic river, that goal was finally reached. The Atlantic lay ahead but we weren't about to go surfing, although the idea was suggested. We'd reached the end of the river T and now it was time to go home. Colder and wiser? Well certainly colder!





More information  
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# Kutmaster Minimaster RRP £24.95 and Multimaster RRP £49.95



**K**utmaster from the USA had to be with a name like that, have produced a number of multifunctional tools that come with a lifetime warranty. All are very well designed, with fully locking L handle for personal security, a high carbon content stainless steel which prevents rusting and the whole

functional tools has risen since the original Swiss Army penknife came onto the market. The Kutmaster range of tools are all very robust and up to the job, the knives and files are all well thought out, sharp and easy to use. I especially like the Minimaster as it is small enough to be carried unobtrusively in a pocket but has a wide range of applications.

The only problem with both the tools is that they were first tested on a trip in France and the fact that they had no corkscrew between them was a major, major problem but they did redeem themselves as we could open the wine bottles with other applications on the tool.

## Coleman Containers

Range of sizes range of prices.

Coleman produce a range of containers that are either built in high-density polyethylene or tough polycarbonate. Both types of containers are like their canoes they are cheap, easy to use and will stand abuse. All containers are ideal for liquids and powders, they are easily to fill as they have wide mouths and the screw tops are simple to fasten and undo. The smaller containers have an insert in the top that helps them secure their contents. The larger sizes are graduated for measuring and have a plastic lanyard, which attaches the cap to the bottle so it will not get lost in the boat or around camp. So if your designing the ultimate wanigan or just wanting to take a drink along with you it's worth considering Coleman containers.

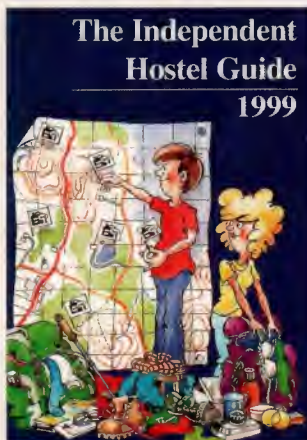
## Independent Hostel Guide

The Independent Hostel Guide has become established as a unique source of budget accommodation for travellers and outdoor enthusiasts. The 1999 biggest ever edition features 216 hostels with new entries throughout England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. The variety of accommodation reflects the independence of the hostels. They range from large inner city backpackers in London and Edinburgh, through communal pub accommodation to converted mills and lonely camping barns. All provide an atmosphere in which to spend some time, relax, eat and make friends.

A very useful pocket sized volume, whether you have places you plan to visit, or to help with the planning. A brief look inside whets the appetite to visit fascinating parts of the British Isles which are seldom heard of. Whether you visit spectacular isolated spots, famous cites or small cosy market towns, you are sure of a welcome at the independent hostels. The comprehensive full page features of each hostel reflect the character of the establishment and

include all essential details and locally compiled accounts of the attractions in the vicinity.

The guide is excellent value at £3.95 and available from bookshops (ISBN 0 9523381-8-1) or by mail order from the address above (£3.95 including postage, payable to the Backpackers Press).



system is easily opened and used.

The Minimaster is small (6cm \* 1cm), compact and light weight.

It fits easily into pocket or on key ring and has 16 functions

### Multimaster

The Multimaster is larger (15cm \* 5.5cm) comes with options of blunt nosed or needle nosed pliers. It has washer spaced blades and therefore its 17 junctions are easily opened. It has a 1/4 drive socket adaptor, with universal magnetised screw bits all of which fit snugly into a nylon container which can be carried on a belt or placed in a pocket.

The wide-spread use of multi-





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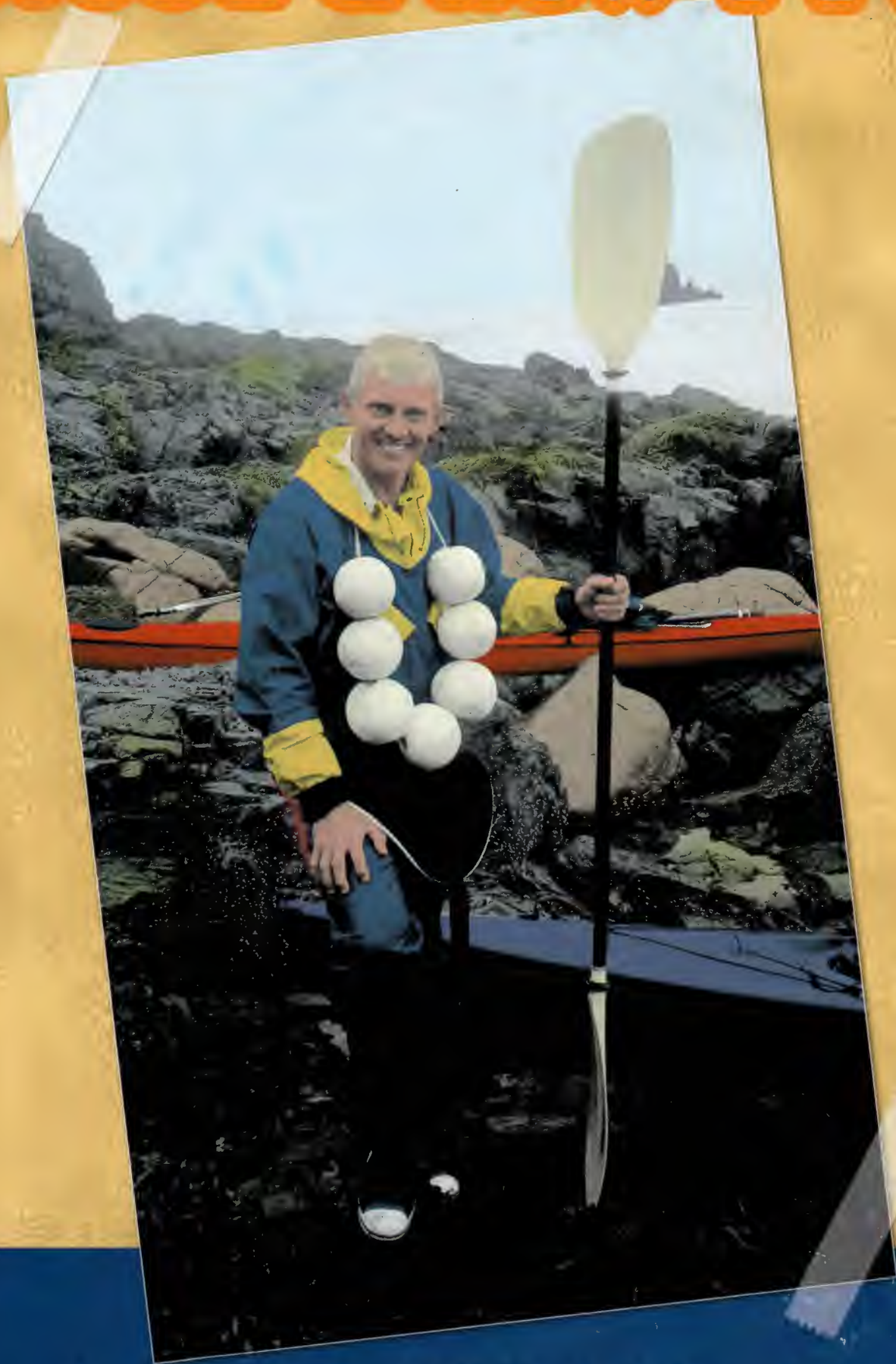
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