

THE CANOE SPORT MAGAZINE FOR THE NINETIES

canoe focus

10-99

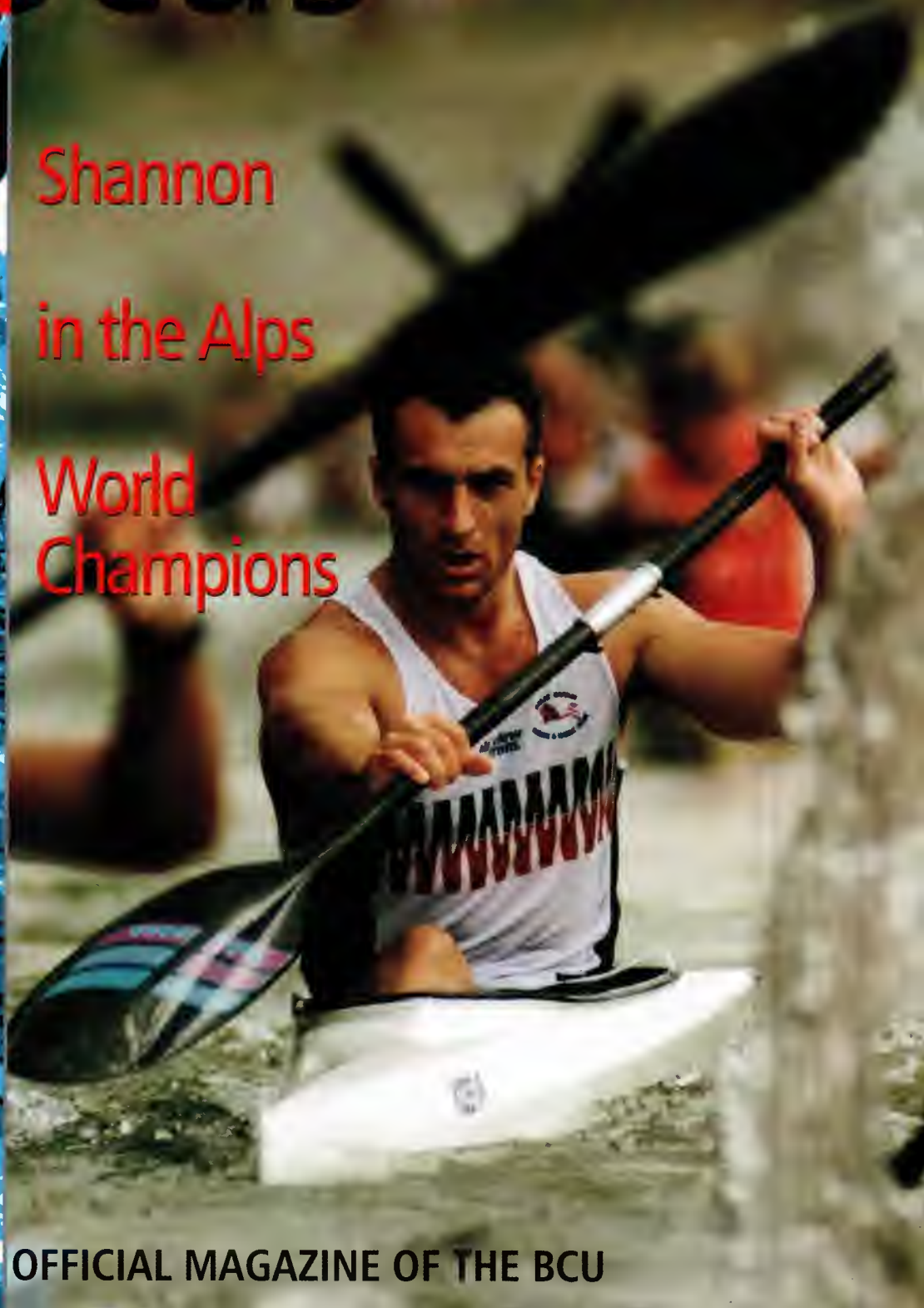
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Front cover:
Ivan Lawler,
six times world champion

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Canoe Focus
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John Dudderidge House, Adbolton Lane,
West Bridgford, Notts NG2 5AS
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BCU Enquiries & Editorial to
above address

Chief Executive
Paul Owen

Editor
Yvonne Froggett

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29 Greenfields, St. Ives,
Cams. PE17 4HB
Tel/Fax: (01480) 465081
ISDN 01480 359956

E-mail: peter@twobdesn.demon.co.uk
Website: www.twobdesn.demon.co.uk

Advertising Sales
Anne Egan

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canoeing with
the BCU

More Activity
promoting more
canoeing activity

More Access
more access to
waterways, facilities
and finance

More Coaching
improving the
quality and
quantity of coaching

More Medals
winning more
international, world
and olympic medals

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A selection of good reads.

Your contributions make Focus happen. The quality and variety of news, articles, reports and photographs depend on the submission of material from you. Very few contributors are professional writers and photographers. Please don't be put off writing because you have no experience! Canoe Focus is all about canoeists to canoeist dialogue: a paddler's magazine written by paddlers. **Technical Information.** Contributions are acceptable in clear handwriting or typed (double spaced). PC disks (3.5 or 5.25) can be read from most Word Processing programmes especially if saved as an ASCII file. Macintosh Files saved as DOS or ASCII can also be scanned. Photographic images are preferred on transparencies (colour slide). Artwork and line drawings should be clear and large. All material is accepted on the understanding that the BCU and its agents cannot be held liable or responsible for loss or damage, although every care and effort is taken to safeguard material. Next Copy date is the 20th OCTOBER 1999. Material arriving at FOCUS after this date cannot be included in the DECEMBER 1999 issue.

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COMMENT

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MARATHON WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS



Ivan Lawler Champion of the world, sixth time. Just as the August Canoe Focus arrived with members we heard the excellent news that Ivan Lawler had retained his World Marathon title in Gyor Hungary.



This was Ivan's fifth world title in the Marathon discipline, his sixth title being in 10,000 metre sprints and when added to the Silver Medals he won at

the first two marathon Worlds means that Ivan has medalled at every single Marathon Worlds - A magnificent achievement.

Not to be out shone twice Marathon Silver medallist Anna Hemmings, turned Silver to Gold with her first World title in the Women's K1. Abigail Cattle of Reading took the Silver medal in the junior Women's event to complete the British medal haul.

Following the world Championships the team then competed in the European Championships in Poland with Anna retaining her European title in the Women's K1 and Conor Holmes of Elmbridge taking the Silver Medal in the Men's K1. In the Junior events Abigail Cattle took gold in the Junior Women's K1, Adam Kennedy & Tim Sowry, Silver in K2 and Bronzes for Jenny Spencer and Elizabeth Holmes K2 and Nathan Johnson K1.

SLALOM WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

As we close for press we hear that the GB Slalom team have qualified four boats for the Olympic Games - one in each class and Paul Ratcliffe was once again the fastest man by over a second but, sadly a touch on gate number one and a two second penalty, put him in to the Bronze medal position.

CANOE POLO EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Congratulations to the Canoe Polo Teams with two Silver Medals at the European Championships. The under 21 tournament also saw medals for Great Britain with Gold for the Men and Silver for the Women.

SPRING RACING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Our Sprint Racing team completed their very successful season by qualifying 5 boats and seven athletes for the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. Congratulations to Tim Brabants, Tricia Davey, Ross Sabberton, Paul Darby-Dowman, Ian Wynne and Stephen and Andrew Train for getting the job done and good luck in what will be a keenly contested battle for places in next years team.

PADDLEFEST

Next weekend October 9 & 10 will see the third BCU Paddlefest and if you have not already booked a place its not too late. For late registration please either telephone the BCU Coaching Office or E-mail: coaching@bcu.org.uk

INTERNATIONAL CANOE EXHIBITION

Although still under negotiation it is hoped to increase the pool size at ICE by a factor of 5. The Exhibition is on February 26 & 27 2000 and up to date information will be carried on the BCU Web Site: www.bcu.org.uk

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

The proposed BCU Budget from 1 November 1999 has provision for a Communications manager who will be responsible for developing and implementing the future communications strategy of the BCU. It is hoped that this Senior Post will be advertised soon.

BCU ROAD SHOW

Once more this Autumn Senior Members of the BCU Board together with supporting members of the BCU Staff will be touring the Country with the BCU Roadshow. The Roadshows will cover Club Development and getting the concept of the proposed English Canoe Association over to Clubs.

WELCOME

A warm welcome is extended to several new members of staff.

In the general office:

Vera Whalley PA to the Chief Executive
(to cover maternity leave)

Rachel Buckland - Slalom Administrator.
In the Performance Department

John Macleod - International Teams Manager

Andy Maddock - National Staff Coach, Slalom

Eric Farrell - Senior National Women's Coach Racing

Doug Parnham - Specialist Technical Coach Racing

Trevor Hunter - Specialist Technical Coach Racing

New Contracts awarded to

Alan Williams, Alan Edge and Penny Briscoe

Chief
Executive
Paul Owen

NOTICE BOARD

news & info

WWC

White Water Consultancy International Ltd have expanded their empire and have taken over the Wave Sport Distribution. Following recent mergers and acquisitions by Confluence Brands of Mad River Canoes and Wave Sport in the United States they felt that it was only fitting to consolidate the sales and marketing efforts in the same way within the UK.

WWC are responsible for the distribution of Wave Sports products through stockists' nationwide and will be retaining the current World class paddlers for the Wave Sport Team.

IWAAC

The inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council (IWAAC) has begun its promised review of its 1998 report on priorities for waterway restoration. The review will be published in the summer of 2000

Number 1 European Freestyler for the second year running

Simon Westgarth is having yet another storming freestyle season winning the Euro Cup Series. After taking Gold in the European Championships last year at Ausberg, Simon is again on the number one ranked spot in Europe for the second year running, a previously unachieved goal. This year's Euro Cup Series saw events in five different nations across the continent, Wales, Austria, Spain, Finland and France.

Along with this feat, Simon has finished in the top five at all fifteen events he has entered this season, taking five first places, including the highly prized Hurley Weir Rodeo and Sjoa Kayak Festival. Along with this competitive success, Dagger and Palm Equipment have employed Simon as their roving Technical Representative throughout Europe this summer. During this Ambassador role he has been visiting events and Kayaking shops throughout Europe in addition to listening to

paddlers feedback.

This Autumn Simon goes to Dagger HQ in Tennessee to help Chief Boat Designer Mark Lyle in the development of the next generation of freestyle and white water boats. Before jetting down under for the World Championships in New Zealand. Some schedule! We wish him well.



AGMs

The Annual General Meetings for all the BCU Committees will take place as follows:

English Regions: Eastern: Monday 22 November at 7.30pm at the Golden Hind, Milton Road, Cambridge. Approach from the A14 to the North of Cambridge, turning towards Cambridge on the A1309 (A10). The Golden Hind is on the right, at the first traffic lights after the level crossing.

SouthWest Region: To be held at the YMCA Friern Street Bridgewater on Friday 26th November 1999 at 7.30pm. Nominations for Committee Officers or Representatives should be sent to **Dennis Walls, 71, Butts Road, Exeter, Devon, EX2 5BG**, to reach him no later than 4th November. Anyone requiring an Agenda should send an s.a.e. to Dennis Walls to reach him no later than 4th November.

Southern Region: To be held on Tuesday 16th November (8pm), at Liston Hall Marlow.

NorthWest: To be held at The Burrs on Saturday 13th November. Featuring: Coaching AGM at 5-6pm, AGM at 7-8pm, 9-5pm Coach Update Modules: WW Safety Course, Injury Prevention, 3* Standardisation, Child Protection. On Sunday 14th there is an Assessor training Day. **Contact Pat Mee 01457 864817**

Nominations for AGMs to **Andy Cook 01695 577226**
London and SouthEast: To be held on the 24th November at St Johns School, Caterham. 8pm start. Any problems call **Chris Childs on 01273 554688**.

West Midlands Region: Will be held on Tuesday 30th November at The ARC. Ackers Residential Centre. Small Heath Highway Birmingham. 7.30pm. The ARC is accessed from the West bound carriageway of the A45 Coventry Road. From the large Heybarnes Island, continue left along the A45 towards the City Centre. In about 200 yards on your left (past the large recycling plant) look out for 2 signs for ARC and gateway. The ARC is to the right at the end of the canal basin.

SPONSORSHIP

Powering Champions

The electrical business is right behind the latest attempt by British sportsmen to become world champions. The England Surf

Kayaking team is looking to retain its World Champion title in this year's world Surf Kayaking Championships, being hosted in Rio de Janeiro between 9-19 September. The team has agreed a sponsorship deal with 3M Electrical Products division, suppliers of cable joints, terminations and accessories. Together with Ras Dex, 3M are providing all the paddling clothing for the forthcoming event.

Barclaycard Team 2000

Barclaycard Team 2000 is an elite squad of 100 of Britain's best young sports people. Members of this elite development scheme receive sponsorship from Barclaycard worth at least £20,000 over a four year period in the run up to the 2000 Olympics. The sponsorship package includes financial grants, media training, kit and publicity. Tim Brabants and Paul Darby –Dowman are two of the above team of 100 elite athletes. Other athletes include swimmer Sue Rolph and decathlete Dean Macey. In July 1999 Brabants was 4th at the European Championships which were held in Croatia. He was 4th at the 1999 July World Cup in Poland and 4th in the April 1999 World Cup Regatta which was in Seville. Darby – Dowman was 3rd in the K2 1000m July 1999 World Cup Regatta which was held in Duisburg Germany. In May 1999 he won the K2 1000m and 500m events, at the National Sprint Regatta, Nottingham breaking both course records in the process.

Holme is where the art is

A specially commissioned sculpture that will dominate the slim hillside area between the canoe slalom course and the lake.

The aluminium and stainless steel structure depicts some of the most recognisable features of the Holme Pierrepont site: water, trophies, oars, flags and rare plants.

It is the first of seven pieces of public art to be sited alongside the Millennium Cycle route, which will snake a path through the whole country.

Sport England has jointly commissioned the piece, by local artist Liz Lemon, with Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottingham Trent University and Sustrans – creators of the National Cycle Network.

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TRAVEL

French Rivers

French River Information Guides and photos consult

<http://freespace.virgin.net/kim.cross>

The Surf Forecasts are at:

<http://www.geocities.com/Pipeline/Halfpipe/1259/surfpro1.htm>

Sportbreak: provides information for sportsmen and women. The following website is an informative database of sports and leisure breaks in UK and Ireland, including everything from corporate activity days to family holidays.

www.sportbreak.co.uk

Teignbridge Women's Personality 1998



Sue Davey picked up the title of Senior Woman Sports Personality of the year for her achievements in surf kayaking over the last 5 years. She is current ladies World Champion, past British Champion (twice), and has been paddling for the England team for the last 5 years. Her local club, Teignbridge Canoe Club, nominated her and this is a rather

fitting as she started her canoeing with the local club and has continued to do so all the way through, whilst competing nationally. As she has retired this year from competitions though will remain helping within the club, it was an apt finish to her competing years.

Record breakers

New World Record Kayak Crossing of the North Sea.

Three Norfolk Sea Kayakers, Ian Castro, Rod Cooke and Simon Worsley, have taken over four hours off the previous World Record for Kayaking across the North Sea. They crossed from Aldburgh on the Suffolk coast to Zeebrugge on the Belgian Coast in a time of 24 hours and 20 minutes.

New Record for Charity paddle on the River Shannon.

Dave Moore from Freestyle Canoe Club in Northwich, Cheshire completed a charity paddle from Loch Allen to Limerick on the 14th/15th August. He completed this distance in an outstanding 29 hours and 35mins, which has been verified by officers of Leitrim County Council and Limerick City Council and Irish Peace Institute. Which has made it the new record for the river Shannon, the previous time being over 3 days. The paddle was in aid of Children for Peace in Warrington, and Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team, and Sandbach Lions. It is estimated to raise over £400. Congratulations. See Article.

Orosi Helmets Safety Notice.

Nookie Kayaking equipment wish to contact any customers who inadvertently purchased non CE marked helmets during June/July this year. The helmets were samples only and should not have been supplied within the EC, as they are not CE marked. Any customer who acquired one should return it to the shop where it was bought or contact Nookie Kayaking Equipment (01822 618688) Purchase price of the helmets will be refunded in full.

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news & info

Apology from the editor

In the last edition of *Canoe Focus on the Wet Seat* Article there was a error in which the name of the paddler in question was incorrect. The name should have been Rachel Crosbee (and not Helen) This was due to human error on my behalf for which I have apologised to Rachel.

Sincere apologies to Rachel and her sponsors, Perception.

**Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician course**

The course extends beyond first-aid and teaches a lot of medical knowledge and skills – including detailed patient examination and techniques such as reduction of dislocated joints, treatment of snake bite and much more.

The course runs for 6 full days (the Americans are manic and hardly stop to draw breath) – starting at about 08.30 and running to about 21.30 most evenings. We will go out on exercise twice – one in the evening and one full day – this allows the students to use their newly found skills and knowledge in a almost real situation.

There is more information on the following websites. <http://www.wildmedic.org> , <http://www.wemsi.org> and jel@wildmedic.org. Or phone **Dr Jel Coward on 01654 710269 at home or on his mobile on 07771 996213.**

UK Suppliers of Dutch Composites

Joe Walmsley and Dave Hiron have arranged with Dutch Composites of Eindhoven, Holland, to supply to the UK market, their Sprint/Marathon and Wild Water Racing designs under the above name. They can be contacted by telephone on **01256 703713** or email: jowalmsley@aol.com or davehiron@aol.com

Waterwise 2000

Waterwise 2000 aims to raise the awareness of young people to activities in the environment of rivers, lakes and canals, throughout England. Apart from water based sports, this could involve artistic projects, poetry, prose, video etc... The scope is wide. These would take place during the Millennium Year, and would lead to competitions being judged, exhibitions and publication in the media.

The Millennium Festival Awards for All has been set up, and applications are to be considered for funding of such activities. WaterWise 2000 seeks individuals and organisations that would be interested in the initiation of appropriate schemes, and thereby to make application. This could be from an individual teacher or a youth leader from an accredited body, the school or the organisation concerned.

WaterWise 2000 will advise on such an application, and will ask for full details of the person or organisation concerned and for checkable references as is customary in matters concerning youth. Please contact **WaterWise 2000, 28 Alverstone Avenue Wimbledon, London, SW19 8BE Tel: 0181 9473692 Fax: 0181 2968711.**

Major water sailing and water sports centre open

Thousands of sailing and water sports enthusiasts, throughout the UK, will have access to a major new resource following the recent opening by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh of the £5.4 million Mount Batten Centre, Plymouth.

Prince Philip, a keen sailor was impressed with his 60 minute tour and in a short speech commented "This Centre is clearly going to be a tremendous asset for Plymouth. It really is marvellous and I wish it all the success it deserves."

The Centre is RYA approved and is the first of nine regional centres of excellence to open. Based at the Mount Batten Peninsula off Plymouth Sound, the Centre is ideally placed for a number of activities and events including sailing, canoeing, sea angling, powerboating and windsurfing. Access to a variety of water types means the Centre can cater for the beginner looking for a safe haven to learn, through to more challenging tests for the elite competitor.

The Mount Batten Centre Chairman, Charles Howeson commented "The Centre is designed to be a resource for all. Although there are twenty two affiliate members, the Centre activities can be used by any organisations, groups or individuals."

The water based activities are already available and the final touches to the shore based facilities will be completed by 7 August 1999. Events already held at the centre this summer include the Cornish Pilot Gigs Championship and the UK Boardsailing Association Championships.

The Centre Will have a full range of facilities including boat parking, hot showers, accommodation for up to 52 people, disabled access, equipment storage, a restaurant, a bar, and ample car parking. The Centre will be able to cater for training sessions, competitions, conferences, product launches, business meetings and weddings.

A range of activities on dry land will be provided from the Centre including caving, mountain biking and gorge walking for those who want a change from water based action. Tel 01752 664262 Fax 01752 254980.

Change of contact details

Bewl Canoe Club,
Clive Wilson,
Chairman, 'White Gates',
Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2SE
Tel: 01892 654033

PEAK UK – New Premises.

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Web:
www.peakuk.com

news & info

OCSG Events

9-10th October,
Autumn Weekend
Derwent Water,
Cumbria. Organised by
John Bull 016973
51688

30th – 31st
October, Windermere
Social and Cruising
Windermere, Cumbria.
Organised by **Keith**
Morris 01539
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Tickets on the
Weekend £15. **Apply**
to BCU Northern
Region Tyne Tour,
PO Box 77, Hexham,
NE46 3RY.

National Bell Boat Championships

The first National Bell Boat Championships are being held at The National Water Sports Centre, Holme Pierrepont in Nottingham on 9/10th October. The Bellboat is a team boat for all and has already been used by every section of the community: scouts, guides, toddler groups, primary school children, those with learning disabilities and top class paddlers. It is a 9 metre long very safe and stable boat.

Paddlefest '99

This year the event will be held over the weekend of 9/10th October and promises to be bigger and better than ever. The objective of the weekend is to bring together as many paddlers, with as wide a range of interests as possible so as to create a fun, multi-discipline event, featuring elements of competition, coaching sessions and clinics, have a go/try a boat sessions, presentations and lectures, doing your own thing, along with a car boot sale and of course a paddlefest party. **For a booking form and/or more information please contact the BCU Coaching department, Adbolton lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 5AS Tel: 0115 9821100 fax: 0115 9821797.**

BCU /SASA Student Courses

Surf Training camp will be held on the 16th/17th October. And the Safety and Good Practice Seminar is planned for October 23rd/24th October. The Safety and Good Practice Seminar is aimed at students responsible for club events and club trips. The Programme for the weekend is a mix of presentations, discussions groups and practical sessions. River Running training camps in Scotland and possibly the Alps are planned for 2000. **For more information please contact Yvonne Froggett at BCU Headquarters on 0115 9821100.**

The Great Ouse Race-Bedford-Herts Canoe Club

All Canoeist and clubs are invited to join the 20th Great Ouse Race, which will be held on Saturday 6th November at 1pm and covers 6 miles approx. Last check in at midday. This is a handicap race for all classes of boat, all ages and all abilities, and starts in Bedford (Car Park at junction of Cardington Road and Longholme Way). This is a fun event, so for more information please contact **Chris Wilson on 01727 851773** or email: chriswil42@aol.com

The Avon Descent

On Sunday November 14th 1999 is a classic marathon decent race, organised by Mercia Canoe Club. It starts at Stratford on Avon and finishes 10 miles downstream at Bidford on Avon with 6 weir shoots or portages. There are classes for K1, K2, WWR, C2 Touring and Racing, and GP Touring. Handicaps are applied to even out the Kayak classes. The start is at 12.15pm with late entries up to 11.30am. This is an ideal warm up to the Exe Descent or a good trip for those looking for an enjoyable paddle. **Please contact Nigel Wooltorton, Mercia Canoe Club, c/o 11 Bayford Avenue, Coventry, CV3 5BS, Telephone 01203 418796** or e-mail nigel.wool@cwcom.net for details. We look forward to seeing you.

National Boat Caravan and Leisure Show

The 2000 National Boat, Caravan and Leisure Show is all set to host the latest in canal, river and coastal craft ranging from inflatables and dinghies to narrowboats and luxury cruisers. The show, which will return with a new look to Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre, takes place from 19 – 27 February 2000. 10am – 6pm weekdays and from 10am to 7pm on Saturdays and Sundays. Car parking is free. **Further information and enquiries about exhibiting available from the organisers on 01203 221443.**

The NEW Balcan Emergency Life Line - B.E.L.L. Q - has considerable application for all canoeists!



Balcan has produced a new version of their unique throwing line, the Balcan Emergency Life Line - B.E.L.L.

This is very easy to throw and has a proven accurate range of 40 metres, which is much longer than any other line. Balcan claim that even from a sitting position it is possible to achieve a throw of 20 metres. The original model comprised of a bright orange, plastic capsule of an approximate size and shape of a half-pint bottle, which also contains the

line that pays out through the neck as it flies through the air. The new model - B.E.L.L. Q - now has a quoit incorporated to comply with DTI/MCA requirements and is, in fact, the only throwing line, apart from the traditional quoit and line, to obtain this

approval. This is a much neater unit than a traditional quoit and line and is, of course, much easier to use from any position. All B.E.L.L.s are supplied with a large plastic coated clip so they can be mounted firmly just in front of the canoeist so they are immediately ready for use.

A FLIKSTIK is also available that allows longer throws to be achieved. The stock of the B.E.L.L. is fitted onto the end of this and with a simple overarm casting action, the B.E.L.L. flies off the end to achieve a greater reach.

A number of years ago, B.E.L.L.s were used very effectively on three occasions during the Scottish National Surfing Championships in heavy sea conditions near Aberdeen.

In view of the limited space and movement that a canoeist usually has during an emergency, it would seem the B.E.L.L. has considerable application. **Contact: John Rinfret. Tel: 01526 353075**



NOTICEBOARD

news & info

Perception news splash sept '99

Congratulations to our team perception paddlers who have been selected to represent Britain at this year's world championships in NZ: Andy Stuart, Andy Jackson, Chris Harrison, Joe Andrews, Tim Copplestone, Andy Macdonald

What lovely people:

When Perception were approached to help loan a boat to a paddler who'd had their boat stolen at the Rabioux festival they decided to go one better. With the kind assistance of event organisers CKM they gave the boat intended for the prize draw to the unfortunate victim of the theft.



Mad dogs:

Team P's Aymeri Semeria is a character who requires no introduction in France, but now he has a challenger to his crown as chief entertainer His dog bollo#k. B#llock likes nothing more than shreddin' with aymeri

as he proved at this year's Rabioux festival, much to the delight of the Eurosport cameraman who was sent to cover the event. Keep an eye out for Aymeri and his trusty companion on Eurosport over the coming months.

Paddlefest:

Keep an eye out for the Perception mega dome at this year's Paddlefest. The 32 square metre geodesic dome will be team P HQ and the all important place to go to see, touch, drool over and test Perception boats.



Pyranha's moving to bigger premises.

For 2000 a new factory will be completed, that is probably the biggest single investment in Europe ever in production process machinery and advanced technology for the canoe and kayak market. The first of the new ovens is now being installed and will be up and running by the end of the year. The new factory will allow Pyranha to significantly up their production and distribution of their products around the world



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Give me that old time canoeing

As we approach the 21st century, mainstream canoeing, and the variety of craft in which canoeists pursue their sport, appear very different from the state of the art, as it was when last a century turned.

Should a late Victorian paddler be time-warped into the new millennium the most striking change obvious, regardless of the shape of the boats, would be colour. Flamboyant colours are a phenomenon of the later decades of the 20th century; not just in canoe sport but in all aspects of our lives. For previous generations the colour of their boats depended largely on their choice of timber if varnished; the wood grain and natural tones showing through. Paint was dullish stuff and even the few brighter shades available would have faded quite rapidly in sunlight. When fabric covered canoes and kayaks made their appearance colour was still a very conservative affair; red or royal blue were probably the brightest you could expect even in the 1960s.

When the time-travelling Victorian eyes had adjusted to the impact of our colourful boats and lurid gear they might also register the astonishing display of flesh tones visible where previously serviceable tweed or demure dimity had discreetly swathed the paddlers body. When next you don your

If you would like to find out more here are a few relevant contacts:

The Historic Canoe & Kayak Association, **co Tony Ford, Am Kurpark 4, 37444 St.Andreasberg, Germany.**

The HCKA member in charge of the canoe french archive is:

Roger French, 18 Bamards Hill, Marlow, 5L7 2NZ. Telephone 01628 486885

For anyone who may be considering an alternative to plastics boats and has a basic skill with woodwork tools. The following designers sell a variety of canoe and kayak plans suitable for amateur builders:

Alan Bridges, Birch Creek, Cenarth, Dyfed SA38 9JU.

Telephone 01239 710391

Dennis Davis, 9 Great Burrow Rise, Northam, Bideford EX39 1TB. Telephone 01237 475165

Dennis Davis also issues occasional lists of out-of-print and second-hand canoeing books.

Paul Fisher (Selway Fisher Design), 15 King Street, Melksham SN12 6HB. Telephone 01225 705074

W.F.Harrison, P.O.Box 55, Bingley BD16 4UU. This is the contact for the PBK range of plans designed by Percy Blandford; a catalogue costs 70 pence.

favourite togs to go paddling try to imagine how it would feel if instead your garb consisted of thick flannels, shirt with collar attached, woollen socks, felt hat and a monkey jacket (plus an Inverness cape to ward off rain or the night air). This was the clothing suggested for a canoe trip by Warington Baden-Powell in 1871. His advice to take at least one complete set of dry clothing as spares is still valid but imagine the difficulty of getting that lot dry after a dunking, or laundering! The rainbow colours of modern clothing may be purely aesthetic but their practicality in terms of drying and weight is a boon the Victorians would have envied. The modern change of kit should take up less room in the canoe but paradoxically some of the camping gear in use around the turn of the 19th century was incredibly compact and lightweight. T.H.Holding was a young man when the Victorian sailing canoe boom was at its zenith and he later went on to become a keen bicyclist. A tailor by profession, Holding designed silk tents which could be carried in the pocket of Norfolk jacket and other canoeists gave as much thought to the design of their camp 'kitchens' as they did to their boats.

The little 'Rob Roy' in which John MacGregor launched the sport of canoeing was a fairly crude construction of oak planked hull and cedar deck but she was recognisably a canoe. As the canoeing craze gripped the Victorian imagination the urge for speed and competition largely overtook the more placid pursuits of travel and exploration. The resulting "big canoes" almost took on the guise of "small yachts", as noted in the title of Harry Speed's 1883 book 'Cruises in Small Yachts & Big Canoes'. It took a while - several decades - before canoes lost their pretensions and the majority of enthusiasts settled down to the simplicity of either the open, Canadian, type or the kayak style as epitomised by the fabric covered folders which were so popular between the two, World wars.

So, now you have glimpsed what it might have been like to be a canoeist a hundred years ago perhaps you would like to learn more? More about the boats. More about the canoeists who used them. The Historic Canoe and Kayak Association was formed ten years ago by enthusiasts who wanted to know more about the antecedents of their sport. The first gathering was held on Lake Windermere in September 1989. The majority of the membership own boats that have been around for a good few years - not exactly antiques though one or two lucky members own those too. But there is no obligation to own an old boat, an interest in the past and a wish to see as much of it as has survived thus far preserved for the future is sufficient to warrant membership. The HCKA publishes a quarterly journal, is compiling an archive of canoe/kayak plans, tries to find good homes for unwanted older boats of historic significance and hopes at some future date to establish a library of relevant books and magazines. For the past several years HCKA has had a stand at the International Canoe Exhibition and informal get-togethers of members and their boats are arranged from time to time.

Enjoy our present world of colour and exotic materials but just occasionally try to turn back the clock and appreciate canoeing from a different perspective; you may find that the past can deepen present enjoyment. ●





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An Ageing

What was I doing travelling to France with a group of 18 to 20 year olds? I certainly wasn't in charge of them - if anything, as the least experienced paddler, they were going to be in charge of me.

It all started twelve months ago when my son Peter went on a school canoeing expedition to the wilds of Norway. One night he was chatting with some of the other lads when someone asked, "What shall we do next year?"

"Let's organise our own trip to kayak in the Alps."

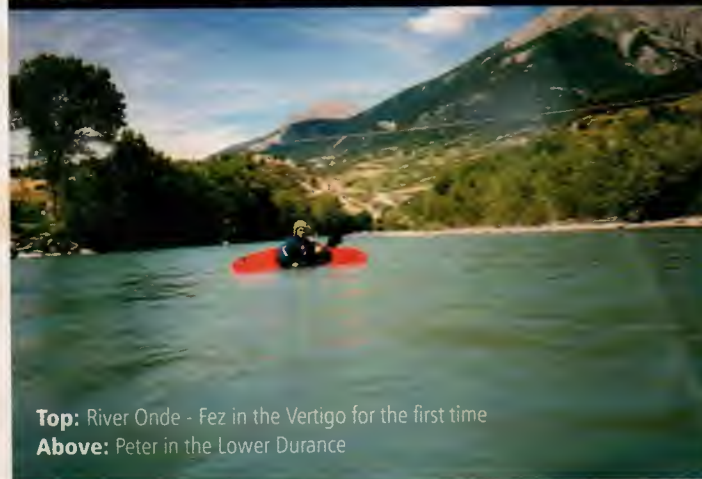
Eight months later and nothing done; it seemed like another of those ideas that was doomed through intense apathy, but then there was an announcement in school that the Scott Trust committee was accepting applications for grants for self-organised expeditions of pupils and recent old boys. This rekindled their interest and Peter and Sam presented a rather hurried bid. Amazingly they were awarded £1000.

"A" Levels came

With this incentive behind them they feverishly spent the next three months doing nothing about it. "A" Levels came and went and thoughts eventually turned to the trip. I had told Peter that he could borrow my car, but that they would need another, as it would not take five lads, five boats and all the gear they would need for two and a half weeks. No one else was able to get hold of a second car.

"Peter, why don't you ask at school if you can borrow one of the minibuses."

Two days later he came back to me with one of those appealing looks on his face. "We can hire the new Isuzu Trooper and a trailer. but the school insurance is only valid for drivers over 25..... Daaaad you're over 25 aren't you? What are you doing for the first two weeks of the school holiday?" I



Top: River Onde - Fez in the Vertigo for the first time
Above: Peter in the Lower Durance

always was a soft touch.

Everything now seemed settled for the trip - but oh no! Joe's passport had expired and there was a seven-week delay in dealings at the passport office. Joe was out. Suddenly a government announcement that passports could now be extended at post offices. Good, Joe was back on the trip. No he wasn't, this new arrangement would only come into force two days after the trip departed. Joe was off the trip again. Wait, he would get it renewed as soon as possible and catch a flight out to join us. Don't you just love it when things run like a well-oiled machine?

Great Book of Doom and Gloom

So, with a week and a half notice, I was driving through France for my first taste of Alpine paddling, armed only with Peter Knowles' "White Water Europe" and the Great Book of Doom and Gloom [Franco Ferrero's "White Water Safety"]. Only Tom had any experience from one trip there with his university club last summer. A gruelling eighteen hour drive and then we finally arrived at the campsite next to the Rabioux wave on the Durance. After a good twelve hour sleep, I woke up next day ready for the first river. We had decided to start with the lower Durance as a big volume river with plenty of fast moving water, but technically very straightforward.

With only one vehicle, we had taken a bike along to do the shuttles. I drove down to the take-out, locked up the Trooper and started back. When I had agreed to go along as the driver, I hadn't thought through all the implications. It was ten years since I'd last been on a bike. I had forgotten that rivers flow downhill so I would be cycling uphill. The road out of

Novice in the



Photos and editorial by: John Taylor

Opposite: Ubaye Race Course - Sam and coaching the Roman Bridge.

Above: Tom, Peter and Sam playing "spot the water" and trying to work out plan B

Embrun was a nightmare. The first two miles were the worst - it felt almost vertical. After that it levelled out, but we hadn't had a look at the bike before we left and the brakes were catching. I couldn't even freewheel on the downhill sections.

When I finally arrived back, I felt like throwing the thing at the lads, but after a ten minute recovery, I got myself kitted up and we set out, putting in just below the wave. It was worth all the driving and cycling. Hot sun, big blue water and fantastic scenery. We spent a lot of time on that first day practising break-outs into the smallest eddies we could find - something which came into its own on most of the other rivers we paddled.

We had all taken our own boats together with a couple of spares from the school store in case of problems. Peter and I each had an "Attak", Tom in his "007" - a bit on the long side for me. Sam had his "Stunt 300" and Fez his "Creek" - a boat that I detest with a passion. We persuaded Fez to try the school's "Vertigo" for day two on the Onde. For him, that was it - a boat in which he could play. He stuck with it for the rest of the trip and made plans to sell his boat as soon as the trip was over.

Two tubes of Araldite

Sam was more wary. He was convinced that at his height of 6ft 5ins the "Stunt" was the smallest one that would fit him - until we took the footrest out of the "Microbat". He complained at first about the lack of speed compared to his own, but it didn't take him long to realise the advantages of the much greater manoeuvrability. After his second day he was hooked. So much so, that when he split the hull on a rock, he spent several hours,

half a carry mat [we are still trying to work that one out!], two tubes of Araldite and a full roll of canoe tape trying to seal it. All credit to him, he kept it afloat for the rest of the trip. We await developments in his boat buying.

After picking up Joe in Grenoble at the end of day two, things went well except for the weather. It was simply too dry. We had done all the rivers within our paddling limits that had water in them. They were all different, but all very enjoyable, the best being the Ubaye Racecourse for its scenery and the Lower Guisane for its continuity at grade 4. There were rivers that we would have liked to have paddled - parts of the Guile, Severaise, Drac - but the levels were far too low.

After about ten days and second descents of most of the rivers, we decide to move north to Bourg St. Maurice for the Isere and guaranteed water. We started with the Upper section from the slalom site to the "ogling pool" at St. Gothard. A walk down past Aime rapids and the famous hole led to a decision that we just be doing the upper section again next day. None of the individual rapids seemed too daunting. Seven of them, however, one after the other, looked as though they might lead to a couple of us having a difficult swim at some point and we decide on a little discretion.

We continued our movement north to our final river, the Dranse. It was a surprising little gem and I can recommend it to anyone. By this time, our paddling had markedly improved and after the second trip I felt like a genuine white water paddler for the first time. The only downside was that the Trooper was broken into whilst we were on the river and a wallet stolen. Even that didn't dampen our spirits as it gave Sam another excuse to have a go at repairs with a sheet of polythene and his favourite canoe tape.

On the journey back, the lads were chatting about possibilities for next year. Northern Alps, Norway.....I wonder if they want a driver again? ●



Top: take out for the Lower Guisane

Above: Short of water, Fez still had to practice his rolling technique

RETIREMENTS

news & info

Grayson Bourne

The End of an Era

- 47 National Championship titles, including 9 times K1 500, 7 times K1 1000 and 6 times K1 10,000.
- Winner of the K1 500 in Duisburg in 1982, winner of the K2 500 in Szeged in 1986 (with Jeremy West).
- 11 World Championship Finals
- 5th place K4 1000 1984 Olympic Games.
- Silver medal K2 10,000 World Championships 1989,
- World Champion (with Ivan Lawler)
- Represented Great Britain at five Olympic Games (Moscow, Los Angeles, Seoul, Barcelona and Atlanta.)

What an amazing career (see box). Surely Grayson Bourne is one of the greatest canoeists this country has seen? "It's one of my regrets that I didn't fulfil my potential. I would have liked to have been one of the World Greats" he says in typical self-critical manner. But surely he's achieved more than he could have wished for? "I'm proud of what I've done, winning the World Championships was the moment that justified all the hard work for me." And it's not just the sporting success he's enjoyed. "Throughout my career I've met and competed with so many great people - many I can now call friends - that's meant a lot to me."

Where did it all start? After leaving school ("build your own canoe or learn French; I still can't speak a word of French!") Grayson settled into the pattern of so many elite athletes of the time; the odd bit of work to get by as well as signing on. The current young paddlers won't have to become life insurance salesmen or, like Grayson, steamroller drivers; they can rely on Lottery funding. Indeed Grayson can concentrate on his own career now. Having started a preservation company 18 months ago he is already employing over 20 people! "Having the extra 3 hours a day not spent training means I can really concentrate on work." Will there be any room for canoeing? "Only recreationally, I still enjoy paddling and won't stop exercising." His pursuit of excellence to the exclusion of mediocrity is what marks Grayson out from many contemporaries. And it started young; "I was in the National Youth Brass Band and won competitions playing the cornet," he says "if I hadn't started canoeing I could have succeeded at athletics or swimming." Are there any other sporting goals? "I've always fancied having a go at bobsleigh!" What about within canoeing? "I'd like to help as I think I've got lots of recent experience which could be useful."

So it could be that Grayson will still have some contribution to the future of British racing canoeing. "The lottery funding is making a difference, although the strategy behind it might need some alteration." One thing's for sure; while Anna Hemmings, Grayson's long time girlfriend, is still racing he will still be seen casting his eye over the sport he so dominated over the last 20 years.

Nick Redshaw

Retires after winning Bronze at the Wild Water Racing World Cup 1999

Twelve months after a life threatening illness resulting in major brain surgery following a brain haemorrhage Nick represented Great Britain in the 1999 Wild Water Racing World Cup with Canadian Doubles partner Slade Warne and won a bronze medal. Nick Comments 'I had achieved a childhood and lifetime ambition. Through ups and downs, relationships and illnesses, family commitments and educational studies, the ability to adapt and evaluate the here and now became an essential quality. To recognise life's advantages and its limitations, to form new strategies, new paths, but still remain focused on the overall destination and to actually arrive there was a dream come true'.

In recognition of his amazing recovery and achievement, Nick a Corporal in the Royal Marines was awarded the NATO Cup, presented annually to the sportsman or woman who has made the most meritorious contribution to service sport.

Nick is now currently in the processes of leaving the armed forces to pursue a doctorate in neurological research as his degree in psychology comes to a conclusion in October this year with the Open University he says; 'The experiences and techniques I have had to develop having a balance a complex sporting life in order to achieve my childhood dreams will be adopted and used in developing my research. Although I am under no illusion about how hard life can be, if I achieve only some of the success I have shown through sport and recovery in my research, it will hopefully make life for others somewhat easier. Since the beginning of my recovery I have felt that 'life is like standing on top of the White Cliffs of Dover on a lovely summers day putting your arms in the air and shouting I'm alive' a feeling I had on the medal rostrum in New Zealand, a feeling I hope others will be able to share. ●



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news & info

LONDON YOUTH GAMES - Docklands Sailing Centre – June 20th



Pictures by
J. Smith,
E. London PDO

Canoeing's inclusion within the London Youth Games had been under threat due to a number of factors and this year was crunch time. If it didn't work this year... we were out! So the BCU Paddlesport Development Officers (Sue Hornby & Jon Smith) worked very hard to make it a success and this is exactly what they achieved, in making it the best in 5 years with over 200 children attending.

Sue and Jon's key objective was to give young people a true experience of the flatwater racing aspect of Paddlesport within a really enjoyable context.

The London Youth Games is an opportunity for children across

London to compete for their Borough in what can only be described as a mini - Olympic Games. The ability level varies enormously – for example- national ranked paddlers from Richmond were competing with those who had just come in to the club through Local Authority schemes. The positive point was that young paddlers all came from groups that the PDOs had been working with over the last year – for example, Canal side paddlers represented Kensington & Chelsea and there was good representation from Barking & Dagenham and Islington.

The Paddlesport events took place at Docklands Sailing Centre, under the shadow of Canary Wharf on June 20th.

The programme included:

- Bellboat Races
- series of Sprint races over 200m and 500m
- Distance kayak races

All races were fiercely competed with the youth each taking part in at least 3 events

There was much activity going on bankside too. An ergo challenge was run for all to test their technique and endurance against the clock. To support the ergo challenge, the men's Elite K4 made an appearance which really, motivated the youngsters to try harder. Demonstrations were also given by the UK Squirt Boat Team. There was also a large array of demo boats on offer for the young people to try out ranging from white water racing boats to flat water racing boats

Results

At the end, the worthy winners were:

- 1- Barking and Dagenham closely followed by:
- 2 - Richmond, 3- Wandsworth.

We were also able to see that there were some potential-paddling superstars in the making. Some paddlers from Islington particularly caught the eye and the PDO's are following this up.

A BIG thanks for all the organisers of the event with Canoeing and Paddlesport securing its place in the future.

Good practice and child protection in action

Few would dispute that sport and canoeing, in particular, is good for young people and that thousands of them enjoy taking part in the sport every week. However, we cannot ignore that sometimes sport has been used as a cover to disguise child abuse. The term child abuse is used to describe ways in which children are harmed, either physically or mentally, usually by adults and often by those they know and trust. Those of us who coach and organise sport need to understand and operate good practice in working with young people.

To this end, BCU is being proactive in terms of developing and implementing policies, which it is encouraging its clubs, centres and other affiliated organisations to take on board. Two have been developed and adopted:

- Paddlesport and Young People
- Child Protection and Duty of Care

These are both available at no cost, through the coaching Department and will be launched at Paddlefest on October 9th/10th.

The documents not only provide useful information on issues related to young people but also good hands- on tips related to simple good practice that you should adopt within your club or centre.

The Coaching Service and Youth Programme are also encouraging all coaches to attend the National Coaching Foundation course – 'Good Practice and Child Protection'. Paddlesport Development Officers are currently organising workshops in their area over the winter period and will be encouraging all coaches to attend. Where there is not a PDO in your area, you can find out where the nearest NCF course is through contacting your local NCF office at the number below:

Area	Name	Telephone No.
North	Malcolm Moore	0191 374 7820
North West	Jan Turley	01695 584657
Yorks	Karen Douglas	0113 283 7579
West Midlands	Alison Woodward	0121 414 3890
East Midlands	Emma Atkins	01509 223493
East	Steve McQuaid	01234 261547
South West	Colin Wilson	01225 444823
South	Michelle Vickers	01628 475510
London	Barry Simmons	0171 594 9069
South East	Mandie Godliman	01323 411186
Wales	Catrin Devonald	01222 300500

The course covers:

- Identification of good and poor coaching practices related to young people
- Understanding of what constitutes abuse, what is acceptable/unacceptable behaviour
- Recognition of the signs and symptoms of abuse
- Awareness of the action to be taken a child discloses abuse
- Identification of practice that reduces the likelihood of abuse occurring
- Identification of practice the reduces the likelihood of wrongful accusations

Sprint Regatta Grand Prix Series 1999

1 06 young people participated this year in a new Grand Prix series of local sprint regattas in the West

YOUTH

news & info

Thames/London area run by the local Clubs with support from the BCU. This new series combined current races with new ones to form a five race series with each race counting towards the final results. The racing kicked off to a good start at Easter with a great regatta run by Richmond CC hosted at the Thames Young Mariners base – (sunshine courtesy of someone who cares!) The season continued with racing at Elmbridge in May, Westel and Wey KC ran events in June, and Royal CC ran the last event in July with over 70 young people participating at this one event. The events were open to any club/paddler and paddlers travelled from Leighton Buzzard, Bishops Stortford and Chelmsford to join in the racing.

The format for the racing is 200 and 500m time trials to start – based on these times the paddlers are seeded into races of similar ability. This ensures good racing all round. The Racing includes K1, K2 and distance races. The Grand Prix points were awarded on the 500m time trial results. Congratulations to the winners and thanks to the race organisers for some great events. Overall results as follows:

Under 12

Girls 1st Joanne Harris – Roy, 2nd Olga Stumph – Roy, 3rd Sam Brown – Elm

Boys 1st Ros Negus – Elm, 2nd Chris Burt – Elm, 3rd Stephen Burbridge – Elm

Under 14

Girls 1st Zara Dale – Elm, 2nd Jo Etheridge – Wey, 3rd Francesca Negus – Elm

Boys 1st Ben Brown – Elm, 2nd Edward Cox – Wey, 3rd John Sawers – Elm

Under 16

Girls 1st Ros Bates – Elm, 2nd Kim Wetherall – Ric, 3rd Netty Kelly – Roy

Boys 1st Ben Farrell – Elm, 2nd Paul Rodgers – Wes, 3rd Liam Heath – Wey

Under 18

Girls 1st Joanne Bates – Elm, 2nd Sam Wetherall – Ric, 3rd Denise Dewey – Wey

Boys 1st Tim Sowry – Elm, 2nd Nathan Johnson – Ric, 3rd Victor Kelly – Ric

Trophy to overall club winner – Elmbridge Canoe Club
2nd Wey Kayak Club, 3rd Richmond Canoe Club,
4th Royal Canoe Club, 5th Westel

North West Region.

Two NorthWest paddlers have achieved selection for National Canoe Slalom Teams. Michelle Patrick, aged 17 (Warrington Canoe Club), was placed second following the Junior Selection Races and will compete in the Junior Pre-World Championships in Bratislava and the Junior World Cup Races.



Michelle Patrick

Alex Burt aged 21, (also from Warrington Canoe Club) but trains at Teeside gained a Under 23 Team place and a 'wild card' entry for the Senior Selectio Races at La Seu d'Urgell

New 'Diamond Slalom Challenge' Being launched this winter

The new Paddlesport Diamond Challenge is being launched at Paddlefest 9/10th October.

This is a great new scheme consists of a series of 4 progressive challenges- Blue, Bronze, Silver and Gold - for young paddlers under the age of 14. Based on flat water, it is designed to fit into a one hour pool session and aims to help the paddler improve on their boat handling skills such as bow rudders, S turns and sweep strokes all applied within a 4 slalom gate diamond formation.

At Blue and Bronze level, should an indoor pool/ gates not be available, organisers can improvise by either placing poles in the bed of the lake/ river (if shallow enough) or anchoring buoys with poles extruding vertically.

At Silver and Gold awards the paddler is required to negotiate the 4 gates in a particular sequence and should be organised along side slalom open training events or Div 4 slaloms. The scheme is ideal for inter club challenges. A series of badges/ stickers is available for every successful paddler. Information packs are available through the BCU Coaching Office

Lightning racing boat demand growing

The new plastic junior racing boat, the Lightning, has had a great reception across the country as the boats have started to appear on the ground this year.

The new boats, aimed at children Under 12 were predominantly located within racing clubs but the demand for the boat is now growing significantly from Centres.

Upton Warren, based at Bromsgrove has acquired 6 new boats, while Pangbourne, Reading and Victoria Docks have all received new boats this year. Pangbourne has already used the boats in their regatta in June, Upton Warren are hoping to run a Flat Water event using the boats on October 4 whilst Victoria Docks plan to organise a regatta using the boats next year.

LIGHTNING EVENTS

Already the boats have appeared as a class within several events already. Heather Parker and George Oliver have ensured that two Nottingham regattas have featured the boats, whilst Pete Jones at Solihull has actively promoted the Lightning class within Hasler events in the West Midlands area. There was also a Lightning class at the Thames Valley Marathon in August.

GOALS FOR 2000

The BCU Youth Paddlesport and Flat Water Development teams are already planning for next year, a great series of more local events across the country, featuring the Lightning. Watch this space

IF YOU WANT ONE

The Lightning is made by Pyranha. Retailing at around £280 (ex Vat), a number of clubs (such as Barking & Dagenham) are putting in Awards For All applications to help them with the purchase cost.

If you would like further information on the boat, details are available from the Coaching Department or any Paddlesport Development Officer. ●

Bell Boat Licences

Bell boat Licences have now been agreed and are available. Please see the Access page for Supported by the British Canoe Union

Supported by the British Canoe Union

- Are you between the ages of 14 – 18?
- Do you live in the Greater London Area?
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- Are you able to raise or be sponsored for the funding needed?
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- Are you the type of person who will gain from this experience
If you can answer

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A meeting will be organised for selected candidates

news & info

River Barle Fatality, Dulverton, 24th October 1998

The following report on this fatality is collated from information that I received from members of the club involved, Blackwater Valley Canoe Club, and from evidence which was given at the inquest held on 4th February 1999. I hope that it is a true record of the events, which took place. As always I would ask all paddlers to consider the other people involved and resist the temptation to make any value judgements on the incident.

Members of Blackwater Valley Canoe Club arrived at Tarr Steps for a descent of the River Bade for which they had obtained permission from the BCU Local Access Officer some weeks before. The river was at a good height, the water level being just below the 'slabs' of the foot crossing there and the organisers immediately decided that the conditions were not appropriate for inexperienced canoeists or junior members of the club. The remaining six experienced members of the group individually made their decisions to paddle the river, having first agreed that they were each responsible for their own safety and that no one person would be considered to be the group leader. Two paddlers who had the BCU 'Senior Instructor' qualification were included amongst the six. Dean Britain, an experienced open Canadian canoe paddler, decided to use this type of boat for the descent.

They changed and arranged vehicle shuttles and when they were ready to get on the water it was observed that the level had risen considerably and that the water was now level with the slabs. It was still raining heavily.

Soon after commencing the descent the group realised that Dean was having difficulty in making the smaller breakouts which the kayaks could make. He capsized and after the recovery of his boat he was advised to attach a throw line to it to facilitate easier recovery in case of any fixture capsize. Dean capsized on at least one other occasion during the descent but made the decision to carry on canoeing when his colleagues asked if he would be happier carrying out along the footpath.

The paddlers had completed the vast majority of the descent before Dean's boat started to become swamped near Marsh Bridge, at which point the group was operating as two groups of three. The very rapid current was making control of the boat increasingly difficult so Dean decided to effect a self-rescue by swimming to the shore with one end of the attached line. During this operation he was assisted by one of the kayakers who tried to tow him to the bank but Dean had to let go of the rescue boat, as they were both in danger of getting swept into the trees. He then became trapped in trees briefly, before being washed out but was then seen to be pinned against another tree by one of his colleagues. The rescuer got out of his canoe and was able to speak with Dean from the bank, but could not reach him. Dean was clearly agitated and said that he could not move at all. While his companion examined the scene to look for some means of help Dean slipped under the water and his head could be seen stationary below the surface. At considerable risk to himself Dean's companion crawled along the branch and tried to

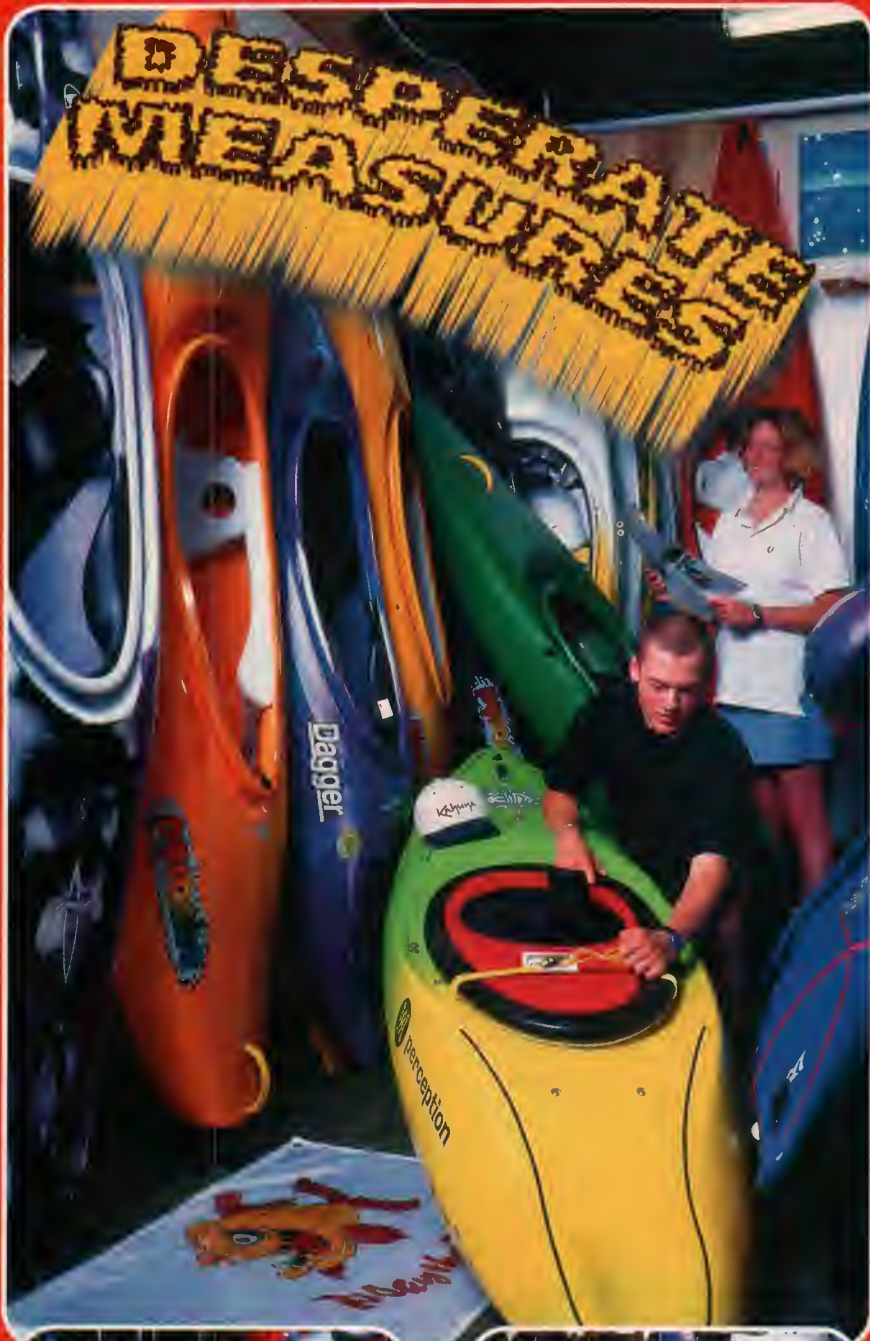
lift him up but found he could not move the patient. He then pushed hard down and Dean was washed out from the tree and started to float downstream. It is not known if Dean was alive at this point but there was no obvious sign of life. Dean's rescuer then ran down the bank, got back into his canoe and into the water and set off in search of the victim. Dean was found immediately below Dulverton Weir where the rescuer immediately commenced resuscitation, which he administered for some time. Despite these valiant efforts Dean Britain's colleagues were unable to revive him and he was declared dead by a doctor who had stopped to help.

At the inquest a hydrograph was produced by the coroner and used in evidence. This showed that the river had risen dramatically after the group had started their descent and had been at its peak at about the time of the fatality, some two and a half-hours after they started. Several local people attended as witnesses; they all gave evidence to the effect that they had spoken to the paddlers and strongly advised them not to paddle in such 'suicidal conditions'. Some described the river as 'the highest since the Lynmouth Flood' (1952), an assertion which I am sure would not stand up to close statistical analysis. However, it is important that paddlers realise that they may have to justify their actions when faced with such evidence. Happily the coroner accepted my view that non canoeists would not be able to appreciate the fact that conditions which may seem horrendous to them are actually what serious paddlers wait all year for and travel all around the World to find. He also accepted my argument that when the group got on the water the river level was not ridiculously high, and they could not have known that it was going to rise so exceptionally. He gave a verdict of accidental death, which was what we would have hoped for. I should add that the members of Blackwater Valley CC who attended and gave evidence were composed, dignified and superbly precise in their evidence and did themselves and the sport great credit.

Another issue from which we must learn concerns the more immediate aftermath of the incident. While being supportively and sympathetically questioned by a local policeman the organisers of the trip were told that they had to wait to be questioned by CID officers from Taunton. These officers adopted a far more aggressive stance and it became clear that they were trying to establish whether there was any question of payment to a leader, i.e. they were trying to establish responsibility. It seems that Lyme Bay is having repercussions on inland canoeing too; trip organisers and especially professional river leaders, need to be aware of this. Only after an hour of intense questioning were they frilly satisfied that the club and the trip were non-profit making and entirely voluntary, after which they left.

Other lessons can be learned from this tragic incident.

- Dean's boat did not have full white water buoyancy, and it almost certainly should have done so.
- Dean chose not to get out and walk when he was tired and probably cold; his colleagues could not force him to do so, but perhaps we all need to remember that there is no shame in quitting while you can. ▼



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news & info

probably cold; his colleagues could not force him to do so, but perhaps we all need to remember that there is no shame in quitting while you can.

- Canoeists on this trip and those involved with the fatality on the River Dart on the same day needed some form of counselling service, but none was available from within the sport; we need to address this.
- Although it would not have helped in this case, we also need to consider the establishment of canoeing's answer to Mountain Rescue Teams, 'rapid response specialist whitewater rescue teams'. As it is clear that the emergency services are not well equipped or trained to deal with the very special circumstances which can arise when rivers are at high levels and perhaps we should take some responsibility for this?

River Dart Fatality, 24th October 1998

On Saturday 24th October James Bilson, a 19 year old member of Basingstoke Canal Canoe Club, drowned whilst paddling the Holne Bridge to Buckfast section of the River Dart at high flow. The following information is that which I have been able to obtain from members of the club who were on the river that day, and from the various officials who gave evidence at the inquest which was held on 7th January; I therefore hope it is an accurate account.

Members of the club had arrived at the River Dart, having booked their accommodation and Dart access tickets some months beforehand. The group included two very experienced whitewater paddlers, one of them a Level 3 Coach, E2, and a number of paddlers who had various WW experience. Owing to the very high flow the group decided not to paddle the Loop, for which they had permits, but the lower Dart which is known to be less challenging. They organised their group to operate as two groups of 5 paddlers, recognising the difficulties of paddling such fast water in a large group, and accessed the water at Holne Bridge. Before getting to Holne Weir, James, who was a fairly large young man (in excess of 14 stone) paddling a Whiplash kayak, helped to rescue a canoeist that had come out of his boat. He then safely shot the weir on the extreme left and proceeded downstream to join the other members of his group. About 30 metres downstream of the weir a member of his group had become pinned against an obstacle. It is not known whether James deliberately lined his boat up to try to 'bump' the other boat off, or if the current simply took his boat there. But James did indeed release the first boat from its pin, only for his boat to become pinned nose down against this underwater obstacle. The boat was several metres from the bank and in a very fast current and despite land based and water based attempts to release James and his boat it proved impossible to do so. Even though members of his club physically held his head above the water for some minutes and he was able to speak with them to indicate that he could not get out. All the time the

river level was rising and at some stage his boat had rotated such that his head was underwater; other paddlers had become involved in the attempt to free him but in the end they had to give up their brave attempts to rescue him. The emergency services were called but by the time they arrived it was inconceivable that he could still have been alive. The water level continued to rise and the Police Underwater Recovery Team was unable to retrieve the boat and body until 9 hours after the entrapment.

It was later found that the boat had been held by the current against a fence post, which would normally have been well out of the river. The Police examination of the boat found that there was an indentation of about 1.5 inches which ran upwards across the deck and thigh braces. It was agreed that this was almost certainly caused by the boat being held tightly against the steel tube fence post by the water pressure, and that this depression of the deck and thigh brace would have made it impossible for James to get out of the boat.

The coroner returned a verdict of accidental death, which is the best verdict for all concerned, including his parents who have been unimaginably supportive throughout. Although obviously devastated they have taken the view that at least he died doing something that he loved, and they wanted no question of blame or vindictiveness.

I hope the people in the SW who were spreading rumours that this was a complete novice, paddling in a Dancer with other people who only had experience of flat water, now feel suitably ashamed of themselves. Ill informed comment is harmful for the sport and must be devastating for the members of the party involved so let us at least learn from this sad experience.

What now?

The coroner recognised that many people choose to participate in sports which may be dangerous, and accepted that it is often the danger which makes the sport attractive. He asked what is being done about the fence and I was able to report that we are negotiating with Dartmoor National Park and the owner to have the posts removed and replaced with something more likely to give under such pressure. (This has now been done).

All of us should, remember that rivers in high flow are especially dangerous and any amount of training in whitewater rescue techniques may not fully prepare us for an unforeseeable event. We should all try to learn from this tragedy to minimise the chance of anything like it happening again. ●

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MORE MEDALS

WILD WATER RACING competition

Junior Wild Water Racing Pre-World Championships, Vipiteno, Italy.

**Article by
Paul Anderson**

Results

Men's K1

1st Carl Barnes NZL
19th Tim Mumford GBR
29th Andy Bolton GBR
31st Oliver Cunningham GBR

Ladie's K1

1st ITA
5th Liz Holmes GBR
11th Nicola McGee GBR
15th Mary-Jean Smith GBR

Ladie's Team Event

1st Italy
2nd Germany
3rd Great Britain

Boy's Team Event

1st France
2nd Italy
3rd Germany
8th Great Britain

Manager

Graham Froggett

Boy's Coach

Jamie Christie

Girls Coach

Paul Anderson

The final weekend of June saw the National Junior Wild Water Racing Team, arrive in Vipiteno, which is situated in the Brenner Pass.

The team quickly settled in to the Italian surrounding including the river Izerco with it's continuous bouncy rapids and fluctuating river levels. Despite the clear looking water, the team encountered its first obstacle in the form of 'River Sickness'. The local sewer appeared to wash into the river, which left many of the competitors ill. A good

weeks training saw a largely inexperienced team fully prepared for the weekend ahead.

First off in the forerunners event was Jonny Schofield, being too young to race in the main event, but storming down the course in a time, which would have placed him, midfield. Tim Mumford left his mark (19th) in his first ever International competition, and well within a minute of the winner. Andy and Oliver had good sound run's after each recovering from a dose of the dreaded 'river sickness'.

In the ladies event, junior veteran Liz Holmes just missed medals by a very narrow margin, but was happy with 5th. Nicola and Mary also had a good clear run, leaving them 11th and 15th respectively. Only one-hour recovery and straight into the team event, and the ladies team of Holmes/Mcgee/Smith taking home the Pre-Worlds Bronze team Medal. With all competition over, Pizza Time!!! ●



Top: The Junior team
Above left: Ladies team
Ladies team event -
Magee/Smith/Holmes





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WORLD CLASS competition



We are now midway through the 1999 international season, with some major competitions still to come. The British Canoe Union is proud to congratulate its three New World Champions, Ivan Lawler and Anna Hemmings in K1 Marathon and Lester Noble IC10 Sailing.

As this issue of Canoe Focus goes to print our World Class athletes are making their final preparations for Sprint Racing World Championships in Milan and the Slalom World Championships to be held in Seu d'Urgell, Spain. Not only will they be competing for the World Championship title but also for qualification for the Olympic Games in Sydney 2000. We wish them well in these crucial competitions.

Article by
Laurence Oliver.
(Manager, Junior
Racing Team)
Photos:
Laurence Oliver
and Alan
Edwards

Junior Sprint Racing World Champs, Zagreb, Croatia.

The Great Britain Junior Sprint Racing Team took part in the Junior World Championships in Zagreb, Croatia in July. There were 45 nations competing. Great Britain came twenty ninth overall.

At the previous Junior World Championships, in 1997, we failed to reach any of the finals. In Zagreb, thanks to Richard Darby-Dowman, we reached one. Nine boats compete in each final and junior men race over 500m and 1000m and junior women race over 500m. In both kayak and canoe events there are singles, doubles and fours. Great Britain entered all of the kayak events and just the doubles in the canoe, in which only junior men compete. The competitors race in 9 lanes and are held on the start line in 'gates'.

All of our boats successfully reached the semi-finals where they were eliminated apart from Richard Darby-Dowman who, by a very determined effort in the closing stages of his K1

The event was a valuable experience for the junior Men C2 who were competing for Great Britain for only the second time. Mathew Lawrence will still be a junior next year. The K2 crew Claire Hannon and Jenny Spencer will also be juniors next year.

In the junior Women's K4 also came within 3 seconds of the final. Two members of this crew (Becci Hunter and Jenny Spencer) will still be juniors in two years' time when the next Junior World Championships will be held in Brazil.

The paddlers were helped in this event by team staff who supported them, along with a group of parents and friends of paddlers who travelled to this regatta.

Olympic Class?

The recent World Championships in Milan were also the designated Olympic qualification round for racing. Not only were we looking for good world championship results but also for some places to be qualified for Sydney next year. And so it happened! Is there any more proof that Lottery funding can have an effect on the success of British sport? Ross Sabberton and Paul Darby Dowman qualified the K2 1000 by making the final. As did Steve and Andy Train in the C2 1000. Tim Brabant was awesome in the K1 1000 final. In the semis he had recorded the third fastest time and it was in this position he went through the 500 split in the final before finishing in 6th place. A magnificent achievement. Taking more time out from studying medicine, as he intends to do next year, can only improve his chances. Also making the qualification were Tricia Davey and Ian Wynne in the K1 500 metres "B" finals. Trish had an excellent race - holding on to enough of the lead she had established from a good start to come in third. Ian had set out with the intention of winning the "B" final and this he did in style. His time would have put him in 6th in the "A" final.

Unfortunately both the K4s were unable to qualify. The ladies boat were devastated by the 0.2 of a second they missed out by. They had managed to break the British record, but with the qualification criteria effectively meaning they had to make the final, the "B" final proved an anti climax. The men's K4 were close to making the "B" final but lack of race fitness may have been enough to prevent that.

With so much riding on the Olympic events some of the others seemed to many to be damp squibs. However they were still World championship events and the British paddlers acquitted themselves well. Perhaps the best result of these was Trisha Davey's 6th in the K1 1000.

So what of next year? There are the European Championships in Poland. There are places for seven British paddlers to race at the Olympic Games. This is more than some of the established canoeing countries (Norway and Italy included). But will we see the first British Olympic canoe racing medal?

Tim Soury & Adam Kennedy



Abigail Cattle



Richard Darby-Dowman

Below: The GBR team

Claire Hannon & Jenny Spencer



1000m semi-final race, went on to make the final where he came ninth. This was a very good experience for Richard who will still be a junior next year when the Junior European Championships are held in Boulogne, France.

The K2 crew of Adam Kennedy/Tim Sowry was 5 seconds away from the final in their semi-final. Tim will still be a junior next year. The junior Men K4 crew improved on they're times behind the winners from the Bochum regatta in June. Richard Griffiths, in this crew, will be a junior next year.

WORLD CLASS PERFORMANCE

competition

Slalom World Cup 3 and 4

Before any major championships an athlete wants to feel they're at their best and what better way too so this than to perform well in a competition just prior to the big day. With the World Championships only 4 weeks away it was this mentality that was foremost in



1999 Paddling Challenge

Once again the Veterans provided a good appetiser for the main event. Duncan Blyth won the Veterans race, closely followed by Chris Canham (recently out of retirement!). First Master (over 45) home was John West. The Ladies, juniors and Juniors Ladies started together. First Lady was Anna Hemmings narrowly beaten to the line by Simon Fennemore. First Junior Lady was Jo Bates.

For the Open race there was the usual rough water to contend with as the competitors completed 3 laps outside the Royal Canoe Club. Having looked very tired early on in the race, Ross Saberton managed to outsprint Greg Slater through some very rough water to reach the finish first. Third place was Dan Golder having dropped on the sprint to the line. The day was finished off with a barbeque for competitors and spectators.

the mind of the British Slalom Team who recently competed in World Cups 3 and 4.

The events were hosted on consecutive weekends, the first in Bratislava Slovakia (14/15th August) before moving west to the site of the 72 Olympics in Augsburg, Germany.

As expected in Bratislava all the top Slalom nations were present, ready to do battle on what possibly could be described

as the best slalom course in the world with its 9 metre drop over 300 metres and fed by the mighty Danube River.

Although hungry to do well, Saturday's qualification ended the aspirations for many athletes. Britain managed to secure 6 boats into Sunday's final in the shape of Paul Ratcliffe and Shaun Pearce in the K1 Men, Heather Corrie, Rachel Crosbee and Amy Casson in the K1 Women and Stuart McIntosh in the C1.

With a slight change of course to the Saturday's race and the added difficulty of wind, Sunday also saw its share of victims. Paul Ratcliffe once again however demonstrated his ability to deal with whatever is thrown at him with a win over

close rival Scott Shipley from the USA. Heather Corrie in her first major International of the season gently reminded the rest of the world to watch out for her in four weeks time, with a 5th place and Amy Casson took a very creditable 9th place after her first ever qualification.

After a 6 hour drive the site of the somewhat smaller waters of the 72 Olympic site may have caused a little complacency among a few of the athletes. But for many it only took one race run to realise the site with its surges and boils needed exactly the same respect as its predecessor. As usual Saturday saw its share of casualties whether through paddling or victims of the boils their race was over. Sunday would be a day of rest and reflection.

With the loss of Paul Ratcliffe from the Team, choosing to go home to train after his victory a week earlier and a below par qualification from the Women, Britain entered Sunday with only 5 boats on the start list. Ian Raspin and Shaun Pearce in the K1 Men, Rachel Crosbee in the K1 Women, Stu McIntosh in the C1 and Bowman/Smith having recovered from illness in C2.

With possibly a less technical course than has been seen in the past, Sunday's racing was on the edge. Margins were tight and penalties were definitely not an option.

In the K1 Men Ian Raspin after a somewhat disappointing race a week earlier returned to form, finishing in 6th place with two solid clean runs. This result being duplicated by the now fully fit crew of Stu Bowman and Nick Smith in C2. In the Women's event Rachel Crosbee having qualified in such style in 2nd place, couldn't quite find the flow again, finishing in 8th spot. Stu McIntosh did find the flow and did demonstrate on his first run that he has the speed to mix it with the big boys. Unfortunately on this occasion his effort was spoiled by penalties, placing him in 9th in the final count.

Although World Cups 3 and 4 had their disappointments, they also demonstrated that Britain now possesses athletes in every class capable of finishing within the top five and on a good day in the medals. Let's hope that over the period 9th – 12th September every day is a good day.



Article by
Ian Raspin.

Results

K1 Men
Paul Ratcliffe 1st
Shaun Pearce 13th
DNQ
Campbell Walsh 32nd
Ian Raspin 43rd

K1 Women
Heather Corrie 5th
Amy Casson 9th
Rachel Crosbee 15th DNQ
Kath Pigdon 41st

C1
Stu McIntosh 15th
DNQ
Mark Delaney 28th
Craig Brown 31st
Rob Turner 32nd

C2
DNQ
Green/Green 22nd
DNS Smith/Bowman

K1 Men
Ian Raspin 6th
Shaun Pearce 14th
DNQ
Anthony Brown 26th
Campbell Walsh 37th

K1 Women
Rachel Crosbee 8th
DNQ
Heather Corrie 23rd
Amy Casson 33rd
Kath Pigdon 47th

C1
Stu McIntosh 9th
DNQ
Craig Brown 19th
Rob Turner 34th
Mark Delaney 38th

C2
Smith/Bowman 6th
DNQ
Green/Green 21st

WORLD CLASS PERFORMANCE
competition



Lawler takes Sixth World Title and Hemmings her First

Article by David Enoch

**1999 World Championships
 Gyor, Hungary: 31/7 – 1/8/99**

Magnificent performances by Ivan Lawler and Anna Hemmings in winning the individual K1 world titles in Hungary thwarted a complete whitewash by the Hungarians who took the other four titles and won all five of the junior races.

Ivan's win was his third individual world title to add to the K2 titles he won with Steve Harris in 94 and 96 and his K2 10,000m. sprint title. Although not fully fit after a season plagued with injury and illness his skill, experience and determination kept him in the front group throughout the race. When decisive burn came he got away with the Hungarian and Dutchman and then it was just a case of deciding the medal order. He lead out of the final turn and with 1,500m to go, fully fit or not, he wasn't going to let anyone past. Although out numbered 100:1 by the Hungarian crowd the vociferous British contingent roared home a truly great champion to an unprecedented K1 title.

Connor Holmes had a very unlucky race. He always seemed to get the worst of any clashes or problems between other paddlers right from the start. His 8th position was ahead of the 1996 world champion and runner up and last year's silver and bronze medallists but was still a bitter disappointment to Connor who had set his sights much higher.

Anna Hemmings was desperate to win the Women's K1 race. Second in Sweden in 1996, she had then won in the non-championship year of 1997 in Denmark but was second again in the 1998 Cape Town Worlds. Her main rival was always going to the Hungarian Kornelia Szonda who finished one place behind her in 97 and 98 and who won the World Cup race in Italy earlier this year.

These two soon broke away from the rest of the field opening up a gap of about 1 _ minutes. At the last portage they were still together with Anna seeming coolly in command despite a troublesome chest infection. Then Szonda made a mess of getting in leaving Anna clear to paddle the last 3km to her first world title.

Yael Chance in her first full international season finished in 14th place.

The men's K2 got off to a fine start for GB with James Block and Steve Harris leading the field and Greg Slater and Paul Slater on their wash. However by the first portage James was obviously suffering, having been unable to shake off a chest infection, and they stopped shortly after. Slater/Slater were now back in 7th place but were paddling comfortably. The lead group reduced to seven and opened up a two

minute gap over the rest of the field with Slater/Slater still there along with the Hungarian reigning world champions, the Danes, Swedes, Dutch and surprisingly two Spanish boats. On the line the Hungarians retained their title with Slater/Slater 5th.

In the Women's K2 race Andrea Dalloway and Helen Gilby's high hopes of a medal were to be dashed within the first few hundred metres. Turned in the sprint off the start, they took Lucy Hardy and Beth Campbell with them resulting in the two GB boats being last after 500m. Andrea and Helen worked their way up the field to 5th but never had a chance of catching the leaders who had opened up massive gaps.

At the front the race had become a procession with the Hungarians winning by 2 minutes from the Poles who were 4 _ minutes ahead of the Swedes. The second Hungarian boat was another 1 _ minutes back and then Andrea and Helen 2 minutes down on them. Lucy and Beth were slightly disappointed with their 10th place although only 1 minute behind the respectable Danes Knudsen/Barford.

The Canoe racing was a sad affair with only 12 C1s on the start line and Britain's James Lee failing to finish. World C2 champions Andrew and Steve Train had decided not to defend their title leaving the race to the Hungarians who took first and second places from a field of just 8 boats.

The junior K1 race saw Len Jenkins, the South African who had won so convincingly in Italy, beaten into second place in a close sprint finish with three Hungarians. Nathan Johnson was the best of the Brits in 9th place from a field of 30 with Owen Peake 17th and Scott Kemper not finishing after taking a swim on the second lap.

The junior women's K1 race also had three Hungarians leading for the first lap but Aby Cattle was heading the chasing group with JO Bates hanging on gamely in 7th place. On the second lap Aby caught one of the Hungarians to move into third. Jo was now adrift of the group, paddling alone, but refusing to let the chasers gain on her.

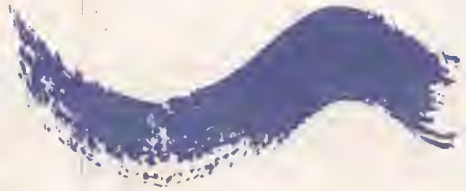
Aby led the Australian and two Hungarians through the last portage and on the last 3km moved into second place to take a well earned silver medal. Jo finished strongly in 6th place – the same as in Cape Town last year. Liz Holmes in her first marathon international did well to finish 10th from a field of 24. Toby Shipway also in his first international, finished 12th from a field of 14.

The junior men's K2 was a fierce race. The Hungarians lead off the start and the 24 boat field soon broke up with a lead group of 9. Adam Kennedy and Tim Sowry were in this group but could never get to the front. The Hungarians continued to dominate to the finish with three boats in the first five. Adam and Tim Sowry were in this group but could never get in the front. The Hungarians continued to dominate to the finish with three boats in the first five. Adam and Tim outsprinted two Belgian crews to take 7th place. Ed McKeever and Ali Rosier had a steady race in the third group to finish 15th.

The junior women's K2 race was also dominated by the Hungarians taking the first three places as well as 6th and 7th. Claire Hannon and Jenny Spencer finished back in 9th place with Vicky Surrage and Clare Gillbe another two minutes down in 10th. ●



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The idea of the Peace River Paddle was conceived about three years ago as I was reading an article about a record setting descent of the River Shannon in Canoe Focus. Like many good ideas, however, it was pushed into the backgrounds by everyday concerns. Another article in the December 98 issue about a subsequent record breaking descent reawakened my interest and planning began in earnest.



By this time I had completed the D.W race with a partner and soloed the TransPennine and Cheshire Ring races in my Weenohah Reynard C1 aided by my long-suffering ground crew. The challenge of setting a new record for the supported, non-stop descent of the Shannon just had to be next. Like previous paddlers I wanted others to benefit from my endeavours. As I had taught in Warrington for some years and was about to paddle an Irish river, the charity chose itself. Children for Peace was formed by

Colin Parry after the tragic death of this son Tim in the Warrington Bombing. The timing also seemed predetermined as fate intervened a number of times to ensure that the event coincided with the first anniversary of the Omagh Bombing. And so the Peace River Paddle project was finally born as my solitary ground crew member Ian Howard and I embarked for Dublin on 10th August.

We had a plan. Spend a few days;-

- i) reconnoitring the river; (portages and feeding stops were a concern)
- ii) contacting local Peace campaigners; (who were to start, time and verify my progress)
- iii) testing the quality of real Irish Guinness; (which I must say was excellent)
- iv) then to start paddling from the top of Lough Allen at 8.00am on Saturday morning and stop in the centre of Limerick just after lunch on Sunday, (a distance of 142 ish miles in 30 hours).

The initial elements of this plan were easily and enjoyably realised but local river users seemed a little sceptical about the final phase. There were

no audible sharp intakes of breath as we outlined our aim but raised eyebrows spoke volumes.

"There's hardly any water," they said.

"These loughs can cut up rough," they said.

"It's a very long way," they said.

Undeterred I was on the water ready to be waved off by Joe Ganley, Leitrim County Council Civil Defense and Water Safety Officer, at 7.45am the next

What's next?

I'm intending to paddle the Upper Thames Race in October which makes me think about a Second Peace River Paddle. 142 miles on the Thames? Who knows?

Article by Dave Moore

The Shannon Peace Riv

"There's hardly any water," they said.

"These loughs can cut up rough," they said.

"It's a very long way," they said.

morning. Lough Allen provided a pleasant warm up. 7 miles of mild swell and soft sunshine and yes Ian was there at the southern end with orange juice and bananas. Soon after I was able to stretch my legs by rather acrobatically completing three portages (6ft get outs now a speciality). South of Leitrim the river broadened and provided deep water paddling interspersed with a little surfing on the huge wakes of passing cruisers. On the subsequent numerous small loughs they became less of a problem only to be replaced by a strengthening Westerly wind which made brute force more desirable than technical perfection. An appreciable amount of time was lost here because of tall reeds which made navigation difficult as lone markers are hard to spot from anything but the bridge of a large gin palace.

As Lough Ree approached and the wind continued to rise, the words 'kick up rough' came back to haunt me while I crept round the Western edge of this 20 mile Lough with waves breaking over my bow. Determined paddling into the wind was followed by interesting runs downwind as I negotiated bay after bay. This necessary caution was however adding miles to an already demanding distance and raising serious doubts about the open crossing of Lough Dearg at a stage when I might be close to exhaustion. Nourishment and encouraging words from Ian at the next feeding stop did much to reduce my concerns as I paddled on to twilight and he drove off to the chippy.

The pitch black

I then gave my whole attention to navigating through a maze of small islands in the pitch black, thankful that I am not of a nervous disposition because I was to meet him next on the edge of the Ancient Burial Ground of Clonmacnois, an eerie place in the small hours. 30 miles and 20 shooting stars later I reached Portumna, at the head of Lough Dearg, sometime before dawn. This was the crux, a 25 mile paddle with two crossings of open water, where I would be at least a mile from the nearest shore, when I had already been on the river for 24 hours. All this on a stretch of water with an evil reputation locally for its filthy weather and its ability to change from flat calm to mountainous waves in minutes.

Threatening conditions sent me scuttling to the Western shore, still in the dark. As the sun rose, the wind dropped and I paddled in mirror calm water to the feeding station at the halfway point. While I received more juice and banana from the ever dependable Ian, the breeze began to freshen. Had I relaxed too soon? The white horses I could see in the middle distance said, 'Yes'. Picking a straight course at 90°

to the wave crests and pumping like a mad man, I powered out into open water with waves surging along the gunnels and slopping onto the

er Paddle

spraydeck. Still 22 miles to go. Eventually I reached the lee of the Scilly Isles and the comparative shelter enabled me to rest and look down the final 7 mile arm of the Lough. It seemed reasonably calm. Head down and paddle but Killaloe seemed always to be round the next bend. Suddenly there was Ian. "It's in the bag", I told myself.

The last 14 miles, however, degenerated into a battle with the elements, particularly the persistent headwind. A new experience awaited me at Ardnaprisha Power Station. Thanks to Gerry who operated the gates for me I was able to paddle through instead of attempting an impossible portage round an enormous lock. I fidgeted during the half hour it took and darted through the 2 mile gorge which carried the power station tail race. I powered onto the tideway on a fast falling tide under bridges through

rapids and past King John's Castle to the finish in the centre of Limerick. The crowd went wild!! The Irish Peace Movement had turned out in force and had had their ranks swelled by a number of confused continental tourists.

I had done it. I had travelled 148 miles (with detours) in 29 hours 35 minutes and had helped raise the profile of the Irish Peace Movement and Children for Peace. During a celebration lunch on that Sunday 15th August the whole pub stood to observe a minutes silence as Limerick remembered the Omagh bombing one year ago to the second: a fitting culmination to the Peace River Paddle.

My thank-you list is quite a long one but without these people I would never have been able to rise to the challenge. My gratitude goes to Ian Howard who did a brilliant job, always there when needed, after battling Irish roads and Ancient monuments all alone; the Irish Peace Institute, especially Dorothy, Una and Noel who looked after me at the finish; the officers of Leitrim and Limerick Councils; the Mayor of Limerick and Colin Parry at home in Warrington. ●



Top left: Right to left: Dave Moore, Paddler. Joe Cronley, Starter Leitrim Council, Lon Howard, groundcrew

Bottom left: Finish presentation, Irish coffee with the Irish Peace Institute

Above top: Lanesborough, N. end of Lough Ree

Above: Final streak, Tideway, Limerick

competition P O L O

Results

Division 1

- 1st Bere Forest
- 2nd St. Albans
- 3rd Humbersiders

Division 2

- 1st Pennine 'B'
- 2nd Dragons
- 3rd Tynemouth

Division 3

- 1st Leeds White Rose
- 2nd Leeds White Rose
- Scratch
- 3rd Crawley Cougars

Division 4 – Ladies

- 1st Sloterplas
- 2nd Old Speckled Hens
- 3rd Derby Rammers Ladies

P.S.

A number of items were found after the event, if you went home without something please ring Joy Tel: 01482 505587



It doesn't seem long since the 1998 Hull International and here we are in 1999 having just completed our 10th Hull International

In retrospect our organisation went near enough to plan. With an excellent turn out of helpers to erect the pitch, we were on course for a great event. We had placed an order for reasonable weather (we didn't want to be too greedy and ask for a heat wave) and we thought to add a little interest to camping aspect, if we ordered a good thunderstorm to take place during the night, this would be an added bonus. I'm sure you were as delighted as we were with the results!

Due to a breakdown of communication at the Cricket Circle, there was a shortage of toilet facilities during the night for which we extend our apologies. This has been duly noted and will definitely be rectified for the year 2000 event.

Back at Princes Quay and competition time. From the organisers point of view everything went well, even though two teams had dropped out late the previous evening causing headache for the organisers. The tournament, however, once underway, was thoroughly enjoyed by the paddlers and general public alike. We did have one medical emergency during the weekend, and every first aid person in Hull ran to the pontoon to assist, nearly drowning the poor casualty. Emergency over, the competition continued. A running commentary on Pitch 1 was very ably performed by Marianne Spender, who spent the whole weekend perfecting her pronunciation of our foreign team visitor's names, and loving every minute of it.

It was really wonderful to welcome all our Dutch and Belgian visitors. We hope that they enjoyed the competition and will come again. One sour note was the

mindless vandalism to some of their cars over the weekend. As organisers, we apologise for our fellow Britons who carry out such acts; they are without doubt mindless hooligans.

There were four individual competitions. Division 1 was a hard fought final between Bere Forest 'A' and St Albans 'A', Bere Forest winning 5 goals to 3. Division 2 was won by Pennine 'A' who beat Dragons by 3 goals to 1. Division 3 was a very interesting final, being Leeds White Rose won by 3 goals to 0. The Ladies competition was won by Sloterplas Ladies with runners up being the Old Speckled Hens.

In conclusion we would like to thank members of Kingston Kayak Club and Hull & District Canoe Club for their invaluable help. Our grateful thanks also to all the timekeepers and other people, totally unconnected with canoeing, who assisted us over the weekend, and did such a wonderful job. Although there were too many people to name individually, we feel that Danny Rawding should be mentioned. He ran the length of the pitches all day Saturday and Sunday from the beginning of the competition to the end. He started out at 4'6" tall on Saturday morning and ended up on Sunday afternoon at 3'6". Last but not least we would like to thank Councillor Petch for presenting trophies and also our BCU Canoe Polo Chairman, Phil Bennett who also presented trophies.

Next Year our competition will take place on 1st/2nd July, 2000. We are hoping to add another pitch for this event, so that nobody need be put on a waiting list. Thank you all very much for coming to Hull and we look forward to seeing you next year. ●



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news & info ACCESS

Parliamentary question

Gareth Thomas MP for Harrow West has been showing a very welcome and positive interest in access for canoeists. We gave him a full briefing when he came to see us at the BCU office on 29 March this year, since when we have been keeping him up to date. On 18 June he tabled a question in the House: "to ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, what action he is taking to increase access to non-tidal navigable rivers by non-powered craft". In his answer Alan Meale MP announced that the Countryside Agency had been asked to consider and report on access to other categories of open countryside including river and canal bank and also including other means than on foot.

Right to roam

Canoeing and inland water are now firmly on the agenda for access to open countryside both on foot and by other means. As reported above the Minister has tasked the Countryside Agency to make suggestions on how such increased access could be provided and managed and on what legislation would be appropriate. Surrey University, employed by the Countryside Agency to do the necessary research, has sent out a questionnaire to which the BCU has responded. We requested a meeting with the University to strengthen and expand upon the information we provided. This meeting took place at the BCU office on 6 August, so things are moving pretty fast. Here are a few of the matters discussed.

We had a good opportunity to explain the shortcomings of the present legal framework for navigation, which fails to place canoeing in a fair position in relation to other interests such as angling. Due to the poor state of the roads in the year 1189, we believe that any water capable of navigation then, including by small boats, would have been used for navigation purposes. If we could obtain evidence to prove such use took place and had the money to take the issue to the courts, there could then be a chance of establishing common law rights of navigation. However, this is a totally impractical route to goal, so we used this as a further reason for needing a change in the law.

We reported on the positive action we are taking to secure access agreements, but went on to explain that the current poor rate of progress does not make us optimistic that this route will deliver sufficient new access. We drew attention to the importance of having secure land routes, firstly between the water and our transport and secondly for portaging around obstacles. We pointed out that the majority of waters navigable by powered craft are already available to the public on purchase of a licence. Therefore more access to inland waters must relate to the smaller rivers where canoeing is the most significant waterborne use. We were given a good hearing. The researchers will now be looking at what legislative regime could be suggested to achieve greater access, having due regard to all interested parties. We have also requested a meeting with the Countryside Agency.

Environment Agency research

The Environment Agency research project on the effect of canoeing on fish stocks and angling has been started. They have appointed APEM to research how much information already exists. The BCU has filled in their questionnaire, sent copies of the questionnaire to regional access officers and also put a copy

on the BCU website so that members can provide information too. So far very little scientific information has been found and certainly none, which indicates that canoeing causes any significant disturbance. We now await to see the content of the formal report by APEM, when it has been submitted to the Agency.

Linton Lock

The transfer of the Linton Lock Navigation on the Yorkshire Ouse to British Waterways from the Linton Lock Commissioners took effect on June 18. The transfer Order, as originally drafted, would have extinguished the public right of navigation on the Swale from Swale Nab to Morton Bridge (32 miles) and on the Bedale Brook (4 miles). The BCU raised a formal objection and helped to prevent this being included in the final version of the Order. The former Commissioners' water from Swale Nab to two miles below Linton is now managed by British Waterways and is covered by the BCU Licence.

Bell Boat licences

It has been agreed with British Waterways that they will class Bell Boats as the same as any other canoe for licensing purposes, provided that they do not use locks. Clubs owning Bell Boats can purchase these licences from the BCU office for £20 per boat; special stickers will be issued. A trial arrangement has been made for the River Severn only; whereby the purchase of a £70 licence from the BCU will permit limited use of locks. Clubs operating Bell Boats must have third party insurance cover and must adhere to a simple code of practice; a copy of the code will accompany the issue of stickers.

Westcountry Rivers Trust

The BCU South West region is co-operating with the Westcountry Rivers Trust. The Trust is a registered charity set up to protect the region's rivers, streams, wetlands and associated wildlife. The Trust raises funds for specific and education projects. They are running a fund raising trek on the Zambezi this November - details from Nick Agg-Manning, Bradford Lodge, Blisland, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 4LF.

Guide launch

Anglers, Canoeists and Landowners Agree New Access Guide. To help secure more voluntary access for canoeing on inland waterways will be launched this week by Angling and Canoeing Liaison Group (ACLG) at the Country Landowners Association Game Fair in Harrogate. It aims to help create a common understanding among riparian owners, anglers and canoeists by offering advice and guidance on the often complex issues of ownership, property and access rights of the non-tidal waters in England.

River Wye

Kerne Bridge: A plea, please, that canoeists do not launch or land at the actual bridge. Whilst there is a footpath there is no legal access here and those who make use of this spot are creating difficulties.

The purpose made canoe launch point is about half a mile downstream of the bridge around the corner on the left-hand bank. Plenty of parking and an amenity site for lunch, etc.

ACCESS
news & info

Environment Panel



Left to right:
Colin Kempson,
 BCU Access
 Chairman; **Carel
 Quaife**, BCU
 Access and
 Development
 Manager; **David
 Gent**, BCU
 Chairman; **Lord
 De Ramsey**,
 Environment
 Agency Chairman;
**Anthony
 Bosanquet**,
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 Association Deputy
 President; **Ken
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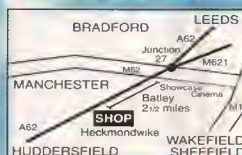
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news & info

River Wye continued

Lower Lydbrook: Here there is a purpose built canoe launch with concrete steps and handrail. On various occasions we have spoken to groups who have moored Canadians and kayaks and who have climbed up the bank, cutting steps, as they go, not more than 10/20 yards upstream of the proper launch point. Other groups have seal launched down the side of the concrete steps eroding the bank. These requests have on too many occasions been met with abuse. The facility at Lydbrook is excellent providing parking, toilet facilities, proper launch and

pleasant grassed area for picnics. If this irresponsible behavior continues the site which is privately owned could be lost for canoeist.

Bredwardine Bridge: If you wish to land or launch at the private land immediately downstream of the bridge left bank, the owner Mrs L.Weaver is quite happy for this but asks that visitors telephone her beforehand please. Tel: 01981 500229. She also wants me to say that she does not allow camping on her land. Thank you. ●

Holme Pierrepont as you have never seen it before

Due to a surface pollution incident to the River Trent upstream, the Slalom course at Home Pierrepont had to be shut off. The result was a moonscape of green weed, funny shaped concrete blocks and an eerie quiet.

It then became apparent that many 1000's of fish, yes, fish had become ponded. Smaller fish were in one of the pools with bigger fish lying on the bottom at the top section of the course. Never let it be said that canoeing disturbs fish. However NWS Centre staff aided and abetted by BCU staff used their bare hands to shovel the fish to safety, including this big Carp and Roach.



In reality the course is looking well 14 years on, yes 14 – years. The course has been in use by around 40,000 people per year. Out of the discussions from that day has come the idea that under water features should be upgraded, making different waves, cater for demographic changes to boat lengths, etc. Suggestions are invited, please make a drawing of your idea/s and send to Chris at the Development Dept. c/o BCU.



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MARATHON competition

After over a year of negotiations we can finally announce that the 2001 Marathon Racing World Championships will definitely be held at Stockton-on-Tees. So make a note in your diary now:

World Championships
1st/2nd
September 2001

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30th/31st August
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Marathon Racing World Championships
August 30th - September 2nd 2001



2001
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STOCKTON-ON-TEES ENGLAND



Stockton-on-Tees England Stockton-on-Tees



MARATHON

competition

There will also be an International World Cups race over the same course next year on 15th/16th July 2000.

The first World Championships were held in Nottingham in 1988 and since then they have been hosted by Denmark, Australia, Holland, Sweden, South Africa and Hungary with the 2000 championships in Canada. The awarding of a second World Championship to Britain by the I.C.F. reflects the major role played by GB on the world marathon scene, winning medals at every major championship since the inception of the World Cups series back in 1982. The superb performances by Ivan Lawler and Anna Hemmings in winning the K1 titles in Hungary this year are the latest highlights of a glittering record.

The staging of the 2000 and 2001 events has only been possible with the very generous financial support of Stockton Borough Council and the Sport England Lottery Fund together with the co-operation of many local organisations such as the Tees Barrage, University College Stockton, Teeside Whitewater Course and the Castlegate Quay Trust.

The senior course is 36km. Over two laps with four portages at two different sites. One is in the country at Preston Park, the other in Stockton town around the replica of Captain Cook's historic ship 'Endeavour'. The junior course will be 21 km with two portages and the Masters course 21 km without portages. All athletes will be



accommodated in the modern Halls of Residence at the University, which is on the riverbank adjacent the start and finish area, and within walking distance of all facilities.

Many people have asked 'Why Stockton?'

The answer is they have an excellent course with the Tees Barrage now providing many miles of deep clean river isolated from the tidal estuary. They have a generous, sports orientated local council and it gives us the opportunity to develop marathon racing on Teeside. The area already has a very active Paddlesport Development Officer in Dave Hellowell and the intention is that these international events should compliment his work in establishing at least one racing club in the area. ●

David Enoch has been appointed to co-ordinate the organisation of both events and will be looking for all the help he can get – particularly from the marathon racing fraternity. If you are able to assist in any way before or during the events, please contact him on 0115 9332258 or fax 0115 9334110

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Weirwolf Canoes



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MARMOT DriClim Windshirt £70

In laymans terms the Windshirt wicks moisture away while providing a wind and showerproof outer shell. The full length front zip with windflap and the coolmax mesh arm pit vents provides easy temperature control and the long back keeps the kidneys and lower back warm. The angel-wing cut of the arms and shoulders gives the full freedom of movement for paddling cag. The Windshirt may be worn on its own as a base layer, with thermals or a thin fleece but when used under a paddling cag the Horizon DWR shell on the Windshirt lets an outer shell to be slipped on easily.

Suitable for use in any type of paddling situation, in all type of weather conditions the Windshirt worked well, even in heavy showers, when worn on its own, provided that you keep working the Windshirt will keep you warm and once the shower has stopped it will dry rapidly. The Windshirt is easily washed and dried, has a zipped pocket to keep your keys in, looks good and is light and comfortable to wear. It also comes in both male and female cuts. **For more information please contact Lyon Equipment on 01539 625493 or email info@lyon.co.uk**

PADDLER'S GEAR reviews

Vitacel and Peak UK Kayaking Wear keep world champion afloat



The rapid growth of paddling wear specialist Peak UK Kayaking Wear reflects the development of the canoeing industry in which, because of their understanding of the requirements, designers of garments for the sport are frequently canoeists themselves. And so it is with Peak UK.

Prior to establishing the company eight years ago, Pete Astles (a keen paddler himself) was working in a canoeing shop and recognised a gap in the market.

Explains Pete, "The products available at that time were boring and simply not good enough."

He, therefore, obtained the fabrics and materials to make up samples to his own designs, which generated sufficient interest

to start his own business. Since then Pete has never looked back. Working alone at first, he now employs eight people and Peak UK Kayaking Wear has been based for the past four years in Sir Richard Arkwright's Cromford Mill on the outskirts of the Peak District National Park. An increasingly wide range of products is manufactured and supplied via retail outlets, centres and clubs, with around 50% of production being exported.

Peak UK produces garments for competition wear as well as the leisure market and numbers several international canoeists among its clients, including the current World Number One Men's Kayak Champion, Paul Ratcliffe, who the company sponsors jointly with buoyancy foam manufacturer, Salford based Vitacel.

Buoyancy foam is an important element in any life vest, especially those for competition wear, and Vitacel EVA foam, which is used by Peak UK in many of its garments, not only conforms to EN 393 (the European Standard for personal buoyancy/flotation in high activity sports), but is also generally lighter than other buoyancy foams. The foam is supplied in sheet form and then cut by Peak UK to the various designs and sizes required.

Paul Ratcliffe, who is currently training in Australia for the 1999 World Championships and 2000 Olympics, comments, "The Vitacel foam moulds to the body well and is very comfortable. It is also light weight and very durable. I am using buoyancy aids twice a day every day, and generally use them for two years before changing. Even then, I change not because the product is worn out but because new shapes, styles, and materials continue to be developed to give results."

For further information contact:

Vitacel
Seaford Road,
Salford, M6 6NB
Tel: 0161 736 5343
Fax: 0161 745 7521
E-Mail: vitacel@vita-salford.co.uk
Website: www.vita-salford.u-net.com

New 'Towcap' from Polybrush

Polybrush, manufacturers of polyurethane suspension bushes, have introduced an innovative new tow bar cover using the same tough and durable material. Towcap fits over a standard 50mm towball and is available in black or fluorescent red for high visibility. The bright colour is designed to make location easier when trying to hitch up a caravan or trailer in poor light conditions.

Unlike most traditional towbar covers, Towcap doesn't need to be removed completely. The cap is simply swung out of the way during connection, so there is less likelihood of it being lost or damaged; and it is equally unaffected by oil, petrol, weather and sunlight. Despite its strength and toughness, polyurethane has a soft rubbery feel which also makes it kind to the shins!

The price is £7.99 (inclusive of VAT), and they can be ordered by calling Ian or Hayley at Polybrush on 01978 664316 (Fax 661190)



Towcap can be produced in bespoke colours or customised with a company logo. Special requirements and trade discounts are available subject to quantities.

River Don

The demise of the steel industry had catastrophic effects upon the lives of the workers. Slowly the city is being rejuvenated and as awareness for the environment heightens the state of the River Don and the surrounding land has improved considerably. Wildlife is returning and names of areas once laughed at during this century may, in the next Millennium live up to expectations. An otter was sighted last year and reports suggest salmon are coming further up the river so Salmon Pastures and Attercliffe (in days gone by this was Ottercliffe) are perhaps once again applicable names.

Paddling the River Don is not such an unlikely prospect after all. Sheffield Canoe Club members have travelled into surrounding counties and areas for river experience often unsuitable for beginners. We needed a local outdoor base — easily accessible — the hunt was on — it had to be our Local River Don but where? One of the committee members took his scouts to play a football tournament on a sports ground in Oughtibridge, North of the centre — Bingo! River access, clubhouse, bar and a wide expanse of grass. It was ideal, but could the committee be convinced — yes. That was 3 years ago and after lengthy negotiation agreement was reached with the owners. Thanks to Fort James (formerly British Tissues) an annual rent enables access to the river, clubhouse and room for a storage

Does just the name River Don conjure a mental picture for you? Perhaps it will to ex-Sheffield folk. A dirty river running through the industrial heartland of steel manufacturing. The colour ranging from brown to rust to black to foamy grey — anyone fancy a paddle?



container. Fund raising by the club and small grants from Sheffield Leisure Services and Nottingham Building Society enabled us to purchase equipment for hiring out and a storage container, the paint for which was donated by Dulux. It hasn't been easy but hardwork and determination has meant we have already run 2 National slaloms with camping facilities.

Coaching for beginners is available every Sunday and during the summer Wednesday evenings. The site is ideal for introducing novices to moving water, polo training and slalom practise with gates permanently in place. We have had visits from Brownies, Cubs, Scouts and youth organisations. Whilst a few are paddling the remainder are making good use of the grass areas for games and picnics, a cheap day out. With a variety of trees, wildlife is often spotted; members to date have seen Kingfishers, Wagtails.

Heron, Bats and Foxes. During the winter, or let me rephrase that; during and following bad weather the river changes character. Trips from higher up at Deepcar and Wortley Top Forge are possible with weirs and a grade 3-4 gorge to negotiate. This year alone 10 such trips have been enjoyed by members, taking them through picturesque countryside and the heart of the paper mill a reminder of our industrial heritage. New Years day 1999 a group of paddlers including my son (perhaps best I wasn't there) shot Niagara Falls! Yes in Sheffield, near the hallowed turf of The Owls and the Police Social Club — even many local people are not aware of the reason the club is called Niagara.

Sheffield Canoe Club is striving to develop a site of canoeing excellence with something for everyone regardless of age or ability. Come along, see for yourself bring the family and a picnic or what about a group visit and bring the barbie! ●

COACHING FOR
BEGINNERS AND GROUP
VISITS CONTACT
Ian 0114 2464010
Chris 01302 719640
River Don Access Officer
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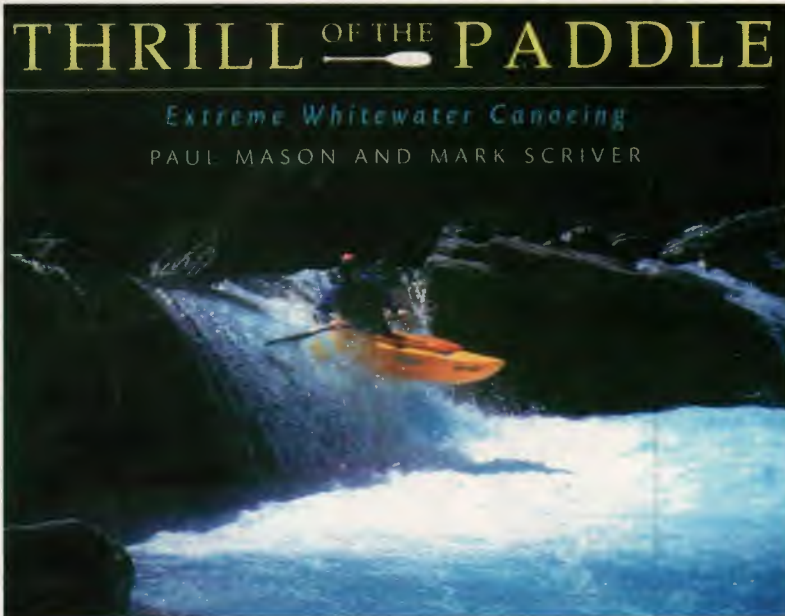
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BOOK & VIDEO
reviews

Thrill of the Paddle

Author: Paul Mason and Mark Scriver
 ISBN: 1-871890-34-9
 Publisher: Cordee, Leicester
 By: Ken Hughes



This book is the natural evolution of the now well-known open canoe text "The Path of the Paddle". If you have enjoyed that book and are comfortable with its format then this book should be compulsive reading. The name Mason may ring some bells; Paul appeared in "Path of the Paddle" and is Bill Mason's son. It is targeted at river running and advanced white water skills in both traditional open canoe and specialist white water boats. So if rivers are your bag, buy this book and expect it to improve your paddling.

The initial sections are good and make the book complete covering aspects of river morphology, equipment, rescue and the like. These could be more comprehensive and indeed there are several excellent complementary texts available if you would like to delve deeper into, say, rescue for instance. A good list of those other books can be found in the bibliography at the back of this book proving that the information which is contained here is sound and of great value. I have a suspicion, however, that the equipment section on white water playboats is based on a sponsorship deal with Dagger! There are 4 main chapters; Tandem Classic (traditional open canoe), Solo Classic, Tandem Playboat (specialist white water open canoe) and Solo Playboat. The latter two, and particularly solo playboating, are the most comprehensive.

This book is about performance. It will help you to gain the maximum from whatever boat you are going to paddle and reflects the trend for exploring what can be done in an open canoe not how to avoid it. It will also prove essential reading for coaches of traditional canoeing and the new breed of specialist white water coaches. Paul Mason and Mark Scriver are both excellent paddlers at the cutting edge of their sport and have captured wonderfully the atmosphere of hard river paddling. You will be able to live with them their accounts of situations

encountered on the river. Be warned, however: reading this book may just make your palms sweat. The photographs put the text into context and are positively inspiring. There is one of particular note involving an ice-climber...but you will have to check out the book for details.

The development of playboating in the UK has by no means even scratched the surface of that in the US, but there are now a number of enthusiastic boaters who are very active here. The coaching scheme will soon be able to support specialist playboat coaches below level 5, which only happens at present. There will only be true progress, however, when the price of the boats in the UK becomes realistic and comparable to that of kayaks; as it is in the US. Many paddlers will have seen one of these boats on the river and thought "that looks great fun". Well let me tell you here and now it is! So if you are one of those people who have bought or are thinking of buying a playboat then this book is a must as it covers all the techniques not previously available in the UK in this detail. It is a good complement to the series by Kent Ford. A combination of his approach with the technical data in Thrill of the Paddle will raise your skill level whatever your paddling standard.

My advice? By a playboat, by the book, get out on the river and open up a whole New World of paddling for yourself.

Sportsmind

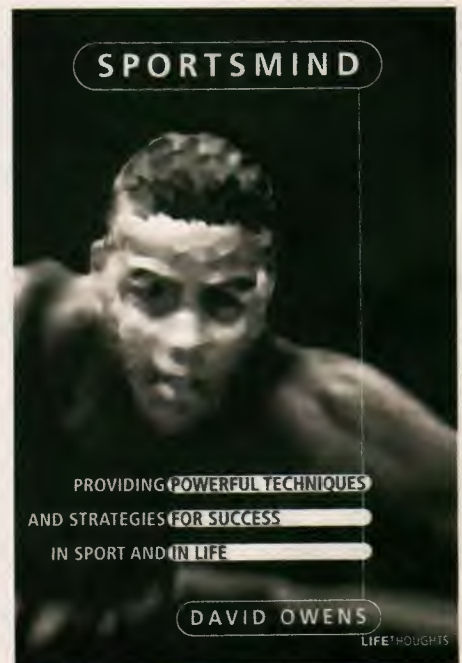
By: David Owens

Sportsmind consists of an audio-cassette backed up by a booklet and forms part of the life thoughts series by David Owens.

The book aims to provide an introduction to strategies and techniques for success in sport and life by exploring self-Belief, Goal Setting, Anchoring, Relaxation, Breathing and Visualization.

Although the concept of this publication is not new, this publication provides an excellent resource to explore some simple ideas on how to achieve your full potential. In depth knowledge is what you are after, perhaps the other publications in this series would be more appropriate as they examine each topic in greater detail.

In summary although there are many similar publications on the market Sportsmind offers a great introduction to exploring your internal mind in an easy to use audio cassette and booklet.



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