

THE CANOE SPORT MAGAZINE FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

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Racing Championships

Where's

My Spraydeck

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Canoe Focus

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BCU DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

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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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Your contributions make Focus happen. The quality and variety of news, articles, reports and photographs depend on the submission of material from you. Very few contributors are professional writers and photographers. Please don't be put off writing because you have no experience! Canoe Focus is all about canoeist to canoeist dialogue: a paddler's magazine written by paddlers. 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 it's agents cannot be held liable or responsible for loss or damage, although every care and effort is taken to safeguard material. Next Copy date is the 20th FEBRUARY 2000. Material arriving at FOCUS after this date cannot be included in the APRIL 2000 issue. Canoe Focus encourages contributions of any nature but reserves the right to edit and condense to fill the space available and unless otherwise stated the Publishers assume no responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts, artwork or photographs. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the British Canoe Union, its committees or members. The printing of an advertisement in Canoe Focus does not necessarily mean that the British Canoe Union endorses the company, item or service advertised. All material in Canoe Focus is strictly copyright and all rights are reserved. Reproduction without prior permission from the Editor is forbidden.

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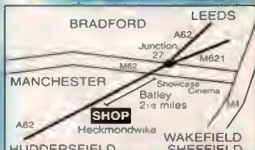
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COMMENT

input & ideas

BCU - AGM - Federalisation

Saturday 11 March will go down in the history books of British Canoeing as the day that it was formally agreed to set up a new English Canoe Association and to re position the BCU as a truly federal organisation, representing the four National Associations in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The new BCU will concentrate on setting Coaching standards across the UK, Performance and International Affairs

Alan Edge - England's Coach of the Year

The National Coaching Foundation presented their Coach of the Year Award to Alan Edge. The award took place at the Millennium Sports Awards at Leeds Town Hall and was made in recognition of Alan's outstanding contribution to Coaching both within Canoe Slalom and to coaching in general

NCH Action for Children

Following the launch of the BCU's year of Paddlesport at the International Canoe Exhibition, several activities are being planned in collaboration with NCH Action For Children. One of these is a World record attempt by Rutland Canoe Club to establish the world's largest free floating raft.

The club don't just want to break the record they want to smash it. The aim is to get 2000 kayaks and canoes onto Rutland Water.

The record attempt is planned for 1st October 2000 and information and booking forms are available by sending an SAE to: Raft 2000, Anglian Water Watersports Centre, Rutland Water Whitwell, Empingham, Rutland, LE15 8B

Access in the Open Countryside

Our December issue of Canoe Focus enclosed a leaflet asking all members to support the BCU lobby for more Access by writing to their MP etc. Our sincere thanks go to the eighty canoeists that gave their support, However with so few letters it is perhaps not surprising that the access provisions of the draft Countryside and Rights of Way Bill specifically do not apply to a person who uses a vessel on any non-tidal water.

International Canoe Exhibition

Thanks go to our new International Canoe Exhibition organiser Brian Stanbridge for organising this year's successful event.

We hope to confirm the arrangements for next years exhibition in the very near future.

Chief
Executive
Paul Owen

Millennium Paddler Awards

The BCU will be making some special awards during this millennium year to celebrate the achievement of people who have helped canoeing develop at a club / local level over a number of years. It is to recognise at least 2000 years of help given by volunteers to canoeing.

A leaflet detailing the Award is available by sending an SAE to the BCU Office

World Class Performance

Great news as we close for press, our World Class Performance grant has been extended to 31 March 2001. However, although this secures the immediate future it is disappointing that the four year plans which we normally work to, securing stability, efficiency and our ability to employ staff in a responsible manner amounts to a series of short term funding agreements.

World Class Potential

We are informed that our World Class Potential grant will be discussed at the next lottery panel meeting and that we should have news at the beginning of April.

World Class Start

A planing team has been established to produce our bid for World Class Start funding which will be submitted later in the year.

Accommodation

Progress continues with working towards the National Development Centre for Canoeing at Holme Pierrepont. To assist in the short to medium term the BCU has rented the ELMS (adjacent to NWSC) to house the Performance Department.

Marathon Worlds and Nationals Web Sites

Web sites for both the Marathon World Championships 2001 (incorporating the World Cup 2000) and this years National Championships will be released shortly so look out for :-

Worlds and World Cup 2001

www.worldcanoemar-stockton.co.uk

Nationals

www.marathon-championships.co.uk

Organisers of the National Championships in Reading advise that this year's event will be to a new format, with provision for both National Champions and Divisional Champions and a race for Lightning's. This year's Championships will be held on 24/25 June.

MORE ACTIVITY

NOTICE BOARD news & info

BCU YEAR BOOK
2000 UPDATES
Page 22 – Wensum
Osprey CC, Nigel S
Emmerson.
Tel No. Should be
01328 864062

Page 23 – East
Midlands web site
www.bcueastmids.freeserve.co.uk
Email: webmaster@bcueastmids.freeserve.co.uk
Email for the
secretary: secretary@bcueastmids.freeserve.co.uk

Page 24 – Matlock
Canoe Club – New
Secretary, Ms Elaine
Smith, 171 Beauvale
Drive, Ilkeston,
Derby SE7 8RZ
Tel: 0115 9306947

Freestyle Worlds Success



PeakUK finished 1999 with another successful competition run at the World Freestyle Championships in New Zealand. The combination of PeakUK Kayaking Wear and Riot Kayaks made themselves ever more present with more joint medal wins for the PeakUK/Riot team than any other software/kayak manufacturer partnership. Great Britain's Andy 'Nice Boy' Nicholl won Silver in the C1 class, along with Brad Luddon (USA) in Juniors and Corran Addison (RSA) in the Men's K1. All the other athletes wearing PeakUK kit (40 in total) performed very well. Alex Nicks (GB) placing a creditable 5th in his first worlds and Adam White 7th in the Squirt. Both these were the highest placed Brits in their respective categories and wearing the spangly Union Jack design PeakUK GB team wear. We would like to congratulate all our paddlers at the championships – Team JPN, Riot Kayaks, and all you others who know who you are!, you all paddled well.

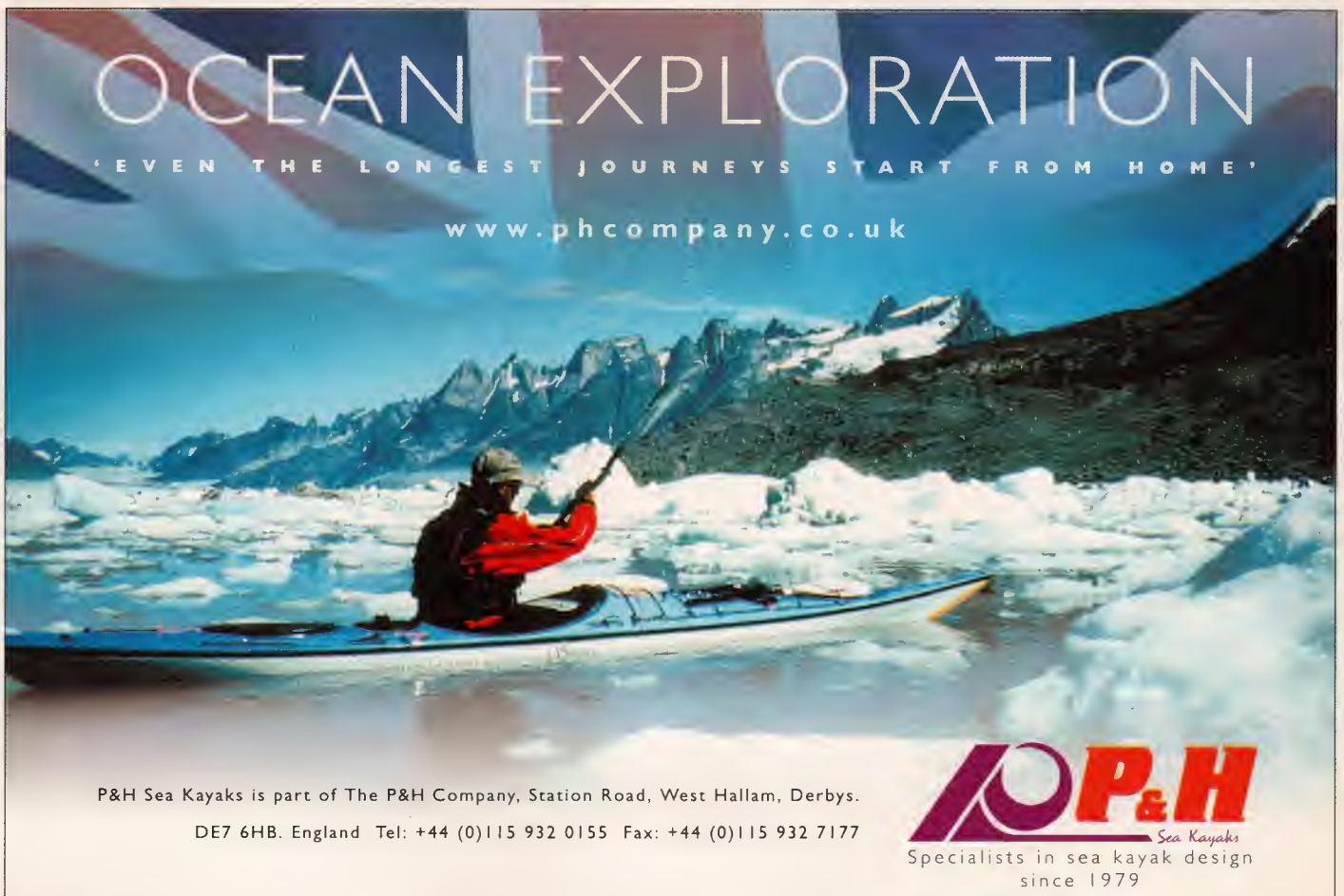
Big Canoe Club

Membership open to any group, club, person, ten person open canoe trips, on canals, lakes, rivers, estuaries, not for profit project, give you club a different experience! Club run by **Dave Hart**, BCU IV coach and committee. Tel 01691 659280.

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John Turner (1936 – 1999)

John started his working life as an apprentice carpenter and joiner in Merthyr Tydfil, where he worked for some years before taking up a teaching post in London.

It was whilst in London, in the 'Sixties', that he took up canoeing and was a member of a club in Waltham Forest. On returning to Wales eleven years later, he continued with his canoeing activities and founded Aberfan Canoe Club, of which he was later to become President and which in 1999 celebrated its 25th Anniversary.

John was an enthusiastic Coach and was always encouraging others, especially Juniors on the river. His shout of "Come on – Keep Paddling" could frequently be heard. In fact it was teaching youngsters to develop their skills that gave him the greatest satisfaction.

Many trips were run on local rivers as well as weekends in Bala, Llangollen, etc., and all were remembered for one hilarious reason or another. Yet, all the time, largely through his enthusiasm and stubborn determination the Club was steadily



developing. Grants were obtained, new disciplines were introduced, equipment vastly improved and the Club has gone from strength to strength. This is his legacy which the Members of Aberfan Canoe Club will all take into the future.

John's passing was a blow to all his many friends. Although very ill over the last eighteen months he never once complained. His good humour and strength of character carried him through.

He will be sadly missed by his many friends in the canoeing fraternity.

Scouts Sea Kayaks

Last April Canoe Focus carried an advertisement from us asking for information about a theft of 4 Skerray Sea Kayaks from the Skelmersdale area on 1st or 2nd March 1999. As a result of this advert and other requests sent through BCU Canoe Clubs, I received a significant number of calls with information, advice, sympathy and encouragement. I would like to thank, through Canoe Focus, all those people who called, kept a weather eye open for our boats and made offers of help in loaning boats, identified replacements and made suggestion where I could borrow or hire boats to keep our programme going.

As a result of information received 3 of the stolen boats were recovered in West Lancashire shortly before Christmas and are now back in action with the Group. Thanks to everyone who helped us recover our kayaks. Too many people called me to thank personally, if you see us, on land or water, please introduce yourself so that I can thank you again! We still have one turquoise rotomoulded Skerray missing is anyone know its whereabouts.

John Lechmere 51st Ormskirk Scout Group 01695 632434.

**BCU YEAR BOOK
2000 UPDATES
Page 27 - YPaddle
Canoe Club, Interests
should include "B"
Slalom
Page 27 -
Hammersmith &
Fulham, Email:
talstein@fsa.gov.uk**

**Page 28 -
Shepperton
Slalom CC Website:
www.sheppertonoscc.freeserve.co.uk**

**Page 34 - Cherwell
Canoe Club. The
telephone number
given should not be
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eing.fsnet.co.uk/

Page 43 - Lower

Wharfe CC C/O

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N. Yorks

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[@tesco.net](mailto:mcs.sandbush@tesco.net)

Page 43 - The

Shoddy Mungo

Paddlers, C/P Mrs A

Gray, 17 Benonley

Road, Almondbury,

Huddersfield.

HD5 8LR

Tel: 01484 304776

Sudbury Canoe

Club c/o Micheal R

Dodd, 2 Carbonels,

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Sudbury, Suffolk,

CO10 0RQ,

mickyd@bcuintern.net

com 01787 373 290

Volunteers Wanted for a Dirty Weekend



The Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) wants more students to help them make their 30th anniversary year their most successful ever. This year, WRG is organising twenty-two canal restoration working holidays

throughout the country. If enough volunteers come forward, several projects could be completed, including an entire canal basin at Over (near Gloucester), restoration of lock gates on the Derby and Droitwich Canals and a new slipway on the Wey & Arun Canal.

Visit the WRG website for all the latest information, news, reports and photographs at www.wrg.org.uk. A free information pack is available from the **WRG Head Office at PO Box 114, Rickmansworth, WD3 1ZY**, which gives details of all the Canal Caps this year.

Symonds Yat Rapids.

Good news. Fundraising to date in excess of £36,500. Lottery Bid has been lodged. Negotiating the final stage of legal option to purchase. Initial target for phase one fundraising £52,500 to support a successful Lottery Bid. Therefore we need another £16,000 to reach our initial target.

This should be sufficient as matched funding for our Lottery Bid to purchase the Rapids and to obtain all the necessary formal consents to be able to legally carry out the project.

Once that stage has been reached we need to find funding for the in-river and other works and make provision for running costs. We need your help now to raise £16,000. Numbered Prints of Lisel Walker's oil painting of Symonds Yat Rapids are available at the special price of £18.00 (plus postage and packing £2.50)

Please send donations and pledges to Veronica Westlake. (Cheques made payable to SYRPG – also Credit card facilities) Contact: **Veronica Westlake, 33 Golden Vale, Churchdown, Gloucester, GL3 2LU Tel/Fax: 01452 531218.**

River Wye Valley Cycleway

The proposed 50 mile traffic-free cycleway linking Chepstow, Tintern, Monmouth, Ross and Hereford is now getting into gear.

Roger Withers, a Chartered Town Planner, was appointed last year as project officer to pull the project together. Roger has wide experience both in this country and abroad including working on the Hadrian's Way national cycle route section of the Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail.

He is working on an Environmental Impact Assessment Feasibility report bringing together past studies and informal consultations. This in close liaison with the Local Authorities and Environmental bodies. Also, of course, Sustrans.

His report will lead to a formal public consultation later this summer. The final report will then follow setting out the options

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and address funding and what can realistically be achieved.

Roger who is based at the Wye Valley A.O.N.B. office in Monmouth sees the project as an opportunity to enhance sustainable tourism and to help conserve this internationally important heritage landscape.

Among many things Roger has evaluated the different habitats along the route including counting bats in the disused railway tunnels. For more information contact **Roger Withers** on Tel: **01600 772746**.

Desert Challenge – Five sports in five days – for charity

The charity's hottest sports challenge to date is set in the foothills of the Atlas Mountains. You'll have the opportunity to run a half-marathon through spacious desert and farmland; cycle through the gorges of Dades across mountain passes and abseil down the magnificent cliff faces. The Barrage El Mansour Eddahbi, the spectacular 30km stretch of blue water set in the dramatic red desert landscape, will be where you take part in a tough canoeing course.

You only have to raise £1,900 each, which covers this unique trip in September and includes food and accommodation with expert training on hand throughout. United Response is a national charity supporting people with learning disabilities and mental health problems. The challenge is open to anyone but the number of places is limited. For an

information pack and tips on fundraising, phone **Jill Birch** at **United Response** on **0208 246 5208** or email on morocco@united-response.co.uk.

'Extreme Sports Zone'

Never before has it been so easy to pursue the world's most exciting sporting activities such as windsurfing, sailing, snowboarding, skating, rock climbing and skiing. Devotees of adventure sports can now buy and sell specialist equipment on the Internet at the new 'Extreme Sports' zone on eBay UK (www.ebay.co.uk), the country's leading person-to-person online trading community.

British Classified Paddling Ads Site

This is a new web site, which is devoted to the British Canoeists and Kayakers who want second hand equipment. You can place an ad for FREE and choose to place your ad in the 'for sale' section or the 'wanted section' along with all the other items listed. Visit www.BCPAds.co.uk

MBE – David Cosstick

Trainer Assessor David Cosstick of W.R Canoe Club was awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours lists. David is soon retire from the police service and we wish him a long (and wet) retirement. "We are both delighted for him and proud and pleased to have David as one of White Rose CC's Members".

Page 47 – Westel Tourist Trial, Basingstoke canal 3 – 30 miles should be 23 July 2000 – contact 25 Jeff Simmons

Page 112 – Stuart Woodward
Email should read canoecontrol@aswatersports.co.uk

Page 112 – Bowels Outdoors Centre
Telephone Number should be 01892 665665

Tees Side date from 20/21st May to the 6/7th May.

25th June 2000
Westel Tourist Trial – Basingstoke canal 3 – 30 miles. Should be 23rd July 2000

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WHAT'S ON

news & info

Hull International Polo Competition

This year's event will again take place on the waters surrounding the Princes Dock shopping complex on the weekend of 1st and 2nd July. For more information please visit the website.

<http://www.ourhouse.karoo.net/krak.htm>

PeakUK Whitewater Challenge. Series 2000

The only multi discipline events series is back. This year we are focusing on three events in three prime sites so we can funnel our energies into these and pull off the finest series to date (we hope!). The overall format will stay the same as previous years with a downriver race, extreme slalom and freestyle all forming part of each event, taking place over a whole weekend of paddling on the site. All three sites call for small individual changes to the way the events are run, so you can expect some novel variations!

As before, each event will stand on its own, but they'll also be combined to form a series, the Nottingham Paddlefest concluding as usual. This year is of special importance because in September at Nottingham, PeakUK (formally Peak Performance) are celebrating their 10th birthday. I can't reveal any details as yet, but you really do want to be there, we are gonna enjoy that one you can be sure! Tickets for the events will be on sale throughout the country. Dates for the series are as follows;

April 8/9th Tryweryn, Bala
May 20/21st Tees Side Whitewater Course
September 23/24th BCU Paddlefest, Nottingham.

For more information contact PeakUK by email on challenge@peakuk.com or tel. 01629 581222. More information will be posted on the web at a later date.

Conwy Ascent 2000

This year the Conwy Ascent combined race and tour will be on Saturday 6 May. The date has been chosen to coincide with a big tide which should result in some fast times and pleasant touring.

As usual the race is split into three classes, each with its own start: Touring Canadians, Singles and Doubles. Tourers can set off anytime within a 90 min window. The course starts on the shore near the Conwy marina, goes up through the busy harbour area and past the castle into a wide area where the fastest route is up the middle. Then the river becomes narrower and twists and turns past wooded slopes and through reed beds before reaching the finish at Dolgarrog.

All paddlers receive an event memento and a snack at the pub afterwards. For details contact **Penny Wingfield on 01492 660720 at Haere Mei, Castell, Tal y Bont**, www.dcpaddlers.fsnet.co.uk/conwy_ascent/

OCSG Events Calendar 2000

15/16 Apr	Start the Season	Hollingworth, Lancs
Walter Green	01254 56116	
6/7 May	Cruising with Ken	Loch Ken, Dumfries
Eddie Palmer	01307820454	
20/21 May	Spring Weekend	Coniston, Cumbria
Kevin Leahy	01539535979	Dave Poskett 01539533878
10/11 Jun	Coastal Canoeing	Menai Straits, Gwynedd
Keith Morris	01539534638	
Training Workshop		
1/2 Jul	Welsh Weekend	Bala, Gwynedd
Lis Woods	01248671056	
22/23 Jul	The Lakes Classic	Ullswater, Cumbria
John Eyles	01768352645	

The Boston Charter Marathon and Tour Sunday 7th May 2000

This event celebrates the 456th anniversary of Boston gaining its Royal Charter.

Venue: Boston Course; River Witham – The Haven (tidal section) – Maud Foster Drain – Frith Drain – River Witham.

The check in and starting point is the SLCC (South Lincs. Canoe Centre), Witham Town, Boston, Lincs.

Parking: Ample parking will be available at the above venue. NB: all property is left at owners risk.

Timetable: Check in: 08.00 – 08.30; **Start:** 09.00; **Presentations:** 13.00 (approx.)

Equipment Hire: The hiring of general purpose, single – seater Kayaks is possible. Please contact the organiser (**Gerry Gibbons 01406 371378** email gerry@gibbonscycles.co.uk) for further information.

Inland Waterways Challenge

On 25 September – 29 September 2000 one of the UK's leading child care charities, NCH Action For Children, together with the British Canoe Union, will be asking children and adults to take to the water in canoes for the Inland Waterways Challenge to help raise £50,000 for the Charity's work with vulnerable children, young people and their families.

The British Canoe Union run an exciting canoe event every year which involves canoe races, white water challenges and workshops. The Inland Waterways Challenge will be joining this year's event and aims to set a new world record to get as many people canoeing in the UK during the Challenge.

International Sea Kayaking Festival

The above event is being organised by north west sea kayakers on behalf of iska. Dates are 1-9 July. Venue Outdoor alternative cerrig yr adar rhoscolyn Anglesey LL65 2NQ Phone/fax : 01407 860469 email centre@outdooralternative.org.

Booking direct to the centre. Good opportunity for those seeking insight into sea kayaking plenty of big boys trips for the more experienced.

The North West Sea Kayakers, now there's a sad bunch of miseries if ever there was, have caught the Millennium bug. Our postponed New Year's party will be at Anglesey in July (well it is warmer and the baby sitters are cheaper).

The North West Sea Kayakers are hosting that mother of all parties a sea kayaking extravaganza at Rhoscolyn Anglesey this is your invitation. If you are old and crusty enough to remember the days before symposiums became the rage, or perhaps you are too young to know the joys of a sea kayaking party without tests, exams or tidetables this is pure '70s' revival. Turn up be competent to paddle at your own level. Hang loose as the ole git says and do some self organised paddling, partying or chilling.

Get that glitter flake boat out of the attic, get that Vango force 10. Grow a straggly beard (women can have stick on ones) and get on down there.

Bookings direct to Ian **Wright Outdoor Alternative, Cerrig yr Adar, Rhoscolyn, Anglesey, LL65 2NQ. Phone or fax 01407 860469.** Email centre@outdooralternative.org.

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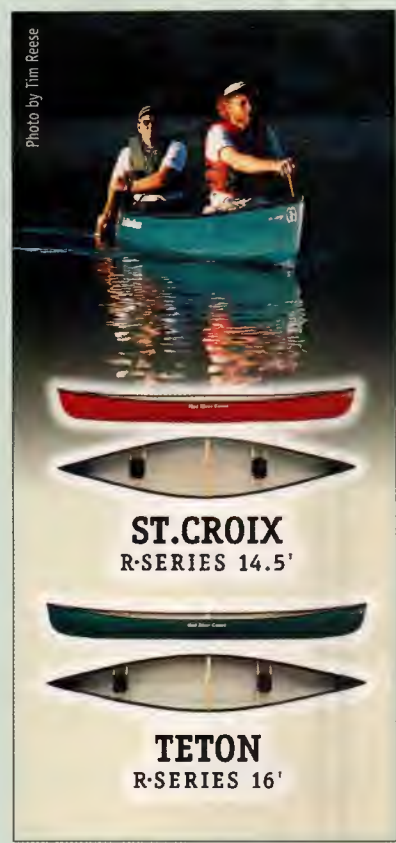


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contact Angie
Hampton 0116 267
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Bridge-End Outdoor Centre Burra Isle Shetland 7 – 10 July 2000

The 2000 Shetland Sea Kayak Symposium will be based at the Bridge End Outdoor Centre on the Island of Burra, which is connected to Mainland Shetland via another island and two bridges. The centre itself has good facilities and we will also be using the nearby Bridge End Hall for catering and lectures. The centre is approximately 20 minutes drive from Shetland's main town, Lerwick, which has excellent leisure facilities and a wide range of shops.

There will be practical sessions, on-the-water skills sessions, group sessions, lectures and talks about a variety of subjects, slide shows and also guided paddle trips – something for everyone. It is anticipated that sea kayak and equipment manufacturers will be represented with demonstration items being available to try. Costs have not been set yet as the event is still some way off, however, it is a non profit making event and we will make every effort to drive the prices down.

Register your interest now, it is not too early, by contacting **Tom Smith, Sunshine Cottage, Bridge-End, Burra, Shetland, Tel 01595 859647.** Email Tom@televiradio.demon.co.uk.

Eskimo Sunday League a the Canolfan Tryweryn.

The Eskimo Sunday League is a fun freestyle competition aimed at those paddlers who wish to try freestyle competition out in a less than serious atmosphere. It is an open competition so anybody can pay their pound and enter, whether you are a top paddler and/or a complete wally. You are normally given two 45 second runs at the NRA Bridge plus you have to do a fun compulsory move such as a disco hand wave. Points are awarded for each competition which are accumulated in such away that we can give prizes throughout the year. Only non-sponsored paddlers are eligible for the prizes. It is held on the first Sunday of the month when the site is open and there is a water release. Always check the Canolfan Tryweryn's water help line before you travel. **The telephone number is 01678 520826.**

Time Event

- 10.0 Meet in the café
- 11.0 A fun paddle down from the top of the site. Normally expert paddlers will be around so you can try what they do.
- 12.0 Possible informal coaching at the NRA Bridge. Plus a chance to try out Eskimo boats and Werner paddlers.
- 13.0 Eskimo Sunday League fun freestyle event. 'It's not about winning but beating your mates'.
- 15.30 Showing off the video footage taken of the event plus the posting of the results.

What ever time you arrive you must buy a day ticket from the Canolfan Tryweryn reception desk.

For more details and help phone **Dave Ayres on 01678 521567** or visit our web site for the link; <http://paddle.to>. Further details about the Canolfan Tryweryn can be found on their web site; www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk

All the money that is taken goes to WCA Freestyle Development. We intend to run formal coaching sessions during the year so keep in contact if you are interested.

Probable dates: 2nd Apr, 7th May, 4th June, 25th June (Wet Fest), 2nd July, 6th Aug, 3rd Sep, 1st Oct, 5th Nov, 3rd Dec. Dependant on water releases and other events.

Pershore Camp Weekend

River Avon 7/8/9th July 2000

Wychavon Canoe Club are organising yet another fun packed weekend in Pershore, Worcestershire for canoeists, their families, clubs and groups. We cater for all level Canoeists, Canadians and Kayaks, whether novice, experienced or instructor level there will be something for you, so please bring your own kit and have some fun. The weekend starts from approx. 6 pm on Friday 7th July at Pershore Rugby Club, Wyre Piddle, Pershore.

To reserve your place(s) for the weekend or ask any questions about the event, please contact: **Clive Pearson, 8 Holloway, Pershore, Worcestershire, WR10 1HW. Tel: 01386 554130, Mobile: 0771 835674,** email: clive.pearson@mailexcite.com.

The Mayan World Canoe Challenge, Belize April 2001.

In aid of The Royal Scottish Geographical Society. This canoe expedition has been designed as a river trip, not a race. You will be paddling two person canoes and we will ensure that the teams are well balanced. The aim of the trip is to allow you to explore Belize and to get a real feel for the country and its people. You will need to be able to cover about 30 miles a day and will paddle in small groups. You can chose whom you want to paddle with and can move in and out of the groups.

The costs are in the region of £1300 per person but will depend on the numbers taking part. All other money raised by you over this amount goes to the RSGS. For more information contact: **Simon Hamilton, Three Hands, 10a Crown Gardens, Glasgow, G12 9HL, 0141 341 0627.**

Conwy Ascent, 6th May 2000

Check it out at www.dcpaddlers.fsnet.co.uk/conwy_ascent/

April	8/9th	Peak White Water Challenge, Tryweryn, Bala Contact 01629 581222
May	6/7th	Splashout/Peak White Water Challenge, Teeside Contact 01629 581222
	20/21st	Nottingham Revolution British Canoe Union Freestyle Committee AGM Contact Chris Taudevin 0378 141660
June	3/4th	Bitches, St Davids Contact Twr-y-Felin 01437 721611
	24/25th	Tryweryn Wetfest, North Wales Contact 01678 521567

Tryweryn Wet Fest '2K

24 – 25th June 2000

More fun than competition is what the Wet Fest is all about. For this year the following activities are on offer:-

- Nookie coaching on freestyle and river running techniques.
- Eurocraft inflatable donkey competition plus other blow-up toys.
- Mobile Adventure canoe races, river running and freestyle competitions
- The Phil Blain Challenge, an over 49s river running competition
- River funning and races with prizes from Eskimo an other manufacturers
- Freestyle competitions for National Ranking
- All types of doubles races and river running events
- Long boat, wild moves fun competitions
- Boot sale of old canoeing gear
- Saturday night, good fun and wicked games

For more details: **Tryweryn Wet Fest '2K, Ty Isaf, Fron Goch, Bala, Gwynedd, LL23 7NU. Tel: 01678 521567**
email: hairy@paddle.to Web site: <http://members.tripod.com/~wetfun/> or via <http://paddle.to>

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Spraydeck!

Its amazing when your memory works. It may fail the night before, as you carefully list all the items you'll need tomorrow. It may fail in the morning, as up you gather together every bit of kit you'll need for the day ahead.

It may even fail during that final mental checklist, as you head off to your destination. But you can guarantee that as you're sitting comfortably in your boat ready to push out into the flow it will suddenly return. In this case it may have been triggered by something physical, or rather, by something that definitely wasn't. "Spraydeck!" yelled Tom, "Where's my Spraydeck?"

Perhaps when you're cruising along the Bude canal a spraydeck doesn't really matter but on a descent of the East Lyn river a spraydeck is kinda useful. The Lyn, running steeply off the Exmoor hills in North Devon, is a river that commands respect from the word go and no matter how bazaar our solutions to the problem, the simple fact was no spraydeck, no chance.

Our party was make up of an elite band of West Country paddlers (admittedly prone to memory loss). Firstly Rory Sacree, who actually had remembered his spraydeck, son of the famous Jeff Sacree manufacturer of Gecko headgear, and instructor with Shoreline Outdoor pursuits (where he has to admit to loosing the occasional surfboard or two). Next the days subject of ridicule Tom Iggledon, Cornish through and though and supremo in the surf – admits to lapses in the past like the day he won the Inter Celtic surf championships and couldn't even remember getting into the water. Compared to their history fellow paddlers Simon Hammond and Matt Britton seemed almost reliable. Simon had, after all, remembered his route all the way from Bude to the river and as it turned out Matt could still remember how to get out of his boat and swim instead of being re-circulated at the base of a particularly nasty drop.

We'll just have to run it twice

So our solution, we'll just have to run it twice. Personally speaking, and exciting as it is, running the Lyn once in a day and getting sway with it, is plenty enough for me, but as it's a short stretch of water and we were there early, a double run was perfectly feasible. We agreed to flip a coin at the end of the first run with the winner giving his spraydeck to Tom for the second.

Having not rained for 12 hours the water level was just on the lower side of ideal. For the Lyn this meant that the run to the gorge would be more technical than normal, the gorge itself would be as formidable as ever and that there would be an increased risk of pinning on the final leg to the coast. Lovely! Not far from the start it was Rory's memory that was the first to be topped up after a sharp drop into a boiling pool. And his now permanently imprinted memory is 'if you try multiple hand rolls in a shallow gully you will eventually bang your head'. On a positive note, he was at least able to assess the value of his dads helmet design.

However, it was Matt's escape during the second section in the gorge that was most impressive. The final approach to this diagonal drop involves some accurate positioning along a roller coaster under cut channel. Perhaps the memory loss virus choose that moment to hit as Matt's idea of accurate positioning suddenly appeared to be 'side on and slightly backwards to the flow!' The drilling he then received was only to be expected, memory returning around his second submarine survey of the fall. I have to say his 'capsize drill' was performed with style and his 'hanging onto a rock' technique looked well practised.

Matt volunteered (or was it insisted) that it would be his spraydeck and not actually himself who would run the river again. Back up the hill at Watersmeet Tom patiently listened to the obligatory horror stories with a rapidly disintegrating smile and then we were off to run the gauntlet again. I have to say that we were all aware of the implications of rushing a second run and so took our time setting up cover as we'd done before.

Tom obviously hadn't been psyched out during his wait and ran the river without a hitch that was until he got well and truly broached 300 m from the end. Despite this very public humiliation right in the middle of Lynmouth Tom's departing words echoed all of our thoughts – what a brilliant river.

Oh and the answer to Tom's question 'Where's my spraydeck' well its still with Simon Cass and its time to give it back! ●



Where's my Spraydeck?



ACCESS news & info

Access Officers BCU Right to Roam

In the Yearbook we showed that there was a vacancy for a local access officer for the Great Ouse between Newport Pagnell and Olney; in fact we have a local access officer, who is **Keith Whitehead**, 9 Hydrus Drive, Leighton Buzzard, Beds LU7 8UL, tel: 01525 371728. The address for Tony Hill, local access officer for the River Hamble, should be amended to **3 Catherine Close, West End, Southampton SO30 2GH**, tel: 01703 472623. As can be seen from the BCU Yearbook there are quite a number of rivers without local access officers; if you can fill one of these vacancies, please get in touch with your regional access officer.

Thank you to all members and clubs who have sent us copies of their letters to MPs plus any replies they received. If you have not already done so, please let the BCU Development Service at Nottingham have a copies of your responses. As we write this paragraph we are expecting any day to see the publication of what will be the government's 'Countryside Amenity and Conservation Bill'. The more responses there are, the more likely that canoeing will be taken seriously. Replies received to date do not give us hope that the needs of canoeists will be included in the Bill; the government continues to point to the access agreement route to secure more canoeing waters.

The reply to our letter came from Chris Mullin MP, Parliamentary Secretary of State for the DETR. We have written to him to object to his view that existing powers can be used to secure agreements; no canoeing agreements have resulted for these powers since the 1949 Access to the Countryside Act became law. We welcomed the stated government intention to promote recreational use of rivers, but pointed out that that not much will happen to help canoeists so long as there is no statutory obligation on landowners to enter into agreements.

Lobbying

There are frequently issues, many of them local, on which lobbying support by members would be very helpful. Passing information on such issues through Canoe Focus is seldom quick enough. We are therefore building up a list of members and club officers, who are willing to contact local media, local councillors, MPs and others as needs arise. We can then email or mail those individuals at short notice with the necessary background information. If you can help canoeing in this way, please let your Regional Access Officer have your name and contact details.

River Lune

After the deadline for the February Canoe Focus we received a letter from the solicitors acting for the riparian owners of approximately 1km river left downstream from the A684 bridge (map ref 632923) near Sedburgh. The letter warns us that permission will not be given to canoe this part of the river. They have given notice that canoeists, who trespass on this water, will be prosecuted. The local access team, supported by national officers has been trying for many years to secure an agreement for this stretch. This information was posted on the BCU website www.bcu.org.uk when it arrived.

Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs)


We make a point of sending responses from the BCU office to all LEAPs. This is important because if canoeing and the needs of canoeists do not feature in these plans, then Environment Agency support for canoeing will be limited. However, if the central response is the only response, it will have much less effect than if there are also many responses from local BCU officers, local canoe clubs and local canoeists.

Taking the Bedford Ouse Leap as an example, there was a total of 26 responses at the consultation stage; of these one was from the BCU in Nottingham and one from a local canoe club/county association, which resulted in nine references to the needs of canoeists in the statement of consultation. In the final LEAP document Issue 8 covers portage facilities and Issue 9 is about the impact of Cardington Canoe Slalom Channel on the ecology of the surrounding watercourses. 19km of the River Ivel has been identified in a recent waterway restoration priority report.

Do find out from your Environment Agency Area Office when they will be drafting the LEAP for their catchment so that you have the opportunity to write a response yourself.

Access in Devon and Cornwall


Regional Access Officer Adam Box has expressed concern in his annual report that the 10 voluntary access officers in his region are experiencing continuing pressure as they strive to meet the needs of canoeists. There is an increasing expectation that they will always be at the end of a phone, ready to distribute permits and information on water levels. Please remember that these access officers are volunteers providing a service in their leisure time; when you do need to phone, please don't phone at unsocial times and do phone well in advance of your planned trip.



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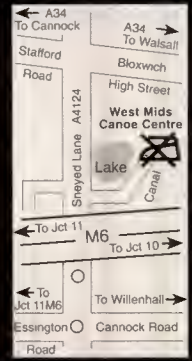


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Well that's it! After spending a wee fortune in time & training, last November I qualified as a Level 5 Coach Open Canoe. If any of you folk are considering working toward Coach 5, then maybe this article will swing you one way or the other!

Humble Beginnings!

Having always paddled a kayak, I stumbled into coaching at City University Canoe Club, London in the late 1980's. Whilst here and at the Shadwell Basin Project I realised that I enjoyed working with people in the Outdoors - so much so that I left the Royal Navy & began freelancing around the Northwest. With spells at Outward Bound Ullswater & at Alpine Action in France, I returned from the summer season of 1994 to qualify as a (SI) Level 3 Coach Kayak. In the days after the assessment weekend I realised that I had been operating at that level for some time.

Wanting an involvement in long term projects, I landed a job with Whitehough Outdoor Education Centre in Lancashire, with responsibility for running the Burnley Canoe Centre. The Head of Centre and my bosses at the Youth & Community Service gave me the scope to explore the possibilities of using Open Canoes for work with Duke of Edinburgh groups. This opportunity captured my imagination, resulting in many trips away. Transferring many skills across from kayak, I quickly found myself on 5 Star and Level 3 Coach assessment OCN. In less than 3 years I had witnessed a coming together of ideas and enthusiasm for the 'group friendly Open Canoe' amongst paddlers & Coaches alike.

During this period I compiled 'BOBBI's Junior Canoeing Scheme' for young paddlers - this had a good response in Northwest Region trials, & became integrated into the Paddlepower Scheme. Result!

I had achieved my wish for something long-term. Where though, do you go next?

Why Coach Open Canoe?

Having been enthused on an earlier Coaching Processes Course, the Level 5 Development Course in October 1997 was the obvious step forward. The intensive week at Plas y Brenin saw 10 of us work with a wide variety of Coaches on areas from feedback to presentation, physiology to injury prevention, sprint to surf, boat dynamics, edging to working with clients. The week was incredibly rewarding and prompted much discussion and exchange of ideas amongst all present.

It was Franco Ferrero, Head of Canoeing, who confirmed my wish to stick with Open Canoe - even when my logbook was heavily kayak orientated. I

Where to



Ash St. John-Claire's

left the course with a substantial action plan, wanting to develop my skills & ideas further.

Action Plan or Action Man?

I contacted my Coach Tutor, Ray Goodwin on my return from a Sea kayak expedition with Raleigh International in Chile. Over the next 18 months I had the opportunity to work with Ray on his 5 Star training courses, Dee & Teifi tours. As part of my action plan, Ray observed me working and offered some feedback on my style, my ability to run away with my own enthusiasm & my solutions to people's technical problems.



o Next?

Coach 5 Experience

I was packing in the courses, the trips, and the rivers & still managed to freelance and take a trekking trip to Peru in the summer of 1998 after the Canoe Centre closed. This lost opportunity opened other doors.

Doldrums!

As with any long-term project, the path to Coach took a backward step the following autumn & winter. I became 'technically blind' to simple situations, doubting both my own abilities as a paddler, let alone as an 'Aspirant'. I managed to sink boats on the easiest of problems on the River Kent, successfully mis-diagnose problems, get my group management



completely muddled up & break every wooden paddle I could lay my hands on! It was during this period that the Tutor-Aspirant relationship paid off for me. Ray was always available to discuss issues, problems or solutions and behind the 'Fetch me a Coffee, Aspirant' banter, was a genuinely concerned Coach, hoping that I would find my way.

PGL & Segs!

The turning point came when I realised my own limitations and addressed them head on. Having organised a successful 5 Star training with 2 other Aspirants in Feb 1999, I sat down with the feedback and shakily booked a place on the spring 1999 assessment weekend. I was very aware that I felt uneasy about this date, but peer pressure & time constraints got the better of me!

Then came the opportunity to work with PGL at their summer canoeing camp at Segries in the Ardeche (Segs). Some 80 Coaches assembled for the 5-week training & assessment course, during which time I was stretched well outside my comfort zones in terms of my technical understanding, personal abilities, course organisation, confidence, delivery and assessing style. In fact, everything I had previously believed was a strong point in my enthusiastic style was hacked into tiny pieces & re-wired. I even took the first swim of the season, and postponed the assessment date to make the most of the experience. Segs was a 24hr a day coaching environment – so many questioning minds continually asking my opinion or for clarification of the day's events – the bar was alive every night! It is heartening to see the commitment that an organisation like PGL has to its up & coming staff – the Training Department are well respected by all participants.

We can re-build him!

With a summer of paddling in Scotland, the Lakes & Wales I managed to dip into Sports Psychology (Newcastle College's Coaching to Win course) & related it to my paddling & those I was coaching.

This proved very useful when I collapsed the new portage trolley within 5 metres of lashing the canoes onto it. When trying to line down the Falls of Dochart at Killin, I believe that the 'River Gods' recognised I needed a 'little detachment therapy for combating external stress'. I resorted to using the dog's lead to pull out our brand new 'broached' Explorer – with all the rescue kit in it, I might add - much to the delight of the tourists! The difference now was that my confidence in my own abilities was untouched – I had rebuilt my coaching style and believed that I could be a Coach 5.

Don't Panic... The Assessment Is Coming!

It was amazing to see just how focused I became about the assessment weekend, paddling 30 days in the 40 days prior, focusing on my long-term students and enjoying myself. The list is inspiring... Awe, Dee, Derwent, Eamont, Eden, Etive, Kent, Orchy, Pendle Water, Ribble, Tay, Twyweren, Teifi, Tyne Tour, Wharf, some bits on the sea & playboating at Teeside with the Bolton School Trainee Instructors in the last few days.

A fellow Candidate joined me on the Thursday to recce potential coaching sites, putting my fears about the assessment to rest and gave me a real feeling of being content with the work I had put in.

Obviously, the day before your Level 5 Assessment you carry on paddling... right? Not so! I fitted a tow-bar to the car – to ensure that I was completely relaxed. I would recommend this basic menial therapy to anyone!

I made the effort and contacted Ray, as his (Hopefully) 'Outgoing Aspirant', before I joined my long-term students in Teesdale.

Too Late... It's Here!

The weekend itself was a credit to all involved. Some 28 paddlers were present, with a Level 5 standardisation meet running alongside the 6 assessments being carried out. Thanks to Bill Taylor & his team for that.

A brisk start on Saturday saw me working with my long-term students on a nearby reservoir, then onto the River Tees from Egglestone to

THANKS

To Jim Wilson & Carlisle Canoes for encouragement & the Explorer

The Patterdale Posse – Alyn, DJW, IMR, JC, Phunter, Smally & the Bolton School Trainees for the late finishes,

Marky, Paul & Isla for the early starts,

Pete & Jules my long term students,

Piggy, Taff, Talc, Jester & all the Segs Team,

Chris Forrest for his timely reassurance,

Mike Devlin & the Development Team for the ground work,

Rob Cunnington for his Feedback,

Bill Taylor, Keith Hampton, Dave Luke & Mike McClure for the Result!

A big thanks to Ray Goodwin for his patience,

Last but not least, my long-suffering partner Ali, & Wobble the dog for the big swims.

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Cotherstone. The Assessor stuck to the guidelines about the 'non-interventionist' style – where no feedback can be given until the debrief on Sunday evening. This was a little disturbing, as it is only natural to enquire about feedback, especially whilst we drove between the River and the Venue.

We had the opportunity to meet our students for Sunday on Saturday evening and get together a sort of plan. A relaxing night out in Middleton and a restless nights sleep saw us hurrying the Assessor along next morning. Our day was progressive, involved a little bit of effective video work and was enjoyed by all. I arrived at Whorlton Lido tired but content. The students were smiling, as were my own long-terms – they had really benefited from the coaching.

The feedback session came promptly, which is always an unnerving experience. The result – a confident pass, students have shown progression and done so in a way that reflects their individual needs. The Assessors & Federal Officer did have some useful verbal feedback – 'go steady on the enthusiasm'!!

Scores on the Doors

Of the 6 Assessment Candidates, (3 OCN, 3 IK) there were 2 Passes in each discipline, and 1 deferral in each. For my long-term students & me the evening became a house party in Windermere, with other Coaches heading for distant parts of the

country and even New Zealand! Phone-calls to my partner, family & Ray reinforced my success. Holidays, family time and a meal out with Ray as means of thank-you confirmed our friendship and gave me the confidence to be accepted as a Coach 5 by my Tutor and peers alike.

The Future...!

Now I have got the ticket I have to go and learn how to use it! The whole experience has been a worthwhile one – I estimate it has cost me £4,500 in time spent chasing experience, course fees, time away from work, travel etc, but this is far outweighed by the deeply rooted confidence in my own abilities and improved enthusiastic coaching style.

I will be running my very own courses over the coming months and intend to live and work in the Lake District, providing Centres, Coaches and individuals with paddling & Coach Development Courses.

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Reindeer and the Rawthey

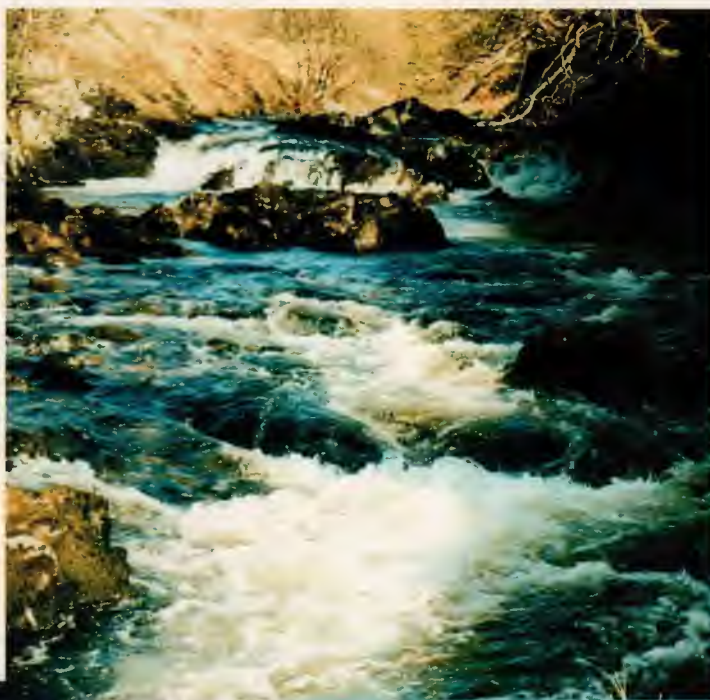
This was Cumbria. We were roughly half way down the River Rawthey, which oddly, is in the Yorkshire Dales National Park (in Cumbria). Moments earlier we'd found ourselves in a wonderfully secluded bend of the river, a fairy glen covered in wild garlic, a double cascade waterfall entering from the left and fern covered trees overhanging the river. I waited for the blow dart of a lost Amazonian tribe to hit me whilst Mike paddled on, dwarfed by the walls of the gorge instantly moving into a brochure picture for kayaking in China. A vertical moss-covered wall dwarfed him in the drifting waters of the gorge, "that'd make a great photo" I commented.

We'd put in at Rawthey Bridge, roughly 6 miles North of Sedbergh. This was not my local river so I was keen for a maiden voyage. I had not prepared myself for what followed.

Having read the guide briefly, we'd decided to go upstream to allow us a warm up before the gorge, with it's potential for being tree jammed. How naive we'd been. From the moment we pushed off,

"Reindeer! Reindeer! Reindeer!" Mike shouted at me I looked bewilderedly at him, I obviously didn't convince him with my "not bewildered" look as he shouted it again, three times.

Finally, and thankfully, I got the point, well both points. The first being that there was a deer just above us on the banks of the gorge. The second, that it was a roe deer and Mike, I'll give him the benefit of the doubt, was very excited and had shouted "reindeer" instead of "roe deer". He should have gone for "deer", I'd have understood.



the river demanded we wake up and get technical. This is no big white water but a series of turn, turn, turn rocky rapids interspersed, thankfully, with some breathing space, in the shape of calmer waters.

Mike and I have paddled the big northern rivers; North Tyne, South Tyne, Tees, but this was a different game. Its grading does not do justice to its huge character. A regular flow of technical rocky rapids gives way to a broader landscape, views of Cautley Spout, before the walls of the gorge close in and the true beauty we privileged canoeists can submerge ourselves in, which, on this trip was more literal than Mike would have liked.

Momentous, was the order of the day, not only did I discover a river of wondrous beauty and character on my doorstep but also Mike, my mentor for too many years, had an epic, complained his boat was too long and didn't relive the time he descended this in his fibreglass Sea-King.

The technical rockies continued, complemented by a couple of lovely drops, one in three tiers. The gorge walls open and close tantalisingly, as the river snakes its way towards Sedbergh. With each broadening I

began to feel disappointment, the trip would be over, not wanting to spot Straight Bridge which signals outer Sedbergh. The journey continued to enthrall and we continued to engorge ourselves in its splendour. Inevitably Sedbergh arrived. The Rawthey returns to its pretence of being just another river meandering through pasture land, relatively broad and flat. We didn't have time to paddle to the confluence with the Lune although we did ponder the logistics but I wanted to keep the character a sit was not me, still starry-eyed and gob-smacked. This river that belies its humble status had provided a world of imagination, one way beyond our expectation, looking back, maybe it was a Reindeer .. ●



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MORE MEDALS

WILD WATER RACING competition

Thanks to the race helpers, Grandtully Hotel Staff and John Handyside for presenting the prizes.

Race Director: Kelso Riddell
Organising Club: Forth Canoe Club
Article written by Martin Streeter

Scottish Racing Weekend – Wild Water

Racers drove North to join the Scottish paddlers to Race on the River Tay at Grandtully on the Saturday and Thistlebrig on the Sunday where the Scottish Championships was keenly contested. The races traditionally take place on the first weekend of March and include the National Prize Giving Ceremony for 1999 and the Scottish Championships.

The weather and water levels on both days chose to be very pleasant, testing enough for the seniors but not too intimidating



Oliver Wickham

for the juniors and cold enough to merit a long spell in the Grandtully Hotel for hot drinks and tall race stories! The wind finally caught up with us for the Thistlebrig race (as it often does), resisting tired racers all the way to the finish.

The familiar faces of Cynthia Berry and Alan Tordoff took the Scottish Championship honours with new names Andy Hamilton taking the C1 trophy and a very happy Nigel Royle secured third place in the

Mens kayak event. British team candidate Fraser Gormal took the second place in Mens kayak.

Racing was very close and tense in the first race of the 2000 calendar, some paddlers were looking to see the effects of their winter training and gauge their world

championship potential whilst other were looking to master the powerful Tay. With a light dusting of snow on the banks and good crowd support waiting like vultures on tully rapids paddlers set off early from the pre start in Aberfeldy. The 20 minute paddle gave competitors a chance to warm up and focus on their plans for the 11 to 13 minute race.

Planning it perfectly was Alan Tordoff, just beating his brother Ian by under 0.5 seconds. Third place went to Peter Keron, still trying hard to beat the high standard set by Ian and Alan. Tina Parsons and Rob Pumphrey who easily won their races in Ladies and C1 respectively also showed good form.

The experienced crew of Dave Belbin and Phil Caunt won the C2 race, proving too strong for the Walling brothers despite their recent improvements.

Other notable performances were from World Cup prospect Oliver Wickham who's dad (off challenged years) powered his way down the course in a pre 1975 vessel to win the Div B race. He was delighted until he realised he would be racing in Div A 24 hours later! A special mention goes to the two young MacIntosh's, Alison and Jennifer. Just peaking over the waves in their slalom boats they gave it some beans and looked confident. Talent for the future in either discipline perhaps? Those lucky enough to receive the shortbread as a prize were on strict orders to take



Mark Grey



Tim Lawrenson.

WILD WATER RACING

them back to mum, a remote hope.

There were some stiff muscles in the car park on Sunday as competitors prepared to practise for the race and hopefully loosen up. This section of the Tay involves a significant amount of seemingly flat water but such is the power boils and swirls emerge unexpectedly, quick reactions are essential. The course usually takes around 12 minutes and also has some excellent waves and not forgetting the intimidating Stanley weir and "hell hole".

The rankings were much the same as Saturday with Alan Tordoff extending his winning margin over Ian to 10 seconds with Peter Keron again 3rd. Mary Jean Smith exchanged positions with Nicola Mcgee in the battle for junior lady supremacy she was 3rd behind Cynthia (2) and Tina (1). Dave Bradburn improved to take second place behind Rob Pumpfrey in the C1 race. Ross Pearton could not repeat his great run at Grandtully and made way for Paul Anderson to take 3rd the C1 paddlers found conditions difficult, mistakes were costly in conditions where time was hard to gain in the fast flow. The Walling brothers narrowed the gap on the C2 crew of Belbin and Caunt but could not reverse Saturdays placing. ●

Junior WWR series at the Burrs

The junior WWR series at the Burrs this February was met with a variety of weather conditions from bright sun through heavy rain. Water levels on the Irwell dropped through the day, helping some of the junior paddlers.

As always there was a good contingent from Burton and a number of other juniors new to the discipline from as far away as Solihull. The Burrs is an excellent venue for young paddlers, with some challenging drops and eddies at the finish to catch the unwary. Tim Lawrenson from Burton won the U16 Youth Series and div. B race thereby being promoted to Div A. Iain Embrey, also from Burton won the U14, followed by Kyle Bowles from Solihull and Iain's younger brother Chris.

Thanks go to Joanne Firth and her team at the Burrs activity centre in Bury for making us all very welcome as always.

Burrs Activity Centre is located in the rebuilt mill workers cottages, which were a terrace of back to backs. The 34 bed bunkhouse occupies most of the first floor with extensive views over the site towards Peel Tower on Holcombe Hill. The river Irwell meanders through the park with grade 2/3 sections depending on the water levels, and a canal to return back upstream, creating a figure eight circuit. There is also a permanent Orienteering course within the park.



Above: C2 crew of Belbin and Caunt

Below: John Embrey



Iain Embrey. Photos: P. Schofield



Tim Lawrenson. Photos: P. Schofield

MORE MEDALS

WORLD CLASS PERFORMANCE competition



Information from the National Coaching Foundation

National Award for Alan Edge

The National Coaching Foundation (NCF) presented, in conjunction with Sport England, the 1999 England Coach of the Year at the Millennium Sports Awards, Leeds. Alan Edge from the sport of canoeing was among four coaches who won national recognition from the NCF at the event. The Coach of the Year awards are part on the NCF's commitment to caring for coaching and the coaches we serve and building pride in their achievements. Derek Casey, Chief Executive of Sport England, presented the England Coach of the Year award to Alan in the category of Performance Director, National Coach or Coach at National Level.



Alan has been the British Canoe Union National Slalom Coach since 1985. He coached Britain's Canoe Slalomists to their first Olympic Medal in 1992 and a further nine World titles, 11 World Cup Titles and six European titles. Alan competed as an elite athlete before his coaching involvement with the team and became World Slalom Team Champion at the 1979 World Championships in Canada.

He currently coaches World Cup Champion and Olympic hopeful Paul Ratcliffe and is also responsible for implementing the Slalom World Class Performance Programme. Alan's coaching knowledge and expertise also makes a significant contribution to the British Olympic Association's Coaches Advisory Group.

The other winners were:

- Community Coach in a paid environment in an Individual Sport, Lorraine Cole (badminton)
- Community Coach in a voluntary environment in a Team Sport, Craig Lowther (sports acrobatics)
- Community Coach in a voluntary environment in an Individual Sport, Maurice Sly (swimming).

Further information from **Trevor Gibbons**
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Winter Training 2000

by Paul Ratcliffe

Enthralled by the prospect of an Indian summer in Australia, the World Class Performance athletes from Slalom travelled to Penrith in New South Wales, to train on the Olympic course.

This was the first warm weather training camp conducted by the team since Performance funding came on line and it was a great success. Athletes were able to take maximum of advantage of training in a warm climate. It enabled paddlers to



focus on quality technique work at a high intensity with less risk of injury, together with a greater continuity of training. Generally it was an excellent competitive environment to train in and every athlete had a good work ethic. Three races were held during January and February and they attracted a high quality International field. They were probably the most intense and competitive races I have ever done so early in the season. However they gave athletes the chance to perfect race techniques on the course and to give early season form indications.

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I write the article as a canoeist of some 15 years, who has come to the sport of recreational white water paddling in the last few weeks.

Familiar territory was the Holme Pierpoint sprint racing course and the many marathon venues around the country. However, the following is written to coax other "semi-retired competitors" to benefit from the side of the sport which continues to provide buckets of adrenaline, but in a recreational context rather than competitive !

The rest is up to you !

1. Introduction

What is it that brings together 18 paddlers from Chelmsford Canoe Club, during the bleakest months of February, to paddle some of the most scenic and challenging rivers in the United Kingdom. I suspect the question may just have been answered. This was the teams seventh year.

Led by Paul "Puppy" Anderson (some would say mis-lead), the intrepid Braemar born adrenaline junky, a man for whom modelling socks and quoting Blackadder is an entire way of life, the groups were carefully navigated down the river.

The team were set to challenge whatever the rivers would throw at them. As an outsider, I wonder at the mind set of those who name the rapids - "Fairy Steps", "The Rooster Tail", the "Crack of Doom", "Wish You Were Here ?" - none of these give an insight to the approaching paddler as to the "fun" that lies in wait. What is wrong with "right hander" and "bumpy down the middle" ?!

Consider "The Cauldron" (as Mark did intimately on two occasions) - to the normal person this is the sound of something associated with home cooking. Now the mere name makes me run for a change of laundry.

The following represents a potted highlight, for those wishing to enjoy the same week of perfect paddling and teamwork.

2. The Frostbite Tour

Some advice for a successful tour. Have someone who knows the rivers inside and out. Have someone who is happy to do the organisation and planning, and most important - have a victim that you can send down the rapids first !

A quick word of warning - if your idea of excitement is Eastenders, you are probably not yet ready for a trip to the areas described in this article. However, if you aspire to bungee jump off a moving 747, read on. To put this into context, by the end of day one, despite being entirely careful, we had one broken boat, one sprained ankle and one full harness rescue !

Before each day the coaches met behind closed doors to have extended and protracted debate about the water conditions and best river for the following day. In truth, the extended and protracted bit, and indeed the debate, was principally concerned with what and how much to drink.

Never-the-less, each day was a careful choreography of teamwork, planning and on the water inspections.

Quite soon two distinct groups of paddlers formed - those trying to avoid Mark Laskey for fear of being contaminated by the boys natural affinity with the bottom of the river, and those for whom poor judgement and adrenaline are second nature - and who led or followed Mark through some of the biggest holes that could be found.

Day 1 - Walking on Water

The River Spean is an excellent induction, especially at low to medium flows when the gorge offers a range of grade 3 and 4 paddling. From Spean bridge a 15 minute paddle leads you to "Fairy Steps", the first of a series of grade 3 to 4 rapids, ending in the infamous 'Constriction'.

Of particular note, and about half way through the gorge is "The Cauldron". A grade 4+ drop, undercut and dropping into a huge boil. Julia "Jesus" Stevens managed an impressive "manoeuvre" inches above the fall resulting in a capsize and a subsequent "out-of-body" experience. (Note for children - do not try this at home !).

The Fros



Once again, Mark Laskey confounded his critics and completed the most risky and foolhardy performance of the day - the first upside down navigation of the constriction - an extremely tight "S" manoeuvre at lower levels !

That evening, back in the self catering accommodation, the whole group were eagerly "talking up" their readiness for further challenge - I suspect the planning team were quietly smiling as they contemplated the further treats in store !

Day 2 - The Longest Day

Old Chinese proverb say; when going paddling, always take your paddle. After a return trip back to the accommodation, we were finally ready for take off.

It had rained overnight, which was the essential ingredient for a trip down the River Roy. This is a class 4 river at medium levels (with one nasty grade 5). At high levels, take your arm bands. From the put in to the Roy Bridge is approximately 7 miles.

The river travels from the outwash plains in the headwaters, through a series of 3 gorges, to the lower reaches before it joins the Spean. This is a long trip, and in territory where the weather and river conditions change as quickly as pantomime costumes.

Whitebait Tour 2000



With a full group of 18 at the beginning progress is slow, and it takes 5 hours to complete the trip. With a smaller group it will still take a few hours as a number of drops are worthy of inspection. Whilst being the longest day, all were in agreement that the River Roy is very special for its transient scenery, and for the range of paddling experiences.

Top tip for the day from Mary-Jean Smith - when paddling into the rapids always listen to the wise words of your coach explaining the route down the next rapid.

Day 3 - Of Mice and Men

Dawn of the third day and a little more rain, so the group activated their rivers action plan, and headed for the grade 4/5 Etive.

The group of 18 reduced to 12 before even getting on the water. The most creative excuse was "I became travel sick on the journey" (a 20 minute hop from Fort William!), though we had close contenders "my finger hurts" and "don't you need me to take the photographs".

The Etive is a great river by any definition. Starting at Triple Falls and ending at Right Angle Fall, one can experience several grade 3 to 5 rapids such as the "Crack of Doom" and the "Ski Jump".

The first rapid at Triple falls is lively. The bottom fall of Triple Falls is a

a can... your pocket, or are you just... me!

air missile - most of the group were held under for at least 10 seconds before being ejected almost clear of the water - I believe it was "my time"!

When I realised plastic boat canoeists talk a completely different language like "boof-off", "twiddle", "wanging" and "down the river" prior to the trip, and I suspect they will have a different vocabulary. I must recommend a descent of Right Angle Falls - a grade 5 waterfall (a lower end grade 5). For our group at least a few of the boats were made without their boats!

The day was spent with a resume of the days safety cover, a discussion of the events that passed and any learning that was needed to optimize the performance of paddlers when routing down the river over the next few days.

Day 4 - No

The team opted to... start to try to bag two rivers in one day. The

aspirations were to complete the River Arkaig, and then hopefully go to the Nevis when the predicted afternoon rain had started to bite.

The Arkaig is an easy river (special mention to Mary Jean for falling in at a grade 1 rapid), with one grade 4 waterfall, and makes a good first stop on any Scottish canoeing trip. For the adrenaline junky however, read on.

By the time we got to the Nevis, the gorge was "full on" (note authors natural use of jargon from 4 days of full exposure). This is a river to be extremely respectful of. A fully experienced group of four started in the Scimitar Gorge and finally emerged less one boat, one paddle and three teeth!

The river rises feet in minutes during heavy rain, and a grade 4 becomes a treacherous grade 5+. For our esteemed leader, this was the last chance to get his adrenaline buzz before having to turn into "Captain Sensible" prior to the arrival of his girlfriend. This he achieved with full colours after negotiating "Leg Breaker" at Pink Granite Falls in his beloved "Stealth" whilst shouting "give it to me baby, ah-hah" (rumour has it Paul consigned the girlfriend to the spare room so that he could continue to sleep with his boat).

During the evening, a small prayer group formed to perform the ritual of rain making, and to allow the team to return again to their beloved River Nevis. As I write, I can already hear the excuses of those whose evening bravery (induced by copious quantities of liquor) was quickly translated into bowel movements on viewing the river.

Roll on tomorrow (no pun intended)!

Day 5 - Rest day ?

Theory and practice clearly do not meet on a canoeing trip. If I had a fiver for the number of times I heard "the book says the route is on the left" when the right was clearly better. This equally applies when the "rest day" dawns.

The 'A' group decided on a repeat visit to the Nevis which by now had gone down to mere mortal levels, as those who had sensibly decided to portage the grade 5 "Leg Breaker" and 30 foot "Falls of Arabach" wanted another bite at the cherry.

The difference a meter of water makes is truly amazing, though seasoned paddlers will no doubt look on that comment in disdain. What was a whirl pool that had cost us three teeth and a paddle the day before, had turned into a "breath in" constriction.

Despite the barriers the river put in our way, the whole group finished the morning with a wide smile and a sense of achievement.

In the afternoon, most of the group went their separate ways. One group, led by our Mountain expert / photographer, Shane Bartley, undertook what was billed as "a pleasant walk around the mountain". Fifteen miles later, after traversing bogs and rivers, the once buoyant group had been walked into submission - the evening meal was distinctly quiet!

Both Paul and myself 'snuck off' to the upper Spean, as the river looked high in Fort William. True to form, we arrived with three pipes releasing from the face of the dam. The guide books describes one pipe as reasonable, two pipes as optimum and three pipes as frightening. I should have taken out shares in Andrex before the trip.

The over-pours, boils, whirl pools and stoppers were what you would expect of a continental size grade 4/5 river. I have no desire to repeat the sensation of sitting in a whirlpool in water so full of air it couldn't support a rubber duck. I have to say that as I spotted the get out point above Monessie falls, I once again looked to the heavens and said a small "thank you" - amazing how religious one can become on a trip such as this!

Day 6 - The Finale !

An exhausted group entered the final day with hopes for a finale to be proud of. The full team decided to descend the River Loy, which was



running at a good grade 3 with occasional grade 4's. Neil Costen excelled today with a 1 minute long trashing in a simple grade 2 stopper, aided by Carl Foody who nobly sat on his boat to prolong the experience. Neil sat on the bank after his swim, looking like he had just been saved from the Titanic - in many respects looking at his full expedition boat, he was probably right.

The troops had hoped for another shot at the larger than life upper Spean, running with 3 pipes, however on this day we were to be disappointed. However, as tired limbs had now set in the various

cars drove to disparate parts of the area to enjoy the scenery for a final afternoon of site seeing.

To close the day, and to recognise the achievements of a number of paddlers during the week, dinner prizes were awarded for the following categories :-

- a) Best trashing of the week - awarded to Carl Foody for biting off more than he could chew on the River Nevis
- b) Most impressive manoeuvre - awarded to Julia Stevens for her roll on the top of Triple falls and subsequent backwards descent
- c) Most embarrassing moment - Neil Costen for his simulated cardiac arrest in a grade 2 stopper (joint with Carl Foody who sat on his boat and helped keep him there !!).
- d) Most improved paddler - Gillian Mara, for going from the Chelmer river to the Etive in under a week !
- e) Biggest nuts - The prized trophy went to Mark Laskey, mainly for trusting Paul Anderson, but also for nobly sacrificing his paddles in his endeavours to rescue Mary Jeans boat (any alternative motives here we have to ask !!).

3. Summary

The Fort William area is a must for any canoeist. Not only is the density of rivers incredible - several grade 3-5 rivers within 20 minutes travel time at most river flow conditions, but the area ranks as one of the most scenic areas of Scotland. Day trips for skiing remain possible during the Winter season, and on poor weather days, a simple drive on the road to Skye reveals sights which must not be missed.

On a concluding note, I must pay a particular tribute to our non-paddler photographer, a Mr. Shane Bartley - what can one say of a man whose efforts in "getting the photograph" would embarrass the "Milk Tray" man. Apparently the secret of a good photograph is to give advise to approaching paddlers in order to maximise the drama ! Other paddlers beware - Shane is easily spotted - he's the one with the ice axe !

Equal tribute must go to the Neil Costen, an old hand on the trip whose old hands are better geared towards preparing the evening repast, than in helping him stay upright ! Without Neil we would not have had the once-in-a-lifetime experience of indigestion on a grade 4/5 rapid.

And finally, to wrap up what must go down as one of the best trips to date, I implore my paddling colleagues to take up the challenge of the Frost Bite Tour, or something similar. Unlike the true condition of a frost bite, you should come away with all limbs intact, and a feeling of re-vitalisation drawn from adrenaline and from the surroundings which make this such a special area. ●



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VIDEO & PADDLER'S GEAR

reviews

id2 with Shaun Baker on Man Made - The Video.

What a rush he must get! There can be no doubt that the content of this video will keep you watching.

If you're a boater, and you've got pretty good shoulders then after the video you'll probably be planning how to go about getting on one of the water-ski tows that Shaun makes look deceptively painless.

If you're not a boater you will more likely be planning a course through life with the aim of never coming into contact with these groups of people who make the decision to go the few 'steps' further.

How does one man get away with so many risky ventures into his chosen 'sport'? I definitely enjoyed the 30 minutes of stunning shots, manic manoeuvres and wild drops but I have to say that the presentation as a story and

the vibrant effects used, leave me a little puzzled as to who it's aimed at.

Watch out for the strobe lighted night paddle on four gates at the Hurley weir! Nice touch. That must have been disorientating.

Iain McKie



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SLALOM competition

Club Slaloms in 2000

A series of six Club events are to be included in the slalom calendar for 2000 with the expressed aims of:

- Strengthening the club based structure of slalom and encouraging participation in club teams.
- Providing more structured practice time, with the opportunity for coaching junior competitors in lower divisions.

1 Two events will be held on each of three weekends as follows:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| April 29/30th: | Marple (Manchester CC) and Fairnilee (Selkirk CC) |
| July 29/30th: | Stone (Stafford & Stone CC) and Llandysul (Llandysul CC) |
| October 7/8th: | Shepperton (Shepperton SCC) and Middleton (Tees KC) |

Further details and contacts for each of these events can be found in the 'Slalom yearbook,' for 2000 or by contacting: Don Raspin, 28 Cotswold Drive, Skelton, Cleveland, TS12 2JN. Tel: 01287 650668. No other national ranking Slalom events have been organised for these dates to encourage clubs to schedule these weekends as enjoyable social outings for their members. So book your minibus now.

2 Unfortunately entry numbers will have to be limited for this first season, although it is hoped that they will prove so popular that more Club events can be introduced into the calendar for future years. Sites will be graded according to expected water levels and courses will be set at about Div. 3 level.

Each event will include:

- On Saturday:
Opportunity for coaching and structured practice time;
Demonstration team runs by Div 1 & P coaches/officials
A team event for Div 2/3 & 4 competitors in teams of 3 paddlers from any of these divs/classes.
- On Sunday:
Individual runs in separate divisions and classes for Div 2, 3&4 competitors (D.4 eligible for promotion) and an Officials' competition open to Div 1 & P coaches and officials.

3 Club entries must be submitted by a Club Manager.

Clubs wishing to compete should contact the organiser at least 6 weeks before the event indicating probable entry numbers and the name and address/tel. no. of the Club Manager. The organiser will inform the Club Manager of the maximum entry numbers s/he can accept from that club at least 4 weeks prior to event.

Completed slalom entry cards and fees of £5/entry (1 Ind. + 1/3 team) must be submitted by Club Managers at least 2 weeks prior to event. (C.M.'s may enter any eligible paddler in

more than one div./class on payment of the extra entry fee/s. Current, or previously ranked paddlers, wishing to compete in a class for which they have no current ranking status may be entered on division below their current/previously ranked division. (i.e. a Div 1 K1 paddler can compete in Div.2 C1 or C2). Competitors from lower divs. Can compete in higher divisions). Each team entry should be accompanied by the name of an official which will be included on the organiser's list of officials duties.

The organiser will then forward a Start list to Club managers about 8 days prior to event. Only competitors named on this start list will be eligible for BCU Voucher prizes.

Late entries:

Club managers may make substitutions for paddlers on the original start list. Div. 4 competitors should have priority for late entries up to the event limit. Late entries for Div. 2&3 paddlers and for scratch teams are at the organiser's discretion. All club entries must be made via the Club manager and only entries submitted by the C.M. can count for club points.

4 Premier and Div.1 paddlers may enter the Demo. Teams and the officials event only if they help with coaching and judging duties as approved by the event Coaching Co-ordinator.

5 An individual's club membership and ranking status (6 weeks prior to event) will be taken on trust but if they are later found to be default the compile/slalom exec. May nullify the club's points from that event.

6 Most prizes will be in the form of BCU vouchers giving free entry to a Div. 2/3 ranking competition (within 12 months of the issue date). Other prizes will be at the organiser's discretion.

7 Judging and officials duties will be allocated to each club under the supervision of their Club manager. A Coaching Co-ordinator will be appointed to supervise the Saturday, coaching sessions and to organise a Jury.

8 Proposed Points System:

The top placed individual/team for each club in each div./class will score points on this basis:

Individuals & officials: 1st=2pts, 2nd=4pts, etc.

Teams: 1st=1pt, 2nd=2pts, etc

Clubs with no entry in a div./class will score max. points + 1/team or + 2/individual thus giving a double weighting to team results.

Total points will give the club positions in reverse order for the event. It is hoped that this system will enable small clubs to compete on more even terms with their larger rivals and even to recruit extra members from unattached competitors attending the events.

A % system will be used to calculate the end of season rankings from a club's best 3 events are .We are seeking sponsors for appropriate trophies. ●

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Acrobat 270, aquamaine, backrest, footrest, £200, phone Roger on 01757 64155 (York).

Acrobat 275, two yak air bags, and mania paddle, all in good condition, £340, phone 0191 371 9810 or 01788 435 876

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Canoing books, ancient and modernist e.g. MacGregor, Bliss, Olson, Hutchinson, several on canoe camping, 01237 475165 for full list.

"Canoe Trailer by Scott Group in Greater Manchester. Holds up to 10 canoes. Galvanised with working trailer board £200 ono. Telephone Susan 0161 428 7939 or email susi_cox@virgin.net"

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C1 Caz Sprint + marathon boat, kevlar hull, excellent condition, £200 including paddle, phone 01522 526995

C2 Marathon, ICF mobile adventure, £300, phone 01245 467771

Cleaver - X, (Kington Kayaks), 7.4kg, perfect condition - as new, never used, £1200, phone Tish 0181 783 1265, tish@trshavey.co.uk

Concepts Designs 'The Top' competition K1 kayak blue/white, kevlar construction with matching bushesport neoprene spray deck, very good condition, stored in garage unused last 5 years, £150 ono, phone John on 0116 277 1176 after 7 pm or 01572 822758 office hours.

Corisca Overflow, good condition, full ww spec, footrest, backrest, airbags etc, £250 ono phone 0161 795 2288 (Manchester) or email haveybusby@manrad.com

Corisca S, Purple, good kayak £200 ono. Mi 370 plastic slalom style kayak, yellow, VGC £100 ono 6'8" Surf board with leech, VGC £100 ono Palm wavesurf skt, plastic with paddle £150 ono. Tel: Jon 01775 713361

Dancer X5. The small persons version of this classic boat. It has seen my three boys through their formative years on the water, both home and abroad. An excellent boat for children. Teal green. Buoyancy bags. Nylon spray deck. Childrens paddle. £180. Nic Burne. Doncaster (01302) 350573 evenings

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Dagger Freefall II, with deck, very good condition, £260, no offers, phone Simon on 0411 772822

Dagger Freefall II, Yellow & Black with nose cone, good condition, brilliant boat for hard WW, £200 ono. Savage Scorpion playboat fair condition, great first playboat for light paddler, fantastic in the surf, £100 no offers. Telephone 02476 373524 after 5pm & ask for Andrew, boats are located in Warwickshire but I can deliver to Port of the Nene

Dagger Freefall, Red, full plate rests, backrest etc, £150, phone Rob on 0174 881 2327 (evenings), also various cags, buoyancy aids and other items for sale.

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Dagger Reflection 16, Open Canadian, green, 3 cane seats, very good condition, rarely used, 2 Grey Owl Voyager Wooden Paddles, 2 Buoyancy aids, portage trolley, books, £550 ono, phone 01761 233070 (Meridid).

Dagger RPM, good condition, multi-coloured, purple black and white, ww specs, stored indoors, £380, phone 01482 666617, (East Yorks area)

Dagger RPM, very good condition, red and yellow, grab loops & buoyancy bags & end caps & padding kit, excellent river boat, £385 ono, phone Martin 07980 348144 (Plymouth).

Dancer X1, in green ww spec, back rest, £150, phone 01736 810770 (Cornwall).

4 Dancers, 1 Stunt, bat, 2 Freestyles, 1 Valletta, 1 M370, all good condition, any reasonable offers considered, phone James on 0114 266 9138 or Emma on 0114 232 1472 or Rich on 0114 267 8328 (Sheffield).

Discovery K1, ideal beginners marathon racing boat, £150, phone David on 01889 570369

Enigma Plastic Squirt Kayak, good condition, stored inside since new, £220, phone Phil on 01792 529072 (Swansea).

Enigma Plastic Squirt Kayak, yellow, very good condition, £140 ono, phone 01937 835429 (Yorkshire).

Esimo Gamble, colour black, usual Esimo quality, extremely comfortable river runner, suit beginner to white water, paddle available if required, £200 ono telephone Bob 01509 853658 evenings. (Notts)

Esimo Gamble, black, usual Esimo quality, extremely comfortable river runner, suit beginner to white water, paddle available if required, £200 ono phone Bob, 01509 853658 evenings (Notts)

Esimo Topo 'Spud', full ww spec, turquoise colour, about 6 years old, but little used, good condition, includes rear air bag, £200 ono, phone 01256 351482 (evenings) (Basingstoke, Hants)

Esimo Zwo, Red, very good condition, £400, phone Gavin on 0771 4511 450.

Esimo Zwo - Blue, excellent condition - 6 months old, garage stored - increased shoe size necessitates sale! Great playboat will be sorry to see it go. May be able to deliver/meet at Nottingham. £475 ono. Tel - 0113 261 1970 Euro Kayak Olympian, Buoyancy aid, size medium, never used, £25, phone 01294 823316

Fury K1 ww racer, by Haze Enterprise, £80, phone James 01633 259612 or 01495 754277 (South Wales)

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Inazone 230, 6 months old, good condition, grey and black, £450 ono, phone 01743 356336 (Shrewsbury).

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K1 A3 Kevlar, construction, overstem, £100, phone 0115 933 4768.

K1 Attack, u/s £175, phone 01245 467771.

K1 Double Dutch Judge, vacuum construction, excellent condition, £700, phone 0115 933 4768.

K1 Glass Ranger, good condition, £125, phone Colin on 01372 223024 (day) or 01932 855786 (evenings).

K1 Nick Pick Obsession K1, suitable for marathon or sprint epoxy carbon-kevlar sandwich hull, carbon-kevlar deck weight to race 9kg, good condition, £395, phone Melvin on 01244 314214 (evenings and weekends).

K1 Rapier, u/s, £160, phone 01245 467771.

K1 Super Savage, Wild Water, made in New Zealand, carbon-kevlar construction, good condition, weight 10kg, ready to race, £300, phone Melvin on 01244 314214 (evenings and weekends).

K1 Super Savage, Wild Water, made in New Zealand, kevlar construction, training boat, very strong, weight 11kg, needs some attention to the front deck, £125, phone Melvin on 01244 314214 (evenings and weekends).

K2, DW spec, with handles and pump, good condition, £260 ono, phone Joyce on 01949 843757 (day) or 01949 843435 (Nottingham).

K2 Gaybo Stiletto, full kevlar construction underside and overstem rudders stored boat in fair/good condition, £250, phone Melvin on 01244 314214 (evenings and weekends).

K2 Mirage, Mk 3 o/si handles, £300, phone 01245 467771.

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Longjohn wet suit, medium size, buoyancy aid (BCU approved), B.D.H.'s some books etc. ring for details, phone John on 0116 277 2176 after 7 pm or 01572 822 758 office hours

Magic Bat, hardly used, on lakes only, full plate foot rest, £220, phone Dave on 020 8472 2120 (London)

Mk Nully Huntsman Sea Kayak, good condition, new hatch covers, £300 ono, phone Mark on 01443 235278 any time, or leave message (S. Wales).

Mk 370, plastic slalom style kayak, purple, good condition, stored in garage, £100 ono, phone Kevin 017687 80107.

Mould Trylon 'Solo', £25, phone James 01633 259612 or 01495 754277 (South Wales).

Nomad Precision 2, K1 Slalom Kayak to suit person up to 10st in weight, phone Tom on 0114 225 1914 or 07979 360556.

Old Town Discovery Scout, teal green, wider seats, front and rear air bags, lash in points, good condition, £500, phone Ian on 01931 712627.

Old Town Discovery, 14 8 Canadian with paddles, little use, £250, phone Colin on 01372 223024 (day) or 01932 855786 (evenings).

Old Town 169, 6 years old but in good condition, £600 ono, phone 01229 582278 (South Lakes).

Old Town Discovery 14 8 Canadian with paddles, little use, £250, K1 Glass Ranger, good condition, £125, UK4 touring double, £85 Call Colin 01372-223024 (day) or 01932 855786 (evens)

Old Town Otter Orange Ohtana/Royale. The original solo open canoe. Length 13' 10", Width 30". Perception saddle, full buoyancy bags. A dry and stable boat great for river running. Old but in good condition. £200 Nic Burne. Doncaster (01302) 350573 evenings.

Open Canoe, 15ft Grumman Aluminium, £280 ono, phone Tom 01989 269531 (Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire).

Otesports 16 Scandian Single. A true beauty, manne py light, fast, stable, as new, cost £400, offers over £200, phone John on 01233 338851.

P & H Capella Sea Kayak, polyhene retractable sky back rest, 2 hatches, very good condition, £450, phone 01736 810770 (Cornwall).

P & H Capella Sea Kayak, dark blue, 2 hatches and bulkheads, declines, thigh grips, retractable skeg, spraydeck, sea paddle, used only 3 times and so in very good condition, £450, phone Howard on 01244 344117.

Paddles, set of split paddles, very good condition, £25, phone 01294 823316.

Perception Corsica, Teal green, very good condition, only used on Coniston & Windermere, £250, phone 01253 356718 (Blackpool).

Perception Corsica, good condition, £100 ono, phone Alison on 01727 862460 (Herefordshire).

Perception Gya Max C1, good condition, stored inside since new, £150, phone Phil on 01792 529072 (Swansea).

Perception Prouette, full ww/spec, airbags, full plate footrest, backrest, hip pads, £275, phone 07939513865.

Perception Prouette S, supersport, very good condition, blue, £260, phone Tom on 01792 234676.

Perception Prouette S, excellent condition, full plate footrest, back rest, pale blue, stored indoors, £350, phone 01482 666617 (East Yorks area).

Perception Prouette S, good condition, blue, ww spec, full plate foot rest, back rest, air bags, nose cap, £275, phone John on 01524 419421 or 07974 597048 (Morecambe).

Perception Super-sport, very good condition, £250, also Concept top slalom kayak, £75, phone Ruth on 0115 846 9121 (Nottingham) with an offer.

Perception Whip-it, red, good condition, include spray deck, £300, consider swap for sea kayak, phone 01304 373595 (Kent) email stevesaggi@hotmail.com

Perception Whp-it, blue and yellow graphics, full plate fitted, good condition, excellent all round boat, £300, phone Alan on 01433 670211 (Derbyshire).

Perception Whp-it, yellow profile version, hip pads etc, £240, phone Rob on 0174 881 2327 (evenings).

Perception Whp-it, good condition, great surfing & playboat, blue & with both end caps, £280 ono, phone Nick on 01723 363176, email N@abulamore.freevse.co.uk

Perception 3D, purple/red, 3 months of use, very good condition, sell for £300 ono, bargain mate, phone John on 01443 222035, can arrange deliver to most top kayaking sights.

Plywood round bilge kayak, 13ft x 24 ins, lightweight, with spray cover, £99, used only for occasional demo as were 7ft Gins plywood sailing dinghy, £90

and 10ft plywood solo trimaran with cloth wing sail, £240, all are car-topable and need to vacate our garage so the car can go in Willie! Phone 01237 475165 (North Devon) email dddesigns@zmailcity.com

Phyon Invader, alpine spec, blue, full plate footrest, airbags, backrest, drain plug, £200, phone 0181 335 4194 (S. London / Surrey).

Phyon TT - Canyon, good condition, stored inside since new, £125, phone Phil on 01792 529072 (Swansea).

Pyranha Acrobat 270, red, full plate footrest, back strap, stored indoors, very good condition, £300 ono, phone David on 01270 587908 (Cheshire, Crewe).

Pyranha Acrobat 270, black, air bags, full plate footrest, back rest, stored indoors, two pairs of Schlegel paddles (one pair slits) £270 for quick sale, phone 01970 643073 (Staffordshire).

Pyranha Acrobat 300, Protec Classic Helmet (med.), spraydeck (nylon), Robson Carbon Fibre paddle, Palm Upper Buoyancy Aid, all for £500 ono, excellent condition. Phone Phil on 07977 494 598 (Milton Keynes).

Pyranha Attack, red, hardly used, great play boat for the smaller water, £250 ono, phone Alan 01433 670211 (Derbyshire).

Pyranha Attack, Mango, less than a year old, stored inside, brilliant fun boat for the teen paddler, £225 ono, phone Gav on 0771 235 8212.

Pyranha Blade, Mango, great condition, full ww spec, inc foot pegs, and air bag, £300, phone Tom on 0191 383 1244.

Pyranha Master, full white water spec, utilised plastic etc, good condition, £100 ono, phone Alison on 01727 862 460 (Herefordshire).

Pyranha Micro Bar 230, good condition, stored inside since new, £275, phone Phil on 01792 529072 (Swansea).

Pyranha Micro Bar 230, blue, well loved but reasonable condition, missing nose cone but has airbags, footrest and backrest, contact Sam at d_wyred_99@yahoo.com

Pyranha Micro Bar 230, purple, good condition, white water spec etc, £250, phone Sue on 01758 863452.

Pyranha Microbar 240, good condition, full white water spec, £325, also spray deck, £35, phone Derek on 01628 486075

Pyranha Mountain 300, Red, very good condition, ww spec, air bags, £275, phone Frank on 01709 543770 (Bath/Sherburn).

Pyranha Storm, mango and black multi-ant, full XR outfitting, Yakima footrest, hip pads, superb condition, worth £680 brand new, sell for £350 ono, phone 01453 890474.

Pyranha Storm, Black, Yakima footrest, hip pads, bow and stern caps g/c; Quick sale needed! £420 ono Large orange fibreglass (similar looks to a pyranha master) no storage space left need quick sale £25 with spraydeck and footrests paddle £100 answerwarp split paddle very good condition £35 ono Contact Jackie 01709 740624 (near Sheffield) in evenings or email psrcha_69@excite.com

Pyranha Stunt Bat, good condition, stored inside since new, £250, phone Phil on 01792 529072 (Swansea)

Pyranha Stunt Bat, Red, WW spec. Mainly used on flat water and in very good condition, stored indoors. An excellent all round boat that would suit beginner/intermediate. Complete with Amerswath paddle and 2 spraydecks 1 neoprene B 1 nylon. £265.00 ono. Palm WW buoyancy aid, blue and black. Good condition, hardly used. £300 ono. Tel: 01604 494112 after 5pm, Northampton. Could deliver to Nene WhiteWater centre.

Pyranha Tuff Master, front and rear air bags, good condition, £100, phone Jon on 01889 570369.

Pyranha Prospector, in reasonable condition, phone 0181 335 4194 (London / South Essex)

Pyranha Stunt Bat. Navy blue, white water spec. Good condition £275ono. Phyon Hurricane. Black, white water spec. Good condition £180ono. Contact Jacqueline on 01959 523 529 (Kent) or, e-mail at jnyar@breathless.net

Racing K2, south African version of Regina built by Nottingham Canoe Club, two tone purple with seats, £200, phone Scott on 01889 570369.

Reflection 16, open canoe, brand new, slit wrapped, blue, full ash trim, phone 01934 518906.

Regina K2, Sandwich construction, split weights, excellent condition, £450, two wooden seats, £150, all used for training only, phone 01502 711376.

Riot 007, custom made terracotta-pink colour - only one in existence - very cool, ideal introductory play boat, small enough to cartwheel anywhere, but spins like crazy in big water, £370 ono, fitted with stone seat, good condition, can deliver H.P.P. or N. Wales, or most playspots. Phone Pete on 07714 758086. Also, Yak, Dr. D's buoyancy aid, £35.

Roof bars, to fit Rover 200 (pre 97 style) or Rover 800, secure, strong, cost over £100, sell for £25, phone Phillip on 0181 460 5471.

Thule Roofrack, vauxhall astor / corsa or chevrolet nasa unused, £50 ono, phone Alison on 01727 862460 (Herefordshire).

Riotbat, damaged seat & rear deck, £25, phone James 01633 259612 or 01495 754277 (South Wales).

Sail Canoe, 'Little Peter' by Solway, good condition, full rig and paddles, may be able to deliver £100 for quick sale, phone Chris on 01703 861907 (Southampton).

Saveage Beast, 1 year old, good playboat / river runner on an intermediate or advanced paddler, can meet at Sheffield, Birmingham, Nottingham, Trywryn, £400 ono, phone Rich on 0114 267 8328 or email

MEAGRAM7@sheffield.ac.uk

Saveage Manna: in Red, VGC, 1 year old, hardly used due to injury. £475 ono. Call Alex on 07801 801 139 or 01626 739881.

Sea Kayak, shoreline by North Shore, bulkheads & deck hatches front and rear, knee tube, deck mounted compass and chump pump, £380, phone Simon on 0411 778282.

Sea Kayak (Euro kayaks) good condition all deck lines etc, red, £300 ono, Tel: 0151 334 3502.

Sea Kayak, full expedition, North Shore Manna, complete with Silva Deck compass, retractable skeg etc, very good condition, £625 ono, phone 01294 823316.

Sea Kayak P & H keeloe, with rudder, expedition, two hatches, deck pump, spray deck, good condition, £100, medical reason for sale, phone Steve on 01359 231460 (suffolk).

Sea Lion, plastic sea kayak, hatches, bulkheads, blue, foam seat, large cockpit, good load carrier, £400 ono, phone Dave on 01691 659280 (Glanab, Trefach, Oswestry)

Slalom K1, damaged seat & rim, 325, phone James 01633 259612 or 01495 754277 (South Wales).

Slalom Sensor C1, nearly new condition, no repairs, carbon construction, £300, phone 01642 865607 (Teesside area).

Source Touting K2, by Sea Cadets for racing, fitted with portaging handles and flat adjustable footrests, could easily have rudder fitted, in excellent condition, £150, phone David on 01889 570369.

Stable K2, symmetrical design built by Nottingham Canoe Club with US rudder, green and grey with seats, as new £300, phone David on 01889 570369.

Stealth Playboat, light blue, excellent condition, £290, phone Andy on 0191 285 0143 (North East), email, a.laird@byzak.co.uk.

Stuntbars 2, one teal green, WWspec, airbags, backstrap, hip, good condition, kept indoors. Incl Palm Gasket deck, £250ono. 2nd Green older, repaired but sound hence only £50. Good beginners or kids boat. 01268 782361 (Essex)

Topolino - Duo, very good condition, available to try / view at HPP, phone Chris on 0115 928 2917.

Topo Spud, 6 months old, hardly used, full white water spec, plus spraydeck, £350 ono, phone Darren on 0468 803479 or 01664 840019, could meet at HPP.

Trailer, one double axle, 4 wheel, with paddle racks, new condition, and capable of carrying K1's, K2's, Plastic boats, Canadians or slalom boats, capable of carrying up to 22 boats, £1500 ono, Phone Andrew on 0410 745 736 or 01772 814549.

Tylen Sea King, sea kayak, 5.2m long with twin hatches and deck lines and paddle, £160 ono phone John on 0116 277 2176 after 7 pm or 01572 822758 office hours

UK4, touring double, £85, phone Colin on 01372 223024(day) or 01932 855786 (evenings).

Wasswegbebu, purple, good condition, excellent river runner/ playboat, can deliver to Hurley, £350, phone Ed on 01494 472330.

Wooden open canoe, 15 foot 2 inch long, recently retaped, complete with some

Mission

Surprise, Surprise! It was like taking off a blind fold, waking up to find you were in the midst of the most beautiful scenery in Britain. The snow capped mountains of Glencoe and the crystal clear water of the rivers immediately acted as an uplifting drug, banishing away the aches and pains of being couped up for eight and half hours in an mini bus based on the ergonomics of a primary school child. Not that this would have damped the spirits of the twenty paddlers on a mission to have a great weekend paddling. Our objectives, according to our top secret agenda, were to: get wet, get cold - really cold, not just York cold, re-orientate ourselves into new, 'there's always water', 'loads of rivers' culture, understand the native language with the aid of translator McSquirt and last, but certainly not least, to discover the attraction of single malt whiskies.

Being a mixed ability group of paddlers ranging from the fishes who had only been canoeing since October to those who were happy throwing themselves off grade 5 waterfalls just to tick it off, get the T-shirt, get the photo, we nevertheless found a river for everyone. The really keen river junkies peeled themselves out of their warm sleeping bags a tad far too early an hour in the morning to paddle the River Coe (grade 4) from Loch Actriochan back to the bunkhouse. Judging from the stories circulating whilst munching greasy bacon breakfast, even the most experienced were tested, each knocking up some points on the fishy swim chart.

Mother Nature and the minibus

With every thermal on, we set off to paddle the Upper Roy. That was the plan, but Mother Nature and the minibus had other ideas. As the

tiny, bendy road, deemed unsuitable for caravans, (well it was a boat trailer, not a caravan) rose steeper, a snow storm decided to whiten the road. All out to push. Wheels spinning and diesel fumes belching, we changed plan and pushed the trailer back down, much to the bemusement of a local farmer in his 4x4. The Lower Roy was hardly a bad consolation. It was hard to believe that this was actually Britain, the water was perfectly clear and snow covered mountains soared around us. If it wasn't for the numb hands it could have a greener version of the Alps. The grade 3 section from Stone Bridge to Roy Bridge proved to be a thoroughly worthwhile paddle. The rapids were not too challenging

(although you may disagree if you had swam four times) but they kept coming at you fast. There was no time to fall into a false sense of security on flat,

Article by Ruth Holdway
Photos by Ruth Holdway



Top: The Team

Left: Ruth paddling the 'Chicken Shoot'

Upper right: Jay paddling the Easan Dubha on the Orchy

Right: Jay paddling the main shoot on the 'Chicken Shoot' on the Orchy

boring sections. There were rapids which left you thinking, oh that was bigger than I expected, as your boat decided spontaneously to pull some impressive rodeo moves.

Cultural experience

It was a bunch of tired but hungry paddlers that attacked the chilli before sampling an essential ingredient of Scotland at the well patronised pub in Glencoe. To the uninitiated southerner this was a cultural experience in itself. People were actually wearing traditional Scot dress, brandishing swords and dancing on the tables. Glencoe is the centre of inter-clan rivalry following the history of the massacre of the Macdonalds by the Campbells.

Separating yourself from the cosy sleeping bag and getting into wet, cold canoe kit was hardly any easier the next morning. We'd journeyed several hundred miles for this pleasure, we were going to find some serious fun on a river, however cold. The River Orchy (grade 3/4/5), from the Bridge

Scotland:



of Orchy to above Eas Urchaidh was on the agenda today. This was a really good paddle with plenty of rapids on a river that had much more water than the Roy, providing some interesting holes which, as you plunged unsuspecting into, you just knew that it was going to gobble you.

'Chicken Shoot'

There were not many people who escaped a cold dunking, on some of the grade four rapids there were boats, swimmers and paddles all over the place. After a warm up stretch of bouncy ripples things started getting more exciting with a few

(Code Name: 'Haggis')



interesting grade 3 rapids preceding the grade 4 'Chicken Shoot', so named as the main shoot can be avoided. Sheep Trolley Gorge followed. (what the relationship between sheep and trolleys is I don't know.) There were several routes down this rapid, it was a case of choose your own route, what they didn't warn us of, was the big hole on the right resulting in a few interesting enders and/or swims.

Lucky escape

Most sane people portaged the grade 5 rapid of the Eason Dubha, that is except the Duo, pretty impressive considering the front man had only been paddling since October and is better known for his active study of Marine Biology. It would have been a bit nasty if the central line was missed as one paddler nearly found out but had a lucky escape boofing off one of the rocks.

Those who were chilled to the bone escaped to the waiting mini bus at this point. Excitingly named Grade 4 rapids, Sore Tooth, Roller Coaster, End of Civilization and Witch's Step followed in quick succession giving most people the opportunity to practice their rolls in anger. The feeling of elation after completing my first grade 4 river was wonderful, making the long trek home well worth it.

The unenlightened non-canoeing fraternity probably thought we were mad returning at 2.30am absolutely exhausted but a weekend's paddling in Scotland was not something which could be easily missed. ●

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Open Canoe Girlie W

The first of many!

Below: Karen genetically modifying her birthday cake



Why should the men have all the fun? So Sid and Smurf dreamed up the girlie weekend. The men folk started to get slightly nervous. Plans were put into motion, and word started to spread. No men and kids sounded like a great idea. Numbers were small, but it was going ahead whatever.

Men were becoming nervous. We even heard mumbblings of a renegade boy's weekend. Tough! The gear and canoes were coming with us. It was our turn to play. A male offered to bring down his van with a trailer for the canoes. Another said he would shave off his moustache and wear a skirt. Their kind invites were declined. It was going to be a ladies only weekend. Anyway how many women do you see paddling in skirts? Things started to come together and the total shot up to 19 plus one male, Cirrus the dog!

It was on! Lessons had been given in tying canoes to car roofs and putting up tents. Please note that none were given in childcare and housework!

So the day came. The weather was terrible and many journeys had been delayed due to accidents on the motorways. But everyone arrived safe and sound at Bracelands campsite. Tents were pitched, evening meals

prepared, and drinks supplied to all. Entertainment arrived in the form of six men trying to pitch their tent. It was so hysterical that we left them to it. It was Karen's Birthday. With a chorus of Happy Birthday, Sid produced a cake in the shape of a Furby. I think

* The names of men have been left out to protect the innocent, we know who they are!!!



Karen's into genetically modifying food. It didn't look anything like a Furby after she had finished slicing it up! I won't say where the first cut went! It was a good night with loads of cake and the cans of Fosters flowed freely.

Saturday morning

We awoke on the Saturday to find the morning was overcast with a cool wind. But that wasn't going to dampen our spirits. The rest of the group soon arrived and we set off for Huntsham Bridge. As the shuttle set off for Monmouth the heavens opened. Refuge was sought under the bridge as we waited. As Sid went off to Monmouth we had Cirrus. He was all ready to go with his red lifejacket on. He looks even cuter wearing it. Three cars stopped to ask if the dog was wearing a lifejacket.

The river was at a very low level with a nice moderate flow. Just right for our group of mixed paddling skills. The only thing that gave us any trouble was the gusting wind that slowed us down for a time. But this was not a race and with a gentle pace we drifted down the river.

Amazingly we didn't encounter anyone else till we passed Symonds Yat West, considering how many trailers had passed us. It

left: Sid



Association weekend

Below: Huntsham Bridge. It's raining, but we don't care

Right: I'm not really eating chocolate

Bottom right: Chocolate stop



was the river the weather and us having a good time.

As we approached Symonds Yat rapids, we gathered together to sort out trim and boats. Sid did a recce of the water. Everything was okay, so we set off in convoy to go down. Smurf and her partner led the way. Smurf did her Moses bit. "There's nine more open boats coming after us!" With that the rapids parted of kayaks for a clear run down. Everybody enjoyed going down the rapids, and we arrived at the end without incident or accident.

We pulled up on the sandy bank for lunch. The rain kindly ceased for our break. Two male kayakers paddled over and asked what we were up to. This is the first Open Canoe Association Girlie Weekend. We had a chat then put them to use by taking a group photo.

With lunch over it started to rain again! Cirrus was having a great time duck spotting from the canoe gunwales. The rest of the paddle to Monmouth was taken as easily as the start with one short break for chocolate. All of us arrived safely at Monmouth rowing club in a downpour. With everything swiftly away we headed back to the campsite for a hot shower. Cirrus was the first to get dry. He enjoyed being rubbed down by three ladies! A slight detour was made to collect the canoe at Symonds Yat and the van left at Huntsham Bridge. A man was quickly borrowed to put the canoe on the roof of the van. It was easier than getting the stepladder out.

With all of us now clean and dryish, it was still raining, five kindly volunteered to drive to the pub for our evening meal. Well with no men, and no kids, why should there be any cooking and washing-up! In we marched and took the place over. This was achieved with great ease, as there was only one person in the bar. We sat down and sorted out the remaining admin.

A toast was proposed to Sid and Smurf for their fine work. After a quick move to the restaurant section, our minds turned to food. Bronya did an excellent job of ordering our meals. Grub quickly came, and was swiftly devoured. When asked if anyone would like a pudding, the answer was in unison, CHOCOLATE! What else could the answer be? Unfortunately they didn't have anything on the menu. With that some children's chocolate bars appeared and were handed out. Now that's what you call looking after your customers. After a few more pints of the local cider we left leaving a good tip for their brilliant hospitality. Oh yes! It was still raining! In fact it didn't stop all night.

Sunday morning

7.00 it stopped raining! Almost all had the same idea. Get dressed and run to the loo. Sunday morning 7.05 it started throwing it down again! Back to sleep for a bit. After breakfast we held a meeting. The plan was to go and play one the rapids till you wanted to go home. The weather report was not good for the rest of the day with strong winds and torrential rain. Because most had been delayed on the trip down because of bad weather, we opted to take steady journeys back home. Better safe than sorry, as the rapids will be there for us to play on another day.

So ended the first Open Canoe Association Girlie Weekend. We all had a fantastic time, despite the rain, and are looking forward to doing it again. It just leaves me to thank from all of us. Sid and Smurf for bringing everything together and making it work so well. Bracelands campsite for letting us stay and The Rock Inn for providing wonderful food and chocolate! ●



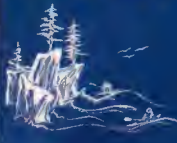
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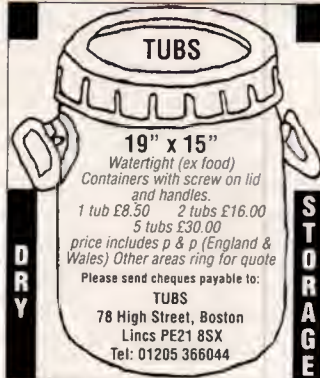
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Tel: 015394 - 39441 e-mail: watersports@elhmail.co.uk

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For further details and Application Form apply to:

The Director
Hindleap Warren Outdoor Centre
Wych Cross
Forest Row
East Sussex RH18 5JS
Tel: 01342-822625
Fax: 01342-822913

SITUATIONS VACANT

Auchengillan International Outdoor Centre**SEASONAL ASSISTANTS**

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Further details from: **Andy Wilson - Warden, Auchengillan International Outdoor Centre, Blanefield, Stirlingshire, G63 9AU . Tel: 01360 770256, Fax: 01360 771197, E-mail: centre@auchengillan.com**

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e-mail robin@docklandswatersports.co.uk
www.docklandswatersports.co.uk

Adventurous Recruitment Officer

We are seeking a **Recruitment Officer** to join the Adventure Division Team at Head Office. You will be responsible for the recruitment and related personnel issues for the staff at our residential activity and educational centres in the UK and France.

Ideally you will have personnel and residential staffing experience. A totally flexible attitude towards working hours and a knowledge of the French language would be an advantage.

Please send a covering letter and CV stating your current salary to: Helen Rutt, Recruitment, NST Adventure, Chiltern House, Bristol Avenue, Blackpool, FY2 0FA.

Tel: 01253 352525 email: recruitment@nstgroup.co.uk
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WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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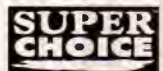
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email.office@malvern hills.co.uk
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SITUATIONS VACANT

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PADDLER'S GEAR reviews

Cebe's Sports Watches



As 'extreme sport' becomes ever more synonymous with 'extreme chic', genuine, well designed and stoutly manufactured sports accessories are finding their way into the office, as well as onto the pistes, water and open spaces frequented by athletes.

Test marketed in France last summer, Cebe's sports watches have already proved clear winners. Water resistant to 30 meters, the Athlon Sports Watch is available in orange, blue or black. It has a resilient, rustproof, lightweight, anodised

aluminium frame and a polyamide strap easily fastened with Velcro. The face features conventional hour and minute hands. The Athlon Sports Watch retails at £54.99, while the Chrono version, featuring an additional digital insert window with alarm clock, light chronograph stopwatch, day/date and time, and luminescent insert, retails at £89.99.

Whirly Bird Services Ltd.

Are not exactly new to making warm and dry clothes for use in cold water. They supply and mend survival suits to the offshore oil and gas industry operating in the North Sea.

Over the last year their Great Yarmouth Branch has been carrying out repairs on clothes for a local canoe club. During this period they were approached by several club members who wanted good quality kit that is reliable. They only sell directly to the consumer, to try to keep the prices as economic as possible.

The two garments that I tested was their W3T (dry top). It is made from Exeat – Tactel 'performance' fabric. It has a twin seal neoprene waist, latex neck and wrist seals with neoprene over protectors. It comes in a selection of colours. I used this top with their W2P (dry trousers), they are made from the same material as the top. It features latex ankle seals again with over protectors and a neoprene waist tube. The knees and seat feature reinforced for extra durability.

The latex seals were thicker than average ones, they are the same ones as used on survival suits. They were a it tight to begin with but loosened up as they got a bit warmer. I would expect them to last longer than most others.

The clothing was tested during a five star white water training weekend in Wales at the beginning of December. This kit was very reliable it did not leak over the whole two days and kept me very warm. The kit is so breathable I could have taken off the top and head straight down the pub for a drink without having to take off any wet under kit.

I also used the kit at a later date in one of my local play spots again the kit was very reliable and did not leak and kept me warm. At this time a friend of mine used one of their basic tops W1T. This top is made from the same material as the others and is twin sealed, the latex neck and wrist do not have over protectors. This was perfectly adequate for the couple of hours that he was in it. It kept him warm and dry.

Whirly Bird Services will personalise your kit if you wish for them (adding pockets etc.). **Tel No: 01493 442081** Email: mail@wbsgtymouth.demon.co.uk.

New for 2000 from Peak UK

Peak UK have completely redesigned their paddling jacket range for the Millennium. All the jackets feature a new cut that has no seams around the high wear under arm areas. The arm panels are articulated upwards so that the jackets do not pull tight with extreme movement. They all feature a super wide inner neoprene waist band that is taped into the jacket for extra water proofing.

There are two neck seal options: the Freestyle utilises a breathable Polartec Thermal Stretch cone. The Deluxe: a double Latex and neoprene cone system. Both products are available in a choice of durable and breathable fabrics. The Ripstop versions offer excellent performance and great value for money. The X3

three layer versions offer greater durability and warmth. For more information contact: **The Peak UK Kayaking Company, Tel: 01629 581 222.** Web: <http://www.peakuk.com>.



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Held over the weekend of 23 / 24th September 2000 Paddlefest is again the paddlesport event not to miss. A range of competition, Coaching and Performance events all rolled into one weekend.

Book the date into your diary now and see the next issue of Focus for full programme and booking details Contact **BCU Coaching Dept,**

Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 5AS. Tel

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Erica Mitchell getting vert with the XXX.



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Jimmy Blakeney throwing ends.



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Boof! Eric "Wick" Southwick and the Y going off.



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