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canoe focus

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Paddlefest 2000

Marathon World Cup

Learning to Swim SHU Canoe Way



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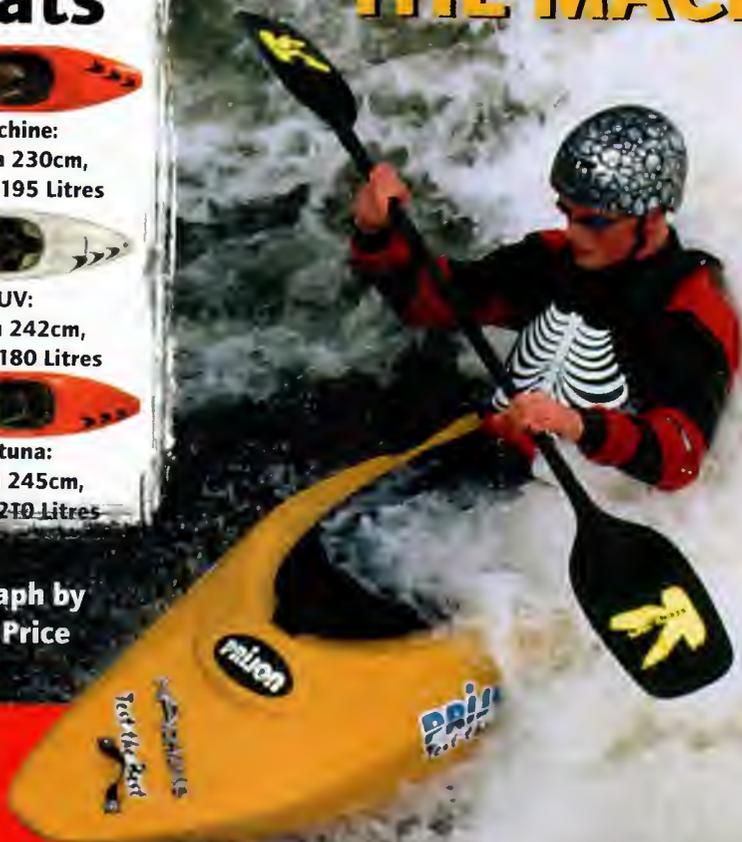
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Contents

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5 Comment

6 Noticeboard

10 Wild Water Racing

Great Britain Team Selection for Junior and Senior World Championships

12 Whats On

14 Paddlefest 2000

The Paddlesport event of the year

18 Learning to Swim the SHU Canoe Way

A year in the life of a student paddler

20 15th Hurley Weir Rodeo

The biggest ever turn-out, superb sunshine and the legendary 3 gates

22 Paddlesport Events

- Crystal Palace

- Youth Polo

- Perception Diamond Slalom challenge

- Coaching schemes

- How to register for the schemes

26 Marathon World Cup

28 University of Leeds Student Freestyle Event

The students bash it out in style for the championship title

30 An Open Boat Descent of the White Volta River

A month long expedition involving six open boats and 14 paddlers in Ghana

34 The Plastic Fantastic National Plastic Surf Kayak Championships

held at Widemouth Bay in April

36 Access

An update of Access information and development

38 BCU Students Safety Symposium

A 3 day BCU river running course in Scotland, set up specifically for student paddlers.

41 Paddlers Gear

48 Swedish Sun, Sand and Sauna?

- An open canoe expedition on Lake Immela

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 dialogue: a paddler's magazine written by paddlers. **Technical Information.** Contributions are acceptable in clear handwriting or typed (double spaced). PC disks (3.5 or 5.25) can be read from most Word Processing programmes especially if saved as an ASCII file. Macintosh Files saved as DOS or ASCII can also be scanned. Photographic images are preferred on transparencies (colour slide). Artwork and line drawings should be clear and large. All material is accepted on the understanding that the BCU and its agents cannot be held liable or responsible for loss or damage, although every care and effort is taken to safeguard material. Next Copy date is the 20th JUNE 2000. Material arriving at FOCUS after this date cannot be included in the AUGUST 2000 issue.

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Slalom Olympic Selection

We close for press on the eve of Slalom selection for the Olympic Games. The past six months have been particularly trying for the Men's Kayaks who have been involved in a dispute in respect of the pre-selection awarded to Paul Ratcliffe at the Slalom AGM in November.

Some of Paul's fellow competitors felt that the Slalom AGM had broken its own rules by awarding the pre-selection after the end of October and that a point of principle was at stake. The Slalom Committee considered that the sovereignty of the AGM was sacrosanct.

With legal proceedings imminent both sides of the dispute were confident of winning any court action. However, in the best interests of the Great Britain Canoe Slalom Team a compromise was finally reached between all parties.

By now Paul will have raced in the selection series on a revised points basis which gave due consideration to his performances in 1999.

BCU Appointments

Since the last edition of Canoe Focus I am pleased to welcome the following new members of staff to the Coaching Department.

Coaching Development Manager England - Richard Ward.
Coaching Development Officer Midlands - Howard Blackman
Coaching Development Officer North Nigel Timmins
Head of Young Peoples Programme - Susie Hornby

This edition of Canoe Focus includes details of further vacancies within the BCU Performance Department, to work on the World Class Potential Programme.

Federalisation

Plans are still progressing towards the federalisation of the canoeing structure in the UK. The processes, procedure and agreements are on line to be in place by 1 November 2000 with full implementation of the English Canoe Association being completed by 1 November 2001.

Medal Winning Start for BCU Athletes

Congratulations to Paul Ratcliffe winner of the first Slalom World Cup Round on the Olympic course in Penrith. Also medals for Ross Sabberton and Paul Darby-Dowman K2 500m (Silver), Rachel & Becky Train K2 200m (Bronze) at the Sprint Racing World Cup round in Mechlen - Belgium. Richard Darby-Dowman competing in the junior events at the same regatta completed a Junior K1 double by winning both the 500m and 100m K1 events.

World Class Potential

The BCU became only the third Governing Body of Sport to receive a full World Class Potential Award from Sport England. The Award of £514,477 takes the BCU through until 31 October 2000 with a further grant of £753,875 for the period 1 November 2000 to 31 October 2001 and an agreement in principle to continue through to 31 October 2003

Devizes to Westminster Forum

Following the abandonment of this year's Devizes to Westminster Race there will be a forum, at which views on the running of the DW and how it should develop can be aired.

The Open Forum is to be held at:

Reading University, Elmhurst Suite, St George's Hall Elmhurst Road on 17th June at 14.00 hrs. The forum will be chaired by David Gent, Chair of the BCU Board.

Questions and subjects for the discussion would be welcome in advance to help plan the agenda. These should be sent to **Peter Begent, Boscombe Forge, Church Road, Bookham, Surrey K23 3JG.**

Working Towards Racial Equality in Canoeing

The BCU is committed to achieving the recently launched Racial Equality Charter for Sport as the best means of demonstrating its commitment to achieve racial equality in canoeing.

The Charter developed by Sporting Equals and endorsed by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, Sport England and the Commission for Racial Equality was launched on 21 March 2000 and the BCU Executive has accepted the Charter in full and all that it implies. The Charter is designed so that Governing Bodies of Sport can ensure all those who play, watch, coach or manage sport can do so without facing racial discrimination of any kind.

The Charter has six key principles:

- Makes a public commitment to challenge and remove racial discrimination and to achieve racial equality in sport.
- Encourages people from all communities to become involved in sport.
- Welcomes employees and spectators from all communities and protects all employees and spectators from racial abuse and harassment.
- Encourages skilled and talented individuals from all communities to become involved in all levels of sports administration, management and coaching.
- Requires sports bodies to develop the best possible race equality policies and practices that are subject to regular review and update
- Celebrates cultural diversity in sport.

The BCU does recognise that inequalities exist in canoeing and we have as a Governing Body committed ourselves repeatedly to making the sport accessible to the whole community. The future success of the sport in this country depends on the BCU, the national associations and clubs enthusing young people from all parts of the community.

Phil Bennett

It is with great sadness that I record the death of Phil Bennett after a long illness. Phil will be best remembered in canoe sport for his contribution to Canoe Polo. Having been Chief Referee for several years he became Chair of the Polo Committee at a difficult time. Phil steered the committee through the organisation of the first ever Canoe Polo World Championships and onto the continued development of the sport in the UK.

Third party Insurance

Some confusion seems to exist in respect of BCU Third Party Insurance. The insurance arrangements agreed with the Union's insurers applies to all members at all times. It is not restricted to BCU organised events and competitions.

Millennium paddler awards

A leaflet explaining all about the BCU Millennium Paddler Awards together with an application form is enclosed with this edition of Canoe Focus.

Chief Executive
Paul Owen

NOTICE BOARD

news & info

Yearbook Corrections

Page 26, Vice Chairman Paul Newman Tel. No. should be 01634 376420
Page 43, Yorkshire Regions page, The contact number for thw Washburn should be 01426 978654

New P&H website uploaded

The new P&H Sea Kayaks website is now uploaded!

Attention all Canoe Clubs and Coaches

Grants up to £2000 are now available from the Wild Water Racing (WWR) committee for clubs and/or coaches to help towards the development of introducing people to WWR.



Applications must be made in writing and should outline how they propose to use the money should a grant be awarded. Along with these grants, access to the wavehopper fleet (plastic wild water racing boats) can also be arranged as a way of introducing more novices to races. For more information

please contact **Paul Anderson on 01245 280396**. All applications to **Paul Anderson (WWR exec), 42 St Margarets Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 6DT**. The deadline for these grants is 1st August 2000 so get writing. All applications shall be presented to the development committee for consideration.

Lottery Awards

Boston Canoe Club has been lucky enough to receive a grant of £3027 from the Awards for all scheme. The money has been used to purchase 9 junior kayaks as well as buoyancy aids, paddles, spraydecks and cags all in children's sizes. The club has a thriving junior element thanks to regular evening sessions during the summer months on the River Witham. For more information on the **Boston Canoe Club** please contact **Gerry Gibbons on 01406 371378**.



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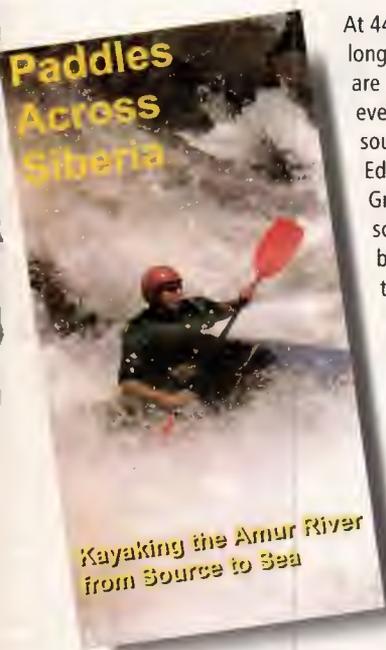
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Paddles Across Siberia



At 4400km, the Amur is the eighth longest river in the world and there are no confirmed reports of anyone ever attempting to paddle it from source to sea... until now. Deputy Editor of **Global Adventure** Paul Grogan, and environmental scientist Richard Boddington, will be setting off in April to attempt to kayak the entire river.

Rising from high on the Mongolian Plateau, the river starts its life 200km east of Ulan Bataar. After crossing into Russia it enters the remote Taiga, a forest that covers an area the size of the United States. From here the river then follows the border with China for a further 2000km before finishing its journey to the Pacific

through Russia's vast Kharbarovsk region. The pair will be paddling in single touring kayaks and hope to cover an average of 20 to 25 miles a day; because the river is frozen from October to May, they will only have five

months to complete their journey.

Territorial control over the Amur has long been disputed by Russia and China, but last year's trade agreements have opened up boundaries that have been closed for centuries. Neither Paul or Richard have undertaken an expedition of this scale before, although between them they have paddled in Zimbabwe, Uganda, Peru and Turkey. "Everything's looking good so far," says Richard, "although we've received conflicting reports on the various permits we may or may not need for Russia and China. Sponsorship-wise, Lendal, Terra Nova and First Ascent have come on board with generous support, and we're talking to various other companies in the hope of securing further assistance."

If you want to know more about the expedition or are interested in sponsoring Paddles Across Siberia, contact **Paul on 01206 505921** or e-mail him on paul@globaladventuremag.com

Fieldfare Millennium Awards - Branch Out

Fieldfare are looking for people with disabilities from across Scotland who want to get closer to nature. In partnership with the Millennium Commission, they have 50 Millennium Awards of between £2000 and £10000 to increase opportunities to explore and enjoy the countryside. **For more information please contact Lisa Duggan on 01334 657708 or fax: 01334 657978.**

BOA announce Kellogg's Personal Best Award Scheme

The British Olympic Association (BOA) is pleased to announce a new award aimed at rewarding those athletes achieving personal excellence at the Sydney Olympic Games, 2000. Kellogg's are putting up a prize fund of £100,000 which will be shared by those athletes who have achieved a personal best.

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Classifieds Section

My apologies for the classifieds section in the last issue, which proved to be very difficult to read due to the small print. I have taken your comments on board and will ensure that this will not happen again. Please note that the deadline for classifieds is printed on the contents page in every issue. The next deadline being the 20th June.

Sparkling future for the Royals

The stunning new Regatta Centre, in the Royal Docks, was opened by H.R.H The Princess Royal in March. The centre, located on the north bank of the Royal Albert Dock includes: a boat house; state of the art gym; an artificial climbing wall; an indoor rowing tank and the Watermans bar and restaurant. The Centre was made possible with an £8 million grant - the single largest awarded to a voluntary organisation by the Sport England Lottery Fund.

What a Load of Rubbish!

Members of the Garstang Canoe Club took part in a unique cleaning method on the Wyre to rid of rubbish that is normally out of reach. The canoeists assisted in tidying up the banks of the river to aid Garstang's bid for the prestigious Britain in Bloom Award. According to the Evening Gazette the canoeists removed, 2 lorry tyres, a park bench, scrap metal, a lawn mower, a trolley and 25 bags of general litter. A big thank you goes to all those who attended on the day and for all the support that you gave, which will hopefully start to give the canoe club a good name in the community.

Pangbourne Chicks!

Adventure Dolphin in Pangbourne have an active group of young people who are participating in the Paddlesport Millennium Challenge sponsored by the Reading Evening Post. "Adventure Dolphin is really good because it provides trips,

coaching and many more things. I like it because you can play games, make friends and have training sessions through out the week. There are also competition, which anyone can enter, and then there are medals.' For more information please contact **Adventure Dolphin, The Office Whitcurch Road, Pangbourne, Reading, Berks RG8 7DA or Tel: 0118 9843162.**

Canoe insurance on the Web

The first dedicated canoe insurance web site, www.canguard.co.uk has been launched by Mardon Insurance Brokers (UK) Ltd.

Canguard offers the canoe enthusiast immediate access to online insurance quotations. What's more, the quotation can be accepted online, the cover and policy can then be arranged instantly, this applies during Mon. - Fri. 9am - 5pm.

This unique web site has been developed using the wealth of experience gained from over 25 years as one of the leading marine insurers. Their canoe policy offers the most comprehensive cover at competitive rates, ensuring that you can enjoy your sport knowing that you are well protected.

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Basking Sharks to be Shot

As the world's second largest biggest shark returns to Britain's coastal waters this Spring, a national appeal is being launched today to help save the endangered basking shark. Members of the public are being asked to shoot photographs of the basking shark to assist the European Basking Photo-Identification Project which is being launched at the National Marine Aquarium in Plymouth. For more information/ photographs to be sent to: Kelvin Boot at the National Marine Aquarium, The Rope Walk, Coxsides, Plymouth, PL4 0LF Tel: 01326 373360 www.baskingsharks.co.uk

Katmandu Memorial Bursary

Katmandu Memorial Bursaries are awarded, each year, to support people attending governing body training courses at Plas y Brenin. This year three bursaries have been awarded to support people attending a wide variety of coaching service courses. Christopher Walker, Jacqui Young and Andi Thomas all received financial support for their coaching courses. If you are or know someone who may benefit from support in their coaching development and who not be able to afford the cost of training at the National Mountain Centre please contact the Director of Training at Plas y Brenin, Capel Curig, Gwynedd. The next trustee meeting to allocate bursaries is in the autumn.

Symonds Yat Rapids - Good News

Fund raising in excess of £37000

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Final stages of legal option to purchase the river bed under negotiation.

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- If anyone has a contact whom they feel may provide major sponsorship from business, commerce or elsewhere we would appreciate details.

Please send donations, pledges, orders, letters of support, information on sponsors to **Veronica Westlake, 33 Golden Vale, Churchdown, Gloucester, GL3 2LU Tel/Fax: 01452 531218 Cheques payable to S.Y.R.P.G also credit card facilities.**

Surfers delight at announcement of UV for Dawlish

Surfers Against Sewage are absolutely delighted at the news that the new sewage treatment works at Dawlish will incorporate Ultra Violet disinfection. The decision by the Environment Agency follows recommendations made by the Coroner at the Inquest into the tragic death of 8 year old Heather Preen last Summer. Thanks and congratulations to the Preen family who have been working so hard to raise the profile of the incidence and occurrence of E.coli 0157.



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MORE MEDALS

WILD WATER RACING

Bala British Open and World Championships Selection

Article written
by Martin
Streeter

The British Open Wild Water Race took place on 14th May on a weekend noted for its glorious sunshine and tense racing. The water release was also used for a tour, rafting and a number of technical and instructional

sessions. Access was authorised by the Centre management for the racers to have use of the course for training and racing on both days until 10am. This gave everyone a safe opportunity to paddle the river without frightening some of the

novice playboaters. Although after watching two of our top paddlers swim under Mrs Davis' Bridge their confidence would hardly have been boosted. Apparently silt build up from river left gave the drop a potent kick to the right, I still think the Tryweryn team had slipped a couple more boulders in on the left but they denied it.

Entries were down this year as most of the juniors were at Nottingham doing some speedwork in preparation for their Worlds at Vipiteno in July. Many other paddlers decided to let the elite paddlers battle it out, knowing that their performance would be poor compared to those peaking to represent Great Britain.

Needless to say the racing was tight particularly in Mens

Kayak. Ian Tordoff won by 3 seconds from Pete Keron with Michael Mason and Jon Royle securing the discretionary 3rd and 4th places. Despite spending a number of weeks training in Europe Jamie Christie could not repeat his great build up for the previous Worlds. He took 5th place just 2 seconds behind Jon and will now have to concentrate on being top Brit at the World Cup Series.

Tina Parson proved she is very much on form to easily win the ladies race. Finishing in 2nd 3rd, and 4th she will be joined by Cynthia Berry, Yael Ford and youngster Elizabeth Holmes at the World Championships to be held in Treignac France on June 4. For Liz Holmes this will be her first Senior Worlds having achieved 5th place at last years Junior Pre Worlds.

In the Canadian Single category Rob Pumphrey, full of confidence, set a blistering pace to win and looks set to achieve Britains best result for many years. Paul Anderson managed to impress the selectors to finish second and book a place in the Team. In the Canadian doubles and injury scare to James Lee meant that his partner Ross Pearton had to show his versatility by racing in C1. Fortunately some good race results from the two vets in France and Germany meant that their talents will be on show at the worlds together with Belbin and Caunt who won the race and the Walling brothers who came second. This year's British open started above the graveyard section and combined with the well-known international course provides a very challenging first 4 minutes. Spare a thought for Dave Peart and Slade Warne who fell in on the recently redesigned dog-leg bend adjacent to the Wild Water Centre. The pair are a forming a promising C2 partnerships and no doubt their chance will come next year.

Thanks to race organiser James Wingfield, the centre management, and to the other boaters on the River Tryweryn "had fun and played safe"! ●





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VISTA



Specifications

Type	Tandem Touring kayak
User Guide	Beginner - Advanced, Families, Hire Centres and Clubs.
Water Type	Estuary, Lake, Touring River
Length	485cm
Width	82cm
Weight	33kg standard specification 35kg expedition specification
Cockpit	228 x 61cm

Outfitting

Standard Specification

- Superlinear polyethylene shell
- Adjustable contour moulded seats with flip down backrests
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Expedition Specification

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MORE ACTIVITY

WHAT'S ON news & info

Surf Competition The Atlantic Breakers Contest

Being held on the 19/20th August. Machrihanish, Scotland. Contact

John Inglis
01880 820255
Achnacraig,
Tarbet, Argyll.

2000 Cheshire Ring Race 1st/ 2nd July

This is the 23rd year of the race which circles the Cheshire Ring of canals, starting near Poynton and passing through Marple, Ashton, Manchester, Lymm, Preston Brook, Northwich, Kidsgrove, Congleton and back to Poynton. There are 95 miles to be paddled, 92 locks and 3 tunnels to be carried around, some of them in the dark. For entry information, send an

A5 envelope to
Pauline Bett, 23
Rensherds Place,
High Legh,
Knutsford, WA16
6NG.

BCU Eastern Region Canoe Days

10th/11th June, Herts Young Mariners, Cheshunt, Herts. (10mins. From the M25/A10 junction) The following will be on offer: Come and try it sessions in kayaks and open boats, Races, BBQ, Slalom training, Open Canoeing, Canoe Sailing Canoe Polo, Trade stands and Coaching courses: Injury Prevention, Child Protection, Aquatic First Aid, Star award testing, Log book revalidation for coaches. Camping overnight is available. For more information, or book courses, contact **Lesley Quinlan on 01255 815093** email lesleyquinlan@hotmail.com

Washburn River releases

21st June Evening cruise
2nd July White Rose Cruise
12th July Evening Cruise
22nd July White Water Race Div A
23rd July Sunday Cruise Leeds CC
2nd August Evening cruise
13th August Sunday Cruise Washburn Committee
23rd August Evening Cruise
3rd Sept Sunday Cruise Leeds CC

All participants should therefore ensure that the event is on by contacting the **Washburn Information Line on 01426 978654**. This will state clearly whether a release has been confirmed by Yorkshire Water.

The IWA National Waterways Festival and Inland Boat Show

IWA National Waterways Festival and Inland Boat Show to be held over the August Bank Holiday (25th-28th 10am – 6pm) at Waltham Abbey, Essex. Admission Prices: Adults £5 children under 16 with parents Free. IWA members £3. This is a weekend of entertainment for all the family including Motor cycle stunt team Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, The Horse Soldiers, Waterways for the youth, Street Theatre 250 Exhibitors, Boat trips and much much more. For more information please contact **Brian on 02476 407070** or for **Boat entry forms phone Pat on 01785 824012**

Swanalong 2000

The Worcester and Wyre Forest canoe clubs are organising Swanalong 2000. This event, now in its 7th year can be used as a fundraising event. Also welcome are those who wish to come along for just a good days paddle. As in previous years it has been arranged that canoeists can use the locks or portage weirs if preferred. There will also be marshalls at various stages along the paddle to help and advise. For further information please contact **Steve Hutchinson on 01905 29069 (answer phone)** or shutch2@yahoo.com

Scottish Racing Week

This year's racing week runs at the end of July rather than the end of June to avoid clashing with major marathon events in England. Moreover, the week runs within the school holidays in the hope that club groups and young families might be more tempted to take a weeks holiday to race in Scotland. The format of the racing is a little different this year, but the principles are the same. There is a selection of marathon and 10k events on different kinds of water over a period of eight days. Competitors

Photo by Andy Morton



gain points from racing in each event on different kinds of water over a period of eight days. Competitors gain points from racing in each event and prizes are awarded at the end of the week to overall winners, as well as individual event prizes on offer.

There are four 10k events one of which is a white-water and two marathons. Competitors need not enter all the 10k events as the best of three 10k positions are used to calculate overall success. At the two marathons, short courses are offered for those in divisions 4 downwards. So these shorter races plus the 10k events, make the week ideal for club paddlers, veterans and youngsters who don't want to end up totally whacked each day. Programme of races:

July 22nd 10k Tay 4pm start
July 23rd Tay marathon (23m) 11am start
July 25th 10K Linlithgow Loch 7.30pm start
July 27th 10k Strathclyde Park 7.30 start
July 29th Loch Ken Marathon 1pm start
July 30th 10k Loch Ken (Scottish Champs) 10am start

Further details can be obtained from **Andy Moron, 3 Park Place, Dollar, FK14 7AA** E-mail Amorton3pp@aol.com
Tel: 01259 742288

Y.E.T. Expedition Leaders Planning Course

Being held at Hesley Wood Centre, Chapeltown, Sheffield, S.Yorks. Over the weekend of 7th/8th October. The course is open to anyone who intending, hoping or just interested in leading expeditions with young people in this country or abroad. The course will offer planning, selecting members, equipment, food, member training, management of a team in the field, insurance, fund raising, safety procedures, project work and how to minimise the environmental impact of an expedition. The cost of the course will £65 and this to cover full board from coffee on Saturday to tea on Sunday afternoon, handouts & lectures. Non residential, £52. Applications forms can be obtained from: **The Course Director, 68 Ridings Field, Brockholes, Nr. Huddersfield, W.Yorks. HD7 7BG.**

NEW ZEALAND

Following on from this years success, Adventure-Whitewater is organising a two week trip for February 2001 for a small group of intermediate and advanced kayakers to paddle some great wilderness whitewater. New Zealand has an unequalled variety of rivers. This excellent spread provides superb class III, IV and IV+ boating from the small volume steep wilderness runs, to the Buller, simply the greatest kayaking river in the country. Our aim is to make some of these excellent rivers the major focus of our trip. Anyone interested in joining the trip should contact Adventure-Whitewater. For information please contact **Phil on 01992 712006 or 07958 242135** or E-Mail phil@adventure-whitewater.com



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Paddlefest 2000

The Paddlesport event of the year
23/24 September 2000

Bell Boats, Lightning K1,s, Peak Challenges,
Coaching "psychology" excellence clinics, floodlight
paddling, live music

Yes - It's Paddlefest time again
Running earlier then previous events



The objective of the weekend is to bring together as many paddlers, with as wide a range of interests as possible so as to create a fun, multi-discipline event, featuring elements of competition, coaching sessions and clinics, have a go / try a boat sessions, presentations and lectures, doing your own thing, along with a car boot sale and of course a paddlefest party.

Seasoned competitor, Rodeo die hard, recreational pick and mixer, novice or convert Paddlefest 2000 will provide five full programmes of activity and numerous add on

attractions, providing wide ranging and varied activity from which you can choose, mix and match and create your own itinerary. Come along and view, or come along and be fully involved. Come alone or come with friends or why not bring the family. Come for one day or come for both, the choice is yours. There will be lots to do whatever your interests. A great time is assured.

"Paddlefest" Peak White Water Challenge.

The Paddlefest Peak White water Challenge is about fun, mass participation and lots of paddling. Last years event attracted both slalom and Rodeo World Champions, however, because of the format and style of the event many less accomplished paddlers found themselves paddling along side them and in some instances winning prizes. So there's no excuse, get stuck in and give it a go.

The event format combines the following disciplines to find an overall whitewater champion. All participants must use the same chosen canoe or kayak in all three disciplines; demonstrate their ability to perform various moves, not just one move over and over.

- Head to Head Downriver - two boats at a time race against the clock down a 600m section of white water.
- Freestyle / Rodeo - utilising a river section rather than just one hole.
- Paddlers must demonstrate as wide a range of freestyle moves as possible.

- Extreme Slalom - a 300m course of upstream and downstream gates, hand target number boards, a vertical hole move and a horizontal wave move. An against the clock event with penalties awarded for missed obstacles only.

Overall points will be calculated and equipment prizes awarded in mens, ladies, Canadian and junior categories.

The £20 entry fee will include a cool event memento such as a shirt, sweat or baseball cap, unlimited water access over the weekend and entry to the Paddlefest party. Not bad value!!! A maximum of 180 entries will be taken for the event. Entries will be taken on the day if space permits however to be sure of your place return the accompanying booking form.

Full event details will be sent on entry.

Additional Competition at Paddlefest 2000

Again this year we have a number of stand alone competitions - On Saturday we have a round of the National K 4 Championships being held, the first National Bell Boat Championships, a Div B W.W. Race, a mini polo Competition and a Junior Lightning K1 competition. On Sunday Paddlefest is host to the Hasler finals as well as Junior/novice slalom events.

All there for you to watch and support or to participate in.

"Paddlefest" Paddle-Ability Event.

"Paddle-Ability" is a term and concept developed by the BCU to address the issue of participation in Canoesport for people with disabilities.

The BCU is working to promote and develop Paddle-Ability in terms of participation in both recreational and competitive canoeing, through local clubs, Regional and National development plans and activities.

Paddle-Ability Competition is currently centred on sprint racing in canoeing, using standard and non standard racing boats adapted to meet the paddlers special needs.

The "Paddlefest" Paddle-ability event will provide an additional calendar event in the Paddle-Ability programme. Contact us for further details.

"Paddlefest" Coaching Symposium

The "Paddlefest" Coaching Symposium will provide Key note speakers along with a mix of indoor and outdoor sessions covering topical aspects of coaching development, along the theme of "Coaching for Performance". An "excellence" programme will provide opportunities to join in on coaching sessions, run by experienced coaches covering all areas of skill / technique development and paddlesport psychology.

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

Opportunities are provided to take part in daylong workshops that will provide endorsements to your coaching / assessor status.

The programme is aimed at all coaches at all levels so don't feel that its not aimed at you - our maxim "Coaching for Performance" is relevant to us all, as better coaches make better paddlers.

"Paddfest" Personal Performance Clinics

Numerous half-day clinics will also be available to anyone who wishes to improve performance or try out another aspect of paddlesport...

Open Canoe / Open Canoe Sailing / Slalom / Sprint / Rodeo / Land locked Sea paddling and Surf to mention just a few.

"Paddfest" Young paddlers Programme.

The "Paddfest" 2000 programme again includes the National Bell boat Championships on the Saturday and a lightning K1 mini competition on the Sunday. Other activities aim to introduce youngsters to the sport as well as providing opportunities to improve skills and experience new and different aspects of paddlesport. Opportunities exist for young paddlers to join one of more of the sessions advertised and progress and experience new very different aspects of paddling throughout the weekend.

"Paddfest" - "Get in Touch" / "Stay in Touch Programme.

Saturday evenings question time will provide the now traditional opportunity to "Get in Touch / Stay in Touch" with both current and development initiatives. Members of BCU Council and Executive will provide an insight into current developments within the BCU, developments towards an English Canoe Association, communication, access and facilities strategy and the BCU Performance Plan. Your opportunity to ask questions or make your own views heard.

"Paddlesport" Question Time.

A panel of BCU serving Officers assembled around a "Question Time" style table ready to be asked those questions that you have always wanted to ask, but have never been able to.

"Paddfest" Demo / Retail

The "paddfest" Manufacturers Trade fair is, I am afraid, only open to the Trade, however, many of the manufacturers will also be having outside Demonstration stands so that you will be able to demo that new boat you've been thinking of buying and many of them may well be retailing items over the weekend as well.

"Paddfest" Admin

Peak White Water Challenge - Entry for the event is £20 for the whole schedule, including a limited edition T-Shirt and the "paddfest party". The aim of the event is to find an all-round and worthy champion! For an entry number (limited to 180) and full details of the event timings etc please return the completed form.

The Coaching Symposium and all other events - The symposium fee, which covers entry to all other aspects of the weekend, except the competition is £20 per person (£8 per day). Inclusive in these costs are entry to any and all aspects of the coaching programme and clinics / the personal performance clinics / the young Paddler programme and of course the party.

Family entry to the Coaching Symposium and associated programme is available to holders of BCU family membership at £35. (Advance booking required)

Pre-registration is recommended for all advertised clinics and workshops as indicated, as places will be limited. Pre-registration will also ease administration on the day and make life easier and admittance to the sessions pain free.

The Symposium and Competition fees do not include accommodation and food. Limited accommodation at The National Watersports Centre will be available. The Holme Pierrepont Campsite will be open for the weekend. Should you wish we would be able to provide an accommodation list for alternative options. Visitors to Paddfest will need to make their

own accommodation arrangements.

Admission to the "Paddfest" party is free to competition and symposium delegates. Food and drink will be available for purchase.

"Paddfest" 2000 provides two full days of paddlesport activity so that you can balance your own day / weekend programme between indoor and outdoor sessions / competition and coaching sessions, doing your own thing. If that's not enough to either encourage you to join us or to make you feel that there would be enough to keep you entertained then consider the "Paddfest" party on Saturday evening - the paddlesport social event of the year.

Access to Workshops and clinics may well be limited! So early booking recommended!!

The spirit of "Paddfest" lies within its multi-paddlesport appeal. Visitors should attend in that spirit. Access to the slalom course is not as per casual weekends - programme requirements restrict access and the course at times within the weekend - (see programme for guidance)

Please return the enclosed booking form as soon as possible to assure yourself of your place in the event and sessions of your choice. We look forward to seeing you there!



Paddfest 2000

23 - 24th September 2000 Booking Form

Please tick as appropriate

- I wish to attend the Coaching Symposium and associated programme only and enclose the £20 fee (£12 per day)
- We wish to take advantage of the family price, available on the Coaching Symposium entry only, to families holding BCU family membership. £35
- If booking one day only please indicate which day Sat Sun
- I wish to attend the Peak Challenge Competition Programme only and enclose the £20 fee.
- I wish to attend both the Competition and the Coaching and associated programme and enclose the £30 fee.

Bookings for the National Bell boat Regatta to: **The National Youth Officer, The British Canoe Union, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 5AS.**

For further details on:

River Race/K4/Div4 Slalom /Young peoples programme/National Bell Boat Championships/Peak challenge contact Diane Woods at the BCU Office on 01159 821100.

Pre - Registration. (essential to avoid disappointment)

Please reserve a place for me on the following workshops.

	Excellence Clinics	Personal Performance Workshops
Sat am		
Sat pm		
Sun am		
Sun pm		

Please reserve me a place on the following day-long workshop(see Programme)

Name _____

Address _____

Post Code _____ Tel No _____

Date of Birth _____ Signed _____

Membership No _____

Please make cheques payable to the British Canoe Union and return with booking form to Paddfest 2000, BCU, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 5AS

PADDLEFEST

Paddlefest 2000 (Provisional) Programme Of Events Saturday 23rd September 2000

Coaching Symposium	Workshops	Young Paddlers	Competition	Trade	Demo / Retail
<p>Opening Address: 09.30</p> <p>Coaching Excellence Clinics: 10.00 - 12.00</p> <p>Motor Skill Aquisition / Improving Technique</p> <p>Inner Game Coaching / Improving Technique</p> <p>Imagery Training</p> <p>Motivation and Building Self Confidence</p> <p>Coaching Young People</p> <p>Coaching Disabled Paddlers</p> <p>Analysing Performance</p> <p>Analysing Your Own Coaching Performance</p> <p>Paddler Profiling</p> <p>Injury Prevention</p> <p>Use Of Video In Coaching</p> <p>Coaching and the Law</p> <p>Keynote Speech: 12.30 - 13.30</p> <p>Personal Performance Clinics: 14.30 - 18.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Throw Line Workshop *White Water Safety Workshop *Freestyle / Playboat Clinic *4 Star Skills *Leadership Training for Intermediate Paddlers *5 Star Skills *Surt Clinic *Open Canoe Master Class Whatever Your Aspirations Coaches available to provide you with expert guidance *The Placid Water Scheme *Slalom Coaching Workshops *Sprint / Marathon Coaching Workshops *Polo Coaching Workshop 	<p>09.30 - 17.50</p> <p>Pre-registration is essential on these full day workshops</p> <p>Aquatic First Aid Trainer - 8 Places Available</p> <p>Aquatic First Aid Course - 8 Places Available</p> <p>Child Protection Workshop - 12 Places Available</p> <p>Injury Prevention in Paddlesport - 12 Places Available</p> <p>Assessor Training Day 12 Places Available.</p>	<p>Bell Boat Regatta</p> <p>Lightning K1 Coaching</p> <p>Junior Boat Evaluation</p> <p>Polo Coaching / Mini Polo Competition</p> <p>Ergo Challenge</p>	<p>Main Lake (Timings Provisional)</p> <p>10.00 - 11.00 Bell Boat Regatta (Heats) 250m-finish</p> <p>10.45 - 11.15 Peak Challenge 250m-Finish</p> <p>11.15 - 12.00 K4 Race (Juniors and Ladies) 1000m-Finish</p> <p>12.15 - 15.30 Bell Boat regatta (Heats / Semi's and Finals)</p> <p>15.30 - 17.00 K4 Race (Seniors A&B) 1000m-Finish</p> <p>Bell Boat Registration: Marquee Centre Lawn</p> <p>K4 Race Registration: Marquee Centre Lawn</p> <p>Slalom Course (Timings Provisional)</p> <p>Prior to 11am Free paddling / Coaching Clinics - Full Course</p> <p>Raft Guide Training (1 Raft)</p> <p>11.00 - 11.20 Peak Challenge - Full Course</p> <p>11.30 - 12.30 W.W. Race - Practice - Full Course</p> <p>12.30 - 14.30 W.W. Race Individual Runs - Full Course</p> <p>14.30 - 17.30 Free Paddling and Skills Workshops</p> <p>17.30 - 20.45 Peak Challenge - Mid Course Bridge to 2nd Island</p> <p>WWR Race: Registration at Riverside Carpark</p> <p>Peak Challenge: Registration - Mid Course Control</p> <p>Winfield Pool (See Performance Clinic Times)</p> <p>Squirt Clinic</p> <p>Intro To WW Racing</p> <p>Intro To Canoe Polo</p> <p>Intro To Slalom</p>	<p>Manufacturers Trade Fair - Open to members Of Trade Only</p> <p>Manufacturers Demo Stands - Open All Day</p> <p>Demo Boats Available with retail options</p>	
Evening	<p>19.00 BCU Question Time</p> <p>Paddlefest Paddlesport Dinner - (To-be Confirmed) Pre -booking Essential</p> <p>20.30 Onwards - Paddlefest Party and Live band</p>				



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Learning to swim

A year in the life of a student paddler

Take one group of lively students, their worried Athletic Union Officer (me), one very dodgy minibus, a sprinkle of decent boats, matching tops, piles of rations (beer & bacon), an idiots guide to Wales and a dash of hot sauce (namely Will) then leave to fester over a long weekend and their you have a ready made club trip to St. Davids with Sheffield Hallam University Canoe Club (SHU Canoe for short).

This was our fourth weekend trip this academic year and the general consensus was that it was the best yet. I thought you may all be interested to hear what we actually get up to in the fabulously wonderful world of student canoeing. However, to avoid disappointment or letters of complaint to the Editor on the sudden nose dive in quality of articles, this is a pre-warning - you will find technical terms and a sound knowledge of the ways of the water far and few between in the following article. The reason being that I am a novice paddler (also lovingly referred to as a 'noddy' by my fellow comrades.)

So please be kind and patient with me, you've all been there before. See this as a small reminder of what it feels like to struggle down a river whilst also serving as an insight into student canoeing the Hallam way and before you start calling safety officers, yes we are sober when we get on the water, or at least after our first dousing of cold water we are!

My first introduction to canoeing in my adult years (trips as a young teenager don't count as I had no concept of fear then, therefore a much better canoeist) was last October 1999 when my two housemates Ruth & Yvonne backed me into a corner by making me promise that if they came to two women's rugby training sessions with me then I have to accompany them on their first canoe trip. In fairness to them they did come training with me and even managed a tackle or two, but unlike them I'm still paddling (there will be time left at the end to debate this last observation).

The first trip to Anglesey proved to be an ideal destination for noddys like me. Calm and flat on the coast, what could possibly go wrong? Well I bet you haven't tried continuously going round in circles before. I have now perfected my new found technique and currently looking to start up a new Olympic discipline in it, I am guaranteed gold medals! Undeterred, however by my obvious lack of ability I still tried a bit of canoe surfing.

The next trip we boarded the minibus for was what has become widely known by all University Clubs as the annual student Canoe Fest, the Dee Tour. HOW COLD . . . ice on the tents and freezing cold water meant that only the hardiest of paddlers braved the water. Fortunately someone had the sense to send me down in the duo (barges don't tend go over I was told!). Sitting in the front meant that I was thankful for not only not being required to steer but more importantly it meant that I couldn't see the look of pure fear on Will's face as we went down Serpent's Tail.

Once safely past the turbulent 'Tail' we both relaxed and thoroughly enjoyed bobbing down the remainder of the river. By the end of the day, although extremely cold I felt like a Pro., Will however was quiet for the first time in his life, exhaustion was setting in, not surprising really as I'm not sure my unique way of paddling round to the left made steering too easy for him.

The next trip to Teesdale meant a luxury stay in a camping barn where we were treated to cooked breakfast from our in-house chef (Ruthless) and a heater to dry our wet stuff - sheer heaven. On this occasion I tackled the river in a single kayak. Everyone did their best to guide me down the river and they all had the patience of a saint, however I was a lost cause that day, why change fate - I was destined to swim. I got on the water to find my steering was still a bit dubious and went straight into some reeds and

toppled over in the first two minutes! The first of many swims, which later resulted in many pints being brought for those that rescued me (a club rule apparently!). Special thanks to Simon, the rescue king. From my vast experience of other sports I've learnt that only bad sports men and women blame their equipment, so I blame the weather conditions. Snow, wind and hail are not ideal for a Saturday afternoon swim. So sensibly I retired to the warmth of the minibus and took great pleasure in watching the others have a great day on the river Swale.

I am now being true to my new nickname 'Bank Bunny' (self-fulfilling prophecy) and sitting here on the bank, well the beach really, at St. Davids in Wales, May Day Bank holiday weekend. Busy taking photos of the others annoy surfers in their boats at White Sands whilst also writing down all my memories of canoeing this year. Little did I know how hot it was and I am now pink and peeling as a result.

Friday afternoon

The weekend started as with all trips, with good intentions i.e. leaving extra early so that we wouldn't be putting up tents in the dark. I arrived just in time to find the trailer loaded and the minibus packed and so we set off straight away at 3:20pm an hour and a half after we had planned to leave! When we eventually made it on to the motorway the excited chatter was suddenly silenced

by our club treasurer, our White Water Champion, our most experienced paddler, (and editor of this magazine!) Yvonne, yelping at the realisation that she had left everything bar her canoe kit at home including her tent, shampoo, towels and common-sense! This gave us plenty of fodder to tease her for the rest of the journey. Dappy moment no. 1. Plenty more to come.

On the whole it took us about 7 hours to reach our final destination which included lots of wee stops and plenty of time to gorge on Macdonalds (healthy fit lot, us canoeists). With a top speed of 30mph up the hills we arrived in the dark and in the rain - typical.

We stayed at Twr-y-felin activity centre but as we are the typical poor students stayed on the campsite but made full use of the small bar which remained lively through out the weekend. That night it rained all night which we all felt sure would continue over the weekend. Fortunately the following day we awoke to blazing sunshine which dried the tents out and warmed us to the idea of getting seriously wet.

Saturday

The campsite is an ideal location with easy access to all the decent paddling spots. We arrived at the beach at 12pm which is really quite early for us. Our first decision for the weekend was whether or not to go coaststeering or go for a coastal paddle (due to the lack of surf). This proved harder than it should have done, as our usual decision maker Simon, was only just setting off by car from Newcastle. We went for the coastal paddle with a bit of cliff jumping afterwards which was great for beginners whilst also fun and relaxing for the more experienced. We explored the coastline, paddling into caves and I even saw a Seal pop its head out of the water, but no one believed me! To improve my paddling I went in the duo so my partner (Kevin - he too wanted a mention) could watch me paddle and advise me on how to improve my flawed technique. Which basically meant that he got a free ride under the guise of teacher for the afternoon! This was, however a great chilled start to the weekend and I even managed a straight line.

That night we all had a BBQ and socialised the night away in true student style in the campsite bar. . . .



the SHU canoe way...



Sunday

Jumpers were needed in the cool air of the evening but come day time us girlies donned our shorts and bikinis and left the boys to enjoy the surf on White Sands Beach enjoying their feeble attempt to look cooler than the Surfers! The waves weren't huge but enough to get a fair few rides and a few trashings much to our amusement. The water was absolutely freezing but the sun was really warm and everyone burned their exposed bits of flesh. Be warned that cool breeze of the sea is very deceptive, and well it is Wales after all so we hadn't come prepared. So that night to stop the moaning we had communal after sunning sessions, we're a very friendly club you know!

Our more experienced paddlers in the group took to 'The Bitches' which at first (dappy comment No. 2) I thought was a reference to some locals of the female variety they had 'met' the year previous. But much to my embarrassment I later found out that 'The Bitches' was another canoeing phrase yet to be learnt. (I did warn you there would be no technical terms!)

That night we hit the City Centre for dinner and a bit of party atmosphere. Hmmmm well we found a restaurant but no big lively atmosphere. This has to be the sleepest and most relaxed City in the country and by far the smallest. It's touristy and quaint with decent surfing shops but definitely no buzzing nightlife. Not phased by this though we were all looking for a memorable but relaxing weekend so all in all it was perfect really. You can't beat the scenery, the beaches are clean and there are plenty of great places to go for walks, climbing, cycling and paddling. What more could we ask for.

Monday

We enjoyed the beach so much the day before that we went back to White Sands again for some more surf. However the waves were not so lively and there were a few too many clouds to sunbathe for long (I'm thinking of

retiring from canoeing and taking up sun worshipping whilst in the company of canoeists as you can tell). The weather was still gorgeous but you needed shelter to feel the full effect. Ice creams all round.

We eventually and grudgingly left approximately 5:00pm and got back to our humble abodes in Sheffield at 1:00am. Much respect to Tony our driver who after dropping people off and clearing the minibus didn't get to bed before 4am after driving for 7 hours. We love you Tony we do, we love you... ●

It is hard to write about a trip like this without resorting to mentioning all the funny antics we got up to of people you don't know and may or may not be interested in. However in my time as a student I have been a member of two clubs one very competitive (rugby) and the Canoe club which caters for all. With BUSA competitions in Canoe Polo, White Water Racing, Slalom and Polo a club can choose to enter their more talented members and become more high profile (and hopefully not for swimming) but not ever exclude the social paddlers, like me. The trips provide a great way of using the skills learned in the pool out on the sea or rivers but also be part of a fantastic atmosphere which welcomes all ages, of whatever colour, race, ability, gender and we particularly welcome people with a fetish for rubber!

Written by Rebecca Bursnall

FREESTYLE
competition

15th Hurley Weir Rodeo

March 2000-05-05

RESULTS

Novice Finals
Dave Lambly
Pete Catherall
Martin Green

Junior Finals

Richard Chrimes
Mark Birbeck
Andy McDonald

Squirt

Bob Campbell
Jason Smith
Adam White

Decked C1

Ollie Castle
Stu Morris
Matt Byham

Open C1

Jamie Wier
Chris Harrison
Jamie Burbeck

Duo

S Hades / L Heroui
J Cox / S Bacon
J Moulder / J Hassell

Ladies

Deb Pinniger
Lyndsey Evans
Paula Floyd

Mens

Richard Chrimes
Cheesy
Tim Thomas

The Hurley Rodeo was a huge success, with the biggest ever turn-out, superb sunshine and the legendary 3 gates. Such good water and weather combined to create a very happy bunch of paddlers and set the atmosphere for the weekend.

The event remains the largest ranking whitewater freestyle competition in the UK. It was organised this year by Shaun Baker and Helen Smith. It continues to evolve each year, thanks to the developing partnerships with major sponsor. New for 2000 were two video screens linked up for live coverage of the action so that people on the bank could see every move from the comfort of their chair. Also new was a specially built judging platform which provided an area exclusive to the



judges which had the best viewpoint. IN addition to this there was extended access for spectators, paddlers and cars on the far side of the weir. There were many impressive runs throughout the weekend. Notable performances included Richard Chrimes, who at 15 years of age won both the junior event and the main event. The hilarious Eskimo Duo fun event was definitely a high point of the programme, with some of the worlds best taking a swim. It was won by a pair of last minute entries in a borrowed boat. That's the spirit! The evening entertainment consisted of unique and highly amusing showing of archive paddling footage from the old school days. The pub was packed to full capacity with paddlers and they loved it. Needless to say copious amounts of food and

drink were consumed and a good time was had by all. ●

The Hurley Rodeo would like to say thank you to all those who without whose generous support the continued success of this event would not be possible: main sponsor SAS Institute, support from Red Bull, Playboater/Eskimo/Werner, Playboating Magazine, Environment Agency Thames region, Brian the Lock Keeper, Harleyford Estate, 21st Maidenhead Scouts, Mean Scream, Cotswolds, Hurley Village, Richard Bell, Darren Baker and all of the hard working judges and helpers. Of course thank you to all of the boaters who came along to compete. Photos: Darren Baker



Overall winner Richard Chrimes

Shaun baker





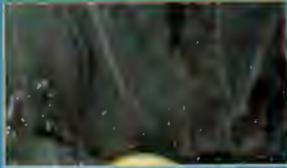
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Paddlesport Events

The final results were as follows:

- U14
 - 1st Sharks (Dulwich)
 - 2nd Dolphins (Dulwich)
 - 3rd Aldershot Apaches (Blackwater)
- U16
 - 1st Tadpoles (Tandridge)
 - 2nd Piranhas (Lea Valley)
 - 3rd Sharks (Lea Valley)
- U18
 - 1st Lasers (Lea Valley)
 - 2nd Eagles (Addlestone)
 - 3rd Destructors (Dulwich)

Crystal Palace

Crystal Palace pool in SE London saw young paddlers from Clubs, Centres, Schools and Scout Groups competing in canoe polo and slalom events earlier this year. This was the third year that these events have been running - what started out as a one-day event combining both disciplines, has grown and is now two separate events. The events were introduced as part of the BCU Paddlesport programme, to encourage participation and give a focus to young people in and around London. Funding from the BCU Youth Programme, Crystal Palace Sport & Leisure, Sport England, BCU LSE Region and Perception Kayaks, along with equipment and assistance from several clubs and individuals have all made these events and their growth possible.

Youth Polo Competition - Sunday 6th February 2000

The large 50m pool is a great venue, providing a real challenge both tactically and physically for the younger competitors who are used to smaller pools! 21 Teams were entered, with 9 clubs being represented. Entries were divided into Under 14, 16 and 18 age groups, with several of the games proving to be really hard tussles, and a great deal of talent being shown by many of the competitors. Some of the final games were really exciting and provided the spectators with some top entertainment. The winners of each age group also won themselves a free coaching course with GB Top Coach Andy Pumphrey to help them do even better next time!



Events

Wanna be a National Champion?? Try this then...

National Bell Boat Championships - 23rd September 2000
The second Bell Boat National Championship will be run at Nottingham during Paddlefest. What about your school or your club entering?

The competition will have two age categories - Under 13 and Under 11 and each team should have boys and girls in it - preferably 4 boys and 4 girls. As the entry is restricted to 50 teams in each category - get your entry in early! Details and entry forms are available from your local Paddlesport Development Officer or direct from the BCU Head Office.

The event will form part of a weekend programme of activities for young people including a "come and try it" boat session, Lightning Regatta and Perception Diamond Slalom. There are many other great events happening at Paddlefest - so there's lots to see and do for everyone.

Perception Diamond Slalom Challenge.

Look out for these new events this summer. The challenge is based on 4 slalom gates forming a diamond shape and is split into four award levels - blue, bronze, silver and gold. Paddlers have a time limit to complete a certain number of gates for each award. The Blue and bronze award can be attempted at your club, the silver and gold awards will be run at regional slalom and Paddlesport events. It's a great way to test your boat handling skills and to practice those strokes you know you'll need on moving water.

Full details available from BCU Youth Programme - Head Office.

Surfers

Not the "of the lip" stuff - but square eyed version. Remember to check out the BCU web page for details of events and what's going on in your area.

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Coaching Schemes School's out for summer - not!

Exciting new developments are afoot for Paddlesport in schools. In July we will be running, in conjunction with the National Coaching Foundation, a pilot of 3 Coaching courses under the Coaching for Teachers Scheme. This gives teachers the opportunity to qualify as a BCU Coach (Level 1 PW) to take groups on sheltered water. First courses will be run in Evesham, Nottingham and Teeside - if successful we hope to extend these to other areas next year.

Also shortly to be available is a new Key Stage 2 Curriculum Pack with 31 pages of information detailing some exciting ways and ideas of how Paddlesport can be used within education.

Cadet Leader Award

This is a new initiative from the Young People's Programme - which aims to encourage and introduce young people into leadership roles within Paddlesport, through a training programme based at their own Club.

The award is aimed at youth aged 13 to 16 and consists of a series of modules which can be completed in any order - with the emphasis on flexibility and meeting individual needs. The training must be supervised by a Level 3 coach - ideally based where the Cadet paddles from. The Modules include Organisation, Safety, Skills Instruction, a Personal Skills and experience log, Role of the Cadet Leader and a two-part project of their choice.

The award is only valid for the Club/organisation where the Cadet completed the award so if the cadet moves to another Club there is an additional short module to complete to help them learn about the safety and ways of operating at their new club.

Other National Youth Awards can be linked to this Award such

as Duke of Edinburgh, JSLA and school qualifications as well as Paddlepower Two challenges or disciplines specific awards. Details available with Guidance Notes for Running the Award.

How to Register for the Scheme - What is Required?

Club/Centres who wish to participate in the award should apply to the BCU for a registration form.

We will need details of the Coach who will supervise the training and their qualifications.

The Cadet must be an individual member of the BCU or a nominated affiliated Club member.

The cost for registration for each Cadet is £6.00 which includes their Log Book, Guidelines for Coaches Running the Award, Certificate, registration at the BCU with on-going support.

Paddlesport Development Officers & Co-ordinators

There have been several changes in the last few months to the people involved in the Youth Programme - so here is the latest up-date - please make a note of any changes in your area.

East Midlands	Howard Blackman
East London/Essex	Jonathon Smith
West London/Thames	Andrea Bagnall (co-ordinator)
Teeside	Andy Tennyson (clubs and discipline support)
	Mike Gallagher (schools)
North West	Jonathon Davies
Worc/Hereford	Ian White (co-ordinator)
West Yorkshire	Michol Kendrick
Berkshire/N. Hants	Craig Hill (co-ordinator)
Head of Programme	Sue Hornby

Perception Youth Slalom Competition -

Saturday 19th February

This year the event attracted 82 competitors, a few less than last year, but not bad considering that it conflicted with many other half-term activities. Two parallel courses were set up, each running the length of the 50m pool. Competitors race head to head down the course (adding an extra competitive dimension), spin around at the bottom and race back up again on the same side. Results are based on the fastest time, plus penalties with all competitors using Fox kayaks. Meanwhile, in the adjacent diving pool, a Perception Diamond Slalom course was set up and those with spare time between competition runs had a chance to go for their Diamond Awards.

The day splashed off with an impressive demonstration by Fabian Bunting from Islington (last year's winner) and Alex Powell of Waveriders. This was followed by some more very talented paddling in the actual competition. The Under 15's provided a great finale to the day after both Charlie Power and Chris McCabe had tied for first place with identical scores on both runs. The only answer was a head to head with the final result just going to Chris - well done to both of them for such excellent performances.

Over both events a raffle was held, with lots of great prizes donated by various sponsors. This was a great success, the money raised by the raffle going towards the expense of running the events

The winners of each age group won free entry to the River Loddon

Slalom and a coaching session with Dave Lomas. An overall team prize was awarded to the club with highest accumulated number of points based on the best 10 results in each class.

Final results were as follows:

U18 Boys

1st Fabian Bunting (Islington)
2nd David Holtam (Westminster B.B.)
3rd Jon Clarey (Dulwich)

U15 Boys

1st Chris McCabe (Islington)
2nd Charlie Power (Islington)
3rd Darren Allain (Islington)

U12 Boys

1st Luke Banks (Waveriders)
2nd Sam Spalding (Ealing)
3rd Peter Organ (Purley)

U18 Girls

1st Jo Powell (Waveriders)
2nd Elizabeth Clamp (Waveriders)
3rd Claire Brusa (Waveriders)

U15 Girls

1st Kellymarie Reed (Royal Vic. Docks)
2nd Katie King (Walling. & Carsh.)
3rd Lizzie Nicholls (Waveriders)

U12 Girls

1st Sarah Green (Purley)
2nd Rebecca Penn (Purley)
3rd Rebecca Challis (Barking & Dagen.)

Club/Centre Overall winners of Event:

1st Waveriders, 2nd Islington, 3rd Royal Victoria Docks, 4th Ealing, 5th Dulwich CP School

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COMPETITION Marathon World Cup



On 15/16th July 2000 we will be hosting the Marathon World Cup II at Stockton on Tees - it really isn't that far away in distance or time, so put the date in your diary NOW so that you can witness one of the best marathon racing events of the year on your doorstep. There will be two full days of racing over the weekend with Lightning races for children on Saturday evening after the main event. You can drive, fly or let the train take the strain. Why not make it a long weekend break?

Camping is available at Preston Park. This is 4km by road from the start/finish area and is the site of one of the portages and turns. Discounted rates have been negotiated of £5 per night for large tents and £3 per night for small ones.

Alternatively, single en-suite rooms are available in the university halls of residence at the start/finish. Room only or full board options. **Contact the Event Secretary, Jim Rossiter at 101 Whyteleafe Road, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 5EJ**, email: jimrossiter@bcuinternet.com for details or download an accommodation booking form from the web site www.worldcanoemar-stockton.co.uk

T-shirts, posters, stickers etc. are available at national regattas, major marathon races and from leading marathon racing clubs. Merchandising is available to clubs at discount prices to sell on and boost club funds. Contact the merchandising manager - **Andrea Bagnall, 55 Mount Ararat Road, Richmond, Surrey, TW10 6PL. Tel: 020 8940 1462** or email ambagnall@yahoo.com to arrange your supplies.

The marathon committee will be running a Lightning Regatta for junior club paddlers on the Saturday afternoon. So clubs travelling to Stockton to spectate for the weekend can take their very youngest paddlers along and they can have a competition. Please contact **Andy Tennyson, Sport and Recreation Unit, University of Teesside, Borough Road, Middlesborough, TS1 3BA. Tel: 01642 342263**. Email: a.tennyson@tees.ac.uk for more details on the Lightning event only.

For further information please contact 9th ICF Marathon Racing World Championships, c/o British Canoe Union, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 5AS. email: marathon.world@bcu.org.uk or see the web site www.worldcanoemar-stockton.co.uk

Programme of Events

Friday July 14th - 2000

16.00 Team leaders' meeting

Saturday July 15th - 2000

09.30 Junior World Cups. K1 men, K1 women, C1
13.15 Senior World Cups. K1 men, K1 women, C1
17.00 Lightning Event
18.00 Medals presentation

Sunday July 16th - 2000

09.30 Junior World Cups. K2 men, K2 women
13.15 Senior World Cups. K2 men, K2 women, C2
18.00 Medals presentation

Countries who have already said they will be participating

Great Britain	Hungary
South Africa	Denmark
Ireland	Germany
Spain	Austria
Brazil	Belgium
Netherlands	New Zealand

Distances to Stockton-on-Tees

Leeds	62 miles
Nottingham	140 miles
Edinburgh	150 miles
London	252 miles



CANOE MARATHON



WORLD CUP

Stockton-on-Tees, England
River Tees: Barrage – Preston Park
July 15th/16th

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COMPETITION

University of Leeds Student Freestyle Event



"Rodeo? I thought that's for horses?" us more experienced canoeists muttered as we set for Holme Pierrepont, National Watersports centre for the annual beer drinking, liver kicking canoe event. It was to be another great weekend with serious paddling for the real canoeists and excellent social for those just up for getting plastered.

The weather was on our side, and after a mighty trek down the M1 we reached the bunk house lodgings, great if we were 4ft 6 boy scouts! But we couldn't grumble as the other universities were camping and although it was march jack frost was still creating icy wetsuits. Once Leeds had organised themselves the competitors registered and then it was off to the bar for a free meal and drink in the gorgeous marquee whose timbers on the Saturday night had colour co-ordinated balloon decorations swapped for naked canoeists kindly donated by various universities. The morning brought glorious sunshine and after "bacon butties" all round (and 20 litres of coke to counteract the deli belly effects of holme pierrepont) the water course became a frenzy of canoes. The purpose of the first event, named the 'extreme slalom' was to section competitors into novice, intermediate and expert standards and consisted of a number of obstacles from surfing and hitting suspended balls to wave wheeling and passing paddles through tyres. This went

successfully without too many swimmers despite the over generous bar boy slipping extra doubles the night before. After the invaluable lifeguards had been filled with cold coffee and greasy pasties, the heats began with six to eight paddlers battling against each other in the looping hole performing an array of spectacular tricks to a cheering crowd. A few got embarrassingly munched in the froth but others hyped their audience by waving, singing and improvising guitars with their paddles whilst surfing. With Leeds Canoe Committee gradually turning grey in the office, the rest of us developed a beautiful shade of brown in the sun while the finalists, who would compete the following day, were calculated. After more evening antics Sunday saw yet more sunshine (or apparently so if we'd taken off the dark glasses) and events began with the duo competition with tremendous performances, 1st place being clinched by Andy Nelson and Andy Lillie from Bristol. The competitors in the C1 event showed similar skill with a 1st from Gwyn Ashcroft from Durham and Jeff Grainger gave Bristol another win in the Squir section. The woman outshone many of the mens performances with Mollie Mckenzie from Bristol gaining 1st and in the novice Callum Main from Aberdeen claimed his victory. John Morrell from Leeds had an excellent win in the mens intermediate and Loughboroughs Malcolm Mathie took the expert section. Loughborough went on to achieve most overall points award.

Although not all being placed admiration is given to all those who competed showing some great paddling and braving the risks of waking Monday projectile vomiting from Nottingham's well known dodgy river. For us not having to do great deal on the organising front it was another weekend which lived up to its ever wild expectations with the atmosphere keeping the usual humour and entertainment flowing. Those that did sweat it out in the office, nice job! ●



A big thanks to all the lifeguards and also to all our sponsor. Cotwolds, White water Consultancy, Ras Dex, Brook Bank, Carlisle Canoes, Nookie, Chill Factor, Shaggy Designs, Reed, Steve Wales events and all helpers.

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An open the White

The White Volta river flows from Burkina Faso into northern Ghana, and travels in a roughly southerly direction until it reaches the coast and empties into the Gulf of Guinea. I was seconded as a civilian instructor from the Joint Service Mountain Training Wing (Ripon) to act as safety back up for this expedition organised by 36 Engineer Regiment in Maidstone. The purpose of this trip was initially to paddle from 'source to sea' using the Black Volta, which essentially marks the border between eastern Ivory Coast and western Ghana. Unfortunately, the British High Commission were less than enthusiastic about approaching the Cote d'Ivoire Government for clearance, perhaps in case the west African country thought the twelve of us might paddle over to their side of the river and gain important strategic advantage before invading.



Our objective therefore changed to the White Volta. This would give us a fantastic river journey, but which two thirds of the way down had been dammed in the 1950's to create the largest man made lake on the planet. Undeterred, the expedition took shape though our objective once again changed, given that it would be impossible to paddle the length of the lake in the time available. Rather than a source to sea trip, we embarked upon a trans - Ghana boat journey which involved the planned use of the Volta Lake Transport Company ferry, and gave our expedition a bit of a Michael Palin flavour.

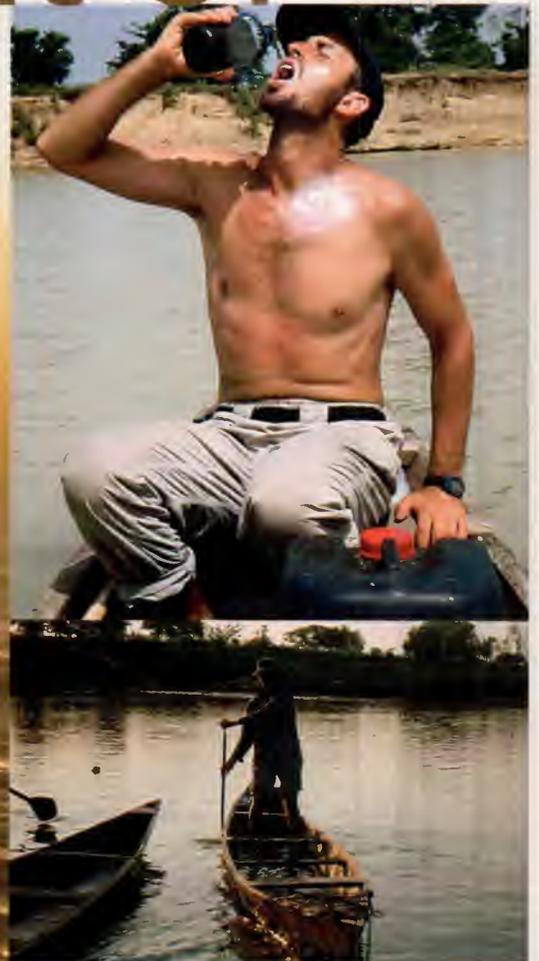
Trying to organise a month long expedition involving six open boats, fourteen paddlers and a four wheel drive support vehicle in a seriously third world country like Ghana is no joke. Getting anything done can take weeks, and prices can mysteriously inflate many fold for no good reason. And then there's always the middlemen and 'fixers' who require payment for organising things which you didn't want organising or fixing.

Months of planning and preparation in the UK amounted to very little once in country, and the team almost had to start from scratch. Fortunately for me, all I had to do was jump on a plane once all the hard work had been done, and catch up to the main group via a 13hr jeep ride along some of the worlds' least maintained roads. Going from -5 degrees centigrade in Manchester in November to touch down into +40 degrees only hours later meant I was somewhat under - acclimatised for the first few days, compared to other team members who had already been in the country for up to a month.

The Army chose to visit Ghana as an expedition venue as it provides a country full of challenge via logistics, climate and length of journey to be undertaken by river, but it also depended upon the initial support of the Ghanain Army. Thus it was hoped that a co-operative effort would help develop and maintain military links between the two countries to take us into the next century. As it turned out, despite lengthy planning and negotiation, little support was available as a result of the Ghanain Army being heavily committed to flood relief in the north of the country.

boat descent of

Volta River



Day one of the trip saw us develop a routine which would serve us well throughout the trip. A volunteer press-ganged from the night before would put the water onto boil for porridge at 4.30am with the rest of us up for breakfast at 5am. Then followed a procedure whereby each boat pair packed up their tents and mosquito nets and loaded the canoes whilst keeping an eye on everybody else to monitor their progress throughout this bleary-eyed unofficial race, knowing full well that the last canoe to be on the water at the designated time of 6am would have the piss taken out of them relentlessly until the next pair took the honours the following morning.

One of the first tasks once the full team had assembled at Pwalugu, just short of Bolgatanga and the Ghana / Burkina Faso border, was to work out what to do in the event of a capsize or swamping.

This was quite important given that we were using heavy canoes bought in-country from local

fishermen, which weren't exactly suited to our journey given the White Volta has many small rapids and the canoes had only two or three inches of freeboard once loaded.

The boats were constructed of heavy hardwood planking, which not only made them less than watertight, but also made them impossible to curl or X rescue in the orthodox manner of open boat rescue. Thus, the strategy adopted was the same as the one used for paddling on open water whereby all equipment carried is tied tightly into the bottom of the boat, so that in the event of capsize or swamping the boat could be turned over and bailed, with the gear tied tight to the boat providing additional buoyancy. However, the boats were so heavy due to their construction and the fact that the wood used had to be kept saturated in order for the simple joints to swell and offer some basic resistance to water penetration that we couldn't get them to float with their gunwales clear, (which would allow us to bail them out) no matter what we did.

The strategy which developed was to paddle very slowly down the grade I/II rapids keeping the canoe level to avoid water lapping in over the

sides and to bail like crazy when necessary, even in mid-rapid. Such was the lack of freeboard that if a swimmer was brought aboard, there was every likelihood that the "rescue boat" itself would swamp and hover about a foot under water with the tied in gear stopping it from sinking completely.

Knowing that we were paddling a small fleet of virtually un-rescuable canoes, we made our way down the White Volta and over a six day stint made our way past the villages of Kpasenkpe, Janga, Dipali and Nawuni. Given the afternoon temperatures rising at times to just above 40 degrees centigrade, it was important to get as much done as early as possible. "Lunch" of stale, sweet bread, tinned cheese and fresh pineapple at 10am enabled us to put a solid four hours paddling in with something to take our minds off the heat, and the warm, iodised drinking water in each of our bottles. The slog through the afternoon was interspersed with occasional swims, but the length of swim depended on how much pain could be tolerated from the fish, which continually pecked at exposed skin. There was little cooling effect from the water during a swim anyway, given that recorded water temperatures were only 6 or 7 degrees centigrade cooler than our normal body temperature.

A further two days hot paddling took us from Nawuni on to the village of Daboya, where we were to be given the ten year old daughter of a local senior fisherman, provided we take her back to the UK and bring her up. We kindly declined his most generous offer and put in another two days which took us to the old ferry port of Yapei. A huge dam was built in southern Ghana, near Akosombo which turned the White Volta valley into the largest man-made lake on Earth, thus allowing Yapei to quickly develop into a bustling ferry port. Unfortunately, huge wet-season floods bring lots of debris downriver which soon caused the river to become so shallow for anything other than small vessels at this point where the river slows as it enters the head of Lake Volta.

After ten hard days on the river we had covered almost 380km, which

considering the boats and the heat, we all felt pleased with. Whilst in Yapei we organised ourselves for the next stage of our journey which was to take us four days down the Volta Lake. Here we sorted out food, water and extra gear to turn the six open boats into three catamarans, which would be more stable and provide a much more useful rescue platform should the need arise.

That evening whilst organising wood to be sawn to size for constructing the rafts, we again experienced the entrepreneurial skills and over-selling tactics at which the locals appeared to be very adept. We asked for six lengths of timber but enough wood was cut up for ten. As we began to explain that we had only requested the six, a group of burly sawmill men gathered around us and made it obvious that they weren't going to be messed about. To make things worse, the generator that powered the lights ran out of diesel and the heated debate continued in semi-darkness. It was suggested that we just leave the wood and walk away, although I considered that to be a foolhardy and potentially painful option. Eventually we bought eight pieces of timber and the hostile atmosphere evaporated. We departed unscathed despite buying two pieces of wood more than we needed!

The team deserved a break and so we headed off to Mole Game Park (pron "Molay") only three hours drive up one of Ghana's bumpiest dirt tracks. Here three days were spent relaxing and recovering, before the dirt track was once more endured and we got back to the real business of moving down river to the head of Lake Volta and the vast blue expanse beyond.

The catamaran rigs were to prove invaluable, given the flooded nature of the lake edge that precluded us from landing and finding dry ground on which to camp. On two occasions, the team spent the whole night aboard our makeshift raft and cooked, but only actually stopped paddling and rested on one of them! On the night where we stopped to sleep, we became a floating meal stop for swarms of hungry mosquitoes. Unable to move during darkness due to the complicated nature of reed beds through which we had to thread our way, there was little choice but to endure the mozzie feeding frenzy. These hungry beasts appeared to be untroubled by insect repellent and also possessed the alarming ability to bite through mosquito netting and a heavy cotton shirt. I managed to doze off for a couple of hours once I had cut two pieces of foam from the seat mat and made earplugs, so at least I couldn't hear them homing in!

Thanks to

Capt Matt Wilkinson and 36 Engineer Regiment for thinking my experience was required and for inviting me on the expedition!
Martin Barry.

Diary entry December 2nd

"Paddled along into ever increasing vastness past dozens of obviously large trees, but now only with their upper branches emerging from the deep lake water, gently rotting and covered in guano. Lots of flying insects but few birds, and



just the occasional frog or snake, seemingly both way out of their depths. A strange, ethereal place so dead and remote yet man induced. Like open sea, swells and all, yet with the tops of trees sticking out into open ocean."

On the day we approached the ferry port of Yeiji, the catamaran rigs proved their worth once more; this time in terms of safety rather than as an alternative to a swamped campsite. Paddling in a straight line between two small headlands, approximately 2km offshore, the wind picked up to a force 3/4 and generated a small breaking swell. Unfortunately for the canoes with their minimal freeboard, the breaking swell soon began lapping over the gunwales, and we found ourselves in a potentially serious situation. The only solution was to head to shore at no more than 45 degrees to the swell so that progress shorewards could be made, whilst reducing the risk of water breaking straight over the side and completely swamping the raft. The situation stabilised with the two bow paddlers digging in deep, while the stern pair bailed as fast as possible. At one stage the word had to be given for one of the paddlers to jump over the side in order to allow the boat to float higher in the water so it could be bailed. Had we not constructed robust rafts of timber and lashings, solo boats would simply have swamped and sank beneath us, leaving us at best with an exhausting 2km swim in breaking swells, lost gear and canoes, and a good deal of explaining to do!

An hour or so later at 1800 hrs we arrived at the ferry port of Yeiji, on the western shore of the head of Lake Volta. We had been afloat for over 36 hours and felt relieved to have our feet back on dry land. We felt like the Ghana Boat People. The team had purposefully arrived a few days early, so as not to risk missing the once weekly ferry south to Akosombo. This gave us the opportunity to have a good look around the town, which up until the late 1950's had been a small village almost 10miles inland of the then River Volta. We also managed to fit in a two day visit to the bustling capital city of the region, Kumasi, which gave us quite a culture shock after our peaceful days and nights on the serene and expansive Lake Volta.

Getting the six large wooden canoes, people and support vehicle aboard the ferry proved very entertaining. It just so happened

that we were travelling in the height of the yam season, and the captain of the boat was reluctant to offer us any deck space given the necessity for the local farmers to get their hard grown crop to the market places. We eventually came to a mutually agreeable conclusion and set up our mozzie nets on the deck of the "Yapei Queen." Two days later we were at the southern end of the largest man-made lake on Earth at the port of Akosombo. We unloaded the vehicle, gear and boats amidst a flurry of unnecessary African help. Before we could do much, all the expedition gear had already been unloaded and so again began the bartering process to pay for a service that we didn't actually request or require. We needed a truck to move the boats and gear downstream of the dam and eventually struck a deal providing they load the boats onto the truck we'd hired.

Down at the village of Senchi, that night, we asked the local chief to look after our canoes, and we left them in his care, afloat and tied to the

bank. At noon the next day we set off on what was to be our final leg to the coast. Unfortunately, the chief in his wisdom had pulled the boats ashore, and this coupled with the time spent out of the water on the ferry meant that the boats had dried out and the joints had shrunk. The net result was that the boats leaked more than at any other time on the trip, and an hour of floating repairs jamming all manner of gunk into the cracks was necessary before we could paddle anywhere.

The team decided that rather than try to camp amidst crowded villages over this last 90 km, we would attempt to paddle it in one go. This we did from noon on December 10th to 6am the following morning, as the eighteen hour stint slowly slid by in a tired, uncomfortable stupor. As the White Volta entered the Atlantic at the Gulf of Guinea, the surf was huge, somewhere in the region of 12ft, so we pulled into a sheltered lagoon and quietly congratulated one another on accomplishing a 600km river journey in difficult conditions, and one which never before had been completed in its' entirety.

Almost immediately, we trotted over the sand bar to take a look at the awesome surf. During the last 30 days or so, no one had come close to being in danger in the water. One lad underestimated the power of the huge dumping waves and was being thrown around like a rag doll. Eventually he was pulled out gasping, and wouldn't go anywhere near the sea again. The rest of us took many a good thrashing over the next couple of 'rest days', slowly learning how to enjoy the massive surf whilst still maintaining some degree of control and a reasonable supply of air to our lungs!

Overall a very worthwhile boat-based adventure, with valuable open boating experience being gained by all those who participated. If you fancy a solid African adventure, utilising the whole range of canoeing skills and techniques, try Burkina Faso to the Gulf of Guinea via Ghana's White Volta! ●



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competition ^{SURF}

The Plastic Fantastic National Plastic Surf Kayak Championships



Surf prediction is a difficult science and almost everyone got it wrong for this event. Forecasters had been shouting for days that the surf would be flat but the organisers, TNT Explosive Sports of Bude, held steady and were rewarded with an ideal three foot swell which proved perfect conditions for this competition.

Widemouth Bay At the beginning of April provided plenty of space and some fantastic sandbanks, creating challenging surf through out the tidal range.

As if holding their nerve all week and running the con test wasn't enough, the TNT organisers proposed a revolutionary competition format that involved all the competitors right up to the final. This points system format avoided the usual problem of having lots of knocked out

competitors hanging around getting bored during the second half of a contest.

All the paddlers agreed that this created a really friendly atmosphere out in the surf. This camaraderie was taken to the limit when Simon Hammond from Bude bounced his kayak off Joe Taylor from Plymouth and then insisted that it was all part of his ride!

Heats began at low tide using a central beach break with an inside hole that was causing the waves to break off somewhat. However by the second round the Camel Rock sandbank was creating some every powerful right hand sections which allowed the competitors to shine. Rob Galley surfing a Dagger RPM managed 2 covered ups in the same heat and Darren Bason in a Perception Mr Clean was putting in cut-backs and spins all around the pocket.

An interesting debate formed during the competition about the scoring of flat spins and other less visible yet potentially harder moves. It is without doubt true that flat spinning a flat bottomed playboat with releasable rails is easy, easier in fact than the timing involved in a good high slasing top turn. We suggested that flat spins in the 'pocket' which acted to stall the paddler who then continued the ride were considered good scoring moves, flat spins on the white water and out in front of the wave were not. The debate will continue.

Paddlers gave their all through out the entire contest by the end of which a real spirit of mutual respect had grown. Indeed such was this respect that

TNT explosive sports wishes to thank all the competitors and the many sponsors who supported this competition. The second annual Plastic Surf Kayak Championship will take place on March 31st / April 1st 2001, be sure to get your entries in advance as places are sure to be in short supply.

For more information and next years entry form send a SAE to TNT explosive Sports, Shoreline, 11a Crooklets Beach, Bude, Cornwall, EX23 8NE



the final places were of minor significance, better to have had a great days surf and perhaps mention those who were placed in the top 8 as they are quite probably the best Plastic Kayak Surfers in the country:-

Mat Britton, Bideford	Riot Glide
Tom Iggledon, Bideford	Dagger Infrared
Robert Galley, Stibb	Dagger RPM
Simon Hammond, Bude	Pyranha Inazone 230 (with glued on twin fins)
Rory Sacree, Bude	Dagger Infrared
Darren Bason, Newquay	Perception Mr Clean
Simon Cass, Callington	Pyranha Inazone 230
Joe Taylor, Plymouth	Riot Glide

A special mention also ought to go to Roger Taylor, Ian Brimacombe and Adrian Salanson who showed particular tenacity and enthusiasm throughout the contest.

Current boat design is certainly one factor that id making these competitions more and more exciting and now with Riot producing what is essentially a plastic surf shoe the future looks even better. ●



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news & info

Countryside and Rights of Way Bill 2000

The Bill we have been waiting for was published on 3 March; it can be viewed on the web at www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm199900/cmbills/078/00078. We feared that canoeing might not be included in the Bill despite our strenuous lobbying at the drafting stage. It is worse than that; it is specifically stated that access to open countryside classed as access land 'does not apply to a person who in or on the land in question...uses a vessel or sailboard on any non-tidal water' (schedule 2, clause 1(c)).

On 28 March Colin Kempson and Carel Quaife had a meeting with Chris Mullin MP, who is Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the DETR; the meeting had been arranged by Gareth Thomas, who is MP for Harrow West and a canoeist. We had the chance to put the canoeist's case much more effectively than can be done by written submissions. Chris Mullin MP acknowledged that there is an issue, which needs to be solved; however he does not want to achieve this by legislation. The outcome is that there is to be a meeting of government organisations including DCMS, MAFF, Sport England, the Countryside Agency, the Local Government Association and others to determine options for providing access on water for canoeists. There is to be a parallel meeting of non governmental organisations including BCU, WCA, RYA, Country Landowners Association, National Farmers Union and angling bodies; this group will have the same objective and is due to meet on 25 May.

Letters from the BCU and BCU members to Kate Hoey, Minister for Sport, have produced sympathetic responses. She has made arrangements for officials of her department to meet with their counterparts in the DETR, the Countryside Agency, the Environment Agency and British Waterways to consider a more positive strategy to help canoeists.

We still take the position that canoeists need rights enshrined in law. Over the last 50 years very few agreements have been achieved, as there is no obligation on landowners and others to make agreements. Amendments to the Bill have been drafted; Gareth Thomas MP has introduced us to two MPs, who we hope will be willing to propose amendments either at the committee stage or later on the floor of the House. By the time you read this the third reading of the Bill may have taken place.

Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Review

This review has been in progress since June 1998. The BCU has sent a series of submissions to the Review Committee. We urged them to consider matters in a wider context than fisheries alone; we pointed out that the interests of other water users including canoeists should be considered too. On 8 March 1999 Colin Kempson gave oral evidence to the Committee. The 199 page Committee report was published on 8 February 2000 and has 195 recommendations. It is out to consultation until 31 July. Find it on the web at www.maff.gov.uk/fish/fishindx.htm.

Recommendation 25 proposes that 'Byelaws should be introduced to abolish the close season for coarse fish on canals and rivers except where its retention is necessary to avert

serious risk of damage to fish stocks'. Bearing in mind that most agreements relate to the close season, this could pave the way to little or no canoeing on coarse fishing rivers. This horror scenario is doubly serious because for a high proportion of the population their local rivers are coarse fishing rivers.

Please write to your Member of Parliament to draw his or her attention to this problem. Please ask that he or she seeks an undertaking that, if recommendation 25 is adopted, users including canoeists will be consulted and given safeguards to prevent any loss of their enjoyment. You can write to your MP at the **House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. Please write in similar vein to Elliot Morley MP, Minister for Fisheries and the Countryside, MAFF, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR.** To find out who is your local MP try www.locata.co.uk/commons

This is another issue on which responses from individual members are very important. The responses from members on the Countryside Bill made a significant impact. These have helped considerably to get canoeing taken seriously. Lets do it again! Detailed information to help you is on the BCU website www.bcu.org.uk or can be obtained from the Development Service at the BCU Office.

New Local Access Information

New LAO for part of the river Wensum. Harry Winthrop will still act as LAO for the Wensum from Fakenham to Lenwade Mill. Tony Carter will be looking after Taverham Mill to the river Yare. **Tony Carter, 19 Meadow Rise Road, Norwich, NR2 3QE, Tel: 01603 453503**

A change of address for the Local Access Officer for the river Avon Foringbridge to **Sea. 30 Grebe close, Milford on Sea, Hants, SO41 0XA. Tel. No. 01590 641686.**

A new local access officer for the rivers Idle, Maun and Meden in the East Midlands region. His details are: **Carl Mitchell, 22 Brookfield Avenue, Sutton in Ashfield, Notts, NG17 2BZ Tel: 01623 468826 between 9.30 - 10.20am and 4-9pm.**

New regional access officer for the Yorkshire region, replacing Dr Norman Taylor, his details are: **Mr D.J. Cosstick, 10 Hodgson Crescent, Leeds, LS17 8PG.**

Dobbs Weir on the River Lee

Access arrangements:

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For insurance reasons only qualified members of the BCU coaching service can operate the sluices, which must be left closed at the end of the session.

Further information from Ron Hodgson 01992 628403 - Email outdoors@hymb.com

It is important that users keep to this agreement as negotiations are in hand for the use of other waterways in the park.



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BCU Student's Safety

By some miracle of last minute organisational skills on the part of the committee, nine members of our Sheffield University Canoe Club (SUCC) team found themselves booked on a 3 day BCU river running course, set up specifically for student paddlers.

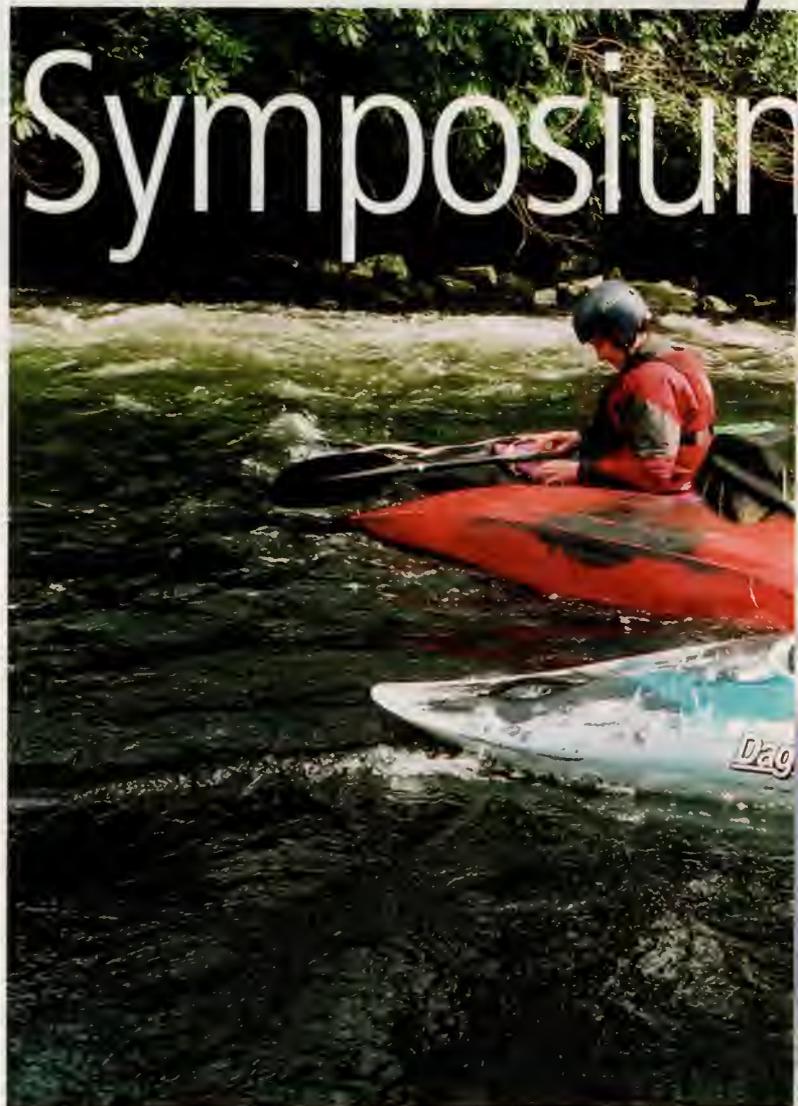
We had 3 separate ability levels within our group, 3 girls who wanted to concentrate on just getting themselves down rivers safely – Nikki, Anna and Julia. Myself, Suzanne and Alison who were beginning to want to lead rivers, and 3 blokes who wanted to do a 5* training style course. Although we had been assured that all 3 groups could be catered for, we were slightly dubious as to what to expect. Still after a week scabbling round Scotland trying to paddle spilt drinks due to the severe lack of water, we were willing to try anything.

Within minutes our doubts were laid to rest. After being introduced to our instructors – Mike Devlin, Matt, Shaun, and Rich it was explained to us that the course would run at whatever level we needed it to and we were asked what it was to we hoped to get from the course. We all then headed to the top of Arkaig. The 5* boys then went their separate ways, and the remaining 6 of us were left with Matt and Shaun.

The first day was mostly about practising the basic skills, giving the instructors a chance to watch us and get to know us as paddlers. We started with an hour of flat water paddling on the loch, then split into two to run the river. I think both groups squeezed everything possible out of a very bony Arkaig, using every excuse for a wave as a chance to practice our surfing skills. We also spent a long time at the top of the rivers' only rapid, discussing different ways of running it and laughing when Shaun went down first and got a bit of a working in the bottom hole! (he claims he was playing) The day was rounded up with a discussion about what we wanted from the rest of the course, and about how we could best go about achieving those aims.

The second day was fantastic. The 5* boys did their stuff on the Lower Findhorn, and the remaining 6 of us were split into 2 groups of 3 according to ability to run the Middle Findhorn, which amazingly HAD WATER IN IT!! Myself, Suzanne and Alison had all expressed an interest in leading, so under the loving guidance of Matt we took full advantage of what the river had to offer. The aim of the day was to look at 'prevention' improving safety by good use of signals, choosing the correct line, keeping a 'line of sight' and several other aspects of river leading. As well as discussing adapting the approach used depending on the group involved.

It was very much a group exercise, with each of us offering advice and encouragement to the other. At the end of the day we summarised what we learnt, and were given suggestions about what we needed to work on.



The 3rd day saw us back on the Arkaig to look at 'cure' – what do you do if things do go wrong? While the 5* boys ran Spean Gorge and the other group of 3 practised flat water skills, we got to stay nice and dry while practising throwing throw lines. We then ran down to the bottom of the rapid where what was likely to go wrong and what we could do about it, before setting up protection for the other group running the rapid behind us.

Anna was very obliging and not only swam but even recirculated a couple of times in the stopper for us!! Everything remained perfectly under control, all kit and swimmer were successfully fished out by us at the





cheese and pickle sandwiches and a weak lemon drink (Matt?). Over the three days of our course we covered rescue, leadership, assessment of rapids, jumping in the water, towing Suzanne's car across the car park and tactical swimming (Nick?) ON our last day Rich was mysteriously replaced by Rob Cunnington who taught us stuff including some river running styles... which turned out to be something a bit different to spinning your paddles round and shouting 'woo-ha' off drops. I think I can pretty safely say that we all got a lot out of the course I personally learned not to underestimate small stopper (after a mind expanding experience on the Arkaig... oh dear) and a whole lot about rope. Next time, let's not pick the driest week of the season to go to Scotland. ●



bottom – the only casualty being in her wetsuit boots which were sucked off her feet and did a solo descent of the rest of the river!! The rest of the day was spent practising rescuing various boats and swimmers using different techniques, which we discovered is definitely not as easy as some people make it look.

The course ended with a nice cup of tea at the instructors bunkhouse. It was an excellent 3 days because it was geared to whatever we wanted and it also offered us a chance to paddle with people of similar ability without ever being led by someone else. All of us came out far more confident in both our leading ability and our paddling ability, and we'd had good fun at the same time.

It also helped dispel myths on both sides – 'there wasn't a beard in sight amongst the BCU instructors, and their boats were shorter than ours.' On the other hand, 'the best way to kill the reputation student paddlers have of being completely irresponsible is by showing people how we paddle, and I think they were impressed'.

What the '5 star' boys were really up to:

Matt, Nick and myself were also a little unsure of quite what it was we had gotten ourselves into when we turned up err, bleary eyed for the first day of our course. Meeting Rich Joy was quite a relief after being led to believe that paddling anything smaller than a T-Canyon would be a distinct faux-pas on a five star training. Rich's Zwo, despite its size seemed to be a floating rescue facility with more well thought out slings, gubbins and bits of shiny aluminium than we'd ever seen. I think we were all at least slightly inspired by the idea of carrying proper kit, as opposed to some soggy



Student safety

The next safety seminar course will be held at Holme Pierrepont on October 21st and 22nd. For details contact the BCU on 0115 9821100

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Dagger Transition, beginners to advanced boat, GC, 2 yrs old, £300, Dagger Animas, VGC, 1 yr old £350 N. London info- Fax 0049714263399

Eurokayak Blitz, excellent all round playboat, surfs very well, suit someone wanting first playboat. Inc. airbags. 2 years old £210 ono. Tel: 01452 423124

Eskimo Diablo, blue GC full WW spec, airbags £280 ono (N London) 02083686273

K2 Fanfare, carbon/kevlar includes seats excellent condition £900 Tel:

0115 9334768

Mad River Outrage, solo WW canoe, Mincell foam bulkheads, fully adjustable saddle, thigh straps, knee cups 18 months old, only used 6 times in last 10 months, £600 / possible part exchange with plastic C1. Tony 01257 482801 (Lancs)

Mega Evolution Polo boat, full carbon kevlar, natural finish suitable for lady/leightweight paddler. 1 year old vgc, £250ono Contact Nicola on 01332 832450 or email

NicolaWilliams@lowandbonar.com

Mega Jester, surf kayak, immaculate condition blue, fully kitted out £400 ono, Mega rave playboat all carbon/kevlar 10kg airbags etc, Unmarked condition £400 ono, Prijon Eskimo Gatino, yellow, airbags etc £150 for quick sale Call John on 01535 636718 eves. Yorkshire Mega Jester, surf kayak, kevlar construction, black, £150. Also old slalom C1, fibrglass £35 Teignmouth 01626 778233

Mi370, with spraydeck and paddle and airbags £90, Perception Dancer classic with spraydeck and paddle £160, also 15 G stitch and glue plywood canadian canoe built from selway fisher plans no paddles £75 Tel: 01252 324030

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LOST

Dagger RPM, last seen on Slennigford Mill river Ure on 8th march 00. The kayak is bright green and unfortunately has no tel no. on it. If found please tel: 01748 874261 (9-5 week days) or 01765 602547

Double Dutch Paddles, River Barle in early March, Black left handed, please contact Adrian 01736 795098

FOUND

C1 paddle, found on Friday 3rd March on river Awe ring Giles on 01369 706337

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VCP Pintall, phone 0131 3397539 (Edinburgh)

Dagger Vertigo or Pyranha Ina-Zone240, any offer considered, contact mark 01635 35367 or 07984 284198

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Mad river guide, in gc, phone Liz on 01584 890775 / 07887 845094 or email on colleybrook@aol.com

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PADDLER'S GEAR reviews

Merrel: Aqua MOC

Reviewed by John Fenna

Following on the success of other models of "Moc" in their "45 Degree Slumber" range (don't ask me, I don't understand why the range is called this either!) Merrel have introduced the Aqua Moc, designed for use "in and around the water". This simple slip-on shoe has several advantages over some other water sports shoes, especially for open canoeists.

First of these is the "slip on" design, which proves very comfortable and surprisingly supportive, while not offering any potentially painful pressure point features like laces or zips when you kneel in your canoe.

The uppers of the Aqua Moc are of a breathable fast-draining and fast-drying mesh with "Benecke Ceraprene" reinforcement at heel and toe and a very comfortable padded cuff and foot top area which has "stretch" to give a secure fit. The heel is reinforced for stability and has a web loop to assist when the shoe is being pulled on.

The sole features the Merrel "Jungle Runner" unit, a "sticky rubber" unit that not only grips phenomenally well, even to wet slate, but is dual density for shock absorption, backed up with a compression moulded EVA foot frame, an air cushion mid sole and 4.5mm anatomical footbed for great comfort.

Although the heel rubbed when I first tried these Aqua Mocs, the shoes soon wore in and have proved very comfortable and supportive and give great grip in, on and around the water.

Very light and flexible, without sacrificing support or comfort, the Aqua Mocs are available in men's sizes 7-12, ladies' sizes 4-6 in "Lead" grey with yellow trim, or "Slate" blue/grey with blue trim, at around £50.00

For a similar water shoe with even more durability, try the Jungle Moc Kevlar which shares most of its spec with the Aqua Moc, but has a Kevlar mesh upper and costs around £80.00 For more information contact **Merrel (Europe) Ltd, CCS Centre, Vale Lane, Bedminster, Bristol, BS3 5RU, Tel 01179 636363.**



Big Pack Solo Tent

The Big Pack Solo is as, the title describes, a light weight tent for one person. The tent's shape is in the form of a tunnel that falls in height towards the foot end and at there is a small porch area suitable for the storage of some equipment or cooking. The inner has a zipped entrance with separate zipped insect netting door and an insect net panel in the roof runs the entire length of the tent. The tent is rapidly erected with only seven pegs required in most conditions and the outer tent is clipped to the inner and



then tightened to create a taught structure.

In use the Solo is quick and easy to erect and the connecting of the outer to the inner adds to the rigidity of the whole form of the tent; decreasing noise in windy conditions. The porch area is a little small and getting into and out of the tent takes a little practise but there is plenty of room inside to store gear. The panel of insect netting in the roof of the inner tent keeps the tent cool in the summer but in colder conditions there is a lot of heat loss. The poles and pegs have separate bags which helps keep fabric of the tent free from mud when the tent is packed away but it also means that these can be separated and stored elsewhere.

The Big Pack Solo offers the light weight camping of a bivi bag but also offers comfort without the disadvantages of a bag. A tent for people who like to travel fast and light but who would like a little more space than a normal bivi bag. RRP £195

For more information please contact Big Pack United Kingdom, (Scotland) Tel: 01698 845522 or Fax 01698 845811

Review by Dave Halsall



PADDLER'S GEAR

Pioneer: SL 50N Sport Active Buoyancy Aids

Reviewed by John Fenna



Not all canoeists are white-water thrill seekers who regularly get trashed in high stoppers/frantic surf or grate their bodies down grade 6 rapids. Equally, not all canoeists need gear that is designed to take this kind of wear and tear. I have recently been trying out the Sport Active Buoyancy Aids from Pioneer Outdoor Adventure. These, although not made of ballistic nylon or the very latest in long life high tech plastics, will offer the more relaxed paddler all the buoyancy comfort and convenience needed, at a fraction of the price a White-

Water Warrior needs to pay for "state of the art indestructibility".

Carrying the CE mark that guarantees they meet all the required safety standards, the Sport Active Buoyancy Aids are made with a full 50 Newtons worth of soft and comfortable foam encased in a light, but tough, nylon that is much more

"wearer friendly" than some textured nylons (if not as durable). Features of these buoyancy aids include a soft but strong webbing reinforcement from hem to hem over the shoulders, a drawcord adjusted hem, a fully adjustable Velcro closed main belt, a mesh front pocket with a velcro closure, elasticated side panels and a zipped side opening (for ease of putting on/taking off the buoyancy aids) with a press stud closure to avoid zip "creep".

Designed for comfort and ease of wearing, these buoyancy aids have deep cut arm openings for freedom of movement which, combined with the soft nylon, results in lack of chafe if the buoyancy aid is worn next to the skin as you drift down the river/canal/lake soaking up the rays.

These buoyancy aids are made to a good standard (despite one of the belt loops not been fully sewn down on the review sample – the first quality problem Pioneer have had reported on these buoyancy aids) and although not perhaps the first choice for adrenalin-paddlers, offer the more laid back canoeist an excellent option.

Neatly styled and available in an attractive (if soon dirtied) white/navy colour combination in sizes S-XL (for everyone from 30kg up to those over 90kg) the S.L. 50N Sport Active Buoyancy Aids cost around £43.75 and seem a good choice for all but the most regular and abrasive white-water canoeing.

Pioneer: Stern Storage/Flotation Bag

Reviewed by John Fenna



I was intrigued to see the Wilderness Systems' "Stern Storage/Flotation Bag" as it seems to prove that one item can do two jobs and thereby saving space, proving convenient and saving cash all in one.

Although made to fit the Wilderness System's kayaks, this dual-purpose bag could conceivably be used with a wide range of craft, including open canoes.

Made from heavy duty vinyl with welded seams, a standard inflation tube and two tying in eyelets, the bag measures some 75cm x 105cm in a kind of arrowhead shape, the

eyelets being set at the widest point, about 80cm from the point, and the inflation tube in the "shaft" of the arrowhead.

The base of the arrowhead provides the storage bag access and comprises a 42cm wide sleeve and roll bar closure. This proved to be surprisingly airtight.

To use the bag you simply fill it with whatever you wish to carry and slide the clip over the folded end of the access "shaft". Do not expel any air, but trap as much as you can and top it up with lung-fulls via the inflation tube.

As you have to reinflate the bag each time you open it to get at the gear stored inside, it is not advisable to use it for holding items wanted during the day, but is best reserved for items only needed occasionally, i.e. repair/disaster kits/camping kit/spare clothing etc.

Securely lashed into your canoe, the Stern Storage/Flotation Bag can be used either for dry storage or flotation, or both at the

same time. Filled with items such as sleeping bags and pile clothing, the bag still seemed to give more than 60n buoyancy, but naturally the heavier the contents, the less buoyancy provided.

The disadvantages of this combination of storage and flotation are:

- The more gear you carry, the less buoyancy you have available to support the extra weight;
- If you do tear the bag, you lose buoyancy and get your kit wet at the same time.

The advantages:

- Sensibly packed, the bags still give good buoyancy even when full;
- Using the system gives you more space for a fully kitted out canoe camping trip;
- You don't need to buy both dry bags and buoyancy bags – a cash saving!
- The system looks different and intriguing.

I have been trying out the storage/flotation bag in my open canoes and have so far found that the system works very well, the advantages outweighing the disadvantages to the extent that I am planning to replace my current end bags with these dual purpose bags when the existing bags die.

The Wilderness Systems' Stern Storage/Flotation Bags are available in Steel Blue only and cost approx £53. For more details contact **Pioneer Outdoor Adventure, 218-228 Edmiston Drive, Glasgow, G51 2YT, Tel 0870 9000527.**

Rasdex Rainbow Voodoo

The new Rainbow Voodoo Rodeo / playboat is now ready. Features from all the top playboats have been brought together and moulded in to this hot little boat so you can create your own ëblack magicí on the river.

The Voodoo has an adjustable seat and thigh braces, foam backstrap, full foam buoyancy and a full plate footrest.

Rasdex the importers of the Rainbow kayaks range say the Voodoo will be in stock at the Adrenalin shop on Trent Boulevard Nottingham along with a demo boat, Avoncraft, Extreme kayaks in Doncaster and Nomad paddle works in Bala will also be stocking the boat.

Price will Be £499

For Details contact Rasdex on 0115 9813323

info@rasdex.co.uk
www.rasdex.co.uk



P&H Vela

High performance exploration kayak scaled down for the smaller/lighter paddler.

The Vela has been designed for the smaller, lighter paddler requiring a quick sea kayak with at least a reasonable degree of stability. With a beam of 54cm (21 1/4") it is in the width band of the faster kayaks and the innovative hard chined, light convex curved hull provides the maximum possible stability for a kayak of this beam. With a length of 4m 80cm (15' 9") the kayak is more manageable both on and off the water.

Length: 480cm (15' 9")

Width: 54cm (21 1/4")

www.phcompany.co.uk



The Streamlight Wow and Syclone

Streamlight have been producing torches for over 25 years and with groups such as the New York Fire Department, the Canadian Mounties and New Zealand Mountain Rescue Teams they have a good pedigree. Their research has lead them to produce the first million candle power hand held light for NASA and a torch that will withstand temperatures of up to 500°C. With a large range of lamps that cover most applications there must be something in there to tempt canoeists to part with their money.

WOW RRP £14.99

The Wow requires 2 AA batteries and has a textured reflector that illuminates hot spots to give a very uniform beam. The torch converts easily from a handheld lamp to head torch and the bulb mounting incorporates a screw on/off switch and has a 180° head tilt.

The Wow is a poor design that attempts to get into the head torch niche but fails miserably. On first impression the torch seems very flimsy. Used as a hand held lamp it is OK but when used as a head torch it can be uncomfortable or floppy. The lack of a positive switching on and off of the lamp means that it invariably switches on when travelling in a pack and then leaves you with no juice in the batteries.



Syclone RRP £49.99 - £94.99

Four AA batteries power the Scylone which is waterproof to 30 metres, has a swivel head, rubber grip and lanyard attachment point. The torch can also be used hands free by either using a clip, head strap or helmet mounting. The dual bulb system can be switched easily from a candle power 2.2 Watt, krypton bulb to an amber LED which will provide for 72 hours of use. There is a rechargeable or disposable battery option.

The Scylone is a different kettle of fish; this torch oozes power, strength and reliability. Its main beam is very bright and the LED is great for prolonged use in a tent or for map reading when you don't want to lose your night vision. Its switch is positive and easy to use even with mountain mitts on. The torch multi-use; it will stand upright on a flat surface and the head can be angled to direct the beam, it can be clipped to a helmet, worn as a head torch and clipped to a pocket or rucksack strap. The Scylone is a well designed and very useful bit of kit.

More information from Edger Brothers, Tel: 01625 613177 or Fax 01625 615276

Swedish sun, sand and sauna?



We had just completed a three day survival exercise and were now heading for Lake Immeln, fully equipped with the appropriate kit and survival knowledge. I still had the 'funny tummy' from eating all those delicious plants and was forced to stop the minibus on two occasions on the way for those crafty chunders behind a telegraph pole.



Want to know more?

For more details on Open Canoe or Sea Kayaking Expeditions in Sweden or Survival Training contact O.E.D.I (Outdoor Education Development Initiatives) on tel (Mobile) 07968 438416 (Fax) 07977 070935 or E.mail odei@genie.co.uk

The band of merry men for the canoe expedition consisted of five students from Duchy College in Cornwall, Dan (the man) Ridpath; Si (hotmail) Rham; Sean Rider; Andy Hambly; and Reuben (hypo) Ellis. Also accompanying them on this trip were five students from Bollerup College in Sweden. The expedition being led by Tim (the welsh wizard) Wiggins and colleague Christian Person.

Mild force 2 breeze

Conditions were great with the sun beating down and a mild force 2 breeze. We put on the lake at Immeln itself with a collection of hand crafted wooden canoes made from Swedish spruce and a few 'Old Towns'. It was such a delight to be paddling these wooden canoes, for some people this may just be a dream, but here we were. Even the paddles were handmade resembling otertails and voyager paddles. The boats were so light and highly manoeuvrable and when edged turned remarkably quickly. Mind you with the water temperature only being 2 degrees centigrade I didn't fully test my bow jams.

Lake Immeln is just one of over 90,000 lakes in Sweden

and is edged by beautiful and extensive forests. As we left Immeln we moved away from traces of mankind and reached the peace and tranquillity of this fantastic location. The lake system itself stretches for over 35km with an abundance of different smaller lakes to explore.

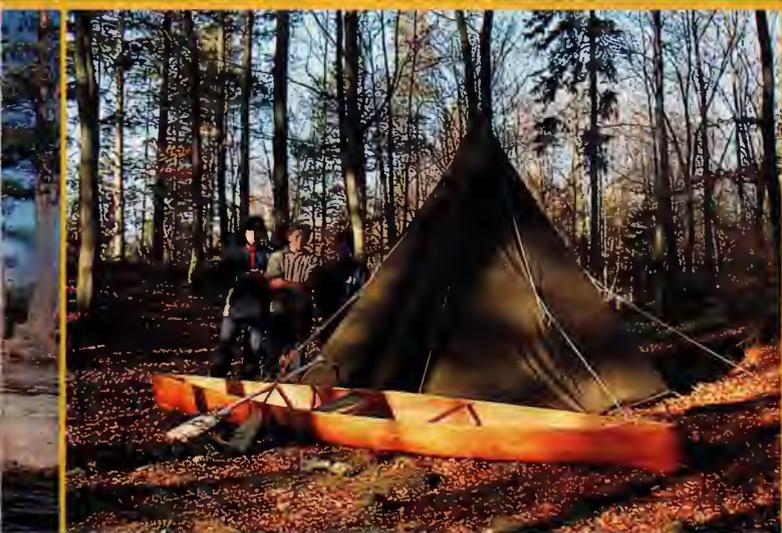
On the first day we made steady progress, taking cover from some of the many islands from the head wind. It surprised me how peaceful the lake was. Apart from one small fishing boat the lake system was ours to explore. We pulled in for the first night near Udden and found a quiet location sheltered from the breeze.

Peace, quite and an idyllic setting

Immediately our party started to get the wood and get a fire going. We erected the tepee tents we had brought along. Once we had eaten it was time to try our hand at some fishing using the line we had brought along with us and the wooden hooks we had made. By now the wind had dropped and the lake was like a mirror. No luck with the fishing, obviously we need some more tips from 'Ray Mears' survival techniques. That evening I had decided the time had come to relieve myself in the woods. After reading that classic "How to shit in the woods" book I felt confident and well prepared. Armed with the toilet roll and my trusty size ten boot I trundled off into the forest hidden by the disappearing sun. I quickly found a remote spot overlooking the lake. I decided to try the log perching technique, which entailed finding a log and squatting over it. Well this was a remarkable experience and I felt at one with nature. Peace, quite and an idyllic setting until I heard the log break and I almost sat in my own faeces. Obviously I need more practise at this technique, a good job no one was watching.

I woke the following morning to find myself alone in the tepee tent. The rest of the group said it had something to do with my snoring but I think they just wanted to sleep out under the stars. Well that's the story I'm keeping to.

The lake was once again like a sheet of glass with the morning sun reflecting on it. During the night the temperature had dropped to about minus three degrees but as the sun rose it soon warmed up. For this day



we split up into four groups, enabling each group to explore the tranquil spots and navigate the islands. We agreed to meet at the portage at Brotorpet. Christian and I left the rest of the group and headed for Hogan (translated as High Island). On one side is a 25 metre high rock face used for climbing and abseiling. We ascended via the East side, equipped with the flask of coffee and chocolate bars. This spot is one of the best of the lake system, from the top you feel you are in heaven and on top of the world. You look back across the lakes towards Immeln and from here you get a full understanding of the great lake system and it's expanse. We could see the other groups darting in and out of the many islands. The two of us could have stayed here all afternoon. The view certainly took your breath away and for quite some time we just sat there in silence. Far from the hustle and bustle of the English "rat race", stress - certainly not a drop of it out here. Sadly we had to depart from this spot to rendezvous with the rest of the groups. At Brotorpet you come to the top end of Lake Immeln and you are forced to take an 800m portage because of the fish spawning. The team rallied together and carried boats and equipment along the track (how I wished I had brought a canoe trolley).

Massive boulders

We then put in on Lake Filkesjon. A smaller lake and even more picturesque than the previous. On the north bank were holiday chalets/log cabins disused at this time of the year. This lake system was more narrow and harder to navigate. Concentration was needed to avoid the massive boulders hidden just below the waters' surface. Within the next two kilometres the lake narrowed into a short set of grade two rapids. Conscious of the delicate wooden canoes we were paddling the group decided to portage here. A ramp had been built to carry the boats around. The trouble being the uphill gradient and drop the other side. Not to be put off the group started the portage. I decided to line my canoe down the rapids, which involved ferry gliding across to the eddy on the other side and lining the boat down the jets. This worked well and certainly saved a lot of energy. With more water it would have been possible to shoot the rapids, as the group were indeed very competent paddlers.

Within another kilometre was the final fifteen metre portage. Following this we decided to split up. It was now late afternoon and we decided the experience would be heightened by a bivy out in smaller groups. We were to meet at Kion (one of the smaller islands on Lake Raslangen) at 5.00am. Each group took supplies and headed off in a variety of directions, slightly apprehensive but ready to take to the challenge. Christian and I set off straight towards Kion pulling in at one of the purpose built shelters for afternoon tea. Well I had to pass on the English tradition to Christian my colleague from Sweden. There are a few of these shelters built around the lakes, they sleep about eight and come with fireplace and yes even firewood cut for you. Each place has a toilet hut, hand axe and bucket and pontoon onto the lake. You wouldn't get this in England!!!

Sleep under the stars

We arrived at Kion at approximately 9.00pm and quickly got a fire going and the tepee erected. Preparing ourselves for the surprise we had planned for the group in the morning. That evening Christian and I sat around the fire watching the moons' reflection glisten on the water. Above us a whole host of stars were looking down at us. We loaded the fire up and pushed the stones into the fire before going to bed. Even Christian moved out of the tent to sleep under the stars this night.

I awoke at 4.00am to hear the first group arrive telling stories of their night paddle experience. What an impact it had made on them. I resurrected the fire ready for the surprise. Over the next forty-five minutes the other groups arrived and following a hot drink, it was time for the surprise.

"Come on time for an early morning swim and sauna" I explained. I won't repeat the responses I got but gradually I did manage to persuade five of the group to participate. We stripped down to our underwear and made our way down to the water. Dan was in first due to him slipping on the rocks and taking a forced plunge. The rest of us quickly followed into the two degree centigrade water. The sprint to the tepee over the frozen ground was like an Olympic sprint race. Christian had moved the hot glowing rocks into the tepee and the bucket of water. On went the water and up gushed the hot steam. What a fantastic experience and one to tell our mates down the pub when we get back. Unfortunately the hard part was leaving the sauna after it had started to cool down.

After getting changed and a hearty breakfast it was time to head back towards Immeln. There was not a breath of wind, which produced virtually perfect paddling conditions. For some reason we seemed to be paddling a lot quicker on the way back. Perhaps it was the revitalised bodies from the sauna. The portages seemed to pass with ease and we all took lunch back on Hogon. We had hoped for some wind to assist with the return journey so we could do some sailing, but this was not to be.

After an eight hour paddle we returned to Immeln.

The expedition had certainly reached the expectations of all those who took part. The lake system had been ideal with such an unspoilt landscape and beautiful waterways.

To a certain degree Sweden have got it right. A virtual right to roam and the ability to camp almost anywhere except in someone's back garden. ●

ALL WEATHER MAPS

Aqua3 waterproof maps available on line from aqua3.co.uk



Peak District based Chartech has today launched its on line map store www.aqua3.co.uk which contains a ground breaking free access public database which may be useful by anyone interested in watersports. Chartech has launched an on-line map store which enables anyone travelling to the UK's inland waters to choose the most appropriate map series, identify the individual maps required and purchase them on-line. In addition to this Chartech have added probably the largest map based information resource database on the web

For every map in each of the series there is an opportunity to leave information relevant to a specific map. Tell other enthusiasts about good locations and facilities, advertise gear and equipment, clubs and suppliers. Promote local competitions and post the results. Choosing the map series required then choosing a map is very simple as it is all graphically driven. By using one of the two UK graphic maps, one topographic and the other with settlements and roads, the viewer can select the location they wish the map to cover. Once on screen the viewer will see the familiar rear view of the OS map which identifies key features. Click on the map, select a subject area and submit to, or search the database.

"We wanted to produce a site which provides more than just an on-line map shop." said Mike Thompson, MD of Chartech. "To do this we commissioned a site which had a free,

unrestricted, public access database where visitors can leave information about any issue relevant to the map area chosen and which is important to them. It can be as controversial as rights of navigation and access; where to stay, eat and drink, the list is almost endless. Once submitted the information is then stored in a database and can be searched by subsequent visitors. We want the site to be used by people throughout the UK, there is no real limit to what can be entered. Should there be a category missing, please contact us and suggest what should be there. We want it to become an information resource which is geographically based, open to everyone and limitless in its scope."

The simple way in which the site functions makes it quick to download and very quick to submit and retrieve information. As the database fills with information it will be become possible to gather a wealth of background information about parts of the country before visiting them.

"Because it is public access we thought it would be fun to launch the site with a competition. We are offering a prize of 10 Aqua3 maps, of the winners choice, for what we think is the most useful submission to any part of the database each month for the first year." Added Mike Thompson.

For more information please contact: Mike Thompson, Managing Director, Chartech Ltd. Tel: 01433 621779

Email: mike@aqua3.co.uk

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The MX5 is a great camera to use when you are in and around water. Waterproof to 36 metres and constructed from lightweight clear polymers. The MX5 is non-corrosive and impact-resistant. Ideal for the canoeist for capturing the days activities on film. The camera can be clipped onto a belt or tucked into a pocket. The MX5 is a simple point and shoot camera, it has a 28mm focus-free lens which makes picture taking easy. The film loads, advances and rewinds automatically. Don't miss out on capturing water activities on film whether you are canoeing, windsurfing, snorkelling, scuba diving, white water rafting or just having a day at the beach. Available in five tropical colours Coral Reef Green, Deep Ocean Blue, Anemone Pink, Coral Reef Green, Luminous Yellow, Stingray Grey and costs £139 plus pp. Further details please phone

Tony White of Creative Underwater Solutions on 0208 318 9226 or Dick Davis on 07836 328135.

Photographs: Tony White



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