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Claire O'Hara

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**YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS MAKE CANOE 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, so don't be put off writing because you have no experience! Canoe Focus is all about canoeist to canoeist dialogue: a paddler's magazine written by paddlers. **Technical Information:** Contributions are acceptable in typed (double spaced) or preferably as a Microsoft Word file, which can be emailed to [peter@canoefocus.co.uk](mailto:peter@canoefocus.co.uk), or mailed to 2b Graphic Design, 49 Greenfields, St Ives, Cambs PE27 5HB. All material is accepted on the understanding that the BCU and it's agents cannot be held liable or responsible for loss or damage, although every care and effort is taken to safeguard material. Next Copy date is the **28th APRIL 2004**. Material arriving after this date cannot be included in the **JUNE 2004** issue. Canoe Focus encourages contributions of any nature but reserves the right to edit and condense to fill the space available and unless otherwise stated the publishers assume no responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts, artwork or photographs. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the British Canoe Union, its committees or members. The printing of an advertisement in Canoe Focus does not necessarily mean that the British Canoe Union endorse the company, item or service advertised. All material in Canoe Focus is strictly copyright and all rights are reserved. Reproduction without prior permission from the Editor is forbidden.



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# COMMENT

**Paul Owen**  
Chief Executive

## John Dudderidge and Ralph Tyas

As we closed for press in February we sadly brought you the news of the death of John Dudderidge our President of Honour. John was one of the founding fathers of British Canoeing and a driving force in the creation of the British Canoe Union.

This month we must now bring you the very sad news concerning the death of one of our vice presidents – Ralph Tyas. Ralph was also one of our founding fathers; working behind the scenes Ralph was the architect of many of the Union's rules and regulations. Many clubs probably don't realise that if they use the model constitutions supplied by the BCU these would have been written by Ralph. Ralph's contribution to the sport is immeasurable and a full obituary appears in this edition of *Canoe Focus* (Page 10).

## Community amateur sports clubs

Shortly before Christmas in his pre-budget report (PBR) the Chancellor of the Exchequer extended support for grass roots sports. Local sports clubs can take advantage of significant tax breaks that are available if they are amateur and open to the community through the Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) scheme introduced in 2002 and extended by the PBR.

The details announced in the PBR include exemption from corporation tax on profits derived from trading activities by registered clubs if their trading income is under £30,000pa. Profits derived from property income will also be exempt for clubs if their gross property income is under £20,000pa. Up to £50,000pa of income may therefore be exempt from tax. CASCs whose income does not exceed these thresholds will no longer be required to complete a corporate tax return on an annual basis. By far the most valuable benefits to BCU clubs that register as a CASC are:

- 80% mandatory business rate relief from April 2004
- The ability to raise funds from individuals under Gift Aid – a registered CASC can reclaim £28 in tax from the Inland Revenue for every £100 donated by individuals. Insofar as individuals giving under Gift Aid are concerned, a club registered as CASC is treated as if they were a charity without having to go through the detailed registering and monitoring process that a charity faces. Thus clubs do not have to own/lease their own facilities to substantially benefit from the scheme.

To date, the take up of CASC registration has been slow despite the fact that one rugby club has already reclaimed £30,000 back from the taxman. There are over 100,000 clubs that are potentially eligible to register, yet as at the end of January 2004, only 612 had done so. If only one in four of these clubs registered, with a reasonable successful fundraising programme and mandatory rate relief, Government could be paying in excess of £100m to the voluntary sports sector. The indications are that many clubs are not aware of these new benefits. The registration process is simple and the Inland Revenue administer the scheme with a light touch.

For more information explaining the options and benefits open to clubs please visit the CCPR website [www.ccpr.org.uk](http://www.ccpr.org.uk) or contact Sarah Woolnough at the CCPR on 020 7854 8530. The website also contains crucial information about how to

make your club's constitution eligible for the scheme. A 'model' constitution and 'model' clauses for clubs are available, which can simply be adopted or added to an existing document to fulfil the Inland Revenue requirements.

## Sports Relief

The very first Sports Relief, as part of Comic Relief, in July 2002 brought the world of sport together under one banner for the first time raising an impressive £14.4 million.

Comic relief's mission is to bring an end to poverty and social injustice. Half of the money raised by Sports Relief 2002 is being spent in the UK funding projects that make a difference through sport. The other half is supporting work trying to get children who are leading really tough lives in some of the poorest countries in the world. Information about Sports Relief 2004 can be found at [www.comicrelief.org.uk](http://www.comicrelief.org.uk). Do have a look and see if you can support the event.

## School club links

The BCU is to receive funding for School Club Links. This will amount to nearly £100,000 over two years. The purpose of this grant is to further develop national strategy for PE and school sport, with a particular aim of increasing the percentage of 5-16 years olds who are members of or participate in sessions organised by accredited amateur sports clubs.

## AGM

A successful AGM was held at the Welsh Institute of Sport, Cardiff on 6th March 2004. David Belbin was re-elected Treasurer. Cardiff as a venue for the AGM was ideal taking our annual meeting out of London for the first time in several years.

## Rivers Access Campaign

The Rivers Access Campaign continues to gather momentum with the BCU eagerly awaiting the publication of the DEFRA report. If you want posters and leaflets to help with your campaigning they are available from the BCU offices.

## Canoe Exhibition 2004

You will receive this *Canoe Focus* just in time to book your tickets for the International Canoe Exhibition to be held at the NEC from 2 to 4 April. Tickets for the show are available at a special BCU member's price of two for £16.00. They are available from the ticket hotline 0870 010 9086 and please quote BCU.

## Doping rules

The ICF have introduced their implementation of the new World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) rules with immediate effect. These in turn have been adopted by the BCU board. All athletes affected by the new rules will receive a full copy.

## Membership recruitment

Increasingly our membership comes under scrutiny by government agencies and others as a measure of the size and success of our sport. BCU membership has continued to steadily grow yet as we modernise it is important to develop more services and recruit more members. Go out and recruit a friend!

## Sean Morley

As featured on page 36 of this edition of *Canoe Focus*, Sean Morley commences his circumnavigation of Britain on April 3. Sponsorship forms to support the fundraising aspects of Sean's voyage are enclosed with this *Canoe Focus*. Good Luck Sean.

## Athens course opens

British slalom paddlers were amongst the first to get on the new Athens White Water course (page 9). Although not completely finished, the course is clearly going to be superb offering very challenging waters. More pictures of the course are also available on the BCU website ([www.bcu.org.uk](http://www.bcu.org.uk))

## Caversham Lakes

Work continues on the Caversham Lakes project to provide a regatta training facility to be used by both the BCU and the ARA, alongside the Thames in Reading. It is hoped that that our first use of the lakes will be during the Marathon Racing National Championships on 10/11 July 2004.

## Freesport

Work continues to try and develop a dedicated sports television channel on the Freeview platform, later this year. Canoeing is one of the twelve founder sports of this initiative.



## Leeds Met student is given a 'sporting chance'

In recognition of her outstanding sporting achievement Claire O'Hara from Meanwood in Leeds has been awarded a Carnegie Sports Scholarship by Leeds Metropolitan University.

Claire, who is in the third year of a BA(Hons) Sport and Recreation Development degree at Leeds Met, came second in the Kayaking Ladies' National Student Rodeo and is competing in Division Two Canoe Slalom. She takes part in many types of kayaking and canoeing, including whitewater river running, freestyle and rodeo, slalom, polo and open canoeing. She also coaches the Leeds Met Kayak Club and Leeds Canoe Club, and was captain of the University's Kayak Club last year.

On receiving the scholarship, which includes a cheque for £1,000, 22-year-old Claire, who attended Notre Dame Sixth Form College and Cardinal Heenan High School in Leeds, said: "I chose to study at Leeds Met because I was impressed with Carnegie's reputation and they offered the course I wanted to do. I will use the money to finance competitions and training, as well as upgrading my kit."

## School's big kids

Falcon Rowing and Canoeing Club in East Oxford has received a grant of over £6,000 from the Oxford Community Foundation to run a Summer School for local children in the skills of sculling and racing kayaks.

Part of the Falcon riversport school will be directed toward overweight students and demonstrate for them the enjoyment of fitness above obesity. Increasing activity on the river in after-school clubs can be a real contribution to the well being of our children in Oxford.

Peter Travis points out there are two conditions to the grant; the young people must have a full role in the setting up and running the activities; with hands-on training in how community sports are organised, so they become used to working together to access sporting facilities, sports training

opportunities and fund raising for neighbourhood sports.

In addition Falcon must find local, qualified or trainee, British Canoe Union and Amateur Rowing Association coaches willing to work with the children next summer. "This shortage of willing volunteers seems to still hold back lots of kids from doing things which would otherwise be open to them. Students from our two local rowing universities, Oxford and Oxford Brookes, are especially welcome as are any old hands at rowing and canoeing wanting to put something back into their sport." Commented the Falcon president. Some money is available to pay coaches expenses or fees.

The Lottery and BCU are helping Falcon buy more youth boats this year. Adults wanting to help are invited to phone Falcon on 01865 727388.

## ACT pleased with Schrodgers 2004

With record attendance figures of over 210,000 visitors, the 2004 Schrodgers International London Boat Show was deemed as a great success at the Excel exhibition centre in docklands. The move from Earls Court has allowed more room for exhibitors and key features such as a pool.

The consortium of paddle sports companies which worked together to set up the canoe village section of the show were equally pleased with their results. With the aim of promoting the sport to a much wider audience, the impressive stand drew crowds of interested members of the general public as well as lots of familiar faces and even government ministers, who were interested to hear how the sport and industry were growing and also importantly took note of the importance of access to waterways for canoeing.

The inclusion of the 75m x 30m indoor pool within the show (which was used to hold a demonstration canoe polo competition on) was a key feature and has now opened up the opportunity of a host of canoeing activities from competitions and demonstrations as well as more general 'come and try it' sessions planned for the public next year.

The Association of Canoe Traders (ACT) led consortium consisting of 14 of the major brands: Islander, Perception, Dagger, Pyranha, Palm, Mobile Adventure, P&H, Wavesport, Mad River, Victory, Windrider, Wilderness Systems, Voyageur and Yak invested in the London Boat Show as part of a new and enthusiastic cooperative partnership aimed at taking canoeing out to the general public.

There is also the exciting possibility of the partnership growing and organising more "enthusiast" focused events around the country as well as further developing this initiative in taking the sport to the public.

## Are NGB awards enough?

At the College of West Anglia they don't think so - modern 'outdoor' professionals need to be both practically skilled and academically aware. With increasing pressure on finite natural resources and the ever-broadening applications of outdoor experience successful practitioners are likely to be those with the skills to provide safe, enjoyable, appropriate and theoretically valid experiences to a broad range of client groups.

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## ICF expresses sympathy with Spain

Madrid - The President of the International Canoe Federation Ulrich Feldhoff has expressed his outrage at the multiple bomb attacks in Madrid.

"It was with greatest consternation and shock that the ICF has taken note of the tragic and abhorrent strikes, which took place today at various locations in Madrid", said Feldhoff.

"The International Canoe Federation, which has made its home in Madrid, is deeply shocked by these assassinations and the injuries to so many people. We would like to express our sympathy, solidarity and condolences to the families of the victims and all citizens of Madrid and the Spanish Olympic Committee", he said.

"We are remaining in silence and are at your side in this desperate moment", added Feldhoff.

## Struer looking for distributors in the UK

Struer Kajak A/S has for many years been one of the most important players in kayak markets all over the world, so now they would also like to give the UK a chance to see and buy this unique kayak made in mahogany veneer.

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For more information have a look at [www.struerkajak.com](http://www.struerkajak.com) or send us a mail on [mail@struerkajak.dk](mailto:mail@struerkajak.dk).

## North Shropshire youth get £4953

Oswestry and Districts Canoe Club have received a grant from the government children and young persons dept via the local network fund of Shropshire and Telford.

The grant was for £4,953, to purchase five double touring kayaks and spraydecks plus marketing finance to promote adventure trips to young persons in north Shropshire. The club is seeking approval to link trips with the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Youth groups will also be targeted to use the club facilities with leaders known to the young persons. ODCC is a club which is inspected by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority has British Canoe Union Centre approval and is inspected by the Welsh Tourist Board. Participants should be able to swim and the club is open to all including adventure seeking adults who support the quest to get our young people interested in exercise, healthy recreational interests and adventure. Youth leaders or parents can contact the club coach on 01691-659-280 or

[www.kayaktours.org.uk](http://www.kayaktours.org.uk) or [info@kayaktours.org.uk](mailto:info@kayaktours.org.uk)  
Dave Hart, ODCC Coach

## Peter Hughes

12th February 2004 aged 65

Every club or organisation has its share of characters and Peter was certainly this within Crewe & Nantwich CC. He joined the club shortly after it was founded in 1987, and since then he attended just about every event the Club put on.

We first met Peter when he came along to some pool sessions we were running locally, from there it was obvious he found an outlet for what he was looking for, a physical outdoor activity, mixed with a lot of friends and an active social life.

Peter in the early days was easily spotted in his super tanker sized Olymp on the rivers, in the 80's and 90's hurtled downstream at places like Holme Pierrepont when the NW Region used to hire the venue for the weekends.

The club did encourage him to become an instructor but he never really wanted to be one even though he was more than capable. He was content with helping other coaches, and coaching quietly in his own inimitable way.

He also became a helper teaching local Scout groups how to canoe.

He frequented the sea symposiums at Anglesey, and even bought a fold up sea kayak, which he took on the river Dove much to every ones amusement.

C&NCC regularly have weekends away Peter never missed any of them, even if work got in the way he would come for the day to support us.

He was always thoughtful, and would organise Easter Egg hunts for the children in the club, or the annual mince pie tour when everyone had to paddle in the silliest Christmas hat they could find. If he became aware of someone's birthday during an event he would make sure it was celebrated by everyone even if he had to make a detour to buy them a bar of chocolate.

He died following a motorcycle accident on February 5th, he was in the ICU ward where he passed away gently a week later on the 12th February. We will miss his whistling in the mornings when he got up, and when he paddled, we will miss his humour, and we will miss him; Peter will leave a hole that cannot be filled.

Phil Edwards Coach Level 3 on behalf of every member of C&NCC





As the BCU yearbook goes to print it is impossible to include late updates, the list below is an update to the current yearbook.

**Page 34 - RCO Matt Ellis** - Please note Matt has a new address, Outward Bound Ullswater, Watermillock, Nr Penrith, Cumbria CA11 0JL  
Tel: 01768 485000 E-mail: [mattellis@outwardbound-uk.org](mailto:mattellis@outwardbound-uk.org)

**Page 34 - Dallam Canoe Club** - New email and web address: [enquiries@dallamcanoeclub.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@dallamcanoeclub.org.uk)  
[www.dallamcanoeclub.org.uk](http://www.dallamcanoeclub.org.uk)

**Page 36 - Eastern** - Youth and Women, Lisa Coe, E-mail should be [lisa.coe@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.coe@peterborough.gov.uk) tel: no. should be Mobile: 07782 318265

**Page 36 - Eastern** - Touring and Moving Water, Ian Cave, Details are now, C/O FoxBoats, 10 Manna Drive, March, Cambs PE15 0AU Mobile: 07831 690584 E-mail: [kayak@switched-on.uk.com](mailto:kayak@switched-on.uk.com)

**Page 36 - Eastern** - Paddlesport DO, Please Note Brian Stanbridge is no longer the PDO  
**Page 38 - East Midlands** - Secretary Lorraine Pell New Email address [lorraine.pell@btinternet.com](mailto:lorraine.pell@btinternet.com)

**Page 41 - London & South East** - Please note Paul Newman is now Hon Secretary and his E-Mail should be [paulnewmanpaddlesport@bluevonder.co.uk](mailto:paulnewmanpaddlesport@bluevonder.co.uk)

**Page 41 - London & South East** - Please note there is a new RAO - Gavin Hollis, 27 Lakeside Park, Meade Lane, Chertsey, Surrey KT18 8NT

**Page 43 - Maidstone Canoe Club** - Paul Newman Secretary - E-Mail should be [paulnewmanpaddlesport@bluevonder.co.uk](mailto:paulnewmanpaddlesport@bluevonder.co.uk)

**Page 43 - Westel Canoe Club** - Mr Peter Yea - Please note that the address should be, 74 Nightingale Road, Carshalton, SM5 2EN Tel: 0208 6471771 E-Mail: [bluepeter74@yahoo.com](mailto:bluepeter74@yahoo.com)

**Page 47 - Crewe and Nantwich Canoe Club** - Please note the email should read [acrobot270@yahoo.com](mailto:acrobot270@yahoo.com)

**Page 49 - Local Coaching Organiser** Andrew Maxted - New telephone number 07730 852760

**Page 49 - Southern Region** - New Web Site address - [www.bcusouth.org.uk](http://www.bcusouth.org.uk)

**Page 51 - Southern Region** - Please note that Pangbourne CC's web site should read [www.adventuredolphin.co.uk](http://www.adventuredolphin.co.uk)

**Page 54 - Axe Vale Canoe Club** - New web site <http://axevalecc.members.beeb.net>

**Page 55 - Paington Canoe Club** - New secretary - Matt Read, 10 Berrys Wood Road, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 1UP Tel: 01626 205778

**Page 56 - Totnes Canoe Club** - Please note new secretary - Mr Graham Tweed, 12 Sheplegh Court, Blackawton Nr Totnes, Devon TQ9 7AH Tel: 01803 712612 E-Mail: [sue@tweed50.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:sue@tweed50.freeserve.co.uk)

**Page 58 - Club Omitted** - Heme! Hemstead Canoe Club Mr Chris Carter 29 Pretoria Road Watford WD18 0RL Tel: 01923 460508 E-Mail: [chris.hhcc@freeuk.com](mailto:chris.hhcc@freeuk.com) A B E H J N X Y Z

**Page 59 - Tamworth Canoe Club** - Please note the web site should read

[www.tamworthcanoeclub.fsife.co.uk](http://www.tamworthcanoeclub.fsife.co.uk)

**Page 60 - Yorkshire** - Leeds Canoe Club - Address should be 25 Wetslea Crescent Yeadon Leeds LS19 7EE

**Page 65 - Programme of Touring & Recreation** - Westel Tourist Trail - this has now moved to July 11 2004 and Jeff Simmonds E-Mail should read [jeff@westel.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:jeff@westel.freeserve.co.uk)

**Page 68 - Sea Kayaking** - Please note that Craig Addison has moved, new address - 41 Award Road, Staplehill, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 7NT

**Page 80 - Freestyle** - Please note that the website address has changed to [www.ukfreestyle.com](http://www.ukfreestyle.com)

**Page 85 - Marathon Racing** - Organiser No. 53 should read, Chris Carter, 29 Pretoria Road, Watford, WD18 0RL Tel: 01923 460508

**BCU River Information Service** - Inclusion - Mersey - Stockport to Carrington, Mr Christopher Cleaver, 39 Cavendish Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport SK7 6HX Tel: 01625 878838 Email: [chcleaver@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:chcleaver@tiscali.co.uk)

**BCU River Information Service** - Inclusion - Wheelock, Mr Mark Davies, 14 Prestbury Road, Maccelsfield, Cheshire SK10 1AU Tel: 01625 869887 Email: [markdaves72@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:markdaves72@tiscali.co.uk)

**BCU River Information Service** - Inclusion - Clun, Onny and Teme, West Midlands - Mr Karl Bungey Active Outdoors Cider View Stoke Lacy Herefordshire HR7 4HE Tel: 01885 490535 Mobile: 07876 205033 E-Mail: [jeme@activeoutdoors.co.uk](mailto:jeme@activeoutdoors.co.uk)

**BCU River Information Service** - Dane, telephone number should read 01606 48917 Email [vinadavid@lincsone.net](mailto:vinadavid@lincsone.net)

**BCU River Information Service** - Eden, Cumbria - Please Note, the Eden has an Access Agreement and should be Bold and Underlined

**BCU River Information Service** - Gipping and the Orwell - Please note that Andrew Sparks is no longer LRA for these rivers.

**BCU River Information Service** - Ribble - Jem Lees, Email: [jem.lees@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:jem.lees@blackburn.gov.uk)

**BCU River Information Service** - Entry Omitted - Lune Cumbria Mr Andy Clifford 4 Bankfield Kendal LA9 5DR E-Mail: [acclifford@ntlworld.com](mailto:acclifford@ntlworld.com)

**BCU River Information Service** - Weaver - David Moore, telephone number should read 01606 48917 Email [vinadavid@lincsone.net](mailto:vinadavid@lincsone.net)

**Page 112 - BCU Coaching Services and Fees** - Please note the price of the BCU Canoeing Handbook should read £19.95 inclusive of P&P

**Page 136 - Approved Centres** - Inclusion - Wimbledon Park, Merton Council, Home Park Road, London SW19 7HX Tel: 020 8947 4894 E-Mail [wimbledonpark@hotmail.com](mailto:wimbledonpark@hotmail.com)

**Page 138 - Approved Centres** - Inclusion - Oswestry and District Canoe Club, Mr David M Hart C/O Glanaber Treflach Oswestry SHROPSHIRE SY10 9HQ Tel: 01691 659 280 E-Mail: [info@kayaktours.org.uk](mailto:info@kayaktours.org.uk) Web: [www.kayaktours.org.uk](http://www.kayaktours.org.uk)

**Eddie Bingley, BCU Yearbook Compiler**

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## Ralph Francis Tyas

## John Dudderidge OBE

1912-2004

Ralph is known to most paddlers for his work in producing the Guide to the Waterways of the British Isles first published in 1936. This was the first and is still the only comprehensive guide book. He told horrific stories of its production and extensive editing back in the days of wax stencils.

Ralph came into canoeing as a young man and as a member of the Canoe Camping Club toured extensively in both the UK and Europe. Touring remained his preference and he served throughout his life on the CCC National Committee and the BCU Touring Committee.

In 1965 he added membership of the newly formed Access Committee where he continued to serve as the source of legal and factual information on rivers for both staff and successive voluntary officers. He was involved in obtaining the House of Lords Select Committee decision in 1973 that recommended legislation to enable negotiation for access to water to take place equitably. Although this was never implemented it did form the basis for future action on access.

He was elected an Honorary Vice President of the BCU in 1999 and attended meetings up until late 2000. His advice to staff and volunteer officers was comprehensive and invaluable.

Ralph leaves his wife, Sheila, four children and ten grandchildren. He will be missed.

**Competitor in Berlin Olympics who went on to develop Canoeing as a modern sport**

**John Dudderidge, who died on 23 January aged 97, was a founding member of the British Canoe Union, the governing body for canoeing and was a notable figure in the administration of the sport, both nationally and internationally for 45 years.**

Canoeing was included in the Olympic programme for the first time in 1936. Dudderidge had acquired his first canoe three years earlier, and he was among those who recognised that it would be necessary to set up a national governing body, if a British Olympic team was to travel to Berlin.. As with many sports Canoeing had started in Britain in the 19th Century when the Royal Canoe Club was founded by John MacGregor and continued with a number of clubs around the kingdom, but with no overall control. The British Canoe Association was founded in 1933. In 1935 Dudderidge became Racing and International Secretary, and set up a training squad, which were invited to train at Royal C C. In 1936 the British Canoe Union was founded, taking over competition from BCA, affiliating to the IRK and BQA, and Dudderidge took a team of three to Berlin. In 1938 he took a larger British team to Stockholm to compete in the First World Championships. At the Congress of the IRK (later rebranded as International Canoe Federation) held at this time he was elected to the Board of Management as one of two members for Europe, a position he retained until retiring in 1980.

At the outbreak of war in 1939, Dudderidge was appointed Hon.General Secretary of the BCU when the existing officer was called up to serve in the Forces. He guided the Union through the difficult war years and held this post until 1959, when he was elected President. Somehow, he also found time to assist in the foundation of Richmond Canoe Club at Richmond on Thames, now one of the leading clubs in competitive canoeing.

By 1946 the time had come to revive the International Federation, which had been a somewhat German dominated body, known as IRK (Internationale Repraesentantschaft fuer Kanusport). Out of the ruins a new international body emerged, the present ICF, and Dudderidge was at once elected Vice-President with responsibility for organising the 1948 Olympic Canoe Regatta, held at Henley, to be followed by the World Championship programme and the Congress. Dudderidge undertook all this with characteristic enthusiasm and inspired the many volunteers required to do the work. Not content with this work load he persuaded a firm which had previously specialised in manufacturing aircraft propellers to provide, as a gift, the dozen racing kayaks required for training the British team.

John W. Dudderidge was born on 24th August 1906 in Sheffield. He was educated at Magnus Grammar School, Newark on Trent and University College, Nottingham. After two years as Assistant Master at Manor House School, London, the rest of his professional career was spent at Haberdashers' Aske's School at Hampstead and Elstree, where he was Head of Physical Education 1931 to 1956, on the Science Staff 1956 to 1969 and Housemaster 1956 to 1966.

It must be remembered that Dudderidge worked for sport development at a time when there little or no government funding. He believed that those who had enjoyed the privilege of participation in a sport should be prepared to plough back some of that enjoyment and help others, in particular young people, to find similar satisfaction.

After the war, therefore he set out to promote Canoeing in schools, beginning with his own; persuaded the Outward Bound Schools to include canoeing activities in their curricula; encouraged developments in the Scouts and other uniformed



John Dudderidge (right) with the late Geoff Sanders in 1993

youth organisations as well as in the Youth Clubs, and when the Central Council of Physical Recreation was given Bisham Abbey as a National Training Centre he pressed for canoeing facilities to be included, offering to run courses there and find other canoeists to help. He also sought to interest the Youth Hostels Association in setting up youth hostels to cater for travellers by water. It was through this involvement in youth activities that he came to realise that if the Union was to cope with the growing flood of would-be canoeists it would be necessary to train people for the work of teaching the basic skills, and conceived the idea of setting up a Coaching Scheme under BCU. He then began to organise training courses in various parts of the country in collaboration with local canoe clubs, and from these courses he appointed selected people as coaches on whom to build up the Scheme. Pioneer courses were held in Sheffield, Leamington, Bradford on Avon, Ham Dock and other centres. When the Coaching Scheme was on its feet he handed over the Chairmanship to his colleagues who developed it to its present stature.

Ever enthusiastic for canoe touring, Dudderidge travelled widely at home and abroad; taking the opportunities offered by his official duties as an ICF Official at Olympic Games and World Championships in many parts of the world, he made a practice of staying behind when teams returned home, to find out more about the host country and its rivers. In 1965 he began a long dialogue with land-owning and angling interests in the hope that a policy of collaboration and reasonableness rather than confrontation might lead to the opening up of more private waters to canoeists, or at least prevent further restrictions. He was for many years the Chairman of the Access Committee formed to handle this work and found that English Law on property rights severely hampered progress. On one occasion he was called to address a committee of the House of Lords on this issue. This is still the case and the work he started continues.

Dudderidge's unflinching cheerfulness brought friends and recognition in many countries and the mere recital of awards and offices held indicates the wide spread of his interests. He received the BCU Award of Honour in 1961, with the Award of Merit from the ICF in the following year together with the OBE "for services to sport." In 1977, after seventeen years as President of the BCU he was given the title "President of Honour". In 1980 on retiring from the Board of the ICF he was presented with the Gold Medal and Honourary Life Membership. He represented Canoeing on the Council of the British Olympic Association 1938-1980, Member of the Executive 1969-1973, Deputy Chairman 1973-1977 and Vice President 1977-2004. As competitor or official he attended every Olympic Games from 1936 in Berlin to 1992 in Barcelona.

In his nineties, having retired to Cambridge, Dudderidge was still active with his local canoe club. He retained his independence and zest for living and at the age of 97 took his first gliding lesson, which thrilled him greatly. He married Evelyn in 1936 who predeceased him. John Dudderidge is survived by his two daughters, Hilary and Ruth and two sons,

# Olympic Canoe Slalom on target for a spectacular, stunning venue

The Helleniko canoe slalom course built on the old airport site in Athens opened for the first time on 25th February with nations from the world over attending in order to bring in the information they need in preparing athletes for the 2004 Olympic Games.

No ceremony. Indeed a somewhat auspicious start as the five (out of six) pumps pushed out enough water to dislodge two big slabs of concrete used to fix obstacles on the river bed. Great Britain canoes and kayaks attending were self-selected from 2003 domestic selection events.

Despite the start having a hiccup the newest addition to world slalom courses sets an Olympic standard in site design

and construction. The overall impression is stunning. Just at the moment the technical quality of the water needs working on - doubtless changes will happen to obstacle positioning. There were no adverse comments about sea water being used and it will just become part of the racers routine to wash the salt out of kit - and simply forget for what originally was a problem for some!

Left: The course. Below: Paul Ratcliffe. Note the frothy whiteness of the water as expected with (sea water) ocean water. It will take some time before the full technical character differences between sea-water and river water are evaluated - and may turn out to be insignificant.



## Channel Sports Boats

Channel Sports Boats is an existing motor boat dealer for Chaparral, Salcombe Flyer and Linder Aluminium Boats. From February 2004 they have branched out into distributing canoes, kayaks and associated accessories. They aim to service both private individuals and supply bulk orders to university societies, adventures centres and canoe clubs etc. Although based near Canterbury, Kent they are open to supply throughout the UK. They offer demonstrations to individuals and groups by appointment and have agreements to supply Ainsworth Paddles, INKAS Aluminium Canoes and TekSport Kayaks, a range they hope to expand on throughout the year.  
[www.channel-sportsboats.co.uk](http://www.channel-sportsboats.co.uk), e-mail [sales@channel-sportsboats.co.uk](mailto:sales@channel-sportsboats.co.uk)  
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## WCA statement on the River Dee

This is a WCA statement in response to the access agreement we have been offered by angling interests on the River Dee.

Last week we were offered an agreement, which we've rejected for a number of reasons. We were offered one 'limited numbers tour' for February 2004, then no further recreational access until 2005. We felt it would have been a step backwards to accept this as we would have had the same number of tours but for fewer people.

The February tour date for this year was limited to 400 people. Dee tours have never had such a numerical limit imposed on them before, and we felt that to run an event this year with such severely restricted numbers would have been unmanageable and not in the best interests of paddlers. The date that was offered was also unrealistically soon, considering the organisation and planning that are needed for an event of this scale. From a health and safety perspective, this arrangement couldn't have worked.

We also felt that it was unrealistic to offer access to 400 people over two days on condition that the rest of the paddlers in the country stayed off the river for the remainder of 2004.

We'll only accept an agreement that we feel is realistic enough for paddlers to accept.

Although the angling interests have asked us to request that paddlers stay away, we can only advise people that there's no access agreement in place on the river (outside the Mile End Mill site). We'll continue to give this advice until a realistic access agreement is in place on the Dee.



# Rivers Access

([www.riversaccess.org](http://www.riversaccess.org))



**By the time you read this we might have had a response from The Countryside Agency Access Demonstration Projects; which is the latest phase of research currently being undertaken by the University of Brighton on behalf of DEFRA. If we have received a response and have been able to respond then you can find out all the information on our website [www.riversaccess.org](http://www.riversaccess.org) and in the next edition of *Canoe Focus*.**

**The campaign for greater access to our rivers in England and Wales, even with a positive response from DEFRA will need continued raising of public awareness (for canoeists and non canoeists alike), as well as, the lobbying of our Members of Parliament and all the other key agencies and organisations on a regular basis. The Access Team will continue with their work on lobbying and raising awareness but we do need the support of the many, many groups and individuals.**

We gave some ideas in the February edition of *Canoe Focus* of ways in which you could help to raise public awareness. It is important that you get involved in this campaign and help. We need all the support so that not only is everyone aware of the access issue but that we mean to change the situation. We would be happy to hear of any other ways you feel would help. You can also visit our website ([www.riversaccess.org](http://www.riversaccess.org)) where the 'How to Raise awareness' suggestions can be found.

### Lobbying your MP

One of the most successful ways of getting your point across to the Government is via your own MP. Your local MP, as well as being involved with countrywide issues and decision-making is concerned with issues that affect their constituency members and this includes the access issue.

Lobbying your MP means that you contact your MP and express your concerns and discuss the issue putting your case for change. One of the best ways is to actually go and meet your MP at one of their local "surgeries" (a time set aside by the MP to meet local constituents) Your MP is likely to ask what you would like them to do.

Sometimes it is just a case of ensuring your MP is updated on the issue/problem but it is more likely that they need to act on your behalf. It could be anything from writing a letter, raising a question in the House of Commons to putting forward a Private Members Bill.

In the case for Access we need them to be fully aware of all the issues including the access problems in your area. We need them to support the work currently being undertaken on behalf of DEFRA for the Rt Hon Alun Michael MP, Minister for Rural Affairs by pledging their support in writing to the Minister

and stating that greater access to rivers is needed and that they support this need.

### How to lobby

You can contact your MP and arrange an appointment to see them either at their local office or at one of their surgeries near to your home. This information can be found from your local council or local paper. The information could even be in your area's phone book. It is best to actually go and see them. We can help you with leaflets and posters if you would like to leave them some information, which you could then follow up with a letter (sent to their local constituency office) summarising the points you discussed. The address for your MP can also be found at [www.parliament.uk/directories/nciologists/alcsm.cfm](http://www.parliament.uk/directories/nciologists/alcsm.cfm)

- Please go and see them at the appointed time and explain
- What your personal paddling experiences have been.
- What you feel the problems are and difficulties in your local area.
- Why you feel canoeists should have equality of access to rivers.
- What equality of access would mean to the 2,000,000 people who go canoeing every year... Let alone anyone else who enjoys the great outdoors!

You could take with you back up information (e.g. you could use information from The Case for Change (see below) and personal experiences) including your comments summarised, which they can use for future information. Do not forget to cover all your really important points during the meeting.

Another discussion point is The Countryside Agency Access Demonstration Projects; which is the latest phase of research currently being undertaken by the University of Brighton on behalf of DEFRA. This needs to be discussed with your MP. You can also mention the first Brighton report "Water Based Sport and Recreation: the Facts" as well as progress reports for the Access Demonstration Projects that followed. This information is on the website. Suggest that your MP should not only be aware of the report and that you would like them to write a letter of support for the work being undertaken but also to state that greater access to rivers is needed and that they support this need.

Please try and see your MP as soon as you can and let us know how you got on. You can do this via email at

# Access Campaign



[info@riversaccess.org](mailto:info@riversaccess.org) or by letter to Rivers Access Campaign, British Canoe Union, John Dudderidge House, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Notts NG2 5AS  
Tel: 0115 9821100 Fax: 0115 9821797

The Rivers Access Campaign Leader will note your details so that if the situation changes during the lobby period we can let you know.

## Letter writing

If you are not able to visit your MP in person then please write to them at their local constituency office stating your concerns and asking them for their support to change the situation. (If you want to put a leaflet in we can send you one... just ask us) Remind them of the fact that The Countryside Agency Access Demonstration Projects; is the latest phase of research currently being undertaken by the University of Brighton on behalf of DEFRA. Suggest that you seek support to expand the work on access, so that longer term, there is greater access to rivers potentially through new legislation. If there are difficulties in access locally point out where so that they can see the impact in the local area too.

To help you we have drafted up a few letters for you to add your own details and facts to. Do have a look and see what you can do.  
([www.riversaccess.org](http://www.riversaccess.org))

## The case for change

You could present your own case for a fair share of our rivers for canoeists based on your personal views and experiences. Here are some suggestions you could use.

## Background

The legal situation regarding access to water in England and Wales is different from other countries in the world, where canoeists are generally able to paddle large and small non-tidal rivers without seeking permission, as beds of these rivers are not privately owned and not vested in riparian owners. Under these different and more open regimes there is very little, if any, conflict between land ownership, angling and navigation interests, each having rights to the use of the water.

## The current position

A substantial mileage of lowland flat water is managed by a number of navigation authorities. However, when compared with the large number of waterways that do not have access or navigation rights it is simply inequitable and highly restrictive to a water based activity that needs access to water to pursue its activities.

"Private" waters represent the best canoeable rivers in England and Wales offering both challenging moving white water and calmer recreational water. Both Labour and Conservative governments have consistently recommended that canoeists seek more access through negotiation on a waterway-by-waterway basis. Local negotiation has been well tried but has not succeeded in delivering any significant increase in access to and along water.

Local authorities, which have the powers of persuasion, have not made any orders under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

The BCU have concluded that gaining access by voluntary and negotiated agreement is not effective. The only way forward is an Access to Inland Waters Bill.

## These facts and figures may help too.

- Canoeists do not harm fish, fowl, flora or fauna and leave no trace of their passing.
- English Nature agrees that there is unlikely to be any significant impact on or lasting disturbance to wildlife and the water environment from the passage of canoes.
- The Environment Agency research has shown that canoeing does not impact on fisheries.
- A high quality environment is an essential part of the canoeing experience.
- Research has shown that canoeing does not impact on fisheries.
- Canoeing is a non-polluting activity sport.
- Anglers fish from boats and canoes.
- All other countries in the world do not have the situation where the bed of

- a river can be privately owned and they experience little conflict over use.
- Canoeing contributes to government's social objectives and does address social exclusion.
- Internationally, British canoeists have an enviable track record of international results. Our competitors have achieved medal success at every level of competition including Olympic, World and European Championships.
- Canoeing is an activity that is enjoyed by all ages, gender, race and ability.
- Canoeing assists in developing social skills for all ages but especially young people.
- Canoeing contributes to economic development through a healthy and growing canoe trade.
- Canoeing promotes a healthy life style through physical recreation.
- Canoeing promotes and canoeists acquire skills and sporting excellence.
- Canoeists travel extra distances to paddle when suitable local waters are not available.
- When preparing for the CRoW (Countryside and Rights of Way) bill, the Countryside Agency commissioned a poll by MVA Ltd in 1999 entitled "Access to Other Open Countryside - measuring potential demand". The following public support was stated....69% were in favour of increasing access for canoeing and rowing, 19% against and 12% unsure.
- On the River Wyre the favourite method of collecting Otter spraints (droppings) and observing Otters is now undertaken by canoe.
- Canoeing is an affordable means of getting afloat for everyone especially for young people and families.
- For several years in a well-known SSSI, canoes were used by English Nature to check how many eggs breeding water birds were hatching in their nests because canoes were the only way of getting to the nests without undue disturbance.
- Canoeing is an increasingly popular recreation particularly for the young and the retired.
- The BCU have local and regional longstanding advisors for each river to help with canoeing information of all kinds.
- Where an access agreement is considered by paddlers to give paddlers fair access they are adhered to and the BCU is happy to help promote, publicise and manage that agreement.
- There are over 2,000,000 people who go canoeing each year.

**Please remember...  
All we are after is a  
"fair and secure"  
share of a natural  
resource.**

## River Information Service

Amendment to the 2004 Year Book entry for the River Teme. Karl Bungey continues as the Local River Advisor and his contact details are changed to - email:  
[teme@activeoutdoors.co.uk](mailto:teme@activeoutdoors.co.uk) tel no. 01684 574546 (work) and 01885 490535 (home).

## Fencing around weirs

The Environment Agency have been installing fencing about weirs to prevent public access for safety reasons following a non-canoeing related accident. Where the Agency has contacted the BCU fencing has been arranged to allow portaging and access about the weir to effect throwline rescues of paddlers and anyone else on a weir or in a stopper. A satisfactory arrangement has been agreed with the Thames Region of the Agency for Castle Mill Weir on the R Mole at Dorking. Elsewhere, the BCU and Inland Waterways Association, supported by a local authority in a case on the R Chelmer have contacted the Environment Agency where fencing has created portage and possible difficulties for rescues. The Agency has acknowledged the need to take greater account of the safety risks these installations can create for other recreational users and for retrospective corrective action where necessary. Please let your Local River Advisor and the Access and Facilities Department ([access@bcu.org.uk](mailto:access@bcu.org.uk)) know about any difficulties encountered with new fencing installations by the Environment Agency.

F O C U S

Feature  
FINLANDBCU courses  
life by experimentation or,  
with your pants down!

One of the highlights of the Open Canoeing summer was again the BCU course at Nurmes, North Karelia, Finland in August. I participated already last year and thought the course was excellent, besides we also had great fun! So, of course I signed up this year as well.

I had mentioned the course already last winter to my paddling friend and clubmate Jaakko Mäkikylä, who is also the PR-man for the Finnish Open Canoe Association and he also decided to come. In fact, he took a jump start in May at Nurmes when they organised the 1-2 star skills course up there. Also last summer was a Level 2 Coach course, which meant that some of the participants had to acquire Three Star skills and Canoe Safety Test awards.

### Dave ,the funnyman

Lester Matthews and Graham North from Birmingham were our teachers again this year and they brought a third instructor, Dave Perry from the same area, with them. Despite a promising rush to sign up in the spring, we were finally only seven paddlers on the course, three canoeists, three kayakers and one participant who did the course using both. The teaching language was English, which as such is alright for paddlers, since most of the terminology is in that language anyway.

The open canoe group was assigned to Dave, who proved to have the most excellent personality right away. Dave must be around sixty, but that does not slow him down, he still has a wonderfully relaxed touch to teaching and certainly gets the last word... We liked Dave instantly and the endless verbal fireworks continued throughout the course.

We covered the three star syllabus on flat water already on the first day and the ones who were still missing the Canoe Safety Test did that also. I already had it from last summer's course.

On a BCU course the teaching always starts from the basics. The syllabus is covered both during the lectures and in practice. This course was no exception. We started eagerly to go through all the basic techniques for the open canoe to kick off the skills test. This is the only right approach even at more advanced levels; after all the J-stroke with all its



variations is the most difficult item in open boating – and at the same time its most basic element. And anyway: what does a canoeing instructor usually do if not teach the basics?

### Foreign teaching method

Although the teaching syllabus for a BCU course looks very methodical on paper, the actual teaching does not have to be carried out in the same sequence, especially when all the students are adults. These three BCU coaches adapted their way of teaching to the personalities and skill levels of their students. I already noticed this on last summer's course,

for which I had carefully prepared by going through the two level skills test during the summer. I was even a bit nervous before the course, since the list of things to demonstrate seemed pretty severe on paper, but on the actual course, the agenda was quite free. I realised only afterwards that all the necessary items had been covered despite this. Even tests on these courses are not tests as we Finns understand them, but they are performed by the students



# in Karelia —

## Learning rope tricks even

experimenting, together with the teacher showing them how to do it. At the same time, the instructors observe you and make mental notes about who can do what. At the end of the course they give you personal feedback and a chance to discuss the course and leave you with a list of things to practice. The open canoe group on the course really appreciated Dave's completely unofficial and riotously humorous approach, and we all enjoyed the technical workshops on the water. However, this teaching method, that deviates completely from what we Finns are used to, seemed to baffle some of the new kayakers on the course, even to such a degree that they did not think they were learning much. My opinion is that you do learn on the course, but you need to shake the preconception of expecting a purely methodical approach. It is important to actively try the things that are currently discussed and taught, the rest of the group will give you instant feedback anyway, and the teacher's role on the water is to encourage the students, not to tell them what to do.

When the incident was analysed we concluded that a 'traditional' white water rope rescue would have been appropriate also at Jongunjoki and that it, as an option, would have been safer for the rescuers than the method actually used. Nevertheless, the incident ended happily with the pinned man being finally rescued, which of course is the main point. We had the opportunity to apply this theory into practice the following day at Viitakoski rapid at Jongunjoki, where we went to practice moving water techniques and poling. Lester first waded to a rock and "pinned" a kayak against it. The rescue operation was launched by first ferrying a rope across the river above the "scene of the accident". Then, the rescuer was hooked onto the main line by an independent line and a carabiner. The idea is that the rescuer performs a self-lower to the pinned craft/person in trouble (this time an empty pinned kayak). The rope men on each shore help by moving the rescuer laterally across the current to the desired spot.

### Pants down

There are detailed descriptions of the anatomy of rope rescues in the literature. I have read about them myself, but now I was to experience personally what happens when the ropes are not attached properly, since I was the swimming rescuer in this operation. Although the water level was really low, it was surprising how strongly the current grabs the swimmer, who the ropemen on the shores aim to position in the current above the rescued boat/person. My own 'umbilical cord' (from a buoyancy aid equipped with harness) was hooked onto the main line with an ordinary snap-gate carabiner, which released even in the mildest flow, unleashing the rope. I thereby drifted down the rapid with the current pulling down my pants (only the outer ones) to my ankles with everybody else gaping (and laughing) on the shore. Well, a couple of bruises on the bum is not irreparable damage and even the pants were still wrapped around my ankles when I tried to get up at the bottom... (Lester's note: I let a snap-gate be used in the hope that it would release, as a salutary lesson in a controlled environment!)

### Rope tricks

Safety and rescue issues are an important part of a BCU course and various rescue techniques are also practiced off, on and in the water. This time I had brought a video of the Jongunjoki incident at Aittokoski rapid in the spring (Lesters' note: This genuine incident involved the 45 minute rescue of a pinned canoeist. Rescue was effected only when an axe was used to break out a section of the gunwhale and hull; none of the canoeists present had a saw or other rescue kit). We watched it as a group on the second day of the course. Post-event analysis of the rescue operation between the students and the instructors was very fruitful in every respect. We cannot get organised river rescue training much in Finland.



Of course, we repeated the same experiment immediately again, now using a locked gate carabiner that held beautifully. This time, I could float down safely and easily with the current and extricate the pinned boat. What a good way to demonstrate how important it is to pay sufficient attention to the safety of the rescuer! Everybody was left with a pretty clear idea of what to include in the rescue kit: sharp-toothed saw, various lengths of rope, prusiks, duct tape and a selection of decent screw-gate carabiners. These will take you a long way in river conditions. Personally I thought this was the most valuable day on the course, since I have not had to execute previously any large scale rescue operations in practice.



place. The last day contained sailing for the open canoeists. As an experienced open sea sailor (two Atlantic crossings), Jaska was the expert by far in this. He had the rig hoisted up in no time, we lashed our two solos together and since the wind was rather brisk, we whizzed across the bay in a couple of minutes. As we were tacking our way back

in the side wind, we heard a strange lowing sound from the beach. We did not immediately realise that the rest of the group was calling us back in for lunch with Petri Leinonen's cowhorn. Humbly we accepted the reprimand for abandoning our group awareness for a moment, when we finally furled the sails at home port again.

**Wind in our sails**

In addition to paddling and theory, the course included plenty of other socialising and informal gathering. We usually had our meals as a group. The traditional sauna evening on Friday included a musical performance by the instructors on guitar, accordion and fiddle, paddling videos and traditional Finnish summer food, grilled sausages and beer. The ones with the most energy stayed up until dawn trying to make the world a better

**Petri made history**

The course stayed on for the Sunday to observe the Level 2 Open Canoe assessment for Petri Leinonen. Petri had taken the level 2 training course already a few years back and came now to do his assessment. Since Dave had never seen Petri paddle before, he first asked for a demonstration of basic techniques. We all went out as a group again and each of us gave Petri an assignment on the water. He performed beautifully, although he was paddling solo a big Prospector double. His



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## i n f o

**Approved centre at Nurmes**

The Nurmes courses are a part of a larger project, one of the aims of which is to gain BCU approved centre status for Hyvärilä at Nurmes within the next few years. The value of this project for Finnish canoeing is undisputed and we can only hope that the cooperation will spread to the canoeing circles also in Finland. The level of the BCU summer courses at Nurmes has always been high, so it has been well worth the 1200 km drive to participate from Espoon. The course in itself is not expensive, the cost is 100 euros, but travel, accommodation, meals etc. add to the expenditure, as do the costs for joining the BCU. I can warmly recommend the course next summer for all those wishing to get further training – this is the most versatile teaching you will find in Finland!

The author is a member of Espoon Eskimot canoe club and the chairwoman of the Finnish Open Canoe Association.

Minor editing by Lester Matthews, Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies.

skills with the boat were unquestionable, however.

The teaching was done with a group of local youngsters who had not canoed before. Petri taught the group the basics of flat water doubles work for two hours while the rest of us observed from the dock with Dave assessing. Dave's long experience as an instructor was proven by the fact that Petri could teach in Finnish, according to Dave this had no bearing on the evaluation. The teaching went well also, although Petri admitted having been nervous, which was not obvious on the water in any way, however. His students were pleased as well and assured that they had learned a lot.

Thus, we could all witness a historical moment, the first Finnish level 2 Open Canoe Coach of the Finnish Open Canoe Association is Petri Leinonen from Puumala. Congratulations! ●

**Leena Aarpianen**



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Feature

# USA Sea kayaking destinations

## ...the one in the Deep

It's October and the weather in good old Blighty can be anything from a sunshine soaked finale of a prolonged Indian summer to a rain drenched greyness that we call autumn. Occasionally we are blessed with the first hints of winter when snow cloaks the mountain tops giving them the appearance of white capped giants. Then there's the wind. For the first time in months it can turn from balmy south westerlies to biting blasts from the north. Where I live on the west coast of North Wales this can chop up the sea into ugly waves - brown, silt laden and unwelcoming.

At times like these isn't it just lovely to think about paddling in warmer waters and blazing sunshine? Well, for the second October running there has been a sea kayak symposium and BCU week in Georgia, USA. It's an excellent way to escape the wet and cold and experience paddling warm seas where you may want to roll now and again just to cool off. At a mere 32 degrees north of the Equator it's about the same as Morocco in North Africa! What bliss to be able to wear t-shirts, Texas and a pair of shorts all day...everyday. Now you're getting the picture!

**Sunhat...shades...heavenly.**

It gets better too because travelling there is very straightforward. You simply catch a plane to any of the entry airports along the eastern seaboard of the U.S. and then an internal flight to Savannah, Georgia. The organisers of the event, Sea Kayak Georgia, will even collect you at the airport. Simple or what?

As soon as you get into the terminal at Savannah you feel the balmy warmth of this deep south town. Colonised by the British in the 18th century and developed as a port to export cotton it has some interesting history. Twenty miles away southwards along the coast lies the island of Tybee, a small sandy holiday destination connected to the mainland by road. This is where Sea Kayak Georgia is based and where all the paddling

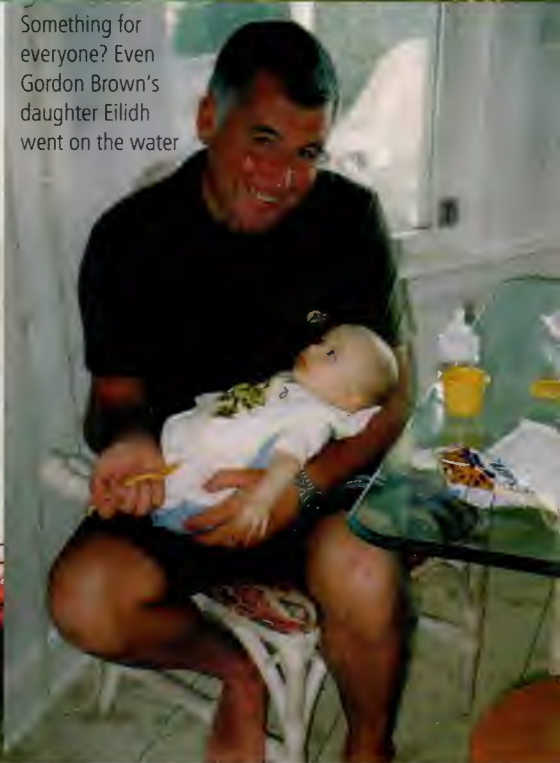
Simulated helicopter rescue. The Triangle, Tybee



Deep South style on the surf beach



Something for everyone? Even Gordon Brown's daughter Eilidh went on the water



takes place. Dale Williams is the owner of the business and a 5 star sea paddler himself. He has assembled the most helpful and friendly team who are keen, willing and competent to help out with all your kayaking requirements. The epicentre is the shop and accommodation unit (a dull way to describe a rather luxurious modern house!) that backs onto a tidal creek...handy for trying before buying! During the symposium and BCU week all the information about classes, courses, events, times, tides, locations were posted for everyone to see. Marsha led this military style

# Georgia...

## South of the U.S. of A.

Quiet estuary waters ideal for some classes



Touring the maze of back waters just inland from the Atlantic Ocean



operation and I must take this chance, along with dozens of others I'm sure, to thank her for her calm ability to simultaneously juggle a million bytes of information and maintain a rare sense of poignant humour. Oh how that was appreciated at times. Aply assisting were Kim and Heidi equally blessed with a great sense of fun.

Tybee Island has something to suit a variety of tastes from the quiet backwaters of the creeks on the "inland" side to the impressive swell and surf on the ocean side. There's even an offshore sandbar where the ebbing waters of the main river estuary collide with the Atlantic swell to give a quarter of a square mile or so of confused maelstrom known as 'The Triangle'. Whilst the island is occupied by about 3,000 permanent residents the coastline of Georgia to the south is pretty wild with very little human habitation and an interesting place for multi-day trips.

During the week there were all manner of classes, training courses and assessments from 2 star to 5 star sea, level 2 and 3 sea coach, 4 star surf training and assessment, 4 star journeys and environmental awareness journeys. Sea Kayak Georgia can hire out or sell every canoeing accessory that you are likely to need, will offer help and guidance and even repair damaged boats in their workshop. Each day the events all began in different locations around Tybee Island. Participants, who came from all over the States and beyond, would either drive themselves there or use Sea Kayak Georgia's free minibus and trailer service. The efficiency of this would be make any railway system management envious. Don Hitz, aficionado of blues music and strong coffee, was the man at the wheel most of the time whizzing round town bending over backwards to help. He's equally at ease telling you the best way to grind Bolivian beans as he is chatting, in a most unassuming manner, about the bands for which he used to 'roadie'.

In the evenings there were slide shows and talks, wonderful meals at local restaurants and, my favourite, an outdoor oyster roast. Here the

indomitable Mike Robinson boiled fresh oysters in a huge drum before tumbling them out onto a vast table. Everyone had been given a special oyster knife to pry open the shells and down the contents. Washed down with Guinness (after Guinness, after Guinness!) under a starlit sky must surely rank as one of life's culinary highlights. Also high up on the list of favourites was Doc's Bar. They had been warned that a contingent of British Sea Coaches was imminent and that it may be prudent to stock up with Guinness. Thankfully, this they did and naturally the black and white liquid gave us strength play pool, chat with the friendly locals, survive the tricks and treats of Halloween and to dance to live music until the wee small hours. Right now, next October seems some distance away but as I gaze out of my window and watch the cold wintry drizzle fall from a grey welsh sky I can somehow see a warm sparkly surf wave crash down on my deck... and it makes me smile. ●

**Phil Eccles, Level 5 Sea Coach**

### info

For information about next year's BCU Week and Symposium

Write to:

Sea Kayak Georgia

1102 Highway

80 Tybee Island

Georgia USA 31328

Telephone: 001 912 786 8732

Check out: [www.seakayakgeorgia.com](http://www.seakayakgeorgia.com)





# Three countries

**The original idea for our expedition was to paddle from Outward Bound Wales in Aberdovey to Outward Bound Scotland in Loch Eil near Fort William. We had managed to wangle a two week period to do it in so we would need absolutely perfect weather from the start if we were to succeed...**

## Wales

The two of us set off from Aberdovey at 8am on a Tuesday morning with a supportive and encouraging send off from absolutely no-one! Who cares - we're off. We were really going to have to cut all corners and paddle at all possible opportunities if we were to reach Fort William, so the first day was a B line straight across the Cardigan Bay to the end of the Llyn Peninsula. A four to five hour crossing was quite a big one to be doing on the first day. As it turned out the wind was southeast 4-5 so the further away from shore we got, the greater the fetch and therefore the lumpier the swell was. We got a few miles out and decided that turning east for Harlech and a bit more shelter was a better idea. With a beam sea and wind it was pretty hard work - the land just wasn't getting any closer! Finally we could get out and wake the legs up, eat some noodles and relax for a while before the evening shipping forecast. The wind had increased since we'd been out and the forecast was for it to increase to Force 8 and then drop down to Force 3 or 4. So, after six and a half hours and 24 nautical miles of paddling we put the tents up, ate more food and then went to sleep for a recharge ready for a potentially longer day tomorrow.

The first day was a good taster for me of what the whole trip would be about. Fiona is no stranger to long distance trips so this one was just another on the list for her, but I hadn't done anything longer than four days or so before. Having so far to go in such a short time was quite a major factor for this trip, in terms of the amount of paddling and also our motivation to get up and do it and keep doing it! One thing that was reinforced to me during these two weeks was that with sea paddling you just have to be so flexible with your planning and execution. Tides are predictable but the weather is not (we had some very wrong forecasts!).



Great Ormes head



The light house at Prestatyn

So at every stage of the day you had to be juggling with plan A, B, C and D and be willing to drop one in favour of another in order to primarily keep yourself safe and, a close second, to get the miles done.

Day two was a more relaxing affair in terms of the weather - southerly 3-4 which dropped and dropped in strength throughout the day. It was across to Pwllleli for the first break and then on to Abersoch and finally Aberdaron at the end of the Llyn in the evening.

My excitement of the first day was gone and was replaced by an assortment of blisters up and down my fingers. The paddling was less challenging so we had more time for chatting. Fiona gave me her philosophies on long distance paddling: There are few other activities where you are so committed - even in climbing you have the opportunity to lower off or pick a different route if it gets too much. But with sea paddling, once you are out there in your little bit of 'floating driftwood' you are pretty much on your own. You have to get it right.

40 nautical miles done" It was all a big bonus - but you had to put the time in to get the miles done. Besides, what else is there to do but paddle? I just grunted at her and tried to think of something else other than being stuck in this fibreglass log (no disrespect to NDK!) for ten hours a day for the next two weeks and what the state of my blisters and shoulders would be after 20-40 nautical miles each day.

As it happened I got the next two days off to recover. The tide flows



es in two weeks - just!



The Pepsi Big One!



Ian in his tent at South Blackpool



Company at Morecambe Bay



an ice cream at Rhyl and on to The Point Of Air near Prestatyn for the night. England tomorrow!

**England**

Up at 4am to get on the water for the tide at 5.30am. It was quite a calm sea and we were in the boats for a solid five hours before getting out at Liverpool for the first pee on English soil. Well, mud. Crossing the shipping lane was a bit of a laugh - those Red Funnel ferries don't half steam out of there! It wasn't a long break as we had to get up and round Fornby point before the tide turned against us. We got round okay and entered the start of the terrain that we were to have for the next three or four days. Sandbanks and mudflats. The next ten miles or so were littered with wrecks poking out of the sea. It was very shallow and as a consequence very choppy when a solid NW Force 4-5 wind kicked in. The beam waves were really

disheartening as any momentum you got going would be quashed as one broke next to you and you were forced to bongo slide it until its energy dissipated. We grumpily plodded on but were

eventually faced with a long open crossing over to Blackpool. Not the conditions to be doing it in. We decided to have a go at a different type of paddling. The type you did with your Granny when you were a toddler. With our toelines attached to the boats we trudged through the shallow pools for the next couple of miles. Fiona got on the phone to Nigel Dennis to see if he could get a forecast for our area. It came back that the wind had been and would remain at no more than ten knots. What! This was from the coastguard station we had passed a few hours earlier at Fornby point. Sorry, don't agree with you there boys - It might have been ten knots inside as you sat drinking tea with the window open! Anyway as we got closer to our launch point for going across to Blackpool we noticed a large sandbank that would offer us shelter from the chop for most of the way across. Once we got there we realised that the day was far from over. It took us a further two hours to carry the boats and all the kit across the mile or so of sand to a beautifully manicured public park for a campsite. Geese and a boating lake and all!

Putting in at high tide was the major factor for the next day. We missed the first high tide of the day because the early shipping forecast said to expect Force 8 winds, so we decided to stay put. As the sea disappeared to the horizon during the course of the morning the wind dropped and the sun came out. Whilst waiting for the next high tide I went

like a rocket round the end of the Lleyn so you have to time it so that you get the full six hours of flood behind you in order to get to a safe get out on the western shore. On each of the next two days we had one chance only, the second flood of the day being after dark. The weather wouldn't let us go. Mist, lots of surf and winds of Force 5-6. There are a couple of nice pubs and cafes in Aberdaron but on the third day we decided enough was enough. Our mate Tom was originally going to be the third member of the team but he had interviews to attend instead. Fortunately he was free on that day to come and pick us up and give us a lift round to Caernarfon. We timed it perfectly and got the full flood tide behind us all the way through to Beaumaris that evening. We got 7.6 knots on the gps going through the Swellies.

From Beaumaris we had a reasonably taxing crossing to Great Ormes head. The wind was southerly, so directly behind us. It was a toss up between putting a little bit more effort in to catch the swells and use their energy to send you on your way or to just keep plodding along with the skeg down and try and stay pointed in the right direction. The surfing really took it out of you after a while but once we got round Gt. Ormes Head we were in the lee of the land. The cliffs were white with guano from the nesting seabirds that kept us entertained as we drifted past. Also lots of seals and a porpoise which I missed as it was behind me. Typical! The rest of the day was a long slog along the North coast of Wales - Colwyn Bay,

for a swim and a shower at the local swimming pool. The first for a week, Fiona spent the afternoon fending off the parkies who wanted to know if they were going to have to get an eviction order to send us on our way!' At about 3pm we started hoiking our boats and kit to the high water line, which was still miles away, to be ready to be on just before the high tide at 6pm. Only just made it too - the sea was coming in fast and was lapping round my ankles as I closed the last hatch cover and got in the boat. It was quite interesting paddling past England's most famous and tacky seaside resort, but that was about as close as we wanted to get. We reached the headland expecting to find a golf course to camp on, but since the map had been printed it had been replaced by housing estates. We squeezed the tents in on the side of a public footpath between a field of cows and a huge boarding school. Another day of bad weather followed but we were kept entertained by the curious cow who came over to peer over the fence at us and give the tent a good licking, and the to-ings and fro-ings of the school kids sneaking out to the beach for a snog and a fag.

It had been obvious to us for a while now that there was no way that we were going to make it all the way up to Loch Eil. The plan was being revised every day. We realised that we were going to have to be happy with reaching Scotland.

We'd heard that the next leg across Morecambe Bay can be a bit of a nightmare, again due to the shallow flats, so we headed out a bit. Quite a lumpy day really, but we were getting fed up with sitting about so we went for it anyway. There was the mile wide shipping channel to think about and we ended up holding our position against the tide for about half an hour waiting for the ships to pass and leave us a clear run across. The channel was obvious not only because of the buoys but because it was so much calmer than the surrounding water due to its greater depth. As we got closer to Walney island the ebbing tide got faster and faster and we ended up ferry gliding at an angle of about one degree to make our slow laborious way over the last 500m.

After a bite to eat we used this tide to whip past Walney and on up to the coast of the Lakes. We were confronted by more sand bars which we had fun navigating between and which protected us from the swell and waves breaking on the outside of them. As we got under the Lakeland hills the sandbars disappeared and the waves increased.

They were bigger than when we'd had a beam sea before and were quite steep before breaking. Fiona turned and shouted, "Are you okay with this? If one of these hits us square on it's going to hurt!" We carried on a bit more and I looked round to see the bottom of Fiona's boat! Oh Dear. Make the roll Fi, I don't want to be practicing my rescues in this surf. Of course she made the roll and also the decision that that was enough for today. The landing was quite exciting but we managed it safely.

### Scotland

Scotland was now just around the corner and very reachable in the time that we had left. We'd arranged a pick up with Pete from NDK from Gretna Green in three days time. Our friend and ex OB colleague Gareth was living just round the corner so after a day's sunbathing and looking at the dead flat sea we bribed him with food to give us a lift up to St Bees



Caernarfon Castle

head. Yes we were being lazy but what the hell - we were on holiday. After St Bees the coastline finally started to get a bit interesting again. Cliffs, nesting birds and an American warship anchored off Whitehaven. We popped into Maryport for a stroll and a takeaway. The town has quite an impressive harbour and had the feeling of being a lot less busy now than it used to be. We presumed that the harbour would have water in it at all states of the tide. Wrong! When we came back from our stroll

there was a long steep bank, of black mud between our boats and the rapidly diminishing channel. Seal launch time! We weren't sure if the boats would slide or stick to the mud and were a bit apprehensive about seal launching fully laden sea kayaks. I went first to the sounds of "Yeehaa" reverberating off the harbour walls. Just don't tell Nigel.

We were definitely in Scottish waters now as we entered the Solway Firth. Here we found... more sandbanks and shallow mudflats! At one point it was quite eerie as we were surrounded by a vast field of barnacle covered rocks poking out of the water. We were having to go quite a long way out to go around this obstruction so decided to get out and stand on a sandbank and wait for the tide to come in and give us a bit more water to paddle in. The tide was becoming more and more crucial on this, the last stretch of the expedition. We got up to 6.6 knots on this flood, but there was better to come. We camped at Skinburness for the last night and calculated that we would have over three knots behind us tomorrow if we left at about 10am. We not only wanted the tide behind us but also to try and make sure that we arrived a Gretna as near as possible to high tide to make the get out easier. We weren't quite sure what to expect when we got there.

The next morning not only did we have the tide behind us but a good F3 southwesterly wind to help us along. We got excited when the gps started reading 6 knots but it continued to rise and rise. We had a good half hour at over 8 knots and reached a maximum speed of 9.2kms. Bonus! In fact it was too fast and we were risking arriving too early. So to slow us down a bit we tried rafting up and using the KISU and paddles as a sailing rig. But it didn't work we were still doing over six knots. All for free! We did manage to waste some time playing on some standing waves which were being produced by the strong tide flowing over the shallow banks.

The final stretch was a peaceful creek leading up to Gretna with England on the right bank and Scotland on the left bank. We got out in Scotland at a perfect spot for Pete to find us on his way through later that evening. A great end to a great trip. ●

**Text: Ian Fish**

**Photos: Fiona Whitehead**

the Solway Firth



**t h a n k s**

Thanks to OB for the time off, Nigel Dennis Kayaks for the boats and Tom, Gareth and Pete for the lifts.



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# The early days of canoe surfing in the UK

## Story No. 2 - First Attempts at Surfing, as told by Bill Goodman

After a few hours of surfing with varying degrees of success, we were relaxing on the cliff tops, idly watching the waves. It was early days and it should be appreciated that we were still learning how it should be done. Oliver, who was more learned than the rest of us, watched the waves and seemed troubled. His brow slowly cleared, his thoughts had come together, "You know, if you tried, and had a big enough wave it should be possible to loop a canoe".

That made us if not sit up at least open our eyes. At this stage in our learning curve to be able to surf without capsizing was good; capsizing and rolling up again before hitting the beach was an achievement. Looping end over end was to be avoided at all costs. We looked at the prophet, "Quite simple," he replied in a type of voice that explained brilliant ideas to dim peasants. "You paddle out, find a big wave, climb up the face of it, back paddle so the stern digs in, the wave carries on taking the bows with it over the stationary stern. You are then upside down and pointing inshore, wait a few seconds for the wave to pass, roll up in time to catch the next wave and surf in to rounds of applause".

As with all elegant theories, it needed proof. What was needed was a prophet/idiot to go out and do it. Now in the general run of things, nobody likes to admit to being an idiot, so it had to be a prophet. We looked at the only prophet we had. He agreed to do it, saying the waves were building up nicely and could be quite big by late afternoon.

We had now unfortunately lost our prophet, and we had to find another, or if that could not be done, someone with a bit of dash and verve. The only person we could think of who had these qualifications and would act on them was Bill Horsman. Bill was the only man I know who, while serving in the R.A.F., was put on a charge for 'sailing' a land yacht down the runway as the C.O.'s plane came in to land, forcing that gentleman to make another circuit so that he could get down on a clear runway. I don't know the outcome of the charge. Bill never said. A person who can do this certainly has the right credentials. Bill was found and the theory explained to him; he seemed impressed, said it should work, he would do it. Bill wriggled into his kayak. (These sea kayaks we used for surfing in those days were long - about 16/17 feet long, and they were narrow - about 20 inches maximum. Bill was six feet tall and big with it, so getting into a cockpit about 18 inches diameter was not so much getting in it, as wearing it. Once settled, and with the spraydeck firmly in place, he paddled out to sea. He seemed to be enjoying himself riding up the waves over the top and down the other side - not at all to the theory



Oliver  
Cock with  
Vicky his  
dog at  
Polzeath  
1957

as expounded. Oliver was shouting "Now" whenever the moment came to back paddle. What was happening we couldn't fathom. Was he looking for a big wave? They all looked pretty big to us! Whatever it was we never found out. Suddenly an extra large wave caught Bill. It dug his stern in, flipped him end over end, and rapidly surfed him towards the shore upside down. But something was not quite right. The kayak was not being left behind, it was still happily surfing shorewards. We assumed Bill was still underneath, waiting for the wave to pass; it didn't. Not many seconds later Bill arrived on shore still upside down in 18 inches of water, his head and back scraping along the sandy bottom. No crash hats or lifejackets in those days! Oliver was a little perturbed, and was heard muttering that perhaps the theory could need modifying. Bill survived, albeit with a sore back and head. Next day others were trying the new technique with varying degrees of success; the days of acrobatic stunts and stunt competitions had arrived. After this Bill was often known as 'baldy' but whether this was from scraping his head on the sand or natural wastage we never knew.

Another member of our party, one without a lot of experience, tried to do all this, but much nearer the beach, and consequently with not much depth of water underneath him. He got his stern dug into the wave, but he also got the stern stuck into the sand. The canoe became vertical, with the paddler well clear of the water and vigorously paddling up to heaven. Where he thought he was going to get to was something of a mystery. The canoe revolved around its stern and gently fell over towards the shore, the right way up. The next wave caught the canoe and paddler and propelled them rapidly and easily onto the sand. The audience watching from the cliff top gave a wild cheer as he landed. In fact the audience was weak with laughter but I don't think the new born 'expert' quite understood why. ●

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## BCU Paddlesport Workshop

Friday 2nd April 2004

Start	Finish	Speaker	Topic	Appearing with...
11:00	11:45	Fiona Whitehead	Sea Kayaking and Circumnavigation of Britain and Ireland	The North Face
12:00	12:45	Pete Knowles (Green Slime)	Bhutan - Land of the Thunder Dragon	River Publishing UK
13:00	13:45	Scott Lindgern	Liquid Lifestyles - Award winning kayaking cinematographer	Peak UK, Scott Lindgern Productions
14:00	14:45	Charlie Munsey	The Extraordinary Life of Charlie	
15:00	15:45	Franco Ferrero	A South American Experience - The Chotohuasi and Colca Canyons	Pesda Press
16:00	16:45	David Thorpe	Water Activities in Trewern	Environment Agency

Saturday 3rd April 2004

Start	Finish	Speaker	Topic	Appearing with...
10:00	10:45	David Thorpe	Water Activities in Trewern	Environment Agency
11:00	12:00	Pete Knowles (Green Slime)	Bhutan - Land of the Thunder Dragon	River Publishing UK
12:15	13:15	Charlie Munsey	The Extraordinary Life of Charlie	
13:30	14:30	Franco Ferrero	A South American Experience - The Chotohuasi and Colca Canyons	Pesda Press
14:45	15:45	Scott Lindgern	Liquid Lifestyles - Award winning kayaking cinematographer	Peak UK, Scott Lindgern Productions
16:00	16:45	Fiona Whitehead	Sea Kayaking and Circumnavigation of Britain and Ireland	The North Face

Sunday 4th April 2004

Start	Finish	Speaker	Topic	Appearing with...
10:00	10:45	William Crookshank	Water Activities in Trewern	Environment Agency
11:00	12:00	Franco Ferrero	A South American Experience - The Chotohuasi and Colca Canyons	Pesda Press
12:15	13:15	Scott Lindgern	Liquid Lifestyles - Award winning kayaking cinematographer	Peak UK, Scott Lindgern Productions
13:30	14:30	Charlie Munsey	The Extraordinary Life of Charlie	
14:45	15:30	Justine Curgenvan	Kayaking: Summer in the Kamchatka in Far East Russia	The North Face
15:45	16:45	Pete Knowles (Green Slime)	Bhutan - Land of the Thunder Dragon	River Publishing UK

## Canoe Polo Competition

Saturday & Sunday 3rd & 4th April 2004

EZ Dock Wave Seven Marine - BCU Invitational Canoe Polo Competition



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British Canoe Union (BCU)	C2	<a href="http://www.bcu.org.uk">www.bcu.org.uk</a>
British Dragon Boat Racing Association	C115b	<a href="http://www.dragonboat.org.uk">www.dragonboat.org.uk</a>
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# LETTERS

Your chance to put forward your point of view

## Churchill Memorial Trust

**When I have written to Canoe Focus in the past it has usually been with an obituary, this time it is about something more cheerful. I have been fortunate to be selected for a Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Travelling Fellowship. The category for the Fellowship is canoeing and my project title is "Inuit Origins of Modern Recreational Sea Kayaks".**

I have been interested in Inuit kayaks since my teens, having started my paddling career on the sea at the age of ten in 1950. This interest intensified in 1960 when I had the opportunity to paddle a genuine sealskin kayak on Loch Lomond. It had been built for Kenneth Taylor, a fellow member of the Scottish Hosteller's Canoe Club who had been on a one man expedition to Igdlorssuit, in West Greenland to study the use of the kayak in that area. He was then a student at Glasgow University and was prompted to undertake his project by Harald Drever, an Orkney man and a professor at St Andrew's University who had a long term involvement with Igdlorssuit.

Since 1953 I had designed and built my own sea kayaks and I was paddling my third and rather extreme model at the time. However, Ken's boat handled so well and made such an impression on me that all my sea kayaks since then and there have been a few, have been based on this sealskin covered kayak, of ancient lineage, built by the Greenlander Emanuele Kornelsen in the village of Igdlorssuit in 1959.

Ken Taylor left Scotland to continue his studies in North America and left his kayak in the care of my paddling buddy, the late Joe Reid. Joe and I measured the kayak accurately in 1964 and I produced a plan of it. I have always made the plan freely available to anyone interested and at least thirty-three different models of kayak have been based on it, directly or indirectly, including the well known Anas Acuta, first produced commercially in 1972.

Over the years my interest in Inuit kayaks, Greenland and others, has developed and widened to include the use of the narrow bladed paddle and Inuit paddling techniques. I now find myself giving presentations on these topics at the sea kayak symposia in which I have become increasingly involved since my first contribution in 1987.

At last year's Scottish Coaching Conference at Glenmore Lodge Gordon Brown a good friend of long standing and one of the countries leading sea coaches, had a quiet chat with me. It was his opinion that the logical follow up to my Long term interest in Inuit kayaks, narrow bladed paddles etc., was to make a trip to Greenland and study these things at their source. He reminded me of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Travelling Fellowships, that there was a place available in 2004 for a canoeing project and suggested I apply for it. So with eight days to the closing date I obtained a form and did just that. The category may seem to be a rather narrow field of interest but there were over forty applicants.

I am honoured to be one of the two candidates selected and am off to West Greenland in the middle of the year on a project titled "Inuit Origins of Modern Recreational Sea Kayaks". It is proposed to visit Igdlorssuit, where Ken Taylor's kayak originated and other centres in West Greenland to study past and present kayak design, to ascertain the reason behind various design features and in particular study Inuit paddle design and technique, which has been largely ignored in the UK.

The Trust requires that I write a report on the project on my return, which I will be happy to do. This should ensure

circulation out with the sea canoeing field through the Trust and I intend to make a presentation to at least one major sea kayak symposium in 2005.

Naturally, I am indebted to the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust for making this trip of a lifetime possible and of course to Gordon for giving the Old Yin (I will be eligible for the pension next year) a push at the right time.

**Duncan R Winning OBE  
Honourary President, Scottish Canoe Association  
Honourary President, Historic Canoe & Kayak Association**

## Beginner's luck

**My boyfriend and I took the 1 star course last year, hoping to go on some fun day or weekend trips. Unfortunately as yet we have not managed to find anything that we think is suitable for us as total rookies!**

I joined the BCU straight after the course, and I was excited to receive the magazine, however after looking through three editions I have to admit that I am disappointed that there is nothing for beginners! This magazine is probably the first introduction to the canoe/kayak social life for those of us who are new to the sport, but sadly it seems to be an exclusive group! I have scoured the back pages looking for holidays, weekend trips, or groups aimed at beginners, even meetings, social gatherings or in desperation - where to find a club to join! But there is not much to be found. There are usually training courses offered, one or two trips or holidays which do white water, or other stuff that seems really scary to someone who is still a little unsure of what the difference is between a canoe and a kayak... Forgive me!

You guys seem to have so much fun, and I'm sure there are many "newies" who are dying to join in! Think back to your earlier paddling days - it is really intimidating to be with a group where everyone is so much better than you. I know that for you advanced guys, to actually take a beginners group on a trip may not be a thrill, but consider it an investment in the future of the sport.

If you can offer any suggestions on where to find a club, and any kind of trip that we can do, hiring stuff, and any other information that you could offer a beginner it would be gratefully appreciated.

**Helen Henry, Surrey**

## Access calling card

**With regards to the BCU call for ideas to raise awareness to the access problems, may I suggest leaving a calling card when ever a group of paddles have used local services i.e. Café, Pub shop etc.**

The card could read something like the example below.

**Canoe & Kayakers**

**Support Local Services.**

**You have just been visited by Canoe & Kayakers and We thank you for your hospitality.**

**If we had no access to the water,s we would not have been here.**

These cards can simple be made using a PC and printed on normal paper. It could even have contact details such as the BCU action for access web site. I would like to know the BCU and readers thoughts. I will certainly be leaving cards on our next club trip after seeing how much money we put across the bars during last weekends Lake District trip.

**Paul (Jean Claude) Mills**

Please send letters either by email to [peter@canoefocus.co.uk](mailto:peter@canoefocus.co.uk) or post to: Canoe Focus, 49 Greenfields, St Ives, Cambs PE27 5HB

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SCOTLAND

Diary of a Sco



**PC Stubbs:** “Mrs. Dixon, we have found your son’s car abandoned in west Scotland. Have you any idea of his whereabouts?”

**My mother:** “Oh yes, he’s canoeing across Scotland, on his own.”

**“He’s what?!... Does he do this sort of thing often?”**

**“From time to time, why?”**

**“When was the last time you heard from him?”**

**“Umm, now you come to mention it... About two days ago... Oh...”**

### Friday

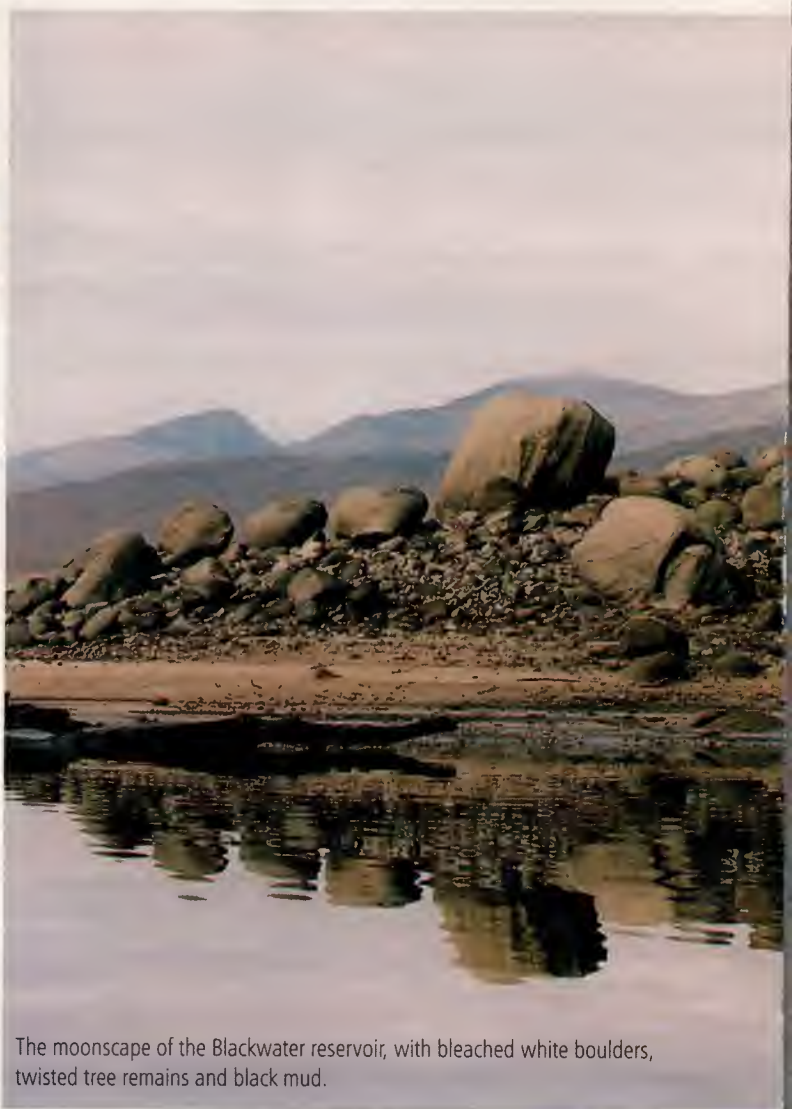
It’s 3.30 pm and I’m tired after the past eight weeks – my first half term as a qualified science teacher. The term ends with 11B2 dressing up as atoms reacting together to form ionic compounds and as they leave I wonder how I will spend the next nine days. Sleeping might be sensible, I think.

On the way home, I stop off at Safeway and stock up on Super Noodles, Nutri-grain bars, crisps and chocolate. I remember a vague plan that hatched at midnight last night. Seems crazy now, but I know that sitting at home for my half term won’t do me any good. I spend the rest of the evening driving to and from a friend’s house to collect the sail for my canoe and borrow a stove, pots, a spoon, and some toilet roll. These things might come in useful over the next few days.

### Saturday

I wake up at 5.30 on the first day of my holiday, taking care not to disturb my housemates (also teachers, recovering from the previous night’s excesses). I hit the motorway and cruise past Birmingham in the dark. The miles drift under the wheels as the sun comes up to my right.

At 4.30 I launch my loaded solo canoe into Loch Leven under the road bridge at Ballachulish, on the west coast of Scotland. Lucky that the



The moonscape of the Blackwater reservoir, with bleached white boulders, twisted tree remains and black mud.

tide was coming in. I’d love to credit this to my excellent planning, but you’ll realise by now that my planning was rather minimal.

Heading east up Loch Leven with the tide, I rig the sail to speed up the progress. The seal following me cheers me up, even though it is rather shy.

It’s dark by the time that I arrive in Kinlochleven, hauling my canoe onto the green in the drizzle. My Super Noodles cooked in the bus shelter are hot and tasty, but the path out of Kinlochleven can wait until the morning. My dry sleeping bag and my dry tent are too inviting and it’s only eight o’clock.

### Sunday

I left Kinlochleven in the dark for the portage to the Blackwater reservoir and the ten kilometres and 350m of ascent took a mere four hours of





challenge I had set myself – I was sure that it would be possible to canoe from the west coast of Scotland to Perth on the east via lochs and rivers, but I had to admit that I had never heard of anyone who had actually done it.

By the time it got dark, I had run out of water, tried poling up the mud, given up on the trolley and almost lost all my gear on Rannoch moor. I resorted to dragging my canoe behind me across the moor. I was quite pleased with my progress – I had covered about 2 km across the moor in four hours. My camp was a lonely and damp one, but this had been one of those rare but precious days when I had not seen a single other human being. My rather difficult lessons struggling to teach the disaffected students in 10B6 seemed a pleasantly long way away.

### Monday

I woke up at 5am. Last night was chilly. Rannoch moor stretched out in front of me. My progress east across the moor was painfully slow and painful generally. I came to the railway line and struggled alongside it. The passengers on their way to Glasgow from Fort William sped past, watching me dragging a laden canoe weighing over 60 kilos. I watched them, dressed in their suits, typing on their laptops. I wondered who was feeling more sorry for whom.

I had always known that the Rannoch moor traverse was going to be the most physically demanding part of my trip. But the real turning point had arrived. I was now attempting to link several lochs, heading due east towards the river Tummel, which flows into the Tay. I had known that determination and sheer bloody-mindedness would see me up from sea level and across the moor at almost 400m. But nothing would get me the rest of the way across Scotland if the wind was against me.

Again, my fabulous planning had ensured that my trip coincided with a gentle westerly wind. Up went my sail and I careered across the loch, in total control. Honestly. The loch ended at a weir, according to the map. Apparently, my idea of a weir, as a Southern Pansy, was quite different from the hardened Scottish cartographer. It was, quite clearly, a dam, which required a substantial portage. I was amused by a sign on the portage warning me that there was a danger of drowning. Good job I was

wearing a buoyancy aid. Or not.

The Gaur dam seemed to starve the Gaur of water, but I was determined to avoid walking the entire way across Scotland. For one thing, it would make bringing along the canoe seem rather pointless, like I was doing it for attention. Again, the poling was hopeless and the wading was cold but I eventually got to Loch Rannoch at about 3 pm. I began to paddle into the Loch, in awe of the scenery that surrounded me. And then I felt a breath of wind on the back of my neck. The luck was still with me, as was the Force 2-3 wind. I wasted no time. Up went the sail. Fifteen kilometres in

Portaging along the bed of the Blackwater reservoir after I had run out of water, but before I had the arduous 15 km of dragging across Rannoch moor.

slogging. The graveyard at the dam was slightly spooky, but the Golden Eagle that guarded it wasn't too interested in me.

My heart sank when I saw that the reservoir was half empty. I knew that the top half was going to be hard to navigate. No wind either. The landscape was very strange – black mud, white gravel, bleached white boulders and twisted tree remains. Rannoch moor stretched out beyond the dry upper reaches of the reservoir. I suddenly felt quite intimidated by the



just under two hours. You can't buy that kind of excitement.

It was a hard choice to make at the end of the loch in the encroaching darkness, but I decided to drag my canoe around the 'weir' rather than go for the canoe's preferred option of being sucked into the whirlpools and under the sluice gates. The river below sped into Dunalastair water which I paddled across in the dark, amongst the bats,

before finding somewhere to camp. After the third consecutive dinner of Super Noodles and Mars bars, washed down with a mug of hot water, I began to wish I'd done a bit more planning. I'd know for next time. Yeah right, like there would be a next time.

## Tuesday

I reached the next dam at dawn and hauled the canoe onto the road. The aqueduct carrying the diverted water was tempting, but I had a sneaky suspicion I knew what would happen to the water at the end of it. The road would be harder work, but arguably safer. The rapids below me looked wicked and seemed to be calling to me, but then the Lyn Gorge always looks like a good idea from the portage path. (That's another story.)

Loch Tummel was next and even though the wind had dropped, it still helped me along the length of the lake. Surprise surprise, another dam; another portage. I looked down at the river below me, trying to work out the size of the rapids. My conversation with Rich a few days later would go along the lines of "Did you enjoy the river Tummel? I forgot to tell you about the Grade V section..." It also happened to be in a section of the river that had disappeared off the maps I had bought in Fort William.

Pitlochry wasn't far and I had the joy of realising that my long dam portages were behind me. It really was downhill from here to the sea. Two hours later, I arrived in the quiet village of Dunkeld, 20 km below Pitlochry. It was a very strange feeling to be offended by the noise, the crowded pavements and the exhaust fumes. I had obviously been enjoying the solitude of the Scottish wilderness.

## Wednesday

I had been able to get about 30 km

Another long portage stretching into the distance.



from Perth after I left Dunkeld. It had been tempting to keep going in the dark, but it's hard to explain how frightening Grade I rapids sound in total darkness and thickening mist! I drifted down the Tay, into the dawn and through the thick mist that was hanging over the river. My breakfast was dry roasted peanuts, the last of my food. Good job I hadn't much further to go now. It was a freezing morning,

which made me appreciate how lucky I had been with the weather over the previous four days. The frost on the gunnels showed no sign of melting, and anything that splashed into the canoe froze within minutes. Only the leaping salmon seemed immune. My wet suit socks had been frozen stiff this morning, and my toes weren't communicating anymore.

The weirs near Stanley were the kind of weir that I was used to: there didn't seem to be any danger of being sucked under, dragged into a HEP turbine or channelled into a fish pass. The difficulty was in negotiating them given the visibility was down to about five metres.

At 10.30 am I dragged my canoe out of the river in Perth, right onto the North Inch golf course. A golfer stopped mid-swing as I collapsed onto the fairway, exhausted. I loaded the canoe onto the trolley for the last time and disappeared across the course into the mist. Now all I had to do was reassure the Glencoe police and my poor mother that I was still alive and hitch across Scotland back to my car...

One hundred and sixty four kilometres, of which almost a quarter had been portaged (including the 12 km of dragging over Rannoch moor). I had climbed a total of over 400 m of ascent and been self sufficient for five days in the Scottish autumn. I had canoed from one side of Scotland to the other, via a route that leaps out of any

road atlas because it is so simple and yet so audacious.

I don't do this kind of thing very often, but I find that every now and again one feels the need to remind oneself of something. Whether this is self-sufficiency, confidence, fitness, ambition or strength of character, I have always found that a long canoe trip is the perfect way to find what it is that you seek. ●●●

**Neil Dixon**



Autumn views of the Tummel above Pitlochry.



# Open Canoe Association



We are a group of enthusiasts who enjoy everything to do with open canoeing. Annual membership includes our quarterly journal *Open Canoeist* and access to trips, events, coaching and contacts around the country. Individuals and families are welcome regardless of experience and ability.

Our main 2004 rally is based on the banks of the River Trent over the first weekend in May. It will be an excellent opportunity to get together with other open boaters and take part in trips, workshops and training. If you want to find out more about OCA membership or this rally, contact us at:

Open Canoe Association, PO Box 7317  
Harwich, Essex CO12 3WZ  
colin.taylor@highnambb.co.uk  
www.opencanoe.org



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**It's early March and St. Ives Bay is bathed in spring sunshine. The water beneath me is so clear I suffer from vertigo as I stare down into the shimmering depths. I can clearly see the ripples of white gold sand several metres below. Suddenly a dark shape flashes past and I flinch involuntarily, my paddling rhythm interrupted as if I have tripped over myself. Where did it go? What was it? Not a sign anywhere. I continue on, not wishing my pulse rate to drop and thus ruin the training session.**

There they are! The familiar shapes of a pod of dolphins break the surface just fifty metres away. I keep paddling hard and sure enough their curiosity gets the better of them and they circle back towards me. My smile turns to laughter as the first one leaps into the air to get a good look at this new kid on the block. Soon I am sat on the wash of three, bottlenose dolphin and several more dart to and fro' beneath my hull. It is difficult to laugh and paddle hard at the same time but I know that they will only stay with me if I can somehow match their speed. I have to be careful where I place my paddle, as the smooth, muscular bodies are so close to me on either side. Every so often one leaps skywards, droplets of seawater sprinkling like diamonds from its body as it flies gracefully through the air, diving back in with hardly a splash.

For five minutes or more these wonderful creatures chose to share their ocean, and my world was filled with joy and delight, their gift to me. The encounter had been on their terms, their rules and I had been happy to participate. They left me with a feeling of completeness – one step (or paddle stroke) closer to the meaning of life.

Apart from it being a beautiful day for a paddle, the reason I was out there was because I have been training for the greatest adventure of my life. Starting on the Saturday 3rd April 2004 from Falmouth in Cornwall, I will be attempting to make the first solo circumnavigation of the UK and Ireland by sea kayak.

It is the realisation of a childhood dream: to paddle off over the horizon only to eventually return from the opposite direction. I am taking a six-month career break from my job as a police officer in the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary to complete the journey. I have been inspired to attempt to include all the inhabited islands in my challenge by Bill Taylor who threw down the gauntlet in his book *Commitment and Open Crossings*, which tells the story of the first ever circumnavigation of Britain and Ireland in 1986. Bill and his paddling partners, Mick Wibrew and Richard Elliott completed the 2,612-mile journey in 155 days. I have 183 days, but I will have to paddle nearly 5,000 miles to complete my challenge. This is because I intend to 'keep the land on the right'. I will attempt to follow a route that will take me seaward of every inhabited island that makes up the United Kingdom and Ireland, including the Isles of Scilly, St. Kilda, the Western Isles, Orkney, Shetland and the Channel Islands. I will also include all of the coast of Wales and Ireland, using the narrow North Channel between the Mull of Kintyre and Northern Ireland to cross the Irish Sea in both directions.



# Yak-paddling.com challenge 2004

It has been said that it is too much, too far in one season. I would be the first to admit that I will have to be very lucky with the weather if I am to be successful. Should the weather prevent me from making the big open crossings I will concentrate on my main goal, the first solo circumnavigation of the mainland of the UK and Ireland.

There has been some debate over recent years as to what has and what has not been achieved in terms of solo circumnavigations of Great Britain and the UK and Ireland. It would seem that the American Chris Duff attempted the first ever, solo circumnavigation of mainland Great Britain in 1986. He used the Crinan canal to bypass the Mull of Kintyre during bad weather. Some would argue that makes his circumnavigation incomplete. It would appear that no one has attempted a solo circumnavigation of the UK and Ireland and no one, solo or otherwise, has attempted to include all the inhabited islands of the British Isles.

The definition of solo in the Oxford English Dictionary is "unaccompanied, alone". Whilst Simon Osborne completed a very commendable circumnavigation of Great Britain in 2002, other paddlers accompanied him, at times. The 'solo' issue has given me much food for thought, as I need to be seen to be acting responsibly. Therefore I am endeavouring to find suitable vessels to be on standby for the longest open crossings - The Scillies, St Kilda, Orkney/Shetland and the Channel Islands. I will not be following them, nor will I want them to follow me. I will not use them to help me navigate or supply me with food or drink; in fact apart from the odd photo I would rather not see them at all during the crossings. However I do believe that in the modern world such a measure is a sensible precaution should I fall ill or have any other mishap that forces me to stop. I will be able to call them up on VHF and not have to bother the emergency services.

Apart from just being an ego trip I will be hoping to raise a considerable amount of money for two charities, the Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI) and the Marine Conservation Society (MCS), the UK charity dedicated to the protection of the marine environment and its wildlife. Details of how you can contribute to these very worthwhile charities can be found on my website [www.expeditionkayak.com](http://www.expeditionkayak.com).

I first became aware of the work of MCS through Richard Cooper's record-breaking circumnavigation of the UK and Ireland by windsurfer in

1999. I hope that my expedition will serve to raise the profile of MCS within the paddling community. Perhaps most well known for the publication of the 'Good Beach Guide' and the 'Adopt a Beach' scheme, MCS has worked successfully for over 25 years to highlight issues of concern and threats to both marine wildlife and to the wider marine and coastal environment. There is no better way of exploring our coastline and observing the shy wildlife you will find there than by kayak. MCS recognises the low impact our sport has on the environment and wishes to encourage us record what we see. They particularly want sightings of Basking Shark and Turtles both of which can regularly be seen around our shores. You can obtain sightings report cards by going to their website [www.mcsuk.org](http://www.mcsuk.org) where you will also be able to find out about other ways of contributing towards protecting the marine environment.



It is perhaps easy to take an organisation like the RNLI for granted. Much like your life insurance policy, you hope you will never need it but it's nice to know it's there. You may not be aware that the RNLI recently took over most of the Beach Lifeguard services on our beaches and as such a visit to the seaside is a much safer pastime. The RNLI has a reputation for being a wealthy charity but when you consider it cost 107million pounds to run the lifeboat service last year it puts it into context. Rest assured though that your money is well spent: 81 pence in the pound goes direct to maintaining and replacing the existing fleet, purchasing new equipment or shore facilities, beach lifeguards and sea safety. Like many organisations, the RNLI has been hit by the poor performance of the stock market over recent years as well as a worrying drop in legacies and membership numbers. Several new initiatives have started to see a turnaround in the charities fortunes and any funds raised by my expedition will be targeted towards this year's 'Train A Hero' crew training programme.

The kit monsters out there may be interested to know what equipment I have selected to use for the six-month expedition. Like most paddlers, my usual criteria is 'whatever I can get for free' but for a journey of this length and exposure I know that my kit will need to be the best. The team at Kirton have built a beautiful 'vac-bag' epoxy Kevlar kayak for me, which has a shell weight of just 20kg – not bad for a kayak 18ft 7inches long! I have had it on the water for a week now, and I can honestly say that I am delighted with its speed and responsiveness, despite its size. Its stability is excellent and will give me the confidence to tackle the big open-sea crossings and be fast enough to cover the vast distances.

I use wing paddles, not just for racing but for sea kayaking as well. I find I can roll and perform the finer correction strokes without a problem but they do take a bit of getting used to. Lettmann, the German paddle maker, produce a whole range of paddles for racing, touring and white water. The quality of their paddles is unsurpassed. Thanks to Paul Ralph of Marsport, Lettmann have agreed to provide me with a pair of Nordic wing paddles for the expedition.

YAK Adventure Equipment are supplying me with all the paddling kit I need. The quality of their technical gear has improved considerably in recent years and they can now be considered to be leaders in a competitive market place. The support they have given me has been second to none and there will be 'live' updates of my progress on their website [www.yak-paddling.com](http://www.yak-paddling.com)

At the London Boat Show I managed to negotiate several deals such as with SILVA, world leaders in navigational aids and electronic wizardry. I have a very small brain and like the simple things in life. I had always shied away from the complexity of GPS relying on my faithful old compass to navigate. I had read about SILVA's Multi Navigator, which is simple to use and far more than a GPS; it also includes an electronic compass, altimeter (not sure how important that will be unless the swell is really big), and a barometer with a weather forecast function. As well as giving me a Multi Navigator, they have also supplied me with their excellent S12 waterproof handheld VHF radio.

McMurdo have given me a Fastfind Plus Personal Locator Beacon on loan. This exceptional bit of kit features a built-in GPS receiver combined with a 406MHz transmitter and a 121.5 MHz homing signal. In the event of an emergency, an alert signal is transmitted to Cospas-Sarsat satellites and forwarded to a rescue co-ordination centre typically within 3 minutes. The built-in GPS receiver will provide latitude and longitude co-ordinates to give a position to within approximately 30 metres anywhere in the world. It should be regarded as essential kit for anyone venturing out to sea.

Aquapac have supplied me with waterproof cases for electronic kit such as my laptop computer, which I will be taking with me so that I can stay in touch with everyone via email on the way round!

First Ascent are the UK importers of Cascade Designs range of gear including 'Sealine' dry bags, Platypus drink systems and ThermoRest sleeping mattresses. I have used their kit on previous expeditions and found them excellent and they have been kind enough to supply me again.

Marine Instruments in Falmouth have lent me a number of books and charts for my detailed planning. The RNLI are obviously keen to ensure I do not require their services during the expedition and have asked me to do risk assessments for every crossing where I will be more than five miles from land. There are 50 such crossings in total! With each one I have taken into consideration the tidal streams, the potential fetch of the wind and the amount of shipping I am likely to encounter. As you can imagine, with a crossing such as the one from Weymouth to Alderney in the Channel Islands there is a lot to think about!

Food is very close to my heart and Wholebake Ltd have supplied me with their delicious 'NRG' bars and protein '9bar's made from hemp seed. I pointed out to them that I thought it ironic that as a policeman I should be promoting '9 bars'. They responded by saying that it felt just as odd for them to be supporting a Traffic Cop!

There are numerous other companies and individuals who have given me support and I cannot thank them enough. I just hope that I do them justice by making it all the way around.

**Sean Morley**

## info

If you are interested in the challenge, wish to contribute towards either of the two charities, or think you can help in any way please do not hesitate to contact me through my website [www.expeditionkayak.com](http://www.expeditionkayak.com) You can download sponsor forms, check out my progress with 'live updates' and see where I hope to be and when by following the links on the website.

I would be delighted to see you at the National Maritime Museum Cornwall on April 3rd from 10am. You would be most welcome to join me on the water too from about midday and paddle with me as far as Black Rock at the entrance to Carrick Roads, from which point on I will be on my own. Sponsorship forms can also be found included with this edition of Canoe Focus.

## Pyranha Lightning Sprint Cup Events

Please note we have a new co-ordinator for these events - Sam Wetherall. Sam can be contacted on 07977 217518 or email [lightnings@fsmail.net](mailto:lightnings@fsmail.net). First event Sunday 9th May

## Champion 2012:

### Westminster children

### take Olympics to heart

Around 200 children took part in weekly sporting sessions as part of the first year of the unique

Champion 2012 sporting programme. Cllr Tim Joiner,

Westminster's cabinet

member for schools, said:

"There has been a very high demand for the Champion 2012 programme and the number of children

participating is well above

our initial expectations. This

is particularly heartening

when concerns about rising

levels of obesity in children

are reported with depressing

regularity, because

inculcating good eating and

exercise habits at a young

age will help protect

people's health for life. "It's

also good news for London's

Olympic bid, because the

more young people try out

sports like judo and table

tennis, the more likely it is

we'll find the next

generation of stars in time

to compete at a home

Games. We're also looking

at ways to strengthen the

link between sporting and

academic achievement, for

example by encouraging

pupils to write letters of

support to British athletes

preparing for the Athens

Olympic Games."

Summer is on it's way – and what better time to start building and developing skills for use on the rivers! So here's a good way to get going with the BCU

## Diamond Slalom Challenge

What is it?

The challenge is a course based on a diamond shape that is a great way to test boat handling skills and to practice strokes needed for moving water – whether it's for slalom, playboating or just paddling down a river. The course can be formed by slalom gates or buoys and can be run in a swimming pool or on any patch of water where you can lay the course. Whilst aimed at the 8-12 age group – we know some top GB paddlers who like to go for the Diamond Challenge!

### How does it work?

There are 4 progressive challenges – blue, bronze, silver and gold and the paddler has to clear the course in a set time. The time allowed decreases with each award from 60 – 40 seconds and at silver and gold level the paddler has to complete the course in a set sequence with two seconds penalty for each gate hit.

The blue and bronze awards can be set up during club sessions and stickers awarded by any BCU L2 coach (award stickers available from the BCU at 50 pence each). The silver and gold awards are run at various regional youth events, YouthFest and some local slaloms – so check out the regional activity on the youth pages of the BCU web site.

### Course layout

The course can be set up in less than 5 minutes in most club sessions. If you want to you can make the gates quite easily (great project for a Cadet Leader Award) and a do-it-yourself guide to making them is on the BCU website along with full details of how to set up the challenge course .

### More Information

Check out the BCU website

[www.bcu.org.uk/youth/diamondslalom](http://www.bcu.org.uk/youth/diamondslalom) alternatively can get details from the BCU Young People's Programme and order the award stickers – email [youth@bcu.org.uk](mailto:youth@bcu.org.uk) Tel 0115 982 1100.

## Canoe clubs gain prestigious award

Two more BCU canoe clubs have recently been awarded the Sport England Clubmark and revised BCU Top Club Awards.

This is a fantastic achievement by the clubs and congratulations go to:

- Macclesfield and District Canoe Club – first canoe club to achieve the Top Community Club award in the North West
- White Rose Canoe Club – first canoe club to achieve the award in Yorkshire.

The Club Mark and Top Club award recognises clubs that are safe, effective, and child friendly and who provide a varied programme of activity for young people. Details of the scheme are found on the Youth pages under BCU Top Club and Sport England Club Mark.

There are now five BCU Clubs who have achieved the award (see panel) and a further 63 BCU clubs are currently working towards the awards.

### The following article is from Di Lawler of Elmbridge Canoe Club explaining about how their club works.

**We established Elmbridge Canoe Club twenty years ago with a very definite aim in mind. We wanted a kayak racing club that recruited young people into the sport and provided them with the training and environment to encourage them to develop their potential to the full. We hoped to have everyone aiming at excellence, working towards their own best performances and eventually aspiring to places in British teams at world championships and Olympic Games.**

As the club developed and as numbers increased a system of graded groups evolved through which paddlers can progress at their own rate. Each group has its own coach or coaches and regular training times – for the lower ability paddlers the coaches are always on the water with them, while at the top end coaches usually operate from the tow path on bikes. The coaches try to make training as enjoyable as possible, at the same time providing motivation and a routine within which everyone can work. All paddlers need to do is turn up and train!

Certain factors of our training and coaching have played a key role. Early on we introduced a handicap system which enables ability and progress to be accurately measured. Weekly handicap races are a chance for everyone to shine – to improve their handicap number and possibly to win. Another vitally important factor is that we maintain a full range of ability from complete beginner to Great Britain squad member. This means that youngsters have someone to look up to and the others have paddlers of like ability to train with.

Our youngsters are encouraged to compete in fun races and division 9 races as soon as they are able to cope. We have also found over the years that racing away from the club is a good way to get parents involved. Buying a roof rack and transporting boats to an away fixture can be a pleasant outing for the family as well as showing parents what is involved in our sport! The Hasler trophy has also proved a big incentive to our paddlers, with even beginners keen to qualify for the prestigious final and race for the club. The trophy was first won in 1985 and since 1996 the club has been unbeaten.

In sprint racing the commitment and hard work of the canoe clubs of the West Thames region means that there are several low-key local sprint meetings for juniors to attend before moving on to competing at the National Watersports Centre at Nottingham. Our young members often start their racing careers at the National Championships in July and are then keen to do their bit for the club at the McGregor Paddle competition in September.





Young paddlers from Elbridge Canoe Club

## Sport England Clubmark and BCU Top Clubs

Chelmsford CC - TPC, TCC  
 Elbridge CC - TPC  
 Macclesfield DCC - TCC  
 Tandridge CC - TPC  
 White Rose CC - TCC

TPC = Top Performance Club  
 TCC = Top Community Club



Like all clubs, our facilities and volunteers are crucially important. In terms of facilities, not only do we need adequate boat storage, changing rooms and gym space but a good-sized clubroom means that paddlers have somewhere to meet after training and parents have a place to chat to us and each other. We hold several social meetings each year and also meet parents informally as much as possible – through this we aim to make them aware of what we are trying to give their children and hope that they can share our enthusiasm and aspirations. We also encourage parents to get involved in all aspects of the club, two parents have qualified as coaches, as well as a number who help out with the land-based winter training and with timing of handicap sessions, other parents help with the running of the club.

Continuous recruiting of members has always been a priority but we now find that our most successful method is through schools and via word of mouth. Retaining young members, particularly through the winter, is difficult and however many we introduce to the sport in the summer we rarely retain more than six to eight new members each year.

Our athletes and coaches have been publicly recognised in a variety of ways. In the New Years' Honours List, the United Nations, the Pierre de Coubertin Award, the Torch Trust Trophy and the Mussambini Medal for coaching. During our twenty year existence we have had ten Olympic team members (some competing in two or three Games) and won one Olympic medal; we have produced eight world champions, one double world champion and won 30 world championship medals over all.

Over the years we have been grateful for the generous financial support we have received from a number of organisations. One of the largest grants was the initial £8,000 we received from the Sports Council to help us build the clubhouse and the building was extended a few years later with the help of £10,000 from Walton Charities. Elbridge Borough Sports Council annually considers requests up to £750 for the purchase of equipment, while Surrey Council for Youth and Voluntary Services has been a great help funding repairs to our building. The Foundation for Sport and the Arts funded half of the cost of our original fleet of Regina K2s and the BCU Community Boat and placid water scheme has helped us increase our range of club boats. We are very grateful for the help all these organisations have given.

We are now applying to Sport England's Community Club

Development Scheme, with the help of the BCU, for funds to help us extend our first floor to include extra gym space, where we can work with the younger paddlers. ●



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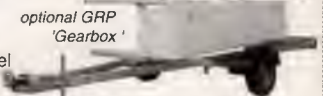


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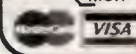
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**Sea Kayak** - fibreglass Sea King suitable for a large framed paddler. 15 years old, in fair condition, equipped with deck lines and fore and aft rubber deck hatches. £100. John Mottram : Tel 01782 796628. e mail [john@jmottram.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:john@jmottram.freeserve.co.uk)

**Sirius MF touring kayak fibreglass**, fibreglass seat, no kink skeg deck, towing cleat, keel rubbing strip, great condition 6 years old, Jonathan Rose Aberdeen 01330 844409

**Starlight open canoe** white £200 13ft, built in buoyancy, fibreglass, paddles inclu. Kris Lebrooy 01424733028, 07970406134 East sussex

**Surf Boards**, two pink body boards, Tiki, With Velcro Leash, Hardly used. £60 the pair. Tel: 0116 220 1577

**Thule roofrack** (feet & bars) to fit car with 'gutters'. Used twice then sold old car hence sale. £45 [caileanmacloed@yahoo.com](mailto:caileanmacloed@yahoo.com) 0141 576 5924

**Topo Spud**, Blue, Good nick, £200. Contact Julian on 07789 747348 or [julian.mason@dssp.com](mailto:julian.mason@dssp.com)

**Towbar for Ford Galaxy**. Supplied by Towsure. New and unfitted. Complete with electrics and all necessary fittings. Meets new EU requirements. Cost £185 new. Sell for £125. Tel Clive in Norfolk on 07770 645516

**Vaude Hogan 4-season tents**, choice of 3. Each cost £235 new. One is unmarked as-new (E145), others are

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**Wavesport EZ** (yellow), Robson Green paddle, Palm rivertec neoprene spraydeck, Peak UK semi-dry cag (large), Yak instructor buoyancy aid with knife. All as new, £750 the lot. Contact Paul 07769 905680 South East

**Wavesport Ice 4.7**. 2 years old, orange, good condition, ideal intermediate playboat. £400 one. Contact Gary on 07931 954601 (Kent).

**Wavesport EZ** red & black, £400. Would suit someone lighter than me! Yorkshire. Tel 07771 504 899 [andrew.menzies@kpmc.co.uk](mailto:andrew.menzies@kpmc.co.uk)

**Wavesport evo**, (yellow/orange) good condition, with nookie neoprene spraydeck, excellent boat for the smaller paddler. £425. Offer: 07742600228.

**Wavesport EZ**. Great all round boat, yes, it will do everything (well, maybe leave the creeks alone) IR Flex capacitor backrest. Blue in colour its fairly well used like a good boat should be but price reflects this. Good outfitting and i'll throw in a lot of foam to wedge yourself in. Somewhere around £300 Based in Brighton but can travel to Hurley, Nene, Hpp etc. [olcriston@hotmail.com](mailto:olcriston@hotmail.com) or 01273 697270

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**Nigel Dennis Romany or Explorer sea kayak**. Willing to pay up to £750 depending on condition / usage. [caileanmacloed@yahoo.com](mailto:caileanmacloed@yahoo.com) 0141 576 5924

**Very cheap kayak for C1** conversion erg. Blade, Glide. Etc. Any condition. James 0798 9621145

**WW or recreational plastic two person canoe**. contact Rob from Bedfordshire. [r.hastings@cedarsupperbeds.sch.uk](mailto:r.hastings@cedarsupperbeds.sch.uk) or 07799760749

## Lost

**Dagger Gradient** + numerous paddles + kit 31 January Worksburn/North Ynre. Reward for return. Contact Shep - 01642 490821

**Yellow pyranha inazone 220** of the river Afon Tarell which leads on to the Usk on the 4th of Feb. If anyone has seen it or knows of its whereabouts please contact Mike at Black Mountain Activities 01497 847897 or on my mobile 07790818452.

**Lost Tempest Cranked Carbon paddle** with Poggies attached in Gantwymyn Gorge on the River Twymyn (Tributary for Afon Dyfi) on 21/04. If found please contact Amber Tel: 0116 286 5146.

**One pair of nomad galasport paddles** on the river conwy on the 18th of January 04 above the little gorge run before the get out by the farmers track, black with multi coloured stripes on the ends of the blades, quite battered. If anyone has news it would be



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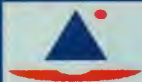
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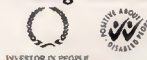
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For further details and application form contact :  
 Seasonal Staff Coordinator,  
 Lakeside YMCA National Centre  
 Newby Bridge, Cumbria LA12 8BD  
 Tel 08707 273927 ext 106  
 Email sylvia@lakesideymca.co.uk



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Tel. 01934 820518 **Contact Dan Thorne**  
 E-mail: info@mendipoutdoorpursuits.co.uk  
 Address: Summer lane, Banwell, N-Somerset, BS29 6LP

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 Somerset BA10 0BA  
 Tel: 01749 812307/Fax: 01749 812706  
 E mail: millonthebrue@compuserve.com  
 Deadline for applications: **Wed 14 April 2004**

SITUATIONS VACANT

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Catering staff are also required.

For further information and an application form, please ring Christina Butler at Grafham Water Centre, Perry, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE28 0BX on (01480) 810521

www.grafham-water-centre.co.uk

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**For details please phone/fax 01748 884434 or email office@marrickpriory.co.uk**

**Norfolk County Council**  
**Outdoor Education Programme and Norfolk Youth and Community Service**  
**NCC-OEP - Chief Instructor (paddlesport)**

Permanent position to become part of our core team.

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**NYCS - Instructor in charge - Eagle Canoe Centre, Norwich.**

1 year contract, to co-ordinate activities at Eagle CC, to deliver activity, to supervise and mentor a modern apprentice, and to develop community partnership based at Eagle CC. Successful applicant will have a range of NGB awards with at least one paddlesport award at level 3.

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**Interview date: April 30th**  
**To start from: ASAP**  
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**For information and an application pack please contact 01493 368129 or visit www.nccoutdooreducation.co.uk**

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You should have at least 12 months water or supervisory experience and hold a current first aid certificate. It is essential that you have or are working towards industry based water coaching awards and ideally hold a BCU level 2 award as a minimum requirement.

We are also looking to recruit a wide range of full time and part time water sports instructors: Rates of pay will depend on your level of qualifications and experience.

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For the above posts, you should be enthusiastic, committed, with excellent organisational and communication skills. It is essential that you are able to work alone without supervision or as part of a team. Ideally you will hold a current First Aid Qualification.

If successful you may be required to apply for disclosure of criminal records at an advanced level. Further information about the disclosure scheme can be found at [www.disclosure.gov.uk](http://www.disclosure.gov.uk).

For an Application form and further information, please contact the reception desk on (01159) 821212. For an informal discussion please Contact Brian Voce between 8.00am and 4pm on (01159) 9824723 or the above number.

Closing Date for Applications: 29/04/2004

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We are opening an Outdoor pursuits project working with young people presenting challenging behaviour.

Experienced and qualified instructors required, child care experience preferred but not essential.

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**For further information please call  
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or 07930 314762**

## Pembrokeshire County Council

*Pembrokeshire Watersports is a County Council project completed within the last four years with three purpose-built facilities. The main residential centre is situated on the banks of the Milford Haven estuary, with a satellite centre on the side of Pembroke Castle moat. The third centre is located in the north of the county at Fishguard and is a great windsurfing venue. We have a large fleet of nearly two hundred craft, which have all been chosen by our instructors.*

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A number of full and part-time qualified instructors are required for our Watersports Centres at Pembroke Dock and Fishguard. You will deliver tuition in watersports and water safety. Contracts are between five and seven months duration to cover the holiday season and include weekend, evening and bank holiday working. Working arrangements will be flexible to respond to the needs of the Centres and their customers.

An RYA, BCU or National Governing Body Coaching Qualification is essential.

Ref: 366154

Closing date: 31 May 2004

Please contact us by: Telephone: 01437 775710,  
Fax: 01437 775376 or E-mail:  
[recruit@pembrokeshire.gov.uk](mailto:recruit@pembrokeshire.gov.uk)

[www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk](http://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk)

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### TAIN ADVENTURE CENTRE BALLYOONAN, OMEATH, CO LOUTH IRELAND Full & Part-time Vacancies for the 2004 Season Instructors Required

For a busy multi-activity centre providing a wide range of activities to schools, youth groups and universities throughout the UK and Ireland.

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Please forward applications to  
 Mr William Ward,  
 Adventure Centre Manager,  
 Tel: 00 (353) 42 9375385  
 Fax: 00 (353) 42 9375417  
 E-mail: [tainhol@eircom.net](mailto:tainhol@eircom.net)  
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### STUBBERS ADVENTURE CENTRE Upminster, Essex

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Applications with CV to Bob Edwards (Centre Director) at:

Stubbers Adventure Centre, Ockendon Road, Upminster, Essex RM14 2TY

Or email: [stubbersac@aol.com](mailto:stubbersac@aol.com)

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SITUATIONS VACANT

### SEASONAL INSTRUCTORS REQUIRED NOW

2 NGB's preferred in SPA, LCLA, BCU, GNA 01749 870646  
 email: [countrywideweekends@btinternet.com](mailto:countrywideweekends@btinternet.com)

Education Services

Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre, Essex

### Activity Instructors for Summer Season 2004

£10,614 – £13,425 pa inc. pro rata  
 (depending on qualifications)  
 Post No: P17494

Grangewaters is a local education authority non-residential centre based in South Ockendon, Essex. We have opportunities for activity instructors and assistant activity instructors to work on multi-activity programmes. The activities we offer include climbing, sailing, high ropes, kayaking, archery, all terrain bikes, abseiling and much more. Our client base is varied and includes:

- Schools
- Youth Groups/projects
- Colleges
- Groups with physical and learning difficulties
- Commercial sector

We are looking for dynamic, enthusiastic and self-motivated people. They must be able to work well within a team, with an adaptable approach. Qualifications within the outdoor industry would be an advantage but not essential as training will be provided. This job is challenging and rewarding. If you like working outdoors, working with people and learning new skills this job is for you. Posts are available from the beginning of April on a six-month contract to the end of September. Do you want a summer with a difference? If so then please apply. For an informal chat, please call on 01708 855228.

To obtain an application pack, please call Grangewaters on 01708 855228/856422 between 9am–4pm, Monday-Friday (answerphone available outside these hours), quoting job title/post number. Email: [grangewaters@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:grangewaters@thurrock.gov.uk)

Closing date: 14 April 2004.

Thurrock Council is committed to equal opportunities and welcome applications from all sections of the community. People with disabilities will be offered an interview where they meet all essential criteria on the person specification. Job share applications are also welcome. Most Departments operate a flexible working hour system.



Apply on-line at  
[www.thurrock.gov.uk](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk)



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We need qualified and/or experienced Kayak, Rocksport and Expedition Instructors for the April to September Season at our Multi-Activity Adventure and Survival Training Centre. We can offer you full board and accommodation in a fantastic wilderness environment, with a good wage, and excellent wild island exploring and sea paddling all around. Great opportunities to add to your logbooks and increase your qualifications.

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PADDLER'S GEAR ▼ MORE PEOPLE

# Grabner makes a return to the UK

Grabner is well known in the boat business as a leading manufacturer of inflatable kayaks and canoes.

Twenty years ago Grabner bought the former Austrian rubber boat factory Semperit, and the

production machinery and technology from Metzeler, in Germany.

Later Grabner also bought the brand of Big Pack Boats. Since that time Grabner has produced some very best inflatable types of kayaks and canoes such as the Outside, Adventure, Explorer and Ranger. Their high end quality boats are successfully sold around the world. Some years ago Grabner also had a dealer network in UK but Grabner neglected to market their products in Great Britain. Now Grabner has returned to make a new start and to market and sell their boats in the UK again.

On www.grabner-sports.at you can see their full range of canoes and kayaks, their innovative accessories and the latest Life jackets from their production lines.

**If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact**

[gertraud.pfaffenbichler@grabner-sports.at](mailto:gertraud.pfaffenbichler@grabner-sports.at)



Left: The Outside  
Right top: Adventure  
Right bottom: Explorer



[www.grabner-sports.at](http://www.grabner-sports.at)

## The Complete Book of Sea Kayaking

Fifth edition

Author: Derek C. Hutchinson

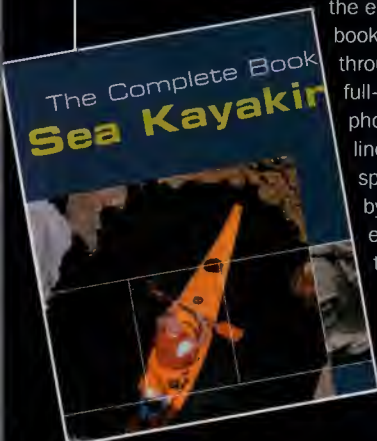
Price: £ 15.99

ISBN: 0-7136 6675 7

Derek C. Hutchinson's classic Complete Book of Sea Kayaking, now in its fifth edition, is an invaluable reference book for sea kayakers of all levels, whether they are beginners who want to find out more about this exciting outdoor pursuit, or experienced trainers wishing to update their knowledge of the sport.

Hutchinson covers all aspects of sea kayaking, providing up-to-date descriptions of the latest equipment and details of basic and advanced techniques. He also provides excellent advice on navigation, coping with adverse weather conditions, understanding tides, and conducting rescues, areas of specific importance to the serious sea kayaker. For the first time the book includes a chapter on racing - a welcome innovation for

the enthusiast. The book is illustrated throughout with full-colour photographs and line drawings specially created by the author to elucidate the text.



# Konvoy, a new line in buoyancy aids by Yak

New from Yak this season is the Konvoy, a 50N all purpose adventure touring; river running buoyancy aid. Ideal for instructors the Konvoy is constructed using durable materials to combat wear and tear and supersoft foam for extra comfort, is packed with features and thanks to an American style low-slung front buoyancy, the Konvoy offers excellent freedom of movement.

It has two spacious front pockets and a pack-away rear pocket that's large enough to accommodate a water bottle or throwline and can be fitted with an optional harness and cowtail.



Adjustable sides and shoulders ensure a secure fit; a front zip provides easy entry and for improved visibility in poor light retro reflective tape has been included across each shoulder, down the back and on the piping along each front pocket.

Other features include a Karabiner park for securing the optional cowtail and a lash tab, located on the front, for attaching a radio or perhaps a knife.

It is available in three sizes S/M, M/L, XL and one colourway red and black.

For further information please contact: Yak on

tel: 023 9252 8621

Fax: 023 9251 0905

email: [yak@crewsaver.co.uk](mailto:yak@crewsaver.co.uk)

[www.yak-paddling.com](http://www.yak-paddling.com)

£69.95



## Having fun - Jackson Kayak

Jackson Kayak was born in October 2003 in Rock Island, Tennessee. It is a kayak company that is simple, streamlined, small, and dedicated to bringing the best kayaks that it can.

Eric Jackson (two time world champion and Olympian) and his design partner David Knight have been successfully designing kayaks since 1994. The first models out of the Jackson Kayak facility will be the Fun Series river running playboats, and the All Star freestyler.

The Fun Series is available in five fully scaled versions giving juniors a boat with exactly the same quality and features as their parents for the first time.

- LCD - That stands for lightweight, comfortable, durable, and dry.
- Lightweight: Creating the one of the lightest production whitewater kayaks requires both lightweight outfitting and hulls.
- Comfortable: Paddling all day is way more enjoyable when you are not in pain.
- Durable: All of our boats will be made from cross-linked polyethylene making them lighter, stronger, lasting longer.
- Dry: A Jackson Kayak has no holes through it! How dry is that? Our boats are as dry as your skirt and drytop.

Square Rock are the sole distributor for Jackson Kayak in the UK and Ireland.

[www.jacksonkayak.com](http://www.jacksonkayak.com) [www.squarerock.co.uk](http://www.squarerock.co.uk)

# Ainsworth professional paddles

The paddles are beautifully sculpted with stiff, fine edged blades. The result is a very positive feel, even in airated water. In the whitewater range there are three alternative blade shapes, Regular, Asymmetric & Side Kick, and so the paddler can be assured of getting the right tool for the job.

The blade construction is a high molecular polymer injected through quadriaial fibres at a pressure of 3,000 psi. - and yes it is tough. It is

also a new method of producing stiff, lightweight structures, which Ainsworth have been working on for some years, and so watch this space for future developments.

Such a fantastic production process has also pushed the boundaries of production efficiency, and at a retail price of around £110, the Professional Paddles offer the highest specification of construction

## Now – Reintroduced... 'Ally shafts'

K100 and C100 range of paddles with Alloy shafts - ideal for centres and clubs. The K100's have index grips on a smaller diameter shaft, and the whole range have blades moulded from a new tough Elastomer Plastic.

These floaty, all round paddles can also be upgraded to glass composite shafts, making them feel responsive and well balanced. Prices, are as ever, very competitive and hit that all important mid price bracket.

## ABS Canoe & kayak Paddles

We have expanded the range of ABS paddles to include Junior Canoe paddles and flat kayak paddles for novices. Black shafts compliment the



bright blue blades to make a very attractive entry level paddle.

<b>C80</b> Junior Canoe paddle	£19.50
<b>K80</b> FLAT Kayak paddle	£29.50
<b>K80</b> CURVED Kayak paddle	£29.50

[www.ainsworthpaddles.net](http://www.ainsworthpaddles.net)

## Kayak Rolling

Author: Loel Collins

Price: £9.99p

ISBN: 0953195686

Loel Collins draws on his experience to help the readers learn to roll a kayak or improve the roll they already have. The approach is to illustrate the ideas with clear photo sequences, keeping the text to a minimum.

Rolling is learnt by working through a sequence of exercises to allow the learner to 'feel' what is required. Once the initial sequences have been learnt, problems are identified and solved. The learners are then provided with exercises to prepare them for the challenges involved in rolling in rough water and given advice on how to cope when they get there.

For those who wish to improve an unreliable roll, a flow chart helps them to plan a learning sequence and choose the appropriate exercises.

Although aimed at kayakers, the book is also a mine of useful ideas for coaches looking for tools that they can use when teaching rolling.

[www.pesdapress.com](http://www.pesdapress.com)



# HH Smock Top

This is a top quality rugged smock top from Helly Hansen that gives full protection in rough weather. it's not the most fully laden smock top on the market with only one mesh front pocket with a zip, but hey - I only need water and chocolate bars - not everything plus the proverbial kitchen sink - so I only need the one pocket!

Everything else is very comfortable with all the usual bells and whistles when it comes to adjusting the neoprene on necks and arms and keeping me dry - very dry. The top is also breathable, though how much body moisture it releases vary. When I was working hard there was in some cases a lot of condensation but neither did it stay for long.



Keeping the top clean is important as mud and dirt will impede the breathability. What you clean a jacket with matters too. Detergent is not a good idea as it can remove the water repellent natures of the fabric, instead try to use pure soap flakes. Overall, this is an excellent light and effective garment at keeping the wearer dry and though it only has one mesh pocket - it is big

### Specifications:

**Range:** Mens

**Sizes:** XS-XXL

**Layer:** Outer

**Fabric:** 100% Nylon with PVC coating.

**Features:** Waterproof fabric, taped seams, neoprene adjustable neck and wrist, mesh front pocket with zipper.

**Benefits:** Keeps water out in all weather.

[www.hellyhansen.com](http://www.hellyhansen.com)



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# Annapurna

**An experience shaped by the nature of Nepal**

**After roaming around the European Alps for couple of summers and testing the cold, steep waters of Norway, we started pondering which other destinations would offer enjoyable whitewater for the intermediate paddler, who's not quite ready to hit the unknown, unpaddled zones in the style of the true hairboaters. Nepal stuck out as an interesting and exotic option, and due to the good reports received from previous visitors we decided to pack our backs and headed to this small Himalayan state in the beginning of November 2003.**

And Nepal definitely filled our expectations. Great days on the water were combined with beautiful mountain views, warm showers under waterfalls and plenty of sunshine. But a paddling holiday in Nepal wasn't only about paddling. It was more of an experience shaped by the culture, people, and the nature of the country. Getting from place to place, from river to river and from the take out to the put in sometimes took hours (sometimes days) of riding in the buses and hiking through the bushes.

Maximising the days paddled wasn't always possible in the true European way. Meanwhile the overall Asian experience gained on the holiday was priceless.

In Nepal, where the rivers flow down from eight of the world's ten highest mountains, there are obviously several great paddling areas. However, with the current conflict between the Government and the Maoists, some of these areas are out of reach for travellers. Annapurna region around the tourist city of Pokhara is one of the safe whitewater meccas for paddling enthusiasts, and that is where we started our exploration after a day's sightseeing in the chaotic Kathmandu.

To get a quick start on the paddling front, we decided to hook up with one of the rafting companies who was organising a trip on the Kali Gandaki, a holy river for both the Hindus and Buddhists. While the rafters took care of the logistics, food and accommodation, we could hit the water with nearly empty boats and start warming up. The first day provided excitement in the form of the Big and Little brother rapids while the remaining two days drifted by while polishing paddling techniques in easier water in beautiful surroundings.

Now that we had got into the swing of how to make things happen in Nepal (everything happens – eventually), we decided to continue under our own steam. To carry on with little





more warming up, the Upper Seti, just a taxi ride from Pokhara was a nice half-day trip while preparing for the bigger waters to come.

There are several good runs around Pokhara, and most of the rivers get more interesting the higher you hike up. After a day's hike up to Old Bridge on the Modi Khola, part of our team continued up to the New Bridge to gain few kilometres of even more exciting whitewater. Next morning a clear dawn view of Annapurna South put us on the mood for this steep Alpine style creek run, and when the group was together again, it was a day of plain sailing to the take out on excellent continuous whitewater, with cups of hot lemon tea in the local teahouses to remain as the only breathers on the trip. Following day we had a quick day trip on the lower Modi, which is probably a great blast on higher water levels, but only a slow alpine warm-up run in lower levels.

To finish the Annapurna experience with style, we hiked up to Ngadi to get started on the Marsyandi with our now familiar porters. This was the first high volume run of the trip, and after getting used to the speed of the water and the size of the holes to be avoided, it was pure enjoyment for two days. Although the small village where we stopped by for a night had no lodges, one of the families was ready to accommodate us in their beds while sleeping on the kitchen floor themselves.



True Nepalese hospitality! (acquired with couple hundred rupees...)

Leaving the Annapurna range behind, we moved to the Bhothe Kosi valley and joined crowd of international paddlers participating in the annual Nepalese whitewater challenge. The river itself is one of the easiest rivers to access, and each day we could decide how hard we wanted to go and catch the bus to one of the starting points. Once again the river offered us high volume water with exciting rapids, grading varying from unrunnable to 2 depending on the section. And evenings were spent relaxing in the hammocks and drinking local alcoholic delights on the Sukute beach.

Sooner than we hoped it was time to start making our way back home and return to the Western civilisation. Pleasant bus ride was to be had with a herd of goats and box of chicken fitted into the same local bus with us and our boats on the way back to Kathmandu. On the airport we had to depart with \$100 to get our gear out of the country, but we still considered ourselves lucky not to be flying the national airline, who had its flights suspended for the third day because of technical problems... Looking back and to wrap it all up; we loved it and will be back soon enough!

I went on an organised trip with Gene17kayaking. ●

Satu Vänskä  
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## Annual charity paddle

Hereford County Canoe Club are planning to reinstate the annual charity paddle on the River Wye between Hereford and Ross. It will take place on Sunday 6th June and will be in aid of Hereford County Air Ambulance. The paddle will be a leisurely 27 miles with paddlers proceeding at their own pace allowing a maximum of nine hours. Water conditions are mainly slow moving with occasional simple Grade 2 rapids. There are good launching, landing and recovery sites with a half way stop at a field for lunch; shower and bar facilities at the finish. Entry fees will be £5.00 for each paddler. Entry and sponsor forms available from

**Paddle organiser:**  
Liz Ottaway and Liz Howe,  
20 Overbury Road,  
Hereford, HR1 1JE  
01432 354681

All proceeds will go to Hereford County Air Ambulance.

## Special needs tour

13th June 2004

**What is it?** A tour along the River Severn from Arley/Bewdley especially for those with special needs who may not otherwise get the opportunity. **Who for:** Groups or individuals who have special needs. **Cost:** Free. **Whom do we paddle with?** BCU Qualified coaches will be on hand to supply canoes/kayaks and leadership along the river. **How many can take part:** The idea is to get as many special needs groups/individuals on the water to paddle the four miles from Arley/Bewdley. **Can we help?** If you have a group that requires special attention along the way then obviously you will be required to help. **What do we do now?** Obtain a booking form and return it to us ASAP. **What happens then?** Further details will be sent on receipt and nearer the time of the event. **What do we do then?** Turn up on the day at 11.00am, book in, hope for good weather and enjoy the day. **For booking forms: Contact Dave Bateman WM RTO C/o The Ackers, Small Heath Highway, Birmingham B10 ODQ 0121 772 3739 [info@ackers-adventure.co.uk](mailto:info@ackers-adventure.co.uk) [Deebee1@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:Deebee1@blueyonder.co.uk)**

## 24-hour canoe polo event

28th-30th May 2004

**Up to 480 paddlers are wanted to hopefully break or establish a world record for the longest continuous canoe polo game whilst raising money for three cancer charities. Hatfield Water Park, Doncaster will see 24-hours of canoe polo action and fundraising.**

A group of paddlers from York University Canoe Club decided to organise a big fundraising event after graduate and fanatical canoeist, Ruth Holdway, was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Disease, a form of lymphatic cancer. The money raised will be divided 60% to Cancer Research UK, 20% to Cancer Backup and 20% to University Hospital North Staffordshire Chemotherapy Unit where Ruth is having her treatment.

In order to hold a continuous 24-hour canoe polo game

there will be two teams of five players with rolling substitutions so that the game does not stop and the opposition will be constantly changing. Players will volunteer for 30-minute sessions and will be subbed off after that time. Hopefully players will participate in several sessions over the 24 hours.

Over 300 canoeists from around the country are being recruited to take part in the event. If everyone only volunteered for 30-minutes, 480 paddlers would be needed!

To take part paddlers are asked to sign up to play via the website or by contacting Ruth, stating their ability, their age, availability and email/postal address. They will be sent a sponsorship form and further details. Exact time slots will be allocated a month before the event.

Each competitor is being asked to raise a minimum sponsorship of £10 for adults and £5 for children. [www.cancerchallenge.org.uk](http://www.cancerchallenge.org.uk) has the latest details on participating and sponsorship. **Ruth Holdway: 01782 641186 or 07815768360. Email [ruth@cancerchallenge.org.uk](mailto:ruth@cancerchallenge.org.uk)**

## Open Canoe Association May Rally

30th April - 3rd May 2004

**The OCA's main annual rally is to be held this year on the banks of the River Trent and the Trent and Mersey Canal, near Shardlow Village, South of Nottingham and Derby.**

The venue this year is a friendly farm having two lakes ideal for training purposes. It is a large site, with lots of space for camping, caravans or RVs. Through our local contacts there are lots of options available for local paddles on flat, running and some white water. Some folk may be interested in the National Water Sports Centre, some 30 minutes drive away.

All the normal attractions of the annual OCA rally are planned. There will be paddles of different lengths on each day on both river and canal, training will be available at all levels up to 4 Star, and workshops will be available, dependant on demand, on trip planning, cooking, navigation, GPS navigation, poling, ropes and lines, kids and boats, portage and packing, and sailing. Shardlow village itself and the local area provide alternate attractions such as inns, cafes, marinas and footpaths. We expect there to be a number of trade stalls present over the weekend and a bar and barbecue are being arranged for the evenings.

This rally is not restricted to OCA members - anybody with an interest, real or potential, in open canoeing is welcome - whether individuals or families, regardless of experience.

Costs for OCA or BCU members or affiliated club members will be around £20 per person or £40 per family. A booking fee of half this sum is requested and you can obtain a booking form by any of the following routes: - **Via our web site [www.opencanoe.org](http://www.opencanoe.org) - By email via [colin.taylor@highnambb.co.uk](mailto:colin.taylor@highnambb.co.uk) - Or by sending a SAE to OCA, PO Box 7317, Harwich CO12 3WZ. Further information may be obtained from Colin Taylor on 01452 308379.**

## Northern freestyle event

Easter weekend (Sat 10th/Sun 11th April)

- Club team and individual events
  - Coaching
  - Demo boats
  - Freestyle Competition (and yes - surfing scores!)
  - Slalom
  - Events / Competitions open to under 18's if of 3\* standard and accompanied by responsible adult
  - 'Come and Try' - flat water canoeing for those who normally stand and watch!
  - BBQ Saturday night with flat water Freestyle comp. - team and individual (Fancy dress gains extra points)
  - COST - a bargain at £16 for both days including BBQ - £8 for one day. (Non Competitors - £4 for BBQ ticket)
- More info. Nearer the time on <http://northern.bcu.org.uk>**

## British Quadrathlon Championships and National Trophy Series 2004

### 2nd May The Mighty Morph - National Trophy Round Two

Ashdown Forest, near East Grinstead, Sussex

Contact Andy Read on 01580 754270 or [www.the-morph.co.uk](http://www.the-morph.co.uk)

### 9th May The Deeside Triathlon - National Trophy Round Three

Starts at Highland Games Arena, Braemar, Scotland

Contact Ian Brown or Liz Chellingsworth on 01224 312381 or email [ian@chester39.freemove.co.uk](mailto:ian@chester39.freemove.co.uk)

### 30th May Falcon Cycles North Lincs Challenge - National Trophy Round Four

Ancholme Leisure Centre, Brigg, North Lincolnshire

Contact Ken Collier on 01724 337958 or email [ken.collier245@ntlworld.co.uk](mailto:ken.collier245@ntlworld.co.uk)

### 11th July Wadenhoe Summer Challenge British Sprint Championships and National Trophy Round Five. Sponsored by Tri Bike Ltd

Wadenhoe, nr Oundle, Northamptonshire

Contact Eric Hatliff on 01832 720402 or email [EHatliff@aol.com](mailto:EHatliff@aol.com)

### 1st August The Yorkshire Dales Quadrathlon - National Trophy Round Six

Starts Serner Water, Bainbridge nr Hawes. Point to Point - support vehicle required

Contact Harry Waugh on 01581 600350 or [www.oldestandtoughest.org.uk](http://www.oldestandtoughest.org.uk)

### 21st August Pembrokehire Challenge - National Trophy Round Seven

Neyland Yacht Club, Pembrokeshire

Contact Stuart Blaxland on 01437 890741 or [STUART@blaxland3.freemove.co.uk](mailto:STUART@blaxland3.freemove.co.uk)

### 2nd October The Awesome Foursome - British Championships and National Trophy Round Eight

Bude, Cornwall

Contact Simon Hammond on 01288 354039 or email [hammond\\_family@virgin.net](mailto:hammond_family@virgin.net)

For details of all these events and more, race updates and results service, and all news on the National Trophy series standings, make sure you are on the Quartermaster Information Service database. If you are not yet connected to the British Quadrathlon Association's Information Service, known as Quartermaster, then email [padraig.herlihy@lineone.net](mailto:padraig.herlihy@lineone.net) to request an electronic form, or write to the BQA at 2 Court Lodge Cottages, Church Road, Mersham, Ashford, Kent, TN25 6NS to receive a form through the post.

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