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IN BRITAIN 25P

No. 98 NOVEMBER 1975



THE MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH CANOE UNION

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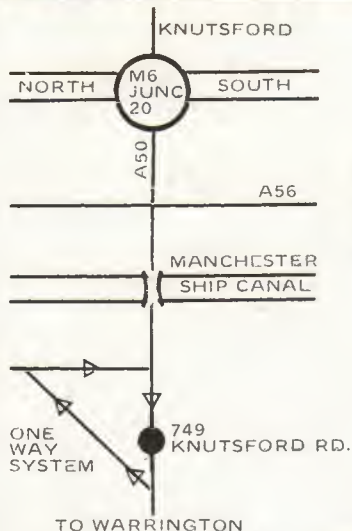
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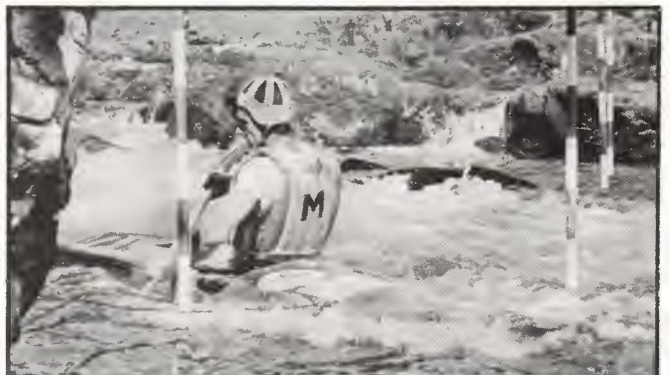
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CANOEING IN BRITAIN

BCU HEADQUARTERS NOTES

Headquarters have circularised all members who, for one or another reason, apparently had not renewed their membership or whose records were in some way or other suspect: i.e. different initials, different addresses etc. The response has been most helpful: practically everyone seemed to realise that we were trying to improve our services and not setting out to annoy members.

At the end of August we had received 358 renewals for membership, 106 envelopes were returned "Gone away", 40 withdrawals of membership, 122 corrections, change of address, change of status. Only four members sent replies which could in any way be termed unhelpful.

A new filing system for correspondence is being introduced with effect from 1st October 1975. All correspondents are requested to quote in their replies the reference number indicated on letters from Headquarters.

1976 BCU SUBSCRIPTIONS

Owing to an error the annual subscriptions for 1976 for affiliated members was given in the last issue as £5.00. This should read correctly: £7.00.

RIVER ADVISERS

Please note that Mr. C. J. Leach, 110 Mount Pleasant Road, Exeter, Devon, has been erroneously taken off the list of river advisers for the river Exe. Please re-insert his name in the list.

For the River Dart delete D. Pritchard and insert in his place The Warden, Outward Bound School, Holme Park, Ashburton, Devon. This is subject to change after December. An appropriate notice will be published in the next issue.

BROCHURE ON SEA TOURING

Mr. A. J. Ramwell, A.C.O. Eastern Region, has written a booklet on sea touring, but unfortunately his own photographs appear not to be good enough for printing.

He would be grateful if readers of CinB could let him have any suitable black and white prints and/or negatives depicting any aspect of sea canoeing: equipment, deep water rescues, interesting coastal shots etc.

The author will return all photographs to their owners and pay a small fee for each photograph used.

Write to him: Mr. J. J. Ramwell, H.M. Borstal, Gaynes Hall, Gt. Staughton, Cambs.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

P. Wood has been taken off the list of paddlers published in the last issue of CinB who have been disqualified from all competitions.

Editorial

It was disturbing to see Richard Stilgoe begin his journey down the Thames on Nationwide the other week paddling off in a canoe, without any form of buoyancy, and wearing wellington boots. At least he acknowledged that he ought to have worn a lifejacket; but the jaunty remarks following his capsize in shallow water might have been a lot less jaunty had he come out near the lock gates in the following shots. *Never* canoe in wellies, and for a more positive approach to buoyancy see this issue.

There was a paragraph in Shrewsbury C.C.'s newsletter last month which alleges that certain skin diving clubs spread themselves and their gear out so much that they have been banned on some holiday beaches. Canoeists need to take care not to be a nuisance to the public on beaches, especially when surfing and landing. We have enough access problems already without engendering the belief that there is a need for more restrictions.

JACK LEVISON

From November 1st Chris Hare will be taking on the duties of Editor of Canoeing in Britain, while continuing as Advertisement Manager. All future correspondence should therefore be addressed to him.

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ADVERTISEMENT DEPT.

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FRONT COVER

Dave Smith breaking out from Gate 7, Linton Dv II '75.
Photo by Bob Lewis

Enquiries regarding non-receipt of magazine, notification of changes of address and general enquiries should be sent, quoting your membership number, to the Director. Names and addresses of the principal officers of the British Canoe

Union can be found on pages 15 & 16 of the February/March issue of C.i.B.

The Director
The British Canoe Union,
70 Brompton Road,
London SW3 1DT Tel: 01-584-9229

CENTRE SPREAD

The North Sea Expedition rafts up for supper.

Photo: John Ramwell.

SPRINT

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR SENIORS—Belgrade 31 July-3 August 1975

Leading up to the final stages of preparations for the 1976 Olympic Games the Sprint Racing Committee had sent a comparatively large team to the 1975 World Championships in Belgrade, but there is no reason not to admit that the results were not up to expectations. In the final ranking list on points Great Britain came 19th out of 23. In the essential short distance races only D. Parnham gained a good sixth place in the K 1 500m event whilst in the women's K 4 500m race the crew Burnett-Peacock-Goodwin-Wetherall came ninth in the final (though out of 11 entries only). All other competitors were eliminated in the preliminary heats. The individual results were as follows (times in brackets are the times for the winner in the race):

K 1 500m

D. Parnham gained a third place in his heat, a third in the semi-final and came sixth in the final in 1.47.77 (1.44.34).

K 1 1,000m

N. Mason came sixth in his heat in 3.58.61 (3.47.05), but was eliminated in the repechage taking a fourth place in 4.09.74 (4.01.81).

K 1 10,000m

A. Williams came 12th in 46.25.92 (42.12.37).

K 2 500m

The pair Lawrence-Farrell came third in their heat in 1.41.72 (1.37.19), but were eliminated in the semi-final coming sixth in 1.41.06 (1.36.60).

K 2 1,000m

The pair Fieldus-Tilford took a sixth place in their heat in 3.47.62 (3.34.64) and were eliminated in the repechage coming fifth in 3.42.77 (3.34.87).

K 2 10,000m

The pair Parnham-Avery came 15th in 40.53.70 (38.44.73) out of 17 entries.

K 4 41,000m

The crew Avery-Haynes-Hunter-Wetherall came 6th in 3.27.78 (3.11.54) and were eliminated.

K 4 10,000m

The British crew came fifteenth and last in 37.17.87 (34.47.67).

C 1 500m

W. Reichenstein came sixth in his heat in 2.16.77 (1.57.35), but was eliminated in the semi-final coming fourth in 2.09.14 (2.04.60).

C 1 1,000m

W. Reichenstein took a 7th place in his heat (no time taken), but lost out

in the repechage coming fifth in 4.34.91 (4.28.76).

C 1 10,000m

W. Reichstein came somewhere after the 13th place — no times and placings taken after the 13th competitor.

K 1 500m Women

S. Burnett came third in her heat in 2.10.49 (2.01.43), but was eliminated in her semi-final coming fifth in 2.08.42 (1.59.31).

K 2 500m Women

The pair Peacock-Goodwin came 8th in their heat in 2.09.17 (1.49.38) but lost out in the semi-final coming fourth in 2.00.15 (1.49.99).

K 4 500 Women

The crew Burnett-Peacock-Goodwin-Wetherall took a third place in the semi-final in 1.49.94 (1.43.20), but came ninth only in the final in 1.50.13 (1.37.61).

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR JUNIORS

No report has been received from the Sprint Racing Committee, but we notice from the result sheets obtained from the ICF that no British competitor appears in the finals.

HOLME PIERREPONT INTERNATIONAL REGATTA 1976

Our own international regatta is gaining increasing support from abroad. In 1976 we will include in the international programme a separate programme for the Olympic events with entries restricted to one (or two) boats per federation and event. Already now the German Democratic Republic whose canoeists have made the most striking progress in recent years in particular in the Olympic events — on which they have been concentrating — have informed us that they will come to the 1976 regatta with a full strength team of 30.

NATIONAL SPRINT RACING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 1975 National Sprint Racing Championships were held in ideal weather conditions at Holme Pierrepont on the 9th-10th August. Entries appeared to be slightly lower than in 1974. The principal results were as follows:

K 1 500m Seniors:

(1) D. Parnham 2.02.20. (2) A. Williams 2.03.84. (3) L. Oliver 2.03.90.

K 1 500m Juniors

(1) I. White 2.05.39. (2) T. Speight 2.06.70. (3) S. Shepherd 2.05.39.

K 1 1,000m Seniors

(1) D. Parnham 4.05.31. (2) R. Avery 4.06.62. (3) L. Oliver 4.08.44.

K 1 1,000m Juniors

(1) T. Speight 4.17.35. (2) I. White 4.20.61. (3) P. Dimmock 4.24.75.

K 2 500m Seniors

(1) Lawrence-Farrell 1.48.21. (2)

Oliver-Williams 1.49.91. (3) Parnham-Avery 1.50.94.

K 2 500m Juniors

(1) Middleton-Ellard 1.56.12. (2) Sherriff-Butt 1.57.21. (3) Spiers-Montgomery 1.59.84.

K 2 1,000m Seniors

(1) Parnham-Avery 3.49.91. (2) Lawrence-Farrell 3.50.97. (3) Oliver-Williams 3.51.26.

K 2 1,000m Juniors

(1) Sherriff-Butt 3.49.38. (2) Middleton-Ellard 3.49.98. (3) Shepherd-Thorogood 3.50.13.

K 4 1,000m Seniors

(1) Oliver-Williams-Fieldus-Tilford 2.27.22. (2) Avery-Haynes-Weatherall-Williams 3.28.80. (3) Mason-Brown-Kolar-Hambrey 3.32.64.

K 4 1,000m Juniors

(1) Machin-Truelove-Speight-Dimmock 3.40.62. (2) Haynes-Butt-Sherriff-Day 3.41.40. (3) Shepherd-Thorogood-Russells-Bains 3.42.60.

C 1 1,000m

(1) W. Reichenstein 5.08.91. (2) B. Edom 5.10.90. (3) K. Pereira 5.16.35.

K 1 500m Women

(1) S. Burnett 2.15.83. (2) H. Peacock 2.17.20. (3) P. Goodwin 2.19.66.

K 2 500m Women

(1) Peacock-Goodwin 2.08.11. (2) Nadel-Burnett 2.08.39. (3) Weatherall-Haynes 2.10.21.

K 4 500 Women

(1) Weatherall-Haynes-Burnett-Harris 1.54.10. (2) Cairns-Allan-McIntyre-McClure 1.55.44.

C 1 1,000m

(1) W. Reichenstein 5.08.91. (2) B. Edom 5.10.90. (3) K. Pereira 5.16.35.

The championships also included some 10,000m races for which the complete results were not made available.

SURF

With the advent of the surf kayak and canoeists whose first love is surf canoeing, an attempt has been made to standardise several aspects of the sport. At the National Canoe Surfing Championships last year 10 surfers were elected to form the B.C.U. Surf Technical Committee. It was originally hoped to have a committee of 12 and since September two more members have been nominated. The committee have discussed judging schemes, safety rules and other aspects of surfing and, at the South West Canoe Surfing Championships, nominated a B.C.U. set of rules and judging schemes.

The committee felt that these schemes were acceptable to most

competitive surfers and hope that more competitions will be run on these lines. This will enable competitors to be thoroughly familiar with all requirements. To allow sufficient time for familiarisation it is suggested that the B.C.U. schemes form the basis on which surfers are judged at least until the end of 1976. During this time faults may emerge and opinions change but there must be sufficient time to 'prove' the system.

The safety rules have been in operation at most competitions for several years and the published set are based on those used at the National Championships.

The rules for surfers during competition seem quite popular, although it may take a little time for some surfers to learn to leave a really good wave to the competitor already riding it!

The judging schemes used at various competitions have been chopped and changed over the past few years but the tendency in both surf kayak and slalom canoe handling has been towards more subjective judging. To ride a good wave on the shoulder and consistently beat the break are the aims of most surfers. Consequently this should be reflected in competition and the surfer riding a good wave well should obtain more points than the surfer on the edge of the break who just 'pops out' or the surf kayaker who '360s' all over the wave. There is a place for these manoeuvres but they should be included as part of the run and not performed as isolated tricks.

To simplify matters the same basic judging sheet can be used for both slalom and surf kayak events with the 'Bonus Manoeuvre Points' box filled in appropriately. Judges should score competitors' waves out of a maximum of 10 and to achieve a degree of conformity they should, where possible, confer or at least mark several different surfers runs.

As well as the subjective scores two bonus points are allowed for each of the listed manoeuvres performed. (N.B. Bonus points are only allowed once for each manoeuvre - 10 popouts or 3 continuous 360s still only score 2 bonus points.) Points are deducted for infringing the safety and sportsmanship rules (either loss of lowest wave score or total disqualification).

The suggested system and one which has already been used with some success is to have 3 judges watching the event and scoring the runs and one 'scribe' per competitor writing down the agreed score and marking off manoeuvres etc. The weakness of subjective judging is of course the fact that opinions vary but with 3 judges marking the subjective side of the competition there can be

some moderation and, hopefully, standards will be consistent, at least for each competition. To reach a form of standard judging the National Championships at Bude this year will include a judge training course. The eventual aim is to have some form of recognised judge and all B.C.U. competitions to include one of these judges. Applications for the judge training course should go to the National Canoe Surfing Championships Competition Secretary, Mount Green, Rose, Truro, Cornwall.

B.C.U. SURF COMMITTEE - COMPETITION AND SAFETY RULES (prior to event)

1. Competitors must comply with organiser's rules, re. entry form, entry fees and closing date etc.

2. Competitors must be covered by third party insurance.

3. Each competitor must wear an approved buoyancy aid and crash helmet.

4. Each craft must have more than sufficient buoyant material to keep it afloat in a horizontal position when full of water.

5. Each craft must have toggles firmly fitted at bow and stern.

6. Each craft must have some device to prevent the competitors feet from passing the footrest in the event of the footrest or footrest support breaking.

7. All competitors must be able to perform an eskimo roll. The organiser of any event shall have the right to seek confirmation of compliance with these rules and in the case of the eskimo roll may carry out random checks.

B.C.U. SURF COMMITTEE - SAFETY AND SPORTSMAN- SHIP RULES (during an event)

1. Competitors will not interfere with another competitor's wave or in any other way jeopardise another competitor's chance.

2. The first surfer on a wave has precedent regardless of his position.

3. With a simultaneous start the surfer nearest the shoulder of the

wave has precedent.

4. Out-going paddlers give way to surfers riding in.

For each infringement of these rules the number of scoring waves will be reduced by one. On each occasion the score from his lowest scoring wave will be cancelled.

Any competitor who jeopardises his or any other competitor's safety, or any competitor surfing in the vicinity of an event, but not part of that event will automatically be disqualified.



STRAND GLASS SERIES

After five races of the eight race STRAND GLASS SERIES of Long Distance Races, competition is hotting up for both the overall club championship and individual winners in the ten classes. After the Chelmer Race, well over 250 individuals from some 43 clubs, have participated in the series which offers first class competition to both the youngster starting racing and the experienced international paddler.

CLUB POSITIONS

1st	Bradford-on-Avon Rowing Club	47
2nd	Leighton Park School C.C.	
	Harlow Canoe Club	33
3rd	Nottingham Kayak Club	30
4th	Wey Kayak Club	27
5th	Royal Canoe Club	22
6th	Riverside Canoe Club	17
7th	Chelmsford B.C.	15
8th	Royal Signals C.C.	11
9th	Lichfield C.C.	10
	Gailey C.C.	

CLASS LEADERS

Senior A-K2

(1) Storey/Gorman (Royal Signals/Royal) 40; (2) Kidstone/Fielding (Royal Signals) 36; (3) Hunter/Weatherall (Richmond/Royal) 18.



Senior A-K1

- (1) Tony Chapman (Chelmsford) 29;
 (2) Theo Speaight (Nottingham) 19;
 (3) Brian Greenham (Hove) 14.

Senior K2

- (1) Fletcher/Morgan (Gailey) 39; (2) Saxby/Latimer (Aylesbury) 38; (3) Kirschner/Rowell (B.O.A./R.N.K.A.) 30.

Senior K1

- (1) R. Haynes (Riverside) 42; (2) S. Shepherd (Harlow) 38; (3) R. Rumble (Pangbourne) 19.

Junior K2

- (1) Stone/Lecch (Shenfield) 42; (2) Howard/Harrison (Harlow) 38; (3) Page/O'Neill (Wey) 16.

Ladies K2

- (1) Chandler/Crawley (R.N.K.A.) 44; (2) Wright/Usherwood (B.O.A.) 31; (3) Haynes/Weatherall (Richmond) 29.

Junior K1

- (1) D. Smith (Harlow) 43; (2) K. Owen (B.O.A.) 33; (3) G. Burgess (Hove) 23.

Ladies K1

- (1) B. Lovell (L.P.S.) 37; (2) H. Money (Nottingham) 25; (3) K. Nadal (Nottingham) 19.

Under 16 Espada

- (1) S. Missen (Bradford-on-Avon) 38; (2) K. Bishton (Gailey) 37; (3) G. Payton (B.O.A.) 33.

Under 16 K2

- (1) Whitehouse/Etheron (L.P.S./Hove) 49; (2) Ball/Rose (Nottingham) 27; (3) Ball/Fowles (L.P.S.) 18.

Competitors please note the following points:

- (1) *NO* late entries are acceptable for this series.
 (2) B.C.U. Membership Cards *must* be produced at the first race which you attend.
 (3) Entries, with appropriate fees, should be sent to the Race Organiser and not to Bob Russell.

JUDGING - SLALOM CANOE HANDLING EVENTS

Judges will be looking for the same qualities in the slalom canoe handling as in surf kayak handling but in addition they will look for an 'aquabatic' finish to a run.

Manoeuvres scoring bonus points are defined as follows:-

SHOULDER RUN. A sustained run close to the breaking shoulder.

POP OUT. A forceful change of direction from forward movement to a backward movement or vice versa. The canoe may become airborne but must remain upright.

LOOP. Turning the canoe and over end. This may be done forwards or backwards and the canoe should go through a vertical position. The canoe may become airborne.

DRY LOOP. This is a loop with a 180° twist in the vertical position, the competitor remaining completely dry.

PIROUETTE. The canoe is stood in the vertical position as for a dry loop but then rotated through 360°.

INTERNATIONAL SLALOM AND WHITE WATER CALENDAR 1976

		White		Category
		Slalom	Water	
24-25 April	Zwickau, German Dem. Rep.	x		B
8-9 May	Kern River, USA	x		A
17,18 May	?, USA		x	A
8-9 May	Tryweryn, Great Britain		x	A
12-13 June	Muotathal, Switzerland	x	x	A
19-20 June	Merano, Italy	x	x	A
24-25 June	Soca (Bovec), Yugoslavia		x	A
24-25 June	Lipno, Czechoslovakia	x	x	A
26-27 June	Tacen, Yugoslavia	x		A
10-11 July	Spittal, Austria	x	x	A
1-2 August	Skopje, Yugoslavia	x		A
7-8 August	Augsburg, Fed. German Rep.	x		A
12-15 August	Lofer, Austria	x	x	A
21-22 August	Landeck, Austria	x	x	C
27-29 August	Jonquiere, Canada	x	x	A
28-29 August	Tryweryn, Great Britain	x	x	C
29-29 August	Nowy Sacz, Poland	x		C
3-4 September	Savage River, USA	x	x	A
4-5 September	Cerveny Klaster, Czechoslovakia	x		C

A—Open competition.

B—Open competition for national teams of up to 6 boats in each class.

C—Invitation competition. The number of competitors in each class may be restricted by the organiser.

The events in *italic* are listed for the Europa Cup competitions 1976 with the events in Tacen and Spittal as substitute competitions.

INTERNATIONAL RACING CALENDAR 1976

22-23 May	Prague, Czechoslovakia	World C'ship P'gramme
22-23 May	Ghent, Belgium	World C'ship P'gramme
22-23 May	Amsterdam, Holland	Olympic Programme
29-30 May	Sofia, Bulgaria	Olympic Programme
29-30 May	Moscow, USSR	Olympic Programme
5-6 June	Vichy, France	Olympic Programme
5-6 June	Bydgoszcz, Poland	World C'ship P'gramme
5-6 June	Snagov, Rumania	Olympic Programme
19-20 June	Holme Pierrepont, Gt. Britain	Olympic P'gramme and World C'ship P'gramme
19-20 June	Bochum, Fed. German Rep.	Junior Regatta
26-27 June	Belgrade, Yugoslavia	Olympic Programme
28-31 July	Montreal, Canada	Olympic Games Regatta
4-5 September	Plovdiv, Bulgaria	Junior Regatta



PRICE CHANGE:

P. & H. Fibreglass Products have had to reorder from the importer and find that as usual price increases have taken place since they last ordered. However, by buying bulk and paying for them within seven days, they were able to negotiate a more reasonable price.

This now brings the mail order price, including V.A.T. and carriage in the UK to £11.75. Extensions are available for this rack at extra cost of £3.51 including V.A.T. and carriage if ordered with the rack.

NEW ON THE CANOE SCENE

A new firm on the Canoe Scene is Extrasport U.K. Ltd., or to be precise it is Ripper Surf Products trading under a new name. The company has four new canoes to offer, two surf canoes, one slalom and a touring kayak.

The Ripper, winner of the

Northern Surf Championship and fourth in the Nationals in 1974; a buoyant, tried and tested surf canoe is designed to cope with any size of person, large or small. The Stripper surf canoe is a real winner with very hard rails designed for the person that wants to go that little bit farther. The fish-tailed stern really holds those walls.

All surf canoes can be supplied with fin and boxes as an extra. Avenger, low line slalom kayak is new for 1976. It is fast, manoeuvrable and capable of sliding under the poles; at present used by the R.A.F. team.

Escort is a general purpose touring canoe suitable for the tyro and the experienced paddler.

Paddle leashes, this innovation by Extrasport is the answer to paddle problems in heavy surf and is now being used by all leading surf men.

Seasport, ever competitive in the highly competitive field of wet suit manufacture announce their current prices: Full suit in 4 mm nylon lined neoprene £24.25 inc. VAT; One piece with sleeves £22.50; and Long John £20.75; all prices quoted are for made to measure.

Higher rate VAT

Now that the initial battle against the Government's imposition of this discriminatory tax on boats is over, canoeists and other members of the boating public may like to know a bit more about what has happened so far and what the British Canoe Union and its fellow organisations propose to do in the future.

As soon as the Budget proposals became known we got together, under the auspices of the Central Council of Physical Recreation, with our fellow sufferers, the Amateur Rowing Association and the Royal Yachting Association. Very early in our discussions it became quite apparent that although we might abhor the whole concept of a tax on boats, as if they were the one and only sporting luxury, it would be a waste of time to oppose it totally. We resolved to concentrate on particular areas where we might realistically expect to make some progress and find general support.

Two such areas offered themselves, first, safety of life, and second, the youth and participatory athletic sport aspect. Briefs were prepared and forwarded to Government departments, like the Home Office and the Department of Trade, interested in safety on water, and also to newspapers and to Members of Parliament.

A deputation, which included the British Canoe Union, led by Dr Mary Glen Haig, Chairman of the CCPR, was received by Dr John Gilbert, Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

Two important facts emerged from this meeting. First, our representatives made a plea that it was unfair to place this higher rate of tax on equipment used in sports like canoeing, rowing and sailing where the major part of the participant's expenses went on his equipment, as opposed to games like tennis and golf where the equipment costs represented only a very small proportion of the total costs of participation. Dr Gilbert replied that this had been deliberate. In seeking activities to tax, the Chancellor had had to choose one in which the equipment was relatively expensive, and because of the difficulty of administering dual rate VAT there had to be a limited and easily identified number of retail outlets. For sheer cynicism this admission takes some beating.

The second point was that the BCU, the ARA and the RYA were invited to submit proposals for the consideration of the Chancellor, that

might exempt rowing boats, canoes and day sailing boats. A great deal of work went into producing this document and a meeting was held with the Customs and Excise who, after making small amendments, accepted our proposals as viable. At the same meeting we also put forward proposals to exempt a number of safety aids and to bring down to the lower rate boat maintenance, in common with maintenance of aircraft and motor vehicles. These proposals, accepted by the Customs and Excise as feasible, were then sent to the new Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Mr Robert Sheldon.

By this time the House of Commons had taken the Finance Bill in Committee. The debate on our clause was keenly fought. The briefs prepared were plainly being used to good effect and it was the general opinion that our side won the argument but, unfortunately, with the whips on, we lost the vote. Our friends in Parliament came back again at the report stage and once more proposed an amendment. This too, thanks to whipping, was lost by only 15 votes. We were successful however in wringing a few small concessions out of the Chancellor.

We have lost the first round, but history is full of cases where groups of people who, having received unfair treatment, have persevered in their efforts to obtain redress and have eventually won. It is seldom that the Treasury can be persuaded to amend

any of the Budget proposals, and we have done well to get as far as we have. We intend to maintain the pressure, and one of the aims of this letter is to ask all those who take part in any form of boating to send details to the Treasury or to the BCU at its Head Office of any incident, no matter how trivial, where accidents have happened or life has been endangered as a result of reluctance to replace or repair faulty equipment, or indeed to provide a necessary piece of new equipment because of the incidence of 25% VAT.

By the same token, any anomalies which appear — and there are many of them — should be brought out. By this means, perhaps with next year's budget or the one after, we may persuade the Chancellor to treat us in the same way as he has all other participatory sports.

Although we have little to show for it, this has been a long and intense fight against extremely intransigent Government attitudes. We have been ably and enthusiastically supported by the CCPR, the British Canoe Manufacturers Association, the SBBNF, the ARA and the RYA and I would like to thank them for their assistance. I can assure readers that nothing more could have been done in the time available, and that we do not propose even now to give up. That is why it is so important that we collect as much ammunition as possible from canoeists and others, to use in the next round.

CLUB CHAT

With a record entry, it was Nottingham Canoe Club's day of triumph as they walked off with half the trophies in the Chelmer Canoe Race (Strand Glass Grand Prix Series) in June. In all 5 out of 10 cups and trophies were taken back to Nottingham and the remaining were shared out by the other clubs competing. Chelmsford members, who have been doing very well in other races in the series, were surprisingly thoroughly defeated on their own river, winning none of the prizes and coming second in only one class.

For the first time, in the twenty-odd years that the race has been held there were over 100 canoes competing with nearly 150 paddlers in all. Williams/Fowler of Royal C.C. won the Senior A K2 Event and T. Speight of Nottingham the Senior A K1 by 3 seconds from J. Barr of Lichfield. Nadal/Burnett took the Ladies Cup in the K2 Class, and Miss H. Money the Britvic Cup for K1 paddlers.

The Chelmsford Town Centre Canoe Dash Open section was won

by A. Williams of Harlow to win the Mead Cup.

Smith/Bourne (Harlow/C.B.C.) took the K2 first place: Brentwood School gained three firsts and two seconds in the Touring Classes.

The British Nordkapp Expedition left Bodo, Norway, on 3rd July 1975 and, after a paddle of over 500 miles in the worst northern summer since records were kept, arrived safely at the Nordkapp at 1500 hours, 29th July 1975. Men and equipment reported to be in good shape.

Humphrey Smith points out that St. David's College C.C. raised £209, not £20 on their sponsored R. Conwy trip (photo caption, Club chat, last issue) Sorry everyone, misprint.

Leicestershire Schools Canoeing Association's L.D. Race in June was sponsored by Rediffusion in terms of prizes, amplifying equipment and assistance on the day, and thus attracted a large number of good class paddlers, and 23 Espada entries.

A number of enthusiasts from Telford C.C. set about some time ago to design and make a modern slalom boat. This has now been achieved with the completion of the mould. Club members will be able to use it shortly for a levy of £3 per boat.

LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

Dear Jack,

I had been intending to write to you earlier to congratulate you on the layout of this year's calendar in the Feb/March issue.

Many readers however may not have realised its convenience. Near my desk the central photograph is displayed on the wall held in position by two pieces of elastic and four drawing pins. It can easily be taken down for reference to the calendar. For added convenience I have put a small key ring on each elastic for ease of lifting to replace the calendar.

This is far more beautiful and easier to refer to than the large sheets issued in previous years.

I have however one small grouse. If page 15 of the April/May issue just received had been interchanged with page 11 the amendments could have been stored in the same place, displaying whichever photograph I preferred.

Manchester *Maurice Rothwell*

Dear Sir,

This year's canoe exhibition at Crystal Palace was a disgrace, a waste of B.C.U. funds and more important, a waste of personal money by members, who gave up a valuable weekend to travel to London.

Most of the members I spoke to came to see the manufacturers' stands, not local club displays. The films and canoe polo were good but no one is going to travel from N. Wales or even further afield just to see these.

If we can't put on a better show than this, let's give up the idea of a National Canoe Exhibition and devote our energies and resources to improving our sport and its image.

N. Francis,
Naval Air Command Mountain Centre

Dear Sir

With reference to your article in *Canoeing in Britain* No 97 page 10, where it is suggested that 3mm marine ply be used for the hull while 6mm marine ply be used for the deck to build the Kidman Kayak.

I should have thought that it would be the other way around. Would you be so kind as to help clear up the problem, as I would like to build one of the boats, but I am very unsure about the thickness of the hull.

Forbes M Mitchell, Aberdeen.

The designer confirms that the building instructions published were correct. The hull and foredeck should be constructed of 3mm ply, and the bulkheads and aft decking (on which one sits when getting in and out) from 6mm material. One error did creep into the materials list - item one should read "1 x 1220mm x 2400mm (8ft x 4ft) 3mm marine ply", not 9ft x 4ft.

Dear Mr. Levison,

Last year we asked if 7 people could canoe through Stratfield Saye Park on a special Sunday and were refused permission. This year I wrote asking if there is a suitable date when a few canoeists might canoe through, and was refused permission. I quote the reason from a personally signed letter by the Duke of Wellington:—

"Permission is given to birdwatchers, fishermen and now the general public, to walk along the river. Although I have absolutely no doubt that your canoeists are quiet, well behaved people, many feel that this sort of activity detracts from the quiet enjoyment of a riverside scene.

I must therefore regretfully once again say no."

How shall I reply?

If you think fit, you may publish this in your letter page.

Looking forward to your reply — perhaps I'd better make it clear that although I would still like one day to canoe through Stratfield Saye Park, I feel the more important aspect at the moment is to try to 'educate' the Duke!

Mrs J. A. Bunce, Crowthorne.

Dear Sir,

"Near to Disaster" is not far off the mark — The caption to the front cover photograph of "Canoeing in Britain" August/September 1975 refers.

To have produced a photograph of a canoeist in surf who appears to be wearing an inadequate buoyancy aid and is certainly wearing no crash helmet must, by inference, be condoned by the British Canoe Union. It is ironical that the report of the safety committee should appear in the same issue. A potential statistic?

A. J. Ford, B.F.P.O. 41.

We agree Roger Halsey should wear his crash lid but his personal buoyancy looks very much like an inflated Beaufort Sportsman, which is a lifejacket to B.S.S. 3595/69.

Our photographs show canoeing as it is, and we can all learn, even from mistakes. Editor.

Dear Sir,

I am wondering if any readers of this magazine know of anyone who may have completed (or attempted) certain Advanced Sea Trips as outlined below; or can give me any information at all as to what has, or has not, been done by canoe.

1. John O'Groats to Lands End East or West coast route. i.e. How long it took by whom, etc?

2. Circumnavigation of Ireland.

3. England to Egypt (Portsmouth to Port Said)

Note: This would be a coastal trip apart from certain channel crossings: Dover — Calais — Gibraltar — and so through the Mediterranean.

Paul Grigg *Bowles Outdoor Pursuits Centre, Eridge.*

Dear Sir,

Ref. C in B No. 95 April/May, P.26, Miniflares

I agree entirely with the photo caption that the Miniflare kit is "ideal for the limited space available in a canoe". I have doubts as to their usefulness in attracting attention initially when in distress offshore, but think they would make an excellent follow-up to "Icarus" Maroon and/or Parachute Red rockets in enabling one to up-date one's position every 10-15 minutes, especially if drifting in a strong tidal flow. The orange smoke cartridges would also be useful here.

The main reason I am writing though, is to warn possible users against the dangers of corrosion in the "pen-type projector". After only a few trips I took ours out of the bag to find the projector was just a *solid mass* of corrosion! It was absolutely useless. Since it had said something like "corrosion resistant" or "Anti-corrosive", I can't remember exactly, in the accompanying literature, I immediately returned it to the suppliers. They passed it on to Schermuly who replaced it F.O.C. The supplier (F. Diack & Sons, Edinburgh; very good by the way) also sent me a waterproof bag in which to carry it on future sea trips.

The points I would stress are:— a) Always make sure the kit is carried in suitable waterproof packing; consistent with being readily available for urgent use and easily unpackable when very cold and floating in the sea. Simply a 'poly' bag rolled down and taped up would do, with the tape doubled over at the end to give a 1" pull tab to ease ripping it off. If a piece of cord were rolled up with the bag it could then be tied to the life-jacket. b) If after any trip you think salt-water may have got in, do not leave it too long before you unpack it to check. If so, dismantle the projector, rinse the parts in cold water and when dry re-assemble, smearing lightly with petroleum jelly. Then re-pack in the 'poly' bag.

It would not be very comforting to discover that it had seized up just when it was required for real use.

It might make you feel better but I don't really think it would be much good trying to throw the bloody cartridges into the air and shouting "BANG" at the same time.

I blame my own lack of common sense more than the manufacturer for what happened to our first projector.

Incidentally, at our clubhouse last bonfire night we decided to let off a couple of our flares that were nearing their "time expiry" dates 1) an Icarus Maroon, 2) a Mars Hand Held Red. The Mars worked beautifully whilst the Maroon didn't even trump, (sorry, puff if you prefer) not even after we put a nail up the hole and hit it with a 3 foot length of 4" x 2". Gulp!

John E. Chamberlain
Derby

NORTH SEA DIARY

by Derek C. Hutchinson

Felixstowe Ferry, Saturday, August 2nd, 1975 — the Big Day! 1.30 a.m. and still awake, with a mind whirling from apprehension, a too vivid imagination and the after-effects of a particularly trying day.

There had been too much driving and too much vexation trying to organize a parking place for the caravan, vexation heightened by a session spent trying to discuss the proposed trip with incredulous and hostile coastguards.

Six of us were going to attempt the longest open-sea crossing in eskimo kayaks. For me it was the culmination of several years of dreams and hopes. A little more than a year previously the dreams had begun to crystallize and gradually, in the usual hush-hush, M.I.5 method of canoe expedition planning, hints of the proposed trip were discreetly circulated and the potential team grew. Gordon Henderson immediately wanted to come along, as soon as he realised what I had in mind. John Ramwell expressed real interest when he was up on one of the Northern Coaching Panel assessment courses. Later, two of John's canoeing colleagues, Robin Catchlove and Keith Maslen were added to the list and Tom Caskey, another member of the Northern Coaching Panel made up the sixth.

I must finally have fallen asleep about 4.30 a.m. and was up again at 7. The sun was already hot. A high pressure system dominated the English weather, while another 'high' waited over the Atlantic, ready to take its place. The sea was calm, and, according to all sources, the future prospect was stable. Britain was steaming in an almost unprecedented heat-wave. After breakfast I left the others getting ready while I went to make final arrangements with the Coast Guards.

Although they thought we were over-estimating our powers of endurance, they noted our Estimated Time of Arrival as 10.00 a.m. Sunday (24 hours) and agreed that after 30 hours they would start seeking us. Their weather forecast was good, winds N.E. 3 to 4. The Coast Guard then made his required official warning against our going. "Although

it's calm here," he said, "it can get rough out there." Hardly news, I thought.

Wearing our sun-glasses and hats, we got into our heavily-laden boats, said our farewells to those who were to watch and wait for us, and set off at 10.30 a.m., accompanied for the first few hundred yards by a Press boat trying to get pictures of us. Soon they left us and we settled down into a steady paddling rhythm. First stint as pilot was taken by Gordon. I had organized a rota of hour-long turns at being pilot, (half an hour during the hours of darkness) and each pilot was assigned a 'companion', whose duty it was to talk to him and try to prevent the sort of hypnotised dullness which can come from staring only at the compass.

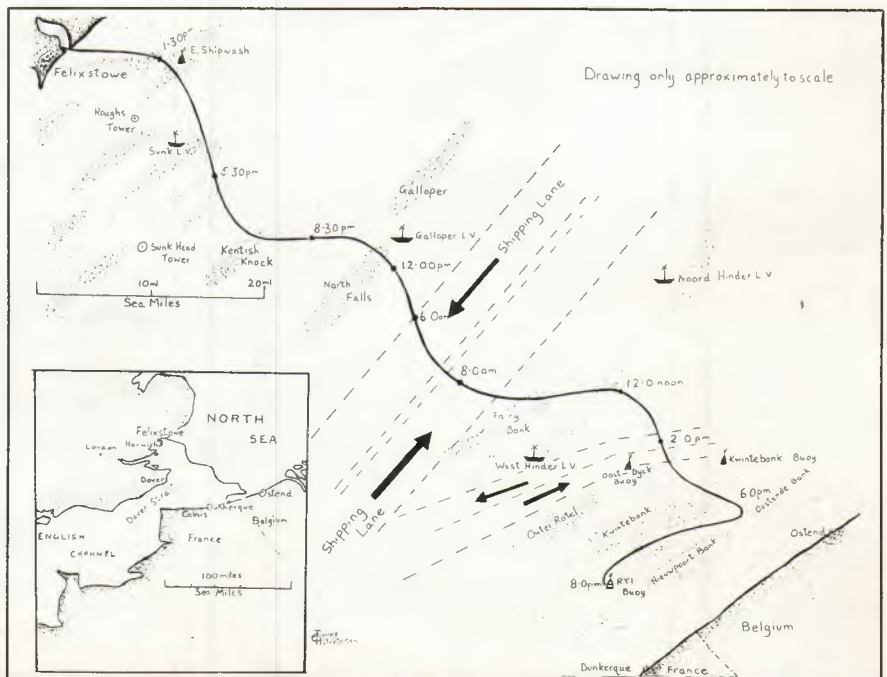
For the first 3 or 4 hours the ebb-stream would take us northwards as much as 2 to 3 miles off our course. Ahead and to the left about 3 miles away was the flashing light that replaced the Cork lightship. Even in the glaring sunlight the flash was extremely bright. There were some ships ahead of us crossing our path, going to and from Felixstowe and

Harwich. We paddled on a course of 132° mag. towards them but by the time we got near the actual shipping lane, they seemed to have vanished into the distance, giving us a clear passage through. Way off to the right in the South West, we could see the Roughs Tower, one of those gigantic gun platforms which were built in various parts of the Thames estuary during the war. At a distance of about 6 miles, this one appeared like a tiny table in silhouette on the horizon. There seemed to be some shipping steaming on a course parallel to our own and, we assumed this was traffic crossing the North Sea.

At about 1.30 p.m., three hours of paddling, we saw a high-speed launch skimming towards us from the South. As he approached, I put up a paddle and waved. He changed course slightly and came towards us, slowing right down as he drew level. "Have you a radio aboard?" I asked. He had and agreed to radio Felixstowe or Thames Coast Guard to say he'd seen us and to report our position. Then he shot off at high speed, his gleaming stern proclaiming the title "Million Dollars, Southampton". We saw him stop about ½ mile away presumably sending his message which, as we later learned gave our position as "One mile West of the East Shipwash Buoy".

We paddled on in the heat, eventually stopping for lunch at about 2.30. We planned to have such major breaks approximately 4 hours apart, and a 5 minute break each hour.

About 5 o'clock — and now we seemed to have left the shore slipping well behind. Visibility was very good as the late afternoon wore on. Ships appeared on the horizon to the North, but only one came anywhere near crossing our path about ¼ mile behind us. We paddled on and on. John and Keith both had transistor







NORTH SEA DIARY

radios on. Mine, unfortunately, had been forgotten through agitation and haste in getting ready to leave. It proved a bad mistake. Listening to a radio takes out much of the monotony of paddling and provides a link with reality, giving the mind something else to concentrate on apart from the horizon.

6.30 p.m., 8 hours of paddling — we were all in good spirits. No-one seemed daunted by the long paddle ahead although every now and again a 'companion' would have to be reminded to keep at his task of talking to the pilot, instead of getting quietly lost in his own thoughts. About 2 mls. ahead and on our course, a fishing boat appeared. They moved off slowly northwards and I thought it might be a good idea to alter course slightly in an attempt to make contact, but they moved faster than we had estimated so we reverted to our original bearing. Our position was approximately just North of the Long Sand Head and Kentish Knock Sandbanks.

8.30 p.m. — The sun was now getting low in the sky and we started to think of the long night before us. Conversation previously flowing freely, was drying up now. At about 9 o'clock we rafted up for supper and got ourselves wrapped up and warm in jumpers and anoraks in case the night proved chilly. As the sun sank in a beautiful red sky, some sat on the backs of cockpits, supported by paddles and stretched their legs. Others just leaned on their paddles, glad of a rest from the interminable paddling.

After a few minutes of moving on again, into the night, we spotted the bright flashing light of Galloper lightship, way off to our left. It quickly became very dark. The lights of the pilot and his 'companion' rose and fell in front of the rest of us in a world of inky blackness devoid of horizon.

11.00 p.m. — almost 13 hours paddling — our world still dark. The lights of ships were dotted about ahead of us and a few to the sides but they were about 15 miles away. Our position was somewhere near the North Falls — almost the middle of the North Sea. The moon had not yet risen. The sky was a myriad of stars — the brightest I'd ever seen, and Venus actually shone and reflected on the water, but our vision being low, we only enjoyed the starriness when we rafted up. When we paddled, we seemed to paddle on and on in total darkness. During one of our 'raftings' we looked up and saw not only the stars but something moving in a straight line, which then turned sharply and moved off at 90° from its original path. A U.F.O? Who knows?

Midnight — Tom hadn't been feeling well. I would shout to the others to hang on while I tried to give him some comfort and encouragement. Then we could paddle on for a little while until Tom would slump forward and I would try to hold on to him again. This must have been frustrating for some of the others who were still quite fit at this particular time, as they were unable to press on, but I think I was glad of the stops as I, too, was beginning to feel distinctly unwell. I'm not sure whether it was fatigue, the seeming endless darkness, the hypnotic effect of the bobbing lights of those in front, or a combination of all three.

Across to the left and slightly ahead, a triangle of three lights rose and fell in the blackness. "It's a buoy" said someone. "We'll get a fix on it". I paddled towards it at full speed. I could hear John just behind me. We didn't seem to be making any progress. "This tidal stream is bloody strong!" I shouted to John. It seemed as if I was being swept away from it. Then it dawned! — the damn thing was moving. "Hello there!" I shouted. Immediately a light shone on us and a startled voice called, "Who is it?". The reply, "Canoeists crossing the North Sea", seemed to stun whoever it was. After a short pause we heard, "Hang on, I'll come



Derek Hutchinson

about." It was a yacht. He didn't have a radio but he told us we were 43 miles from Ostend and gave us a bearing of 130°. Then he went off into the night, no doubt to entertain his friends with tales of the strange people one meets out at sea.

Just as he moved off, a ship which seemed to be all lights passed about ½ mile away, going at great speed. We plodded drearily on. The moon was now up and giving us plenty of light on our left — Blackness to the right. By now I was feeling really ill,

so ill I thought I was going to die. God, what a place to be sick! I grabbed deck and heaved up my stomach contents. Tom, who was feeling a little better, now supported me, putting his hand on my shoulder and telling me I'd be O.K. soon. "Just wait till it get's light", he said, "You'll be O.K. then." But I felt just as awful.

"My God", I thought, "I'll never be right again!" Now it was Tom's turn to tell the others to hang on. We would paddle on into the darkness and then have to raft up with each other and wait 10 or 15 minutes and then paddle slowly on again. It is also obvious from the chart that in this part of the North Sea we must have been heading almost directly into an adverse tidal stream for some of this time.

4.00 a.m. — about 18 hours paddling, and we must have only travelled 5 or 6 miles since midnight. The first grey light of day started to appear in the sky — a strangely depressing sight, knowing that we still had a long way to go. I vomited four or five times more. Tom had stopped being sick now. Then, as it started to grow lighter, I 'saw' a block of flats right in front of me. I could feel my eyeballs wanting to roll right up in their sockets. During the night, Tom had 'seen' a man lighting a Primus stove, I 'saw' a huge cantilever bridge and, curiously, we both "saw" a wire-mesh grid. These, of course, were hallucinations and the images and the horizon seemed to overlap like a badly printed picture. I was glad when that episode was over. The night had been a nightmare. While Tom and I had been so ill, it had fallen to John to take over the task of keeping us all together on course.

6.30 a.m. Sunday — 20 hours of paddling. The sun had risen. It was warm and there was an early morning mist. We rafted together to remove our anoraks and warm night gear and to have something to eat. I got right out of the cockpit and stretched full length along the canoe. After 5 or 10 minutes I sat up and gingerly sipped a few mouthfuls of my egg and milk mixture. It stayed down! I was feeling a bit better. Tom was looking brighter now. Gordon looked as fresh as when he'd started and preferred not to raft up in case it made him feel sickly. Robin seemed a bit tired but quite well. Keith had had a time of almost falling asleep during the night but hadn't slowed down at all and now looked wide awake again. Keith turned out to be an ace navigator and could be depended on to know just where we were. About this time we heard engines throbbing quite close but could see nothing in the haze. It was about this time too that severe stomach pains told me that nature was calling rather pressingly and there ensued quite an anti-social performance. When we finally broke the raft, Robin realised he'd lost his paddle.

(to be continued)

NEWS

LONG DISTANCE RACING — SPANISH SUMMER SUCCESS

The British team which visited Spain this year came up against lively opposition. The organisation of the racing came more under the central control of the Spanish Canoe Federation and there was an obvious attempt to make the two weeks more of a series.

The programme started the most important race — the Sella — and the results achieved were perhaps our best ever. First places were gained by John Fowler in the Mens K1 and L. Perrett and H. Money in the Ladies K2. In the Mens K2 R. Storey and P. Gorman came 6th and G. Oliver and D. Squires 7th after pulling through from 56th on the starting grid.

In the Junior K2 A. Fieldus and J. Freeman paddled well to finish 2nd. Unfortunately Kinch and Davis were tipped in at the start and could not make up the lost ground. Gt. Britain was placed 1st in the team event.

Gt. Britain was placed 1st in the team event.

OTHER RESULTS:

Spring Regatta — Trasona

Mens K1 J. Fowler 3rd; Mens K2 Storey/Gorman 4th; Mens K4 Storey/Gorman/Fieldus/Fowler 2nd; Ladies K1 Perrett 3rd Money 4th. Team Event 2nd.

Gijon Harbour Race

Mens K1 J. Fowler 2nd; Mens K2 Storey/Gorman 4th Oliver/Squires 6th; Junior K2 Fieldus/Freeman 1st Kinch/Davis 2nd; Ladies K2 Perrett/Money 2nd; Team Event 2nd. *Nalon Ascent*

Mens K1 J. Fowler 1st; Mens K2 Storey/Gorman 4th Oliver/Squires 8th; Junior K2 Fieldus/Freeman 2nd; Kinch/Davis 8th; Ladies K2 Perrett/Money 1st; Team Event 2nd.

ACCESS

ACCESS IN THE NORTH EAST REGISTRATION SCHEME

Work is now well underway on the proposed scheme to be operated in the region as a pilot from January 1st, 1976, and affecting all canoeists, including those from other parts of the country, who canoe on water under Access Agreement. It is mainly a means whereby canoeists can be identified by landowners and anglers, and non B.C.U. Members kept off water which they have contributed

Cares — Deva

Mens K1 J. Fowler 2nd; Mens K2 Storey/Gorman 4th Oliver/Squires 3rd; Team Event 2nd.

Aiar del Ray

Ladies K2 Perrett/Money 1st; Junior K2 Fieldus/Freeman 4th; Kinch/Davis 7th.

SLALOM ROUNDUP

It is reported that all three members of the British Mens K1 Slalom team — Dave Mitchell, Ray Calverley and John MacLeod — are retiring from top class competition in this country. Dave Mitchell, a popular figure who will be sadly missed, eight times British Slalom champion, and world silver medallist, has emigrated to the U.S.A.

No full report on the World Wild Water Championships and Slalom in Yugoslavia reached us in time to be published in our last issue. There is no doubt that tremendous strides forward have been made since the last championships.

The Ladies, of course, stole the show (and at one stage, the Belgians' flag from their hotel) by taking places 2, 3, 5 and 6 in the Ladies K1 class; and the Gold Medal in the Ladies K1 Team event, an outstanding achievement.

The bad luck experiences by the men did not prevent them achieving creditable placings in these world events — Dave Mitchell came 9th in the K1 Race. Norman Jackson, who was doing rather better, broke a blade before the halfway point. Jon Goodwin took 13th place in the C1 event — with a shoulder wrenched during practice and G. Goldsmith was 14th. The Mens K1 team came 5th, 37 seconds behind the winning Austrians, but a broken paddle handle for Bill White hampered the G.B. team in the C1 Team event, where we obtained 6th place.

Following the event, winners from the French team refused to attend the ceremony to receive their prizes, as a protest against the disqualification of their team in the K1 event, a decision upheld by the

nothing towards by way of negotiation.

To show good will, the anglers agreed to start re-negotiation for next year's Agreements this September.

Only time will tell, but one of the main benefits of the scheme could be the promises, at present made quietly behind the scenes, of more water made available to canoeists, when identity and behaviour can be guaranteed.

N. TYNE

The Agreement from Chollerford to Warden has been altered until the end of October with dates reduced in number, though the spate clause kept, due to most of the fishing leases having been re-let at a considerably higher rate.

Details from Mike Todd with s.a.e. The same dates are also meant to

ICF jury.

The ICF in consequence ordered the withholding of the medals, reprimanded the French President and Team Leader and excluded the French Team from participating in the Slalom World Championships in Skopje.

In the slalom, 16 year old Nikki Wain came 7th and Alan Edge 8th out of 70 competitors, outstanding results on this difficult and demanding course.

VICE PRESIDENT DIES

We learn with sorrow of the death of Jérôme de Liège, Vice President of the Kayak Club de Frances, in June. From 1954 to 1966 he was a member of the I.C.F. Slalom committee, and was responsible for the introduction of wildwater championships.

He held the Order of Merit in Sport. Interested also in touring and skiing, he helped produce the I.C.F. Bulletin, working always with enthusiasm and good humour. He will be greatly missed by his friends in the canoeing world.

STANDING LIAISON COMMITTEE MEETING

On 7th September the Standing Liaison Committee met at the National Water Sports Centre, Holme Pierrepont and invited to interview all those who had applied for the post of National Coach for Competition.

The Committee now have pleasure in announcing that Mr. Ken Langford of 38 Redwood Avenue, Stone, Staffordshire was the successful candidate and he has accepted the post. Mr. Langford is already a Senior Coach and an Honorary Competition Coach. The Committee wish him all success in his new work.

be applied to the last 2 miles of the S. Tyne (fishing leased by the same syndicate) and a S. Tyne agreement will be operational next year.

WEAR

It seems that problems have subsided, after a spirited press campaign by both anglers and canoeists, and the main anglers' representative having been disowned by some of his colleagues. Durham police have also conducted enquiries into the number of assaults made on canoeists this year.

A verbal statement has been made by the Legal Dept. of the Northumbrian Water Authority to a local M.P. (whose help had been enlisted) to the effect that the Wear from Durham downstream is an ancient navigation and this is being sought now in writing.

WILD WATER JACKETS

EXPEDITION TRIED AND TESTED – AVAILABLE THROUGH AGENTS AND STOCKISTS – SITUATED IN FOUR CONTINENTS OR DIRECT



Photo Courtesy Percy Blandford

NEW--WILDWATER S.R. JACKET (above)
 Ex. Small £6.60. Medium £10 Large £12
 Small £8.00 S.B.B.N.F. approved



Photo courtesy Norman Lilley

CANOE DE LUXE (below)
 To B.C.U. and I.C.F. requirements
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A close look at

PERSONAL BUOYANCY

by Frank Goodman

Before the 1960's, relatively little research had gone into personal buoyancy. Canoeists — when they wore buoyancy at all — relied on such things as Mac Wests or ex Merchant Navy issue garments.

Exactly twelve years ago I was present at the B.C.U. council meeting when Oliver Cock demonstrated an early model of the B.S.I. Kitemarked Life Saving Jacket.

The inherent buoyancy of 30lb. originally demanded by the B.S.I. was too high to allow the canoeist to dive down out of his canoe, so a 20lb. limit was set, with a second stage ovally inflated, to give a total of 37lb. buoyancy. Even this 20lb. was found to cause difficulty and in 1969 a minimum of 13½lbs. was accepted by the B.S.I. for first stage inherent buoyancy in lifejackets for adults.

The B.C.U. Safety committee makes the recommendation that for open-water canoeing, the only satisfactory answer is a B.S.I.

approved 2-Stage Life Jacket. This, when inflated, will turn and support an inert person at about 45 degrees, on his back, facing the waves. A buoyancy aid will not do this.

A waistcoat buoyancy aid to I.C.F. standards may be felt to be sufficient for the competent swimmer whilst engaged in inland canoeing and competition work. Advocates of these claim they are warmer, less restricting, and offer more protection from bumps on rocks. It is fair to say that controversy exists over the benefits of each type of garment.

Advice is freely available from the B.C.U. regarding matters of personal buoyancy, and though opinions may vary as to the best type for a particular purpose, it is still better to have some form of buoyancy than to be without it.

We give below brief details of a number of lifejackets and buoyancy aids sold as being suitable for canoeing, and where they can be obtained.

LIFEJACKETS

Ottersports have two life-jackets made to B.S.I. standards.

The Slimline adult has inherent buoyancy of 13½lb and 40lb. when inflated. It costs £11.88 including V.A.T. plus 50p carriage. Wear is much reduced if a cover is fitted — yellow costs £3.78, or £4.86 for the "Sea Canoeist" cover, which has extra pouches for compass, flare, etc.

The Slimline Child life-jacket costs £9.72. It has inherent buoyancy of 10lb. and inflated buoyancy of 20lb. and is designed for the 3 to 10 years age range. P & H quoted £8.64 for

the child's jacket, which seems low, and £3.24 for the adult I.J. cover, which is cheaper than anyone else. Full instructions come with the lifejackets, also available from Cymru canoes, Llandudno, Lendal in Scotland, Topcraft in Walsall and Pyranha in Warrington.

The Failsafe Sportsfoam Mark 5N lifejacket by Beaufort also features 13½lbs. of deflated buoyancy, inflatable to 35lbs. It comes in orange, and the RRP is £16.15. Field & Trek (Equipment) Ltd. offer it for £13.73. It conforms to B.S.S. 3595/69.

Lendal Ltd. of Prestwick claim that many canoeists like the flatfold configuration of the Beaufort Sportsman Mk. 5N. This has no foam buoyancy, but can be worn with the collar area inflated, giving some immediate buoyancy. Mouth inflation can then increase the buoyancy to 35lbs. Price is £13.72 including VAT.

"Lifemaster" two-stage lifejackets are approved by the BCU and the NSSA for use by their members. By quoting your current BCU membership number you can order these kitemarked jackets through the BCU or direct from Vacuum Reflex Ltd at a discount on the RRP (plus VAT & p&p).

Adults use Type 9 £10.80 (with discount, price £7.20), children Type 11 (2 yrs. upwards, chest measurement over clothing up to 30"), or Type 12 (7 yrs. +, chest up to 34"). Both children's types cost £12.80 (with discount £9.60) Nylon covers for the Type 9 jackets cost £1.80. A full inspection, test and

renovation service is available at nominal cost.

Non-members can obtain these jackets from the Canoe Centre, Twickenham, Tyne Canoes and Mountain Craft, Burnley.



Lifemaster Type 9 life jacket

Valley Canoe Products Duo Lifejacket has no inherent buoyancy, but can be partially inflated. It has been specially designed to fit over the Chevron buoyancy aid, forming the Chevron-Duo. When fully inflated, the jacket unfolds to give 35lbs. of very stable flotation. The Duo on its own costs £9.50 + VAT.



CVP Chevron Buoyancy aid.

Harishok supply all the British slalom team with specialist buoyancy aids. The Competition Vest to I.C.F. specification shown in the photo has been improved in detail for 1976 to give increased forward arm movement and increased frontal buoyancy while retaining all round impact protection with minimal bulk. This, in all sizes, costs £8.15 + VAT available from Pyranha, Lendal, The Canoe Centre, Twickenham and Mountain Craft, Burnley.

The Gold Label buoyancy vest is being increasingly adopted by Educational Groups for its reliability and warmth upon extended canoe trips by canoe and kayak. It carries a Design Centre award, and comes in orange, scarlet, purple or blue. There are 4 sizes, priced from £6.50 to £10.00 including VAT.

Special design features of both



Child's lifejacket from Ottersports.

these models are the contour cut farm sections which increase flexibility. In the Gold label model the skirt section foams are offset half a space to allow the lower section to be turned up and fit closely into the waist area.



Harishok Gold Label Vest.

Topcraft of Walsall stock the Gold Label model. The Harishok pullover buoyancy vest is still available from them for £7.80 including VAT. P&H also have all sizes of Harishok for immediate delivery. Post & packing is 60p extra.

Harishok Manager, Ray Calverley, 4 times British Kayak Slalom champion, claims that over 95% of the first division Kayak slalom paddlers wear Harishok buoyancy aids.

Tyne Canoes Ltd also stock Harishok Gold Label (in orange only) plus the Bailey range of buoyancy aids, stated to be suitable for touring and sailing. The Bailey small child

size costs £4.25 and there are 5 other sizes up to Extra Large Adult at £6.21. These prices include tax where applicable.

BUOYANCY AIDS

The "Wild Water" jackets marketed by the Wild Water Centre used to be known as the "Liffey Life". Field & Trek Ltd of Brentwood still have some under the old name at £9.08 including the dreaded value added tax. Originally there were only two styles — a pullover type known as the Standard and a Deluxe Model which included a heavy duty zip. These models are still in production and are still very popular, but in addition there is a Canoe Shortie which has a heavy duty zip but ends at the waist, plus a Self Righting model, with a collar (and S.B.B.N.F. approval) which is very popular when sailing. The latest addition is the Canoe Shortie Cag which has a velcro fastening mandarin collar and long sleeves with neoprene cuffs which does away with the



Wild Water Canoe Shortie.

necessity of an anorak.

The jackets are all made from 4oz

nylon and the buoyancy is PVC Closed Cell Foam. Prices: Shortie £9 all sizes, shortie cag £12, standard £8.40 to £9, De Luxe £9.30 to £9.80, Type SR £6.60 to £12 depending on size. Add VAT in each case.

Lendal carry the full range of "Wild Water" buoyancy aids.

The Chevron buoyancy aid from V.C.P. features a unique arrangement of above-the-waist P.V.C. foam to S.B.B.N.F. and B.C.U. standards. Positive buoyancy of 13.5lbs to 18lbs is available, the highest buoyancy being for persons over 10 stones. Prices are £8 to £8.50 + VAT. Models with zips cost 50p extra. The Junior buoyancy aid is similar, but with 10lbs. buoyancy and costing £7. By fitting the "Duo" inflatable jacket on top of the Chevron, a two-stage buoyancy system is formed.

THE REVIVAL OF THE GREAT CONTROVERSY!

After all that has been said and written about lifejackets and buoyancy aids, I had imagined that every climb of controversy had been so well chewed over that they could all be swept under the carpet and forgotten!

How exciting, therefore, to turn up another corner of the carpet and find a BRAND NEW CONTROVERSY that should keep us all arguing for months, set canoeist against canoeist, bring violence to the yacht clubs and set thousands of citizens reaching for their pens to sign themselves "Worried water-user"!

The arguments have gone on so long that it is difficult to remember the pros and cons, so here are two tables to put fact and opinion succinctly.

FACTS ABOUT LIFEJACKETS AND BUOYANCY AIDS*

Life Jackets To B.S. 3595	TYPE	BUOYANCY in lbs.		HOW WORN	REMARKS
		UNINFLATED	INFLATED		
	B.S.I. Inherent buoyancy plus inflation	13.5	35	Normally uninflated	Turns unconscious person on back when inflated
	B.S.I. All inherent buoyancy	35	—	Not suitable for canoeists	Turns person on back
	B.S.I. Air inflation only	0	35	Normally uninflated Can be partially inflated	Turns person on back when fully inflated.
Buoyancy Aids	S.B.B.N.F. For persons over 10 stone approved	18	—	Cannot be inflated	Will not turn person onto back.
	S.B.B.N.F. For persons between approved 6 and 10 stone	13.75	—	Cannot be inflated	Will not turn person onto back
	B.C.U. Approved	13.5	—	Cannot be inflated	Will not turn person on back

OPINIONS VOICED ABOUT LIFEJACKETS & BUOYANCY AIDS

IN FAVOUR OF LIFEJACKETS	AGAINST BUOYANCY AIDS	AGAINST LIFEJACKETS	IN FAVOUR OF BUOYANCY AIDS
Turns unconscious wearer on back when fully inflated	Will not hold unconscious wearer's face above water	Said to be uncomfortable and bulky	Usually comfortable
Provides whistle and lifting becket	No auditory aid or lifting becket	Knot at waist difficult to make secure. (Some lifejackets now have D-Rings).	Easy to adjust and make secure to body
		No impact protection to back and kidneys	Impact protection good
		Retention of body heat poor	Retention of body heat, good.
		Doesn't turn wearer on back if uninflated (as normally worn)	

* There are so many types of buoyancy aid that I am talking about average sorts — omitting inflatable collars etc. There are seven types of B.S. 3595 lifejackets — only three are mentioned here.

Three points are clear, whatever red herrings of opinion are drawn across our path.

1)—You cannot actually canoe in a lifejacket, since you should not inflate your lifejacket when canoeing, and a “lifejacket is not a lifejacket until it is fully inflated.” (See labels on lifejackets).

2)—Lifejacket fully inflated, offer better floatation than a buoyancy aid when the wearer has a long wait in the water before rescue.

3)—Since you cannot inflate your lifejacket once you're unconscious, a lifejacket is useful as under two above but offers no advantage over a buoyancy aid if you are likely to be suddenly knocked out.

These three points are in line with the general view that on rivers and inland waters a buoyancy aid is perfectly acceptable, but that canoeists in exposed conditions at sea should wear a lifejacket.

Unfortunately, the danger from hyperthermia in our cold waters must be as great as the danger from drowning, and there is no doubt that a buoyancy aid gives better insulation to the body than a lifejacket.

Earlier this year there was a paragraph in C in B saying that a reappraisal of personal buoyancy by the BCU safety committee had produced few surprises, and that a 3595 lifejacket with suitable warm clothing underneath was still the best bet for the canoeist.

I am surprised at their lack of surprises!

Many people, including myself, feel that one of the best protections against cold water is a full wet-suit. I

would certainly think that wet-suits would be considered as suitable warm clothing by the majority of canoeists.

Here comes the surprise!

If you are wearing a full wet suit, a *fully inflated* lifejacket will not necessarily turn you onto your back. The reason being that the buoyancy of the wet-suit may cancel out the turning characteristics of the lifejacket.

It is important that canoeists realize this, so that they do not become complacent and think that the lifejacket is the final answer. The controversial question is:— “On a sea-trip in exposed, deep water in winter, is it reasonable to wear a full wet-suit and leave lifejacket either ashore or tucked into the canoe?”

I certainly am no longer convinced that a lifejacket is the best form of personal buoyancy at sea. I have not come to this lightly, as I have been personally involved in the design of both buoyancy aids and lifejackets, and after many hours of testing and development, feel I can look objectively at the whole argument of what to wear, without having any axe to grind.

The bombshell of discovering that an inflated lifejacket did not always hold the face above water, was the result of design-work being done on my own lifejacket. I immediately looked to see if I could find an answer. The problem is that the normal lifejacket turns the wearer on his back by virtue of the buoyancy on his chest. Once this chest buoyancy is lifted out of the water by the buoyancy of the wet-suit (or any other buoyancy clothing) the

wearer flops on his side, and it is possible for his mouth and nose to dip below the water surface.

It seemed that one line of attack was to redistribute the chest buoyancy so that it was spread more to each side so that when the wearer flopped on his side, some of the chest buoyancy was still in the water, and had a righting effect.

Various designs were tried that did this and eventually the idea was incorporated into the Chevron-duo lifejacket.

Certainly it is only a step in the right direction and is not a complete answer, but the dihedral angle that the inflated jacket takes up certainly gives a greater stability in choppy conditions than does the normal lifejacket, when the body tends to ‘pendulum’ underneath the chest buoyancy.

Returning to the main point of this article, I'm not sure what I really ought to say to the coroner any more. Are you?

P.S. The table at the beginning raises another question: The Small Boat Builders National Federation ask for 18 lbs. of buoyancy for a person of 10 stone or more, but only 13.75 lbs. for a lighter person. Is this reasonable?

^ A fat person may be heavier on land yet more buoyant afloat . . .

Late information: You can get Harishok and Ottersports buoyancy equipment from Joseph Banks Ltd in Warrington and Avoncraft at Welwyn. Avoncraft also carry the lifemaster Mk 9 jackets.

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WEST MIDLANDS coaching panel — Usk/Wye White Water Weekend. This popular annual course will be held this year on Nov. 29th, 30th, accommodation will be at the youth hostel Staunton-on-Wye. White-Water training and advanced inland kayak & Canadian assessment available. Fee per course £9. Further details from Mr. G. McGladdery, The Youth Hostel, Staunton-on-Wye, Hereford HR4 7NF.

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