

CoDe is the official organ of the BCU Coaching Scheme. Members are free to express their views within its pages. Articles and comments therefore reflect the thoughts of the author and do not necessarily state the policy of the National Coaching Committee. CoDe is programmed for publication with Focus. Contributions, including pictures, are welcome. Please send them to: BCU, Mapperley Hall, Lucknow Ave, Nottingham NG3 5FA.

THE AIM OF THE BCU COACHING SCHEME IS:

To promote the sport and recreation of canoeing and to ensure that newcomers are introduced to canoeing in a safe and enjoyable way and that they and those already in the sport are assisted to progress to whatever level and in whichever discipline within canoeing suits them best.

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EDITORIAL

Part of the opening remarks by the Director of Coaching at the 1990 BCU Competition Coaches Conference held in February

We live at a time when competition is becoming an increasingly dirty word in some circles, particularly in the education field. I occasionally meet up with people in quite influential positions who clearly believe that a coach is someone who has one aim only in life, and that is to identify an Olympic champion at an early age, and work that person up in any way he or she can, regardless of the cost in terms of physical, mental or social development, to the point where they win - again, regardless of the cost in terms of fair play.

Now it's also been my privilege during the past two to three years, to meet a cross section of coaches from other sports, at the very top of their profession, responsible for helping some of the household names to achieve honours. I have yet to meet one, in our own sport, or any other, who does not have a concern for the total person, and his or her welfare both off the course, and on. And some of the biggest names in British coaching can be found at the local school field in their rare moments of time off, coaching youngsters who haven't a hope in Hades of ever achieving anything, apart from the satisfaction of having 'had a go'. I just wish there was a way of getting some of the theorists in this debate to see coaches in action.

In May 1987 a report on canoeing in schools by Wally Keay was published, which the British Schools Canoeing Association commissioned. Its purpose was to advise the Association on what was needed to service youth canoeing more effectively. Wally Keay is Chairman of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Expeditions Advisory Panel, past Chairman of the Mountain Walking Leader Training Board and has many similar involvements, working from a recreational background. As part of his research he studied various canoeing groups in action, and found that a lot of instructors stated that their main aim in teaching canoeing was to help young people to achieve 'personal development'. In the report Wally congratulates many of those concerned on managing to hide their 'hidden curriculum' so effectively from everyone concerned. And at the end of that section, he says:

'Groups involved in competitive canoeing were some of the best served. They had clear aims and objectives which they were able to express; they were highly motivated, and related strongly to both their peers and their teachers. I appreciated the irony that these groups with the most limited of expressed aims, were apparently achieving more in terms of personal development than groups whose professed aim was personal development. They depended on a partnership of parents, teachers and young people to achieve their purpose, whether this was fund raising or travelling to weekend slalom competitions, they had the assurance and confidence which springs from competence, commitment to canoeing as a sport, a team spirit and a loyalty to their group'.

copies of Wally Keay's paper - 'A Report on Canoeing in Education - is available from the BCU Office, price £1

coaching coaches

by WILLIAM T ENDICOTT

Part VI of the paper presented by Bill Endicott to the international slalom coaching symposium held at Augsburg in 1988 was featured in Code No 33, April 1990

Appendix

THE ESSENCE OF SLALOM

I have occasionally been asked whether I could sum up the key points of slalom and what follows is an attempt. I know it's risky to make sweeping generalities about slalom because there always seem to be exceptions. And it's difficult to reduce something so complex to a few words. But this, at least, seems to be the essence of the subject, and therefore what coaches should focus on.

Equipment

1. ATHLETES SHOULD KNOW THEIR BOATS AND EQUIPMENT WELL.

The best boaters don't sit in their boats, they "wear" them like clothing. It takes years to learn how a boat will react in all situations. Therefore, it is no wise for an athlete to change designs all the time. Have him stick with one line. Small changes within a line are ok but it takes a long time to get used to radical changes, say, the difference between a Premier and a Prijon. By the same token, if the athlete is going to race a light boat make sure he practices in one, too. Light boats perform differently than heavy ones. The best paddlers know their equipment extremely well, being able to predict accurately what the water will do to their boats in any given situation. Like as not, top paddlers either helped to design their boat or actually made the original design themselves. They also know, without thinking, precisely what the effects of a particular paddle stroke will be. The best boaters are like surgeons; they know their tools extremely well.

2. ALL BOATS SHOULD HAVE THIN ENDS

By that I mean from a side view. It used to be thought that in slalom there was a trade-off between turning ability and speed in a straight line: The more turning ability you wanted, the more rocker you had to have and thus the less forward speed you would have. I don't think this trade-off is true. If you keep the ends thin, they offer minimum resistance to the water when turning. Thin ends also facilitate pivot turns which are essential in slalom, particularly in C1. Thus, you can keep waterline long and maintain forward speed while having great turning ability.

3. BE SURE THE BOAT IS BALANCED PROPERLY

Many a good design has been discarded simply because the seat was not in the right place and the boater didn't realize it. This applies to K1s and C1s as well as C2s.

Technique

1. "THE TRACK"

The gates on a slalom course can be viewed as mere way stations on an invisible track that runs down the river. There is only one track and the athlete's objective is to go as fast as he can without falling off it. In other words, he must have proper boat positioning all the way down the course - not just in the gates. Many boaters don't observe this principle. They look upon a slalom course as consisting of merely 25 obstacles - the gates. They tend to deal with one gate at a time, they don't pay enough attention to water formations, and they don't stress the proper overall trajectory that the boat should take down the course for optimum speed. Consequently, while they may negotiate all the gates fine and thus have a clean run, they will be too slow to win. To do it right, they must constantly think ahead two or three gates, setting up for one gate or sequence while they are in the preceding ones. Running a slalom course properly means negotiating more like 90 gates. For top boaters, what goes on in between the gates is every bit as important as what goes on in them.

2. HAVE A PLAN.

The basis for accurate technique is the athlete's having a plan of action; deciding where to place the boat and then noting how close he came to that, and the coach's timing it to see how fast it was. This way the racer doesn't just reduce the number of errors, he reduces the seriousness of them. By recognizing errors earlier, he can incorporate corrective strokes into normal paddle strokes instead of having to do them in place of paddle strokes. Technique practice is really a matter of accumulating the widest possible experience with gate combinations and water formations and perfecting a plan before the race.

3. AT HOME ON WHITEWATER.

The crux of whitewater technique is being at home on whitewater. Therefore, lots of river running, enders, handsrolls and playing are extremely important for balance and boat control. A coach should encourage the athlete to constantly press himself to do new things on the water. The athlete must learn to be very aggressive on the whitewater. This means that if he wants to get good, he must find plenty of opportunities to be on whitewater. If he is unsure on the water, it will be difficult for him to concentrate on proper technique. Coaches should not get so caught up in gate training that they fail to get the athlete into a lot of river running.

4. HAVING A GOOD FEEL FOR THE WATER.

An athlete has to be able to sense when the boat is going fast and when it isn't. If it isn't going fast enough, he has to do something about it - some quick acceleration strokes, more lean to make him squirt out of a pivot turn faster, and so on. Many paddlers don't have a good feel for the water, and miss opportunities to go fast. In other instances where the boat is already going fast enough, they apply unneeded effort and get into trouble.

5. BLADE CONTROL.

Another foundation upon which good technique is built is the ability to slice the blade through the water fore and aft very quickly and accurately, even changing directions slightly during the slice. Many slalom moves require a series of strokes blended together through some kind of accurate feathering. If the athlete can do the feathering, the rest of the move will come quickly to him. But if he doesn't have the dexterity with the blade, it will take much longer to learn. This is the problem good river runners have when they come to slalom; they have the balance in whitewater, but they are used to operating with 2-foot tolerances instead of half-inch tolerances, and they can't feather their blades well. Coaches should encourage all paddlers to do one-bladed drills. There is no one more dexterous with a paddle than a C1 and for this reason I think anyone - K1, K1W, C2, C2M - hoping to get good should do some training in C1s. Kayaks should aspire to do little courses entirely on one blade, in reverse on one blade, on one blade on the cross draw, and even one blade on the cross draw in reverse, if they're really good. C1s - and C2s training in C1s - should become extremely adept at cross-draw strokes, and slicing the blade back and forth on the cross draw. These drills will give the athlete more dexterity with the blade, which is what he needs to execute good technique.

6. TURNING MOVES.

Reverses and especially up-streams, are where the best boaters make up their time, not in paddling straight ahead, so coaches should give first priority to these. Work on the turning moves first and only when the athletes have mastered those should they seek to make up the most time between the gates. In many turning moves the key is to avoid sharp, jerky changes of direction, substituting instead smoother, sometimes more gradual ones which keep up momentum better. An example is entering an upstream a bit lower so the boater can power around the turn and not have to worry so much about hitting the poles.

7. "IT'S EASIER TO MAKE A FAST BOATER CLEAN THAN A CLEAN BOATER FAST"

Most of the top boaters got fast first, and then spent later years leaning how to clean it up at that high speed. This means a coach always has to be conscious of speed in the training sessions. The quickest way to get fast is to experiment under the watch.

8. WATCH WHERE THE HEAD AND BLADES STOP MOVING.

To train athletes for speed, in general try to discover where the paddler's head and blades stop moving forward on the course. Where they stop or slow down, ask why. There can be good reasons for it but possibly these are the places where more speed can be obtained by keeping them moving forward longer.

9. FIRST DECIDE WHERE THE BOAT SHOULD BE.

In settling on the proper technique, have the athlete first decide where the boat itself should be in all phases of a sequence. Then have him pick the most efficient and economical number of strokes to put it there. He should pay particular attention to achieving fast exits from gates. Be sure to look for ways in which the water can do the work for him.

10. MINIMIZE BACKSTROKES.

Ideally, all strokes should propel the boater towards the finish line. Whenever you see a boater using a backstroke, ask if it is possible to accomplish the same thing using some kind of forward stroke. Sometimes a quick backstroke really is the most efficient way but often it is not. For example, have the boater try to do a pivot turn off of draw stroke and not a reverse sweep. By the same token, in many cases he should seek to avoid prolonged feather or draw strokes. Try to have him replace them sooner with forward strokes. Upstream gates are one crucial exception, however: Here it is often better to glide in on a long feather/draw.

11. ELIMINATE ALL UNNECESSARY STROKES.

This saves energy and time. When practicing a sequence, consciously look for ways to cut out unnecessary strokes.

12. WORK ON QUICK ACCELERATION.

The best boaters are fast often because they can accelerate the boat either through one or two strokes (in the case of a tight course) or through a high stroke rate (in the case of a wide-open course). In other words, key bursts of power are faster than even pacing. This ability to "shift gears" on a course sounds easy, but in my experience most people tend to paddle the entire course at one pace - the pace they leave the start with. A good coach can devise drills to alternate a high stroke rate with a lower one and thus practice switching gears.

13. GET EXTENSION ON THE STROKES.

Top boaters get tremendous extension on many of their strokes because they have the confidence to do it and can exert great strength or power in awkward body positions. If an athlete can do this, he will often be able to achieve with one stroke what others take two or three to achieve.

14. LEARN CONSISTENCY.

The best boaters are consistently good. In certain practice sessions the coach can have the athlete work on one sequence or course many times without penalty, rather than just going for speed. Sessions in which the athlete has one really fast, clean run but penalties on all the others are not the best sessions. However, it is true that a very fast boater will start out being erratic and only after time will he learn how to be consistent at high speed.

NOTES FROM THE NATIONAL COACHING COMMITTEE

A copy of the minutes of the November and March meetings are available from the BCU office upon receipt of a sae.

Suitability of craft for tests and awards. It was agreed that some specialist boats were not ideal for test and award purposes. The criterion should be that the boat must be relevant to the group being instructed, but that provided the candidate could perform adequately the requirements of the test or assessment, that should be the final arbiter.

Inherent buoyancy in bulkheaded sea kayaks for proficiency test purposes. It was agreed that sea kayaks fitted with two watertight bulkheads do not have to contain inherent buoyancy for sea proficiency test purposes.

Financial affairs. It was noted that the total number of Star Tests taken had reverted to the 1987 results of app 21,000, after a decline in 1988. Senior Instructor figures were steady, but Trainee Senior Instructors dropped to a third of the previous average of 1,000. This was compensated by 660 Trainee Instructors, however, and overall figures were up because of an additional 322 Supervisors. There had been a decline of 50% in Placid Water Teachers from the previous year.

New certificates for Canoe Star Tests. It was agreed that separate certificates should be produced for Canoe Star Tests.

Rules for the obtaining of examiner grades. It was noted that some regions were setting rules regarding recommendations for examiner gradings, which involved stipulating a certain number of courses to be involved on, or insisting upon help being given on courses within the region in order to qualify. It was agreed that national guidelines should be laid down, with a stipulated amount of logged experience being a requirement.

The Placid Water Scheme. The Scheme was being reviewed by the National Coach, in the light of five years' experience. A course for examiners and RCOs would be staged to re-present the Scheme, once the amendments had been agreed, and all the resource material produced.

Surf Awards. It was agreed that the Surf Tests and Awards scheme as put forward by Dennis Ball, the Surf Committee, and refined by a working party of surf coaches, should be adopted.

Executive Committee. It was agreed to set up a small executive committee to assist the Director of Coaching with decisions which needed to be taken between meetings, and to help with the prioritising of matters for the main committee.

Lifesaving tests. The names for the revised COCLG tests were agreed as: 'Canoeing Safety Test' and 'Rescue Test'.

Safety Survey. It was noted that a paddler, Steve Wales, had expressed a willingness to undertake a consumer survey of commonly used safety equipment. Reports for *Focus* would be co-ordinated by Peter Pendlebury.

Women in Canoeing. It was agreed that Ann Palmer should be asked to head up a 'ginger group' to advise the Coaching Committee on policies which would assist the promotion of canoeing, and particularly membership of the Coaching Scheme, among women. It was noted that NCC had agreed previously that 'women only' courses for awards training and assessment could be run where appropriate.

Helmets and Buoyancy Aids. DofC reported that work was in hand on the production of a 'standard' for canoeing helmets. It was noted that Dave Grant had agreed to chair a working party to advise on standards for buoyancy and fittings for devices used in heavy white water.

Epilepsy and Diabetes. A policy statement on the terms of reference for the holding of qualifications by people with epilepsy or diabetes had been drafted. It was agreed to confirm this at the November 90 meeting.

1990 TOURING AND COACHING CONFERENCE Holme Pierrepont, 13-14 October

This conference is open to all who are interested in the kayak or canoe as a vessel for self-contained journeying

Debates: Touring - the development plan

Access - the dream and the reality

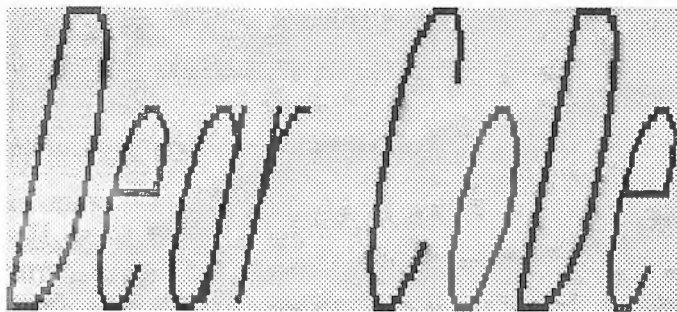
Paddling advanced white water: knowledge, safety, skills, rescue - but the greatest of these is ?

Practical: Touring simple rivers - a missed opportunity ?

Slalom coaching techniques

Stunts and squirts - the new techniques

Send sae to: BCU, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5AS



Dear CoDe,

Recently I received a copy of the latest edition of the BCU *Canoeing Handbook*. This is a very fine publication and reflects great credit on the BCU and all who have contributed to its preparation.

Regrettably, the chapter about rolling by Rob Hignell and Martyn Hedges does nothing to sort out the confusion about the true nature of the Put Across Roll.

The first paragraph on page 323 of the Handbook states, 'It, (the Put Across) is unusual in that the paddle is not carried down on one side during the capsize and brought up on the other, but is left at the surface while the body does all the movement'. This statement is erroneous, and would be utterly misleading to anyone wishing to learn the roll.

In fact, the practical Put Across Roll is commenced with the candidate sitting in the Kayak with the paddle held by the shaft across the body in the normal paddling position. He then capsizes, say to the left. When inverted, one or two simple adjustments are made to the grip on the paddle, and he completed the roll by coming up on the right.

The section in the *Canoeing Handbook* on the Put Across, then goes on to describe ideas like having the paddle floating on the water. Derek Hutchinson also describes the roll as being commenced by placing the paddle on the surface of the water, holding it by the tip with only one hand. These ideas may be alright for instructional games in the baths, but to suggest that they form a part of the actual Put Across Roll is wrong.

On page 4 of the *Canoeing Handbook* it is stated that Franz Schulhof, later to be called Frank Sutton, invented the Put Across Roll. It also states that he accomplished first descents of seven Alpine rapid rivers. Is it really credible that he would use a roll starting with the paddle floating on the water, and out of control, as described by Derek and the *Canoeing Handbook*? The answer is, of course, he would not. If he used the Put Across, he would use the correct practical Put Across. (Incidentally I was fortunate enough to meet Frank Sutton long ago, while doing the Tweed, on a meet organised by Maurice Rothwell).

Fortunately, you do not have to rely on my word regarding the true nature of the Put Across. I have in my possession a BCU pamphlet I obtained in the early 1960s. It is entitled No 1: The Eskimo Roll. It describes three rolls: 'The Put Across', 'The Pawlata', and 'The Screw'. Eric Totty has a copy also and tells me he thinks it was written by Oliver Cock. (As a matter of interest Eric tells me he was taught to roll by Frank Sutton. Eric has seen me do the Put Across on many occasions).

The pamphlet describes what it calls, 'Preliminary Experiments', in learning the Put Across Roll. It then describes the actual practical roll as follows:

'Sit in your canoe with the paddle across the canoe and held normally with both hands. Turn the left hand blade so it is vertical. Lean over to the left and capsize. When you are upside down, pause and count three, then put your paddle into the position you gained in (2) above and return to the surface.

The motions for putting your paddle in position, (to be rehearsed previously on dry land) are as follows:

- 1 Lean forward and also twist the trunk to your left.
- 2 Thrust your paddle out to your left towards the surface with the out-board blade turned horizontal, hollow side down.
- 3 Grip the end of your in-board blade with your left hand, making sure that this blade is vertical.
- 4 Work your left elbow over the left gunnel.

- 5 Reach over with your right hand, (back of the hand to the stern of the boat) and grasp the shaft of the paddle. (If you are wearing goggles you will be able to see that this has brought your face very close to the surface).
- 6 In all probability your right hand will be grasping the shaft very close to the neck of the blade, so slide that hand out to get a nice wide grip, and so as to minimise chances of paddle breakage.
- 7 Lean forward and jerk down sharply with your right hand.'

This all sound very long winded and complicated, but in practice it is done very easily and quickly, with the paddle under firm control throughout. With present day ideas of the hip flick, the jerk down does not need to be so heroic as the description makes it sound. It would be more true to say that one rolls ones self upright using the support of the paddle.

The above, then, is a description of the Put Across Roll as I and many others with whom I have been privileged to associate, have known it.

The *Canoeing Handbook* is a BCU publication and must, therefore, be taken as representing the official teaching of the Coaching Scheme. Derek Hutchinson's book *Eskimo Rolling for Survival*, has a foreword by the Director of Coaching, BCU and therefore has official Coaching Scheme blessing. Anyone wishing to learn rolling might, therefore, be forgiven for thinking that these two publications gave a true description of the Put Across Roll. Unfortunately they do not. This disturbs me as it is my belief that unless something is done to correct these erroneous descriptions the true 'Put Across' Roll will be lost to future generations of canoeists.

I note that Charles Sutherland has also contributed a short foreword to Derek's book. I have a copy of Charles Sutherland's book *Modern Canoeing*. On page 243 he gives a short description of the recovery phase of the Put Across. He doesn't seem to like it much, but in those days people didn't understand the hip flick.

There is a reasonably accurate description of the roll by Geoff Blackford in Brian Skilling book, *Canoeing Complete*. Geoff says that the advantage of this roll is that the paddle is fully extended and provides the maximum leverage possible. But he also says that both hands have to be removed from the paddle at sometime during the roll, thus giving a greater chance of losing it. This last is not correct if the roll is properly executed.

DAVID RUSHFIRTH, Staining

Dear CoDe

In CoDe, April 1990, there was an article concerning people phoning the BCU and so holding up the written correspondence.

In the last few months I have received one letter welcoming me to the Coaching Scheme (which I was already in) and how I would have to join the BCU (which I did about six years ago), another letter saying I hadn't renewed my membership (which I had), another letter to renew the club's, which I run, affiliation (I did that last October) and I have not received *Canoe Focus* for the last three months.

Is it any wonder people phone you ? To try and sort out all these problems mess ups by a letter, is ridiculous!

Finally, there is a poor bloke in Nottingham somewhere who was probably even more fed up with Busby, as the canoeing headed notepaper had the wrong phone number on it. Glad to see you've changed that! Now get the rest of your act together!

K HARBISON, Alton

Editorial Comment: The request for members to write in, rather than phone, did specify for *routine* requests.

Less interruptions would make mistakes less likely - we don't actually enjoy making them!

In this instance, a double entry on the membership file - one as an individual member, and the other as a Junior Club member, appears to have been the main cause of the problem.

Some digits of the phone number did unfortunately get typed in wrongly onto a temporary letter-head during the transitional period - our apologies.

Such charmingly expressed frustration does help to make it all worthwhile !

Dear CoDe,

The editorial in CoDe 32 asked 'Has CoDe improved?' After years of being vaguely interesting, the answer has to be a resounding YES.

To pick a few choice articles: Bill Endicott on 'Coaching Coaches', John Brand on Kayak Research, Phil Bibby (Teaching Styles), Terry Benton (Outdoor Education & WWR) 'The Humanistic Approach to Coaching' by Terry Benson (particularly interesting), Phil Eccles, Pete Button . . . a wealth of interest after years of superficial tedium. Articles which are well researched, well written and include bibliographies.

To be fair, there has been the odd glimmer in the past. 'The Lone Paddler' in the 'digest' of 4-7; 'Diet' by John Doran in 13, Donald Thompson's piece on hypothermia in 16, Hagar the Horrible in 17, Dr Tony Crocker in 22. But, mostly, CoDe has been of passing interest, 'newsy', or offered information available in a similar (often more complete and coherent) form elsewhere.

With recent articles CoDe seems to have 'come of age' with material that is original and interesting (even if I don't agree with everything said - the better for it).

I sincerely hope that we may look forward to more of the same.

DAVE PREECE, Inverness-shire

Dear CoDe

With reference to your article on Buzby in the April 1990 issue, I am ashamed to be compelled to belong to an organisation that is prepared to announce publicly that it is so bankrupt administratively and financially that it is unable to make satisfactory arrangements to communicate with its members and customers by what is to-day the most common and accepted communication channel - the telephone and to imply that it cannot afford to reply by post.

You have brought this on yourself by taking so long to reply to members that they are forced to use the phone to ensure that their communication has been received. Several members have told me that this particularly applies to membership renewal cards and that it often takes up to a month for their cheques to be debited to their accounts (and the banks do not add all that amount of delay). This latter surely amounts to financial mismanagement - a speed-up here would help to reduce the interest payable on our overdraft.

H. D. S. FAULDER, Farnham

Dear CoDe,

Up with Busby - or is the Tail Wagging the Budgie ?

I can sympathise with the office staff at HQ when they say that the phone interferes with the smooth organisation of their lives, my clients always seem to call me just when I start to eat my supper or get in the bath.

I groan, but long may they do so because when they stop ringing I stop working and no longer can I afford to pay my BCU membership fees.

My point is that if the members find it more convenient to use the telephone then the BCU as a service organisation should adjust its working pattern to deal with this.

I am a prime offender. I do most of my business by phone. When I get a request for information, a query about access or qualifications I just want to be able to find a telephone, ask the question or request the service. This should take me a short time, can be done from anywhere and costs 10p if I don't gossip.

If I write I must find paper, pen, processor etc and spend 10 minutes writing a letter and at least 15p to post it knowing that it cannot be dealt with for several days.

I support the BCU, but we are charging a membership fee higher than other outdoor sports and about twice as much for our awards as anyone else we must provide a effective service to our members.

The BCU must be a customer/client/member driven organisation. If the members find it better to contact HQ by phone, fax or carrier pigeon it is up to the administration to cater for their needs.

From this it is clear that I would prefer people trying to contact me to phone rather than write as at least when no one answers the phone you know you are being ignored.

JOHN HILTON, Bideford.

BUZZ OFF, BUZBY

The appeal in the last issue of CoDe for members to write in with routine requests, rather than to telephone, seems, in some instances, to have found a raw spot.

We could staff up to cope more effectively with the incessant phone requests, and could then possibly also arrange for a third phone line, to avoid the annoyance caused by the current two 'always being engaged' - a common complaint. However, the only way to 'person' it, and to take messages without constantly interrupting the clerks in the middle of jobs requiring concentration, would be to employ an additional member of staff. The cost, with salary and total employment costs - around £8,000. This represents the spare income from 800 additional comprehensive membership fees, and does not seem to be the best way of spending such additional income, should we be able to obtain it in the first place.

Why are the lines 'always engaged' ? Many seem to assume that it's because we block them off so we can sit and gaze out at the ducks on the Winfield Pool, while we drink our coffee and chat. It could be, however, that the lines are always engaged because too many people are trying to get through !

We are serious under-funded. That is a fact. We currently receive from Sports Council £17 per head for every member. Members pay less than one third of the fee needed to resource the Union to the point where we could begin to cope efficiently with all the demands, and start to make real progress in the way of development of facilities and so forth.

Most of the volunteers who represent canoeing where it matters, organise the events and activities which are its lifeblood, negotiate access to water, and undertake the myriad other tasks which are essential to the infrastructure, do so without compensation, and without the degree of support they deserve from the central organisation. Most do not even get their petrol money.

Do members really want someone else employed to write down names and addresses over the telephone, requiring 800 new membership fees ? Or would you rather, if the current improvement in membership is sustained, see that income allocated to supporting real development for the sport itself ?

Co-operating, where possible, with the appeal to write in for routine requirements, can make a significant contribution.

If we were a financially viable company manufacturing a product on which we were making a fat profit, enabling the directors to drive around in BMWs, and send their successful salesmen off to Hawaii for a treat, and so forth, these words would obviously be inappropriate.

We are not that, however. The BCU office is merely the full time administrative unit for an organisation which is essentially the 'coming together' of all those who love canoeing, and believe it to be an activity worth developing and promoting. As a member for many years I was happy to make a contribution to support those ends, and, like so many others, to put in personal time, effort and money as a voluntary organiser of a range of activities and events for other canoeists to enjoy.

I am saddened on the odd occasion when I receive letters which indicate a lack of understanding of what the purpose of the Union really is, and which show an inability to understand the nature of the commitment which is required to achieve what we are able to do.

We only managed to publish a *Members' Year Book* this year because the employee concerned, who happens to be a paddler, was willing to take the computer home and spend all her spare time during her entitled Christmas holiday, compiling it, in order to meet the printer's deadlines. This was undertaken without compensation in time or salary.

Our new Membership Secretary is not a paddler. She reasonably assumed that she was being appointed to a routine job, which was advertised like any other. Upon finding she had inherited the problem of a backlog on the processing of membership applications, which at its worst reached a delay of 5 weeks, she willingly took work home, and put in a commitment way beyond that which is normally expected of an employee, to master the situation. The membership register is now up to date, and applications are processed, on average, between 2-10 days after receipt.

The Union survives only on the combined efforts of its army of volunteers - including the paid ones !

Dear CoDe

Re: The Examiner Grading System

I am in receipt of the Directory of Tests and Awards and note on page 85 that changes have been made to the Examiner Grading System. Notably an examiner E1 can no longer, with another E1, do Instructor assessment.

I wonder why there has been no consultation about this change?

How does this affect the people that I have assessed in the past?

What is more important perhaps is the fact that E2 cannot be gained by striving, but is given at the behest of the LCO. No offence intended to LCO's but we cannot have this form of patronage in the hands of individuals. There must be a set standard and procedure and the opportunity to discuss one's performance. Else, how is one to improve and ever progress to E2.

Why shouldn't it be the next rung on the ladder, not necessarily that which all strive for, but that which some of us will want to strive for?

What is more it is vitally important for those of us involved at the sharp end of the sport that we have a continuum of people coming through to be the instructors and assessors of the future.

It is also vitally important that awards gained are not devalued willy nilly by somebody unknown and without consultation.

I must say yet again, that I am really worried about the basic structure of the BCU as this type of thing happens time and again in all aspects of its organisation it seems. There seems to be a total disregard of the due democratic process.

I look forward to receiving your reply in due course and inform you that I am forwarding copies of this letter to *Canoe Focus* and *Canoeist* in the hope of widening the debate.

ROD COOKE, Norfolk

Editorial Comment: LCOs still have the discretion to permit those who are well experienced in assessing Instructors to continue to do so.

There is no imputation that anyone assessed under a previous system has had their award 'downgraded'.

Among the duties which are spelled out for RCOs and LCOs has always been a responsibility for the monitoring of standards. Examiner recommendations have always been referred to the relevant LCO and RCO for endorsement.

The 'consultation' process is three-fold: through CoDe, through local coaching panels, and through the annual Conference. It is impossible to hold a referendum on every point - once policies are agreed, it must be left to an elected committee to determine the detail.

Dear CoDe,

In response to your editorial note following my article regarding the draw stroke.

I would like to make a few points:

1. If Richard Fox, the world's number one at manoeuvring a kayak, finds that 'the underwater recovery was not natural to him' surely this goes a long way to proving my point.
2. In studying paddlers, please make sure that they are not aware of you watching them, as this could lead to them changing from their normal style of paddling, to the BCU text book style.
3. Whilst I agree that correct body presentation is crucial to the efficient performance of a stroke, my question is: What is the correct body presentation?

If you turn to face your stroke, you will be relying on the vulnerable muscles of the lower back to apply the power for the stroke, this could lead to lower back trouble.

More power can be applied more easily if you are pulling from the side. To prove this, tie a rope to a heavy object and try to pull it towards you, first by pulling from the side, then by pulling directly towards your chest. Having gained a result from this experiment you will then understand why the old tars on tall sailing ships used to haul from the side, not the front.

Also, you should realise that if you are able to apply more power more easily, then for a stroke like the draw you will not have to

work as hard as if you were pulling towards your chest. This has two benefits: first it makes for a more relaxing day's paddling, second (and more important) it leaves you a lot in reserve, so that if something were to go wrong you would not be at full stretch, and would therefore be in a position to react more efficiently.

- 4 Teaching beginners to 'feel the blade through water' is not an excuse for insisting that they use an unnecessary addition to an otherwise simple stroke. The sculling draw and sculling pry are far better ways to teach them the 'feel'.

A final point, which does not concern the draw stroke, but does concern your reply, is that of there being 'somewhere, somehow a BCU which decides these matters and then imposes them on an alien species'.

To many paddlers that is exactly how the BCU comes across.

I know decisions are made by elected committees. But most of the Union's members live too far away to attend committee meetings, and not knowing those up for election, don't bother to vote. In some cases, if they thought they would like to vote, most of them have no idea of how to. If you don't believe that the membership is so isolated, just ask any group of paddlers to name more than two of the BCU's officers or committee chairmen. The larger percentage will be unable to answer.

A lot of casual paddlers won't join the BCU because 'the BCU are only interested in competition'. In short the BCU has an image problem. It is no good just telling your active members that you have a touring committee, you need to preach to the unconverted. Although it might help if you could convert your membership first, as many members just see the BCU as a necessary evil.

JOHN TOMPKINS

Dear CoDe

Today's Canoeing Youth

With the advent of new canoeing breakthroughs, the sport is being noticed more. From a group of people of varying ages watching canoeing, it is more likely that the younger person will return home and ask their parents if they could learn to canoe, and their parents will sign them onto a locally run beginners course. Also the increasing number of television programmes featuring canoeing, which turns the lethargic youth into the fledgling canoeist of tomorrow.

All of this is great, the large number of Britain's youth being attracted towards canoeing, but what happens to them? Some are naturally gifted, and with the right help go a long way in competition canoeing. A few are misguided and go no further than beginners standard, but mentally assure themselves that they are capable of things above them, getting themselves into frightening and even lethal situations.

Most of them join clubs and progress very slowly, often staying at the same standard and canoeing the same water for years on end.

Finally, you get the small group of lucky young paddlers who have had good tuition and have progressed fast, paddling high grade water with friends and on courses.

Why can't all the young generation paddlers of today progress this fast?

Is it because adults do not like having those younger than them better than them? So they do not make any effort to boost their experience, or is it because instructors want to keep their pupils from a cash point of view? A few encouraging comments wouldn't go amiss either. It would make a change from detrimental ones made by the minority of bigoted instructors or group leaders.

So, why not use the nineties to encourage and assist young canoeists. Give them the best coaching and the utmost encouragement and they will respond accordingly. Just remember, when you teach a group of youngsters you are starting off a new generation of paddlers.

BENJAMIN LOVE (aged 14)

WANTED: CoDe newsletters Nos 14, 27 and 28. Please help me to make up a full set if you have any spare or unwanted copies. In exchange I have spare copies of CoDe Nos 24, 26, 29, 30 and 32.

P MIDWOOD, Plas y Brenin, Capel Curig, Betws y Coed, Gwynnedd LL24 0ET.

TOWARDS EVALUATING PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CANOEING

by Dave Ritchie

I have recently had a number of interesting discussions about the difficulty of evaluating the use of outdoor pursuits, and canoeing in particular, for personal development. A large number of coaching scheme members (and particularly those in outdoor centres) regularly use canoes and kayaks as a means to an end for the different types of groups they are working with. In particular, I have come across widely differing views on the role of competition in personal development work; references to this issue in 'CoDe' are legion!

On the other hand almost everyone has agreed that evaluating the quality or effectiveness of a particular session, or series of sessions, is difficult or impossible. Even when a review is included at the end of the activity, it is still difficult for the instructor to judge whether the type of canoeing provided, the skills acquired by the group, etc were the most appropriate for that group.

For example, I spent several weeks working on an urban project aimed at young people not achieving satisfactorily in 'normal' education. The primary goal was to provide opportunities for these people to achieve successes, thereby building up their self-esteem. Canoes and kayaks provided an excellent means of achieving within education; skills were often acquired much more quickly than at other disciplines. But while the results were often obvious back in school as improved performance, how to evaluate the actual canoeing activity?

I have come across a system for evaluating youth work which can be adapted for activities such as canoeing in groups. It provides a simple and practical method for planning and evaluation, by concentrating on PROCESSES, not results. The system attempts to identify the key processes in any activity whose goal is the development of those taking part. Eight key elements are identified; I have attempted to summarise the most relevant parts of the key elements for those leading canoeing and kayaking with young people in particular.

The key elements are:

- o PARTICIPATION
- o CHALLENGE
- o FUN
- o DIVERSITY
- o RELATIONSHIPS
- o HOLISTIC VIEW
- o VOLUNTARISM

Mutuality

PARTICIPATION is people having influence in what happens; it can be much more than just being afloat as part of the group. Participation can occur at a variety of levels: organisational, joining in games organised by others, helping other paddlers in the same group, etc. Who proposes the activities? Are some people left out?

CHALLENGE is attempting something new, in the hope of succeeding. Challenge is often in the mind, and involves a degree of uncertainty; achieving a challenge can lead to individual or collective growth. Is there a degree of consent to the challenges set? Are the challenges set realistic?

FUN needs no definition! Fun requires a relaxed atmosphere, allowing for humour, and is not at somebody's expense, necessarily! There can be tension between paddlers getting a sense of achievement, and a sense of fun.

Is the paddling for the sheer enjoyment of it, or is there some serious objective to the exclusion of enjoyment?

DIVERSITY is a variety of opportunities at different levels of performance. It offers choice, which may mean doing activities with only minority support. What do the group want to do? Do all the activities require the same skill level, or is there a range? What type of experience is being offered, for who? Why?

RELATIONSHIPS: Developing ways of structuring the paddling so that friendly and constructive relationships can develop. Many instructors fail to take this into account at all: do the group even know each others' names? Relationships are often a major reason, or the reason, for taking part in an activity; the lack of positive relationships can be a major put-off.

Do the paddlers talk to each other? Do relationships centre on the instructor, or informally among the group?

HOLISTIC VIEW is seeing people in a more complete sense than just their canoeing performance or experience. A holistic view involves recognising the importance of other parts of peoples' lives, and the influences these have on them i.e. looking beyond their immediate paddling performance.

How much do I really know of this person? How much is my attitude to them governed by their canoeing performance?

VOLUNTARISM is freely choosing to take part in activities and relationships. This can be expressed negatively i.e. having the right *not* to do something. Motives are obviously important.

Is attendance compulsory, or freely chosen? Are there levels of skill required which limit individuals' choice?

MUTUALITY is recognition, shared with the group, of each others' needs and strengths; this should include the instructor - it seldom does! A leadership style high in mutuality is characterised by openness and vulnerability; everyone has rights, and as many different skills and strengths should be used during the activity as possible. How are conflicts or non-cooperation dealt with? Most instructors are very directive: is this necessary?

I have found this system consistently useful in clarifying my thinking at both planning and evaluation stages, particularly when something has not gone particularly well, and I am not sure why! Admittedly words such as 'voluntarism' are not everyday words, but they do express the key elements concisely, and are useful headings under which to work. Going back to our group of young people who are not succeeding sufficiently in schools, an initial session might be planned to take the following form:

- o Everyone takes part as far as possible (Participation, Voluntarism)
- o Everyone attempts some challenging activity (Challenge)
- o Challenges are set at appropriate, varied levels (Diversity, Fun)
- o Structured as a cooperative group activity, as well as containing individual activities (Relationships, Mutuality)
- o Nobody loses patience with anybody - the aim is to bring about achievement that the participants are aware of and proud of! (Holistic View)
- o No competition or little competition, as a stimulus only (Holistic View, Challenge)

The session might therefore contain the following:

- o Open Canoes, paddling in pairs, instead of kayaks (or possibly a kayak session heavily structured towards group and team activity)
- o Basic skills taught simply, then applied using a lot of different types of games and activities.
- o Concentration on driving home the skills learned, not on maximum learning of many varied skills.
- o A lot of laughter.

Perhaps the most useful aspect of the system that is proposed here is that it enables one to question what one is doing in a positive and organised way, and to spot where helpful changes could be made easily, without agonising for ages over why a particular problem occurred. The use of canoes and kayaks for personal development has been given insufficient attention and insufficient analysis for far too long, in part because it has been difficult to measure results. By concentrating on the Processes taking place, and not directly on their results, we can at least go some way to analysing what we are doing!

NB All the research originates in the USA, and has been adapted for youth and community workers by Ian Morrison at Westhill College, Birmingham. All I have done is adapt his system.

STRIKING A BALANCE

by PAUL WILSON

Which is the most "macho" - shooting an outrageously difficult rapid which has never been run before, or pulling off a perfect run at the right time to win a major competition?

A rather unusual question perhaps, but not so very different from many of those which novice canoeists regularly ask their leaders. Often these questions will sound more like 'is Richard Fox better than Shaun Baker?' 'is Marathon as good as Sea Canoeing?' or 'are these Expedition paddles better to have than those Racing ones?' However innocent these questions may sound at the time, they often conceal a game of power that goes far beyond the boundaries of canoeing. In order to understand the importance of this game, and how it effects those of us involved in coaching, it is worth looking at how the game is played.

Frequently, the reason for asking such questions as those above is to provide a basis for people to make judgments about their own and other peoples' standing as canoeists. It is relatively easy to judge who is good, or who is better, when everyone is doing the same thing in the same sort of boat. As canoeists progress, though, they often wish to know how they compare to other paddlers in different disciplines. And surely, if top slalom competitors are as good, or better, than top playboaters, then novice slalomists must have as much worth as budding hot-doggers?

The pecking order

How important it is for canoeists to check their status by comparing themselves with others, can be seen most clearly amongst young initiates, who often have no qualms about saying she's good, and especially, who's bad. They point out that 'of course Rachel is better than you. Even Kelly is better than you, and Rachel is much better than her'. At times, this may be shortened to 'You're useless'.

Adult canoeists have also been known to check each other out, with questions about which division you compete in, or how hard are the rivers you have paddled.

When making such comparisons, the Coaching Scheme can be particularly helpful. Not only do we provide a full range of tests within most disciplines to clearly show how good a paddler is, but we also produce tables from time to time to show how the awards from different disciplines can be compared with each other! Thus, Debbie who has her level 2 Canoe test, knows she is just as good as Mary who has her 2 Star, but not yet as good as Sue who has passed her Sea Proficiency. So the gaining of awards, not only recognises individual achievement, but provides a means of ranking individuals within a group of canoeists. In itself this may not be such a bad thing, but where the ranking is given too much emphasis, then the power games can take over from the canoeing.

In order to demonstrate this, we should go back to our group of young canoeists, where we may find that who is the best paddler only matters for a few minutes. Earlier, it was who can do the best skids on their BMX bikes? Soon it will be who can jump furthest on their roller skates. The real game though, which underlies all these contests, is about who has the most influence within the group, and how far they can extend that influence. Frequent challenges are used to decide on, maintain, and change, a pecking order, which is of fundamental importance to how the group operates.

With children, the games of manoeuvring within a pecking order can be quite obvious, whereas we may need to look more closely at adult behaviour to find both the challenges and the hierarchy. In canoe clubs, the pecking order can often be seen at the beginning or end of a days' activity, when the novices may be found loading trailers, sorting out tents, and generally clearing up, while the old hands pore over maps, calendars, or start lists, deciding where to go next. Challenges can emerge when a talented newcomer begins to move up the ladder more quickly than some who have been around for a time. Who has which awards can then become an important issue.

Sex

The problem with this sort of system lies in the way the rules favour particular players. The need to establish importance through dares, challenges and tests of physical skill is a particularly male attribute. It is accurately described by the work 'machismo' - which also means 'maleness'. So no matter how we change the rules, or alter the challenges to give everyone a fair chance, we are likely to still find that most women aren't interested in the game at all.

Both men and women can also be put off when they find that through a variety of disadvantages they are being left behind. Factors which hold people back can stem from social prejudices about race or sexuality, or they may be a result of some physical impairment. Often though, it is apparently trivial matters, such as access to transport, inflexible work schedules, or family commitments, that prevent people from progressing as quickly as they would wish.

Slow progress in itself need not detract from peoples' enjoyment of canoeing. But when newcomers are pushed into giving demonstrations of ability, then given respect and responsibility as a result, those who are being overtaken can easily become demoralised and consider giving up.

Why do people drop out ?

To see whether this happens within the Coaching Scheme it is a fairly simple matter to track down and question people who have tried canoeing for a time, taken part in one or more courses and then dropped out. In my experience it is not unusual for those who made it past the initial stages to talk of enjoying the canoeing, but disliking the pressure to continually work towards a series of tests whose relevance they failed to grasp. This pressure is seen as being especially unpleasant when brought to bear by arrogant individuals who set great store by their own collection of qualifications.

It may just be my mistaken impression that many canoeists are being put off by an over-emphasis on testing, but something is driving them away en masse. A quick look at BCU statistics shows that despite some 2,000 people each year becoming sufficiently committed to canoeing to pass a Proficiency Test, membership numbers remain fairly constant. Surely this cannot just be down to the cost of joining. Nor can all these people continue paddling without the benefits of membership, or we would by now be crowded off the rivers.

Loss of numbers is itself important in these days of political and financial benefit going to those who can quantify their success, but I am, for now, more concerned with the effects on those who stay.

A society dominated by middle class men will naturally tend towards being competitive, this being an important part of masculine behaviour. Whilst there is plenty of space for competition within canoeing, I don't believe it should be allowed to dominate the Coaching Scheme, thereby pushing aside other aspects of the canoeing experience. In particular, the possibility of savouring an activity for its own sake is reduced by pressure to constantly improve. Other emotional benefits of cooperation and shared experience, are similarly reduced in a competitive atmosphere.

Besides the quality of experience which people gain from canoeing, there are more tangible consequences of losing too many people. The lack of numbers continuing to develop to high levels of competence is frustrating, both for those who want to learn, but cannot find people to learn with, and for those who want to teach, but cannot fill courses to financial viability at higher levels. The resultant concentration on working with beginners, and apparent failure to maintain interest, also loses us respect amongst other canoeists and non-canoeists alike. Without proper credibility it is difficult to maintain the exchange of information necessary to continually develop Coaching Scheme relevant to all branches of our sport.

It is very much in our interest to run a more open scheme with wider appeal. The question is, how to make coaching, or being coached, more attractive.

(continued on page 11)

RIVER NOISES

BRITISH INSTITUTE OF SPORTS COACHES

Members will have received details of this institute, the successor to the British Association of National Coaches, with the last issue of *Canoe Focus*. The Institute has produced a 'Code of Ethics' for coaches, which will be considered for adoption by the National Coaching Committee. Please send sae to BCU office if you wish to receive a copy.

COACH OF THE YEAR AWARD

The British Institute of Sports Coaches 'Coach of the Year Awards' sponsored by Grass Roots Group plc with help from Adidas and the Sports Council, are open for applications.

The notice is very short, however, and immediate application is necessary. Send to BISC, 2 College Close, Beckett Park, Leeds LS6 3QH for details. A new category is available this year, for the Schoolteacher Coach who has made an outstanding contribution to the development of sports coaching in schools.

BARCLAYCARD COACHING SCHOLARSHIPS

The Sports Aid Foundation have introduced two schemes to make grants available to assist sports coaches. Travel and subsistence costs can be supported to suitable candidates, and some scholarships are available to those who wish to extend their knowledge through the National Coaching Foundation Coach Education Programme. Full details are available from BISC (address above).

SPORTS DISSERTATION OF THE YEAR AWARD

Each year the Sports Council makes an award of £150 plus a small trophy to the best dissertation written by college, polytechnic or university graduates, in the categories: physiology; biomechanics; sports psychology - motor, social; physical education, recreation management training, history of sport; economics, planning facilities, geography, sociology. Entries by 31 October to the Research Unit, Sports Council, 16 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0QP.

COACHING STUDY OF THE YEAR AWARD

The aim of this award is to encourage coaches, students and professionals working in sport to write and submit studies which have applications to coaching. The study must be substantially concerned with coaching. National Coaching Foundation offers £150 to the winner, and £50 to the runner-up, with £20 for merits. Deadline 31 October to NCF, 4 College Close, Beckett Park, Leeds LS6 3QH.

DIPLOMA IN PROFESSIONAL STUDIES (SPORTS COACHES)

The NCF's Diploma in Professional Studies has been validated by the Council for National Academic Awards. Open to coaches who hold the highest qualification, and are of wide experience. The study programme commences in 1991, is flexible and part-time. Send sae to BCU office for full details. Closing date for entries: 7 September 1990.

COACHING FOCUS GOLD

Subscribers to this National Coaching Foundation service receive three issues of *Coaching Focus*, information on NCF courses, *Coachwise*, reduced prices on NCF products, special offers on sports clothing. Send to NCF for details (address above).

NATIONAL COACHING FOUNDATION COURSES

Courses on coaching-related subjects are run throughout the country to support coaches. Phone the NCF hotline free on 0800 590381 for full information on the opportunities available in your area.

NEW COACHING VIDEO

Ray Rowe has produced a video on canoe teaching techniques, which will be reviewed in the next issue of *CoDe*. Copies are available from BCU Supplies at £20 inc p&p. Running time: 20 minutes. VHS only.

CANOE POLES

Please note that both bamboo and aluminium poles are now in stock. Bamboo poles are 18' long, and cost £4.50 each. Aluminium poles are 4m long and now cost £19 each. Carriage is extra (usually about £23 for 6 poles) unless collection from Holme Pierrepont can be arranged.

COURSES

Coaching day on the Dee

The Dee (whole river) is available for a day for Coaching Courses in the late autumn. Numbers are restricted, and prior arrangement is essential. For date, information and booking form please send sae to the BCU office.

Endorsement course for those teaching disabled people to canoe.

26-28 October, Rochester, Kent.

M Smith, Arethusa Adventure Centre, Lower Upnor, Rochester, Kent (0634 719933)

21-23 September, West Sussex.

Adur Centre, Brighton Rd, Shoreham by Sea, West Sussex BN4 5LT (0273 462928)

BCU Coach Award

The courses for this year are:

Plas y Brenin 23-28 October

Glenmore Lodge 13-20 October

SAE to BCU office for full details please.

New Horizons - Outdoor Education in the 1990s

The National Association for Outdoor Education study weekend is to be held at Charlotte Mason College, Cumbria, from 23-25 November. Send to Chris Loynes, Charlotte Mason College, Ambleside, Cumbria LA22 9BB.

Young people, adventure and the countryside

The Countryside Recreation Research Advisory Group is staging a conference from 18-20 September at the University of East Anglia, Norwich. Contact Hilary Talbot, Rodney Lodge, Grange Road, Bristol BS8 4AE (0272 741117).

MA Leisure and Human Potential

A part-time and a full-time course will commence at Leeds Polytechnic in September 1990. MA Leisure and Human Potential, Carnegie Dept, Beckett Park Site, Leeds LS6 3QS (0532 832600).

OPEN CANOE RALLY

8-9 September 1990

Bala, North Wales

Lake paddling:

Trimarans - Sailing - Survival Techniques - Bivouac

Also:

White water (if Tryweryn is running)

Racing - Poling - Kiteing

Send sae to: S Briggs, Arnwood, 213 Newton Rd, Burton on Trent, Staffs

TRAINING THEORY

a component aspect of Wild Water Racing

by TERRY BENTON

In light of the fact that the elapsed time for downriver races is generally of the order of 15-25 minutes, the activity of paddling such races necessarily becomes an aerobic endurance event.

Endurance in this respect is defined as "the limit of time over which work of a given intensity may be performed" and although the top racers perform at the very top limit of their aerobic range, it is only in the final minutes of a downriver race that a paddler can safely cross the threshold and enter the "danger zone" of prolonged anaerobic performance.

The main factor involved in endurance is fatigue and paddlers adapt to the specifics of the work involved, developing their local muscular endurance as they are literally "running with their arms" and are able to generate and maintain an intensity and duration of maximum output that compares favourably to those who do in fact run with the stronger muscle groups of the legs. Downriver racers also develop a high degree of lactate tolerance which enables them to operate at or just below their anaerobic threshold throughout the race, whilst constantly and frequently inserting short bursts of work above that level in order to cope with the varying demands of a wild water course.

Other factors involved are speed, muscle force, technical ability, economy, efficiency and the correct overall physical and, above all, psychological states of readiness. All of these components necessarily suffer with the onset of fatigue, so it is once again obvious that a successful downriver paddler needs not only loads of self-confidence and courage, a high degree of technical expertise and experience, but also the necessary physical and psychological endurance capacities to effectively keep all of these components maximally in play for the duration of the whole race, notwithstanding all the other hazards and problems threatening to life and limb presented by the challenging and extremely dangerous environment in which he practices his art.

However, the one component of the WWR competitive matrix to be considered in this paper is this most important aspect of the endurance capacity - the competition specific component of **speed endurance**.

SPEED ENDURANCE

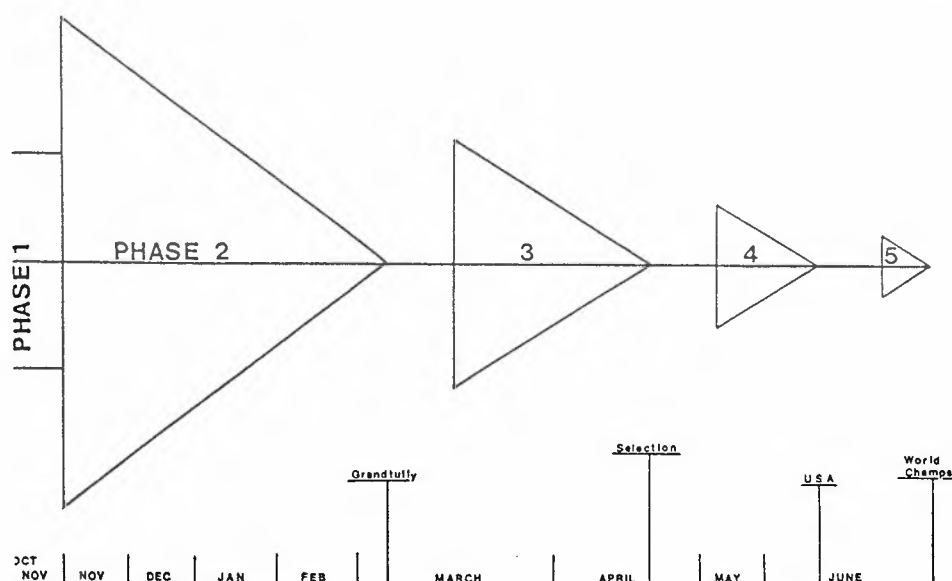
The basis for all work is general endurance, defined as "the capacity to perform an activity which involves many muscle groups and systems for a prolonged period of time". Specific endurance depends on the peculiarities of a sporting activity and involves the capacity to reproduce the many repetitions, or volume, of the motor acts of a particular sport with the efficiency and economy necessary to bring that activity to the desired conclusion in terms of intensity, frequency and duration.

Long duration work utilises the aerobic system whereby the main factors are the supply of oxygen and the utilisation of that supply. It is developed via work of medium intensity over long continuous periods.

A medium duration work capacity is more sport specific and operates at a higher intensity and therefore for shorter periods of time as an oxygen debt is built up via the anaerobic system and the problem of lactic acid build up limits the duration of any such work.

Short duration work is again extremely sport specific and intensely anaerobic, producing a high oxygen debt and high levels of lactate from the intense power and speed involved. Wild Water Racing in recent years has seen a major development in this respect with the introduction of Rapid Racing which involves condensing the art of downriver racing to one major rapid over a distance of 500-800 metres and a time of 90-120 seconds. This is more akin to canoe slalom in terms of intensity and duration and it is interesting to note that the top slalom paddlers perform very well in this event despite the quite different techniques and equipment. However, it does not normally form a major part of the downriver racer's competition performance, although it may be called upon at certain critical moments, such as survival or escaping from trouble or accelerating into and away from the bigger rapids. However, it certainly does play an important role in extending upwards the racer's tolerance of work below this maximum 100%+ intensity level, which is the level of speed endurance at which the racer normally and optimally performs throughout a downriver race. The 1989 World Championships will present unusual problems in this respect in that the River Savage in Maryland, U.S.A., consists wholly and totally of large continuous rapids with no flatter sections - speed endurance will be required to be developed to optimum levels and coordinated maximally in situ with the rhythm of the equally unusual wave patterns of that dam-controlled river for a period of 25 minutes. Truly a test of this aspect of competition specific performance.

The sound and proven physiological base for any such speed endurance and anaerobic development is the aerobic capacity, for if this is inadequate the quality of the shorter duration work will necessarily be severely impaired and performance will also decline rapidly without such a solid base developed widely over time. Local muscular endurance, which is particularly relevant to canoeing, requires the combined ability of high strength development and adequate endurance and is highly sport specific. The development of an endurance capacity is achieved by progressively and continuously overcoming fatigue via a series of so-called "over-compensation curves". The organism adapts to the increases in work loading and once the aerobic



base has been established over time, **speed endurance** can be securely and safely developed via the resistance of the organism to fatigue under conditions of high intensity but medium to short duration.

All of these factors come into play during a normal downriver race on rough water for the paddler must constantly maintain his speed at the upper threshold of his trained aerobic capacity yet also have the capacity to insert short or prolonged bursts of an even higher intensity according to the nature of the river and the particular race tactics adopted. In other words, the developed aerobic speed endurance capability is supported and supplemented by a similarly highly developed anaerobic capacity. A certain amount of "rest" is possible on the major rapid sections, where the racer concentrates on maintaining his chosen line. It is not normally possible to make major gains on the rougher sections but it is extremely possible and easy to lose time in big, rough water. As the master of downriver racing, Jean-Pierre Burny, World Champion in 1969/1973/1975/1979, puts it:

"Survive on the rough, accelerate on the flat."

The strongest structure known to man is the pyramid and this forms the ideal model for the downriver racer's training programme. The base is obviously the long distance medium intensity aerobic work and the apex or peak is the targeted race or competition. The pyramid tapers via a progressively changing emphasis in the training, for it is not possible or advisable to leap suddenly from long slow work to fast, high intensity work. Thus, from totally aerobic work, the loading and emphasis is progressively increased via speed play to aerobic and anaerobic; then from anaerobic and aerobic to anaerobic alone, via repetition intervals with decreasing recovery periods; and finally, pure speed work via the ATP-CP system and then rest with the actual race targeted for the top of the resultant final overcompensation curve.

The annual cycle may consist of one or more of these pyramids according to the competition calendar, as in Great Britain where there are three peaks in the year: national ranking Division A races in October-November, again in March-April, followed by the National Championships in May. International events usually follow on in June and July for the elite paddlers at the top of the sport, giving them, in effect, a four peak year, although each mountain is progressively higher. The Appendix contains one such periodisation plan showing progressive tapering of each pyramidal phase for the selected events, leading up to the final targeted competition of the World Championships. The whole forming one tall pyramid with a very wide and strong base, allowing each of the sub-pyramids to have progressively narrower bases yet remain stable as they each follow on more and more specifically towards the ultimate apex.

As previously stated, the taper from long slow distance usually follows the form of an increasing emphasis on first of all Fartlek training, then organised and pre-planned speed play followed by interval and repetition training before finalising the preparation with pure speed work. The variables involved in this physical conditioning are: volume, intensity, frequency and duration. As the targeted competition approaches, the changes are: a progressively reducing volume matched by a progressively increasing intensity, the duration of the working loads also decreases progressively as do the recovery intervals and the frequency of the workouts changes so that there is more and more emphasis on quality rather than quantity i.e. competition specific in terms of intensity and total volume in order to produce the desired speed capability and speed endurance capacity for the targeted event. (Examples of training episodes demonstrating this changing emphasis and progression are also included in the Appendix).

As much work as possible should be done on real rough water, especially in the pre-competition phase, in order to obtain an effective transfer of this speed endurance to actual race conditions and also to maintain the racer's technical expertise and knowledge for, no matter how well he or she is prepared physically and psychologically, no matter how good his or her equipment, and no matter how well he or she knows the river and the race course, it will come to nought if the racer cannot maintain the chosen racing line down the whole of the racecourse on that river at optimum speed. Such is the essence of Wild Water Racing at the highest level.

(STRIKING A BALANCE - continued from page 8)

Too much assessment ?

I believe it is significant here to look at the emphasis we currently put on assessment. The *Members Yearbook* is full of 1 Star, 2 Star, Proficiency and Senior Instructor Assessment type courses, but there are very few courses offering the chance to learn about Sea Canoeing in a relaxed, coastal environment, or a guided introduction to the joys of Scottish rivers. Such courses do exist, but candidates often have to prove themselves through a series of highly instructional courses before they can join in on more general events.

Instead of learning how to canoe before going out to do canoeing, I believe there is a strong case for learning canoeing through doing, with plenty of opportunity to enjoy the activity in the process. This approach is not entirely new. It has become quite acceptable for beginners who are allowed to play games and have fun, because they can pick up and develop skills in the process. Unfortunately, as paddlers improve, the need to learn a lot in a short space of time leaves very little opportunity for play. Often paddlers are pushed on from one technique to another with barely enough time to practise, let alone sample the real enjoyment which comes from recreational paddling.

Instructors generally have the very best of intentions when pressuring people to try learning a little more. There is a great deal of satisfaction to be gained from acquiring new skills. Improved ability also opens doors to new experiences which can again offer considerable satisfaction. It is important, though, to remember that just having fun can also be satisfying.

There is a tendency to believe that the feelings we get from enjoying ourselves are somehow less worthy, or shorter lived, than a sense of achievement. I would suggest however, that to experience real fulfillment we need to combine these two elements, so that new heights are achieved, but through enjoyable methods.

More games

In order to incorporate this idea into the Coaching Scheme we need to expand our stock and use of games. These can be anything from stalking seals with a camera, to hand surfing small stoppers. The actual activity is not so important, as to recognise that we are doing it not in order to pass our next test, nor because the technique may be useful in an emergency, but because it's fun! We may be improving our technique at the same time, but that is a bonus - not the main purpose of the activity.

Giving enjoyment proper importance in coaching could have a number of potential benefits. For one thing canoeists might come back more often and more readily, giving a boost to numbers, and prompting training at advanced levels. Opportunities for general interest courses, rather than those leading to specific awards, could make broader development more realistic, while if courses are genuinely enjoyable they should appeal to a wider audience, eliminating some of our present bias. The running of courses itself could also become more enjoyable.

Of course, given the wrong treatment any game can become a test of skill or daring, bringing us back to the 'macho' atmosphere we need to avoid. However, when we emphasise the fun element it makes comparisons more difficult. At the end of a day it is usually easy to say who did the best break-ins or pop-outs, but if everyone enjoyed what they were doing, it is harder to choose who had the best day. Self assessment can then become an important part of evaluation, allowing people to judge their performance in terms of their own ability rather than by comparison to others. A far more valid measurement for many of us.

Satisfaction

Besides the fun, there is still a firm place for achievement within this scenario, because full satisfaction comes from enjoying yourself while performing well. By striking the right balance between enjoyment and achievement we improve everyone's chances of success.

So remember, when people ask you questions about who is better, or which is best, to consider just what they are trying to find out. You might try pointing out that when people are really enjoying their sport then easy comparisons become irrelevant.

EXAMINER GRADING FORUMS

Grade II Examiners in England and Wales who have not yet attended a regional Examiners Forum are reminded that their status will revert to EI from 1 March 1991 unless a Forum is attended before that date.

Examiners should endeavour to attend a forum in their own region, but it is quite in order to book into an alternative venue if that is not possible. The new resource material and updated guidance notes will be on review for the Forums listed. It is hoped that Examiners will want to attend each year, to be kept up to date, and share their views on this important field, rather than conform to the minimum requirement of attendance once every three years.

Your examiner status is shown in the Coaching Detail line of the address label. E27 indicates a grade 2 examiner who attended a forum in 1987. E28 indicates 1988, E29 - 1989, and E20 - 1990. Please let us know the date and venue of the last forum attended if the entry on your address label is incorrect.

Grade 1 Examiners who are, or wish to be, involved in training and assessment are welcome to attend, also.

Send sae to your RCO (via BCU if you don't have the address) for details of venue and times.

<i>Region</i>	<i>Next Date</i>	<i>Standard Date</i>
Yorkshire & Humberside	Sunday 3 February 1991	1st Sunday in February
Devon & Cornwall	Saturday 27 October 1990	4th Saturday in October
Eastern Region	Saturday 19 January 1991	3rd Saturday in January
South East	Sunday 24 March 1991	4th Sunday in March
East Midlands }		
West Midlands } <i>combined</i>	Sunday 7 October 1990	1st Sunday in October
North West }		
Cumbria	Sunday 13 January 1991	2nd Sunday in January
North East	Saturday 26 January 1991	4th Saturday in January
Wessex	Sunday 21 October 1990	3rd Sunday in October
Southern	Sunday 9 December 1990	2nd Sunday in December
London	Saturday 3 November 1990	1st weekend in November
South Wales	Sunday 30 September 1990	Last Sunday in September
North Wales	Saturday 19 January 1991	3rd Saturday in January

DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

Stuart Briggs continues to offer courses for DofE Award candidates who wish to undertake canoeing expeditions for their award. Stuart also deals with routine enquiries concerning the award. For informa-

tion send sae (please) to S Briggs, 127 Church Road, Stretton, Burton on Trent, Staffs BE13 OHF.

The revised schedule for the 'Physical Recreation' section follows:

Canoeing - Either:	Points:	6	12	18	24
a) Pass Star Test			1 Star	2 Star	3-5 Star
or					
b) Obtain Proficiency			Proficiency		Adv. Prof.
or					
c) Pass Placid Water Tests		Grade 1	Grade II	Grade III	
or					
d) Pass Racing Tests:	Kayak (K1)			1,000m	3,000m 10,000m
	Canoe (C1)			1,000m	3,000m 10,000m
or					
e) Pass Marathon Tests	13.5 miles			Bronze	Silver Gold
	26 miles			Bronze	Silver Gold
or					
f) Achieve a result in:			(% of winners time)		
Racing, Slalom, Wild Water Racing or			150%	135%	120%
Marathon Race (Promotion)			9-8	8-7	7-6
or					
Devizes-Westminster Race /		for each			For full completion
Trans-Pennine Canal Marathon.		stage completed			of the course
(Junior Class - over 19s must compete					
in the Senior event).					
or					
NABC 100 mile Canoe Test		for each			For full completion
		stage completed			of the course