

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

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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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LYME BAY

As we went to press Devon County Council issued a press statement concerning its interim report on an internal enquiry into the Lyme Bay canoeing tragedy.

The main conclusion is a call for there to be a national, independent registration system, and recommends that the Health and Safety Executive should be the enforcing authority.

Asked for a comment, the following statement was issued on behalf of the BCU:

'The British Canoe Union agrees with the view that there needs to be a comprehensive and enforceable means of monitoring centres which offer holidays and courses involving potentially hazardous activities'.

No decision has yet been reached as to whether or not criminal charges are to be brought. The inquest will not take place until after the criminal case has been heard, if there is to be one.

Regretfully, therefore, definitive comment on the reasons for the Lyme Bay tragedy, and the true implications, still cannot be made publically.

CONGRATULATIONS

Many congratulations to the paddlers and coaches involved in the excellent results in the World Slalom Championships, and to the Wild Water Racing teams. A full report is carried in *Focus*.

Particular mention must be made of Richard Fox, MBE. Richard's re-gaining of the World Champion title for the fifth time during a 14-year period at the top, must be one of the most outstanding British sports performances of all time.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- the effect of the EEC Directive

The European Community Directive on Personal Protective Equipment was due to become effective on 1 July 1992. UK legislation extended the period when there would be no prosecutions until 1 January 1993. This was further extended until 1 January 1994. An amending motion then went before the European Commission to further move the implementation date until 1 July 1995, but it is understood that this has been rejected.

From 1 January 1994, therefore, unless CEN can persuade the Commission otherwise, MANUFACTURERS and IMPORTERS of buoyancy aids in the UK will become liable to prosecution if they place on the market devices which do not conform to the requirements of the Directive. This essentially means that they must have been assessed to the CEN standard.

Retailers, and employers who need to issue buoyancy aids or life jackets to employees, or Centres or Activity Holiday operators who need to issue them to paying clients, may continue to sell, or issue existing stocks until they are exhausted, or have reached the end of their reasonable life, and need to be replaced.

Whilst no legislation is planned to require the private individual to use a buoyancy aid or lifejacket, it will not be possible, in due course, to purchase a device which does not conform to the European standard, as it will be illegal for such to be manufactured or sold within the Community.

Some test houses have now been established, and some British manufacturers have already, or are in the process of having, their devices tested to the CEN standard.

'JD' AND THE ALLIGATORS

John Dudderidge, OBE, our President of Honour, founder of the Coaching Scheme, as well as a great deal of the rest of canoeing in the BCU and ICF, has recently visited Florida. In his 86th year, John caddied the use of an open canoe and disappeared, against advice, into the Everglades. Rumour has it that he has some interesting pictures, which we hope he will allow us to feature in a future *Focus*.

Recently a certain canoeing magazine queried the paddling habits of 'the BCU hierarchy'. In the light of 'JD's' exploits, and what I know of others in the 'establishment', it is difficult to know who the comment was aimed at.

Donald Bean

Now in his 61st year of canoeing, and 71st year of LIFE, Donald Bean of Staffs and Stone CC has just sent a postcard from Turkey, where he is working with Dave Mamby, and a group of disabled canoeists and rafters. He has taken part in the World WW Rafting, Kayaking and Caterafting competition, during a 3 months tour abroad !

More news of our amazing septo- and octogenarians, inside !

TEACHING AND LEARNING

ALAN JOHNSON

Members of the BCU Coaching Scheme sometimes find themselves working with groups of young people, possibly from youth clubs, who are less interested in formal instruction and techniques and have come to the session with expectations at variance to a normal pattern of teaching.

The young people may, and in my experience often do, expect to be able to roll successfully within the first ten minutes of a session (tell me how to do it), with out a spray deck and without any previous experience. Some of them have done it all before and are brilliant at it, even if they can't quite manage to paddle forward in a straight line, and they believe the rest, especially the girls, are rubbish. Most want to get soaking wet so the workers at the agency have decided they should wear shorts and t-shirts for the early season spring evening session, despite the advice sheet you sent them in advance. But possibly this sound no different to your more formal session!

What of the work you are expected to do in the session? Are you working as a BCU Instructor or are you working with the aims of the agency that the young people belong to?

Youthwork and youthworkers tend to talk of their work in terms of helping young people through adolescence towards adulthood and providing learning opportunities in a variety of environments. Where do we place ourselves between the BCU Instructor and the youthworker? How do we manage our interventions with the group, balancing safety and a certain amount of success in the activity and working with the relationships of the group?

One description of youthwork I have worked with talks of "themes" in youthwork which include health, relationships, self awareness, sexuality and political education, and "principles" such as education, equality, participation and support, which are said to be a tool for the evaluation of the work.

Our work with the activity should therefore contain elements about fitness (health), relationships (issues such as attitudes of young men towards young women) and political education, with a small "p" (the group negotiating the content of the session with consideration for the restriction made by their clothing, equipment etc).

We could measure the success of the work by asking: What have they learned? - both in terms of activity and about themselves and their relationships with others: "education". Did we "support" those less able to help them "participate" and is positive discrimination towards the less able contradicting the principle of "equality" or is it enabling it?

An HMI report on effective youthwork gives some good examples of work done with young people through activities. One example talks

of some unemployed young people who did not know each other, being drawn together into a group to organise a canoe trip. It appears that they were supported in organising the trip themselves and the activity was used to consolidate the group. The account does not continue beyond this point but I would presume the worker would have been able to use their increase in self esteem gained during the activity to help them organise some sort of unemployed support group and further educational experiences.

Other examples in the report include one interesting intervention where a group, who are not used to outdoor activity, have gone on a day walk in Derbyshire. The intervention came during the lunch break when the leader began to extract fossils from nearby rock. When asked what he was doing he told the group to go away, he was busy. The group of young people soon rose to the challenge, searching out their own fossils and the worker was able to engage them in conversation sharing his geological knowledge of the area.

Perhaps the last example reveals one of the other positions we need to work with. Do we teach the technique so that the group can enjoy the games more effectively or do we introduce the games and offer support by either helping those in difficulty or letting them learn from our example? Are we into teaching or is the group into learning? Where in youthwork terms is this situation? I could say that I see the rigid teaching situation as disabling young people's ability to learn to find out, how to develop in life (always expecting to be told what to do). On the other hand, helping them learn from their experiences, helping them find out is, I believe, a good example of "support" mentioned above. The truth is, of course, that all people are different, the young people, the youthworker, the agency and the BCU Instructor. There is therefore no fixed answer.

I believe, based on the above, that we need to be aware of the expectations of the young people we work with, the youthworker who is part of the group and the aims of the agency we are working with. We need to adapt the learning environment we create to each individual situation.

So where does this leave you, the reader? Do you know it all and you are brilliant at it? Is what I have said controversial or rubbish? ("Go away I am busy"). Are you going to react to what I have said, like the group on the walk, and write to CoDe to say what you think? Whatever you feel, there is a chance to create a learning environment of our own. Please write to CoDe and share your feelings about working with young people so that we can gain, like the unemployed group did in the example above.

CRIB CARDS

The popular Instructors' Crib Cards are available from the BCU Coaching Office at £5.95 per set. The cards, A5 size, in sets of 12 in a ring binder, are encapsulated in waterproof plastic, and cover the basic skills for kayak, or canoe, and remind the instructor of the salient teaching points. They include the 'wriggle' test.

Please send a cheque with your order, and stipulate whether KAYAK or CANOE is required.

PLASTICISED STAR TEST MARKING SHEETS

The new plasticised marking sheets for Star Tests were introduced at the International Canoe Exhibition, and proved immediately popular. The sets of 5 cards on a ring binder, on A5 encapsulated in plastic, provide the syllabus and marking sheets for the 1-3 Star Tests, and the Inland Proficiency.

JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT

RICHARD WARD
National Coach for Marathon

The most direct and effective way for anyone wishing to help increase the quantity and quality of junior marathon and race canoeing in Britain is to help out with the junior section of their own club, or where there is no club, set one up. As well, as this need for work at club level, there are several other ways in which willing helpers can aid junior development.

Coaching

By continuing the programme of BCU coach training we can keep improving the standard of junior instruction and coaching. Placid Water Teacher and Race Trainer courses will provide the majority of the helpers, but it is hoped a rolling programme of Competition Coach seminars (2 per year) would also ensure a higher level coaching for those that want to progress. As well as BCU courses and awards, generic coaching courses run by outside agencies, such as NCF, will broaden the education of coaches and trainers.

For those people with the right experience and qualification to run or contribute to a Race Trainer or Placid Water Teacher course, the best way to help would be to contact your regional Placid Water organiser and offer your assistance. Equally, for those who wish to qualify, the contact should be the same, to find out the availability of appropriate courses in their area

Information

The spread of information would be aided by a regular newsletter on coaching to provide continued support to Trainers and Teachers. Included might be guidelines on training programmes, examples of how the successful clubs do it, specialist articles, plus information about suitable canoeing equipment for young people. We need a co-ordinator to round up articles and submit them for circulation.

Events

More low key races/mini marathons, within the club, or between a couple of local clubs, are needed. There are already several Junior half marathons in the race calendar, but there is room for more.

Junior Development Squads for Marathon & Sprint

JDS would be useful to identify and encourage talented young paddlers. They would also provide an important source of information for new and small clubs with only one or two juniors. To start with it may only be practical to run 3-4 meets around the country per year. This will require volunteers to administer and coach, and several suitable venues will need to be identified.

Equipment

Until recently there has been only a limited amount of equipment on the market suitable for young paddlers. There are now several manufacturers/retailers who can provide such items. By compiling a short leaflet on sources of junior equipment, shopping time will be cut.

WHY WOMEN ? WHY WOMEN ?
WHY WOMEN ? WHY WOMEN ? WHY WOMEN ?
WHY WOMEN ? WHY WOMEN ?
asks ANNE PALMER
Chair of the Advisory Panel on Women In Canoeing

As the impact of the Women in Canoeing Advisory Panel has become more noticeable the above question is being asked more often. Members want to know what is behind all this so on behalf of the Union I will try and explain.

The BCU set up two advisory panels - one for 'Disability', and one for Women in Canoeing. Their aim was to focus attention on the needs of those particular groups.

Since the Women in Canoeing Advisory Panel was set up it has held a National Conference from which a policy statement was drawn up which has since been accepted by the BCU Council. This statement is:

'The BCU is committed to redressing the inequalities in the coaching scheme by encouraging women as follows:

- by recruiting more women into the scheme
- By facilitating the development of those who wish to attain higher level coaching awards.
- encouraging regional panels to involve women in the decision-making processes'.

One of Sports Council's targeted areas for funding is 'Women in Coaching'. A submission, based on the above policy statement, was made and was successful in gaining funding for an Apprenticeship Scheme to be developed over the next 4 years. The success of such a pilot scheme could have a far reaching effect on the sport as it may prove to be a useful model for both male and female members of the Coaching Scheme.

The aim is to facilitate the development of those women who wish to attain higher coaching awards beyond Senior Instructor level. The training will take 2 years to complete and is offered in a modular format.

The anticipated knock-on effect of this will be that there will be a small group of women in several regions who are more accomplished to coach at higher levels and therefore act as role models to support and encourage other people aspiring to higher levels in coaching in the future.

Linked to the Apprenticeship scheme will be the development of a mentor network. This will offer support and guidance to the few sparsely spread women already in the Coaching Scheme until such time as there are greater numbers in each area.

A further area of development to be focused on in the near future was also identified at the National Conference. This is to look at the image and promotion of canoeing both inside and outside of the sport. Members are being asked to offer their expertise/involvement in this issue of *Canoe Focus*.

I hope this has answered some of the questions about 'Why Women'. The commitment of the Union to work towards equity, and the hard work of those closely involved with the suggested initiatives of the Panel need your support if we are to see the day when more women are involved with canoeing and enjoying the things which give all of us so much pleasure.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

THE STAGING OF AWARDS COURSES

Please note that all courses for the training or qualifying of candidates for BCU coaching awards, must have the prior approval of your Regional Coaching Organiser. This includes all training or assessment courses for Supervisor, PW Teacher, Instructor, Senior Instructor and Advanced Proficiency testing.

Forms for notifying courses for the 1994 calendar, and for obtaining approval where necessary, will be sent to all coaching organisers, and organisers of courses listed in this year's calendar, by the end of the first week in September. If you are planning courses either for the calendar, or for which approval is needed whether they need to get into the calendar or not (eg 'closed' courses) send to the BCU office for a Course Authorisation Application Form, and details of the requirements, if you do not receive a set.

'Closed' courses may be staged - eg courses for the staff of a centre, school, club or college - but these must still be authorised by the RCO, and must, of course, conform to the requirements for the number and grade of examiners. Two months notice is normally required.

RCO/LCO ELECTIONS

As no further nominations have been received, the following are declared elected to the relevant posts:

Eastern Region

RCO: Paul West, 33 Risedale, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP3 9NW.

LCO Bedfordshire: Trevor Wadsworth, 16 Lodge Road, Rushton, Northampton NN10 9HA.

Change of address

Please note the address of RCO East Midlands, which was wrongly stated in the last edition:

Keith Sykes, 8 Marlwood, Cotgrave, Notts NG12 3NS.

Vacancies

Vacancies still exist for LCOs in the following areas. If you are willing to volunteer, or know of someone who would do a good job, and who you think might volunteer with a little persuasion, please get in touch with your RCO:

Herefordshire, South Cambridgeshire, Mid Cumbria.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual general meeting of the Coaching Scheme will take place in London on the evening of Saturday 9 October. Full details of the venue will be sent to all delegates who register for the Paddlers' Conference (details on separate 'stuffer' with this magazine) or on request (sae please to BCU office).

The Vice Chairman, Derek Hutchinson, is due for re-election this year. Alternative nominations, signed by two delegates (RCOAs, LCOs, Specialist Committee representatives) must be received by the Director of Coaching at the BCU office, before 15 September 1993.

Motions to amend the Constitution must be proposed and seconded, and forwarded as above.

COACH REQUIRED

Opportunity exists for an expenses-paid trip to Zurich for a Coach grade II Examiner able to undertake the assessment of staff for the weekend 11-12 September. If you are interested, and available, please leave a message for Geoff Good at the BCU office.

BCU SEA KAYAKING SYMPOSIUM

To be held at Calshot Activities Centre from 2-3 October. Details from Dave Evans, Calshot Activities Centre, Calshot, Southampton.

WELSH CONFERENCE

The WCA Coaching conference is to be held from 22-24 October at Twr y Felin. An E2 seminar is planned for the Friday night, with workshops on various aspects of canoe coaching throughout Saturday and Sunday. Full details from Terry Davies, 87 Tyisha Road, Llanelli, Dyfed.

SCA SEA KAYAKING SYMPOSIUM

To be held at the Scottish National Sports Centre, Cumbrae, Firth of Clyde from 8-10 October. Details from Bob Johnston, Wellpark, 31 Main St, Coylton, Ayrshire KA6 6JW.

SCA COACHING CONFERENCE

The SCA conference is programmed for the spring at Kilbowie Centre, Oban, and is being run by Bill Kersel. Details to follow.

EAST MIDLANDS - EXAMINER FORUM

Sunday 26 September, 0930 at the Pavilion, Current Trends, Holme Pierrepont. A practical seminar on Testing Procedures - live guinea pigs. Bring your paddling kit and own lunch, or purchase from CT. Coffee available (donation required). Instructors and above welcome. Details from Keith Sykes, 8 Marlwood, Cotgrave, Notts NG12 3NS.

THE COACH AWARD AND E3 STATUS

Please note that Coaches are not automatically able to test for Advanced Proficiency. Only Coaches are *eligible* for appointment to grade 3 Examiner status, but it is still necessary to be recommended and appointed. The statements at the outset of the leaflets for the Inland and Sea Advanced Proficiency tests, are not correct.

HISTORIC CANOE - GOOD HOME WANTED

Offers are invited for an historic canoe. The boat needs some attention. It is made of cedar, by Spalding St Lawrence Boat Co, Ogdensburg, has a mounting for a mast, and is estimated to be at least 90 years old. If you are interested please contact Mr David Parsonage on 0270 624580.

RALEIGH INTERNATIONAL SEEKS STAFF

Raleigh International (previously Operation Raleigh) needs:

2 Senior Instructors (Sea) and 1 boat handler for Chile (13 Sep - 17 Dec)

1 Whitewater Rafting guide (grade 4-5) for Zimbabwe (14 Sep - 19 Dec)

1 Canoe Instructor for Guyana (16 Sep - 14 Dec).

Please contact Karren Norman, Raleigh House, 27 Parsons Green Lane, London SW6 4HS.

SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE EXPEDITIONING

The Young Explorers Trust is staging a conference on safe and responsible expeditioning, particularly for those who organise for the 14-20 years old age group, at Charlotte Mason College, Ambleside from 17-19 September. Details from YET, Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR.

THE CANOEING HANDBOOK

£14.50

**the only comprehensive guide to the whole
sport published in Britain**

FOR COMPETITION COACHES ESPECIALLY

COACH OF THE YEAR AWARDS

The National Coaching Foundation is inviting proposals for the prestigious 1993 Coach of the Year Awards. The categories are:

- Female / Male coach coaching individual performers
- Female / Male coach coaching teams
- Male / Female coach coaching Disabled Sports People
- Male / Female coach coaching junior competitors
- Male / Female coach coaching in schools

Female / Male coach who has made an outstanding contribution nationally to the development of coaching.

Nomination forms from NCF, 114 Cardigan Road, Headingley, Leeds LS6 3BJ, which must be returned by 17 September.

COACHING CHILDREN IN SPORT

Children in the world of sport, developmental changes in children, psychological aspects of participation, applications to the coaching process, and good practice in coaching. Author Martin Lee, Institute for the Study of Children in Sport. ISBN 0-419-18250-0. £16.95. E & F N Spon.

COACHING FOCUS - EATING DISORDERS

The Spring 1993 edition of Coaching Focus, published by the NCF, concentrates on eating disorders in sport, addressing Basic Issues; Analysis; Consequences - particularly on young people; Weight management; Exercise addiction; Making Weight. Coaching Focus Gold includes the magazine three times per year, insurance for professional indemnity, and discounts on products and services. Phone 0532 744802 for an application form.

NCF KEY COURSES

A full programme of key courses for Coaches is available throughout the regions. 'Delivering the Goods', 'Planning Your Programme', 'Coaching Children', 'An Introduction to Structure of the Body', 'Developing Endurance', 'Developing Strength and Speed', 'Developing Flexibility', 'Nutrition for Sports Performance', 'Introduction to Sports Mechanics', 'Analysing Performance', 'Prevention and Treatment of Injuries', 'Motivating Your Athlete', 'Understanding and Improving Skills', 'Mental Preparation for Performance'.

*Available in home learning format.

The courses are staged at National Coaching Centres throughout the country, or can be delivered for your club or group, by arrangement. Please contact NCF, 4 College Close, Beckett Park, Leeds LS6 3OH for full information (hotline 24 hour number: 0800 590381).

There are introductory study packs for those just starting out on coaching.

RUNNING SPORT - PROGRAMME OF SHORT COURSES

The Sports Council is offering a series of courses around the country under the headings 'Working with People', 'Personal Effectiveness' and 'Money Matters'. The courses are working towards the development of a formal qualification in sports administration based on standards required by NCVQ.

For further information sent to Running Sport, the Sports Council, 16 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0QP.

SPORTS MATCH

Sports Match is a government sponsored scheme whereby for every £1 of sponsorship money raised, the government will match it with £1.

For further information contact Sports Match, Francis House, Francis Street, London SW1P 1DE.

BISC AND NCF JOIN FORCES

The British Institute of Sports Coaches, which was formed out of the British Association of National Coaches, merged on 30 March with the very successful National Coaching Foundation. The amalgamation is one of the recommendations arising from the Sports Council's review of governing body coaching structures, published in the report 'Coaching Matters'.

BISC already enjoyed a very close working relationship with NCF. Its new name is the National Coaches Association, and as such it is concerned with the welfare of coaches, coaching matters, and the delivery of coaching, whilst NCF develops and delivers better coach education.

PARTNERS IN PERFORMANCE

A National Conference on the contribution of sports science, sports medicine and coaching to performance and excellence is to be held from 4-7 November in Manchester. The Conference is being run by the Sports Council in conjunction with the British association of Sports Sciences, National Coaching Foundation and the National Sports Medicine Institute. Details from Sports Council, 16 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0QP.

STAN HOLTORP - STILL GOING STRONG

Stan Holtorp, Instructor January 1969 (examiner Des Capps); Senior Instructor January 1973 (examiner Geoff Sanders) is still instructing two or three times a week - for free! He has put a good number of 40 and 50+ year olds on the water in the Hampton Park area.

Stan was a keen marathon paddler for many years, and still covers 5 miles a day - in his 76th year.

Stan and his canoeing have been featured in *Choice* the Magazine for 'senior citizens' on more than one occasion. He now 'winters' in Spain, where he also canoes extensively.

LATE NOTICE. Wales South and East. E2 seminar to be held at the Eagle Hotel, New Radnor, commencing 1000 on Sunday 21 November. Details/confirmation: Chris Charters (0544 21208).



THE COACH AWARD - A GRADE V EXPERIENCE ?

by Roderick Galway

This article has arisen from the Essay and Lecture which I presented on a Coach Training Course at Glenmore Lodge, Aviemore.

In my lecture I expressed concern as to the current state of the Coach Award.

Surely there must be something wrong with the scheme, when each year hundreds of successful candidates gain their Senior Instructor awards, yet only a handful ever come forward to attend Coach Courses.

During the debate which ensued, I discovered that I was not alone in my views, nor were my concerns necessarily new ones.

There are numerous reasons for the poor response to the coach award. However, several main points arose from the discussion between the staff and course members.

There appears to be a lack of understanding as to the role, remit and structure of the award. Most people are probably quite ignorant of the award, and potential candidates are put off by the whole mystique which has surrounded it. Many have negative preconceived notions and find the thought of the essay, the formal lecture, the rumours of intensive training and the stories of nightmare assessments ending in failure, all too daunting to even consider coming forward.

At the end of the discussion, I was asked to draft an article which might help to inform the canoeing fraternity of some of the innovations over the past 3-5 years, which have gone a long way to improve canoeists' perception of the award and indeed the whole format of coach training courses. It was hoped that this, in turn, would promote the whole award and encourage potential candidates to come forward.

Throughout the eighties, the coach award appeared to have little appeal and even now this remains the case, despite successive attempts over the last decade to improve the nature of the award and its outlook.

Most people involved in coach development are now agreed that the training and education of aspirant coaches is of more importance than their actual assessment. Therefore the separation of the coach course into its two component parts - training and assessment - was a welcomed move.

Prior to this, a six day course consisted of four days training, followed by two days assessment. Even now, with training spread over six days, the course is still very intense. By the end of our course we were physically and mentally drained as there is a vast amount packed into a relatively short space of time. The new format now allows a period of time to lapse before a final appraisal is arranged. The nature of the appraisal will vary from individual to individual.

The coach training course has a sound core of coaching styles and techniques, as well as a broad base to include all major recreational and competitive disciplines of the sport. Behind the facade of a content centred approach, the course has an individual centred approach, tailored to suit the candidates requirements, as it aims to extend the trainees existing expertise in order to make their coaching skills more effective.

There has been a shift of emphasis away from the traditions of Sea, Inland Kayak and Open Canoe, which has made the Coach Award more generic, encouraging candidates to be general practitioners of the sport. This alone has been a tremendous advance.

The main thrust of the course is to establish how individuals learn and how we might apply this to canoeing. 'Coaching is Coaching'. The concept is transferable, and works whether it's presented inland or on the sea, from a kayak or an open canoe.

Throughout the course the candidate's ability to instruct and perform is acknowledged through the SI and advanced proficiency qualifica-

IV	V
Route not always recognisable	Inspection essential
Inspection mostly necessary	Extreme discussions
Heavy continuous discussion	Possibly navigable at particular assessments
Brain stoppers	High risk of failure
Pressure areas	
Obstructions	

tions that they hold, and no-one should feel under assessment in these areas. This allows the candidates to focus on developing their coaching.

There is a need within the system for an All-Round Coach of high calibre, both from a performance and background knowledge point of view.

'The generic nature of our course suited most candidates, it had many persuasive advantages which made it a very productive experience. It is important to look outside our specialised subject to see what we can learn and take back to our respective disciplines. This is encouraged by the Generic Course'. (Ian Sherrington)

The Coach Training Course provided ample opportunity for the aspirant coach to observe the qualified coach in action, presenting information through various styles and techniques.

'One incident which I felt epitomised the openness of our course for me was the 'coaching styles' day. Never before have I seen tutors put their own ability 'on the line', to be analysed and scrutinised by a group of experienced canoeists. A brave move given the wealth of experience watching them'. (Ian Sherrington)

Coach training offers an opportunity to foster and propagate new ideas and techniques which aspirants can take back to their own regions.

'The single most significant factor to stand out from the course, was the genuine help and enthusiasm that developed between the 'trainees'. Taking away the assessment banner enabled everyone concerned to relax and learn from each other. This took away the sting and stigma often associated with assessments'. (Paul Trott)

'There was a mountain of experience drawn together for the course. Then, given the relaxed nature of the course, it was perhaps hardly surprising that the levels of discussion were so high'. (Ian Sherrington)

As a result of this openness throughout training, a dialogue is established so that by the end of the course, staff and the trainee can sit down and identify the trainees' strengths, weaknesses and blind spots. Feed back is generally positive and constructive, with the emphasis on 'Not yet attained the required standard' as opposed to 'failed'.

'The course was even more positive than I had expected, it seemed to build on an individual's strengths'. (Ian Sherrington)

Towards the end of the course, the trainee and staff agree realistic short term goals and establish a personal action plan to be achieved by the trainee, prior to any final evaluation. At this stage a coach tutor is nominated to work with and direct the trainee.

Once trained, candidates need time to develop and the removal of assessment from the training week gives aspirants sufficient time after receiving feedback to absorb it, to experiment and foster a style which is both comfortable and effective.

It is important that you recognise your own 'style' of coaching - which will be a reflection of your personality. The coach can use different methods to coach somebody - but will do it in their own style. Styles are unique to individuals.

Having established that there is a need for this period of metamorphosis between training and any form of appraisal. There is no fixed time scale for this. It will depend on the needs of the individual and the tutor will be influential in the timing and content of any final review.

There is no standardised format for appraisal, and again, each individual will have to be assessed differently depending on their respective deficiencies.

The training course made us aware of the importance of meeting the

students' needs by looking at how people learn. As coaching is about 'helping people to learn' - there is obviously no 'one' correct method or technique to use that facilitates this learning. Any method which is effective must be correct'.

As a coach it is important to be sufficiently aware of the needs of the client and the conditions prevalent, in order to use an effective method of coaching that will facilitate learning.

'CHOOSING AN EFFECTIVE METHOD is one of the main keys to good coaching. Coaching is then just as much about the 'soft skills' of reading people and the conditions as it is about the 'hard skills' of performing and imparting information/knowledge. (Mike McClure)

The course also confirmed many techniques which we had been using and yet gave us so much to go away and think about.

'I personally came away from the week with loads of ideas and information that will take me years to work in to my coaching' (Dougie Shannon).

'All in all a tremendous course' (Paul Trott).

In conclusion, I feel that the award itself, while having undergone radical improvements, is in dire need of a new set of guidelines for the benefit of potential candidates.

An increased exposure, through articles in the canoeing press, highlighting the relevance and importance of the coach award, and reflecting its new positive outlook and informal approach, should do a lot to promote the award.

The initiatives have gone a long way to reduce a lot of the stress and anxiety which normally exists and inhibits the candidates performance.

Certainly a policy to recruit, rather than to exclude, should be apparent.

'I have already recommended the course to several people and will continue to do so' (Dougie Shannon).

RCOs should identify and push experienced SIs forward, as they may be closer to the award than they think.

'It is one of those things most people have to be encouraged to do' (Vic Brown, CoDe July 1989).

Not everyone wants to be a coach - education and training are more important than the piece of paper. By attending training, and adapting your current methods of coaching, your future methods are bound to improve, making you a more effective SI.

I certainly would encourage any experienced SIs to attend a coach course, to improve and extend your coaching repertoire. You will probably find training reinforces a lot of what you are actually doing.

Hopefully I have highlighted some of the recent initiatives, and current thinking, which would now appear to be the adopted policy for coach courses in general.

On behalf of the trainees who were at Glenmore Lodge in October '92, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for all their support and feed back. I would personally like to thank my fellow trainees for their camaraderie and for taking the time to provide me with their views on what we all agreed was an excellent course.

THIS YEAR'S COURSES

Glenmore Lodge	18-23 August
Plas y Brenin	15-20 August
	14-19 November

Entry requirements

- Senior Instructor, minimum age 21
- An advanced proficiency certificate
- An alternative proficiency certificate
- Have helped on at least 1 Instructor or SI Training or Assessment course
- Produce an essay (minimum 1,000 words)

Full details of the requirements, and booking form, from BCU office - see please.

Dear CoDe

Dear CoDe,

I am becoming increasingly concerned at the emphasis which is being placed on 'female friendly' course, so I am writing to see if I am alone. Here are my thoughts on the matter:

- 1 Canoeing has, for many years, been male dominated. This is reflected in the proportion of male and female events at the top level. A full world championship slalom team, for example is only 20% female.
- 2 'Female friendly' courses seem to encourage women to try canoeing, but they do not change the sport as a whole. My husband and I have coached a junior ladies slalom squad in the past and currently coach junior men. In our experience, canoeing appeals more to men than to women. Women who need a 'female friendly' atmosphere tend not to stay in the sport of canoeing for long.
- 3 As I see it, the BCU coaching scheme's aim is to encourage and help people of both sexes to go canoeing. Why give special privileges to women?
- 4 The last sentence of your notice headed 'women in canoeing' in AA CoDe no 49 talks of arrangements for readmittance of instructors who drop out. I agree wholeheartedly, but why women only? Many people have a break from canoeing, for various reasons. We don't want to lose any of them - male or female - from the coaching scheme.

Any comments? Am I the only one who feels this way?

SUE BURNS, Perthshire

DoC comments: It is appreciated that there are many outstanding female paddlers, such as Sue, and many female instructors, who do not feel the need for any 'special arrangements' to encourage them. Dare one agree, also, that if we go too far down the path of making the sport gently acceptable, that the type of person enticed to 'have a go' is probably unlikely to become a regular practitioner.

The Coaching Committee did accept the principle of 'positive discrimination' however, in an effort to improve on the current situation. With more than 50% of the population being female we should be able to improve on the present ratios for participation.

It is not a case of putting a great deal of emphasis on 'female friendly' courses. It is a matter of seeking to ensure that courses are not actually 'off-putting' to females, and to allow for the occasional 'females only' course if this is felt to be a useful device in a particular location or situation.

As indicated in CoDe 50, special provision to encourage women back into membership following maternity, is a suggestion from the Panel in keeping with other particular provisions to cater for circumstances which deserve special consideration.

Dear CoDe

As an outdoor activity professional, I spend a good deal of my time training and assessing other instructors, so I'm very interested in NVQ developments. As I wish to assess for the Outdoor Education NVQ that is not operational I have started training for the NVQ assessors award. As an experienced assessor, I thought that I would be able to achieve most of the award by APL (NVQ speak for having done loads of it before). This has proved the case. However, the award has included some training that I have found interesting, and I thought it may be worth while to share these thoughts.

The first point about NVQ's that must be clear is that they are about assessment, and not training! It does not matter in the least how you arrived at the level - or how much better you are - the question for an assessor is 'is the candidate competent at all of this unit?'

The second point is that the only assessment decision is a pass! (What? You can't fail?) The assessment process ends when the candidate passes. If the candidate is found 'not yet competent', the assessor needs to explain what must be done to become competent, and decide how this will be demonstrated. When this is completed, an assessment decision can be made.

This has much greater effect than you may think. The assessment can only be carried out by looking for things that are positive. I thought I did this before. I've always tried to be positive, and give positive feedback, even

when people have failed. But to *just* look for positive points is very difficult. Try it next time you assess. I'm sure almost all of us find it easier to focus on the reasons why we are about to fail someone, and to have these very clear, rather than being able to list what is good. But this is what we must do for NVQ's.

So, for everyone who's thinking of becoming an NVQ assessor, start to think positively during assessments, and start to collect your portfolio *now*. Keep photo copies of any paper work you do, programmes, report sheets, exam papers - absolutely everything. Also get testimonies from other assessors, or even candidates. You can make up forms for them to fill in, or even write the testimony, as long as they are happy to sign it, and stand by it later. It also seems the more credible/qualified these people are the better, 'bulls eye' is other people trained, or training, as assessors.

Hopefully, the more people who do this, the easier it will get.

PETE BUTTON, Tyne and Wear

Dear CoDe

A swift request: please can you date all publications that are sent out. True, my filing system should be better organised, but I do have similar information most specifically access information sheets, that are not dated, and therefore it is not clear which supercedes which.

Apart from the above point, thank you for the varied and interesting content you provide.

DAVID ALLAWAY, Dyfed

DoC Coments. Sorry David, you're quite right. Will do !

Dear CoDe

It is with dismay that I find myself writing this letter to you. The matter that concerns me, is the recent Lyme Regis incident and the validity of canoeing qualifications.

When is someone not qualified to instruct total beginners? Able to teach them? If he holds the leader award as described in CoDe No 49, either he is qualified to instruct and has trained to do so, or he is not. I find this loophole in the instructional structure alarming and infuriating, both as an instructor and a club member. These people generally do not have the background knowledge needed to answer the questions of beginners.

For years the whole water sports industry has known about the hiring of unqualified staff by holiday companies. To reduce the staff costs, they hire the minimum number of qualified staff and then supplement the short fall with cheaper unqualified staff. This led to the tragic and unnecessary problems on March 22 93. Active Learning and Leisure, the company which runs the St Albans adventure centre in Lyme Regis, defended its 'instructors': 'As far as we are concerned they are all properly trained'. (*The Guardian* 24.3.93) Well, it is a sad day for our sport when untrained, unqualified and inexperienced people drag it through the mud. Had they been BCU qualified they would have had the training that would have shown them their limits, and when not to step over those limits. The BCU is now in a position to send a clear message to the industry to put its house in order before the government possibly gets involved. Make the lowest level of responsible person to teach total beginners, Trainee Instructors under the direct supervision of an Instructor or above at all times. To do this would require a change in responsibility of Trainee Instructors, from their present state, to being totally qualified for all by their experience of group control and instructional technique.

A second point I feel compelled to write about is the possible introduction of NVQ to our sport. These qualifications are a double edged sword. If, as I understand them, they are government controlled, then in theory they are setting up a standard for awards which will become nationally recognised. It will be no longer the sole right of the BCU to issue qualifications, leaving the way clear for other bodies to set up with a more assertive attitude toward the rights of canoeists.

However, if I am mistaken, and the BCU still holds sole control as the only national body, then what is to be gained by all the extra paper work and cost, and who will pay for its administration? The members? The people taking star tests? The Instructors?

On a more positive note, I totally agree with the proposed 4-5 star becoming the proficiency and advanced proficiency awards. The RYA has just restructured their higher levels of windsurfing, but for different reasons. This is a step forward and will lead to more paddlers becoming more rounded in experience and knowledge.

The RYA has always required a first-aid qualification and it is well overdue in our sport. I feel that instructors who say they cannot spare 6 hours every 3 years, because that is the length of a revalidation course, are a danger to our sport, their classes, and themselves.

To finish off, unless you can show BCU members, as it is their sport, and the Instructors, as it is their livelihood, and qualifications, that there is

something overriding to be gained from S/NVQ other than another piece of paper, let's forget them and get on with guiding our sport the way we want it to go. This is my sport, and I want as little government involvement as possible. I look forward to future replies from Instructors and other paddlers about the points raised in this letter.

RONAN P HARRINGTON, Catford

DoF comments: Our awards are designed for the situation where a person is taking total, autonomous responsibility for introducing others to canoeing, and leading them on at a suitable pace, and into suitable situations, on an ongoing basis, to the maximum level for which the instructor is capable, and to the point where the paddler becomes self sufficient, able to make his or her own decisions, and take personal responsibility for their own welfare. The Instructor and Senior Instructor awards are designed primarily for this purpose.

The Supervisor award, which is of a much lower technical order, and which gives people only a minimum of understanding of the whole sport, is designed for the situation where a teacher or youth leader undertakes initial sessions only, in very controlled conditions.

We may raise the question of the 'quality' of the experience, but if we are deliberating on the issue of safety, the fact is that no-one has ever drowned from a kayak, whilst wearing a buoyancy aid, in those circumstances.

The suggestion that Trainees must always work under direct supervision is unrealistic, and in view of the lack of accidents when they are operating within their terms of reference, unnecessary. We would return to the 'Catch 22' situation where we used to tell trainees to go and get experience, and the local authorities told them they couldn't get experience until they were qualified !

The activity holiday companies are offering an initial experience in a range of sports. In the main they are dealing with one-off, set-piece, introductory sessions in controlled conditions. Our terms of reference require that Senior Instructors are employed in key positions. We ask that seasonal instructors are brought to TI status through in-house training, and vet the company with regard to their training programme to ensure that all seasonal staff are competent paddlers, sufficient for the task in question, under suitable supervision, and where applicable, suitable back-up.

Hundreds of thousands of young people are given a taste of canoeing each year by companies who rely on average on a 60% referral booking rate - in other words, the same schools and groups returning year by year. Unless the experience given to the students is enjoyable and safe, they don't come again.

Two investigations by *Which* during the past 15 years failed, in my view, to identify a major problem.

The St Albans Centre may have defended its instructors, but the fact is that they were not put through a training programme for the exercise being undertaken, and no one at the Centre was qualified, either formally or through experience, to provide the training, or to determine the suitability of the venture on the day.

Sad and salutary as the four deaths were, the circumstances leading to them do not appear to be typical of the responsible sector of the 'activity holiday' market.

We would all wish that everyone was fully qualified. In the real world, several major companies have moved a considerable way in that regard during the last few years. Without legislation requiring them to conform, the BCU has co-operated to achieve the best arrangement possible in the circumstances, and brought a monitoring influence to bear where none existed before.

If, as a result of this terrible tragedy, legislation is invoked, then clearly we will be in a much stronger position with regard to the requirements. Also, the companies concerned will be competing on 'an even playing field' in that those who spend money on training will not be under-cut by the 'cowboys'.

With regard to NVQs, my personal sympathies, and those of most with whom I speak, are with Ronan. I believe that sport could, and should, present a united front to HM Government and say that NVQs are not relevant. There are no 'voluntary' engineers or caterers ! Industries are not dependent to a massive extent upon the volunteers, with the community likely to suffer dramatically if those volunteers vote with their feet.

There are clearly issues which need addressing within governing body qualifications. There are things we could, and should, do better. However, this can be accomplished through the NCF and the Sports Council, and does not require payment to an outside profit making organisation whose only role is to enter a name on a computer.

The dilemma is, however, that if NVQs for sport go ahead regardless - and several governing bodies are now well down the line, ahead of us - if the BCU does not provide the system, it would be open for an alternative body to set itself up to do so.