

CoDe

the magazine of the BCU Coaching Service
No 59 - October 1994



CoDe is the official organ of the BCU Coaching Service. 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.

Editor: Director of Coaching

THE AIM OF THE BCU COACHING SERVICE 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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Men's K2 Gold:

IVAN LAWLER / STEPHEN HARRIS

C2 Silver:

ANDREW TRAIN / STEPHEN TRAIN

DUISBURG INTERNATIONAL REGATTA

C2 1000m Silver:

ANDREW TRAIN / STEPHEN TRAIN

SLALOM WORLD CUP - OVERALL RESULTS

Men's K1 Gold and Silver:

SHAUN PEARCE

IAN RASPIN

C1 Gold:

GARETH MARRIOTT

Ladies K1 Gold and Silver:

LYNN SIMPSON

RACHEL CROSBEE

Congratulations to all our winners for their outstanding achievements, and the coaches and supporters behind them.

The success of the Slalom team must be among the best overall British sports achievements of 1994 - the men's kayak team had 7th (Andrew Rasin) and 14th (Paul Ratcliffe) as well.

COMPETITION COACHES

HOLME PIERREPONT, NOTTINGHAM

3-4 December 1994

COACHING '90's STYLE

The Coach as Facilitator

The theme for this year's Conference is 'Methods of working more effectively with groups of athletes'. **John Syers of Sporting Bodymind**, and our own **Hugh Mantle**, past Men's Olympic Slalom Coach and twice Coach of the Year, and **Alan Edge**, present Olympic Slalom Teams Coach, are among the contributors, together with National Coaching Foundation input on 'A Question of Style'.

The intention is to explore the methods employed by coaches who have successfully welded squads of elite performers into effective 'self-help' groups, grasping the nettle of self-interest against the general good of 'the team', and the challenge posed by inter-coach and inter-personal relationships.

The dates are 3-4 December at Holme Pierrepont. All currently registered Competition Trainers and Coaches will receive information through the post. Please send sae to the BCU office if you have not done so by the end of October, and wish to attend.

NATIONAL COACHING CONFERENCE

Holme Pierrepont, 29-30 October

There are still some places available at the time of going to press. Details from BCU office.

This annual conference enables the scheme to benefit from your input, as well as providing you with up to the minute information and help

This year featuring the well known sports psychologist, **Dave Collins**

Dear CoDe

Dear CoDe,

After reading "Terms of Reference" there were many questions and queries which concerned me.

Kayak supervisor, TI, I, TSI, SI

1 Do people holding these qualifications need to hold any Open Canoe Awards before taking Open Canoes eg 1,2,3 star, canoe safety, proficiency ?

Reply: As shown in the table, those who hold qualifications based on closed cockpit kayak are able to supervise open cockpit kayaks to the same level, and open canoes on very sheltered water, or sheltered water, as indicated. This has always been the case.

2 Are they now able to assess Open Canoe awards as well, without holding the awards themselves ?

Reply: An Instructor (Inland - cck) can test 1 star canoe. A Senior Instructor (Inland - cck) can test 2 star canoe. In each case this is dependent upon their having sufficient experience in open canoe - a judgment which is left to their discretion and integrity. This has always been the case and is stated in the syllabus and Directory.

3 Will their training programmes and assessments reflect their now much enlarged remit ie open cockpit kayak and open canoe ? Will it include how to teach, control their craft and safety skills associated - solo and double ?

Reply: Programmes should already include some work in this regard and greater emphasis is planned for the future within the current revisions to the scheme.

Open Canoe Supervisor, TI, I, TSI, SI

I can understand that people who hold only these awards do not necessarily know how to free a kayak paddler in closed cockpit who has capsized but not left the boat and therefore it would not be safe for them to take closed cockpit kayaks BUT

1 These skills could be taught on training weekends and assessed during assessments (I, SI)

Reply: These skills could be taught. However the separate progressions for OC Kayak and Open Canoe have been framed on the basis of providing for a clientele who want to operate these craft only and do not want to sit in a closed cockpit kayak at any price.

2 Why can't they take open cockpit kayaks ? There's nt risk of entrapment.

Reply: They can. All they need do is to obtain a Placid Water award.

3 IFTSI and SI (Canoe) holders obtain canoe safety in closed cockpit kayaks why can't their remit be extended to ALL CRAFT as their kayak counterparts have (incidentally kayak TSI and SI might find sheltered larger lakes very interesting places on windy days with open canoe - without training or OC canoe safety skills)

Reply: Closed cockpit kayak Instructors and Senior Instructors have for many years, been taking responsibility for open canoes without any restrictions - the Open Canoe awards were only introduced as separate qualifications in 1981. There are now restrictions on their remit. Simply stated there is never a problem with closed cockpit kayak instructors being willing to try out canoes and open cockpit kayaks. It does not always work the other way round.

It is a simple matter to tow an open canoe with a kayak, or to rescue one across a kayak. The open canoe does not have the speed of a kayak for supervision purposes.

Where common sense is applied by competent people, there is no real problem either way. A Canoe or Placid Water award holder who obtains the safety test in closed cockpit kayak can operate them on Very Sheltered Water.

My concerns

I guess I'm concerned at the moment. I see this new directive in two lights. Firstly it allows clubs who have limited or no Open Canoe expertise to start building up open canoe experiences and programmes which is good. On the other hand is there a danger that open canoe standards will slip ? Will we be able to end the 'you paddle an

open canoe just like a kayak' philosophy which is still apparent in parts of the country ? or will this perpetuate ?

I have also recently come across another problem which I might just as well share with you whilst I am writing.

I have recently returned from a 12 day wilderness canoe expedition in Northern Ontario, Canada (yes - Temagami, County River Centre, Pangbourne). I was the leader of a small group exploring networks of very large lakes (and I mean very large lakes) where wind in any direction can whip up 1-2 foot waves with no problem at all; where navigation is difficult because all headlands look like islands and vice versa and some islands aren't even marked on the map; where weather conditions determine your day ad weather forecasting a useful skill. (Doesn't that sound like a course content found somewhere perhaps in an Open Canoe Open Water Proficiency or something ?)

My problem was in the fact that my BCU qualifications didn't cover me for the training venue: I was working within Berks Youth and Community because there were 4 youth in the group and the Centre comes under their regulations. Our closest venue which simulated these conditions most accurately was Poole Harbour and coastline. I hold no sea qualifications, there are none at present for Open Canoe, so I had to find a S.I Kayak (Sea). Luckily the centre has one so we were able to train, in Open Canoes, ready for our expedition. By the way, the training was spot on for the lake conditions we met. We should have included boulder walking though !

Reply: We are now being asked to organise a training scheme to accommodate a specialist, and comparatively rare - in British terms - undertaking. It may be that more emphasis should be put on open water work, taking account of the potential of Scottish Lochs. No strong representations have been made in this regard, from our colleagues 'north of the border' however.

The use of a suitable harbour to simulate the conditions expected on this expedition, seems a common sense solution. I would have no difficulty in supporting the concept, but it is very difficult to write recommendations and organise a whole system of awards around each and every possible situation. Somewhere along the line 'common sense' must prevail.

Open canoes on the sea ?

This brings me to another point which I know all clubs based on the coast with open canoe paddlers will agree with. What's wrong with open canoes on the sea ? I mean sea defined as 'Defined beaches - close to inshore beaches where there is easy landing, not involving tide races or overfalls' and with properly experienced and qualified SI Open Canoe - coastal (or something). A new development perhaps, can I start working on the programme now ?

Reply: On the wider issue of providing a qualification for operating canoes on the sea, some reservations must be expressed. Currently there is no problem with their use under competent supervision in the situation described.

To lead canoes on the sea in more serious, or committing situations, however, is a potentially hazardous undertaking. There is no reason why those with the desire and ability to journey in canoes on the sea, should not do so.

Whether or not the BCU should provide a qualification to authorise a Senior Instructor to lead others in that context, requires very careful consideration.

Dear CoDe,

I did not reply to your questionnaire as I only do a little canoeing now because of a health condition. I owe a great debt to the BCU. Annual visits to Crystal Palace, hiring films, buying books, going on courses, gaining qualifications, all helped to give me the necessary confidence to take groups in safety on challenging rivers like the Wye, Usk and Exe and to enjoy surfing in Cornwall and on the Gower.

I think the Star Award Scheme initiated by the BCU was well thought out and enabled thousands of young people to start canoeing safely and then later make progress to whatever stage was required.

We formed a Canoe Club at my school, bought a canoe mould for sixty pounds, gained some valuable help and encouragement from the Riverside Centre at Donnington Bridge and later turned out twelve canoes in twelve days at a cost of fifteen pounds per canoe. Some of

the canoes are still being used today, but sadly my colleague Norman Bracewell, who supervised the building operation has passed away.

Many of our pupils have become instructors and many say how much they enjoyed those days when the sun always shone, the water was always warm, and eggs, bacon and sausages had a lovely flavour and smell.

I still do some voluntary work and have just turned out a video which we hope will encourage local schools and youth groups to get started in canoeing.

I began my Sea Canoeing at Lyme Regis where I took my Proficiency and Assistant Instructor Awards, something I would advise all sea canoeists to do. The sea is such a vast place and poses so many problems.

Many courses today are available at what seem to be exorbitant prices or is it because I am getting old and people are getting higher wages?

Perhaps one of the most enjoyable experiences I ever had was to accompany a group of canoeists for fifty miles on the River Wye as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award. I was looked after like a member of the Royal Family.

Much more difficult was a paddle from Lechlade to Kew Bridge, a distance of one hundred and forty miles to raise money for a new school mini-bus.

Two canoeists who have done so much for the sport in this area are Peter Pendlebury and Doug Manning. I, like so many people are indebted to both of them. We are also indebted to Geoff Good and all who work behind the scenes at the BCU HQ. Keep up with the good work.

JOHN MACDONALD, SWINDON

Dear CoDe,

Should an Instructor be able to roll ?

After reading your article in the August edition of CoDe "Should an Instructor be able to roll ?" I would like you to consider the following scenario.

An Instructor out on a lake such as Bala Lake, North Wales with a group of four or five children. It is nearing the end of the session and the youngsters are playing games watched closely by the Instructor.

When one youngster loses his or her balance and reaches out to the Instructor's Kayak to steady himself, grabbing the Instructor's boat on the side of the cockpit. In doing so he capsizes the Instructor. All the children are new to canoeing and do not yet know the intricacies of rescues.

So the Instructor swims to the edge to empty his boat and re-launch. Everything so far is OK, but whilst the Instructor is off the water, are the children in a safe situation ?

If the Instructor had been able to roll he or she would then have no need to leave the group in a possibly unsafe situation.

IAN WILLIAMS SOUTH WIRRAL

Dear CoDe,

Any Instructor has an implicit responsibility for the safety of the novices in his care. If he or she capsizes during a period of instruction, however remote the possibility, the Instructor has the responsibility to right his craft and regain control of the group as quickly as possible.

I am intrigued by Geoff Good's ability to predict that an Instructor will never capsize. It happened to me - on my TI course. A momentary lapse of concentration, perhaps whilst emptying somebody else's kayak, or a sudden unexpected turn whilst playing a game, or difficulty with a less able bodied canoeist. There are any number of occasions when an Instructor might capsize. Instructors are not infallible.

Presumably, if one follows Geoff Good's reasoning, if an Instructor accidentally capsizes whilst teaching a group of, say, 10 year old children, he or she would exit his kayak, shout to the children between gulps of air "Wait here and raft up", while he swims, say, 50m to the shore, empties his kayak, and paddles back to the children. In the meantime, if one (or more) of the children fall into the water and panics, it doesn't really matter because they won't drown, even if they

are scared out of their wits on being suddenly dunked into cold water, totally unsupervised, as their leader is at least 5 minutes away emptying his kayak.

Of course, as Geoff suggests, the Instructor could always use the assistance of one or more of the inexperienced children to re-enter his kayak, and risk putting them into the water as well as him or herself. But to achieve this, it assumes that the child/novice has the presence of mind (and the ability) to position his kayak quickly and accurately, and the confidence to allow a large size Instructor to climb about on his unsteady kayak while he sorts himself out.

If an individual goes off and paddles by him or herself, with borrowed equipment, that is up to them, whether they drown or not. But the Instructor has a responsibility for the personal safety of, and the minimising of risk to, the people in his or her care. Furthermore, if a life is lost whilst in the care of a BCU qualified Instructor, could the BCU live with the fact that the loss might have been avoided if it was more strict in its assessment of the abilities of its Instructors ? Could the BCU honestly claim to its insurers that every sensible safety precaution had been taken ?

Should an Instructor be able to roll ? Yes, he or she certainly should, and the BCU should enforce that requirement in the best interests of safety and confidence.

There are more than enough placid water areas, canals, and rivers where rolling skills can be developed. If someone is intending to become an Instructor, they must be at 3 star standard, and therefore perfectly able to cope with learning to roll in these open water situations. One doesn't have to rely on the warm, cossetted, unrealistic conditions of a swimming pool to learn to roll.

Let's not get this matter out of proportion, and let's not waste time debating the pros and cons. Just let the BCU include rolling ability as a pre-requisite for Instructor assessment and make canoeing that little bit safer.

W R MESLEY, SURREY

DofC comments: I did not say that an instructor will never capsize. I said that 'it should be unlikely... and certainly not during the introductory sessions'. I must say that I have not noticed them flopping out all over the place !

No one has ever drowned from a kayak on simple water whilst wearing a buoyancy aid. Why is the kayak group, sat happily on flat water, in any greater peril than a canoe group ? Or a group in touring kayaks ? In neither of those instances is a capsized instructor going to be able to roll.

For the closed cockpit kayak instructor it's a very simple matter to empty across a student's boat and get back in - he or she does not need to leave the group and swim to the bank. Nor need it cause distress to the student involved.

What about the other possibilities for the disablement of an instructor ? A centre manager phoned me to insist that in future he wanted to put a powered safety boat out for all canoeing on a small lake, because an instructor had dislocated his shoulder whilst running along a canoe 'raft'. Many believe that our policy should require powered escort, as is the norm for sailing.

So let's pursue the 'what if' scenario. Dislocations from rolling are not unknown, and there have been instances of paddlers suffering coronaries - some relatively young ones. An instructor was once struck by a falling tree and disabled while in charge of a group.

Should we therefore insist on 2 instructors to every group at all times - although we will, of course, need 3, as if the first instructor is disabled and in pain because of dislocation or illness, he or she will need attending to, and so the third one must be there for the group - and of course, someone has to go for help!

It may be easier to opt for the powered escort boat - with 2 engines, because there's always the possibility of a failure at the critical moment. Also, perhaps the boat should have 2 coxswains as it's not unknown for someone to go overboard, or, again, to have a coronary !

As requested, let's keep some perspective. Canoeing at novice level on sheltered water, for those wearing buoyancy aids, has been totally safe, with the person in charge at Supervisor or Instructor level not necessarily having been able to roll, for a great number of years. What has suddenly changed ?

INSPIRATION ON RIVERSIDE FLORA

by PAUL TROTT

Accompanying lecture notes to a presentation by Paul Trott as a member of a BCU Coach Training Course at Glenmore Lodge, October 1992.

INTRODUCTION

Canoeing in Britain refers to the combined disciplines of canoeing and kayaking. We are one, if not the only country, to encompass both disciplines under the same 'umbrella'. I like this 'HOLISTIC' approach and would like to widen it a little further to consider the environment we paddle in, or at least a tiny portion of it.

The reason being:

For several years now I have been embarrassed when asked if I know the names of the riverside flora. My usual answer being - "Alas, no".

That has begun to change !

I work in an outdoor education centre; with various populations, not least youth groups. I am still surprised how inquisitive some of these groups are about the environment they are in whilst paddling. I have missed many an opportunity to kindle their enquiry, or to perhaps start a spark about the environment where there had not been one before.

I now see it as a responsibility, especially in my position, to try and heighten my groups' overall 'outdoor education' in more than just the 'Basic Strokes' or the activities they are physically engaged in.

But how to motivate ?

Most of our motivation is based on the basic necessities to sustain life - 'Survival of the Fittest' - and all that !

Well what better motivation for learning about plants than finding out which ones you can eat !

It is a starting point at least.

From here it can develop and be the basis for a much deeper knowledge and understanding of our environment.

NB At this point I think it is pertinent to re-enforce the fact that this presentation is meant as a 'catalyst' to encourage a closer look at our paddling environment in terms of the flora around us. If you wish to pursue the topic of edible plants etc it should be remembered that a great deal of time and CAUTION is needed to identify species correctly and there are several poisonous plants and fungi, not to mention the fact that many of the edible plant around today are becoming RARE !

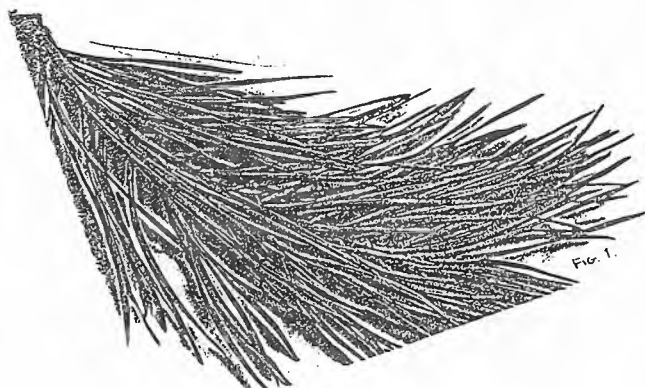
PLEASE BE CAREFUL, BUT DO ENJOY !

So let us begin:

I have chosen a vaguely logical approach to the seasons and will highlight a few of the Riverside Flora that are of interest in each season.

SUMMER

So let begin with a little refreshment - Pine Needle Tea !



Summer is the best time of year to pick the needles as they are fragrant and swollen with sap, fortifying them ready to endure the coming winter Pine (Figure 1, *Pinus Sylvestrus*) is fine to use. I find the best the more fragrant Spruces (*Picea* spp).

To prepare: Chop and bruise the needles. Pour on boiling water. Let stand for 5-10 minutes. Strain as served. Sugar if preferred, but no milk.

The starter

From here, our starter will naturally be soup, so what sort of soup is there ?

Nettle Soup !



This is quite easy to prepare but you do need a few additional ingredients. It goes like this: 1 onion, 1 clove of garlic (can be wild), 2 potatoes, olive oil, chicken stock cube, cream. 2 Gloved handfuls of nettles (Figure 2). Prepare the onion, garlic and potato for frying in the olive oil. Fry for about 5 minutes. Use only the leaves and tender stems of the nettles, add these to the pan with the stock in a litre of water. Boil until the potatoes are cooked. Liquidise and re-heat. Add the cream upon serving.

OK, so that is our starter over with. A couple of other edibles worth a mention for summer are Watercress, which contains a lot of iron and Hogweed, which if picked when the shoots are just emerging, is said to make a superb vegetable dish !

AUTUMN

Wild Crab-apple win is a table wine, a little dry, but it accompanies the salad quite well. It is easily prepared from 2-3 lbs of Wild Crab-apples (*Malus sylvestris*). Chopped and steeped in water for a couple of days, strained, added to 3-4 pints of warmed water with a lb of sugar dissolved, poured into a demijohn with a little yeast. Additions like raisins or cinnamon can enhance its flavour.

Autumn is the best month for wild food. There is far too much to consider, but here are one or two ideas - again all close to or along the riverbanks and lakesides that we paddle.

Obviously, mushrooms and toadstools (Fungi) are in their greatest abundance in the autumn (Figure 3). I have a magazine article which covers many so I will not dwell on these too long. Perhaps the *Boletus* fungi are worth a mention here (from the Greek word 'bolus' meaning lump) they are the tastiest in my opinion. They do not have frills like regular mushrooms, but a mass of tiny tubes which look like pores. This gives them a spongy appearance. They are generally known as Ceps. (Figure 4).

The most obvious of our Autumn edibles are the nuts and fruits. Blackberries, Elderberries, and Rosehips are obvious examples - a fine fruit salad !

One thing you might not have considered is Hawthorn - both the berries for wine and the leaves for salad with Beetroot.

WINTER

Winter is a difficult month to consider wild food of the floral variety. Bulrush roots are a good example as these are storing the necessities for new life when spring comes around again. They are in fact tubers like potatoes, prepared quite simply by peeling once they have been boiled until tender (this can take some time ! - Figure 5).

A very good example of a waterside plant that is edible in winter is the Ramson or Wild Garlic. It is the bulbs that we are after. Wild Mint (Figure 6) often survives well in a sheltered spot, the combination of garlic and mint provides a lovely salad dressing.

Other, previously gathered delicacies, can be indulged in during the winter. For example Sloe Gin, and various wines - well it is the season of 'Good Cheer' ! Last, but not least, in our winter store, Juniper berries can be used for all sorts - tea to conserves etc.

SPRING

Spring is when all life emerges again. It is a wonderful month on the riverside. It is the second best season for edibles in my opinion. Watercress, Mustard and Woodsorrel (Figure 7) are at their most succulent. Lady's Smock (Cuckoo Pint) is a great addition to sandwiches.

Several other wild flowers are edible and make delicate culinary decorations if crystallised, for example violets, but these are usually rarer and I prefer to leave them be.

CONCLUSION

Let us reflect on the starting point and the end product. Why did I choose, what could be misconstrued as a rather 'bizarre' subject, in terms of a Canoe Coaching lecture ?

How holistic are we as Canoeists and Coaches ?

Are we making the most of our environment ?

Can we instill and inspire a greater appreciation for the environment we use ?

We have a unique vantage point from which to observe our surroundings. The flora is just a tiny part of the 'whole' - but hopefully my talk has instilled a little inquisitiveness in you, that you might follow a little further !

PS Please recall my notes of CAUTION

References

Wild Food by Roger Phillips

Mushrooms and other Fungi of Britain and Europe by Roger Phillips

The Survival Handbook by Raymond Mears

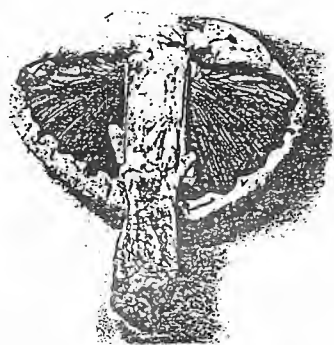
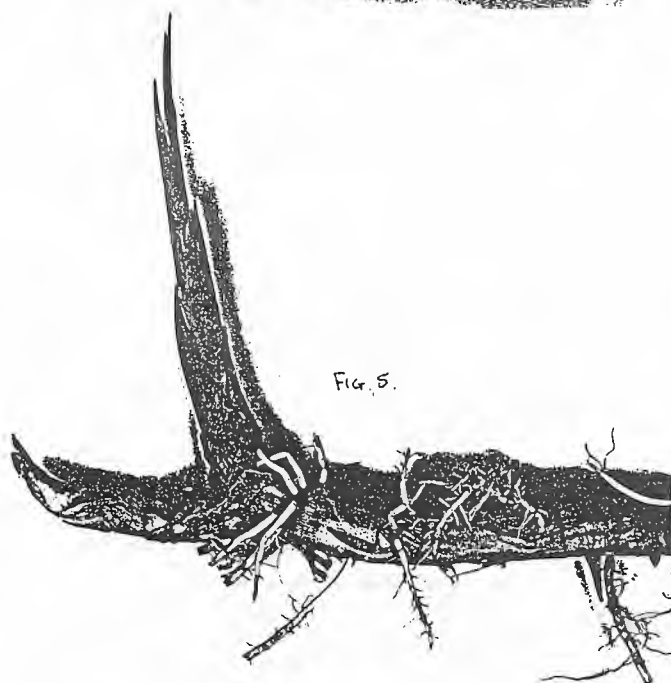
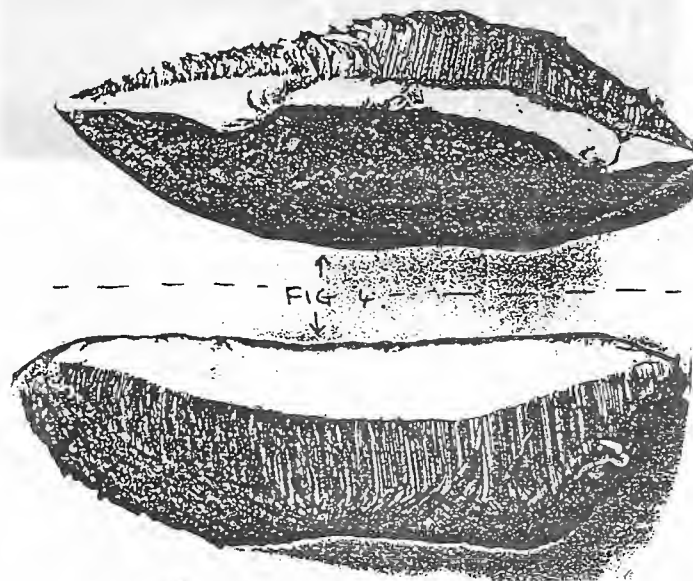
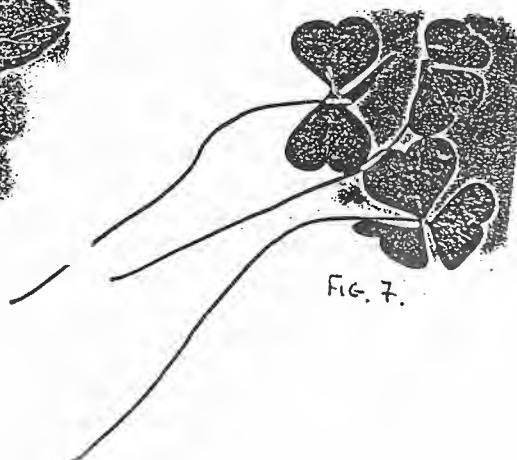


FIG. 6.



FIG. 7.



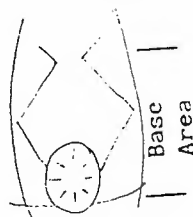
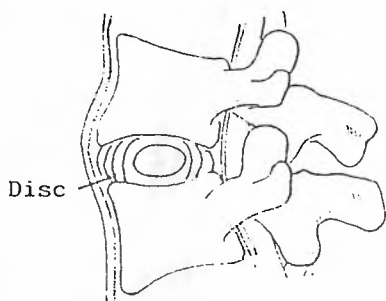
Back to Base-ics

by TONY BURLEY

As instructors introducing novices to paddling, improving the techniques of the intermediate paddlers or as Coaches training the Instructor, we should all be aware of the anatomical reasons for the way in which we should be performing our strokes. If we were to go into great depth of what muscles performed every activity then you would all be asleep within a few minutes. What I am more interested in is the reasons for performing a stroke in a certain manner and some pointers that can be used in coaching for observing that the student is working efficiently and with thought to preventing injury. For example some of us older paddlers remember the High Telemark stroke where the upper arm was held behind the head to break in and out of moving water. This was a classic example of a potential dislocation of the shoulder if an unpredictable force of water was met by the blade. Sense has prevailed and that stroke is now defunct being superseded by more anatomically efficient and stronger ones.

Before we discuss some of the strokes there are some points we need to bear in mind.

- 1 In kayaking we sit, and as a result, strange as it may seem, there is far more Inter-Discal Pressure of the spine than in a person kneeling as in Canadian or standing. This is because the back muscles must work harder to support the spine and prevent the trunk from falling forwards. With good abdominal muscles 40% of the pressure on these back muscles can be reduced and by tensing these abdominal muscles and the diaphragm these discs are unloaded.
- 2 We should be aware of our Base Area. This is the area formed by your Triangle of Stability, from where the feet press on the footrest, knees grip the boat at sides and buttocks and hips meet the seat. Anything performed inside this Base Area will be more stable and easier to lift or support than anything outside. One example would be leaning back in a stroke would make the stroke less efficient as the Centre of Gravity would move outside the Base Area. It is not always possible to keep in the Base Area but one should endeavour to keep as close as possible to it.
- 3 We should also understand our Centre of Gravity (C of G). This is the point in the centre of the body where the weight above and below are equal. We may have to slump in certain manoeuvres to keep the Centre of Gravity low. The lower we keep it the more stable we are.
- 4 The Vertical Mid-Line (VML) is the Centre of Gravity to the ground. Certain strokes require that the lever is fixed or anchored as close to the VML as possible for stability.
- 5 We should think about using our Levers correctly. When it is longer it is stronger and therefore more powerful as in a flat-water sweepstroke.
- 6 The very nature of moving water will mean that we encounter Unpredictable Forces from time to time. These are normally the water through misreading or misjudging the effect that the forces will have upon the blade as in a high speed eddy



turn with bow rudder or when bracing in a stopper. The body may not have time to guard itself against these.

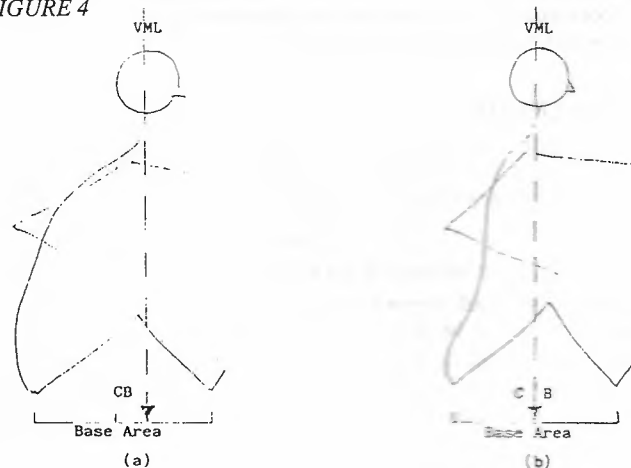
Individually these points do not pose great problems but when they are combined then poor stroke performance and a high risk of injury can occur. All the areas are ones where the novice may not have the development, possibly in the abdominals, or the awareness whilst trying to master the strokes.

Let us now look at some of these strokes bearing these points in mind as we do.

FORWARD PADDLING

We all know about the stability triangle, extending the upper arm, trunk rotation, push with the foot for normal flat water paddling. However in moving water things stay much the same but one tends to paddle in bursts particularly when powering up to 'break-in' or working back upstream in a fall. If you are not careful you see a rounded back appearing. We should avoid this and try to maintain the spine in a natural position. Lean forward of course, but try to push the navel forward to maintain a hollow in the small of your back (lumbar). This will do two things, relieve a certain amount of Inter Discal Pressure and keep your VML close to the Centre of Base area as in Fig. 4(b)

FIGURE 4



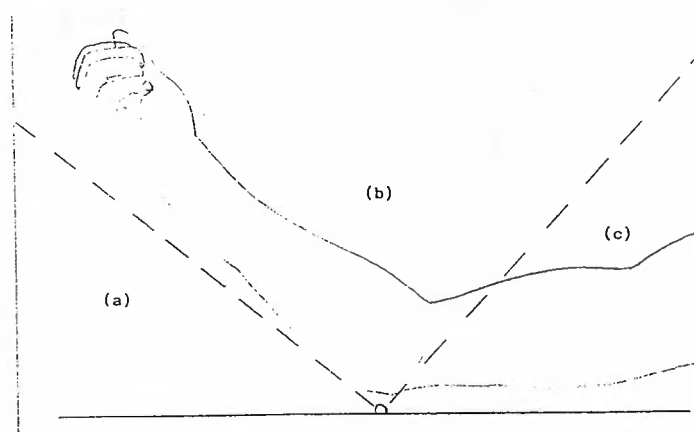
Centre of base area (CB)

Then add to this short deep stroked to 'power-up' with no splashes followed by longer strokes as the speed increases and we will have a more efficient stroke.

SWEEP STROKE

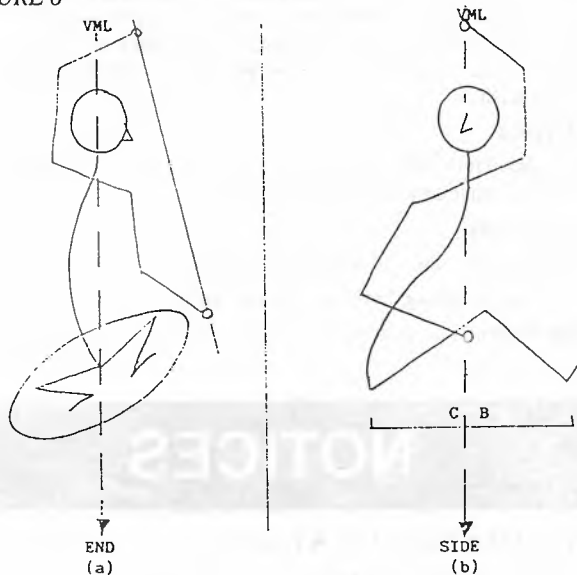
In flat water we use an extended arm as a long lever and Scribe an arc from front to rear of the kayak. This is very efficient and works well, however in moving water we modify this. We shorten the lever to using a bent power arm which is a strong position for the muscle. Any muscle is strongest in its mid-range (Figure 5(B)), however we are losing the effect of a long lever. This is due to instability in turbulent water of the long lever as it is not close enough to base and the Unpredictable Force would cause damage to the muscle. (See Fig.5)

FIGURE 5



DRAW STROKE As used in moving water often gives the final adjustment to the position of the boat on a lead in to a rapid or to pull the boat laterally to avoid an obstacle in the rapid. Possibly we think this stroke is not too injurious but when we look at how the back is working then realise that this is the basis for the more demanding Bow Rudder perhaps we should take a closer look. This combines the two worst movements for the spine which are side-bending, as in raising the inside knee and reaching over the kayak with the upper arm, and the twisting action to rotate the trunk towards the blade. Lifting a weight in this position for an untrained person would be disastrous. However as long as there is not Unpredictable Force on the blade this does not involve the moving of much weight. In Figure 6(b) we can see that the paddle should be kept as close to base as possible and in the VML. A novice will work the blade too low and away from the body - away from the VML and moving away from Base.

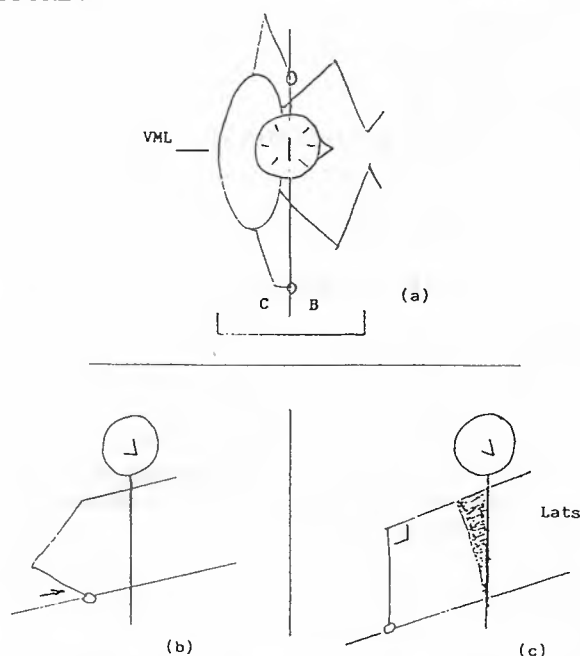
FIGURE 6



SUPPORT STROKES

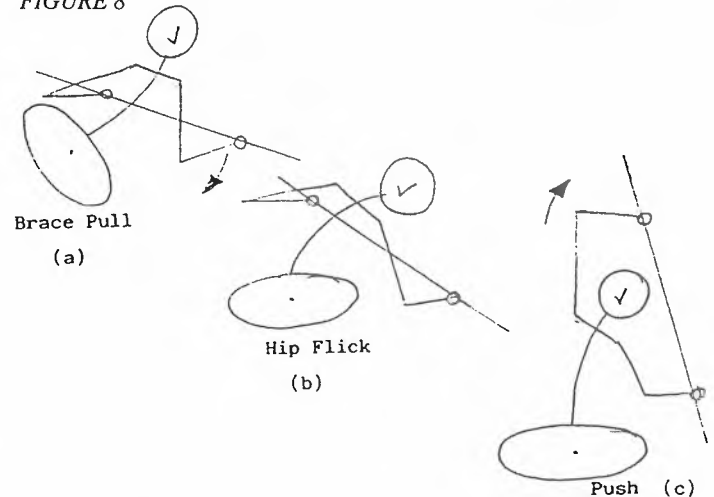
The Low Brace which can be used as part of a turn, as a brace on a wave or stopper or for recovery after completion of a forward stroke. Once again we should try to keep the paddle in the Centre of our Base throughout the manoeuvre. The elbow in the active arm should be directly above the wrist throughout. This ensures that the powerful Latissimus dorsi (Lats) Figure 7(c) are working. If the position is as one sees novices in Figure 7(b) then only the lateral rotators, small muscles at the back of the shoulders, are working. Which would you prefer? An extended lever to perform the stroke here is important to support the weight of body moving out from the base.

FIGURE 7

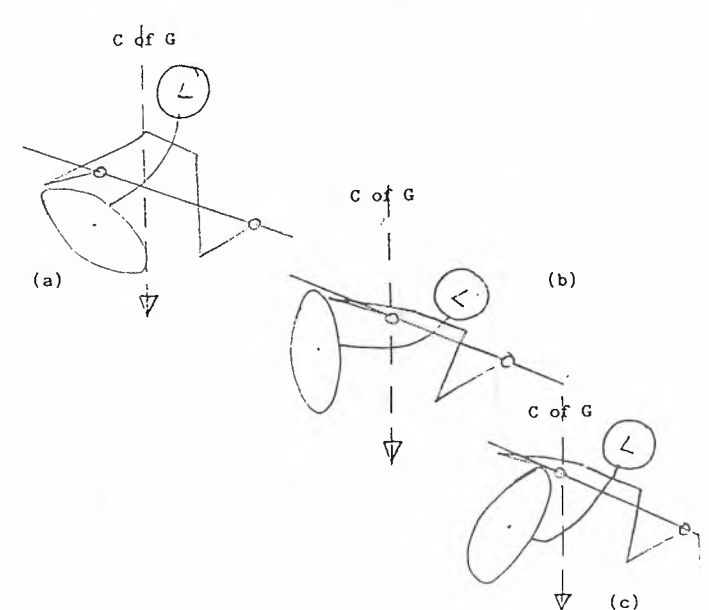


The High Brace used to brace on a wave, recover from the initial and interim part of a stroke and to avoid being thrown over by the water. Here the paddle should, as in Figure 8 be kept Close to the Centre of Base (close to the chest in this cast) and in the VML. Extending the lever will help to produce a flat platform to recover from. Commonly it is taught as a two part manoeuvre but try and think of it as three. First, the overbalance onto as low a blade as possible, well below head level and kept close to the chest. With the upper arm above shoulder level the alarm bells ring as the shoulder joint becomes unstable - in risk of dislocation. In this position (Figure 8(a)) the working arm elbow is directly below the wrist, not as powerful as the low brace, but good enough to initiate the stroke. Pull down with this hand. Secondly, Figure 8(b), now comes the reflexive hip flick, not much action from the paddle but a righting of the boat by the hips. Thirdly, (Figure 8(c)) a push-up with the upper arm to complete the stroke. This uses the trunk muscles and then the strong extensors of the elbows - triceps.

FIGURE 8



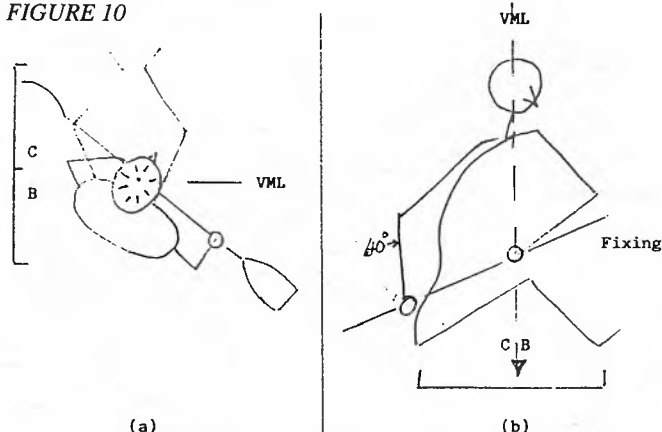
SCULLING FOR SUPPORT or the Sculling Brace where the support from one brace stroke is not enough and the flattened blade is moved continually back and forth in a high-brace position until the required recovery is performed. This has all the potential for back damage. Side bending to reach out from the boat whilst bracing the upper knee and twisting to rotate the trunk towards the blade. You should try and maintain an upright position throughout to keep the body inside your base area. It used to be common to lean back over the rear deck. Asking an improving paddler to 'see how far he can go' whilst sculling may not be such a good idea. In Figure 9(a) he is off balance and holding his position with his Centre of Gravity passing through the edge of the boat. Hard enough work for the spine. In Figure 9(b) all the power is on a rapidly moving blade and the Centre of Gravity is far outside the boat or Base area increasing the stress on



the back. In Figure 9(c) the boat has collapsed on top of the paddler but he finds it easier to maintain his position because part of his body is under the boat and hence the Centre of Gravity has returned towards the Base. The second position is potentially quite dangerous especially when encountering Unpredictable Forces.

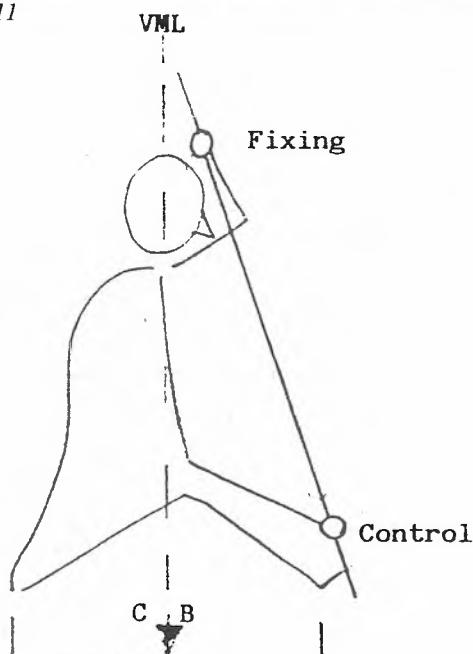
LOW BRACE TURN as in the Low Brace but with some differences in order to overcome the forward momentum. Keeping the Fixing (upper) hand in the Centre of Base and close to the VML ensures that the other blade can be an extended lever out to the side parallel to the shoulders. By having the head over the Fixing hand the latter (Figure 10(b)) is kept close to the VML. Note the Fixing hand is well away from the body. The head is placed easily in this position by a slump-down into the boat and forward as the brace is performed thus lowering the Centre of Gravity. In the lower arm the hand need not be directly above the wrist as the force required is more of a push down and forward as we control the forward momentum therefore the lower arm can be lowered slightly to about 30-40 degrees.

FIGURE 10



BOW RUDDER was once termed an 'advanced' stroke but now it is taught after only a few days and very soon becomes the mainstay for breaking in and out in moving water. All the problems associated with the similar Draw Stroke are encountered; side-bending to edge the boat, twisting to rotate towards the blade but also a slump to lower the Centre of Gravity. Once again it is important to keep the Fixing hand (upper) (Figure 11) as the fulcrum of the lever close to the VML and Centre of Base. Novices produce, at first, a very weak, unstable and potentially injurious position by having the upper fixing hand too far forward. This puts the upper shoulder in a very tenuous position. Any Unpredictable Force now will cause the shoulder to 'pop' or the paddler to abandon the stroke in the middle when they most need the support. It is also important to spot the second most common problem - the straight lower arm. This in fact should be comfortably bent for strength so that the Bicep is working in its mid-range. It will then be powerful as an anchor with which to pivot the boat around the blade.

FIGURE 11



SUMMARY

Obviously the detail of this text is far too technical to be bothering students with, but the observant Instructor of Coach needs to spot some of the stresses the body is having to face during the performance of these strokes. By doing this they can enhance this performance and also lessen any potential injury from this Unpredictable Force the novice, through inexperience, is more likely to meet.

One should not become paranoid about this as the body is very resilient and if well-trained can certainly withstand these pressures. An example is that well developed abdominal muscles can reduce the strain of the back muscles by 40% and by tensing these muscles we can unload the idscs. By the same token a novice with little experience of the stresses involved in kayaking should not be taxed too much until the correct muscles and techniques have been developed.

With positive attitude to development of the correct technique and thoughtful progression they will soon be riding the same stopper or paddling the same falls as the experienced paddlers. The students of today are the Coaches of tomorrow. We should all be thinking 'BACK TO BASE-ICS!'

Reference

Mrs Linda Hunter Gordon, Chartered Physiotherapist to the Centre for Complementary Therapies, Inverness.

Bibliography

Athletic Ability and the Anatomy of Motion by Rolf Wirhed

Countless Canoeing Technical Books, in particular:

White Water Kayaking by Ray Rowe.

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EXAMINERS' EXTENSION

Please note that currently E2s have an automatic extension of their status due to the suspension of the forums pending the preparation of information concerning the revisions and NVQs. Details of what is now required will be notified next time.

CANI CONFERENCE

CANI are planning a conference for 27-29 January 95 at the Tallymore Centre, Newcastle. The programme is available - details from Mike McClure, 57 Tullybrannigan Rd, Newcastle, Co Down BT33 0PL.

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Please note change of date for seminar at Woodmill, Southampton, to 11 December. Details: Les Porter, The Thatched Cottage, Shooters Hill, Pangbourne, Berks RG8 7EA.

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