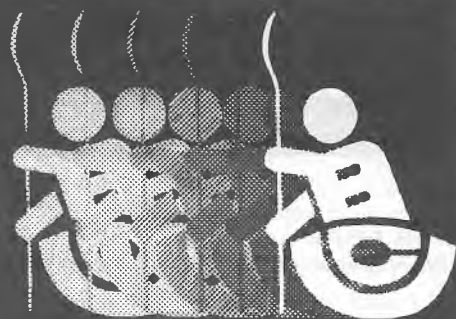


CoDe

Coaching Development



the magazine of the BCU Coaching Service

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.

PLEASE RESERVE THE DATE

11-12 October 1997

The next BCU Paddlers' and Coaching Conference is planned to take place from 11-12 October 1997.

With the short notice given, insufficient numbers have expressed interest this year, and with the loss of our Coaching Development Officer setting us back a little, the event notified for Devon from 12-13 October has been cancelled.

However, a major event, providing clinics on all aspects of paddling and coaching, is now being planned for next year. It is hoped that a good cross section of members will attend.

Full details will be published in future editions of CoDe.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual general meeting of the Coaching Service will now be held at 1630 on Saturday 9 November 1996 at the National Water Sports Centre, Holme Pierrepont, following a meeting of the National Coaching Committee.

All members of the Coaching Service are entitled to attend. Voting is restricted to those who are Comprehensive Full (adult) members.

The Chairman and Treasurer are due for re-election this year. Alternative nominations, signed by 2 delegates (RCOs, LCOs, Specialist Committee representatives) must be received by the Director of Coaching before 20 October 1996. Motions to amend the Constitution must be proposed and seconded, and forwarded as above.

APOLOGIES

Two apologies. Firstly, there was an error in naming the last edition of CoDe. It should have been No 70, August 1996, but unfortunately the No 69, June, title was retained.

Secondly, the planned supplement to the Directory has still not been accomplished. Provided a replacement Coaching Development Officer can be appointed shortly, however, it *should* be possible to achieve this with the next edition.

COACHING SERVICE REPORT

A major report on the role, responsibilities and development of the Coaching Service has been prepared. The first draft for general comment is now available, and has been sent to Regional and Local Coaching Organisers, as well as to all committees of the Union, whom the Coaching Service is set up to serve.

Copies are available to members upon receipt of a written request, together with postage stamps to the value of £1. Comments back must be received before 1 November 96.

The Report will be debated in full by the BCU Council in March 97, and will then become the established policy of the Union's Coaching Service.

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Dear Code
- 4 Eastern Region Notices
- 5 Shoulder Dislocations
- 7 'High strokes'
- the debate
- 9 Effective Learning
- 10 NE Region Notices
Assessor Training dates
Employment
opportunities
- 11 The Influence of
Practice Structure
- 12 Notices
Slalom courses

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 in February, April, June, August, October, December.

Final copy date: 1st of previous month.

Contributions, including pictures, are welcome. Please send them to: BCU, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5AS.

Editor: Director of Coaching

The Coaching
Service is
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Dear CoDe

Dear CoDe,

S/NVQ Status . . . Assessors or Trainers ?

It seems to me a good thing that the BCU is offering the opportunity for people to gain D32 and D33 awards. It is also clear that to be an assessor in any discipline or profession a person needs to be 'occupationally competent' which an experienced instructor or above ought to be, however to be a 'trainer' requires different skills. Is the BCU likely to consider developing S/NVQ Trainer status (C21..) opportunities ?

Leaving S/NVQs aside, as a trainer and assessor within my own profession I find the apparent confusion between the two terms in many fields extremely odd. To assist on a BCU level 1 or 2 coach training course for example, you need to attend an assessor training day ... perhaps we need more trainer training days ! I realise that it could be argued that Instructors already 'train' people, but then they already 'assess' people too. It would be more logical to say that to run a training course you need to be a trainer, and to run an assessment course you need to be an assessor. Anyone who has experienced a training course that felt more like an assessment will probably recognise what I mean.

BERNADETTE KERBEY

Nigel Timmins, our S/NVQ Consultant, comments: S/NVQs have benefitted canoeing considerably - not least in the professional training and assessing of S/NVQ assessors. The have also provided much of the impetus for the BCU Assessor training course.

I do accept that to be a trainer requires different skills from those of an assessor. However, we have no plans to introduce C21 NVQ trainer status as yet. Though training is a different skill from assessing, the role of training has been reasonably well addressed. There is, of course, always room for improvement.

However I accept that the role of assessing has not been so well addressed, and, as stated above, it is for this reason that we are now asking all who are wishing to become assessors to attend the BCU Assessor Training Day. We are sure this will improve our assessors' skills, and highlight the major differences between assessing and training, so that those on training courses do not feel that it is like an assessment - and conversely, that those on assessment get a fair and reliable assessment.

Dear CoDe,

Well at long last I have found the time to put pen to paper concerning a couple of issues within the coaching service currently.

Firstly, I would like to look at the Five Star (Advanced Proficiency) issue. I realise that this is possibly a little late to air my views, but it did not occur to me that there would be a U-turn in policy. I understand there were a lot of objection letters from coaching scheme members to the original policy, but, these alone should not have provoked a U-turn - rather it should have been put to a vote or opinion poll. I believe that there could well be an equivalent number of people out there in favour of the original policy as those who objected, and I do not believe the answer is a U-turn.

Why is there a problem with taking Five Star assessment - surely if people are examining Level 3 coaches (SI) their own personal ability should be at a standard that a 5 Star would

be a matter of formality. Surely if their personal ability is not at that level should they really be able to assess Level 3 coaches ? Please, Coaching Committee, do not close this issue yet - seek first a much wider opinion. Put it to a vote if necessary, but let's keep the issue alive.

Secondly, revalidation. Are those people who have objected so strongly to 5 Star the same as those who have objected to revalidation ? Other Governing Bodies successfully run revalidation purely on a log book basis. Surely if we are keeping up to date and still paddling we can be proud and secure in the knowledge that all those promoting the sport of canoeing are doing so in an up to date, competent and unified way - that has to be a good thing. Doesn't it ? A revalidation process of this type does not require extra time or cost other than religiously keeping a log book.

Many thanks for your time and providing the forum in which to express these opinions.

PETER BAMFORD, Tonbridge

DofC Comments: The proposal that grade 2 Examiners should have to obtain 5 Star (Advanced Proficiency) by April 1998, or lose the right to continue to assess level 3 coaches (Senior Instructors) was put to the vote at the various forums, and was overwhelmingly rejected. It is the intention to require 3-yearly re-validation based on a logged outline of experience, the first returns being required in January 1999. The suggestion has been made that a log should be made available in advance, rather than expect members to fill in 3 years' worth in one go on the due date. This is under active consideration.

Dear CoDe,

In response to the letter regarding a 'new breed' of outdoor educationalists (CoDe 69 June 1996).

I am relatively new to the world of teaching outdoor pursuits, working in the industry for a mere three years - having started off on an instructor training scheme which cost me a considerable amount of money. This, I believe, shows a high level of commitment to do well within the industry, both on a personal and professional basis.

The letter expressed concern over the lack of experience I must have, due to going through the paper-chase quickly. I must disagree with this most strongly by asking what experience is valid? Having spent five years in the Royal Navy, do you not think that I may have a certain amount of life experience, and experience of responsibility applicable to looking after people?

As for instructors using their own time for developing their own performance - in my experience of centres, the majority employ young people for six days a week with twelve hours of work per day whilst paying them a pittance. No wonder they don't go out doing their own activities! They are probably getting some well earned rest so that the people within their charge receive quality supervision.

Finally, on the subject of operating at the lowest level needed to gain a workable award, throughout my short career within the outdoors I have always agreed with the principle of being better than you need to be to pass an assessment. Personally, I lead happily on E2 mountain routes, surf, paddle grade 4 (open canoe and kayak) and ski black runs - amongst other activities. I had done none of these sports three years ago. This principle is also one held by the majority of people I have had the pleasure to work with.

Change happens throughout our world. It is all part of our development. We shouldn't be scared of it, but need to embrace all that it offers. Experience is good, but a long time doing the same thing can also lead to bad habits. Let's not be elitist, and label all new-comers as fashion victims. Besides, if all people with qualifications are not worthy of them, whose fault is it? I would suggest their assessors.

MARK, North Pennines

Dear CoDe,

I have for a while now felt compelled to put pen to paper on a much talked and written about subject - the revision to the star tests. More specifically with reference to the Open Canoe. I am a great fan and enthusiast of the open boat, and was delighted at the inclusion of the 'beyond the paddle' skills in the star tests, and really looked forward to passing these skills on at 2 and 3 star level.

To my main point, I recently organised a 1-3 star course for our staff and volunteer workers and passed the coaching on to a number of trainee SIs - or should I say level 3 coach trainees - all of whom went through Star Tests many years ago.

When it came to improvising a sailing rig, none of them could do it themselves, let alone teach it! To a lesser extent, the dam can be said of poling and the use of lines.

More generally, I know a great number of Instructors (Level 2) and even Senior Instructors, whose personal skills in these areas leave a lot to be desired. I feel this is a result of such skills being paid 'lip service' for many years, and often rarely touched on at proficiency level. While I applaud the inclusion of the techniques in the Star Tests, particularly at 2 and 3 star level, I have to wonder whether or not they will receive the same standard of tuition as - let's say for example - the 'J' stroke.

Obviously we cannot insist that all level 2 and 3 coaches re-train and practice these skills until they can perform them as well as any stroke in the repertoire. However, I feel that those of us with the skills in the Coaching Service, should take the time to pass on our knowledge - if we truly want to advance the skills of others in the open boat. I fear that a number of coaching service members will gloss over these new elements when star testing, and unfortunately a large number will be centre instructors and those who have always been 'in-house' trained and assessed.

To underline my point, not so very long ago I spent half an hour - that's all we had! - with a friend who was going on an SI assessment, teaching him tracking and lining. He had never used lines before! He duly passed, and is now training and assessing those skills he has spent half an hour on himself. Compare that to the hours he probably put in on his 'J' stroke!

To round off, if you feel a little in the dark with 'beyond the paddle' please don't ignore it, but find a friendly face who will spend some time with you. And at the end of it all - Happy poling, tracking, lining etc etc!

SIMON MILLS, Mansfield OC

Dear CoDe,

Due to the changes in the Star Test syllabi I thought it would be an ideal opportunity to hold my first panel meeting as a forum for an agreed standardising of the assessment of the elements of the 1-3 Star Awards (Kayak).

I and others felt the need as there has been little guidance other than that which has been produced in the pages of CoDe. I invited Kevin Danforth (as he had produced a video for use at our E2 seminar last year) in the hope that we would get some indication of the national picture and to try and ensure that our standards reflected those elsewhere in the country. Unfortunately, Kevin was too busy to be able to attend.

So on a sunny Saturday in July we had a go. Merseysport offered their premises and facilities for our use - many thanks.

I invited all from Level 1 Coach (now able to assess 1 Star) upwards.

The debates on all areas could have gone on for weeks as different interpretations were put forward on almost every conceivable point. Some two and a half hours were spent agonising our way ahead - we almost completed looking at the 1 Star, with still a lot of discussion on how we interpret the term **encouragement** award. How long is an introductory course?

After lunch we moved onto the water where our eager guinea pigs from Picton Scouts were prepared to be scrutinised by our two groups of coaches facilitated by two highly experienced examiners. We used as a basis a Star Test Score Card which listed all of the main elements and allowed us to dif-

ferentiate the different levels. After much debate and discussion within the two groups our analysis showed that we had a 75% agreement as to the standard of each element we had looked at. I felt that we had barely scratched at the surface of something that needs to be addressed as everyone I talk to is alarmed at the variance of standards across the country.

I intend to repeat the process - hopefully using this attempt as a platform on which to build. Many thanks to those who participated and helped in what I hope was seen as a **non-threatening, supportive, constructive** and hopefully useful exercise.

DAVE MCGARRY Liverpool

DofC Comments: An SCA Coaching Conference undertook a similar exercise a few years ago, with experienced examiners assessing 2 candidate 'guinea pigs' at each level: 1, 2 and 3 star. Comparisons were then made. On a given stroke or technique, the variance in assessment was considerable. On the overall result, however - pass or fail - there was about 90% consensus, to the best of my recollection.

We are frequently being challenged not to be over-prescriptive, in our definitions of the basic strokes and techniques, but I do sometimes wonder if the balance isn't the other way. Now that we have 'cleared the decks' regarding the changes in structure and admin, the intention is that future assessor forums, allied to better support material, will address this issue.

Dear CoDe,

Re: Need of First Aid Certificate on Coaching Courses

A year or so ago, I ran a proficiency course with several candidates taking part. Upon inspection of the candidates' equipment, ie repair kit, first aid kit etc, one candidate produced a roll of canoe tape and stated that this was both his repair and first aid kit, assuring me that he could repair both a damaged boat and a punctured lung and even produce a sling. The candidate was a Doctor and I was intrigued and part convinced that he knew his stuff. After all, I didn't want to pierce his boat, nor did I feel it necessary to pierce the lungs of another participant just to prove a point. To test his knowledge further, I asked him to place a casualty in the recovery position, using his tape for a head wound. The wound he coped with, the recovery position he did not.

The last issue of CoDe stated that those in certain professions, ie police officers, firemen, doctors, nurses, paramedics, dentists, ambulance staff and physiotherapists are exempt from holding a first aid certificate when participating on a safety test. Why? After making various enquiries a large number of these professions do not have first aid knowledge.

My other half is assistant manager at a large nursing home and will tell you that the Home does not require a first aider as required by many other business. This is because it is staffed with qualified nurses. These nurses will admit that they have no first aid knowledge and would not know how to put someone in the recovery position. Modern nurses are trained in the class room and only get minimal person to person practice by being placed on periodic secondments. This begs the question, how much first aid knowledge do other 'not quite medical' people get, ie physio's dentists etc. I have even had members of the police force who have not had first aid teaching.

How many course application forms ask the question 'What is your profession?' Many professional candidates could go through the whole of the coaching scheme without holding the relevant certificate. The word Doctor could mean anything. Doctor of what? Philosophy, Physics and nurses, where have they specialised. Some only do elderly care, others are midwives and some have very limited practical experience in any area.

As a Safety Test examiner, I feel that all candidates should produce a first aid certificate and that no-one should be exempt. If I pass off one of these professional who then go on to make a mistake, I feel that it will be my skills being questioned because I am the one to have to pass them

DAVE BATEMAN, The Ackers

DofC Comments: The other side of the coin is that we would undoubtedly receive a great number of enquiries concerning exemption, from those listed who were being kept up to date as a result of their employment. I would not think doctors of Philosophy would assume exemption, but the revised notice contained in this issue of CoDe makes it clear that it applies to medics only.

Should there be any come-back as a result of one of the exempted persons not performing adequately in a first aid situation, the comeback would be on the BCU, not on the individual assessor, who is merely applying agreed principles. The assessor may well feel a 'moral' responsibility, but certainly there would be no legal implication.

Dear CoDe,

I have been kayaking and canoeing for about ten years. Last May I passed my coach level 2, in the same year I attained coach level 3, in October I am due to attend a 5 Star assessment.

I work at a centre in Derbyshire (paddling county NOT) where we have quite a high contingent of coaches level 2 and 3 in both kayak and open boat. There seems to be very much a feeling of being let down by the BCU from the point of becoming an assessor.

If I am correct, to become an assessor, it is necessary to have held a minimum of coach level 2 for at least three years. Then candidates have to attend an assessor training day to be classified as a grade one. While I am aware that the BCU and members are striving continuously to improve the safety and quality of our coaching and sport, I feel we have alienated a lot of experience coming into the coaching scheme.

From a personal view the new system that is in place has not been fully thought through and still has some way to go before it is fully respected. I feel I am being held back as my teaching and skills ability are more than adequate to cope with the job of assessing to grade one standard.

This is not somebody on an ego trip. It's just an SI who wants to progress. There is still a fantastic amount of skill and expertise in people who are not involved in the coaching scheme. Instead of slowing existing instructors down, we need to encourage more participation and strive ever more forward in an attempt to provide a secure future for the scheme and the sport.

I'll look forward to reading your views in CoDe.

Paddle safely and above all enjoy yourself.

ALEC BERRY, Sheffield

DofC Comments: One of the most common internal criticisms of the Coaching Service is that there is too wide a variation in standards. A letter in this issue relates to this concern. Now that Level 2 Coaches (Instructors) can assess Level 1 Coaches it does not seem unreasonable that some experience should first be gained as an instructor before beginning to train and assess other instructors. Currently, there are over 500 grade 2 Assessors available for a total of 2,500 Level 1 and trainee Level 2 candidates coming through each year.

Dear CoDe

The new (blue) one-star certificates which I have are pretty difficult to write on or to print on using a laser printer. The paper is coated with some sort of slippery substance and the surface is rough and bubbly. On top of that the paper is ****, it curls and goes different shades in a laser printer. I hope the BCU paid a good price for these certificates - ie nothing.

KEITH HOOKER, Wokingham

DofC Comments: If this is a common problem we will address it at the next re-print. This is, however, the only complaint so far received. I have written on a sample with biro, with no problem. The card in use is, in fact, exactly the same as has been used for the past several years for Star Test certificates - it is only the text and colour which has changed. Our laser printers will not cope with card of any sort. Effectively we have not paid a 'good price' for the certificates, as they have been sponsored!

EASTERN REGION NOTICES

RCO/LCO ELECTIONS

Norfolk - LCO Paul Fynn has reached the end of another 3 year term of office. With an expanding family and increased business commitments he is not seeking re-election. We are grateful for his contribution to Norfolk and the region. Two nominations for the vacant post have been received.

Dace HOLDER (Proposed Bernadette Kerb, Seconded Ms J Field) Level 3 Kayak/Sea Coach, Level 2 Canoe Coach.

Started paddling in 1962 - building a BK. Since then has enjoyed slalom, river, surf and sea paddling, building fleets of boats to support work with youth groups. Worked in Industry, Youthwork and Outdoor Education since 1972 delivering programmes for young people and adults - county/regional residential outdoor education courses. Jointly founded Stromness Kayak Club. As Norfolk Youth & Community Services Water Activity Co-ordinator introduced paddle sports into Philby, a former sailing base, and established mobile kayak and canoe fleets. Is contactable, has administration support, daily contact with young people, groups and schools, and no private commercial canoeing interests.

Roger WARD (Proposed Paul Fynn, Seconded Martin Alton) Level 4 Kayak Coach, Aspirant Level 5 Coach. Level 3 Sea Coach, E2 Kayak, BCU S/NVQ Assessor

Has eighteen years experience across the whole range of disciplines, and has been involved with the coaching service for ten years, running both basic canoeing courses and coaching qualification training and assessment courses. Holds a variety of coaching awards in other outdoor disciplines. Currently lectures in a range of outdoor activities to mature students at Norfolk College, preparing them for a career in the outdoor industry. Keen to raise the profile of paddlesport in the Norfolk area, and to encourage paddlers into the Coaching Service. Has administrative back-up and does not have any private commercial canoeing interests.

The election will be conducted by POSTAL BALLOT (No Faxes or 'Email' please!) Each BCU Adult Comprehensive member registered in Norfolk and holding a current coaching qualification, (including 'Trainee status' and competition coaches) is entitled to vote:

- 1 PRINT the name of your chosen candidate, from the two candidates, on a piece of paper.
- 2 PRINT your name, BCU number (and present qualifications) on the paper.
- 3 Add your address and SIGN the paper (in ink).
- 4 Enclose the paper, one vote only, in an envelope and mark the outside clearly Vote for LCO - Norfolk. *Please do not enclose any other correspondence.*
- 5 Post the envelope to RCO, P A West, Eastern Region, 33 Risedale Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP3 9NW

Votes must be received by last post 31 October 1996. Envelopes will be opened and votes counted immediately after the closing date in the presence of an independent scrutineer. The result of the ballot will be published in the next available addition of CoDe.

It is proposed that the new LCO will hold a count panel meeting on either Monday 2 or Tuesday 3 December. Details will also be available from 18 November at the BCU Eastern Region agm.

Change of Date

Qualification Courses Strategy Meeting now Thursday 7 November. Venue YMCA Cambridge. 1915 for 1930 start. Please send sae to RCO if map is required. Meeting open to all organisers of level 1-3 coach training/assessment and other courses requiring authorisation, in region.

Coaching Panel Examiners Standards Seminar

1-2 March 1997, Lowestoft

Saturday - Forum to National Programme (but excluding Assessor presentation?) Wet activity and/or flares demonstration

Sunday - Assessor Training Course - sae for application and cost. Local sea/harbour? tour if sufficient interest

Please send sae for details and map. (no phone calls), to the RCO about the above between 21-28 February 1997

Coach Development Programme

A regionally based coach development programme (for level 5 Coach award) has been proposed. Please WRITE to RCO enclosing sae if you wish to be included. State your preferred discipline. Closing date for expressing interest - 18 November (regional agm).

Reminder - if you want to be included in, or promote, activities, or stay abreast of local opportunities please contact your LCO / County Association in the first instance.

HIGH SUPPORT STROKES - THE DEBATE -

Ron Turner's article in the last issue, elicited one of the best responses we've had to an item in CoDe - except for the comments from Examiners when it was proposed to remove E2 rights from those who did not obtain the 5 Star !

We first reprint an article from Focus No 71, June 1991. This was produced by Clive Atkins, of Waltham Forest Outdoor Pursuits Department, as a precis of a thesis he produced entitled 'A Study of Shoulder Dislocations among Canoeists'.

SHOULDER DISLOCATION AMONG CANOEISTS

Clive Atkins

Shoulder dislocation is probably the second most common serious injury that occurs amongst canoeists - the first being inflammation of the tendons in the wrist (tenosynovitis).

During 1986/7, Clive Atkins conducted a study which looked at the cases of eighty primary (first time) shoulders dislocations which had occurred whilst canoeing, together with any subsequent redislocations. Here Clive reports on his research and gives his recommendations on how shoulder dislocation injuries can be minimised.

Incidence

Nearly all of the dislocations (96%) were 'anterior' dislocations. This is where the arm is raised and rotated palm up, as when reaching back and performing a very high brace. The few remaining cases of 'posterior' dislocation all occurred in circumstances which were out of the ordinary, for example on striking a rock with the shoulder, or whilst swimming following a capsized.

It has often been thought that shoulder dislocation is most likely to occur amongst inexperienced canoeists, who would tend to put themselves into positions that more experienced canoeists might avoid. However, it was found in the survey that the people most at risk from shoulder dislocation are strong, young, adult males, who are also competent white water canoeists. The findings in fact showed that the physically stronger and the more competent a person is on white water, the greater is their chance of sustaining a shoulder dislocation. In contrast to this, there was found to be very little incidence of shoulder dislocation amongst novice canoeists, and none whatsoever amongst female novice canoeists. There was also no incidence found amongst persons under 16 years of age.

The hypothesis for this pattern of incidence is that a physically weaker or less competent canoeist would tend to let go

of the paddle and capsize, in the situation in which a stronger or more experienced canoeist would maintain their grip of the paddle. In maintaining a grip, the shoulder joint can be forced to the extremes of its range, and beyond. This has been substantiated many times over, through comments made by the subjects themselves. Even amongst the 20% of cases in which the paddle blade hit the bottom or a rock, the resultant 'jerking' action would cause all but strong or experienced paddlers to lose their grip of the paddle.

Although four out of five injuries occurred on moving water of some sort, in general the conditions were within the capabilities of these canoeists and they were neither anxious nor tired.

It was found to be the canoeist's 'better' or 'stronger' side that is most likely to dislocate. This is probably due to the fact that most canoeists tend to perform support strokes, braces and rolls, more frequently on their better side than on their weaker side.

Causes

Analysis of the causes of injury reveals that the commonest instances (accounting for 75% of cases), occur when the canoeist is attempting some form of support stroke, high brace or eskimo roll. During these strokes the arm is raised and turned palm upwards. In most cases the shoulder joint is able to cope with the strains involved, however, under 'extreme circumstances' the joint is forced beyond its normal range with the result that dislocation occurs. Circumstances leading up to these 'extreme circumstances' can be caused by any of the following:

- Poor anticipation of the 'effort' required to perform the stroke successfully. 'I under-estimated the strength of a small wave and had to do a high brace very quickly....shoulder dislocated anteriorly'.

- 'Desperate' circumstances, in which the canoeist is attempting to remain upright at all costs. Supporting very hard using a lot of strength.... shoulder dislocated'.

- The unexpected impact of the paddle blade against the bottom or a rock.

"Went to make a support stroke but did not realise how shallow it was. Paddle caught in sand with left arm outstretched and full weight on it; it simply lifted easily out of its socket'.

Avoidance of Injury

There is probably little that can be done to reduce the incidence of paddle impact with the bottom or a rock. Whilst a loose grip of the paddle would almost certainly prevent dislocation, it would obviously cause other problems. Care should be taken in situations where it is known that the water is shallow. Surf canoeists particularly should be aware of the fact that in shallow water, any attempt to remain upright by supporting following a loop or pop-out should be made with caution. Paddle contact with the bottom should be avoided at all costs.

It is possible, however, that some of the other injuries could have been avoided had these subjects an awareness of the mechanics of the injury. Through an awareness of the exact positions in which they are putting their arm, it may be possible to avoid 'dangerous' positions and the extremes of joint range.

It is virtually impossible to dislocate a shoulder whilst performing a low brace, and therefore wherever possible a low brace should be used in preference to a high brace.

If the canoeist needs to perform a high brace, then three factors need consideration in order to avoid a dislocation (these all relate to the arm on the supporting side):

- The elbow should not be raised higher than the shoulder.

- The elbow should remain bent.
- Under no circumstances should the elbow be further forward than the hand of the same arm.

Compare the following photographs of good and poor high brace technique, looking in particular at the relative positions of the supporting arm.



Good technique



Poor technique



Rehabilitation

Following dislocation it is recommended that advice be sought from a suitably qualified doctor or physiotherapist, or a Sports Injury Clinic. The standard regime of immobilising the arm for three weeks following injury is advised. There is evidence to suggest that the high rate of recurrence of dislocation would be significantly reduced if the subjects followed a specific, adequate rehabilitation programme, which included both a restrengthening programme, and a rigid restriction of their activities.

On returning to canoeing, the majority of canoeists have expressed caution in performing strokes on the side that was dislocated. Although this caution leads to successful avoidance of redislocations in controlled situations, it is often less evident when conditions become more demanding. It is under these 'more demanding' circumstances that canoeists should be particularly aware of the exact positions in which they are putting their arm. By doing so the extremes of joint range may be avoided. Strokes should be performed in complete awareness, or not at all.

Several canoeists, in adopting this attitude, demonstrated a successful return to canoeing.

'I now avoid high bracing and wide sweeps with the arm extended and elbow back'.

This group also includes subjects who rightly choose to capsize and perform a controlled roll in certain situations, thus avoiding the need to carry out 'desperate' support-type stroke.

'In a similar situation I would allow myself to be capsized and then roll up again in a controlled manner'.

The effect that shoulder dislocation has had on the subjects in this study has varied. There were few cases in which the subjects were able to successfully carry on as before. In the majority of instances some form of restriction of activities has been necessary.

Recurrent Dislocations

The incidence of recurrent dislocation is high – over 40%. This high rate of recurrence is possibly due to the tendency that these canoeists have of returning to the sport at the earliest possible opportunity, and carrying on as before. Of those that had redislocations, 52% occurred within 3 months of the initial injury, and 88% had occurred within two years. It was found that the longer the period that a canoeist is successful in avoiding a redislocation, the less likely it is that redislocation will occur.

Conclusions

- The incidence of shoulder dislocation occurring amongst canoeists could be reduced by an awareness of the arm position which should be avoided. This is particularly important for the people most at risk - young adult males who are also competent white-water canoeists.
- Dislocation is most likely to occur when performing high brace strokes or rolling, particularly when in rough water or where it is shallow and the paddle blade hits the bottom.

- Where possible low brace strokes should be used in preference to high braces.

To minimise the chances of a dislocation occurring, in all rolls and high braces, the canoeist should pay attention to the following three aspects of the position of the supporting arm:

- Keep the elbow below the shoulder.
- Keep the elbow bent.
- Keep the hand forward of the elbow.

Try thinking of these points next time you are playing in a stopper, or whilst doing support strokes on flat water. It is vitally important that you should avoid 'desperate' high strokes where the arm is extended and behind the shoulder.

- If you are unlucky enough to suffer a dislocation, be sure to seek medical advice from a suitably qualified person. This will typically involve immobilisation of the arm for three weeks, followed by a rehabilitation and restrengthening programme. Patience here will pay dividends; restrain yourself from returning to the sport too early, avoiding whitewater paddling in particular for as long as possible.

THE DEBATE

In CoDe No 69 Ron Turner outlined his analysis of the high recovery stroke and made several proposals towards a safer and more efficient stroke. Overall I found the article to be very well researched and presented; the editor's comments I felt were equally accurate and relevant. I would just like to add a few extra ingredients to the recipe which may prove helpful.

The section of the *BCU Canoeing Handbook* begins OK with the general points of the stroke being the use of the driving face of the blade and a pulling / hanging action with the arms. However the area that may cause concern is the diagram in Stroke Definitions, which displays a paddle held almost above head height and the Technique Checklist, which notes that the paddle should be 'held high, chest height or above'.

I think the diagram in Marcus Bailie's book '*Canoeing & Kayaking*' shows a far better picture, still with the driving face and a hanging action, but with a low paddle. Due to the layout of the page, a useful comparison with the low recovery stroke is also displayed.

Surely the height of the paddle at the start of the stroke is irrelevant? It is the angle of the paddle at the time of impact with the water surface which matters. In reality we have to recover from all paddle positions; depending on our stroke at the moment of imbalance.

I totally agree with the editor's comments about coaching and concepts. One of the main benefits of attending coaching conferences and symposiums is the observation of other coaches' methods and techniques, and the prevention of a robotic teaching style. Time shared with other instructors is generally time well spent.

The Deep Recovery

Ron Turner did put some emphasis on ensuring the impact of the blade on the surface of the water. I think it is important to begin with this approach, but once the basics have been covered students should be shown that the recovery stroke can work with the blade deep under the water surface. So long as the blade is pulled down and finds 'solid' water, a recovery stroke can still be successful. If this point is omitted, then students can adopt the mindset that once the paddle is under the surface, all is lost and quite often give up, when a deep recovery could have prevented a capsize. In fact, some advanced paddlers do not perform this deep recovery stroke, and instead go for the capsize and roll option, which, apart from being lazy, can be dangerous.

Paddle Height

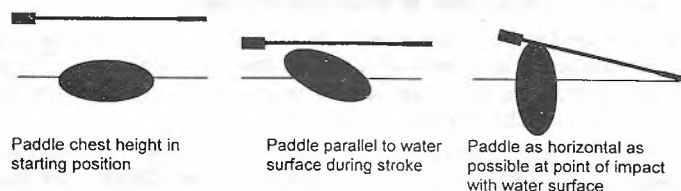
The one comment I would add on the 'chest height' saga, is that strokes should not be taught in isolation in a stationary position, but related to movement, and eventually linked with other strokes. As part of the star tests syllabus, the recovery stroke must be performed whilst forward paddling - in which case the paddle will be at chest height. Therefore, it may be wise to practise the stroke from this position. It is highly unlikely that anyone will be forward paddling with the paddle loom positioned low on the cockpit at the point of loss of balance.

I think Ron's technique is an excellent teaching progression, emphasising a low blade, with a strong and safe paddling technique, and it is a useful cure for those students that do tend to allow the paddle to be raised to potentially shoulder-dislocating heights.

Paddle Position

When teaching the high recovery, I try to put across the fact that the paddle position at the time of impact is critical - not the start position. The diagrams below illustrate the path of the paddle, showing a chest high start position, but a safe

and efficient paddle position at the point of impact with the water surface, as Ron Turner suggests:



STUART WILLIAMS, Preston

Thank you for publishing my article entitled 'The High Support Stroke - is there a better way?'

I am pleased that the (then) Coaching Development Officer agreed with the basic philosophy that I presented in the article.

I agree with him that an experienced paddler, when paddling white water, will tend to adapt a stroke to suit the particular circumstances at the time - in fact strokes rarely exist on their own, they tend to flow into one another as the need arises, with each stroke being modified depending on the previous one, and on the one that follows. The basic technique of the stroke is, however, still there.

I am concerned about two of his comments which follow the article. The first is about 'unlearning' the technique of sculling for support. I am not sure why anyone should want to unlearn the technique. I have found it most useful as a means of buying time, when some specific turbulence means that even the best support stroke or roll does not succeed. It also works as a means of survival if I have been washed against a rock wall, and cannot roll up fully.

The second concern is his comments about the concept of a BCU method of performing a stroke - I find it difficult to understand why he should appear to advocate that instructors are free to interpret the descriptions of strokes as they choose. Why does the *BCU Handbook* devote a whole chapter of 40 pages to basic kayak strokes, with detailed descriptions and photographs, and with a detailed technique checklist, if instructors are free to interpret all this as they please? Surely one of the aims of the Coaching Service should be to achieve a high level of consistency in the way strokes are performed, and in the standards required to achieve the Star test awards and the Rainbow awards. Every instructor has his/her own method of teaching, but the result should always be the same.

A final question - if a novice is taught by an instructor to perform a high support stroke by the BCU method, and the novice later dislocates a shoulder whilst using a high support stroke, could the instructor be found guilty of professional negligence, if it can be shown that there is a published and accepted method of performing the stroke which is both safer and more effective?

RON TURNER, Dunblane

My congratulations to Ron Turner for his analysis of the high support stroke and its contribution to the UK's accident statistics. I am afraid that the BCU, despite its best intentions, may indeed have contributed to the problem. The *Canoeing Handbook* clearly shows the active shoulder up beyond the danger point, and the 1990 *Directory of Tests and Awards* calls for a 'hanging' support.

How should we as instructors help the next generation of paddlers to protect their shoulders against dislocation? I have four concrete suggestions:

- 1 Teach the use of a low 'uphill' hand, based on a starting position with both hands in front of the shoulders (I sometimes start teaching high recoveries with one end of the learner's paddle on a buddy's boat and the other resting on the learner's own boat).

- 2 Emphasise keeping the 'downhill' elbow bent.
- 3 Get people of all levels out of the habit of leaning back, and especially the habit of sweeping the paddle back.
- 4 Give better paddlers exercises where they abandon an extreme brace in favour of a roll as they tip over (it has to be a half-roll, so that the paddle is in the set-up position before it hits the water - try it !)

I cannot claim most of these ideas as my own. I thoroughly recommend Paul Dutky's splendid book *The Bombproof Roll and Beyond*, in which he emphasises balance and hip movement above paddle strokes. His figure 3.2 is almost exactly what Ron Turner is advocating. I can however claim relevant experience, having dislocated my shoulder during my 3-star assessment.

RICHARD FOX, Grimsby

I read with interest Ron Turner's letter on the high support Stroke and have taught something similar for years. Yes, there is a tendency for most beginners to go far too far back for both the high support and the sculling for support strokes. I offer the following views on Ron's points as a basis for further discussion.

If you go well forward, for the high support stroke, even to the extent of putting your back into the water first (so that your trunk is would up) and you go down under the paddle, you are in the perfect position to come up paddling by simply unwinding your trunk. Having been on the receiving end for many years I can add that I have not seen many instructors who are actually prepared to demonstrate the high support stroke on the move. Most instructors draw the line at doing it stationary and then not very often.

Still on the wet strokes, instead of simply saying that the kayak must be off balance for the sculling for support stroke, perhaps we could be a little more definitive:

- * We could either treat the stroke as an exercise in co-ordination and confidence building and insist that the gunnels are vertically in line and that the head and body are in the water. It would be nice to see this stroke done with the body more or less straight out (with the shoulders turned upward) and the body under the paddle instead of what usually happens, which is with the body leaning hard back on the after deck of the boat
- * Or, we could treat the stroke as an introduction to working in a stopper, and say that the body should be vertically upright in the kayak all the time, and that both the kayak and the body should together be over at an angle of 30 to 40 degrees. The kayak would be off balance and the student would have to do long powerful strokes just to stay put. At least this would give a use to what some people say is a useless stroke.

KEITH HOOKER, Wokingham

DofC comments: I wonder if we aren't going a little bit overboard on all this ! the illustration in the 1989 *Canoeing Handbook* (diagram 1) is not, perhaps, ideal. However, the paddler is not adopting an extreme position, and it is the extreme extension which is the problem. No matter how well the stroke is first taught, if the paddler is going to extend in a given situation, he or she will be at risk. I must say that I thought that Ray Rowe's definition in the *Handbook* was in keeping with those principles, although I do accept that ideas move on. However, we now have some good resource material on which to draw for the next edition.

There was a strong lobby at working party stage, for 'sculling for support' to be removed from the star tests syllabus, on the grounds that the technique has no practical application. Some would argue that it is detrimental, in that it encourages paddlers to sit and support in stoppers, when in fact they should be applying techniques to get themselves out. The stroke has been retained on the grounds that it teaches good paddle blade control for all, and does have prac-

tical application for racing. The ability to flip the blade over into a scull can also help in a 'nearly failed roll' situation. Quite clearly there are differing opinions involved, and we will need to do some more work on this for the next edition of the *Canoeing Handbook* - which is some way off yet, I hasten to add !

With regard to the one and only prescribed 'BCU method', quite clearly there has to be a guide somewhere which is fundamentally sound and identifies the key features of a given stroke or technique. I do think that we get confused between the required outcome, which I believe to be identifiable, and methods of teaching, or achieving it. There is not necessarily one right way to goal, but there is a goal which needs to be achieved. We have to be careful not to become too stereotyped, however, as sport is continually evolving, and what was considered to be crucial at one time, is discredited, or its importance downgraded, at another. There is a shortcoming in our system with regard to keeping up to date with identifying relevant technique for different boats, and different aspects of the sport, and promulgating the same. This needs to be addressed. Hopefully, once our new CDO is in place, and the immediate problems and backlog are dealt with, this is an area in which we can become much more pro-active in future years. In the meantime, I am grateful to those who raise the issues and suggest the remedies.

Insofar as the likelihood of being sued is concerned, I would consider that there is a theoretical case to answer. However, if the instructor was working to the training and recommendations of the BCU, it would be the Union 'in the dock', rather than the individual instructor. It might be difficult for the complainant to prove that he or she was performing the stroke at the time in exactly the prescribed manner, and that this prescribed manner was taught to them in spite of superior knowledge being available. My guess is that the lawyers would get richer than the complainant !

It should be noted that the term 'high' has been retained to identify a support stroke performed with the drive face of the blade. Maybe we should look at the nomenclature, as it could be taken to imply reaching high up. 'Hanging' also may well give the wrong impression - it merely means that the paddler is maintaining a brace with the paddle in the 'high' mode - ie using the drive face.

How about 'drive face brace' and 'drive face recovery' ? Has anyone got any better ideas ?

From *The Canoeing Handbook* - Ray Rowe



Fig 6:8

The high recovery stroke is vitally important to any paddler in a rough water situation. The subtle timing between instinctively striking the water with the blade and applying knee lift and hip rotation needs concentrated practise

From *The Bombproof Roll and Beyond* - Paul Dutky

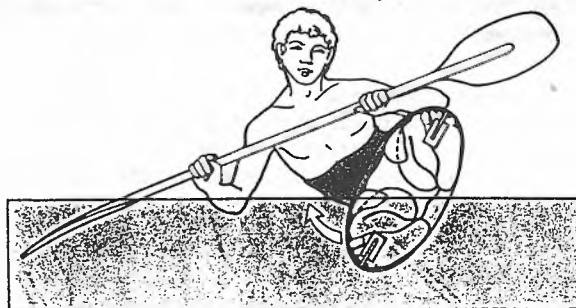


Figure 3.2: The high brace requires a strong hipsnap. Drive your lower knee up toward the bracing blade as you roll the kayak up underneath you.

EFFECTIVE LEARNING

Lawrence Chapman

This is a copy of the research paper I produced for my level 5 coach training in October 1995. Some of it is a bit wordy, but I think this is of real use to the coach.

To be an effective coach of any sport it is important to realise how the student can best learn from the tutor; it will help to identify what their preferred learning style is. There is little point being with a group of students on the water if they are not learning effectively. Instructors should organise themselves and their environment in order to maximise their students learning.

Many theories have been developed to guide teachers towards a better understanding of effective learning. One thing is sure, all students are individuals and as such learn in different ways. *"If the tasks and activities in which the learner is engaged are not matched to the learners existing capabilities, then learning difficulties are likely to occur"* (Ainscow 1988). If the students have not grasped particular learning styles they will not learn effectively.

It has been suggested, for example by Kolb (1984) that learning can be split into four orientations.

1. Concrete Experience (CE) - this is about learning by doing, by feeling not thinking. Students who respond to this approach can be intuitive thinkers and good decision makers. They relate well to others and are open minded.
2. Reflective Observation (RO) - students prefer to think rather than do. They use observation and carefully describe them as impartially as possible.
3. Abstract conceptualisation (AC) - focuses on using logic, ideas and concepts. Thinking not feeling, building general theories and finding a scientific approach to problems.
4. Active Experimentation (AE) - practical not reflective, understanding, concerned with what works not what should.

"A child learns very little indeed when experiments are performed for him . . . he must do them himself rather than sit and watch them done" (Piaget 1966). Piaget emphasises the point that most people are accommodators and learn from concrete experience. However in any group of people there will always be people with different preferred styles of learning.

Students are individuals and have different preferred learning styles. For students to learn efficiently they need to learn in their preferred style. It is therefore important for instructors to vary their coaching style, not only from session to session but also within sessions. The four preferred learning styles mentioned at the start can be used in a cycle as shown in fig. 1.

What has all of this to do with Coaching Canoeing ?

We all have a style which we find easiest to learn from. If this can be identified in those being coached the time spent with them can be maximised. The majority of the time instructors will be working with a group of people who will all have different preferred learning styles.

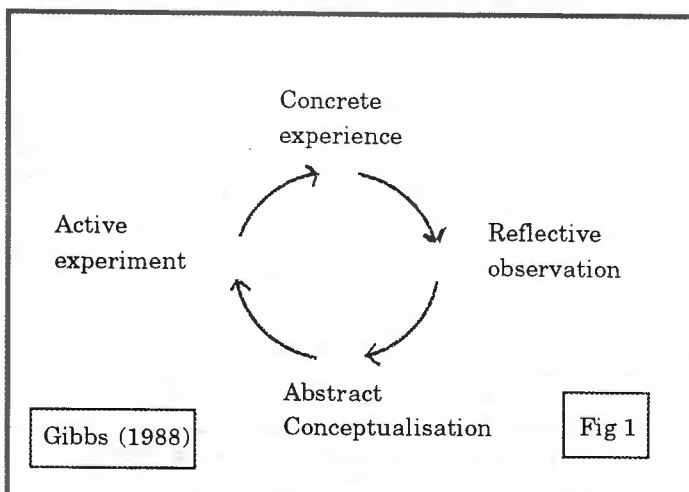
Effective coaching should work through all the preferred learning styles in order to give everyone a chance of learning in their preferred style.

Sessions can start anywhere on the cycle, but for efficient learning to take place students should be encouraged to work round the full circle. From first hand experience it has been found best to start from the top of the cycle. For example an introductory kayaking session:

- Initially students are very usually very excited or apprehensive. A long description at this stage would put them off, it is far better to give them a quick introductory talk and get them on the water e.g. "we're all going to paddle over there" on the way most of them will spin round in circle on the way over but they now have a 'concrete' kayaking experience to build on.
- On reaching the designated point students can be asked to comment on what they found easy or difficult. A lot will say that they can't keep the kayak straight. This is a 'reflective observation'.
-
- Now the students will be more receptive to anything the instructor has to say about going straight. For example "don't worry these kayaks are designed to turn" "try to keep your paddle close to the kayak when you want to go in a straight line" etc. This is 'abstract conceptualisation'.
-
- From the instructors little group discussion in the above point, the students would be set a little task involving paddling straight and some controlled turns. This 'active experimentation' will give the students chance to play with the ideas they have been given and give them an experience to move on with.

In the example shown above the cycle has been completed on the one activity and now starts again as the group move on to something new, the draw stroke.

- *Experience* - ask the students to find as many ways of moving sideways as possible, anything goes. With young groups it is possible to see people jumping out and swimming with their boats. This has given the students experience of moving sideways, they now know that they can move sideways in some form or other.
- *Reflection* - ask the group if they found one method a lot more efficient than the others. Would this method be suitable for using when wanting to go sideways. The students are being asked to review what worked and what did not work.
- *Conceptualisation* - having given the students a chance to gain some experience and a chance to review how they felt it worked, the time has come for the instructor to give them a bit more input. e.g. "What most people find as an effective sideways stroke is this..."
- *Experimentation* - from the demonstration given summarise this into key points that students can work on. As they experiment with these points (where do I need to keep the paddle to stop me swinging? for example) so they are gaining another experience that will allow the cycle to begin again.



This is just one example of part of a session. Sessions need not go round the cycle just once and need not complete the cycle in one session (if the topic is on going).

As canoeists approach their first "Trainee Instructors" course they will be made aware of the 'IDEAS' model for teaching.

Introduction

Demonstration - reflective observation. Students are passively observing.

Explanation - abstract conceptualisation. The students are making their own imagery to fit the explanation.

Activity - active experimentation. Having observed and listened pupils finally get to experiment with the stroke.

Summary - usually a verbal summary.

IDEAS is very limiting and does not allow for all learning styles to be used. By choosing to start the cycle at the reflective stage students will be less receptive. They want to get on and do rather than listen or watch. Once they have tried it out they will realise how easy or difficult it is and be willing to listen. The activity stages have been minimised and learning will be effected, although instructors will feel that they are imparting a lot of knowledge.

IDEAS makes no attempt at a cycle of learning, the experimental stage is not used as an experience for the next stage. IDEAS should perhaps be made into ERNIE:

Experience - "everyone try paddling backwards"

Reflection - "did you find it easier or harder than paddling forward?"

Narrative - "this is the most efficient way to paddle backwards"

Identify - "these are the key points I would like you to try."

Experiment - try it

With **ERNIE** the cycle is followed, activity is at a maximum and learning should be more efficient.

Following the learning cycle has two main advantages. Firstly the obvious fact that students will have a chance to learn efficiently because at some point during the session their preferred learning style will be utilised. Secondly by continually using the cycle to run sessions, students will be encouraged to develop other learning styles. Students who gain the ability to use differing learning styles in varying situations will learn a lot more efficiently.

A balanced and varied approach to coaching is the best.

Like all theories and ideas this will need to be adapted to you. You may find that it does not suit all situations at first. So play with it!

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Kolb, D A (1984) *Experiential learning: experience as the source of learning and development*. Prentice-Hall.

Piaget, J (1966) *The growth of logical thinking*. Routledge and Kegan Paul. London

ASSESSOR TRAINING DAYS

South Wales - Saturday 19 October 1996

Steve Maynard, Fax no 01646 661639

Cumbria Region - Saturday 30 November 1996

Keith Morris, 1 West View, Church Road, Allithwaite, Grange over Sands, Cumbria. LA11 7RB

Yorkshire and Humberside - Saturday 7 December, 1996

Sam Cook, Bewerley Park Centre, Bewerley, Harrogate, N Yorks HG3 5JB.

South East Region - 8 December 1996

Paul Newman, 20 The Rise, Hempstead, Gillingham, Kent.

NORTH EAST REGION NOTICES

Simon Clooney, RCO North East has moved house: 48 Granville Court, Newcastle, NE2 1TQ. Tel/Fax 0191 2813550(h): 01429 263090(w): Email:

106077.3601@Compuserve.com

Coaching Service Management Group meetings are to be held on set dates in the future: 1st Wednesday in March; 1st Wednesday in July; 1st Wednesday in September; the AGM in November. Coaching service members should let their LCO/DCO have any relevant information in good time for these meetings.

We are in the process of putting the **1997-8 coaching calendar** together. Any examiners or prospective examiners wishing to work on courses are urged to let the RCO have the following information, which course organisers will be able to access in order to adequately staff their courses: Name, Address, Coaching qualifications, What courses would like to help on? How far are you willing to travel? Own transport? YES/NO

The Northeast Region is considering running a **regional Level 5 Coach Development Course**. This would be run over a number of weekends, possibly starting in Spring 1997. The course will only proceed if there is sufficient demand from the region's coaches. If you are interested please contact: Pete Clark, The Outdoor Trust, Belford, NE70 7QE.

The Northeast Region is also considering running a **regional Surf Level 3 Coach Course**, including a one day conversion course for existing Level 3 Coaches with the relevant skill and experience. Those interested should contact Pete Clark (address above) with details of qualifications and experience. The course is expected to cost approx £50 for the weekend, or £25 for a one day conversion. Accommodation (including camping) is available locally.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

THE GUIDE ASSOCIATION (Incorporated by Royal Charter) require **ACTIVITY INSTRUCTORS FOR A GUIDE ACTIVITY CENTRE DURING 1997**. Short and long term contracts available.

Candidates should be over 18 years of age and hold BCU Level 2 Trainee or BMC SPSA training as a minimum. Enthusiasm and the ability to work with young people are essential attributes.

Activities include canoeing, climbing, abseiling, archery and skiing. Experience in the other activities is an advantage although full training is given.

Application forms and details available from: Blackland Farm, Grinstead Lane, East Grinstead, Sussex. RH19 4HP



STAFF INSTRUCTORS

to start as soon as possible

You should hold at least one appropriate qualification (SPSA, GNAS, RYA Windsurf / Dinghy Instructor, BCU Canoe/Kayak Level 2 Coach) and be looking to develop your career in Outdoor Education.

Mepal can offer you a challenging job with a very wide client base, including young people with special educational and physical needs, managers on work group team building activities, family recreation, school groups and formal qualification courses.

Send an SAE for an application pack to David Savage, Mepal Outdoor Centre, Chatteris Rd, Mepal, Ely, Cambs. CB6 2AZ

Robinwood Activity Centre

Robinwood Activity Centre for children require BCU qualified instructors to instruct canoeing and other activities. Robinwood runs activity courses for junior school groups and accommodates between 25 and 40 children, attending 3 or 5 day residential courses. Activities offered include Canoeing, Archery, Rifle Shooting, Orienteering, Climbing and Abseiling, Mountain Biking, Problem Solving, Stream Walk, Narrow Boating and Raft Building.

Instructors receive from £54 to £63 per week, with full board and accommodation provided. Staff training is provided covering all Robinwood activities, with the opportunity to gain National Governing body qualifications including GNAS, Archery 'Leader', NSRA Air Rifle 'Tutor', BOF 'Instructor Level 1', MLTB Single Pitch Supervisor training, St John Ambulance Emergency Aid.

The season at Robinwood runs from the beginning of January through to the end of November each year.

For details phone 01706 814554

The Influence of Practice Structure on Long Term Learning and Adaptability

M J Davies and P J K Smith

Marianne Davies and P J K Smith conducted research on applying contextual interference to the Pawlata roll at the School of Sport, Health and Physical Education Sciences, University of Wales, Bangor. A copy of the study, on which your comment is invited, is available from P J K Smith at the School of Sport, Health and Physical Education Sciences, University of Wales, Ffriddoed Building, Victoria Drive, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2EN. Please send large sae, stamped for 100 gms.

The extent to which students will retain the ability to perform the skills they have practised is of great importance to all those who coach or instruct motor skills. With skills that are performed in a changing environment, or that are practised in an environment that is different from that in which they will be performed in the future, the ability to adapt or transfer the skill is also necessary.

A recent major focus of movement learning research is a phenomenon known as contextual interference (CI). Introducing CI into the practice of motor skills has been found to increase the time it takes to learn a skill, but to greatly enhance the long term learning and transfer ability. However, the bulk of the research into the effects of CI has been performed in laboratories and has used very basic movements. Some more recent studies have used 'real' skills in natural settings, but have still focused on simple movements which are practised in their entirety, such as badminton serving.

A recent study into the effects of CI was conducted using the pawlata roll, to see whether long term learning benefits would still be evident for a complex, full-body motor skill. The pawlata roll was chosen for practical reasons only as it was felt that the students would learn this skill quicker than the screw roll.

Contextual interference is introduced into the practice session by mixing the order in which the various skills are practised, so that the performance of one skill is interfered with by the performance of another. This contrasts with the normal method of allowing practice of each version of the skill to progress uninterrupted by other versions.

In this study CI was introduced by practising the roll on alternate sides throughout the learning phase. Thus, the students learned to roll on both their preferred and non-preferred side concurrently. Another group was taught to roll on one side (preferred) first, before learning to roll on the other.

The results of this study showed that the CI group not only displayed superior retention and transfer ability, but they also achieved a successful roll on both sides far more quickly than the other group. The finding of a reduction in the time to learn the skill was not expected as this did not replicate

previous research findings with other skills. The most likely explanation is that because of its complexity, the skill requires using a progressive-part practice technique, thus, better learning and transfer of each of the various elements ultimately reduced the time needed to link these elements together.

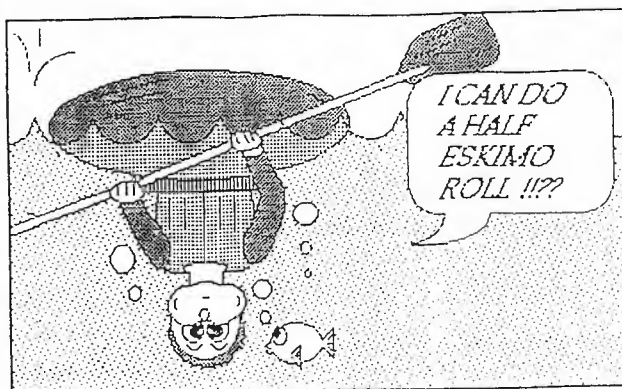
There are two prominent theories about how CI affects skill learning. Both theories focus on the way in which learners think about the skill during practice. One theory is that between each execution of a specific skill variation, the memory for the move-

ment will have been forgotten and so the movement problem must be 're-solved'. If the same task is practised over and over again, then the learner will use the memory of previous attempts at a skill to perform the next attempt.

There is a lot of evidence to suggest that the harder we have to work to remember something, the better chance we will have of recalling it. Hence, the more difficult method of practice is expected to result in better memory for the skill in the long term,

The second theory states that with CI the two ways of performing the skill are compared and contrasted with each other directly, resulting in a deeper understanding of the fundamentals of the performance requirements of the skill. When the skills are practised repetitively, the opportunity for contrast and comparison does not exist, so the learner develops a shallow understanding of the skill. These explanations are not mutually exclusive. The CI effect is probably due to their combined influence.

At the moment further research is being conducted using the pawlata roll. The focus of this research is to continue to explore the effects that practice order may have on the overall learning of this skill. Hopefully in the future we will be able to look at other kayak skills as well as other sports, and perhaps identify ways in which to successfully use CI in applied coaching situations. The research being carried out at the moment is still in its infancy. Much needs to be done to identify the types of skills that benefit from being practised under high contextual interference, and the types of skills for which this may be detrimental. This type of applied research would greatly benefit from the wealth of knowledge and experience held by those of you who coach or instruct professionally, thus any comments, suggestions or feedback you have would be greatly appreciated.



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Coaching Service members with appropriate experience (in canoeing and/or rafting) are invited to apply now for 'chief instructor' positions at approved centres based in the UK, France, Italy and Spain.



Contracts from April - September 1997

Send / fax full cv with covering letter to:

Tim Boldry, Acorn Venture Ltd, Acorn House, Worcester Road, Hagley, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY9 0NW
Tel 01562 887260 Fax 01562 887091

NOTICES

AMENDMENTS TO THE LAST ISSUE

S/NVQ Assessors and 'Coaching Processes'

Please note that there was an error in the announcement on p8 of the last issue of CoDe, under the heading 'Coaching Processes Courses'. S/NVQ Assessors who have trained through the BCU courses, are NOT exempt the 'Coaching Processes Course'. They ARE exempt the Assessor Training Day.

First Aid and CST before Assessment

It is confirmed that it is necessary for level 2 candidates (Instructor) to hold the relevant Canoeing Safety Test and First Aid Certificate prior to Assessment. Candidates do not need to hold them before attending a Training course.

Richard Ward's address

Please note that Richard now lives at 66 Westernlea, Crediton, Devon EX17 3JE (NOT 166 as shown in last CoDe)

S/NVQ PRICE CHANGES

The charge for an S/NVQ level 2, in addition to BCU membership, is now £65 for a 'Children's' award, and £63 for an 'Adults' award.

1997 COURSES

Pro-formas for notifying courses for inclusion in the BCU Yearbook Calendar for 1997 have been sent to all RCOs, LCOs, Approved Centres, and Course Organisers listed for last year.

If you are staging courses which you wish to have entered in the Calendar, and have not received the pro-formas, please phone or fax for a copy. Forms must be returned to the BCU office in all cases (except Scotland) by 15 October for courses requiring authorisation (ie all courses for qualifications, plus 5 Star training or assessment, white water safety training and disabled awareness training). For all other courses the pro-formas must be returned by 31 October.

The BCU office will copy the forms to the relevant RCO - please do not send them to the RCO direct.

Please note that the 1997 Calendar will run until 31 March 1998. There will be no separate early year calendar in 1998. Courses therefore need to be notified through to that date, please.

STAGING BCU AWARDS COURSES

All courses for BCU qualifications - ie levels 1 to 5 Coach, plus 5 Star Training/Assessment, white water safety, disabled awareness training - must have the prior approval of the course organiser's RCO. This applies to both advertised and 'closed' courses. The RCO of the Region in which the course is to be staged (if different) must also give consent, and may object on grounds of clash of dates, or over-use of a particular site.

'Closed' courses may be staged in addition to the calendar, by agreement with the RCO. Normally 2 months's notice is required. Such courses must be applied for on the standard pro-formas, available from the BCU office. 'Closed' courses include courses for the staff of a particular centre, club or organisation, or any courses which are recruited without recourse to advertising.

NATIONAL COACHING FOUNDATION

The calendar of autumn and spring courses is now available from the NCF at the address following.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPORTS COACHES

The Membership categories of the National Association of Sports Coaches have been rationalised. Full members now get the following benefits: professional third party indemnity - protection up to £5 million; liability insurance while officiating; 24 hour legal service; *Coaching Focus* - keeps you up to date with key issues in coaching; reduced prices on NCF products; coaches workshops - regional and national; discount on a current awareness service - abstracts articles of interest; Supercoach magazine.

Full details and prices from NASC, 114 Cardigan Road, Headingley, Leeds LS6 3BJ.

EXAMINER/ASSESSOR FORUMS

The following Examiner/Assessor Forums have so far been notified:

London: Saturday 1 February 1997. Canalside Activity Centre, Ladbroke Grove, North Kensington, London W10, commencing 0930. Please inform Paul Kilham of your attendance. 259d Ladbroke Grove, London W10 6HF.

South: Sunday 19 January 1997. Brunel University, Runymede Campus, commencing 1100. Please inform Les Porter of your attendance. 17 Albany Place, Egham, Surrey TW20 9HG.

Wessex: Sunday 19 January 1997. Filton College (north Site), Filton Avenue, Bristol (2 minutes drive from J16, M5 - south on A38. Commencing 1100. Please bring Coaching Directory, Canoeing Handbook and packed lunch. Tea and coffee provided. Please inform Julie Simpson of your attendance. 35 Gooch St, Swindon, Wilts SN1 2BA.

West Midlands: Saturday 1 February 1997. Shrewsbury. Please send s.a.e. to Rogre Drummond for full details: South View, 8 Severn Bank, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 2JD.

SLALOM

The following courses are available:

Level 3 Slalom Coach

Nottingham - 9-10 November 96

A two-day assessed course aimed at coaches with significant logged experience, who wish to coach at a more senior level.

Levels 1 and 2 (Canadian)

West London - 7-8 December

It is intended to run a combined course to: 1 Introduce paddlers and non-paddlers to canoe slalom; 2: assess to level 2 those who meet the required standard.

The course will concentrate on CANADIAN (Canoe)

Level 1 Slalom Coach Course

Nottingham - 14-15 December

(this course was previously advertised for 23-24 Nov)

A two-day non-assessed introductory course to help both **paddlers and non paddlers** understand the basic strokes and techniques of canoe slalom.

SLALOM COACHING SYMPOSIUM

Holme Pierrepont - Sunday 1 December

All Slalom Coaches, of whatever level, are invited to a day of information and debate. Please reserve the date.

Information will be mailed direct to all registered slalom coaches.

Details from:

Information concerning all or any of the above from:
Brian Fuller, Manorside, Main Street, Grendon
Underwood, Bucks HP18 0SU (01296 770464).