

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.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS !

Thanks are due to all you volunteers beavering away on the river bank, and especially to those who have given additional voluntary input to the Coaching Service during this past year. Quite simply we couldn't continue to function effectively without your contribution.

This issue of CoDe has proved particularly difficult to compile in time for the deadline, and I'm sorry it isn't more festive ! Hopefully the news and articles it does contain will prove of interest and help.

We are most grateful to all contributors, but would particularly welcome more in-depth articles on aspects of competition coaching, as well as on technique coaching for recreation.

Regretfully there has been a delay in being able to obtain a successor to Kevin Danforth. This has meant that the workload has again made it impossible to finalise the amendments and additions to the *Coaching Directory* which it had been hoped could be circulated with this edition of CoDe.

Nigel Timmins, our S/NVQ consultant, has provided sterling support during this interregnum, and we are most grateful to him for his efforts.

Anne Ferguson, who is undertaking a consultancy in an endeavour to make the Union eligible to participate in the national TOP CLUB scheme, has continued to make remarkable progress. Club delegates will be invited to meet in selected parts of the country in the New Year in order to consider the proposals which have now been finalised.

Liaison has recently taken place with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, and it is hoped that our sport will feature much more strongly among the young people involved - particularly with regard to the carrying out of expeditions by canoe.

It has been stated by some that there is a level of concern abroad among instructors with regard to their liability when working with young people in the light of increasing legislation. An article is being prepared to reassure members. The fact is that learning to canoe under competent instruction, on Sheltered Water, and whilst wearing a buoyancy aid, is virtually free from serious accidents. Certainly no one has drowned in that situation.

Re-assurance needs to be given that not all canoeing poses a serious risk !

TELEPHONE ENQUIRIES

A reminder that the Coaching office is open to telephone enquiries from 0830-1600 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

Wednesdays is kept clear so that written enquiries may receive priority.

Your co-operation in avoiding making telephone enquiries on Wednesdays, except in cases of emergency, is much appreciated.

We are not seeking an easy life - just trying to cope ! Honestly !

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Dear Code
- 6 A General Synopsis
Eastern Region Notices
Prices for 1997
- 7 Examiners / Assessors
- Notes and News
- 8 The Invisible Man
Notices
- 9 Situations Vacant
- 10 White Water Anxiety
- 12 Protecting Children
BCU Appointment

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

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Dear CoDe

Dear CoDe,

First Aid Qualifications

First Aid is now a requirement for any of the 'coaching' awards but is it right to make it compulsory?

I am fortunate in that as a professional Firefighter I can acquire mine through my career (free of charge) and all too sadly get too much practise for real.

Unlike coaching awards, where there is a standard of technical, and practical know-how which is measurable, First Aid is not. So many signs and symptoms are similar, eg: panic and heart attacks, diabetes etc, etc, and the incorrect response could have dire consequences.

Sadly we are following the American way of life with people suing for the incorrect diagnosis and administration of First Aid. I have the luxury at work of having my Fire Brigade to fall back on. Not so when I'm on the water, though of course there is 'liability cover' through the BCU.

A nurse friend refuses to administer First Aid to anyone but her friends because of the above.

I have been involved in incidents when even long-time members of a voluntary First Aid organisation have got it wrong.

No one can deny the 'common sense' aspect of learning and practising first aid, for every day family life, if for no other reason, and it should be encouraged at every age and level. But it should not be compulsory in order to gain coaching awards. The exception to this being unless you work at a Centre.

Perhaps first aid should be likened to driving. It's 'nice to be able to do it, but not essential'. Or perhaps there are plans somewhere for the future for driving to be made compulsory.

PHIL EDWARDS Crewe

Editorial comment: There has been over-whelming support for there to be a requirement for instructors to hold a first aid certificate at various conferences over the last few years, which is the main reason for its introduction. Many people were amazed that for many years the BCU has licenced instructors to take others into remote areas without requiring the leader to have obtained first aid training. To date no court in Britain has penalised a first aider - trained or otherwise - for doing their best in an emergency situation.

Dear CoDe,

I was interested to read the letter from Dave Bateman in CoDe 71 regarding exemptions from first-aid certification.

The nature of the training of doctors, dentists, physios and nurses is that a lot of the theory of disease processes and trauma, their effects and treatment are covered in detail but the first-aid aspects are not necessarily relevant to their role in patient care, the major exception to this is resuscitation.

As a dentist I have attended a number of first-aid courses and have found that only a little of the course has added to my knowledge of patient care. I believe this supports the need for exemptions. However it also requires the exempt candidate to ensure that they are completely familiar with those aspects of first-aid care that their professional status leaves out. There is also a responsibility for the examiner to ensure that the candidate exhibits a satisfactory knowledge in all aspects of the assessment, this means reviewing the first-aid skills of the exempt candidate and if necessary referring them.

NICK WOODGATE

DofC Comments: Please note that whilst the general exemption applies for the professions listed, it is incumbent upon the individual concerned to ensure that their first aid training is relevant and current.

Dear CoDe

Three years experience before Assessor Training

My kayaking experience has been gained over 15 years. For the last 7 of those I have been involved in the Coaching Service.

The current requirement for Level 2 coaches to have held that award for 3 years to enable them to attend an Assessor Training Day appears flawed to myself and others that I have discussed it with.

What if the Level 2 coach gains that status and then does little or no assessing, or even paddling, as is the case with **some** club instructors and teachers that I know, especially where canoeing isn't their main interest. After three years of inactivity they may attend an assessor training day.

On the other hand a mature, active paddler with many years experience both in coaching and personal skills, who works in the outdoors **every day**, either gains Level 3 in a relatively short space of time or enters directly at that level through exemption, would have to wait a further **3 years** before being allowed to attend an Assessor Training Day.

Does this really ensure an even standard amongst our assessors?

What I propose is a scheme whereby anyone wishing to attend an Assessor Training Day must complete an assessment log book outlining their **assessment experience** beforehand in the same way that you have to fill in an assessor's log to progress through the scheme once you have gained A1 status. Only when candidates have completed an agreed number of assessments will they be able to attend. Surely this would guarantee a more even standard for people attending assessor training days and therefore the quality of our future assessors, and would not inhibit people who have the experience, or can gain it in less than three years, from progressing.

The Aim of the BCU Coaching Service states in part, 'to ensure . . . those already in the sport are assisted to progress to whatever level . . . within canoeing suits them best'

I hope you will give some consideration to my proposal, and keep the issue open for debate.

A plea for common sense, NORTH WALES

Dear CoDe,

The High Support Stroke and Sculling for Support

Initially, I did not feel inclined to write to Code, because I personally felt that this issue was 'Old Hat'. To my knowledge, in the West Midlands Region and other Regions, most current up to-date Coaches have been teaching the 'low position' High support stroke for the last eight or nine years. Discussions with other Coaches lead me to believe that the 'low position' High Support Strokes were the main reason for the reduction in the incidence of shoulder dislocations in kayaking over the last ten years.

The reason for my writing, is about some of the comments referring to the 'Sculling for Support' Stroke. For the 3 Star award, we train in Sculling for Support in a 'low' high support position, sculling on the face of the blade with the kayak right over on edge. We then talk about using sculling for support 'as an introduction to working in a stopper'.

I would like to open up the debate on sculling for support. I ask the question of experienced paddlers and Coaches who regularly play and work in stoppers, 'What stroke do they use for support when sitting in a stopper?' At this stage I suggest we ignore the deep vertical re-circulating stopper, and concentrate on the more friendly play-wave type stopper. I put forward, that if they are experienced paddler they will sit in the stopper on a low support stroke, feeling for and utilising the hard green water passing under their boat for actual support and using balance and edging to stay upright. There will be very little movement of the paddle in providing support.

As experienced paddlers, what do we do if we wish to move about in this stopper - either to get out, or perhaps to position ourselves for performing a rodeo type stopper move. Do we change from our low support position and drop into a high support sculling stroke so that we can move our paddle about into another stroke position? I suggest not! Most experienced paddlers actually scull on the back of the blade whilst in a low support position, or rotate between the back of the blade and the face of the blade depending on what they wish to achieve. They recognise the importance of working and staying in the low support position whilst sitting in a stopper.

I often see inexperienced paddlers using a high sculling for support action converting to a forward paddle type stroke, desperately trying to extricate themselves from stoppers. The pained expression on their faces often tells the story of the difficulty they are having. Paddling in a high support sculling position, it is virtually impossible to achieve a reverse paddling action. Escape from a stopper is therefore limited to a forward and inefficient paddling action. Why do they insist on working in a stopper on a high sculling for support action? Is it because this is only the only stroke that they have been taught and they have been told, this is the stroke to use if caught in a stopper. Unfortunately, our Star awards only include sculling for support on the face of the blade.* How many Coaches actually teach sculling for support in a low support position on the back of the blade?

When working in white water and specifically for stopper training, I teach low support sculling on the back of the blade, even though it is not in the BCU syllabus+. Whilst sitting in a stopper on a low support stroke, moving to a forward paddle stroke can be difficult. It requires a forward sculling action on the back of the blade, the paddle then needs to be rotated into a forward bow rudder type position so that a supporting forward power type stroke can be executed - not easy for the inexperienced paddler, and often not particularly efficient. However, a more powerful reverse stroke can easily be executed from the low support position, sculling on the back of the blade into a reverse paddle position whereby a very powerful reverse stroke can be implemented. This is often the easiest way of exiting from a stopper.

Are we wrong in continuing to teach the high sculling for support stroke? I have heard that many Coaches think this stroke has limited use in modern paddling. Ask the experienced paddler what stroke they use if caught out by a deep re-circulating, pour over type stopper - where the kayak has to be held right over on edge and balance cannot be achieved. I suggest, that without thinking, they will use a 'low' high support sculling action on the face of the blade as taught in the 3 Star syllabus!

Do we need to consider developing the Sculling for support stroke further, and include Low Support Sculling on the back of the blade, in the syllabus for the 3 and / or 4 Star awards? With Low Support Sculling using the back of the blade, there is less risk of injury, and combined with High Support Sculling on the face of the blade will develop the paddler's awareness of slicing the paddle blade into new padded stroke positions.

MIKE PHILLIPS, Birmingham

Editorial comment:

* The 3-Star Test requires sculling on both sides, both high and 'low' forms.

+ The low form of the scull is easier to perform on the non-drive side particularly initially. It is also widely used for racing craft in this mode.

Dear Code,

In response to your article on shoulder dislocations, No 71, October 1996, I am a female paddler and unfortunately dislocated my shoulder one year ago. My dislocation was not from a high brace, but a freak incident. I am not an inexperienced paddler.

I totally agree with Mr Atkins that the high brace, if performed incorrectly can lead to dislocation and that this is not the only incident in which this can occur. The article concentrated on the incidence of dislocations, causes and avoidance, and only briefly touched on rehabilitation. Psychological damage was not discussed.

As a personal view, my dislocation was the most painful experience of my life, one I never want to repeat. In my case, my right shoulder was completely immobilised for six weeks (great fun when you have just started a degree in Outdoor Education and are right handed).

Nevertheless, the immobilisation phase passes relatively quickly, but it is the rehabilitation that is the main concern. You need to build your whole shoulder up to be stronger than it was before!

Physiotherapy is a must. I attended physio twice a week (even with hangovers) and undertook my own exercise programme at home, at least 45 minutes per day for three months. Swimming was a good exercise, and later on, minimal weight training too.

Psychologically, my kayaking went down the drain, I am still very nervous when paddling in white water, and will not take any chances. However, repeated pool sessions and supportive friends make sure I still have a fun but careful time.

The main thing that will get you through this injury is a sense of humour. Here are a few light hearted advantages of dislocating your shoulder:

- You meet good looking doctors
- You get loaned a lap-top computer
- You can still climb mountains
- You get a ride in an ambulance
- Your other arm gets stronger

I believe that if you are patient, then recurrent dislocation will be minimised.

NINA SAUNDERS, Ontario

Dear CoDe

Brace strokes need to be strong and powerful. We can think of the low brace as being analogous to the press up with the elbows high and the weight over the point of support. The high brace should likewise be analogous to a pull up. If you try a pull-up on a bar (or door frame) two things become apparent.

- 1 It is easier with the body centrally between the arms, elbows vertically under the point of support.
- 2 You can only get effective support if the bar (or door frame) is parallel to and close to the line across the shoulders.

To make the high brace strong and powerful we need to mimic this position. The paddle shaft should be more or less across the shoulder line, close under the chin, with the elbows down, and the hands not too far displaced to the side.

However, if we try this from a vertical boat position we find either:

- 1 The hands have to move from the tight in across the shoulder position or
- 2 The angle of attach of the paddle steepens and you end up with the paddle diving end first and giving no support.

To overcome these problems it is important to realise that Low Brace and High Brace are NOT interchangeable.

To see this, start with a simple low brace, but progressively delay application of the stroke. Eventually you reach an angle of tip where there is no longer room to get the paddle in under the elbow for the 'press-up' position. At this point an effective low brace becomes impossible, and the high brace becomes the preferred stroke.

In a real situation, at this point both forearms should rotate upwards through 180° from vertically below the elbows with the shaft parallel to the hips to vertically above the elbows with the shaft parallel to the shoulders. As with many strokes the short sculling sweep from front to back across the sur-

face that helps prevent the blade from sinking should be created by trunk rotation **not** arm movement. (This keeps the shaft in the strong position across the shoulder-line and under the chin, and helps avoid the anterior dislocation position mentioned by Clive Atkins).

The final problem to be solved then, is if the high brace only works properly at a committed angle of lean, how can it be practised? The answer turns out to be simple. To practice on the right, the paddle is held across the shoulder-line with the elbows down. The body is wound up by rotating to the left, as if preparing for a forward sweep on the right, and then bent forward at the waist. The right elbow should be the first point of contact with the water, just outside the right knee. At about the same time the face of the right blade should touch the water and the paddlers chin should touch the centre-line.

As the exercise is developed the aim should be to improve body rotation and flexibility so that the shaft stays as close as possible to the line across the shoulders and the shoulder line stays as parallel as possible to the water surface.

It is important for paddlers to realise that the high brace is not a dry stroke. I believe that at the very least the point of the elbow must always get wet in an effective high brace, and the face will often dip into the water as the hip flick initiates the roll up of the boat.

Given that the stroke is only useful when the paddler is seriously off-balance, a wet arm or wet face are a small price to pay to avoid a full roll, or worse still, a dislocated shoulder.

ROBERT HIGNELL,

Dear CoDe

We did it for Kayaks in July and now we've done it for Open Canadians in October. A standardisation forum was held at Merseysport in Liverpool in Sunday 13 October. This is part of our programme in Liverpool and on Merseyside to try and tackle the problems associated with a change in the Star Test Awards and a desperate need to try and address the problem of variable standards.

As with the forum on kayaking there were several points that caused considerable debate and a need for clarification. We were very pleased to see the alignment of skills and the similarities between both disciplines (closed cockpit kayak and open canoe).

- 1 Strong feelings that in the two and three star the test elements should be undertaken both tandem and solo, not as an option (particularly as it is a requirement for level 1 and 2 coaches to be solo - why differentiate?). I remember a North West E2 seminar several years ago suggesting similar.
- 2 In 3 star no mention of a boat in deep water rescue, only a swimmer - should this not include boat recovery as well? Is a suitable rescue and return to boat no longer a requirement? This also features similar for closed cockpit kayaks.
- 3 For both forums I requested any available material on the syllabus - fly sheets, posters, etc. To date I have received a large poster with kayak on one side and canoe on the other. Shame that the writing is so difficult to read - is this all that is available other than what is in the Directory?

Many thanks to all those involved and Merseysport for providing us with the use of their first class facility.

Next I intend to run a day for Level 1 Coaches, as testing is not part of their syllabus and they can now test 1 star in their own discipline - no Level 1 coach has attended either forum to date.

I would like to make a plea to those coaches who for whatever reason have been unable to attend so far to make every effort to attend one of the future forums. By pooling knowledge and information it is the only way to move forward and progress - no-one has all the answers.

Feedback from the participants was very positive and leads me to the view that such forums should be a regular occurrence so that not only standards but teaching points - have you tried . . . tips, etc, can be passed around. I know I have certainly learned from both experiences to date.

Suggestions have been made as to presenting other forums, content specific, as updates and refreshers.

It is not only E2's that should be expected to attend such events - anyone with a responsibility to assess anything should attend a forum at their appropriate level. Dates of future forums shall be available from myself, Merseysport, Dave Jones Trailers, Sefton Paddlers, Friends of Allonby and Ian Bell (LCO Wirral) - as soon as a suitable programme can be worked out.

DAVE MCGARRY, LCO Liverpool

DofC comments: The emphasis at 1 and 2 Star is on tandem. The consensus view was that youngsters invariably operate in doubles at that stage. However, for entry to coaching qualifications we need to assess solo performance, so we need a solo test. We are therefore left with freedom of choice for the candidate(s). Is that such a bad thing?

We are constantly being caught out by the interpretation which members manage to put on wording. 'Swimmer' is not mentioned in the 3 Star tests rescue requirements. The text says 'Be rescued and carry out the deep water rescue of another canoeist'. Unless an alternative system has been invented of taking the victim ashore and leaving their boat to fend for itself, the assumption has always been that by 'rescue another canoeist' is meant 'put them back in their boat'. It was not picked up as ambiguous in the fairly extensive checking of the drafts by various members. This will, however, be spelled out in any future reprint.

Apologies if insufficient material was supplied. The syllabi are all available in leaflet form, and sufficient quantities could - and should - have been supplied.

Dear CoDe,

In Defence of the 5 Starless E2

In the last issue of CoDe, Peter Bamford expressed some reservations in respect of E2s without a 5 Star award.

One reason stated originally for the 5 Star requirement was that, in the new awards scheme, the 4 Star award was to include paddling on grade 3 rivers. Examiners/assessors training Level 3 Coaches would thus need to be qualified to lead at that level. The grade 3 proposal was, however, subsequently rescinded leaving the 4 Star award operating on grade 2 as was the case with the old Proficiency award.

Under the new scheme, assessors running Level 3 Coach courses should only need to work on grade 2 rivers. Why do they need a 5 Star award? Their technical competence in safety terms is surely adequate if they are experienced Level 3 Coaches. If not, why did other assessors sign off their assessor log cards?

What an E2/Assessor needs is the following:

- 1 An in-depth knowledge of all the skills up to 4 Star
- 2 The ability to train other people in how to teach those skills in an effective and meaningful manner
- 3 The ability to teach safe leadership skills at an appropriate level
- 4 The ability to assess in an accurate and fair manner

The knowledge required for items 1 & 3 would surely be present in an experienced Level 3 Coach? Items 2 & 4 have traditionally been taken care of by working alongside other assessors and compulsory attendance at a standards seminar every three years. It is this latter aspect which, in my opinion, leaves cause for concern. I have attended seminars every year, except one, since their inception and found them interesting and relevant but far from comprehensive in terms of developing high quality, all-round assessors.

I feel the way forward for both existing E2's and future assessors is to make attendance at seminars more frequent,

perhaps annually. Seminars would need to cover topics such as: standards for Level 1 - 3 Coach awards, Coaching methods etc.

Ideally, the BCU would produce an annual programme which all would follow in order to facilitate uniformity across the regions and to produce national standards.

Only when we begin to tackle issues such as these will the standard of coaching courses be guaranteed. Is the possession of a 5 Star award seriously going to address the fundamental aspects of being a good trainer/assessor up to Level 3 Coach standard? After all, 5 Star is a qualification to lead a group of moderately competent paddlers safely on grade 3/4 water. It is not a teaching or assessor qualification in itself.

Standardisation

I have both read and heard complaints about Level 2 and Level 3 Coach training and assessment courses for many years. These complaints have never suggested that the assessor had a problem with personal skills. They have always been directed at the manner in which courses were run and in which course members were treated as people. Here are some typical comments:

We only did rescues and personal skills, we were not taught anything about how to teach.

We were not shown any modern teaching methods.

We spent too much time doing unrealistic scenarios.

eg: Half the group is injured in some way - sort out the problem.

I wasn't told what was expected of me or how the day was going to be run (on assessment).

I only had 7 minutes with a group to demonstrate my teaching ability.

We were examined on Grade 3 when we should have only been on grade 2.

The assessor didn't like women.

While I usually adopt a neutral stance on such comments (after all, I didn't witness the incidents personally) I can see that none of these comments were directed at personal paddling ability. They do, however, suggest some kind of problem which will not be solved by holding a 5 Star award.

There is little doubt in my mind that a person who has spent many years running courses up to 4 Star standard, and leading groups on rivers up to grade 2, is likely to be very responsive to the needs of a Level 3 Coach. With good training, such a person ought to make a good assessor providing they have the appropriate personal qualities. Perhaps asking for five years as a Level 3 Coach before becoming a trainee assessor would be more useful than insisting on the 5 Star award. At the very least, there should be an avenue for people who can demonstrate their ability to be good assessors without a 5 Star.

We do have a reasonably good assessor system already but it is not perfect. The only way to improve it, however is to tackle the issues and not to hide behind the rather dubious proposition that only high performance paddlers make good assessors.

B L MEE, 5 Starless E2

PANEL OF EXPERTS ON CANOEING FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE DISABLED

Under new arrangements for promoting the interests of people with a disability, the BCU Council has determined that each Specialist Committee should establish an advisory 'panel of experts'.

If you are a member of the Coaching Service well experienced in working with paddlers with a disability, or are a Coaching Service member with a disability and would like to help on this panel, please volunteer your services to the Director of Coaching at the BCU office.

Dear CoDe

Bureaucracy

The good old days before EC Directives, the Activity Centres Act, CEN standards, French Equivalence of qualifications etc. are gone. The bureaucrats have made so many problems, soon all small businesses will need a legal expert to keep up to date or give up!

I thought that the extent of the EC Directive below should be made known to the canoeing world.

Following the EX Directive on Package Travel No. 90/314/EEC, the UK passed the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tour Regulations 1992, effective from 1/1/93.

The definition of 'a tour organiser' is the provider of a 'package' (or arrangement) comprising a combination of at least two of the following components:

1 Transport

2 Accommodation

3 Other tourist services not ancillary to transport or accommodation and accounting for a significant proportion of the package. (It is difficult not to include canoeing in this)

The law applies to all holidays sold within the EC irrespective of their destination (including within the UK)

The main effect is all organisers must provide financial protection and repatriation cover in the event of their financial failure. This may be bonding (like with ABTA), an approved insurance policy or a 'designated' trust account administered by a trustee like a firm of Solicitors. Also a tour operator public liability and professional indemnity insurance is required.

At present, most canoeing organisers have not realised they are breaking this law. Most canoeing trips run commercially in the UK or abroad consist of either 2 or 3 of the above components. Centre based courses can normally be exempt as educational.

For occasional small commercial canoeing trips (as I used to run) the cost of complying with the EC directive including tour operator liability insurance with minimum annual premiums would normally be over £1,000, which works out expensive per person. This will result in either higher prices or the end of some trips, or continuing to committing a criminal act until caught!

Over the last two years, due to my involvement in skiing holidays, I have been checked by the Trading Standards Office, Consumers' Association, ABTOF, French Government Tourist Office, CAA, Ski Club of Great Britain, Sunday Times, plus I have been contacted by several Companies offering cover, which was very difficult to find in 1993.

At present, advertisers in *Canoeist* and *Canoe Focus* seem to have avoided being contacted by the watchdogs, of which Trading Standards are the enforcer!

MICHAEL BRUCE, Alpine Options

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And now for something completely different ! A GENERAL SYNOPSIS

by Oliver Pritchett

People often ask me how I get my ideas for the hugely successful TV drama series I write. As it happens I do know exactly where and when it was that I got the inspiration for my latest blockbuster.

It is one of those sagas about two great dynasties in Texas and the whole thing came to me at ten-to-six last Thursday evening. I know the precise time because I was listening to Radio Four. By the time the weather forecast came on at five-to six I had the whole thing mapped out.

I'll give you a general synopsis. It is about these two adjoining cattle ranches - North Utsire and South Utsire. North Utsire is the home of the Tyne family and they have a herd of pedigree Sumburgh cattle. The patriarch of the family, living in a tastelessly furnished mansion, is old Dogger Tyne. He is rough and tough, has white hair and also blue eyes which he crinkles up meaningfully. He is widowed and has two daughters. The youngest is Lundy who is pert and tomboyish. The other daughter, Valentia, is quite different. She wears an awful lot of lip gloss and her lustrous head of hair is so heavily lacquered that it hardly moves when she goes out in a high wind - even Gale 8 at times.

Old Dogger Tyne loathes the Fisher family at South Utsire. The head of this family is Cromarty Fisher. He is fair, moderate and good. He has a senior ranchhand called Lewis whom he treats like a brother. Sometimes, however, he asserts his authority and kicks the butt of Lewis.

Cromarty Fisher has a handsome son named Rockall who has a hyperactive Adam's Apple, denoting sensitivity. Of course Rockall Fisher is in love with Lundy Tyne.

Why, you ask, do the Tynes hate the Fishers? It goes back to an earlier generation when Viking Tyne was courting the wistful, romantic Faeroes Fisher, but the families would not let them marry. Poor Faeroes went mad and threw herself off a cliff. The wind was Storm force 10 at the time. Viking dies of grief. (All this can be seen in flashback). Some folks say Faeroes secretly gave birth to a daughter called Hebri-des. (She will turn up as a successful lawyer in Episode Fourteen).

Other characters include Dogger Tyne's sidekick, a sinister figure called Malin. He owns a fierce dog - a German Bight. He seldom speaks, just gives the odd intermittent light scowl.

Then there is the femme fatale, Shannon Fastnet, who is in love with Rockall Fisher but knows it is hopeless.

You will soon be seeing the whole drama on your TV screens and I don't want to spoil the plot for you. I will just mention one marvellously dramatic moment. Young Lundy Tyne is being blackmailed by the evil Malin and finally she can take no more. She pulls out a Smith Knoll Automatic and shoots at him. Malin just laughs in his sinister way. "Missed", he sneers. "Three miles".

EASTERN REGION

LCO Norfolk. Roger Ward elected. Dave Holden's name was published as Dace Holder and these 'typos' rendered the election void. However Dave has decided that he could support Roger and withdrew his nomination from the election. Dave has also assured me that he does not require the election to be re-run !

Roger WARD, Norfolk College of Arts & Technology, Tennyson Ave, Kings Lynn, Norfolk. PE30 2QW 01553 76144. Roger will be holding his first meeting in December 1996 in conjunction with the Norfolk Canoeing Association. A second panel meeting is being planned for February 1997 since some may find the December meeting short notice. All CURRENT (Norfolk) registered coaching panel members should have received one mail-shot. If you have not received yours check registration - in the first instance with Roger Ward, not the BCU office.

(Editorial comment: A humble apology to Dave Holden for the catalogue of literal errors in the election entry).

LCO Hertfordshire. Mike James has reached the end of three years service. Regrettably due to business pressures he is not seeking re-election and therefore retiring from the post. Many thanks to him, and his family, for his contribution. NOMINATIONS to the RCO please.

Eastern Regional Coaching Panel Examiners Standards Seminar

Saturday 1 March, 1997 - Lowestoft.

Forum to follow National Programme (but excluding Assessor presentation). Wet activity and/or flares demonstration + Sunday sea tour.

Assessor Training Day

Sunday 2 March Lowestoft - see to RCO for application and cost.

Please send see for details and a map. No phone calls to the RCO about the above, between 21-28 February 1997.

1997 PRICES

The 1997 prices for tests and awards remain constant:

£2.50 per Star Test 1-3

£2.50 per Canoeing Safety Test

£5 per 4-5 Star (£7 non-members)

£5 per Aquatic First Aid Test (syllabus now available)

Discounted prices: £20.50 per lot of 10 x 1-3 Star Badges and Certificates (£100 per lot of 50). Mixed lots are acceptable.

Coaching Qualifications:

£10 per Registration Fee (level 1 first year only)

£10 per Enrolment Fee (training) / Assessment Fee
- payable for every course

LEVEL 5 COACH TRAINING COURSES

3-8 May - North Wales

Plas Y Brenin, Capel Curig, Gwynedd. 01690 720280

8-13 November - North Wales

Plas Y Brenin, Capel Curig, Gwynedd. 01690 720280

Scotland

Glenmore Lodge, Aviemore, Inverness-shire, PH22 1QU
01479 861276

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 1000.* 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 sae to Rogre Drummond for full details: South View, 8 Severn Bank, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 2JD.

*Please note earlier start time.

S/NVQ ASSESSOR TRAINING AND ORIENTATION

For level 3 Coaches with E2 Examiner (or A3 Assessor) status

Based at Holme Pierrepont

S/NVQ Assessor training: 14-15 January; 8-9 February; 13-14 March.

Cost: £45 for two days training (including board and lodging). There are signs that the funding that keeps the cost of the courses low is going to become more difficult to access. You are advised to take advantage of these opportunities to become an S/NVQ Assessor if you need to do so.

Assessor Orientation: 14 January; 8 February; 13 March.

Cost: £25 (includes coffee, lunch and tea). A one-day course for those who already hold D32/D33 and BCU grade 2 Examiner (or grade 3 Assessor) status.

Attention all those S/NVQ Trainees who have not completed

Friday 10 January - Saturday 11 January - Holme Pierrepont.

We are all very busy, and it is sometimes difficult to settle down to completing paper-work when we could be out canoeing!

You are encouraged, however, to attend a one or two-day event when you could concentrate on the completion of your award, with expert help and guidance to hand.

If you still have to complete an assessment, you will need to attend both days. If it is only the paperwork to fill in, you need to attend on the Saturday only. We can probably be flexible, however, and work around a number of options. I look forward to seeing you. Please apply as soon as possible, so we have some idea of numbers.

NB Attendance is FREE, but NO food will be provided, and you will need to book and pay for your own overnight accommodation at HPP (0115 9821212) if required. Please contact the BCU office for a list of b&b in the area if you need accommodation and find that HPP is full.

HOW TO BOOK

For any of the above courses please apply in writing to the BCU office before Christmas stating clearly:

Name, Address, Phone, Fax (if available), the exact course, and the days and dates on which you are attending. Confirmation and full travel and other details will be forwarded.

EXAMINER / ASSESSOR GRADING

Once an E2 always an E2 - well, nearly always!

Apologies are due to examiners over the confusion with regard to the transfer of grade 2 Examiner status to the equivalent Assessor grading.

The statement on page 14 of your *Directory of Tests and Awards* holds true:

'There is no need to convert grade 2 Examiner status (E2) to a relevant Assessor grade as your right to train and assess up to and including level 3 Coach (Senior Instructor) will not be withdrawn. It is intended, therefore, to keep this designation on your record'.

A complication is that the equivalent Assessor grade is grade 4, for which it is necessary to be a level 4 Coach (Advanced Senior Instructor) ie to hold the relevant 5 Star (Advanced Proficiency) and have attended a 2-day Coaching Processes course (or completed level 5 Coach training).

Assessor status will therefore be granted to existing grade 2 Examiners only on the following basis:

Members who held grade 2 Examiner status prior to 1 January 1996, will continue to be designated as E2. If they attend an Assessor Training Day this will be noted on their computer record by the letter A.

Grade 2 Examiners (E2) who become level 3 Coach (Senior Instructor) in the alternative discipline, and who have attended an Assessor Training Day, may transfer across to grade 3 Assessor (A3) - able to train and assess up to and including level 2 coaches in the alternative discipline - once they have satisfactorily assisted on at least 1 level 2 training course, and level 2 assessment, in that discipline. A Log Book must be applied for from the BCU office.

Grade 2 Examiners who become level 4 Coaches (Advanced Senior Instructor) in the discipline for which they hold E2 status, will be transferred to grade 4 Assessor status, upon completion of an Assessor Training Day.

The above applies equally to those members who were part way through becoming a grade 2 Examiner prior to 1 January 1996, and have subsequently been confirmed as a grade 2 Examiner.

ASSESSOR TRAINING DAYS

25 January - Chichester

Mike Watson, 6 Hillside Crescent, Angmering, West Sussex. 01903 771272

23 February - Leicester OPC

Andy O'Connor, 241 Duncan Road, Leicester. LE2 8EJ

23 February - Pangbourne

Kevin Dennis, County River Centre, Whitchurch Rd, Pangbourne, Reading.

2 March - Lowestoft

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

14 March - West Sussex

Mike Watson (see 25 January)

28 April - Germany

Tony Ford, Am Kurpark 4, 37444 St Andreasberg,

COACHING PROCESSES COURSES

18-19 January - Nottingham

Current Trends, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham.

08-09 February - Nottingham

Current Trends, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham.

21-23 March - Pangbourne

Kevin Dennis, County River Centre, Whitchurch Rd, Pangbourne, Reading.

05-06 April - Nottingham

Current Trends, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham.

14 - 15 June - North Wales

Plas Y Brenin, Capel Curig, Gwynedd. 01690 720280

The Invisible Man Syndrome

by Craig Armiger

I'm invisible for the whole day, you can't see me, but I'll be looking at you all the time." said the assessor.

Minutes later there was a rescue to handle. The group had just got onto the water, four candidates and four of us to act as members of the group. Two of the candidates headed for the stopper and dealt with the extraction of the paddler, then another incident to deal with, and the group was left with one candidate to take us down through the bridge and breakout at the bottom.

"I'm the invisible man. You can't see me." "I'm not in the group nor is he". "But they are". The group paddled on down the river and broke out on the right. Suddenly the invisible man was part of the group and broached onto a rock upstream at the top of the small rapid. The leader at the time was bemused at what was happening, as were a few others in the eddy. "You need to deal with the situation now!" But how do you rescue an invisible man? The leader waded out to get to the invisible man clinging onto his rock, but he was unconscious as well.

Suddenly whilst watching this incredible escapade, with the wink of an eye I was a fully qualified paramedic and was asked to take control of the medical problems of the invisible man. Entering into the staged incident I asked the basic ABC of first aid and gave a few suggestions as to how to treat the casualty. Reality suddenly came crashing in and I drifted down the eddy and back onto the playing on the wave with the others in order to keep warm.

Every rock emerging more than two inches out of the water was paddled towards with a smile by the assessors hoping to catch yet another victim. After trawling for candidates to fall into the net there was almost a hoot of ecstasy. Yet another sticker to go onto the side of the boat.

These comments are based solely on what I observed on this particular day. It incensed me so much that had to write in and tell people. This wasn't a feeling I had after getting off the water but within the first few minutes of being a member of the group. Some might say, why did I continue the day, or why didn't I say something to the assessor at the time. Well, firstly it wasn't my course to comment on, although I was tempted to say that this wasn't a very good advertisement for the coaching scheme. Secondly, it was one of those moments that you couldn't quite believe and hoped that it could only get better.

I am not the only individual that is concerned about the standard of some assessments, see CoDe August 1995 "Improving the approach to assessments", by Sue Middleton. Assessing is a difficult skill to progress to. The coaching scheme has for some time been looking at and changing the format for coaches to progress through to the position of assessor. The proposals set out in Nov 95 that an assessor has to hold his or her qualification for at least three years before attending an assessor course are in my mind a positive step in the right direction. This might then exclude the few that shoot up through the ranks aspiring to assess others, without serving the correct apprenticeship first.

Although I do share some of the reservations about the scheme as mentioned by Andy Bond CoDe Feb.96. There is a call for assessor training, this particular day only highlighted to me that this day must come sooner rather than later. The aims and objectives should be clear to the candidates and a feeling of clarity in what they have to achieve. It's not a game of "Now get out of that". A new era is upon us, let us throw away these historic ideas on how to assess coaches.

Let us be professional about how we project ourselves to the rest of the scheme. I have to say professionally as these people did pay to be humiliated.

I felt for the candidates on that day, but also the two who were supposed to be taking their proficiency, as well as being members of the group.

I hope that assessor training courses will be the beginning of the new standardisation period so that a circus like this can be averted in the future.

NOTICES

TAX RELIEF

GOOD NEWS FOR EMPLOYED INSTRUCTORS

Members whose qualification is directly relevant to the duties they perform in their paid employment may now claim 85% of their annual membership fee against Tax. Relief does not extend to Life Membership.

The Union's name will not appear on the official register until 1997. Those claiming before then need to quote to their Inspector SAPP/CI/SUB/1954/MA dated 7 November 1996.

HELP REQUIRED

International Canoe Exhibition

22-23 February - NEC Birmingham

BCU Stand at Caravan and Leisure Show

15-21 February 1997

We will once again have a stand at the NEC during the week before the International Canoe Exhibition, which is part of the Caravan and Leisure Show. Volunteers are required to help 'person' (!) this stand for the period 15-21 February inclusive.

A free pass to the show on the day you volunteer your services, travelling expenses at 12.5p per mile, plus £5 lunch money, and a BCU T-Shirt, are the 'perks'. Regrettably overnight accommodation cannot be provided.

If you are able to help out on any (or all!) of the days involved, please confirm in writing to the BCU office, before Christmas, stating clearly Name, Address, Telephone, Fax (if available) and each of the days 15-21 February (0930-1730) when you are able to assist.

Full travel details and pass will be forwarded in confirmation.

BUOYANCY AIDS MAINTENANCE

A leaflet is available from the BCU office explaining the new EC standards for buoyancy aids, and the legal implications for centres with regard to the continued use of existing stocks. This is perfectly in order provided the buoyancy aids remain in sound condition.

The leaflet sets out a recommended 'home' testing procedure to ensure that sufficient inherent buoyancy remains in the device. Please send sae for 'BA leaflet'.

SAF COACHING SCHOLARSHIPS

SAF scholarships are available to coaches who work with some performers in competitive sport eligible for SAF grants, who are aged between 12 and 24 and are in full or part time education in the UK, and one or more performers who have achieved a top six lacing in the most recent UK/National Championships in their age group, or top 6 in national rankings, or are a member of a recognised national squad.

The scholarships (up to £570) are for relevant courses / workshops / conferences, or a period of study on an approved training course, institute, squad camp or workshop, or a period of work alongside an approved coach/expert overseas or in the UK.

Please send sae to the BCU office for application form and information leaflet.

THE CARRYING OF KNIVES

Concern has been expressed over the implications of both the existing law concerning the carrying of knives, and the likely outcome of the Bill currently being prepared. The situation is being monitored, and information concerning the matter as it may affect canoeists will be carried in a future edition of CoDe.

DUCHY COLLEGE

Cornwall's College of the Countryside CANOEING INSTRUCTOR REQUIRED URGENTLY

Due to continuing expansion we have a vacancy for an Outdoor Pursuits Instructor to start immediately.

We require staff trained to BCU Level 3 Canoe Coach (Senior Instructor Open Canoe)

A complementary land based qualification eg: SPSA or MLTB would be an advantage.

Reasonable pay, plus full board and lodging also available in exchange for limited wardening duties.

For full details and an application form please phone

Amanda Menear on 01209 710077 Ext 162

KAYAK INSTRUCTORS

Carsington Watersports Centre require multi-activity instructors for the 1997 Summer Season.

Applicants with Kayak Instructor qualifications especially welcome.

Tel: Terry on 01629 540478 or send CV to:

Carsington Sports and Leisure Ltd, Carsington Water, Ashbourne, Derby. DE6 1ST

LAKE DISTRICT

Instructors required to teach a range of activities including

Climbing, Canoeing, Sailing, Mountain Biking

NGB Qualifications are an advantage

For application form contact:

Newlands Adventure Centre, Stair, Keswick, CA12 5UF. Tel. 01787 78463

SITUATIONS VACANT

The Venture Centre, Isle of Man requires assistants and instructors to provide tuition and supervision to groups of young people and adults of their MULTI ACTIVITY ADVENTURE COURSES

Candidates should be over 18 years of age and hold at least one governing body award (preferably BCU Level 2 Coach or SPSA). Season runs from March - September 1997.

Rates of pay dependant on qualifications and experience. From £50 - £100 per week, plus meals and accommodation. Non smoker. Must be enthusiastic and keen to work with young people.

For further details contact: The Venture Centre, Maughold, Isle of Man IM7 1AW (01624 814240)

Qualified Activity and Environmental Instructors are required from February 1997 to work at the National Residential Centre of Youth Clubs UK in the New Forest.

These positions are 'live-in' with full board and accommodation being offered along with a salary of £90.00 per week.

The posts require qualifications in the instruction of Canoeing (BCU Level 2 Coach - Instructor) or Archery (GNAS Leader) or Ropes Course (RCD Instructor) with a current valid RLSS National Pool Lifeguard Award.

For further details or an informal chat please contact: Lee Willows, Avon Tyrrell National Residential Centre, Youth Clubs UK, Bransgore, Hampshire. BH23 8EE (01425 672347; Fax: 01425 673883)

Seasonal / Trainee Instructors Required - BCU / RYA / MLTB

CV & SAE: Instructor Recruiting, Calvert Trust Kielder, Kielder Water, Hexham, Northumberland NE48 1BS (01434 25023).

Earn as you Learn as a Modern Apprentice at MENDIP OUTDOOR PURSUITS. Follow 2 year work-based training scheme to NVQ Level 3 in Outdoor Education plus NGB awards.

01934 820518 for application form.

Mendip Outdoor Pursuits require qualified, dedicated staff from April 1987. Long and short season contracts available.

01934 820518 for application form.

Seasonal Instructional Staff. Qualified RYA and BCU Instructors are required to help run canoe and sailing courses and to assist in the general running of the Centre.

Flexibility and enthusiasm are essential for these residential paid posts.

Long term:- May-August Short term:- July-August

Applicants should preferably have a background in Scouting or Guiding

Further details and application forms from LONGRIDGE SCOUT BOATING CENTRE, QUARRY WOOD RD, MARLOW, SL7 1RE TEL/FAX 01628 483252

1997 SEASONAL INSTRUCTORS REQUIRED

The Guide Association (incorporated by Royal Charter) require ACTIVITY INSTRUCTORS for an activity centre situated in THE NEW FOREST, Hampshire.

Short and longer term contracts available.

Candidates should be over 18 years of age and hold minimum qualification Level 1 Kayak Coach

Enthusiasm and ability to work with young people essential

Experience / qualifications in other activities desirable:

RLSS / GNAS

Application forms and job description available from:

The Manager, Foxlease, Lyndhurst, Hants SO43 7DE

Tel: 01703 282638; Fax: 01703 282561

WYEDEAN CANOE & ADVENTURE CENTRE

Providers of Top Quality Adventure Activities

Instructors are invited to apply now for positions within our Company. All applicants must be Qualified in a variety of Pursuits and importantly, suitably experienced BCU, SPSA, LCLA, GNAS etc.

Chief Instructor: contract March - October 1997

Instructors: contract April - September and June - August 1997

Send CV with covering letter to:

Holly Barn, Symonds Yat, Coleford, Glos. GL16 7NZ

Tel: 01594 833238

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

White Water Anxiety

COACHING IMPLICATIONS

(part one)

by Nick Cunliffe

White water paddling is a fascinating activity. Otherwise sane and rational individuals choose to expose themselves to high risk in their pursuit of adventure. It is even more fascinating that many people persist in this activity despite their high anxiety on the river. Technical skills are only part of the solution; many people also need a bit of mental training to get the most from their paddling.

The following articles scratch the surface of this enormous area, and suggest how we can coach techniques such as goal setting, focused concentration, and increased self confidence.

These are practical coping strategies to help our students get a little closer to their best performance. All examples given are taken from recreational white water kayaking, although the techniques will transfer to other disciplines. The articles are written with the recreational coach in mind; competition coaches will probably have their own priorities and sources of information.

A Short Story . . .

"Brian was stressed out. He had paddled the rapid a couple of times before, but never at this level. It was simple enough really, he told himself - just avoid the hole to the left of the lead in, hold a good line through the falls and make the eddy on river right before the next drop. The trouble was, telling himself that he could do it didn't get him any nearer to actually believing it.

He couldn't focus on his chosen line, his pounding heart was leaving him breathless in the eddy, and his fumbling hands were struggling with the spray deck. Every time he muttered the words "let's go then", his head was filled with images of previous bad lines, nasty stoppers and long, cold swims.

He knew he had to run it. After all, Kate had just paddled the rapid smoothly and gracefully - which only made matters worse. With a heavy heart and a white knuckle grip on his paddle, Brian headed off downstream....

"... as he clung grimly to end of the end of the throwline, slowly swinging in to the bank, he felt the waves of frustration wash over him once more. Another swim, and he simply knew he should have coped with that last rapid - never mind falling in on the lead in. If only, Brian wondered, if only he could control his nerves - he'd be OK?"

A familiar story? Most of us have a friend whose nerves on the water positively hinder their paddling performance. The story above relates a number of effects which frequently occur when we begin to feel stressed.

An Explanation . . .

First, let's dispel a few myths. Brian's pounding heart and trembling hands were neither unnatural, nor a sure sign of imminent failure. Indeed, the negative images filling his head and his inability to concentrate were just the product of his own anxiety.

Physical and mental responses to the challenging situations typically found in white water paddling are inevitable and often desirable. Everyone is familiar with the body's "fight or flight" response, which produces the physical arousal necessary for sustained activity. The heart rate and breathing increase in readiness for the coming action. The urge to visit the toilet - to lighten the load - is apparent.

Also, mental arousal can help to sharpen the senses and improve our capacity to process relevant information from the

environment. In other words, we reach a state of greater awareness, of sharpened senses in anticipation of the demands ahead.

However, an anxious interpretation of these responses can sometimes have a negative effect on our performance. Over reaction to the demands of the task affects us in a variety of ways, many of which Brian was exhibiting in the story at the start of the article.

Stress and Anxiety:

Here are two very familiar words we often use in our everyday lives. Although they mean two different things, we often use them to describe the same feelings. For the sake of clarity, let's define them correctly.

Stress is an influence which places increasing demands on our performance.

Take the example of motorway driving - causes of stress might include poor visibility, rush hour traffic, or the close attentions of a police car . . .

The key here is that these stressors might or might not affect our driving performance. We might have high confidence in our driving ability, know the road very well, or have good concentration skills.

Anxiety occurs when the demands of the task outweigh our perceived ability to cope.

In the example above, we might doubt our ability to cope with the conditions, or worry so much about other drivers that our lack of concentration makes us a hazard on the road.

It's not all bad news here, for a couple of good reasons:

First, anxiety is related to our own perceptions of ability, and thus can be controlled.

In stressful situations, we ask ourselves the question, "can I cope?"

Coping strategies aim to convert the answer from an anxious "no" to a confident "yes!"

The stresses remain, but anxiety reduces.

Second, anxiety need not be viewed entirely negatively.

Moderate amounts (sometimes termed arousal levels) in stressful surroundings can help prepare mind and body for action.

An important coaching implication here is that anxiety is a very natural response in perceived risk activities such as white water paddling. Paddlers often feel a sense of inadequacy in the face of their anxiety, especially if their peers have buried their own behind a facade of bravado!

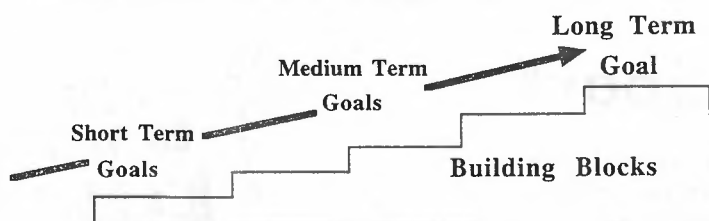
In such cases, we can encourage paddlers to accept their fears as a part of the game, and to develop positive coping strategies in their paddling. Most of us will have some empathy here with our students, and we should show it - after all, very few paddlers have never been afraid on a river!

Goal Setting

Goal Setting is a fundamental skill in coping with stressful situations. Good goal setting can reduce the number of times our students get that "wrong time - wrong place" feeling. It can help to improve performance with fewer setbacks and plateaus, and it can give something positive to focus on when the paddling gets a bit difficult.

Goal setting is a powerful tool to increase paddling performance, but must be used effectively. The building block ap-

proach to coaching involves a focus on short term goals, to bring our students nearer to medium and long term goals that they cannot immediately attain.



Score the Right Goals

In structuring coaching sessions, it is important for us to agree the right kind of short term goals with our students. We should be giving people the tools to develop their paddling between coaching sessions, and choosing the right goals is very important.

- **Process Goals** refer to those actions which underpin performance, such as fitness, technical ability and tactical skills. Process goals might include work on boat balance during eddy turns, improved posture when surfing waves, or practising spotting breakouts earlier on the river.
- **Performance Goals** refer to the results of process goals, and are the next step up the goal setting ladder. Examples include making five breakouts during the rapid, hitting the perfect line through the bottom stopper, or rolling first time.
- **Outcome Goals** are outside our direct control as they rely on the performance of others. For example, we might set ourselves the target of rolling less than everyone else during the river trip, or winning in the local rodeo. Such outcome goals are sometimes an indicator of improved performance, but are too lacking in control to be relied upon in the goal setting process.

The whole point of effective goal setting is that it creates a series of manageable steps to take our students from one level of performance to another. Without these steps, progress can be slowed and frustrated.

Bear in mind that short term process goals are vital at all levels of performance. Once our students have achieved a new medium term goal (for example, greater control when running Grade 3 rapids), we must then identify a whole new raft of process goals to take them to the next medium term goal.

SMART Goals

While good goal setting can be a great way to improve paddling performance, choosing the wrong goals can be equally detrimental. When choosing goals with our students, we should remember to think SMART:

- S** Specific. A vague aim to improve our students' paddling is far less effective than (for example) a specific performance goal related to making more eddies on a particular rapid.
- M** Measurable. Good goal setting increases self confidence through frequent success. We need to recognise that our students are reaching their goals, and to transfer that in feedback.
- A** Achievable. Above all, goals must be motivating. Choosing too difficult goals is frustrating for coach and student, but we must also avoid easy goals that fail to offer enough challenge. In other words, don't aim to jump two grades next time afloat, nor spend the entire day in the swimming pool.
- R** Relevant. It can be tempting to concentrate on our students' strengths rather than their weaknesses. Be clear about which paddling skills need most attention, and set the relevant process goals.
- T** Timing. Identify whether goals are short, medium or long term. Also, be clear about the timing of process goals to achieve performance goals. Choosing a correct sequence of goals, and structuring the coaching sessions well, is one of the most important tasks for the coach.

Two final considerations in goal setting - we must ensure that all goals are **AGREED** between the coach and the student. Without ownership over the goal setting process, our students are likely to be less motivated.

Also, we should make all our goals **POSITIVE**:

Avoid negative statements that might reinforce any bad habits - instead, focus on what needs to be done to make the necessary changes. For example, setting the negative performance goal, "don't capsize" is far less positive than choosing two or three positive process goals related to boat balance and posture.

Summary

Of the different techniques suggested in these articles, goal setting is perhaps the most important step toward improved performance in white water paddling. It is a relatively simple technique to develop in our coaching, which can become second nature with practice. Like any skill, it requires practice to become effective; poor goal setting can equally be detrimental to performance.

Consider the following suggestions:

- Agree positive goals with your students.
- Ensure that the goals follow a logical short-medium-long term progression.
- Ensure they are made up of process and performance goals.
- Apply the SMART test - critically examine the properties of your goals.
- Regularly review your students' goals - have the medium and long term goals changed
 - are the short term goals proving effective ?
- Are your goals increasing your students' motivation to improve ? If not, why not ?

Good goal setting can increase our students' motivation and confidence, allow them to experience success more often, help to identify appropriate targets, and can accelerate the skill learning process. It also underpins the other strategies outlined in the following articles.

The next article looks at the importance of focused concentration in white water paddling. Coaching suggestions are outlined to help paddlers cope more effectively with anxiety afloat.

To be continued . . .

AFAS Association for Adventure Sports
Aontas Fiontair agus Spóirt



Director

National Adventure Centre

Applications are invited from suitably qualified individuals with the requisite experience, both professional and managerial, for the position of

Director of the National Adventure Centre.

This is one of the most important positions in Irish Adventure Sports and the occupant has a significant role in the formulation of National Adventure sports policy.

The Director's position carries an annual salary of 27,000 p.a. together with a pension contribution

and the initial contract of employment will be for three years.

The National Adventure Centre "Tiglin"

is located at

Tigin, Ashford, Co. Wicklow.

Individuals wishing to apply for this position should write in the first instance for further details and an Application Form to the **Chairman**, Association for Adventure Sports, House of Sport, Longmile Road, Dublin 12.

The closing date for applications is the 15th December 1996.

All applications will be treated in confidence.

Protecting Children in Sport

The NCF has been responsible for raising awareness of the need to ensure that sport is **fun** and **safe** for all children. This work culminated in the first *Child Protection in Sport* seminar for governing bodies in June, supported by the Sports Council. Over 150 representatives from 50 sports attended to listen to keynote presentations from Prof Celia Brackenridge (Cheltenham and Gloucester College) and Bruce Clarke (NSPCC). Practical workshop sessions were organized throughout the day on:

- recruitment and selection
- dealing with allegations of abuse against coaches and volunteers
- training issues for protecting children
- listening to young athletes: promoting their rights and safety
- promoting good practice in sport
- dealing with the aftermath
- protecting the most vulnerable
- maintaining safe boundaries in coaching.

The seminar provided an excellent platform for sports governing bodies to discuss areas of concern, share examples of good practice and decide on future action to reduce the risk of child abuse in their sport. Dr Anita White (Head of National Services at the Sports Council) highlighted a number of key action points raised during the seminar including

the need for further research. It was proposed that NGBs in conjunction with the NCF and the Sports Council should:

- adopt a Code of Ethics and Conduct
- draw up grievance and disciplinary procedures
- establish a coaching register
- incorporate child protection issues into their coach education programmes
- educate all those involved in the provision of sport about acceptable and unacceptable practices to protect children
- draw up contracts of employment
- establish close links with the agencies involved in child protection
- disseminate examples of good practice
- continue discussion on future action
- review the draft guidelines *NGB Procedures for Child Protection*. The NCF agreed to help customize and produce the guidelines for each governing body.

Delegates also received sample copies of a new poster for young people: *Sport should be fun and you should feel safe*, and a leaflet for adults: *Protecting children from abuse*. These resources were produced by NCF Publications in conjunction with the Sports Council, the Amateur Swimming Federation of GB, the NSPCC and Childline.



What Next?

NGBs wanting help in drawing up their child protection procedures, running training workshops or ordering further copies of the poster or leaflet, should contact Penny Crisfield at the NCF on 0113 274 4802.

BCU APPOINTMENT - COACHING DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

This is a re-advertisement of the post due to a limited number of applicants having been received
Previous applicants will be automatically re-considered

A Coaching Development Officer is required to assist the Director of Coaching for an initial period of one year.

Candidates will be either level 5 Kayak Coaches or level 4 Kayak Coaches with grade 2 Examiner status, capable of running courses at all levels, including coach education and offering practical coaching at a high level. He or she will be word processor literate and capable of producing good written material.

The Coaching Development Officer will concentrate on the determination and production of resource material for the better presentation of courses, and on projects which are capable of generating greater or new income.

Funding for the post is secure for a period of 12 months at which time the role will be reviewed.

The post will be based from the BCU offices and the successful candidate will need to be located within travelling distance of Nottingham. Regrettably no financial assistance is available towards relocation costs.

The salary will be £17,000 and the successful candidate will be expected to own a motor car. A mileage allowance based upon civil service rates will be available for essential journeys carried out within an agreed budget.

Please send to the BCU office for standard application form which must be returned by 21 December.