

Coaching Development

# CoDe

the magazine of the BCU Coaching Service  
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**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.*

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.

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# Dear Code.....

Dear Code

Just a line in response to your article in the April Code, entitled BCU EQUITY PLAN as I suspect that you may not get many comments.

As a Scout leader as well as BCU member, I have been teaching kayaking at grass roots level for thirty years. For the last sixteen of which I have run structured courses for one, two, three, four star (Sea), and Scout Instructor Badge, about fifteen hundred completed to date, Scouting has always had an equal policy for boys of all classes, colours and creeds and for the last twenty years has included girls in Scouting, but in any case we have always opened our courses to Girl Guides.

I enclose a copy of last years pupils and you can see from the highlighting that there were a good number of girls, a few handicapped but we do not have many ethnic minorities in our catchment area - about fifteen miles radius from the lake in Gosport where we are based.

Looking through my name and address book I find the following medical problems reported by the parents on registering Asthma -47, Downs syndrome -5, Deaf/poor sight - 1, Epilepsy-3, Epitaxis(nose bleeds) -2, Growth Hormone deficiency -1, Osecard Schlatters - 1, Hypa mobile joints -1, Hay Fever -1, Petit Mal Seizures - 1, Dyslexic -1, Ear problems/grommets -1, We have never had any problems with any of these but of course are constantly aware of and watching out for signs of these problems. Some of the downs children perform better in a kayak than on land but do have a problem remembering~ what strokes are what. My fondest memory is of a downs boy winning a sprint race for his age group in our home regatta. We have a 'Special Needs' Scout Group in Gosport the leader of which is very knowledgeable on the subject of handicapped people and she is available to advise us when any new condition comes our way. I hope the above may be of interest.

While writing may I say that I almost totally disagree with the attitude taken by the BCU regarding safeguarding children. In Scouting we have a policy of 100% PRE investigation. Any adult coming forward to help in any way with children is required to submit his name and details for forwarding to Scout HQ for checking, which includes the National Criminal records Register, before he is allowed to work with the children. Even then some men slip through the net, because they have not been found out before.

What use is a self-declaration for a man who has evil intent - do you think he will say what is going to do! If you think that having his declaration will clear you of any responsibility you need to be in the position of being the person who has to speak to the parents of a child who has been abused. You cannot hide behind a self-declaration form. I do urge you to make the BCU a 100% checker of all adults who have any contact with children through the BCU's clubs or organised activities. Who decides how much 'contact time' such men need? Yes it means a bit more paperwork tough.

**Ken Greenwood.**

*Thank you for your comments and feedback on the BCU's Equity Plan. Your experiences remind us again just how versatile and equitable our sport is. With regard to your comments in respect of Child Protection and specifically self-declaration. With 20,000 members, 12,000 coaches and 650 clubs it can only be the club or Centre that determines the extent of disclosure required of coaches, coaching club/centre members and visitors and this must relate specifically to the amount of contact time with young people.*

*With many clubs and centres not having young members, the BCU cannot make a 'carte blanche' policy with regard to CRB checks.*

*That said, self-declaration, while having its limitations sends out a message to would be child abusers. It is recognised that self-declaration policies can deter such individuals from even attempting to establish themselves in clubs etc.. Self declaration is not seen as the ultimate deterrent. Simply one measure amongst a number of measures to help protect young people.*

Dear CoDe

I recently attended a Kayak Level 2 Coach Assessment. I failed the assessment, and although I understand where I went wrong I did not expect to be left feeling so roughly treated. I have written to the Contracted Provider, and sent him a copy of this letter.

On the whole, I have to accept that the assessment was fair. I made mistakes, but I never left any of the "guinea pigs" unattended - they were always within easy reach of myself or the other candidate who was with me in the group. My own belief was (and still is) that I am safe and knowledgeable. I realise that I need more coaching experience at the right level. What I have done since my training course amounts to quantity but not quality- I have been supervising fairly large groups "having fun" for much of the time, rather than coaching.

I was judged on what was seen, but I was not invited to explain why I did certain things as I did! By the time we got to the debriefing at the end, the decision had been made, and the fact that I had what I considered to be sound reasons for my actions was acknowledged but not taken into account. Do the assessors have enough freedom to make their own judgments, or is the standard entirely dictated by the BCU?

What I am less happy about is the fact that I do not recall being given any positive feedback for the things I got right (there must have been some, otherwise I should have been advised to do another training course or to give up!!). Surely encouragement is a sound principle at all levels even coaching.

The number 2 assessor kept telling us that we should be paddling to 4-star standard, and that our own skills should "shine", and I found this extremely irritating. The pre-requisite is 3-star, and whilst I accept that we should be advised to aim higher, and to improve, 4-star is not the stated requirement! I am a late starter, and at 54 years of age am unlikely to progress much further personally - I am not flexible enough in my joints! This does not mean that I cannot safely introduce others to the sport at the lower levels.

I shall follow the recommendations of the assessors, and get more real coaching experience, and try to improve my personal skills at the same time, and I will go for assessment again when I feel ready, but the experience this time was not one I would want to repeat in a hurry. I expected hard work and intensive testing. I did not expect to be left feeling so inadequate.

I know that at least one other candidate failed, out of a total of five. I would be interested to know what the average pass rate is for a first assessment for Level 2 and subsequent levels. If the rate is not good, perhaps more detailed guidance needs to be given on the type of coaching experience one needs to accumulate prior to assessment. Should candidates be asked to submit their record of experience when applying for assessment?

**Clive Pearce**

*Assessments of any kind can be challenging and difficult and as such any and all candidates should be entitled to quality feedback that is accurate, positive and helps them move forward. The BCU, with the introduction of the assessor training day has done much to ensure standards and consistency in this respect, however, I fear experiences such as yours highlights that more is needed to ensure that assessments are fully sympathetic to candidates needs.*

*During assessments assessor can only make judgements against what is seen at that time. Questioning can help clarify particular issues and are encouraged as part of the assessment process. As far as skill levels go it should be remembered that pre-requisite recommendations are in fact set to ensure that candidates for training are of a reasonable level to benefit from training and in order that techniques and their application is understood. At assessment one would expect candidates to show a strong personal level of performance, however, this should be in balance with the level of award being assessed.*





## TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

by Ian Duffy C5 Specialist OCI

### Transferable skills - what do we mean?

To a paddler who has paddled in a range of disciplines such as; slalom, white water racing, sea kayaking, open canoeing and kayaking both as a river runner and play boater it is a concept and skill which naturally occurs.

But in the case of one of my long-term students (AJ) it is a new concept.

AJ's background is kayaking; he started in 1993 and has spent most of his time play boating in a range of kayaks from a microbat to a switch. Until I introduced him to Specialist OCI (SOC1).

Knowing that AJ is already a skilled kayaker and has a very good grasp of the concepts of how he and the craft perform we decided on transferring his prior skills and knowledge on to the new craft. Additionally using slalom CI as a go between his kayak and his open boat.

The feed back AJ had given me on the changes in his kayak skills since paddling a range of craft was very positive; this spurred me on to use transferable skills more.

My aim for this article is not to show you how to use transferable skills, as this needs to be done by yourself in an experiential and reflective way, but merely to show you the benefits as a coaching tool to allow yourself to take it further and discover the effectiveness for yourself.

I would coach AJ in SOCI for most of Sunday over the past eight weeks; he would then spend an hour or two in his kayak and applied what he has learnt to his kayak skills. The results of this were surprising I have listed some of the reflections AJ has given me on his paddling.

### Forward Paddling:

With SOC1 we look into getting a powerful and efficient single stroke acceleration for a range of manoeuvres, the skills for this stem from CI white water racing and traditional Open Canoeing. By increasing his timing, power, placement and how he transfers his energy from blade to boat we achieved an effective power stroke. AJ then transferred this to his kayaking to discover:

- ✦ An increase in trunk rotation.
- ✦ More power generated in his stroke for less effort.
- ✦ Better power transfer through his body.

As a result he also started to use single stroke acceleration in his kayak and putting a succession of strokes in on one side.

### Flexibility:

An increased range of movement in SOC1 is achievable this led to an increased range of movement for AJ in his kayak giving him better flexibility, this benefited him by increasing his power and smoothness when going for blunts and cartwheels. He described it as an elastic band allowing extra stretch and increased movement.

This also transcribed into the feeling of being freer in the boat making him feel more confident in his ability to move his body around in his kayak.

From this he was able to make moves faster with a decreased stiffness in the way in which he paddled.

With all the changes that occurred overall he had felt more in control and understood how he can use his body more effectively in his paddling. As well as the physical changes like flexibility and muscle control that had changed we also changed some of the mental aspects of his paddling. One example was watching CI slalom competitions studying pre rotation and how

visualisation was used as a tool.

We borrowed some CI slalom boats and experimented with this, this gave definite changes in the timing and pace of his strokes both in kayak and SOC1.

Allowing an improvement in his river running skills like breaking in and out and an improvement in his play boating skills with the speed and sharpness of his cartwheels and spins increasing.

N.B. as a general rule I have found that a proportion of the best freestyle paddlers have all come from slalom.

My first experience of learning from a variety of disciplines was when I first started in SOCI as there was a lack of text, videos or coaches in this discipline.

In order to learn I had to take skills from freestyle both CI and kayak, slalom, whitewater racing, kayaking and traditional open canoeing. In effect I was self-taught taking information from a range of disciplines and transferring them to my own.

These are but a few examples. Try using a range of boats in your coaching, think of which disciplines will be the most refined with specific skills.

For example:

Forward paddling + timing + pace would be racing or sprint.

Pre rotation + focus + visualisation would be slalom.

Single stroke acceleration + Crossdeck power strokes + use of water would be SOC1

If you want to improve a specific aspect of your skills use a different discipline to assist you in your learning.

Ian Duffy

acorn



adventure

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# The Paddlesport Review 2000-2005

## What it's all about? & where are we up too?

By Liz Mallabon & Bill Taylor – Manchester Metropolitan University

By now, the words 'Paddlesport Review' should be familiar to all BCU members however, to some this might only prompt fear that yet another questionnaire will soon be arriving on your doorstep! Thanks must be given to the thousands of you who have taken the time over that last twelve months to return the questionnaires. Whilst a brief outline of the nature of the Paddlesport Review was sent with every questionnaire, and further details are available on the BCU website ([www.bcu.org.uk](http://www.bcu.org.uk)) some members may still be unclear as to how they will benefit from the review. The aim of this article is to show you how the information collected will directly help both the development of the BCU and hopefully provide information that is of interest to you the coaches.

When the BCU coaching department commissioned the Paddlesport Review they adopted the following mission statement;

**Providing pathways to paddler performance whatever the paddler requirements/interests might be.**  
(BCU, 2000)

The coaching scheme is one of the pathways for developing paddler performance, and promoting both the sport and recreation of paddlesport within Britain. However, the current scheme includes a total of 49 different coaching awards, covering 12 different technical disciplines and 5 different levels of competence! A primary aim of the review, therefore, was to assess whether such a complex scheme of awards are providing the most effective pathways to develop paddler performance, and reflecting modern developments within coaching.

Whilst the coaching department wanted to start, as far as possible, with a 'clean sheet', three key issues/questions are helping to drive the work:

- > **Would a more generic approach to the provision of coaching at all five levels be more beneficial to coach development?**
- > **Would a more integrated approach, between competition and recreation, to the training and delivery of coaching awards allow greater unified development?**
- > **Would greater horizontal, as well as vertical, development opportunities through the coaching scheme allow for greater generic opportunities for coaches?**

In order to achieve the aims of the review four phases of work have been planned. Work started in January 2000 and phase 3 should be completed by December 2003. A further two years have been allocated to accommodate the implementation of any new recommendations to the coaching service.

### What has been found so far?

The first aim of the review was to establish detailed information about the current participation and usage requirements of the UK paddlesport community. This initial phase was responsible

for all the questionnaires, and was completed at the end of the year 2001. Questionnaires were sent out to four specific groups:

1. Individual BCU members
2. BCU approved centres
3. BCU registered clubs
4. BCU registered coaches

The following table shows the kind of information that was established from the questionnaires.

### Did you know?

- Over 7,300 members returned the individual member questionnaire
- 20% of members are female
- 17% of members are over 50 years old
- 70% of members hold one or more skills awards
- 49% of members hold a BCU Coaching Award
- 8% of members said playboating was the discipline they participated in most frequently - a considerable increase for the newest aspect of our sport
- 26% of members bought a boat in the year 2000
- 20% of members who bought a boat were under 20 years old

A central aim within the Paddlesport Review is providing all BCU members with the opportunity to directly voice their opinions about the BCU's coach education scheme. Whilst the questionnaires have provided some pathways for this, phase one of the review has also included a series of focus groups where open discussion about the coaching scheme has been recorded. At present focus groups have only been run with contract course providers. However, throughout the remaining months of the year 2002 further discussions will be run with a wider audience (i.e. regional committees and discipline committees).

Collectively the information from the initial research phase will, for the first time, help outline not only the demands of current British Paddlers on access, equipment and coaching, but also the strengths and weaknesses of the current BCU coach education service. This information has never been available to the BCU before and is essential to develop the BCU coach scheme, and to fulfil the Paddlesport Review mission statement.

### Main research phase

The focus of the main research phase is to collect further information specifically about current practice of BCU coaches. This will be achieved primarily through the observation and the interviewing of coaches from a variety of disciplines.



This phase started in June 2002 and all the information will have been collected by the end of 2002.

The primary aim of this phase of research is to identify current coaching process practice within paddlesport and to establish coaches' perceptions of the coaching process concepts that they are practicing.

Between July and September 2002 a sample of coaches from six paddlesport disciplines (Inland kayak, open canoe, sea, slalom, marathon and polo) will be observed coaching. A research team at the Manchester Metropolitan University will complete a detailed video analysis of the coaching behaviours to establish both generic, and discipline specific coaching behaviours.

Each coach will also be interviewed, the aim being to establish why coaches are using the techniques they are, and their perceptions on the coaching process within the current coaching scheme.

Finally students from the coaching session will also be interviewed to establish student perceptions of the strengths and weakness of the coaching.

#### End outcome

It is hoped that the end outcome of the paddlesport review will be to produce a framework of the coaching process along with recommendations and guidance on how such a framework could be implemented into the BCU's coach education scheme.

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## Paddlesport Review summary

### What we are looking at..

- ✓ What are coaches actually doing?
- ✓ What are the similarities and differences in coaching across the different coaching levels?
- ✓ What are the similarities and differences in coaching across different paddlesport disciplines?
- ✓ Methods of educating future BCU coaches.

### What we are not looking at..

- ✗ The star tests or the rainbow awards.
- ✗ The assessor awards.
- ✗ The coaching service's administration procedures.

### Possible outcomes of the review

- ☞ A slimmed down version of the coaching scheme.
- ☞ Coaches would be able to transfer between paddlesport disciplines with greater ease.
- ☞ More opportunities for access to coach training.

For more information about the review please either  
contact the BCU;  
[www.bcu.org.uk](http://www.bcu.org.uk)  
Diane 0115 982 1100  
Or  
The research team;  
Liz 0161 247 5504 Bill 0161 247 5146



## Beyond the Wild Frontier – Misadventures in the Red Zone

My aim in this short article is to explore and promote an attitude of mind that remains aware of and open to our surroundings, no matter what local distractions might be demanding our attention as we paddle at sea. There are no 'lists of things to watch out for' - because by the very nature of what we do and where we do it, it is the unexpected that is likely to cause the problem. The key lies in developing our spatial awareness and having a readiness to continually reassess the situation - and then taking appropriate action. Venture with me into the red zone of sea kayaking.....

### Scenario 1

Seven kayakers (5 singles, 1 double), paddling in an unfrequented area, are making their way north up an east shore, looking for a river entrance in which to take shelter from a rising (Force 5 plus) easterly wind. The seas are steep and short, the submarine contours indicating shallows extending a long way offshore. Suddenly 2 or 3 seas combine to produce a truly awesome breaker, which grabs the double, capsizing it and forcing a wet exit by both paddlers. Kayak, paddlers and all manner of deck and cockpit cargo are now in the longshore rip heading towards the confused seas breaking over the bar at the river entrance. The surf is now 5 ft plus, dumping onto a steep shingle beach.

### Scenario 2

Four kayakers (2 paddling singles, 2 in a double), on an expedition in a remote area, are heading south on an open coast exposed to massive swells. The day is overcast and misty, the wind (running across the swell direction) is Force 2 - 3. The group round a point, running south through the overfalls with the tide and start to cross an area of shoals, interspersed with reefs. Half way across the shoal area a huge set of swells come through - these are 2 to 3 times the size of any that have been through before, are 12 - 15 feet front face height and are breaking. The 2 singles escape over the unbroken shoulder of the first swell and head seaward rapidly. On pausing for breath, there is no sign of the double. After several minutes of waiting and watching, the double is spotted - capsized, both paddlers out, kit strewn all around the scene. The kayak and paddlers are directly in front of a reef, and are clearly incapable of helping themselves. The area is a formidable no-landing zone, and remains so for the next 7 nautical miles.

### Scenario 3

Six kayakers, all in singles, make their way south through thick mist (visibility is less than 50 yards) on a no-landing coast exposed to large swells. They are scouting for a cove entrance in which to take a rest and prepare for the rounding of the cape, which lies some miles to their south. The area is studded with shoals and reefs and the swells that are running can be heard breaking amongst the fangs and rocks along the shore. One paddler is working close inshore looking for the cove entrance when a rogue swell comes through the group, tubes over the scout, capsizes him and carries him into an area of rock fangs.

### Scenario 4

Eleven club kayakers, all in singles, are rounding a point, bucking the tide in order to gain a cove on the north side of the headland. From there they will use the back eddy to run north east for 6 miles to the pick up point. The section of overfalls is a half-mile long and the seas at their maximum are 5 - 6 feet and breaking. Early in the passage an older paddler capsizes twice, each time being put back into their boat by a single rescuer. On the third capsize, the rescuer recovers the paddler and then gets another kayaker to stabilize him before setting off to tow the rafted pair around the point. On reaching the beach, the older paddler is put into shelter and given food and drink. Another kayaker then

arrives saying that a second person is in difficulty and needs assistance. The rescuer of the first casualty goes back around the headland and discovers a raft of 2 kayaks being towed by a single paddler. Because the group has taken so long, the overfalls are now at their fiercest, and going in the wrong direction.

Both rescuers join forces and start to tow the raft in a 'V' formation. At this point another paddler joins onto the raft, losing his paddle in the process! No one in the rafted trio is carrying a spare paddle. As the combination enters the area of wildest water, a breaker takes down one of the towers; as he attempts to roll, the towline wraps around his body and paddle and forces him to wet exit.

### Scenario 5

Two experienced sea kayakers, in single kayaks, are mid-way through the multi-day circumnavigation of a remote and wild island. The plan for the day is to make an open crossing of 6 miles and round 2 headlands completing about 24 nautical miles before stopping to camp. The weather is overcast, with driving rain and a Force 3 plus wind coming from the paddlers' right side. Squalls are forecast. Shortly after leaving the shore, conditions worsen to a steady Force 4 coming from the right, creating tumbling white caps and reduced visibility in the swells. Two miles into the 6 mile crossing, matters worsen yet more: the wind is now Force 5, gusting Force 6, with breaking waves all around making boat control and communication difficult. The area directly ahead is a continuous belt of broken water - the 300 ft submarine cliff is creating a monstrous overfall in the present conditions. Both paddlers are apprehensive; neither rescue nor rolling in these conditions is guaranteed and the nearest land is an inhospitable islet 2 miles downwind and down sea. To reach this, the pair would have to skirt the overfalls and then surf 2 miles of breaking waves. The alternatives are to turn and work back to the shore they had left, or to claw seaward of the overfalls, continue the crossing and make the headland - off which are further extreme conditions. As the pair consider the alternatives, a squall comes through and reduces visibility to zero, with maelstrom conditions.

One insurance company used to advertise its services with the slogan 'we don't make a drama out of a crisis' - which is a fairly good way of looking at the scenarios above. In each of them, a critical point has been reached - but the important factor to draw from all of them is that the critical point was not, in fact, one distinguishable point but rather somewhere on a sliding scale from 'OK' to 'very much not OK'. The key lesson is that it is the small incremental steps that matter - and it is usually only in hindsight that it is possible to realise that the red line has been crossed! So, how do we improve our 'vision' to enable us to see when we approach the red line, rather than merely forever recognising it in the rear view mirror?

Look again at the scenarios in turn - in Scenario 1, was it necessary for the double to be so close in as to be vulnerable, until it was on its landing run? Probably not - given the option, scouting in difficult conditions is better done in a single than in a double. Could the conditions have been foreseen by a more thorough reading of the charts, combined with a cross-reference to previous experience of steep seas over shallow bars? The answer is probably 'yes'. In Scenario 2, did the desire to stay in contact with the shore drag the group further inshore than was wise, given the submarine topography? Almost certainly, 'yes'. Could the effects of swell over submarine plateau have been foreseen? Certainly, 'yes'. Scenario 3 is almost a replica - the effects of swell barreling up as it approaches shore through reefs and fangs are eminently foreseeable; when combined with an over-focused concentration on finding the cove entrance did this mean that the appreciation of this dangerous position was largely overlooked? Almost certainly, 'yes'. Scenario 4 is the breeding ground for a mass casualty incident - was it wise to continue with a plan



when it became clear that at least one paddler could not cope? Definitely, 'no'. Was it sensible to tow upstream through overfalls in the first instance? Probably, 'no'. Was it sensible to tow upstream through overfalls in the second instance, even with the prospect of a split group if a different decision was taken? Almost certainly, 'no'. Could the group have been better organised and prepared? Definitely, 'yes'. In the last scenario the paddlers are, like Macbeth\*, stuck in the middle! To return to shore means turning in violent seas; to turn and run to the islet means accepting the prospect of wild surfing in loaded expedition sea kayaks for a considerable distance - both of these options have a real risk of capsize. Rolling and rescues are not guaranteed and will certainly be hazardous. To continue to the headland, into an area of visibly dangerous water seems suicidal. Could the deterioration of conditions have been foretold from the forecast and a reading of the sky signs? Certainly, 'yes'. Would turning back on the first noticed deterioration of the weather been a better solution? Certainly, 'yes'. Would, in fact, opting to camp and wait out the weather and not leaving the shore that day have been the best and most sensible option? - without doubt, 'yes'.

Most dramas do not develop 'out of the blue' but result from the continual adding of small pebbles to the avalanche. By the time you have to deploy your skills to the

full, you have usually already passed the stage at which you should have taken some different action! The best way of avoiding having to paddle for your life is not to put yourself in that position in the first place - and, in the manner of the majority of avalanches being triggered by those subsequently caught in them, most paddlers are the architects of their own misfortune!

One approach that may be useful is to visualize the paddler and kayak being at the centre of a sphere or globe in both time and space. Use the awareness of time to compare things past with things present and future as the timeline passes through the paddler - in other words apply past experience to present conditions in order to foretell future conditions. This is not 'rocket science' - but we do need to remember to do it! All of us, even the paddler newest to sea kayaking, have background knowledge and experience of weather - is a raincoat required today? I don't know, go and have a look! As we gain more experience we can recycle it to improve our ability to forecast how particular weather and sea states might impact on us as paddlers - the key is not growing idle, complacent or lazy, because that way lies arm wrestling with Neptune!

Think of the 'space' sphere as the need to consider all manner of possible influences upon us as paddlers - from things

overhead to things underwater and all around us. Only if we maintain this global awareness will we lessen the chances of being caught unawares. Avoid over concentration on one particular task or aspect to the detriment of the bigger picture - that dark patch at upper left of your vision might actually represent a more critical problem than the one you are concentrating upon.

The size of your awareness sphere will depend on your ability, your confidence, your approach and, above all, on the prevailing conditions. At the very least, make sure that it extends beyond the bow and stern of your kayak and the ends of your paddle!

Lastly, listen to your body. If your mouth has gone dry and your pulse is somewhat elevated, there is usually a very good reason for it! How you deal with the physical and mental reactions to danger is a very personal judgement call, but if you are in the red zone, way beyond the wild frontier and heading for catastrophe, should you be there at all? - and can you see just a faint splash of red in the wing mirrors

\* 'Ste pp'd in so far that, should I wade no more, Returning were as tedious as go o'er.'

Shakespeare's Macbeth, Act 111, Scene iv

**Roland Woollven**

## The three ~~R~~'s E's.

**by Danny Brown**

Coaching is, out of necessity a very complicated process. As coaches we are expected to take people, (the most complicated thing ever) and a set of skills (which are no where near as complicated but try asking a supercomputer to do a Colorado hook) and try to get one to learn the other whilst they are in a confusing environment.

The coaching process needs to reflect this and it does. All of the mind boggling information that the first paragraph would suggest is required has been, is being and will be learnt by many people with an aim to coach.

Are these people geni'i? Hydro dynamic brain surgeons? Psychoanalytical, motor skills specialists?

No. They are people like you and me and we can do all of the above because we are open minded, receptive and have been taught how to.

But we have not been taught every intimate and intricate detail of people, skills, water and physiology as that would be too difficult, we have learnt to recognise signs and symptoms. To help us in this we have been given models, coaching models that simplify things for student and coach alike.

I.D.E.A.S.

Whole/part/whole.

S.M.A.R.T.E.R.

E.t.c.

The ones in use today are so because they appear to work, tried and tested over the years they consistently yield positive results. A lesser known acronym are the three E's. I have heard it unconsciously used occasionally by people but I realised that it could be applied to virtually all strokes.

So I did.

### **EFFECTIVE/EFFICIENT/EASY.**

*Stern rudder*

**effective-  
efficient-**

paddle parallel to centre line of boat  
blade angle keeping cavitation to a  
minimum(no further than 45 degrees of  
centre line) *quietly*.

**easy-**

reach to stern of boat.

I guess another famous acronym is K.I.S.S. or Keep It Super Simple and it is a favourite of mine. It is common practice to break strokes down into their component parts and to pick out the three most relevant three for teaching. All I have done is broken down that coaching method;

Why do we give students three bits of information to deal with?

-The 7, give or take 2 rule. Or to put it another way there is only so much space in any brain for so much information at one time.

-We are, for the most part dealing with three components; boat, body, blade.

-Continuity and familiarity.

Again, three reasons all valid and all documented but perhaps the last one less so.

We, no doubt have our own coaching styles but more and more so the standard of coaching has vastly improved over the last five years or so. This is because we are all drawing from the same sources ie; BCU Coaching Processes Courses and such like, so it stands to reason that to students a lot of what we do will become familiar. This is a good thing and encouraged as it assists learning but for whatever reason this familiarity is not often declared but why?

**continued on page 11**



# Regional Round-Up

## LONDON REGION

### REGIONAL COACHING FORUM

Saturday 30 November, 10.a.m. – 4. p.m. at  
Thomas More School, Purley

### REGIONAL AGM

Saturday 30 November, 5.00 pm. at  
Thomas More School, Purley.

### AQUATIC FIRST AID PROVIDER

Each coach needs to re-validate their first aid every 3 years so it makes sense to have more people within our club system that can deliver the 8-hour Aquatic First Aid course.

To train to provide this course you must have:

- a) a current 16 hour first aid award
- b) been a level 2 coach for 3 years  
(no date confirmed as yet but one will be soon, for the Autumn)

### ASSESSOR TRAINING

This course is open to any Level 2 Coach.

Sunday September 1<sup>st</sup> at Thames Young Mariners and more to follow in the autumn at other venues.

### REGIONAL FUND

There is still a regional fund to support club based voluntary coaches pursuing their level 3 coach award or higher.

### LEVEL 3 ASSESSMENT INLAND KAYAK

Friday evening - 29 November to Sunday 1 December, in mid Wales.

### LEVEL 3 TRAINING INLAND KAYAK

Friday evening - 29 November to Sunday 1 December, in mid Wales.

### LEVEL 3 TRAINING OPEN CANOE

Friday evening 22 November to 24 November in mid Wales

### FOUR STAR INLAND KAYAK

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 28 November in mid Wales

### FOUR STAR SEA

I am willing to co-ordinate individual paddlers who are interested in achieving this qualification in the autumn.

### LEVEL 2 COACH TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT

These courses are mostly run on demand these days, however, Open Canoe assessment at TYM Saturday 14 September, Kayak assessment at TYM on Sunday 15 September.

If interested in any of the above please contact:

**E mail- [gareth.moss@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:gareth.moss@surreycc.gov.uk)**

**Tel: 020 8940 5550**

**Fax: 020 8940 7052**

Enjoy your summer  
Gareth Moss RCO for London

## NORTH WEST REGION

**Next NW Regional Meeting will take place on Monday September 16th 2002 at 7.30 pm in Chester. Venue to be confirmed. Please phone Karen Davies**

**01260 275776 or email**

**karen.davies@bcunw.freemove.co.uk for details & directions.**

Nominations are being taken from individuals (coaches and non-coaching members) wishing to be on the NW Regional Development Team. Several positions on the committee are available, come along to region meetings to find out more.

Safety cover needed for the Charity Cross Mersey Swim on August 10th.

Contact Dave McGarry

[d.mcgarra@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:d.mcgarra@blueyonder.co.uk)

Karen Davies

NW region secretary

### RCO Elections

Following the resignation of Derek Brooks as RCO nominations are sort from prospective candidates. The election will be a postal ballot of all coaches in the North West region. The final closing date for nominations is Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September - from that date the proposed timetable for elections will be as follows:

- Ballot papers mailed out by 13<sup>th</sup> September
- Election closing date – 1<sup>st</sup> October
- Candidates informed of the results – 7<sup>th</sup> October
- Election results posted when all candidates have been informed of the results (via BCU Website, December CoDe & the NW Forum in November.

If there are any coaches interested the post and would like further details about getting nominated or an informal discussion on the role please contact Richard Ward, English Coaching Development Manager.



## WESSEX

### Regional Dates for autumn 2002:

20 <sup>th</sup> Oct.	Regional Update Day
19 <sup>th</sup> Oct.	Assessor Workshop
	1 <sup>st</sup> Aid
	Paddlepower Workshop

The venue for the above days is King Edwards Park, Melksham.

Details for the forum and workshops will be sent by post to all coaches in Wessex during late August / early September.

In the meantime if you wish to enquire about either day please apply in writing to:

**Gordon Summers, RCO Wessex,  
20 Ivybridge, Tavistock Road, Worle, BS22 6LP  
Or by e-mail: [gordensummers@hotmail.com](mailto:gordensummers@hotmail.com)**



# Regional Round-Up

## EAST MIDLANDS

### EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL COACHFEST

With no National Paddlefest taking place this year the East Midlands Region plan to run a regional 'coach fest' over the weekend of the 5th / 6th October 2002.

The annual autumn Peak Challenge will take place as normal over the same weekend and will provide alternative sport for those wishing to take part.

Details of the coachfest will be mailed to regional coaches when finalised in the meantime book the date in your diary.

Coaches from other regions wishing to take part in the coach fest are welcome -

Details will be available from Howard Blackman in the English Coaching Office tel 0115 9822094

Details of the Peak Challenge are available from Peak UK at [www.peakuk.com](http://www.peakuk.com)



## DEVON & CORNWALL

### Regional Dates for autumn 2002:

13 <sup>th</sup> Oct.	Regional Update Day
12 <sup>th</sup> Oct.	Canoe Symposium - provisional

The venue for both is the River Dart Country Park. Details to be mailed to all coaches in Late August / early September.

## Pause for Thought!!

### WHAT HAS THE BCU EVER DONE FOR ME?

How did you become involved in the sport? My guess is that the British Canoe Union was involved either formally or informally. Who involved you and where did their skill and ability come from?

BCU membership is the price of a night out or half the price of a spray deck. Yet how often do we hear the comments what does the BCU do for me? Why do I have to pay membership to keep my qualification current? The answer is simple – we have the best system for skills and qualifications in the world. Having worked for the premier paddle sport centre in the USA (Nantahala Outdoor Centre) – our system was highly respected and envied!

How much pleasure do you get from paddle sport? How good does it make you feel? How young does it keep you? How much satisfaction does it give you and others when coaching? How much confidence and relaxation does it give you? These are just a few questions to ask ourselves.

Our sport is without doubt the most diverse sport in the world – white water, sea, surf, polo, touring, sprint, marathon, open boating, rafting and so on. Yet why do so many people get introduced to the sport just the once and then put it down to one of experience. The truth is it's down to us, people with a passion for the sport. We are the ones who can give so many more people a skill and sport for life.

In a time when disease/stress is on the increase, and people are realising the need for relaxation and exercise, do we not owe it to people to inspire them with our magnificent sport? We live in a country surrounded by beautiful seas, lakes, rivers and canals. The more we inspire people to join us, the greater the access will be, the stronger the BCU will become – more members equals more money – more money equals more resources to improve the sport.

Jack Russell  
Level 5 Kayak Coach  
Director of Personal Development Coaching – 01392 670102

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**13 years of training, coaching and instructing**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## Notice to all Aquatic First Aid Trainer

Once again the Voluntary Aid Societies have deemed it fit to bring out another version of the first aid handbook. Book Eight has been released this month (June).

As of the first of August the material in this book will become the source material for the BCU Lifeguards Aquatic First Aid courses and the BCU Lifeguard awards. Books can be ordered from St John Supplies on 020 7278 2779.

Another major change to the award will be that of BCU membership. The Aquatic First Aid Trainer is the only coaching award within the BCU structure where the holder does not need to be a BCU member. After meetings with the BCU Coaching department and discussions with our insurers the BCU Lifeguards National Executive have reluctantly needed to close this loophole.

Again as of the First of August all Aquatic First Aid Trainers will need to be in membership of the BCU. This will ensure that all Trainers can be updated via CODE and that all Trainers are covered by the BCU insurance. Aquatic First Aid Trainers will also receive all other benefits of BCU membership.

Any courses ran after this date will be declared void by the BCU office staff if a valid BCU membership number that corresponds to the Course Director is not on the paperwork.

If there are any queries on the above please contact either the BCU Office or myself.

**Andy Squirrell, National Training Officer, BCU Lifeguards**  
Poplars, Sanctuary Road, Holsworthy, Devon  
EX22 6DQ, 01409 253495

### Star Award Assessments

Paddlers being assessed for a Star Award and who do not hold the award below that being taken i.e. being assessed for 4 Star but not holding 3 Star, should show themselves able to perform all the relevant skills required at the lower Star level(s).

### Minimum Age For Coaching Award Assessments

United Kingdom Coaching Committee confirmed at their meeting 15th June 2002 that the minimum age to be assessed for a coaching award was 18.

Training for a level 1 and level 2 training course could be taken at 16.

Recognising that a small number of young People may have already taken a training course with a view to assessment prior to the age of 18 an assessment can be offered were the candidate coaches in a club / controlled environment and where they are able to nominate a coach supervisor who should be a minimum level 3 award holder and be present whenever coaching is taking place.

BRITISH CANOE UNION

**WORLD CLASS**

programmes

## BCU COACHING SERVICE

National Watersports Centre  
September 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> 2002

Cost: Course fee £20  
BCU registration fee £15

The Racing L3 course is now run on a Modular basis. This is the course where the majority of the foundation skills and knowledge are covered for this level. Further modules are run throughout the year in the regions.

The expectation is that you will already be working at Racing Coach L2 at least, though lack of a formal L2 qualification does not bar you from the course.

Lunch is included in the course, if you need accommodation (at your own expense) please inform the organiser.

To register for the course  
apply asap

contact Graham Campbell (NDC)  
Cottars End, Sheriffs Lench, Evesham, WR11 4SN  
01386 870072 07768 512934  
Email: [GrahamCampbell@btinternet.com](mailto:GrahamCampbell@btinternet.com)



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[fal enquiries@cornwall.ac.uk](mailto:fal enquiries@cornwall.ac.uk)  
[www.college-falmouth.ac.uk](http://www.college-falmouth.ac.uk)

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-Waste of time, far easier to say, "try this" than to explain that this is a little something you picked up from another coach and they may have seen something similar before and will do so again but ....

-pride, we have all been guilty of it, a little bit at least.

-coaching methodology, often it is better long term for students to develop their own ideas.

So, the three E's can be used as a lynch pin for all coaching models that will add familiarity into the equation. Regardless as to how or what you teach if students can develop an understanding of the basic requirements of a good stroke; effective/efficient/easy all your three teaching points will be logged in the brain next to the correct heading.

## Pry Stroke

**effective-** paddle deep in the water  
**efficient-** blade to stay within 45 degrees of the vertical  
**easy-** hook the thumb on the gunwhale

One consideration, clearly identifiable in the above stroke is that in practice it is often the case that you are not going to be teaching the perfect stroke hydro-dynamically speaking but

are suiting the students needs in relation to their environment. But whether you choose to tell the students or not(probably not) you will more than likely teach to the same three points, ie;

*Teaching a student to pry, very quickly on moving water.*

"Push the boat sideways by trying to splash me with water."

**Effective-** it works doesn't it?  
**Efficient-** economy of words, urgency of voice, recovery phase in air.  
**Easy-** simple and desirable.

Now, I do not suggest that it is the answer to everything and to be applied at all times to everything(although spookily enough it even works with my accounts) but that it is another coaching tool. It is not possible to list all it's applications but maybe you might want to try, for your own benefit and in your own head, please.

I use it all the time and it has been well received but only time will tell if it will become another K.I.S.S.

Easy now,

Danny Brown

## Horses for Courses. Different Strokes for Different Folks, Ideas and Edicts

- Comments by Richard Scullard A3\* CN and K; CCP.

I was very interested in all the items in CODE 101, October 2001. They seem to highlight some interesting questions that must be a concern for our Coaching Service.

+ First, the sad letter from "South Wales" on Page 11. There is nothing wrong with failing candidates. If everybody passed there would be no point in assessing! Failure is always distressing, but it is the job of the Assessor to ensure that the candidates are not lost to coaching. After all the effort the BCU has put into the Contracted Course Provider system why are these things still happening? Where was the CCP? If the Assessor was the CCP what is the BCU doing about it? It would appear that all six candidates were assessed on the same day. My limit is three! I'm sure the assessment results were correct but there must have been something wrong with the assessment process, because if it appears to be wrong **then** it is **wrong!** If five out of six failed, has anyone looked at the quality of their Training Course? Is the system at fault? Should Trainee Coaches be required to log training under the supervision of a qualified coach before presenting himself or herself for assessment?

+ Rob Arrowsmith's item "Building on Ideas" acknowledges the need for a framework for teaching strokes. It then goes on to talk about a kind of system that can be used with more advanced canoeists. OK! There is a movement among some coaches away from formal systems of teaching strokes, (indeed some seem to consider this to be totally unnecessary). This is fine for more advanced canoeists, however, assessment at Coach Level 2 is concerned with introducing the

beginner. When I assess at this level, I have to satisfy myself that when the qualified coach leaves me he or she is capable, on his or her own - of taking a class of beginners (often young people) and running a safe, enjoyable session. Next to safety and group control I look hard for some sign of structure in their teaching. If the aspirant coaches have not been taught how to teach on their Coach Level 2 Training Course they are unlikely to do well at Assessment. Confident teaching at this level relies on a system, EDICT or IDEAS or some other.

+ As coaches gain experience they will be able to move away from this basic "Coach Parent-Student Child" situation (see Steve Paice's excellent item on transactional analysis), but this does not absolve CCP's of Coach Level 2 Training courses from their duty to ensure their students are taught how to teach beginners.

+ While I'm here I hope I may air my favourite prejudice for EDICT against IDEAS.

<u>Explanation.</u>	Class Listen
<u>Demonstrate.</u>	Class Watch
<u>Imitate.</u>	Class Work
<u>Correct Faults</u>	Class Work
<u>Test</u>	Class Work

Class is working for three out of five headings and at the end of the system the coach knows whether or not this part of the lesson has been successful.

<u>Information</u>	Class Listen
<u>Demonstration</u>	Class Watch
<u>Explanation</u>	Class Still Watching!
<u>Activity</u>	Class Work
<u>Summary</u>	Class Listen

Class is working for one out of five headings  
CoDe Issue 106 Page 11

and the coach is encouraged to talk! Coach has no idea if he or she has achieved the aim of the session (as required by the BCU's Lesson Plan Form.)

Of course I know that these mnemonics are only an aid. But why not use one that encourages coaches to achieve the principles of "maximum class activity" and "achieving the aim"

I know that I shall be roundly attacked by those coaches (many senior to me) who believe that the way to run a canoeing session is to set up a safe environment and let the students learn for themselves. I have actually seen this with beginners! Well there's a time and a place for that as well, (as set out in Transactional Analysis.)

**In Conclusion.** If we are to avoid the unhappiness described by "South Wales", Coach Level 2 Training Course CCP's must put aside those trendy ideas on learning which are so often set out in great obscurity in CODE, and ensure that their training course students are taught "How to introduce Beginners" They must also accept that this requires a structure for teaching strokes. If CCP's neglect this responsibility it is likely that the unhappiness will continue and we will lose new "not for profit" coaches who are desperately needed in the clubs if the BCU is to survive.

While Richard raises some interesting points, we do need to keep things in perspective. Ensuring that level 1 and 2 coaches have simple and effective models to assist them in developing teaching and coaching skills is important, however, it is equally important to ensure even at such an early stage, that we are laying the foundations of good coaching processes and good coaching practice.

Rather than ignoring the issues raised we are, through the Paddlesport review, taking all comments into account. Richard's thoughts and those of anyone responding will be fed through into the review.

# BCU COACHING SUPPLIES

The BCU Coaching Service offers a range of supplies to help you to develop your teaching skills and to aid you with your personal coaching development. **The BCU Coaching Logbook** is full of useful information, provides a log for your experiences and courses and keeps a record of your development up the coaching ladder. It is a necessity for all coaches. **Our Canoeing Handbook** is a very popular instruction manual and also makes a very welcome gift to paddlers of all ages. This book provides information on teaching, leading and the history of canoe sport.

**"Canoeing for Disabled People"** is the sister publication to the BCU Canoeing Handbook and is a very handy tool for the less able-bodied paddlers and those who wish to help them to develop in paddling.

**The Paddlepower Deliverer's Pack** is a 'must' for coaches who wish to help develop the paddling skills of younger paddlers, the pack gives helpful information on the best ways to carry this scheme. **Activity Cards** are a supplemental aid to Paddlepower which contain instructions for making learning and development fun by playing games.

Our **Posters** are colourful, double sided A3 size and have pictures of the star test award badges for Canoe on one side and Kayak on the other. **Crib Cards** are a set of 12 plastic cards outlining the main elements of the basic strokes. There are two books for Open Canoe, Single or Tandem, and one for Kayak. Please indicate which one you require when ordering. **Star Test Marking Sheets** are a similar format as the Crib Cards and are wipe-clean marking sheets for you to keep track when coaching. These are available for Canoe and Kayak, so please indicate which one you require when ordering.

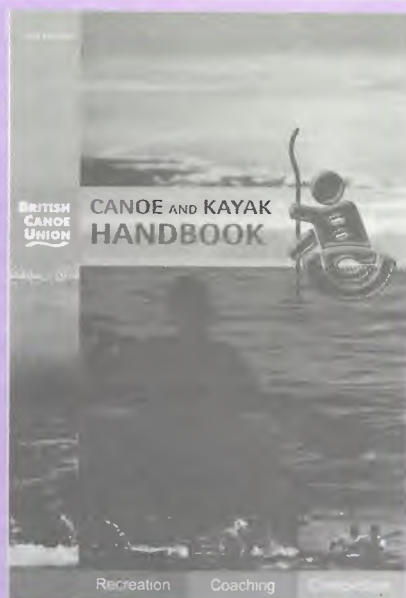
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<b>Coaching Service Polo Shirts</b>	£16.00



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- < The complete paddlesport reference book
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- < Now in full colour

It now being some 14 years since the current 'Canoeing Handbook' appeared a replacement is long overdue. It is now on its way, however, and will be available from the Canoe Exhibition in February 2002.

Produced in full colour and in a larger format than the current handbook it will reflect developments within Paddlesport bringing the BCU's in house promotion of paddlesport activity up to date.

Written by enthusiastic and current BCU coaches and practitioners, this book is an invaluable source of information for both novice and expert alike.

For the newcomer it will provide a firm foundation in their chosen aspect of the sport. The coach or experienced paddler will find it invaluable as:

- < An update to current theory and practice
- < An introduction to new aspects of the sport
- < A pointer to other sources of information  
Such as relevant books and websites

Available from BCU Coaching Supplies and all  
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