

Any comments or articles
please forward to the
BCU Coaching Office
or E-Mail us at
Coaching@bcu.org.uk

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.

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Please send them to: BCU, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5AS.

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RNLI continues to extend its life-saving work

Already well-known around the coasts of the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland for providing the lifeboat service, the RNLI is also busy promoting water safety. Similar to many other rescue and emergency services, the RNLI acknowledges the importance of preventative measures in minimising the volume and gravity of accidents, and loss of life on the water.

Free water safety advice

The right training is key to being safer at sea and the RNLI is committed to helping people be prepared through safety advice, safety publications and demonstrations. The RNLI's aim is to save lives and to help prevent accidents through water safety awareness.

Continuing its work at Paddlesport 2002, giving free, friendly and confidential safety advice is at the heart of the service. On slipways, at boat jumbles, marinas and local boat shows, the RNLI has a growing team of water safety advisers, many having previously served as lifeboat crew.

Demonstrations and publications

The water safety team can also provide free practical demonstrations, seminars and talks. Based on a wealth of experience, they can demonstrate the use of emergency equipment and procedures, such as the use of flares and lifejackets. The RNLI also publishes a comprehensive range of free water safety publications.

Service information

Much of the RNLI's existing work in this area is based on a wealth of information and statistics relating to incidents at sea which have resulted in lifeboat services. The data contains a comprehensive account of all call-outs which number on average 19 a day. Statistics show that in 2001 the RNLI rescued nearly 7,000 people and saved over 750 lives that were regarded

to be in a life-threatening situation. With such information, the RNLI is well placed to advise on water safety and is committed to do all it can to prevent accidents and loss of life.

National Database for INland water Related EMergencies (INREM)

Compared with an average of 300 people per year who have drowned around the coast of Great Britain and Ireland between 1997 and 1999, an average of 270 people have drowned every year in lakes, reservoirs, rivers, streams and canals across Great Britain in the last 13 years.

Aiming to reduce the high death toll from inland drownings, the RNLI and RoSPA is currently addressing improving inland data and data collection through a jointly funded project. Phase 2 of INREM, a three-year research study, is a natural extension of the RNLI's intelligence-gathering work which will provide a central point of information relating to inland water incidents. The main objectives of creating a single picture of inland water incidents are to improve the analysis of causes and trends. The identification of problem areas will enable the RNLI to progress the targeting and promotion of water safety campaigns aimed at educating people about inland waters.

The study examines the scope and feasibility of establishing an INREM database in 2003/2004. The pilot study sample completed earlier this year included almost 20% of the emergency services and also included the relevant owners, operators, voluntary services, Government agencies and National Governing bodies.

For more details of how the RNLI can help you to be safer on the water, or to request a SEA Check for your boat, call the RNLI on 0800 328 0600 (1800 789589 in Ireland) or email watersafety@rnli.org.uk



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The Problem: Students learning to paddle on grade 1 and 2 water or even above may have a tendency to become “transfixed” by an obstacle, a rock, stopper, overflow etc.

How do coaches overcome this situation and ensure that paddlers are able to successfully negotiate sections of river/certain rapids etc?

It was turning out to be another informative and interesting day on the river, at the beginning of the white water season in the South West. Then the one event that started it all off occurred. Whilst observing another coach at work a student took what looked like the correct line down a rapid. So far so good. Half way down the ‘Magic rock’ appeared and what ever the student appeared to do they still managed to hit it side on.

After a successful recovery and completion of the course the question was put to them, “Why did you hit the rock”? The answer in all its glory came straight out, “I don’t know, whatever I tried to do and the harder I tried the more I was sucked towards it”

Introduction

The Oxford Compact English Dictionary lists “Transfixion” as a derivative of the word “Transfix” “to root (a person) to the spot with horror or astonishment”.

Is this what happens to some paddlers, old and new, when faced with a new challenge, a different more complex rapid, that large unpredictable hole or when mental unprepared for the challenge ahead?

One aspect of coaching is for coaches of all disciplines to, encourage, enthuse and guide students on to greater and better things. This can only be fully achieved when the coaches themselves have the necessary techniques and strategies to complete this important role entrusted to them.

Only in recent times has it become apparent that the state of mind and self-awareness of athletes and sportspeople is as, if not more so, important than physical strength and technique. People thought that the four-minute mile would never be broken; it was and within a few weeks of Roger Banister achieving this feat a number of athletes succeeded in repeating this supposedly impossible task.

So what altered? It wasn’t the distance, the running surface or some fancy new piece of equipment becoming available; it was the simple fact that their minds accepted the fact that: ‘If he can do it, then so can “I”’. Out on the rivers of today paddlers are performing a variety of moves that only a short time ago were not even thought possible.

Modern technology and design has certainly played its part, but at the end of the day it is the paddler who has to believe.

The paddler ends up “trying harder” and telling themselves that they “must make that move and avoid that object” and subsequently performing badly.

Why? Where does this lack of trust between the two selves come from? The answer or part of it lies within the mindset of the paddler.

Having interviewed a large number of new white water paddlers and asking them, with no bias at all, one question it is apparent that Self 1, the ego/director, is easily bruised. Some paddlers, experienced and new alike, are restricting their own development and performance and are reluctant to push themselves that bit further and open their envelopes in order to expand their skills.

The question was “What one factor stops you from pushing yourself when out paddling” and the answer, in the majority of cases,

“The fear of swimming in front of their paddling companions”

It must be stressed that swimming should never be taken as the easy way out or the first option on capsizing on white water; where possible the roll is by far the safest option.

From the answer given a number of paddlers are getting onto the water and restricting their potential to develop their performance by telling themselves that they must remain within their comfort zone at all times in order to ‘look good’ and keep their reputation intact. Here lies the first obstacle that coaches must overcome if they are to tackle some of the reasons why transfixion takes place and develop strategies to overcome it.

In the context of ‘transfixion’ it has become clear that faced with an obstacle, a barrier or difficult manoeuvre some paddlers, old and new, are playing out their own battle in their heads. This can lead to a partial fixation upon an object or feature that they need to avoid and subsequently their attention is focused on the negative rather than the positive. Or the sight of a large boulder becomes far more attractive than the clean line to its left or right.

How do coaches overcome this situation?

Coaching is not only about the physical aspects of the sport, the bow rudders, support strokes and when to use them. It is also about helping students to develop the mental attitudes to help themselves. In most learning situations students need to understand why they feel a certain way and how to react to those feelings.

With short-term students the coach only has a limited amount of time in which to work, sometimes as little as a day. So right from the start the coach must be able to deliver their session in a positive frame of mind in order to enthuse the student, thus putting them in a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere. From this start the coach needs to build on the student’s confidence and so enables them to relax and allow the body and mind to work as one. For longer term student’s coaches have the chance to experiment and find the best combination of tools to use.

By using positive language and concentrating on the plus rather than the minus a student can be encouraged to learn to look upon any water feature or obstacle in a positive light.

If coaches had a blank canvas to work with and students were completely open-minded and without prejudice then the task of guiding them onto greater and better things would be so much easier. However, as everybody does, paddlers come with their own baggage, what ever that may be. It is these thoughts, feelings, and emotions that go towards making everyone the unique individuals that they are. On the flip side these feelings and emotions can be responsible for inhibiting movements, skills and abilities when it comes to new and untried situations.

From research undertaken with a variety of top level coaches, in a range of paddling disciplines, it is apparent that mental preparation and the skill to develop students mental skills rate highly on the list of coaching skills. However without the basic paddling skills available to students, mental preparation is worthless. It is no good being able to visualise running a grade 4 rapid if their range of paddle strokes has not developed beyond the sweep stroke.



So what does "transfixion" feel like?

Transfixion is no different from any other emotion or feeling. It manifests itself in the fashion of nervousness: increased heart rate, staring eyes, sharp shallow breathing and at times that panic stricken look. With it comes one vital effect that of the apparent inability to physically control what is happening to paddle and boat. Imagine paddling down a river and seeing a large boulder and what ever you try and do and what ever you tell yourself to do you still manage to hit it. This is a classic result of being "transfixed" by an object.

For some reason the body and the mind are working against each other. To counteract and correct the situation, coaches, need to have a basic understanding of what is happening.

On a recent trip to a wave spot in North Wales a paddler was observed having a difficult time with certain manoeuvres. As time went on he became more and more frustrated and his techniques became rougher and less effective. As a result he eventually gave up completely, the boat then received a number of new scratches from a wall.

Throughout the episode the paddler was constantly talking, shouting and reprimanding someone. Who was this paddler talking to when paddling and who was he taking his anger out on?

The mind at work!

The book "The Inner Game of Tennis" by Timothy Gallwey gives us the following insight into the complex workings on the mind. Within everyone there are two separate entities jostling for position. Self 1 and Self 2. In times of stress Self 1 (our ego and director) takes on the roll of telling Self 2 (our unconsciousness, nervous system and body) what to do, how to make the move and when to do it. And here, lies the conflict. To achieve that perfect performance the mind and body need to work as one.

Through skills sessions and previous experiences, the sub-consciousness (Self 2) has already learnt and laid down the skills to paddle, which strokes to use and in which situations to use them. So Self 2 is well equipped to deal with anything that comes along, in the perfect situation. However as the tension of the moment mounts, for example when faced with a new rapid, (Self 1, that little voice in the back of the head starts to pipe up and put doubt and concern in the mind thus affecting the paddlers performance) a definite lack of trust begins to build up between the subconscious and the director. The body starts to tense up, the nerves become fraid, so instead of performing effortlessl

Mental imagery, visualisation, language, triggers, anchors are to name but a few of the most popular methods used by coaches to help their students become mentally aware of their environment and

situation. Motivation and mental preparation account for approximately 70% of a paddlers make up where only 30% of their make up is apportioned to skill.

More increasingly coaches are using visualisation as a tool and strategy. For their part students need to be open minded and receptive to new ideas for these tools to work. Visualisation can be used at any time in any place over the whole range of paddling disciplines.

Conclusion:

Unless paddlers believe in themselves and have some understanding as to what is happening and why, the task of the coach is a lot harder.

"Transfixion" can, at times, prove to be a real stumbling block for some paddlers in their development. With coaches becoming more aware of the power of the mind and the general mental well being of their students, they stand a real chance of having the tools readily at hand to overcome potential problems.

Through the research undertaken for this paper 70% of the coaches questioned, via an anonymous questionnaire, believe and use visualisation as their number one tool when helping to guide their students through problem areas.

The mental skills and motivation required by students to achieve their potential can come from a number of sources. However it is the coaches who are out there doing the job and who, in times of concern and confusion, the students turn to for an answer and guidance.

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Are University Canoe Clubs the laughing stock of paddlers in the UK and the BCU?

We've all heard stories of 'So and so University Canoe Club' led a group of 18 beginners down a grade 3 river with 1 throwline between them and couldn't wonder why they lost boats and put people in hospital. Does this not demonstrate that something is fundamentally wrong with the University Canoe Club system within the BCU?

Since last September I have been the Captain of a University Canoe Club. As a BCU coach and someone who works in the watersports industry I fully understand a lot of the issues and precautions involved with running safe and enjoyable trips. With previous Captains being less knowledgeable it has been a huge struggle to encourage safe practices in the club. This is not helped by the fact that in the club there are just 3 coaches, two L2 trainees and myself a L3 trainee.

I often find myself leading trips on grade 3 rivers with up to 15 people. Something you would normally expect a Level 4 coach to be doing with reasonable backup from qualified coaches and possibly splitting the group into 2. I continue to do this because I believe we run the rivers as safely as we can, relying on peoples experience and not their qualifications. Given the lack of qualified coaches there are of course times when we are slightly out of our depth. I do not doubt this for one minute, but so far we avoided any major accidents by using every bit of knowledge and every skill we have available. So you can quite easily see how stories like the one in the first paragraph could arise.

Why do I not change things to make them safer you're asking? Why not hire in some coaches? Well to put one word on it, money. University funding is often well below club needs and University student beginners wouldn't paddle if they had to pay an arm and a leg for it. Would I welcome some voluntary help? Definitely, but with University Club reputations pretty bad in general who would offer their skills? University Clubs are by their very nature unable to sustain coaching levels from within due to the massive member turnover every 3/4 years.

In my opinion this is a pretty bad situation, especially with many people getting into paddlesports whilst at University. You might think that the BCU would offer some help? Well there is one good weekend in September @ PYB for 3 people from the club to learn some skills, but that's about it really. So why did I affiliate my University Canoe Club to the BCU when I took over after many years of not doing so? Insurance. The BCU's 3rd party, member-to-member liability insurance means that if anything should go badly wrong on a trip and I was proved negligent, even though I'm not qualified I would be covered.

Hang-on, doesn't the BCU say that "if a large claim occurred, the renewal premium could be prohibitive". Yes, so here's my advice to the BCU, take University Canoe Clubs seriously because in my opinion if any part of paddlesport is going to invoke the insurance it will be them.

My last comment refers to events like the Dee tour big bash which encourage Universities to bring lots of people down to enjoy the party, yet when it comes to the river the WCA dissociate themselves from any responsibility for these people except for a little bit of safety cover. This puts pressure on University clubs to run the trips for beginners even though the river may be too difficult.

As someone who paddled with a few friends before going to University I know all to well about peoples attitudes toward University Clubs, many people come across as feeling that Universities are the laughing stock of paddlesport with accidents and carnage happening all the time. Until the BCU changes the way it deals with University clubs entirely, University Clubs will remain to operate on the edge compounding people's views and the likelihood of a major accident.

They say that most accidents occur through a catalogue of errors that at the time were overlooked; well this one seems pretty clear to me.

In response to, and as opposed to in defence of, these observations the BCU in conjunction with The Student Activities Safety Association and indeed more recently with Endsleigh Insurance have now run numerous annual training opportunities for University Clubs and paddlers. While all have been successful they have required student clubs and paddlers to fully engage in them. Planning is always difficult due to slow response rates.

By way of further response I would also point out that safety, particularly in paddlesport is an attitude of mind focused on both group and individual safety protocols. Again the BCU and the many coaches who do work with uni clubs actively encourage and promote safety awareness and good practice.

Non the less clubs and paddlers have a responsibility to engage in promoting good practice. As the old saying goes 'you can lead a horse to water'...

The WCA for its part does far more than provide a little bit of safety cover at the Dee events and are pro-active in promoting safety and certainly do not dissociate themselves from the event. No matter how much safety cover they might provide it is again necessary for all taking part to do so in a responsible and proactive way.

Clubs interested in attending some of the specific events run on behalf of student clubs should see below and if wishing to contact coaches who may be interested in working with them please contact diane@bcu.org.uk

Student Activities Safety Association -
www.studentsafety.org.uk



BCU student camps 2003

Following on from the success of the BCU/SASA student safety seminar based at Plas y Brenin last October two training camps are to be run....

Scotland – 2 three day courses – 06-08/04/03 or 09-11/04/03

Each course is aimed at those who will be leading your clubs river trips next year. During the course river leadership, skills and WW safety and rescue issues will be covered. The courses will be tailored to meet the needs and ability levels of your club.

Alps – 2 three day courses – 30/06-02/07/03 or 04-06/07/03 or 05-07/07/03 or 09-11/07/03.

These courses have 2 aims – the first to introduce the skills required for leading on Alpine rivers, the second to offer the opportunity to learn 5* skills and possibly be signed off for the BCU 5* training course.

Diary Date - BCU/SASA student safety seminar 2003 - 25/10/03 26/10/03

For more information contact Spike Green.... 01691 772748 or 07752 309838.
spikegreen@btopenworld.com or Diane Woods on 0115 9821100 Coaching diane@bcu.org.uk

ENDSLEIGH
INSURANCE

DUTY OF CARE FOR PADDLERS – DOES EXPERIENCE COUNT?

David Wilkinson provides us with another perspective on the issue of liability

In his article "Liability - Keeping Things in Perspective" (CODE Issue 103, pages 6-8) Mike Devlin makes some interesting suggestions about liability which may worry a great many paddlers. In particular he suggests that, as paddlers, we can be liable for an accident merely because we are the most experienced person at the scene. I want to take issue with this idea because, in my opinion, it is putting some people off becoming coaches and going out on rivers with less experienced paddlers.

In the article Mike suggests that, "if a complete novice decides to paddle a hazardous rapid a court might deem that he or she lacked the experience to appreciate the real nature of the hazards involved. If a vastly more experienced paddler were present, the court might rightly decide that he or she had a DUTY OF CARE to advise the other paddler not to run the rapid"

In fact, and with respect, that is not correct as a general proposition. The law does not require anyone to act as a "Good Samaritan" and assist others who may be in danger or at risk from self-inflicted harm. As it was put in a Canadian case, 'No principle is more deeply rooted in the common law than that there is no duty to take positive action in aid of another no matter how helpless or perilous his position is²'. The fact that a person can, as a result of their experience, foresee dangers that another person faces is *not in itself*, sufficient to warrant the imposition of a legal duty of care. There is no duty to warn a blind person who is about to walk off a cliff of the dangers involved!

Later on in the article Mike puts it a different way, in terms of a general proposition:

"In the eyes of the law we all have a duty of care to our neighbours - a neighbour being anyone whom we might come into contact with and whom if you thought about it might be injured by your negligent acts and or omissions"

Yes, true, BUT since landmark cases in the mid 1980s³, English courts have been conservative in their application of negligence law. The House of Lords now says that, "foreseeability of likely harm is not in itself a sufficient test of liability in negligence". In addition to (i) foreseeability there must also be (ii) a close or "proximate" relationship between the victim and the defendant and (iii) it must be "fair just and reasonable" to impose a duty of care. This is known as the "three stage test". Because of the three stage test I'd say that a court would take some convincing that an experienced paddler had a duty to warn a less experienced paddler, who just happened to be on the same stretch of river, of the risks involved in tackling a rapid. If it were otherwise then, on events such as the Dee Tour, bank safety people would find themselves lobbing warning notices and guidebooks onto the spray decks of passing novices as well as the usual tangled web of throwlines!

Having said that, it is crucial to consider the particular circumstances of the case. Situations could arise in which a paddler's experience was relevant to the imposition of a duty of care. In a claim arising from a canoeing accident the court would listen to arguments that justify the imposition of a duty of care. Factors which might achieve this would include (but not be limited to) the following:

- If the experienced and novice paddlers were part of the

same group on the river, and the experienced paddler had assumed a leadership role. This could be achieved in a number of ways e.g. offering to "lead" the group, offering to give coaching during the trip, accepting payment etc;

- If a more experienced paddler had led a novice paddler to believe that she would look after her;
- If the novice paddler was a child, or had a disability, and the experienced paddler had assumed responsibility as such for this.

All that is not to say, of course, that as part of the paddling community we shouldn't look out for one another at all times. Of course, we should. It's common sense.

The article goes on to suggest that if a paddler is part of a group and is *the most experienced member* of that group then he or she may have a duty of care to the others even if the group is in the charge of a properly qualified coach. What is misleading about this suggestion is that it implies that *experience alone* generates a duty of care to the group. But that's very unlikely, for reasons that I've already given. The presence of a qualified coach in charge of the group can *only make* it even more unlikely. The only situation where I can imagine a court imposing a duty of care in such a scenario is where *for other reasons* the more experienced paddler already *had a duty of care* to the group e.g. a centre employed her and these were paying clients. It's certainly not likely, in my view, to *apply to peer group paddling*. Of course, as a matter of good practice we should be clear that the people that we are paddling with are *up to the river* in question given its condition and their own *condition* on the day but that's a different matter.

In relation to the Standard of Care, Mike suggests that experienced paddlers have a duty to *make sure* that "paddlers not having the experience to make informed decisions are placed in a position of being able to do so by being informed and consulted". True, particularly for novices or others who are dependant on your advice. However, the courts would certainly expect an adult, who knew the general characteristics of paddling (i.e. it's a risky sport due to risk of drowning or injury), to put some effort in to *find out for themselves* the nature of the trip, river, or rapid. This is not the Nanny State. We are not expected to baby sit our paddling partners. Particularly in peer-group paddling, it is likely that the courts would expect each paddler, *even those with less experience*, to make efforts to check out hazards for themselves, both in general terms (i.e. reading the guide book and discussing with other paddlers before they get on) and in relation to a particular rapid (i.e. making enquiries from fellow paddlers as to its suitability for them). Peer-group paddling works best when friends feel a shared responsibility for checking on their own and the group's safety. It's important that we keep it this way.

Finally, I draw some conclusions about how the courts are likely to apply the principles of negligence by looking at one of the very few actions in a UK court following a climbing accident⁴. A climber sued a guide whom he had paid to introduce him to the sport, when he fell off a crag that he was leading, with the guide seconding. The less experienced climber's protection failed and he hit the deck, sustaining serious injuries. He claimed that the guide had failed to properly instruct him in the use of protection, had failed to supervise his protection placements, and had failed to stop the fall. His negligence claim did not succeed. In answering the point about instruction in protection placement the judge

commented "the (climber) is not a child, he was at the relevant time an intelligent adult of 48 and the (guide) was entitled to treat him as such". The judge concluded by saying

"If you are going to engage in rock climbing you must acknowledge and accept the risks you take and not expect to off load responsibility on others. That is not to say that a mountain guide does not assume responsibility for his client - clearly he does, but the nature of that responsibility must depend on the circumstances of the case, on the experience of the client and on the activity undertaken. Thus when the (climber) began to lead he had to accept a degree of risk from which the [guide] could not protect him

So too would the courts expect those involved in canoeing to assume responsibility for their own actions and accept a degree of risk.

Mike's article alerts us to the need to take care of our paddling partners but I'm keen that we indeed keep things in perspective and don't start unduly worrying about law suits arising purely because we hold BCU qualifications or have plenty of paddling experience. Qualifications and experience are a benefit for us to share with others, not a burden for us to carry alone.

1 I'm a Level 2 coach and, for my sins, a lecturer in law at Keele University (eval.l@keele.ac.uk)

2 Horsley v Maclare (1970) 2 O.R. 487 at 499.

3 Governors of the Peabody Donation Fund v Sir Lindsay Parkinson and Co Ltd [1985] AC 210 and Sutherland Shire Council v Heyman (1985) 60 ALR 1

David Wilkinson¹

In this article David is able to place issues of liability in a different context perhaps to that of my article in code 103 (pages 6-8), however I would stress that the intention of the article was to inform and raise awareness of current liability issues. It certainly wasn't to frighten paddlers or coaches. Indeed I wholeheartedly agree with David's closing comment where it says 'qualifications and experience are a benefit for us to share with others, not a burden to carry alone'.

Our current insurance arrangements reflects this and indeed it is recognised that affiliated clubs may not always have qualified coaches and therefore may need to rely on experienced club members when running trips and events.

Going back to the original article. Its intention was to raise awareness to possible scenarios and issues relating to the increasing number of civil actions and liability matters that in the main are settled out of court. Such cases provide little or no precedent in law, however evidence does suggest that settlements are based on duty of care and standard of care matters referenced in the article. Again let us not take fright at this let us instead be clear about such matters.

*Davids comments and references are however equally important to bear in mind. Hopefully what both articles confirm is our need to reflect best and informed practice so that we take whatever **reasonable** steps are required to cover our own and our neighbours safety.*

Mike Devlin

Wimbledon Park Sailing Centre is a BCU Approved Centre and offers canoeing and kayaking opportunities for anyone over the age of 8 years. The centre is looking for enthusiastic senior instructors, instructors and people with basic qualifications looking to gain more. For more information call 020 8947 4894 or email wimbledonpark@hotmail.com. There are good rates of pay for suitable candidates.

Regional Round-UP

WESSEX REGION

RCO: Gordon Summers
Tel: 01934 518505
Email: Gordon.summers@lineone.net

Regional Update Forum:
Sunday 13th April, Bridgewater YMCA

Assessor Training & Aquatic First Aid
Saturday 12th April, Bridgewater YMCA

For further details send an email or SAE to Gordon Summers
Thank you Gordon Summers.

Gordon has decided to step down as RCO after the April Forum. I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of Wessex coaches, to thank him publicly for his massive contribution to coaching and the BCU. By running a regular programme of courses and Update Forums he has provided real support to coaches in Wessex as well as making valuable contributions to English Coaching Management Committee and South West Regional Committee.

RICHARD WARD, BCU English Coaching Development Manager

Nominations are now being sought for prospective candidates for the role of RCO. Any coaches interested in the post or seeking further details please contact Richard Ward at BCU Office. Tel: 0115 982 1100 ext 219 or email: rward@bcu.org.uk



EASTERN REGION

RCO: Steve Scorer
Tel: 01234 376410

Eastern Region Weekend
21 – 22nd June, Priory Country Park, Bedford

The weekend will include a series of Coaching Workshops, opportunities to gain / update First Aid Qualifications and a number of paddling events. For further details from Brian Stanbridge 01234 403 933, email: brian@ice.gb.com, or Steve Scorer (see above)



NORTH EAST REGION

RCO: Ken Hughes
Tel: 07890 139908
Email: Kenneth.hughes@sunderland.ac.uk

Regional Courses:

4 th April	Canoe Safety Test, Northumberland College
11-13 April	Level 3 Sea Kayak - Training / Assessment, Outdoor Trust
12-13 April	Level 3 Surf - Training, Fergus Lynch (0191) 5651283
25-27 April	5 Star Kayak – Training / Assessment, Outdoor Trust
10-11 May	WW Safety & Resuce, Ken Hughes (07890) 139908



Regional Round-UP

WEST MIDLANDS

RCO: Phil Ascough
Tel: 01527 861426
Email: philascough@RYA-online.net

Regional Coach Development Courses:

3-4 May Level 1 Coach Training and CST
10-11 May 3 Star & CST tests (Canoe & Kayak)
17-18 May Regional Assessors / Coaching Forum
14-15 June 3 Star & CST tests (Canoe & Kayak)

Staffordshire

1) 16 hour First Aid Course, HSE approved
Sat 5th – Sun 6th April, Burton Canoe Club

2) Local Coaching Panel Meeting and Update.
Sunday 13th April, 10am-12 noon.

Open to all Coaching Service members living and/or working in Staffordshire. This is an 'on the water' meeting to play with boats, discuss coaching ideas and issues and tamper with technique and strokes. Kayak and Open Canoe. *Would love to hear of any burning issues!* Follow-up planned for Sunday 18th May. Please contact me regarding the issues of the day!! Thanks,

STUART BRIGGS, LCO Staffordshire
Tel: 01283 533 416, email: stuart.briggs@lineone.net for more information.

EAST MIDLANDS REGION

RCO: Chris Cartwright
Mobile Tel: 07855 385323
Email: chris@adventureimages.co.uk

Regional Update Forums:

5th May (Monday), East Midlands Coachfest – Nottingham
18th October (Saturday), Northampton

For details contact Chris Cartwright, RCO.

SOUTH EAST REGION

RCO: Andy Hall
Tel: 01903 767503
Email: debofene@yahoo.com

LCO's wanted

A number of LCO's have stepped down in the region. There are currently vacancies in:

- East Kent - West Kent - West Sussex – Surrey -

Any coaches interested in taking on the role of LCO or in getting more information please contact Andy Hall, RCO or Richard Ward at BCU Office. Tel: 0115 982 1100 ext 219 or email: rward@bcu.org.uk

CUMBRIA REGION

RCO: Matt Ellis
Tel: 01768 485000
Email: mattellis@outwardbound-uk.org

Regional Courses:

10-11 May Coaching Processes, YMCA Windermere (08707) 273927

LONDON REGION

RCO: Gareth Moss
Tel: 020 8940 5550
Fax: 020 9840 7052
Email: Gareth.moss@surreycc.gov.uk

New LCO for South London - Giles Brunning

Dave Wright is stepping down as LCO for South London. Thanks to Dave for all his efforts, which have been greatly appreciated.

Giles Brunning has come forward to offer his experience and take on the role vacated by Dave – welcome along!! He can be contacted at Southmere Boating Centre, e-mail: southmere@boating.fsbusiness.co.uk, Tel: 07930 363 050.

There haven't been any expressions of interest to me concerning a Coaching Processes Course, which is just as well, as none of the providers that I contacted could deliver a course either.

An Assessor Day will be running at TYM in May or June so contact me if you are interested in attending one.

Our Coaching Development Officer, Paul Newman, has recently qualified as an Aquatic First Aid Course Provider – so contact him if you need a course. His phone no is 01634 232 874.

Thank you.

GARETH MOSS, RCO
[Open Canoe Level 2 Training](#)

May 17 – 18. Contact Gareth Moss for more details
[Coach Development Fund](#)

The London & SE Coach Development Fund is still available for any club-based paddler that wants some financial assistance towards either Level 3 Training or Assessment.

SOUTHERN REGION

RCO: Steve Finch
Tel: 0118 975 5318
[New Email: stevefinch@freeuk.com](#)
Regional Coaching Processes
26th / 27th April, Venue tba

For further information, please contact: Steve Finch, RCO

South Bucks Local Panel

10 April 2003

Update Workshop - Best Practice in Water Safety followed by AGM Longridge SBC

19 June 2003

Update Workshop - Introduction to Marathon & Sprint Racing Marsport, Wokingham Waterside Centre

18 September 2003

Update workshop - Three Star Kayak Assessments Longridge SBC

For further information please contact: Andy Maxted

Tel: 07966 491026 email: morven@ukonline.co.uk
LCO South Bucks

Regional Round-UP

DEVON and CORNWALL

Devon & Cornwall

RCO: Andy Barclay

NEW Tel: 01822 833885 (daytime)

Email: abarclay@cornwall.gov.uk

27th April (Sunday) COACH UPDATE FORUM, at Bude.

The spring forum is almost upon us, so here are a few details to whet your appetite! Having held previous forums at Ashburton, Plymouth and Exeter, we are returning to Bude this time in the hope that we can take advantage of the North coast and make use of the surf. This philosophy backfired at the last forum held on the Dart as there was no water, so the morale is don't hold your breath on there being any surf!! However, we also have the beach, river and canal to make use of, so there are plenty of options.

We are currently finalising workshops and so far the following are in place:

An update on the Paddlesport Review
Freestyle canoeing – advanced quiet water techniques
Coaching in the surf
Living from a sea kayak
Surfing sea kayaks
Freestyle manoeuvres in surf

Further workshops are to be added and you will be circulated shortly with the final information. The event will also give you a chance to meet and talk with other coaches within Devon and Cornwall. Hope to see you there.

YORKSHIRE

RCO: Ian Scott

Tel: 0114 263 0178

Mobile: 07961 815038

Email: Highcliffeadventure@hotmail.com

The next Yorkshire Coaching Panel Meeting will be held in September, date and time to be advised. The region would like to support clubs who are lacking in qualified instructors to run their sessions. We feel that the club infrastructure is a vital part of the development of the sport and as such, we have resources to support this. I would like to hear from any club in the Yorkshire region to discuss coaching requirements.

Thanks,
IAN SCOTT, RCO Yorkshire

For up to the minute details about Coaching in Yorkshire please visit the **NEW Website:** www.coaching-yorkshire.org.uk

Thanks Trevor Butler

Trevor Butler has decided the time is right to step down from the role of LCO for Pennine District. On behalf of the BCU I would like to thank Trevor for his contribution to the regional panel and for organising local update workshops. If there are any coaches interested in the role of LCO please contact Ian Scott or BCU to find out more.

Richard Ward, BCU English Coaching Development Manager.

NORTH WEST REGION

RCO: Ian Bell Tel: 0151 638 1555

Email: ian.alison.bell@bcuinternet.com

Another successful update was held at Burrs on 8th December. Many thanks to coaches who ran the workshop sessions: the feedback from participants was excellent. Many coaches have realised the value of the updates by attending every time even though they have already updated. They offer the chance to learn new ideas at low cost and meet other coaches to exchange views and approaches to coaching.

We can best meet your needs if you TELL US WHAT YOU WANT. Sea kayak theory, for example, was very popular on this occasion. **If you think you have an idea for a useful workshop, please contact Pat Mee (details below).**

Remember – places are limited, so if you are really fussy about which workshops to attend then book early!

A few people seem to think it unfair that most updates take place at Burrs. The facts are:

Burrs is fairly central within the region
It offers both placid and moving water facilities
It has plenty of convenient parking space
It has a large, warm indoor room which can accommodate everyone comfortably for meetings
It has changing rooms and hot showers
It has a café which can provide refreshments

If anyone can find similar facilities elsewhere, we will consider using them.

Look out for dates of the next update in forthcoming newsletters.

PAT MEE, LCO Greater Manchester

NW LCO contact details:

Cheshire: Ian McMullen. Tel: 01244 372 183

Lancashire: William Hanham. Tel: 01772 421 909. e-mail: hanham@enterprise.net

Merseyside: Dave McGarry. E-mail: d.mcgarry@blueyonder.com

Manchester: Pat Mee. Tel: 01457 864 817. e-mail: pat.pathways@virgin.net

University Rep: Helen Brown. Tel: 07980 439 295, e-mail: boater_h@yahoo.co.uk

EVENTS

17 - 18 May **Teesside Weekend** (Coaching/events/fun).

Contact: David Brown: 01200 441 274 or

0771 368 7026 or

Andy Noblett: email: andyn@bluecarrots.com Tel: 01254 248 457

21st June **Paddlequest NW** – Merseysport.

12th July **Youthfest** - Salford Water Sports Centre.

Contact: Len Hartley, Tel 07855 639594, e-mail: seapaddlerone@aol.com

REGIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING

29th April (Tuesday) at Merseysport, starting at 7.30pm prompt. All welcome. Contact: Karen Davies for details Tel: 01260 275 776, e-mail: karen.davies@bcunw.freemail.co.uk

CHANNEL ISLANDS

RCO: Kevin Mansell Tel: 01534 745 936 Email: kmansell@itl.net

Thank you Tom Turner. After 9 years Tom Turner has decided to step down as RCO for the Channel Islands and on behalf of the BCU Coaching Service I would like to thank Tom for his sterling work over the years. In the meantime Kevin Mansell has agreed to take on the role. Coaches on the Channel Islands will receive a mail shot shortly with details of Coach Update Plans for the year.

New look and feel

From March 1st 2003, the BCU website has a new look and feel. The site has been comprehensively overhauled with a magazine like homepage, regular news updates, a search facility, access to a huge range of BCU documents and re-designed colour coded sections. You will continue to be able to join the BCU online or try the new e-commerce shopping facility in Coaching Supplies. The top bar feature buttons that connect to the main areas of the site such as:

- About the BCU
- News/events
- Disciplines
- Youth
- coaching
- Access
- Coaching Supplies

Looking in the 'About the BCU' section you will find subareas on the left such as Membership, Clubs, Regions, Policy etc and this design feature is found throughout the rest of the main areas of the site. Large BCU documents, mainly found in Coaching, Youth and Access, are in the form of standard Adobe PDF files.

If the user does not have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is needed to access these files, there are direct links to the Adobe site to download the free software.

Altogether there are around 250 pages on the site which constitutes a considerable investment by the BCU in bringing the latest information to its members. If you come across any problems on the new site, please email the BCU at webmaster@bcu.org.uk

Tiree Surf kayak gathering

'No 7. And still Dedicated to Surfing'

4-7 Oct 2003

learning, playing, chilling, thrilling

Contact Andy Spink 01631 710 317

www.hebrideanpursuits.com

Scottish Sea Kayak Symposium

23 - 26 May 2003

Based at Sabhal Mor Ostaig (the Gaelic College) in Sleat (South Skye) from 23 - 26 May 2003 with paddles around Skye for those able to stay on during the following week.

Accommodation information options will be forwarded with a draft programme. There will be camping and single and twin rooms available at the college.

Alternatively people can choose to stay in local hotels B&B's or self Catering.

For further information contact
Gordon Brown on
ssksymposium@onetel.net.uk

Office Matters

BCU Yearbook 2003 Updates

Under the Contracted Course Providers, please note the change of details for:

Standing Waves Leisure, Office 2nd Floor, Canalbank Estates, Seabegs Road, Bonnybridge, FK4 2BP. Tel :01324 810888 OR 07769 677824 email: mail@standingwaves.co.uk

Under the Scottish Canoe Association River Advisors, please note email address

mail@standingwaves.co.uk

Under the Scottish Canoe Association Personnel, please note email address for the Recreation Stream

mail@standingwaves.co.uk

Under the Approved Centres for the SCA please note that

STANDING WAVES LEISURE, Office 2nd Floor, Canalbank Estates, Seabegs Road, Bonnybridge, FK4 2BP. Tel : 01324 810888 email: mail@standingwaves.co.uk

is and has been an approved centre for many years and has not missed an inspection.

www.wannacourse.com

- BCU Star Tests
- Canoe Safety
- BCU Level 1
- BCU Level 2
- BCU Level 3
- BCU Coaching Processes
- BCU White Water Safety
- Swift Water Rescue

2003 Specials
Open Boat Skills Courses
Open Boat Coaching Courses
Aquatic First Aid
BCU Approved White Water Safety
Swift Water Rescue Courses

- Aquatic First Aid
- Assessor Training
- White Water Skills
- Leadership
- Safety and Rescue
- River Running
- Freestyle
- Open Boat Skills

Special Offer - Places on 2003 Coaching Processes booked and paid for in advance £75 per person
Be a Professional - Learn from the Professionals

Sea Birds

Lindsey Williams

Learn a few of the main species and their habits and make your paddling a richer experience and your leadership on the Sea more entertaining.

It is expected of any BCU coach that they have at least a passing familiarity with the environment in which they operate. At sea when asked what a particular bird is the answer is still too often a hesitant, "Er.. seagull?"

The Northumberland coast is home, for at least part of each year, to as rich a diversity of bird life as anywhere in Britain. The Farne Islands in early summer bristle with tens of thousands of sea birds nesting precariously on wave-washed cliffs and feeding on the water. Along with the huge population of grey, or Atlantic, seals this constitutes an overpowering wildlife experience. Birds were once shot for sport, eggs collected for food and seals killed for their oil. Since the National Trust bought the islands in 1925, the wildlife has been carefully protected and managed.

The Farnes, or Farena Ealande (Island of the Pilgrims) as they were known in Anglo-Saxon times, consist of twenty eight islands. Some are little more than low, bare rocks drying with the tide. As paddlers we are allowed to land in only two places in the whole of the island group, at the jetty on the east side of Inner Farne and on Longstone, the most easterly of the group. The National Trust owns all the islands with the exception of Longstone which is owned by Trinity House. The reason for limiting where people land is to protect the habitats of the wildlife. As sea kayakers, however, we can get close-up views without causing any disturbance. For details of sea birds, get yourself a good bird book. There are lots of good ones. Here are a few of the birds you can see in abundance.

Cormorant and Shags

These are often difficult to tell apart. They are a similar shape and both adopt the distinctive stance on the rocks with their wings half-open, drying in the sunshine. They are both expert fishermen capable of catching more than six kilos of fish a day and swallowing them whole. The mature shag is slightly smaller than the cormorant and has a distinguishing crest on top of the head along with yellow patches on the base of the beak. There are more than 250 pairs of cormorants and 700 pairs of shags on the islands.

Eider Duck

Known locally "Cuddy's ducks" after St Cuthbert who lived on Inner Farne in the seventh century, this is the most common of the sea ducks found on the Farnes. The drake is a handsome black and white in spring and early summer whereas the duck is a dowdy mottled brown. After moulting in late June, however, the drakes look much like the ducks. Nesting eiders are very docile but it is important not to disturb them as unattended eggs will be quickly eaten by gulls.

Guillemot

The Farnes is one of the most important breeding sites for guillemots. These, like the puffins and razorbills, are part of the auk family. Black and white with a pointed beak they nest around the Pinnacles off Staple Island. With small wings for the size of their chubby, little bodies, they make a bit of a meal of taking off and landing on the water and in this are much like the puffin. Watch out when paddling as they are not very accurate and, flying low over the water, can collide with you or your boat.

Razorbill

Similar to the guillemot but with a shorter, wider beak, the razorbill is black with white breast and underbody and a white bar on each wing. There are less than 50 pairs on the islands. The female lays a single egg in a crevice on a bare rock ledge.

Puffin

Of all our sea birds, the puffin is one of the most popular. With its chunky body, large head, small wings and distinctive orange bill, this comic, sometimes referred to as the sea parrot, is known locally as "Tommy Noddy" because of its distinctive head action

when it walks. Puffins dig burrows in the shallow, sandy soil that tops some of the islands. Even where you are allowed to land it is important during the summer not to walk on the grass because only a few inches of sand will separate it from the puffin burrow below and your walk will be accompanied by the scrunching of squashed puffins. In the autumn puffins disappear from the islands. Where they went in the winter was a mystery for many years until scientists discovered that they winter at sea. There are more than 15,000 pairs on the Farnes each summer.

Terns

There are four distinct terns on the Farnes; the Arctic, Common, Roseate and Sandwich. Despite its name, the Common is, in fact, rarer than the Arctic and the Sandwich. The Roseate is the rarest of all with only about 15 pairs on the islands. Terns are fast and agile flyers. At nesting time they become quite aggressive when disturbed and will fly at the heads of visitors. Landing at the jetty on Inner Farne, it is advisable to wear a hat as they commonly draw blood from the scalps of those who don't. Their beaks are thin and sharp. They have narrow pointed wings and deeply forked tails. Their plumage is generally white with black caps and the size, beak and leg colour the main features which differentiate the various types.

Herring Gull

These noisy gulls can be seen swooping like hawks scavenging for food. They do a great deal of damage to the eggs and young of other species. They have a pale grey back and wings with white underparts. Their legs are pink and their bills yellow.

Kittiwake

Smaller than the similar looking Herring Gull and with a yellow beak and dark brown legs, the Kittiwake is a summer visitor to the Farnes. They cover huge distances in their migration.

Lesser Black-Backed Gull

Similar in size and shape to the Herring Gull, this gull has dark grey wings and back and yellow legs. These are real predators often killing smaller birds such as terns and even puffins as well as eating eggs.

This will give you a start in recognizing the various species. There are also oyster catchers (which don't eat oysters), greater black-backed gulls and gannets that roam from further afield.

For a pictorial guide to these birds visit www.rspb.org.uk/birds

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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.

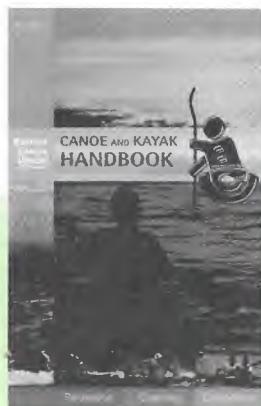
The **Paddlepower Deliverer's Pack** is a 'must' for coaches who wish to help develop the paddling skills of younger paddlers, the pack gives helpful information on the best ways to carry this scheme. **Activity Cards** are a supplemental aid to Paddlepower which contain instructions for making learning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

Please write enclosing cheque/ access/visa/Mastercard
No etc

To **BCU Coaching Supplies, Adbolton Lane,
West Bridgford, Nottingham
NG2 5AS**

A4 BCU Coaching Logbook	£7.00
Canoe and Kayak Handbook	£17.95
Coaching Directory	
Loose leaf	£4.95
CD	£4.95
Paddlepower Deliverer's Pack	£5.00
(Available only to Level 2 coaches and above)	
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Plastic game cards	
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The Geoff Good Coach of The Year Award

The Geoff Good Coach of the Year Award is aimed at raising the profile of coaching and the work of coaches and in so doing will honour the memory and work of Geoff Good BCU Director Of Coaching 1970 -1999. The Award is co-ordinated by the BCU Coaching Service, the awarding body of the BCU.

Award Categories

There are three awards of equal status in the categories as detailed below:

JUNIOR COACH OF THE YEAR
SENIOR COACH OF THE YEAR

VOLUNTARY SERVICES TO COACHING

If you would like to nominate someone for the 2003 award please contact the **BCU Coaching Service**.

The work of coaches in the field is significant and should be recognised. what better way than to nominate them for this prestigious paddlesport award.



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