

ICF to rebrand

As the ICF reached its centenary it was announced that its headquarters would return to Budapest and triple in size. This was the location in the Otto Bonn days from 1988 to 2000, since when it has been to Madrid and Lausanne. A subsidiary office has been opened in Hangzhou, location of the ICF Super Cup with marathon, slalom, polo and sprint. Although US\$400,000 prize money was on offer, support for the event was limited.

The ICF are also to abandon their name and be referred to as Paddle Worldwide. These changes seem to relate to the hostile attempts to take over dragon boat racing and paddleboarding and risk losing sight of the ICF's central reason for existing.

Among guests at the centenary event was Albert Woods, who chaired the ICF Slalom & Wildwater Racing Committee from 1988 to 1996 and founded the European Canoe Association, which he headed from 1993 to 2023.

Kayak death was faked

A 45 year old Wisconsin man, Ryan Borgwast, who disappeared on Aug 12th on a kayak angling trip, sparked a massive search which produced a number of his belongings but no body, leaving a wife and three children. On Nov 11th he finally sent police a video, apparently from eastern Europe where he is thought to be with a woman from Uzbekistan. It seems he had sunk his kayak and phone in 60m deep Green Lake, paddled a child's boat to shore, ridden a hidden ebike overnight to Madison, taken a bus to Detroit and caught a plane in Canada. Before going he had taken out \$375,000 in life insurance, moved funds to a foreign bank account, had a new passport and email address and been communicating online with a woman in Uzbekistan. Authorities in Wisconsin say he owes them \$40,000 for the search costs.

Scottish inland surfing

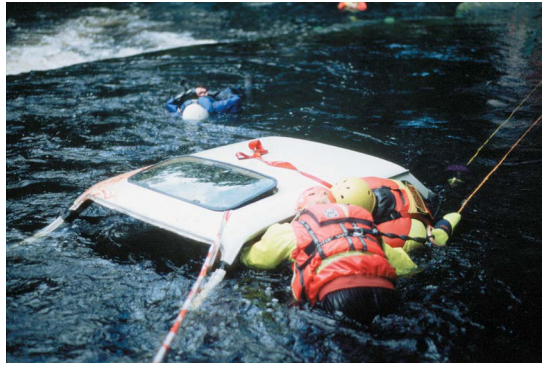
Lost Shore has opened as Europe's largest surf venue of its kind. Sited in a former brownstone quarry at the M8/M9 junction on the west of Edinburgh, it adjoins the Edinburgh International Climbing Arena by the Union Canal at Ratho.

Leeds weirs replaced

The Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme has now been completed after a decade of construction work. A major feature has been the removal of two large sloping weirs from the River Aire. These have been replaced by inflatable neoprene tubes, which can be deflated when floods are expected. It seems that otters and salmon have managed to get past them so it remains to be seen whether canoeists can get past them safely at the edges. Most of the river now passes over sets of weirs that are closed in at each end. While these are lethal it remains to be seen whether they can be adjusted sufficiently quickly



A new water activity at Holme Pierrepont? An autumn storm brought down part of a ceiling.



Avon & Somerset Search & Rescue

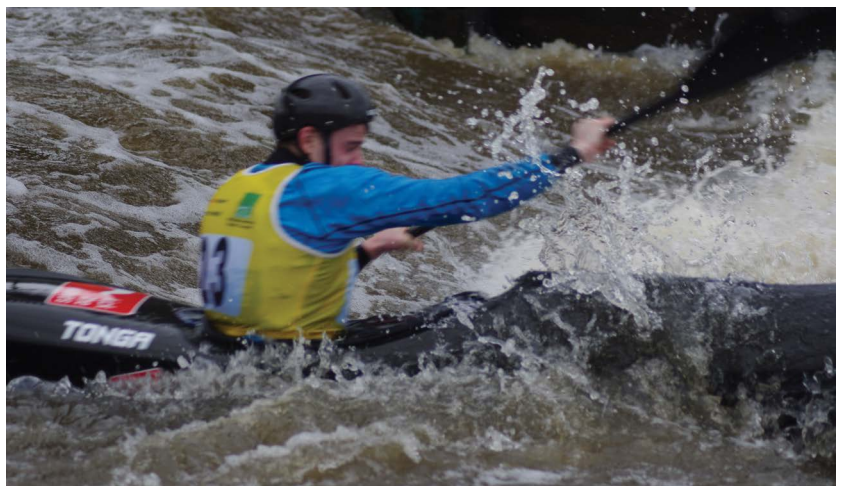
Coastguards have had an intensive training session at the Cardiff WW Centre to prepare themselves for flood rescues. Of particular interest was rescue from a car in the water, which had similarities to an incident during the 2000 canoe lifeguards' national championships on the Tryweryn.

to release somebody trapped and recirculating below them.

Happier Scottish new year

Major changes have taken place with the PS AGM in December and look set to give a more positive future from 2025. Stewart Pitt, 1996 C2 Olympic slalom paddler, is now president. There are four new board members from a range of disciplines. Stuart Smith, CEO for the last 20 years, is to leave at the end of January. Paddlers, including slalomists, are back on the water at Grandtully.

One issue to be faced, however, is that Chris and Ken Baillie, who have held Scottish slalom together at a practical level for over half a century, have now moved to the Home Counties for family reasons, calling for new slalom management support in Scotland. When the dust settles, the future of canoeing will look brighter in Scotland than it has done for some time.



Scott Ritchie

The WWR world has been taken aback by the unexpected death of Scott Ritchie of Pinkston Paddlers. This popular member of the junior and senior national teams was taken ill at home and died soon after in hospital.

Multiple pumped storage schemes

A number of HEP pumped storage schemes are being promoted in Scotland. These include Loch Fearn, Loch Cuaich, Loch Lochy, Balmacann and a couple on Loch Awe, including doubling of the Cruachan scheme. These should not have significant effect on loch users.

Hengistbury Head groyne enhanced

The groyne at Hengistbury Head is being beefed up to give added protection to Christchurch. It will be 1.5m higher than at present. The sea level is expected to rise by over 10mm/year over the next century, compared with 7mm/year over the last 18,000 years.

Mushroom kayak

An open canoe grown from mushroom mycelia by Katy Ayres has already taken to the water (May 20, p8). Now Californian student Sam Shoemaker has responded with a sit on top kayak of similar construction. It has the problem of the open canoe, weighing in at 61kg.