

'it is no surprise to see that places with access to open water and rivers over-index in those disciplines'.

### What the judge sees

Many sports rely on what the judge or referee sees as the final decision, even if spectators think they see differently. The replacement with video assistant referees, the decisions of which are often not as quickly available as desired, may or may not help. Best results are for measurement. Having video cameras on sprint finish lines can give times to three decimal places of a second and are never disputed, provided the system does not break down.

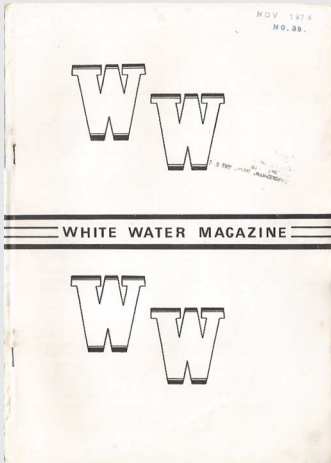
It should be possible to have cameras covering all lines on a polo

pitch rather than referees having to stop a match to confer but, realistically, it would be expensive, they would be vulnerable and even timing fails too often. David Wain put a lot of effort into developing a slalom pole that would register touches reliably but had to admit defeat in the end.

Instead we have gate judges and section judges, independent eyes on what happens. To try to cover this with cameras would require them to cover all angles. Even then, filming by spectators might show something different. In surfing and freestyle opinions play a much greater part and so a panel of judges all watch and their deliberations are shared. There is scope for measuring some aspects of canoe competition but it comes at a price and needs to be reliable.

## Back then

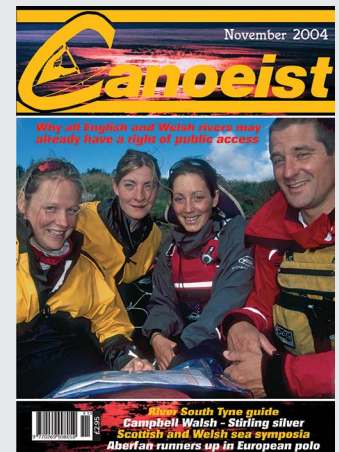
### 50 years ago



- \* Up to a third of BCU members were slalomists, who appeared to be getting a raw deal in the way finances were handled by HQ.
- \* An improvement in slalom deck numbers, especially those applied with tape, was called for, particularly from ZZ at Llangollen.
- \* The Tryweryn saw its first ranking white water race.
- \* The Northern WWR series results were based on the best five results from the nine races on the Eden, Wharfe, Tyne and Tees, at least one race on each river.
- \* Certificates of Competence had been abandoned for WWR entrants as too unpopular.
- \* Summer Grandtully was lost because of lack of an organizing club but Llangollen International slalom went ahead with no organizer or sponsor.
- \* Open events were being added to increasing numbers of slaloms and WWRs.
- \* Albert Woods' slalom team report called for teams to fly to events and stay in hotels rather than camping and was critical of the lack of cooperation from BCU HQ.
- \* After a 16 hour drive the GB team to New Zealand were moved on from their campsite by the army and had to camp by a roadside layby.
- \* There was a call to move the National Canoe Surfing Championships from Bude after some difficult rescues.

### 20 years ago

- \* Sean Morley completed his 7,200km circumnavigation in one season of all the inhabited islands in Britain and Ireland except the Channel Islands.
- \* Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, Acting Prime Minister in Tony Blair's absence, had been white water rafting on the Tryweryn and had taken Graham Cook of Waveney Valley Canoe Club to the doctor in one of his two Jags after an incident on the river.
- \* British Waterways were to restore the Forth & Clyde Canal at Glasgow's Pinkston Basin.
- \* Narrowboat magazines but not canoeists were warned that the EA were trying to get the right to impose compulsory boat insurance, while promising not to use such powers.
- \* It was hoped that an access demonstration in Llangollen would be the largest ever gathering of canoeists in Britain. Labour's Defra Minister, Alun Michael, claimed there was little unmet call for river access.
- \* The WCA funded a feasibility study into a white water course in Cardiff Bay.
- \* Writing for *Canoeist* on behalf of the European Canoe Association, President Albert Woods called for the EU Water Framework Directive not to define canoeing as 'bathing', activity which could be banned from rivers failing to meet cleanliness and sediment targets.
- \* Former BCU National Access Officer Douglas Caffyn explained to *Canoeist* readers how a bungling lawyer in 1830 had caused our access problems.
- \* Rockpool Kayaks began trading from Holyhead with their Alaw sea kayak.
- \* Justine Curgenvin and Freya Hoffmeister were among those attending the Outdoor Hebrides Sea & Surf Symposium.



### 10 years ago



- \* Circumnavigating Australia, Jason Beachcroft had to chase and repeatedly beat a crocodile trying to drag his kayak into the sea.
- \* The Pinkston Watersports centre was approaching opening. The Chain Bridge above Llangollen was to be restored after decades of dilapidation.
- \* The BCU was rebranded as British Canoeing.
- \* Percy Blandford died, his PBK kayak plans having been responsible for the revival of canoeing after the Second World War.
- \* Paddlers were being charged up to £14 per day by the WCA to use the Tryweryn.
- \* The Welsh Government access Green Paper was kicked into the long grass.
- \* Paddlers found a badly injured driver in a car in the Etive after being in collision with a deer.
- \* Paddlers International helped the coroner and Northumbria Police after three men on sit on tops were drowned at the modern Riding Mill Weir on the Tyne.
- \* The American magazine *Sea Kayaker* folded after 30 years.
- \* Pearce/Southey were the youngest ever DW winners, the race start delayed by a body in the canal at Devizes.