

# Newsletter Winter 2013



## Editorial



I thought earlier in the week that Spring had arrived and we could at last look forward to some warmer weather. Now, as I type it is snowing heavily again after hours of rain.. One thing for sure I can't imagine we are going to be short of water for the 2013 season.

At least we are now starting to benefit from the lighter evenings, which means it's again nearing time for renewals and the start of the new paddling season. I hope that you all decide to rejoin the club for the 2013 season. Where else can you get such a varied programme of activities throughout the year and Tim has set all members a challenge for 2013

(see his RU OK 4 a 100 article!)

I have decided that this will be my last newsletter of my current term of editorship (I've been editor on 3 occasions now over past years) and will be handing over to a new editor. Please all support the new editor and write lots of articles on your paddling adventures. A big thank you to all my regular contributors – without you a newsletter is not really possible.

Mark Quadling  
Editor

## R U OK 4 A 100?

No don't worry I don't want a sub or even a loan! However, I do want you to consider whether to accept a challenge this coming membership year. That challenge being to paddle 100 miles of new water.

You will have seen in our last newsletter how Jen Birchnell had done just that and I believe there may even be an article in this newsletter continuing her tale.

So to recap what's its all about. The challenge is to paddle 100 miles in one membership year 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> March on water you're never paddled on before. If you're a new member or not done very much paddling you may



initially be hesitant about paddling such a distance. Don't be! You have the advantage of literally any paddles you go on will count towards your total. If you're an old hand and well able to paddle longer distances that gives you a paddling ability advantage but the downside is that you may well have already done some of the organised paddles. So think about paddling somewhere new, better still offer to organise it as a club trip!

Do remember if it's a there and back trip, only the outbound distance will count. That's because on the return leg you're already paddled on that stretch so it will not count.

Keep your own record of what you're paddled on and tell others how you're doing! Not sure of the distance paddled? Ask the lead instructor or to improve your mapping skills try to work it out for yourself.

One word of advice start early get ready for the new membership year and get out there on those early paddles to start the clock ticking. That's from someone who ended up paddling on Boxing Day a few years ago to ensure he hit that magic 100 miles target.

Looking forward to seeing you all out there paddling this coming year.

Tim Wilby

## Snow Tubing

A cold and snowy evening in February saw 19 Eagle members meeting at the Norfolk Ski Club for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Eagle Snow Tubing evening.

For anyone who has not heard of snow tubing, basically you get to spend a hour sliding down the ski slope in an inflatable inner tube, which is protected by a plastic and cloth cover. The Norfolk Ski Club have got running snow tubing sessions down to a fine art and is a great example of how to run a session with a large group of people. You start with short simple slides, quickly progress to the steeper parts of the slope and then the fun starts. Running jumps, parachute jumps, trains, spins and different combinations of sliding down the slope with up to 20 linked snow tubes are all part of the moves the guys at the ski club have created. With the weather wet and snowy, the ski slope was in fine form and everyone had a fast, fun and active night.

Like all these sorts of activities the night was made special by the enthusiasm of the volunteers at the Norwich Ski Club who put everything in to making sure we had a good time. If you are interested in snow tubing keep an eye out for our 2014 visit or check out the ski clubs website for availability of non group sessions. [Norfolk Ski Club](#)

Mark Quadling

## Five events that really improved my paddling:

1. Buying myself a kayak. This meant I could get out and about as often as I liked, and wasn't restricted to a different boat every Wednesday for an hour and a half. More paddling time and more venues for paddling, meant more improvement.
2. Buying a dry suit. This completely took the horror out of paddling between October and March. Warm and dry, without the need to get down to underclothes in windy car parks around the country, it meant I wasn't afraid of getting cold and wet in the kayak, which meant I wasn't afraid to push myself. As this is the main season for whitewater paddling, it made sense, but I didn't realise how much sense until I'd done it. My main thought, once I'd finished my first paddle with a drysuit was "why didn't I do this sooner?!?"
3. Learning to roll. This took me ages, absolutely ages, two steps forward one step back, so I can completely sympathise with all those regulars at the pool sessions. But having a reliable roll was like getting the drysuit, it meant I wasn't afraid I was about to swim, which meant I wasn't afraid to push myself. (Bit of a theme here!)
4. A weekend course at a top coaching venue. My most recent high-level coaching was nearly a year ago, and wasn't the most successful outing. The year before that we did pretty much the same course. Admittedly it cost a fair bit, but I've taken phrases and drills from those courses that I still remember and act on now. A wobbly break-in on the water is always disappointing, but when it happens I cast my mind back to those courses, remember the key phrases and ideas, put them back into practice, and bingo! No more duff break-ins!
5. Getting out on the surf. Surf kayaking is a discipline in its own right, but it's also invaluable for keeping your eye in, in terms of balance and control on whitewater. I can't get to big whitewater rivers very often, but darting to the coast for a half day is a great way of keeping the same skills up, and it means that when I do manage to get to Wales and the like, I'm not starting from square one. Plus, that speed, that acceleration when you catch a nice, clean, surging roller towards a golden beach, it's absolutely unbeatable. Pure adrenalin. Getting beaten by the bigger surf we occasionally get here is also a humbling experience, you really come out knowing who's boss, there's just no competing with power like that. It certainly makes me feel very insignificant, in the grand scheme of things!



Simon Allen

## New season



Each year we try to get feedback from members about what you've enjoyed (or more importantly, not enjoyed) and for your suggestions as to how we organise club nights and trips away. We are also keen to get new suggestions for activities and trips, and Jenny's article in the news letter seems to have inspired a few to suggest (and organise the logistics) new trips.

Following discussions at the last AGM and from feedback to coaches, we are looking to make the Wednesday club nights a little more structured for 2013 and are re introducing the 1, 2 and 3 star groups (rather than beginner, intermediate & advanced). We are also going to try and give groups a rough programme so you know what will be happening each week (and what you've missed if you can't make it).

We are also going to start a number of groups which will run for 3 weeks between enrolment nights. One will be an "induction" group which is for new members to learn some basic paddling skills before they join the main groups and to find out a bit more about what the club does and how we do it. The other groups will be to learn some of the less usual paddling skills, like canoe poling or play boating. These will be open to all but places will be limited so we will be asking people to sign up to these in advance.

We hope you enjoy these new activities, but as with all our events, please give us feedback as this is how we keep YOUR programme interesting. Better still, do an article for the newsletter !

Stuart Pontin

## River Access

For those new to the sport and perhaps thinking of getting their own boat for the first time this season you need to be aware of rules and guidelines around river access.

Firstly many areas require you to have a licence if you are planning to paddle a canoe or kayak, particularly but not exclusively on navigable water (so areas like the Norfolk Broads). Membership of the British Canoe Union is one way of getting a license as they have an agreement covering large parts of the country. Non Navigable waters generally do not require you to need a license but on these you then run into a different challenge which is access issues.

The BCU has been heavily campaigning for a right to access on all rivers in England. This campaign has been very successful in highlighting the BCU's belief that all water should be open to all. As much as I would like access to everywhere, as a keen angler and walker I am not so sure this will

ever happen. I cannot fish where I like (even when holding an environment agency licence – which I have to hold to fish ANY water – even privately owned) and I certainly cannot walk wherever I like.

On the river Waveney the Environment Agency has worked hard with the landowners and created a fabulous canoe trail where you can paddle safe in the knowledge that you will not upset any local farmers or landowners. It would be great to see similar schemes set up on other rivers but as usual costs come into these things.

The BCU has also set up a network of river access officers that work hard locally to agree with local land owners access agreements including places you can get in and out of the river. Unfortunately, as you can imagine this is a challenging, often thankless and time consuming task so you may find some rivers are not covered.

If you are ever unsure where you should paddle it is worth doing some research on the internet, ask for guidance at your local canoe club, or ask for advice at local canoe/kayak shops.

Mark Quadling

## **Volunteering**

You'll all appreciate how much time the coaches give to making activities and the club a success, but all members can become involved in what we do. Emma (the club's secretary) is also the volunteer co-ordinator and there are numerous ways in which you can become involved.

Maintenance days – The club organises several mornings throughout the year when we carry out essential repairs and take stock of our equipment. The next Sunday morning session is on 24 March when we will be doing a lot of “gardening” and cleaning of the buildings ready for enrolment.

Throughout the rest of the summer we have a number of Volunteer evenings which take place on the second Monday of each month (13/5, 10/6, 8/7, 12/8, 9/9). These allow us to do running repairs to equipment through out the summer and the clean different bits of the buildings each month. Please let Emma know which of the sessions you can help out on.

Finally, on each Wednesday we would like a volunteer bank side helper. This person stays on the bank to help members get boats out, put them away, do a spot of tidying up, assist the coaches if while on the water they need to swap equipment for a paddler or need additional equipment etc as well as meeting any members of the public who call in to find out “what its all about”. You will note in the programme which comes out with your membership forms that there is a blank box next to each week – that's for YOUR name !

Stuart Pontin

## Club Photos and Website

Don't forget to take a look at the Eagle Canoe Club website - [Eagle Canoe Club](#). The club also has an extensive collection of photos on the web which gives a great record of previous club trips and events which can be found at [Eagle Photos](#). Why not take a look?

Mark Quadling

## Many thanks

I know from my own experience of producing Scout newsletters, that it is not an easy task trying to persuade people to write articles for you to include, however Mark has done an amazing job over all the years I have been with the club and has managed to produce a full and interesting publication on a quarterly basis.

I think it is invaluable to take the time to reflect on the trips we have done and the activities which we have enjoyed (or not). It is great for new members to see what happens on activities and for those who didn't go to hear about what they missed (normally a huge bonfire if Mark was there!)

We have had several people volunteer to pick up the production of the Newsletter for which I am very grateful. I hope you are as successful as Mark at producing an interesting and fun newsletter.

For all of us, remember that newsletters don't write themselves and the more articles written, the more interesting it is to read.

Stuart Pontin

## The 100 Mile Challenge Part Two.....

Firstly, the eagle eyed amongst you (see what I did there?!) will have noticed a not so deliberate mistake in part one of my 100 mile challenge.

Although Tim had originally set the challenge from the beginning of the year he had let me change the time span to 'an Eagle year' starting from April instead...this however means the lowly 3 miles I gained in February from the Horstead to Buxton trip have to be disqualified so I actually end part one with a very inadequate 26 miles!

Can I reach the target by the end of March 2013?

### December 2012

Still in sunny New Zealand, I was lucky enough to have two weeks off over Christmas and the first thing I wanted to do was organise a three-day canoe/camping trip on the Whanganui River. I joined a Dutch family and two guides on a brilliant downstream paddle from Whakahoro to Pipiriki.



## Day One – Whakahoro to John Coull campsite.... 37.5km

I met the rest of the group at Canoe Safaris headquarters in Ohakune. The forecast was for some



unsettled weather and the threat of rain, however the journey started with a long dusty and bumpy bus ride to the put-in point at Whakahoro. I had noticed a rather large canoe on the trailer – the company had two 6-person canoes built to enable family groups to paddle together- that Tammy had decided to call The Titanic.... I hoped that wasn't a bad omen as we unloaded the boats.

I started in a very familiar Nova craft Pal canoe – one of my favourite tandem boats at Eagle – and had the company of Norbert as my first paddling partner. I was slightly nervous at the thought of paddling with a total stranger but he seemed capable enough. We started on a tributary of the Whanganui, but soon entered onto the river itself. It was a beautiful sight – steep gorges and cliffs covered in New Zealand 'bush'

with tree ferns everywhere and the sound of Tuis calling out.

Tammy had warned us that there would be a lot of small but bumpy rapids due to the lower than usual water levels, but I needn't have worried about Norbert's abilities as he safely steered us through the wide expanse of river and over the first of the rapids. As I was in the bow I got the brunt of all the waves as we paddled through each rapid, but luckily the forecast was better than expected and I soon dried out. The team in 'Titanic' were taking it easy and it looked like Tammy was doing all the paddling at one point!

We stopped for lunch after a few pleasant hours paddling downstream and were treated to the first of three fabulous picnics before resuming the paddle, including lots more rapids, to our campsite.

A small secluded campsite in the middle of nowhere, it can only be reached by water and was a lovely place to end the first day. With Tammy and Bex preparing the food the rest of us put the tents up (yes I have left the comfort of my campervan in the UK and had to slum it in a tent for the first time in 6 years!) then enjoyed a lovely meal of pasta, fresh vegetables and fruit. There was even beer and wine – no wonder the canoes had looked fully laden.

## **Day Two – John Coull Campsite to the Bridge to Nowhere lodge...29km**

Up early and with our bellies full after a massive breakfast that included cereal and delicious American style pancakes we loaded up the boats. This involved traipsing everything back down the rather steep slope we'd had to climb up the night before and hoping that the boats were still tied together. I was exhausted before we even started – I hadn't got much sleep as pretty much every time I seemed to drift off I was rudely awoken by the kind of snoring coming from Norbert in the adjacent tent that even Colin would be proud of!

We all swapped boats and paddling partners and headed off on another easy downstream paddle with the sun shining and the birds singing. Mirre, at 5yrs old was the youngest paddler – although she didn't actually do any paddling after the first 30 minutes of the first day – and she had the best idea....a bit of singing followed by a spot of sunbathing then falling asleep!

We had another filling lunch stop on the bank and the afternoon's paddle was broken by a walk to the Bridge to Nowhere. (Afraid there's not room to explain about it here so if you're interested please Google it!)

It had been another long but enjoyable days' paddling but with less rapids. I had started to anticipate that sound of the water rushing through the rocks as we approached the rapids and was really enjoying it. We had come across a couple of Jetboats though, which added some waves to the flat water – as soon as anyone heard one approaching the shout of 'Jetboat – head to the bank' would be heard and frantic paddling began. The river has lots of bends so the jetboat drivers wouldn't always see us coming until the last minute. As soon as they passed we all turned the boats into the waves for a spot of white water!

The second night was spent at the Bridge to Nowhere Lodge – hot showers and a comfortable bed! Even the peacocks didn't keep me awake.

## **Day Three – Bridge to Nowhere Lodge to Pipiriki....21.5 km.**

The final day presented us with a visit to the mud caves (with the kids getting suitably dirty) and the biggest rapids of the trip. I was with Tammy in the safety boat and we headed up to them first. Unfortunately, due to the sound of the rushing water I didn't hear when Tammy's shouts of GO turned to shouts of NO and we ended up beached on the shingle bank opposite the rapids. We were also facing upstream....with no choice but to back paddle away we ended up taking the rapids in a stylish backwards fashion! I was sure we would be flipped but we made it through and pretended that had been the idea all along....

The rest of the group paddled through successfully, although as the water was quite low, everyone ended up in the middle of the hole we had been trying to avoid! The end was soon in sight at Pipiriki and after a long bumpy stretch of faster rapids we had reached our destination. Everyone happy, no-one ended up swimming and we had thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

This fabulous canoe trip alone was worth coming to New Zealand for, and despite the long distances covered, all my paddling at Eagle meant I didn't ache at the end of it.



With the total distance of 88 km to add to my tally, all that's needed is a quick conversion....a total of 54.5 miles. Adding that to the paltry 26, I have reached a much more respectable sum of 80.5 miles to end 2012.

### **January 2013 – sea kayaking to Cathedral Cove.... 7 Km/ 4 miles.**

As I started my xmas holiday on the water I thought I'd finish it on the water too. I was staying on the Coromandel Peninsula for two days and was keen to visit the infamous Cathedral Cove. It just so happened that Cathedral Cove Kayaks run trips to the cove from nearby Hahei beach using tandem sea kayaks. Those of you who know me know I'd much rather spend my time in a canoe but it was going to be the only way to get on the water here....

I arrived at the beach in blazing hot sun. The sea wasn't looking quite as calm as I'd hoped and there were some grey clouds looming but as I'd already paid for it there was no backing out. The kayaks were laid out along the beach and I felt all nervous just looking at them! I gave myself a pep talk and hoped I'd get a decent paddling partner.

Once everyone arrived we were split into smaller groups and allocated a guide. My group consisted of 4 Swedish friends, two Argentinian girls, their dad and me! I got the dad as my paddling partner – he'd never been in a kayak – or a canoe for that matter- before and had slightly dodgy English. After the usual safety briefing and adjusting of footrests etc we headed out into the crashing waves – Tyrell our guide was on hand to help us avoid the larger breakers. Once out past those the sea was actually fairly calm and I tried to relax. Argentinian guy (AG) was in charge of the steering – we veered all over the place! It was quite comical really and he couldn't get the hang of keeping in time with my paddling. Needless to say we swapped for the journey back.

The sea was the most gorgeous turquoise, the sun was shining and it was lovely being out on the



water. It wasn't long before we headed towards our landing spot on the beach at Cathedral Cove – dodging the swimmers Tyrell guided us in turn and despite the wind picking up and some rather large swell we all landed safely. He then regaled us with tales of mishaps and broken legs...just glad he'd waited for us to get ashore! We had some time to explore as he made our drinks; all part of the service but unfortunately alcohol wasn't involved – I could have done with some to calm my nerves!

As I sipped my hot chocolate I looked out to sea and saw an intrepid group of paddlers heading our way, who had paddled further out to sea around some of the islands in the bay. Hmm I thought, 'I'm glad I'm not in that group although it looks cool I'm far too much of a wuss to be out that far in a kayak. Shame, but this trip is enough for me'. As we were getting back into the boats Tyrell announced that we would be 'just heading out to those islands and there should be some great

waves crashing around the back' GULP!! Mild panic set in and I almost asked if we really had to but stopped myself just in time.

So head out to those islands we did, with myself in the steering hotseat I tried to get AG to paddle slower and at the same time as me...it was kind of working and we made good progress until one of my footrests jammed then the other one slid off the rail completely. We managed to paddle over to Tyrell and through a cool tunnel on the first island – surfed through on a big wave and then were greeted by a massive wave in the face as we came out the other side. Footrests fixed, the wind was picking up as we paddled out further. I'm not too ashamed to say that I wasn't really enjoying it at this point as the waves crashed and AG started tipping the kayak as he paddled as he was getting tired.

We passed Moteuka island into slightly more sheltered water, with AG and I making good progress we headed back towards the shoreline. We had another slightly risky landing back onto Hahei beach, but everyone managed it in one piece and it was time to tidy the boats and say our goodbyes. I shook AG's hand and he said that I 'was number one Captain'! I presumed that meant he thought I was rather bossy, but I was just glad to have survived paddling out at sea with a total stranger! The sense of relief (and achievement) was massive and although I'm glad I did it, I'm not planning on going out in a tandem kayak with a random stranger any time soon – 100 mile target or not! However, I now only have 15.5 miles to go....

### **January 2013 - Ruamahanga River, Wairarapa.... 17km**

I fancied a weekend away in the Wairarapa and had heard of a canoe hire company in that area, so on a lovely sunny Sunday I headed over to Kahutara Canoes. Karen, one of the owners, had just loaded the trailer and had a spare boat for me to use....unfortunately it was one of those pesky kayaks again. As it was either that or nothing I went for it and chose the pink peril to be my trusty boat for the trip.

The Ruamahanga River is an easy grade 1 river with some small bumpy grade 2 rapids, and nothing as big as the Whanganui River so I knew I'd be safe enough. I tagged along with two lads and headed off for three hours of paddling. It seemed like the lads weren't keen on my company and I soon found myself alone with just the sound of rippling water as I cruised along ahead of them.



The river bank reminded me of the East Anglian rivers, with low trees and cows grazing – at one point a herd of young steers all came charging up to the water's edge to have a good look as I floated on past! However, the mountains in the distance reminded that I was still in fact in sunny New Zealand. I had a couple of leg stretching and snack stops along the way before meeting up with Karen at the get-out point a mere 17 km downstream. If anyone had told me I'd voluntarily paddle

that distance in a kayak, in just three hours, I would never have believed them, but I thoroughly enjoyed it.....and of course I need all the miles I can get!

### February 2013 - White Water Rafting on the Tongariro River.... 13km

Poutu Intake to Blue Pool.

When Tim set me the challenge I didn't think I would be including white water rafting! I had joined a 'meet-up' group when I came over to New Zealand and they had arranged an adventure weekend in Tongariro National Park. I was slightly nervous, but very excited at the thought of rafting as I had never done it before.



The Tongariro River is a popular rafting spot and is a good fast grade 3 with approximately 60 rapids in the 13km stretch we paddled. Split into two groups, we had the safety briefing from Dan before heading out into the ice blue water, accompanied by yet more stunning scenery, sunshine and blue sky. Initially I was a bit wary of the rapids – some had self-explanatory names such as general disaster and the female dog (!), South Island was a series of lots of rapids – taking a long time to paddle through and as for Air New Zealand, well that's anyone's guess.

I soon relaxed into it though and had a fantastic time. We got caught up racing the other raft, then ended up getting stuck on a few big rocks, before racing through the largest rapids. Billy, the guide in the other boat hinted he was going to flip everyone out, so my raft headed on through and got the cameras ready...we were told in the safety briefing, that if the raft hits against rocks or the wall to keep on the side nearest the wall to enable the water to pass underneath it.....despite this, everyone in the B team (we were obviously the A team!) leapt over to the wrong side as soon as they hit the wall and in glorious slow motion the raft tipped everyone in!

The 2hour trip went in a flash and I am really keen to do some more rafting now – not sure if I want to brave any Grade 5 rivers any time soon though!

With this latest adventure under my belt, and some more conversions, my mileage as of the 20<sup>th</sup> February is.....wait for it.....where's the drum roll???..... **102.5 miles!**

Before I came out to New Zealand I was starting to wonder if I'd ever reach my 100 mile target. Not having my own boat, or any boat transport was a major problem and poor Tim had to paddle with me more than once in order for me to scrape some miles together. However, I have risen to the challenge, and even suffered in a kayak in order to reach my goal – and it's not even the end of the Eagle year!

With a South Island holiday in March, there may even be a part three to end the tale....Oarsome!!!

Jenny Birchnell



## Simon's Wildlife Corner: The Bittern

Continuing in my series on wildlife that you might see from your canoe, this week I'm writing about the Bittern. This exceptionally rare bird is very elusive, with its mottled brown plumage it is very hard to spot in the reed beds that it favours. The bittern actually became extinct in the UK in the late nineteenth century. Up until Tudor times it was considered a delicacy, eaten at feasts and banquets, and after this it suffered from massive habitat loss, as wetlands, reed-beds and bogs were drained for agriculture. The population was rekindled as migratory birds from Europe returned to the UK, first restarting breeding in Norfolk in 1911. There are known to be just seventy five breeding males in the UK at the moment. To put that in perspective, on a busy June Eagle night we can have seventy five people at the club, so that's a very small population.

I was lucky enough to see a bittern flying really low, right over my head a couple of years back on a damp, grey, cold day at Hickling. Initially I thought from its size it was a heron, which is a close relative, but the brown colour gave it away. It was a fleeting glimpse, just fifteen seconds or so, until it landed and melted back into the reeds, to remain unseen for the rest of the day. I don't anticipate being lucky enough to see one again, they're that rare and elusive.



Even if you're not lucky enough to see one, you might manage to hear one when they're preparing to breed. The male bittern produces a very distinctive booming call, so loud that it can be heard up to five kilometres away, in an effort to attract a female. This booming call

was thought to sound like a bellowing bull, which has given rise to its scientific name *Botaurus stellaris*, the first part of which also means bull in Latin. It also ties into a couple of its many folk names, which include bog-bull, bog-hen, bog trotter, mire drum and even barrel maker. The Norfolk name for a bittern is butterbump, apparently referring to the fact that it's such a fatty bird when eaten. (I wouldn't recommend trying this out, unless you fancy a stay at Her Majesty's pleasure – it's very heavily protected by UK and EU law).

Female bitterns lay four to six eggs, which they incubate for 25 to 26 days. The young bitterns fledge (leave the nest) after another 50 to 55 days, depending on the availability of food, weather conditions etc. Generally, bitterns have just one brood a year.

So where might you see or hear a bittern? Their UK population is centred on south east England, particularly Norfolk and Suffolk, with Minsmere nature reserve a known hotspot. A few birds are known to be located in Lancashire, and a final hotspot is the Lee Valley reserve, on the edge of London, a short stroll from the Lee Valley Olympic Whitewater Centre, of all places... They wade in and around the edges of reedbeds, never too far from shelter, hunting for fish, amphibians and other morsels to eat. So you could potentially see (or hear) them in many parts of the Broads, most likely in the more secluded, less disturbed spots. This means that silent travel through the backwaters by canoe must surely be one of the best ways to try and spot one?

Editor Note – Many years ago whilst fishing on a cold winters day I was lucky enough to have a bittern within 15 metres away from us for a good 5 minutes on a private broad. I have also seen a pair of bitterns fly over Lenwade.

Simon Allen

## Laughter Lines

An experienced canoeist is taking his work-mate out for a first trip in an open. The experienced canoeist, obviously, is sat in the stern: his pal, the novice, is in the bow seat. As the current picks up and the waves get bigger, the novice turns around and asks, apprehensively, "If the boat tips over, will we fall out?"

"No!" replies the other, "We'll still be friends!"