

# VENTURE

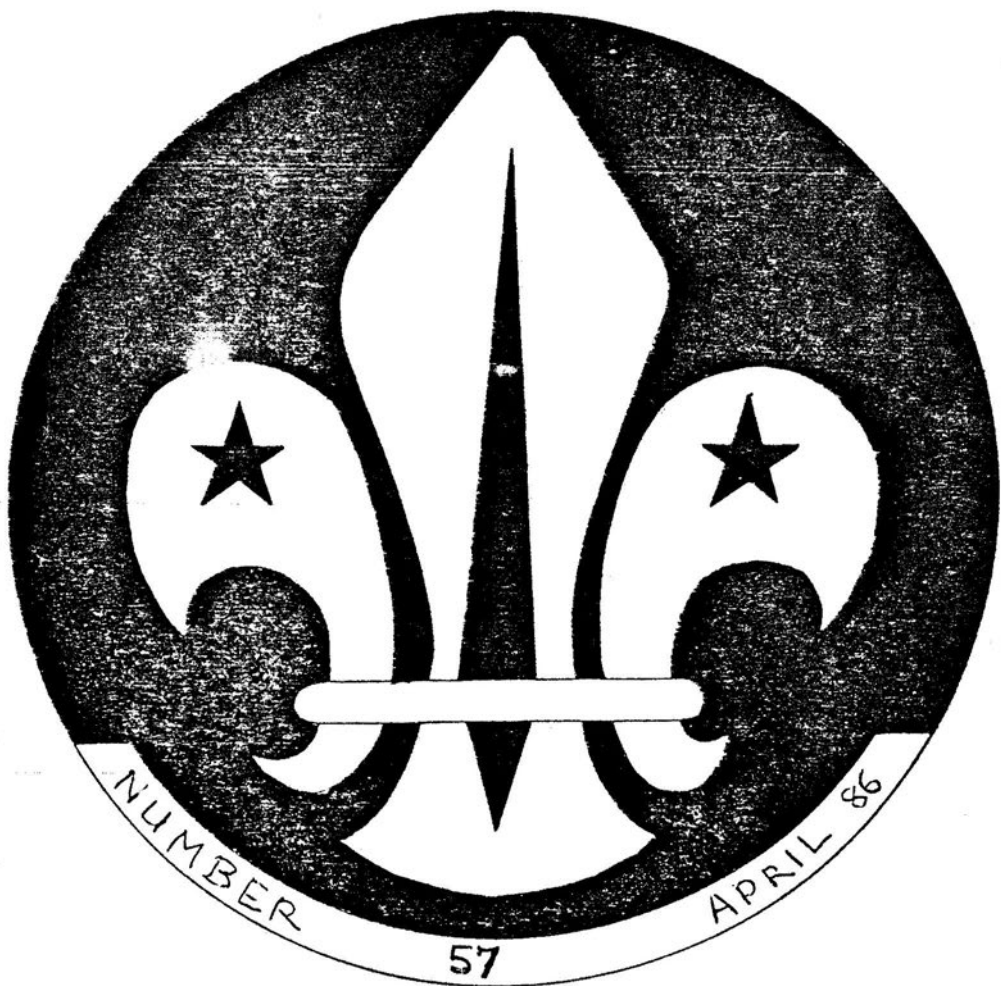
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VENTURE 44      The magazine of the 44th Gloucester  
Sir Thomas Rich's School Venture Scout Unit

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UNIT OFFICERS

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Secretary	Jason Stone
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Recorder	Stuart James
Executive members	Marcus Whitmore
	Rich Booth
	Steve Clutterbuck
	Derek Dalby
	Adam Foster
	James Sargeant

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NEXT EDITION will feature an EXCLUSIVE account by FETE GREEN of the dramatic events which led to his recent award from the Royal Humane Society.

## EDITOR'S NOTES

The winter and spring months may not be the ideal time for scouting activities, but this does not deter the 44th. We have been quite busy since the last issue in fact. The District Swimming Gala early in February proved a success with our unit just failing to win the V. S cup - Graham Dalby, Jason Stone, Sean Watts and myself making up the team. The Cotswold marathon was entered by a willing(?) set of competitors who put up a very creditable performances despite the fact that nearly all of them were in borrowed boots. The gallant finishers were Jason, Marcus Whitmore, Dave Williams, James Foster, Joe Clyde, Chris Brockwell, Ally Smith, and of course, Andy Manders - for the fourth time.

Over the Easter holiday a small but dedicated group consisting of Jason, Dave Williams and Wright, and Simon Clyde braved high winds and bitter cold to hike along part of Offa's Dyke, and then through the Forest of Dean. The 27th of April saw the ubiquitous Bed Race, on which an article appears later in this issue.

The hut has been graced by the presence of one Ian Fletcher within its confines over recent weeks. Ian has been running a First Aid course which has proved to be both educational and enjoyable.

Back to sporting activity, quite a few members and several ex-members have been playing in a local 5-a-side league, and under the sound guidance of Lee Rounce they have acquitted themselves well against older and more experienced opposition. Our normal 5-a-side sessions go on on alternate Sunday evenings at the Leisure Centre.

Steve Clutterbuck

Steve hands over to James Foster the editorship of the magazine next issue. Many thanks to Steve and Neil Hawkins for their efforts over the past two years.

Time for bed, said Zebedee..

The Stonehouse and Cotswold Round Table were granted a temporary Road Closure Order for the High Street in Stonehouse on April 27th for their annual bed race which attracted thirty entrants, including two beds from this Unit.

This year's race was in some ways no different to last year's, and the time before that. The most important similarity was despite having had a whole year to get the beds ready, most of the work was done with a week to go!

All who ran, and those who supported will want, no doubt, to thank Sean Watts, whose skill at welding enabled us to run both beds with only small fear of buckles, twisted wheels, broken frames, bent forks, etc.. It was a good job well done and Sean must take the major credit for getting the beds ready on time (and at all!!). The fateful day turned out bright and sunny and it was obviously going to stay hot for the rest of the day. This was in marked contrast to last year, when it was wet and cold and miserable. The beds were quickly loaded into the vehicles, no problem, and we hit Stonehouse Co-op carpark at 11.45 a.m.

Looking around the opposition we were disturbed, nay dismayed to find few of our opponents beds actually looking like beds. One was basically two bicycles linked and others were prams. Still more were bath-tubs on wheels.

Yet we were undaunted and we assembled our entries, the chosen teams indulged in brisk warm up exercises (For example, posing for photographs, standing and talking and eating and drinking. Jason scowled at other teams.

As two o'clock rolled up, so did we. Placed third and fourth, this was an ideal position to gain an impressive lead. This proved to be optimistic, as we soon lost about eight and one places respectively. The super fit athletes soon raced away from the more sedate Zebedee into an impressive second place on the road, leaving us well back.

To cut a short story even shorter, they finally lapped us on the tenth lap, but we still managed to come eleven -th, a mere 10 minutes behind an excellent one hour and five minute time by Blue Streak. This was a considerable improvement on last year's difference of hours and hours!

Once again thanks must go to Sean and also to the V.S.L and A.V.S.L. who contributed in other ways, all less obvious and less noticeable than welding axles etc.

James Foster

BEDFAX

Blue Streak; Jason Stone, Adam Foster, Marcus (how many laps to go?) Whitmore, Simon Clyde, Ian Heathcock, Lee (count your toes) Rounce. Position 5th  
Time 1 hour 5min

Zebedee; Andy Manders, James Foster, Joe Clyde, Neil Hoyes, Duncan Jennings, Chris Brockwell. Position 11th  
Time 1 hour 15m

Pit team; Sean Watts, Steve Clutterbuck, Rich Booth, Dave Williams, Andy Clyde.

Money raised, to be distributed between Gloucestershire Arthritis Trust, Standish Hospital Appeal and Unit funds, £266.

LOOKING FORWARD. Believe it or not work has already started on beds for next year under the guidance of our new technical adviser, Glyn Jones, when we hope to break the one hour barrier!

NO ROOM THIS ISSUE for "From all points", but a sobering tale from ex-member Mike Barton later. Mike, by the way recently won 1st Prize and Silver Medal for City and Guilds exam success in "Sheet metal and thin plate studies. Well done Mike!

MORI GALLUP NOP MORI GALLUP NOP MORI NOP GALLUP NOP MORI  
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Some time ago, on a friday evening, 25 members and ex members were presented with a Questionnaire aimed at find -ing out basically why they joined the Unit and their opinions on various aspects of this Unit, and views on a few more general points.

The results of the survey are given here with a few comments. As all the views expressed were anonymous, it can be assumed that they represent a fairly accurate pic -ture of attitudes of those who responded.

SECTION A. in the survey sought to find out about the "pre-Unit" background. As 25 people filled in the form we have simply multiplied the answers by four so as to express them as percentages. Members had to simply tick the appropriate statements.

I have been a Cub	52 %
I have been a scout, but left before reaching V.S. age	28 %
I have been a scout in another group but decided to try Venture scouts in the 44th	16 %
I have been in another V.S.U.	4 %
I have never been in the Scout movement	40 %
I have, or had, a brother in the Unit	24 % *

\*N.B. In fact 39% of our members fall into this category at present.

We could doubtless draw many conclusions from some of the figures above, but perhaps readers may wish to draw their own...

SECTION B Members were invited to look at the statements below and to put a ring around the appropriate response concerning factors that may have influenced their joining the Unit.

Responses; A; Very important. B; Of some importance. C; Of little importance. D; Not important at all.

Statement	A	B	C	D	Comment
i) A friend got me to join	12	28	24	36	Interesting spread of responses - do 36% of our members have no friends???
ii) I was attracted by the Scout Uniform	0	4	4	92	Obviously not an important factor - a lesson to be learned here perhaps?
iii) The activities appealed to me	84	12	4	0	The figures speak for themselves
iv) I like parades and marches	0	4	8	88	Once again, no doubt about the message here.
v) I had read about it	4	8	24	64	You see, some Venture Scouts can read...
vi) My parents thought it would be a good thing	12	8	16	64	Perhaps an interesting comment on relations between parents and teenagers
vii) My form-master recommended it	4	8	8	80	Do many form masters at the school know anything about the Unit?
viii) I had seen and heard notices about the Unit	16	44	12	8	Encouraging - publicity pays - It is a pity that people don't read notices AFTER they get into the Unit.
ix) I thought it may help in UCCA/Job applications	4	28	32	36	Difficult to draw any conclusion here.

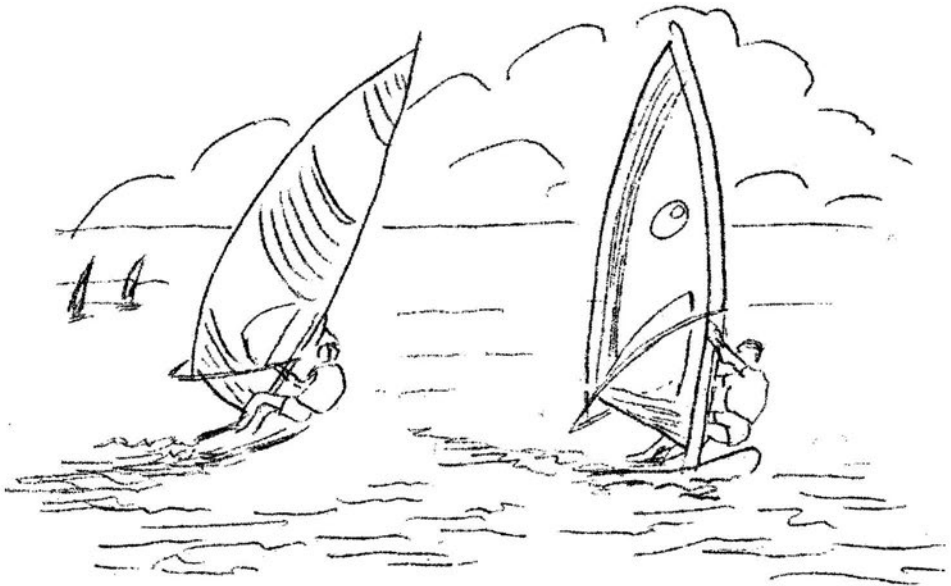
SECTION C. Members were asked if there were any other significant factors which influenced them in deciding to join the Unit. 24% commented on this, and all the responses were concerned with activities.

SECTION D. A simple question, how might the Unit be improved. 44% responded, and a selection of the responses is given. No comment needed on any of these!

More people....more and varied activities....better organisation....more community work....increase in subscriptions..... Have more meetings with aim of planning forthcoming activities so there will be no Friday evenings with nothing planned... improve the hut.....get a new hut....get a new leader....smoking should be banned in the hut....a more responsible attitude towards Scouting....more commitment....more activities with other Units....action, not words....Perhaps people who suggest ideas should follow them up, getting information and setting dates....more money from the school....more enthusiasm... the unit can be improved only by people's enthusiasm and willingness to take part...And so on.

F.H. & S.C.





### WIND SURFING

Wind surfing was invented in 1962 by a naval engineer backed by businessman, Hoyle Schweiter, and was designed to combine sailing and surfing in a form that was easy to transport, rig up and most of all, cheap sailing for the masses.

Without being technical, a windsurfer is an oversized surfboard with a mast boom sail arrangement (called the rig) attached to it by a universal joint. It has no rudder. However it can be steered by tilting the rig to the front or rear of the board.

As the wind picks up the board goes faster and begins to lift on to the surface of the water. It becomes like a water ski, and can be steered by banking the board - instead of moving the sail.

I started to windsurf about two and a half years ago. We went to the nearest windsurfing shop and bought the cheapest board we could find, for about £200, and then got straight down to the nearest lake.

It took many hours of falling in and getting stranded

before we realised we should have taken lessons. And so should you, if you want to try this sport! Anyway, after many hours of waterlogged sinuses, we could stay afloat & upright.

At this point we moved down to Gloucester and found to our horror (mainly mine, as nobody else was all that keen) that the nearest lakes were over twenty miles away, were impossible to drown in (not deep enough) and had about one sailor to every square yard. But soon oaths never to sail on that pathetic puddle were withdrawn as addiction drove me back to the water. With the onset of winter my enthusiasm dampened, and finally froze.

When spring eventually arrived my situation was this:

- 1) I had severe withdrawal symptoms from lack of wind surfing
- 2) I had access to one waterlogged board, outdated and in abysmal condition
- 3) I was out of practice.

The solution? To buy another board and spend every free weekend camping and windsurfing, which is what I did until the summer holidays came along.

During the summer holidays I camped several times, one of which lasted for about a week. It turned out to be one of the least windy weeks of the decade, and I survived on a diet of twixes and baked beans (still no wind? Ed.) Don't ever try it, it will do nothing for your complexion I began to look like a leper...

In the last couple of weeks of the holidays I decided that I desperately needed a new sail. It almost brought the tears to my eyes as I handed over ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY hard saved pounds. You think that's expensive? I could have spent twice as much.

The sail was a State-of-the-Art aerodynamic wing profile fully battened high aspect affair, and it was worth every penny. Two days before it arrived I was out sailing and the strong wind finished off my old sail. I was catapult

-ed into it by a particularly vindictive gust. RIP went the sail as my body tore a hole six foot wide in it. Anger was not the word! Worst of all I had to carry the board nearly a quarter of a mile to my campsite.

At this moment in time I am preparing to pick up where I left off last autumn, so I must finish this and go off to check the board, and pack. This starts another wind surfing year....

Joe Clyde

If the above article helps to show that all Venture Scouts are not all unfit, lazy, cigarette smoking drunkards, the next should confirm the dedication and fitness of at least one more member who was selected to run for the county in the most exalted company in Britain.....

#### THE NATIONAL CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

On Friday 31st February, instead of going to the prison block (school), I travelled up to Newcastle upon Tyne for a cross country race. What a waste of cash I hear you shout. Well it wasn't! Not only was it entertaining, it also was very memorable.

The coach arrived in Newcastle at around 8 p.m. and everybody was extremely tired and many could not wait to sample the local pint.. The hotel we stayed in was very good, and the Geordies were very friendly.

The next day dawned, March 1st, Everton were playing Aston Villa, and it was the day of the National Cross Country Championships. My race was first, and although only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 miles long, it was extremely exhausting. There were three age groups, youths, junior and senior men. The eventual winner of the Senior race, Tim Hutchinson, ran the 9 mile course in just over 46 minutes, a mile in 5 minutes kept up for nine miles!

It was Steve Cram who everyone had come to see Unfortunately, he dropped out on the very first lap - in about 100th place, which was very disappointing. During every race there were numerous injuries sustain

-ed, and many people dropped out, but luckily I suffered no injury.

The course itself was over Newcastle's parkland with a massive hill in the middle. The ground was covered with snow, and everyone wore spikes. I really enjoyed it and found it an experience not to be missed, although some people would think the opposite, but I conclude that smoking had something to do with this!

Adam Foster

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING ENTIRELY DIFFERENT.....

The Hazards of Speaking to Strange Men or I Wish I had Listened to Mother...

It started innocently enough, with a pint of Old Peculiar in the Dick Whittington Tavern, around 7 o'clock. We arrived sometime later in a well known pub in Longsmith Street. I remember participating in an upside down beer drinking competition. Whether it was me upside down, or the beer, I can't remember. Either way, I think I lost. On completion of this exercise, I suddenly experienced an urge for some fresh air, and so I went outside to join the rest of the party, we were celebrating a birthday, by the way.

Sat on the edge of the group, and talking amongst them, was a stranger. He turned out to be called Peter from Newcastle, and on questioning he said he'd been on holiday in Cornwall and had lost all his money so he was hitching back home. Imagining myself in his position, and being full of drunken brotherly love, I felt only too happy to offer him refuge at my flat for the night. We had a lift back with a girl friend, and went in for a cup of tea. My flatmate and his girl friend appeared later. I remember the tape finishing, and as I was the nearest, I proceeded to change it over. This was an operation that required all my co-ordinating and visual senses to work in unison, and it was proving rather

difficult. This perhaps explains why I didn't hear what Peter actually said at that moment, so I stood up and I asked him to repeat it. He had in fact said

"All right, everybody - lie on the floor."

I thought to myself that was a rather strange thing to say, but then I noticed the large carving knife he had in his hand. I looked at my flatmate and the girls. They were all sitting, then suddenly everyone started to move. My flatmate ran through one door into the kitchen and bedrooms while the girls went out of the other door to the stairs, and proceeded to wake the neighbourhood.

The stranger followed my flatmate towards his bedroom (where he kept a large knife) and I followed after the stranger, pausing in the kitchen to pick up a knife myself. As soon as he found himself confronted by the pair of us, he gave up his knife. Wishing to put an end to the whole affair quickly, we simply frogmarched him downstairs and told him to clear off. My flatmate, with his knife in his hand ran down the road after the girls, who were shouting "Help! Help! There's a man with a big knife!" The situation had become a little confused with my flatmate understandably getting a certain amount of abuse from concerned onlookers.....

The next morning I was the only one in, and was half way through cutting off my beard (when I say half way - I mean the right half), and so this was the sight the C.I.D. officers saw when they came through the door. They wanted to know what had happened the previous night. They were abrupt and almost accusing initially, but they became more "friendly"(?) and revealed to me that they had picked up the stranger that morning. He had rung the police from a call box, and had overdosed at the same time. It transpired that he was actually a rapist on the run, and that he was now being pumped out in hospital before being shipped back up north. Makes you think.

Mike Barton



