

TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK



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BAE SYSTEMS

MARCH/APRIL 2005

A Saturday at Burrs



Iain Robinson

19th February 2005

Who was paddling? Allan and Joanne, Phil and Sam, Nicky and Tony, Dave, Tony, Helen, Dave, Clive, and me.

Since December a group of six canoeists from the club have been out practising most weekends, in a bid to pass their BCU 3 Star after a coaching session from Tony. This was drawn to a conclusion in the third week of February when we intended to have one last practice on Coniston before being assessed, by Tony, the following Saturday, before a paddle down the Crake. On the Thursday however, Tony felt we were ready for assessment. We all passed!

We felt that cancelling the river trip on the Saturday would be a shame, so instead we rearranged the venue and roped in a few more enthusiastic canoeists at the Friday night Rolling Course. Saturday morning saw us heading to the Burrs Activity Centre at Bury.

This was a first descent of the Burrs course for some in the group so the 18' weir at the top of the river was approached with slight trepidation. It didn't take long however, for the group of twelve to paddle along the canal to the top of the course, get out, and get back on the river above the weir. The braver, or more foolish, of the group seal launched from the 6' bank into the river. This was all before shooting down the 18' sloping weir into the foam pile, which spat each of us out into the air.

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What followed was a leisurely paddle downstream to a small set of waves where the group spent a good forty minutes playing on the two waves, which were forming at the low level. At this point five of us – Sam, Phil, Allan, Joanne and I – got back out and walked to the top to fly back down the weir and rejoin the group further downstream at another play wave where it was possible to do full 360° rotations without falling too far downstream.



Once this play wave had been exploited to the full the slightly split up group headed further downstream to some more waves. There was

a large wave under the road bridge near the car park. However it was not holding a boat well enough for a long ride so we all quickly moved on.

Further downstream was one last wave, which everyone had a quick blast on before getting out to stretch their legs. This wave allowed Helen to get at least one full spin out of her Skip.

It was getting fairly late in the morning so it was a mad dash for the cars where hydration and sufficient food supplies were found before another run down the course followed for half of the group.



After the second run down the course we headed back to the cars, tired, wet and cold. The cold wind made changing uncomfortable as the wind chilled us even more, before we headed across the road to the pub for a quick drink before heading home. We managed to get lost and arrived home at five o'clock!

Want to improve your paddling or gain BCU qualifications?

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Kayak/Canoe/Flat Water/Moving Water/Star Awards/Pool Sessions/ White Water Safety/Day trips/Canoe Camping Trips/Taster Sessions

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AGM 2004

23rd February 2005

A good turnout again this year for the AGM despite the change of venue and the unpleasant weather: thanks to all those people who made the effort to attend. I counted over 40 adult members plus numerous juniors, so the meeting was well and truly quorate!

A summary of the proceedings is below: if anybody wishes to see the full minutes for the AGM please feel free to contact me and I will provide a copy.

Secretary's Report 2004

At the end of December 2004 we had 276 members. This is 13 more than last year.

The information we have about members' interests and skills has improved dramatically this year, primarily because the new membership renewal forms are helping us to keep the information more up to date. Please take the time to check and correct the forms when you return them with your payment.

There were 6 General committee meetings in the year: one was not quorate.

Brian Woodhouse will be taking over the role of Membership Secretary from now on, to give me more time to concentrate on the roles of Secretary and Newsletter Editor. Please direct all membership queries to him in future.

Treasurer's report 2004

Copies of the report were circulated for members to read. This consisted of a list of assets, the accounts, and notes to the accounts.

The treasurer reported that one of the main sources of income for the club was the

Summer river course. Despite the relatively modest fees charged, this is profitable due to the generous help provided voluntarily by club members. If the course were run on a commercial basis the fees would have to be considerably higher.

It was also reported that at this moment in time the club is accumulating capital. This is intentional, since the club is in the process of applying for several grants for equipment, and such grants often carry the proviso that the club matches an award offered with a similar amount of money from club funds.

Chairman's Report 2004

At the last AGM I set out the Club's aims for the year, and I believe that we have achieved most of what we set out to do, as follows :-

Maintain the strength of white water, flat water and sea touring. I think these must be considered the core activities of the club. A number of members joining over the past two years have progressed in a relatively short space of time to be now on the threshold of the Three Star Award, Canoe Safety Test and hopefully on to Instructor Level 2. Tom Byrne's flat water trips continue to be popular and well supported. Sea tours are held regularly through the summer with introductory sessions including estuary trips.

Maintain a strong committee with fuller representation – adult competition to be better represented and a Competition Secretary appointed. Unfortunately we haven't been able to appoint a Competition Secretary as such. However, reports come in from individuals concerned and Jacky deals with junior competition. Having lost a young person from the Committee we co-opted another. We would like to increase the number of female members on the committee. Any club member can come along to Committee Meetings to see what goes on and

whether they would like to officially join the Committee.

Support Jacky and achieve a strong presence in both Junior Slalom and Junior Polo. Junior polo does not appear to be viable within the club as separate from polo in general. Junior slalom however is strong within the club and parents appear to be supportive and working together.

Maintain the strength of the web site and achieve greater use by members and others. A great job being done by Chris Porter. Many new members make initial enquiries through the web site. The forum could be much better used by members and I'm as guilty as anyone here. I must remember to put up to date info on there regarding Beginners' Trips.

Maintain/improve the strength of the calendar. Any complaints? All suggestions welcome.

Maintain/improve the strength of our awards system. Seems OK. All suggestions welcome.

Improve links with other clubs and the BCU in order particularly to support the weaker areas of the club's activities. Good support for recent BCU Access Meeting at Burrs. Otherwise, I'm afraid we've rather kept ourselves to ourselves.

Consider introducing Freestyle into the club's activities. We looked at sessions at Halton with outside coaching, but the costs were considerable. Ideally we would have one or more coaches within the Club. We continue to look at the issue.

So, keeping to a similar format, what is the Committee hoping to achieve over the coming year:-

Maintain the strength of the Clubs core activities: white water, flat water and sea touring.

Maintain a strong committee with full representation. Adult competition to be better

represented and a Competition Secretary appointed. Encourage more female members.

Maintain a strong presence in Junior Slalom. Be prepared to support Junior Polo if demand materialises and Junior Leagues re-appear.

Maintain the high standard of our magazine and encourage more Members to receive it via e-mail.

Maintain the web site and encourage greater use by members and others.

Maintain the calendar.

Maintain our awards system.

Improve links with other clubs and the BCU.

Support the development of Freestyle within the Club.

Support the BCU in its attempts to improve access for canoeing.

Maintain our store of kayaks, canoes and equipment, keeping it up to date by replacing older items.

Support existing and encourage new Instructors, Coaches and Lifeguards.

Support the organisation of 4-Star courses and assessments for Members.

Election of Officers

Martin Stockdale, John Kington, Steve Swarbrick, Tom Byrne, Peter Jones, Tim Langridge and Brian Woodhouse were re-elected onto the committee. Dave Ellison and Tom Kington were voted onto the committee.

Trophies

The trophies were presented by Norman Green:

Driftwood

The Driftwood trophy is awarded to the club member whose paddling ability has improved the most during the last year.

Nominations: Charles Atherton, Robert Fair, Allan Hacking, Leslie Hacking, Joanne Hacking, Mark James, Sam King, Iain Robinson, Sue Sharman.

Winner: The Hacking Family.

Competition

The Competition trophy is awarded to the person seen to have achieved (or improved) most in Competition during the year.

Honourable Mentions: Sam King, Iain Robinson, Jacquelyn Shaw, Jonathan Shaw.

Nominations: Mick Huddleston, Helen James, Alex Jones, Richard Draper.

Winner: Richard Draper.

Youth Challenge

The Youth Challenge trophy is awarded to the club member under the age of 18 who has achieved the most in the past year, be it in improved paddling ability or competition.

Nominations: Charles Atherton, Richard Draper, Robert Fair, Joanne Hacking, Helen James, Sam King, Iain Robinson.

Winner: Robert Fair.

Author of the Year

The Author of the Year trophy is awarded to the writer of the best newsletter article in the last year.

Nominations: Dave Ellison, Tony Morgan, Janet Porter, Steve Singleton, Peter Thomas.

Close Runner-up: Tony Morgan (Grand Canyon article).

Winner: Dave Ellison.

Philip Singleton Trophy

The Philip Singleton Memorial trophy is awarded for significant contributions to the club. It is not awarded every year, only when the committee feel that a club member has made significant contributions to the club which should be recognised.

Winner: Tony Morgan.

D'Ribbler Trophy

The D'Ribbler trophy is awarded to the member with the most swims recorded during the year.

Winner: Helen James.

Runners up: Martin Atherton, Graham Coles, Peter Bennet, Mark Loftus, Joanne Hacking.

Raffle

Finally, a special thank-you to all those who helped with the raffle, either by providing prizes or by selling or buying tickets.

An extra-special thank-you to UK Canoes who once again generously donated a prize, this time a 'hoody' which the winner (Dave Ellison) hasn't stopped wearing since!

Membership renewals

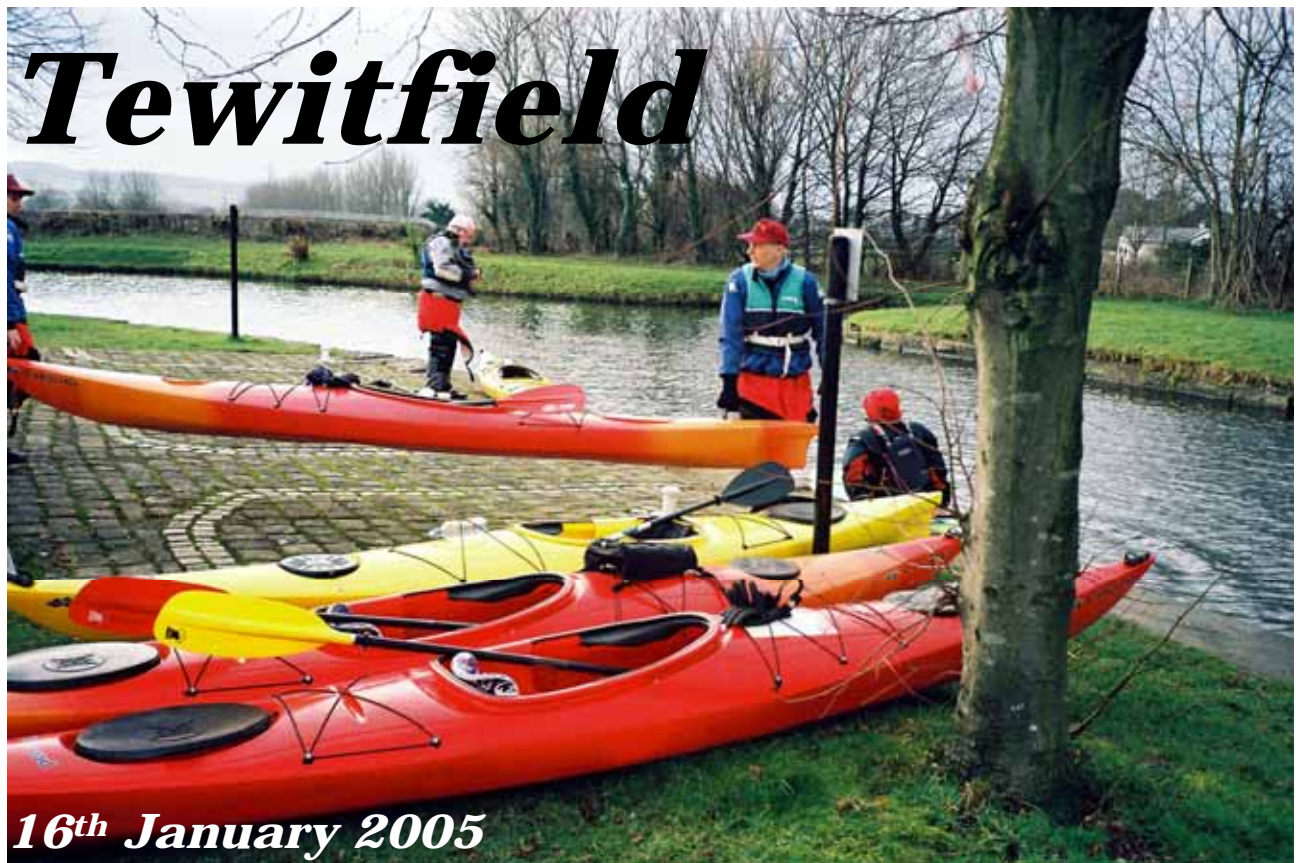
Included with this newsletter (or following in the post if you receive the newsletter by email) is a membership renewal form. These show all the information we currently hold about you.

Please take a moment to look through the form and either correct any mistakes or fill in any blanks, then return the form to Brian Woodhouse (not Martin!) with your payment.

Please try to make sure that your membership form is returned before the next newsletter (May) since this makes our job much easier.

Finally, if there is any problem with the renewal form (for instance you receive one and you think you've already paid) then please get in touch with Brian and he will sort it out.

Brian Woodhouse



Paddlers: Tom, Chris, Janet, Keith, Peter, Albert, Kath, Nick and Eileen

Some of us met up at Forton for a pre-paddle coffee and cake (where I have to say the weather looked extremely promising) and the rest of the group met us in the car park of the Longlands Hotel (where the weather was looking a bit iffy).

We were on the water just before 11 and soon heading towards Carnforth. As uneventful trips go this was a classic. We experienced varying amounts of rainfall throughout the trip and the wind was a bit brisk in one or two places where there were waves on the canal. Many fallen trees were still evident along both sides of the canal following the recent storms with those along the towpath still to be cleared. The walkers we saw had to duck beneath some fairly hefty trunks which were blocking their way.

Carnforth was its usual charming self with plenty of rubbish in the water. Mercifully it's only a small town and doesn't take long to

paddle through. Most of the people we meet along this stretch are very nice and quite chatty, it's such a shame there is so much fly tipping.

We stopped for our lunch just before Thwaite End Bridge, not a wonderful area for a picnic but get outs along this length of the canal are not easy to find as, unlike the southern end, the towpath doesn't tend to dip as it goes under bridges and can be quite high. There is also a lot of that nasty metal edging that can crinkle-cut bottoms and paddles unless extreme care is taken. Flat water paddlers are definitely turning a bit soft as five out of the nine of us had chairs. Albert and Kath's were living room sized (apparently 'they didn't look that big in the shop').

Rather than the usual palaver of getting into his boat from the canalside Peter was almost tempted to get into the water and step in after discovering that the canal at this point is only five or six inches deep. We all, eventually, chose to use the conventional 'keeping the feet dry' method and set off northwards back

towards Tewitfield. We were too cold to contemplate going further south and anyway, according to Chris's new GPS, we had already paddled 4.43 miles at an average speed of 3mph.



The few swans we saw today totally ignored us and I think I caught a glimpse of a kingfisher but aside from the usual scraggy mallards that was the full extent of wildlife. No early snowdrops yet and the buds on the hawthorn trees were still tight shut.

It's strange that the trip back always seems quicker but today it actually was – by fifteen minutes – thanks to the wind mostly but also thanks to the knowledge that there was a warm pub waiting to welcome us. Peter managed to persuade Keith to swap paddles, which, I think, made life a bit easier for him as he was the only one in a short boat. We told him we knew of a second hand Carolina that was looking for a new home but he couldn't be persuaded.

Four of us went up the Capernwray arm of the canal to have a little look. There's not much there, just a very peaceful pool surrounded by woodlands. The others didn't wait for us, the call of the pub was too strong, but we all arrived back at Tewitfield as one group and were soon changed, loaded up and rehydrating.

Janet Porter

Dull Wardrobe?



Do you feel that your wardrobe needs brightening up?

Well, look no further than the Ribble Canoe Club spring collection, exclusive to Ribble Canoe Club members.

Sweatshirts, T-shirts, Polo Shirts, Rugby Shirts and ¼ zip Fleece emblazoned with the Ribble Canoe Club logo.

Large range of colours to choose from, and club logo co-ordinated to match the garment. For more information about these top quality garments at exclusive prices contact:

Clive Robinson

All orders by 15th April please!

Help Me!!!

I'd been back on the committee for roughly 5 minutes before I was cornered by Messrs. Stockdale and Woodhouse. "How do you fancy running the summer course now that you're back?" Fuelled by the enthusiasm of a new hoody (top prize that, thanks UK Canoes) I accepted.

When I awoke the next day with a slightly jaded head fuelled by celebratory Stella, I realise what I'd done. I tried in vain to extract myself from this predicament but suspiciously the guilty parties were unobtainable which leaves me in this unenviable situation of

turning to you, the membership, on bended knee to plea... no, beg for help.

I'm looking for experienced paddlers, wannabe coaches and the real thing to assist on the river course. The ad's in here somewhere so I won't go into the detail, but rest assured that this course only works if you help! If you can help out in any capacity then please do get in touch, willing non-paddling parents will also be useful so please, please, PLEASE phone...

Dave Ellison

Check it first...

A reminder to all members:

If you borrow equipment from the club stock – either at the Hand & Dagger or at Fulwood Leisure Centre – make sure that you check the equipment to make sure it is functional and safe before you use it. If you are in any doubt about whether the equipment is safe to use, consult a qualified instructor or a member of the committee and if there is still any doubt – don't use it!

The club tries to make sure that all club equipment is checked on a regular basis, and faulty equipment is either repaired or

removed from use. However, with the quantity of equipment we have available, it is not practical for us to check every item before and after every loan.

If you find an item of equipment which is faulty in any way, please report it to the quartermaster (Steve Swarbrick) or any other committee member and we will make sure that the item is removed from the store until it can be repaired or replaced.

Steve Swarbrick

Backrests wanted

Do you have an unwanted backrest or two from a previous kayak that you would be prepared to donate to the club? This would

help make some of the older boats a bit more comfortable by adding extra support.

Steve Swarbrick or Tony Morgan

Summer Course



**Book Early to
Avoid
Disappointment**

Call Dave

Ribble Canoe Club's summer courses are fast approaching! BCU qualified coaches will take you through a comprehensive training course which will take beginners to 1 star or 2 star level, and existing 2 star paddlers to 3 star. The course will include both training and assessment.

Suitable for people aged over 10 through to adults, the course will cater for beginner, improver and intermediate paddlers. It is predominantly based on the River Ribble at Alston (near Longridge) on Wednesday and Thursday evenings with pool sessions on Fridays at Fulwood Leisure Centre.

The **maximum** cost including instruction, test fees and club membership will be:

1 and 2 star: £40 children, £55 Adults
3 star: £45 children, £65 adults

Costs will be less for existing members or for additional members of the same family – exact cost will be calculated when you enrol. For three star an additional charge will be a fee payable directly to the BCU for the certificate and badge if you successfully pass the award.

Club equipment will be available for loan on a first come first served basis.

Provisional Program

27th May – Beginners Pool Session and enrolment
5th June – Kit collection and Introduction Session for Beginners (Hand & Dagger)
8th & 9th June – Skills Sessions, Alston
10th June – Rescue Night
15th & 16th June - Skills Sessions, Alston
17th June – Rolling (3*) and Rescue Night
22nd & 23rd June - Skills Sessions, Alston
26th June – Trip TBD
29th June - Skills Sessions
30th June – Assessment/Return Kit

Interested?

What do you need to do next? Simple, just call to book your slot, most of the follow-on correspondence will be conducted by email so please have your email details handy. Concerned about missing some of the dates or boat collection? Don't be! Call me and we'll come up with a cunning plan.

Please Note: ALL candidates will be required to swim two lengths of the pool before the first session.

For more details or to book a place, please call:

Dave Ellison

A Bad Outlook Express?

Skykomish River



More cold calling to Seattle, for Saturday paddling partners, arrangements made to do the same stretch again. Back on the campground I was desperate for company and thought my prayers were answered when I found a wedding reception being carried out in the next camp. I launched into the smiling, nodding and whenever possible witty remark routine but to no avail, the party was over and by 6.00 only the bride and groom remained, I sensed they didn't want company.

Next best thing was to head to the Swedish restaurant and have their much-advertised speciality, "Heidi's famous Swedish meatballs". Heidi turned out to be about 65 with dyed blond hair in pigtails and a kind of milkmaid outfit, oh and the meatballs were off. It was the sort of place that could have been twinned with Dresden Cemetery and did nothing to enhance my social life.

Nothing else for it but to do a fifty mile round trip to the drive-in coffee stall and smile about the price of gas at £1.10 a gallon.

Lots of hand shaking and too many names to remember as we do the introductions. Jenny is here. She very kindly answered all my previous emails and offered to paddle if I was in town. Although I had rung several times and made many complicated arrangements I had not yet spoken to her. I had developed a

great relationship with her non-paddling husband who acted as a conduit for all the messages, so from an email in Lancashire to a river in Washington.

Dave and Peggy were two more virtual friends, whose answer machine and email address I had become familiar with - "Hi, you've reached the Mainer residence..." - along with more paddlers from Paddle Trails club. We also picked up a third party in the form of a bronzed, blonde, permed guy from California looking for someone to paddle with: he may have been a dude, or at least a has been dude.

With hindsight, if we had known how bad his paddling was he would still be looking, but he was now part of the team.



At the take out Peggy casually mentioned if ever I wanted a place to sleep in Seattle give them a call.

"How about tonight?" A combination of the midnight trains and the meatball thing had left me emotionally scarred.

Beers on the way home with my new found friends then onto Seattle for barbecued salmon and all the trimmings, looking across to a pink tinged Mount Rainier in the distance. Next morning I needed to leave early to meet Tim and Co. on the Sauk, and also to have a breakfast at the diner in Everett.

Sauk River

People often comment about the size of our American cousins, the Everett diner is the sort of place that helps maintain an unhealthy interest in food. I arrived before the early morning rush, or should that be crush, and was almost finished as most of the other customers started feasting. There were some seriously large customers here, I felt positively bulimic in their company, but felt self-righteous because I would be putting my calories to good use on the water.



Well I waited, went up the river, down the river, checked the map, and checked the campsite. Nothing! Some people thought they may have seen the truck and boats at the campsite last night, but this turned out to be a false lead: around the time of the alleged sighting the boys were staggering around Seattle, forgetting they already had girlfriends and missing the last bus home.

I was now left contemplating either a lone descent or trying to hook up with a raft group that was about to start - second choice would give a shuttle. I did the introductions, sob story, and put my dry gear in the bus in one fluid movement. Then the boys turned up.

Partly as an act of loyalty to the rafters that I had adopted, partly in a strange act of superiority that I could "at least arrive on time" I announced 'I'd meet them later' and off I went. These young people just don't know the value of punctuality. I was behaving like my parents; I had become my dad, next thing I would be looking at Proton cars and

thinking what great value for money the represented.



"Don't you just hate it when that happens?" That's what I bet Steve the raft guide was thinking when he got flipped up and off the raft, leaving several Microsoft staff heading downstream in or out of control of their own destiny. A bad outlook express. So I justify both my existence and place in the shuttle bus by retrieving Steve, albeit very inefficiently.

A few uneventful rapids later the rafters stop just below a rapid called Popeye which is a great lunch spot, great surf spot and the clients are encouraged to swim the tail of the rapid, apparently it's fun. Steve had a digital camera and saves the flattering pictures of me for the company web site. In turn I pass the address home and friends and family can say "look at that lucky sod paddling in the sunshine."

The other reason for stopping here is so Casey can improve his rock collection. No pebbles for this guy, the rock is of hernia generating proportions and takes 4 of us to heave it into the raft. We then of course have to reverse the process at the other end, then into the bus, then... you get the picture. So with one ball bigger than the other I wave goodbye to the purple and pink shuttle bus, and they all wave back after another day at the office.

Tony Morgan

(pictures from www.americanwhitewater.org)

West Tanfield Camp

8th – 10th July

This is a weekend camp (one or two nights as the fancy takes). The site is Slenningford Water Mill, a well maintained private camp site located adjacent to its own stretch of the River Ure. The River at this point has a grade 3 section suitable for intermediate paddlers and a grade 2 section suitable for improving beginners. There are several family pubs within walking distance. Lightwater Valley amusement park boasting the world's longest roller coaster ride is close by for those not wanting to paddle, and Ripon with its cathedral is about 5 miles away.

The River trip is grade 2 with the exception of Hack Falls which can be portaged. At normal levels the trip takes about 3 hours, but at low levels has taken 5. There is a long walk in (thankfully downhill all the way), but once on the river you pass through pleasant wooded areas and farm land. We normally take lunch and stop on an island just below a weir to eat. The river is restricted access and so we will be making the trip on the Sunday 10th July.

This is an ideal first river trip following the summer course.

Brian Woodhouse

Rhosneigr Surf Camp

22nd – 24th July

Have you ever tried surfing in your canoe? Sitting down, not standing up – though you'd get extra marks for style if you did stand up successfully. If you have then you may know about our annual Anglesey Surf Weekend. If not, read on.

One of the few things that you can do in a kayak that beats surfing a glassy green wave on a fast river is surfing down the face of a glassy green wave on the sea – especially if the sun's shining. Every year we have a weekend camp at Rhosneigr on Anglesey. The idea is to pack in as much surfing as possible and have a generally sociable weekend. We don't always get brilliant surf, but there are other attractions – seal spotting around some of the offshore islands, beach games, kite flying, beer and barbecues - whatever.

If you've not surfed before this is a good opportunity to learn. As long as you have reasonable control of your boat and are

prepared to swim a bit you should have fun – the D'ribbler award was won one year on the basis of an afternoon at Rhosneigr – stand up Michael Moul. A playboat with a planing hull is ideal, but the club's Rotobats work very well too.

This year the camp will be on the weekend of 22nd to 24th July. Rhosneigr is on the North West corner of Anglesey. If you've been before you'll know where the campsite is, if not get in touch with me and I'll direct you. The site is fairly basic – no water park or cabaret, but it has hot showers and is not normally crowded. We usually travel to Anglesey on Friday night, but you can always come up on Saturday. The club does have a large frame tent that you can sleep in, but you'd be better off with your own tent.

Tim Langridge



Would you like to learn to canoe?

Ribble Canoe Club is running a beginners' course starting on Friday 29th April 2005 which will teach the basic skills necessary to paddle a kayak.

The course includes a classroom session to look at the theory of canoeing, three pool sessions to gain practical experience, and an outdoor session on the Lancaster Canal or a similar venue.

No previous experience is necessary.

For the first three weeks the course will take place in the swimming pool at Fulwood Leisure Centre, Black Bull Lane, Preston. The club has all the equipment necessary including kayaks and paddles, so all you need to bring is yourself - and your swimming costume, of course! (At the end of the pool session you will need to carry your equipment outside to the store before you get changed, so flip-flops or water shoes and an old t-shirt would also be a good idea.)

The course will run from 8:00pm until 10:00pm on the 29th April, and 9:00pm until 10:00pm on the 6th and 13th May. Please arrive about 15 minutes before the start time to give time to get equipment sorted out.

The final session will take place during the day on a Saturday or Sunday (date to be decided), either on the Lancaster Canal near the Hand and Dagger at Salwick or at another similar venue. You will need to wear warm clothing and a cagoule (but they may get dirty or wet so don't wear your best gear!), and bring a change of clothes. Again, all other equipment will be provided.

The maximum cost of the course will be £34 per person, which includes the cost of the instruction, pool hire and membership of Ribble Canoe Club for 2005. Membership costs are less for junior members and for additional members of the same family.

For further details, or to book a place please telephone:

Tom Byrne

BCU Access Seminar

Burrs January 2005

There is an annual Access seminar for the North West, which is held at Burrs for all River Advisory Officers and any other interested parties. Over the last few years there has been a relatively poor attendance with perhaps 20 to 25 attendees. In the past we have learnt about alien species invading our rivers such as Crayfish, Giant hog weed, and Mink. We have had the life cycle of the Salmon explained to us. We have been told of the work that the Environment Agency does to clean up the rivers, and we have heard about BCU policy and initiatives.

There were about 40 people present, including 4 from Ribble Canoe Club: Andy Rushton, Pete Jones, Bob Smith and Brian Woodhouse

Chris Cleaver (North West Region Access Officer) introduced the meeting and the agenda. He gave a brief review of access and where you can canoe. Amongst other things he explained that access is only available on 2% of river systems in England and Wales.

Tasmin Phipps gave a presentation on what the BCU was doing. It has moved access into political lobbying, and this is beginning to have some impact. The letters being written by canoeists lobbying MP's and Alun Michael are having some payback. Local Access Forums (LAFs – Government love acronyms) have been instructed by Alun Michael to see how water access (canoeing etc.) can be incorporated in local plans despite the recent legislation (Right to Roam Act) specifically excluding water. The BCU is active on many LAFs and FERACs (Fisheries, Ecology & Recreation Advisory Committees) as well as other bodies.

The BCU has appointed a PR company and wants examples of good stories involving canoeing.

Becca Cleaver gave a short presentation on the diverse nature of rivers – how they were formed, general features, flora, fauna, invasive species of plant etc.

Christie Webster (EA National Recreation Officer) gave a presentation on what the duties of the Environment Agency policies are as it relates to canoeists. This was largely read from an A4 sheet and was so general it didn't really tell us anything.

Jill Bolton gave a presentation on the FERAC in our area: she is a recreational member. This is a statutory committee but it is only advisory.

It has 20 members, including 10 from fisheries, 1 academic (Keith Hendry, a canoeist by chance), 1 conservationist and 2 recreation. Meetings are open to the public, but are usually held mid week.

At induction Jill was told the main recreation on rivers in the North West are fishing and picnicking on the river bank. In the last report only 2 canoe related activities were mentioned out of a host of other activities.

Perhaps we should organise a litter collection on a local river.

Geoff Funnell - Rights of Way Officer employed by Stockport Council gave a talk on rights of way. Rivers are like highways in some respects: the land owner owns the land under the surface to the mid point, but does not own the surface.

Under the freedom of information act anyone can ask the Local Authority what information they have on things such as access to water. This could be a lobbying tool. He emphasised Local Access Forums. He stressed that access

was a long timescale project - it took ramblers nearly 100 years!

Under the right to roam act (Section 16 CREAT) a landowner can dedicate his land/resource in perpetuity for general access. This gives a right to pass but not linger on his land. He can close the land for 28 days each year. The advantage to him is liability for injury – he ceases to be liable – and so the management of access is reduced.

It became apparent through the meeting that there were representatives of other water recreational activities present, swimming being apparent. Other obvious activities are rowing, horse riding, cycling that all have similar problems.

William Crookshank gave a talk on the Environment Agency work. He saw the Environment Agency working on voluntary agreements. Without any such agreement he argued that the Environment Agency could not develop a resource impartially. He then took questions from the floor.

Chris Hawksworth gave a presentation on the damage that water turbines are doing to river running. He gave an example of the impact on the Fecklan, a Scottish river. Most environmentalists think these are a good idea but they do stop river running by extracting water from rivers, and creating physical barriers.

Chris also wants to create a database of fords on rivers because most of them are still operative as points of access to rivers. Many times when a bridge was built it replaced a ford, but because the ford was in use the bridge was built a short distance away from the original ford.

I have looked at the 1846 OS maps for the river Darwen, and the Lower Ribble (London Road Bridge up to Eddisford Bridge).

On the Darwen there is:

- Ford at Owlet Holes 634,258

- Ford at Hoghton Bottom 628,264
- Ford not on 1846 map at Hoghton Bottom 628,273
- Ford at Darwen Side Farm 609,293

On the Ribble

- Ford at 591,317
- Ferry at Elston Old Hall 603,432
- Stepping Stones Bobriding Woods 630,338
- Ferry Osbaldestan Hall 640,355
- Ford at De Tabley Arms 661,354
- Ferry at Dinckly 687,437
- Ferry at Hacking Hall confluence with Calder 708,371

I always believed that there was a ford at Alston, and am sure I have seen it marked as such on an OS map but it isn't marked on the 1846 or the modern map. **Can anyone produce a map with it on?**

He also gave some statistics:

- 4 million anglers
 - 2m pay license fee
 - 60% fish on enclosed water.
 - 1m sea fishing
- 30000 canoeists direct members BCU
- 30000 canoeists indirect through clubs
- 2.1m canoeists from a survey in year 2000

Niel Ravenscroft of Brighton University gave a presentation on the latest developments from study – they have been tasked to get access to two sample rivers in the country.

In the short term there are three ways of getting access:

- CREAT section 16 dedications
- Voluntary agreements
- Memorandum of understanding.

Brian Woodhouse



Paddlers: Tom, Ian B., Chris, Janet, Clive, Janet, Iain, Roy, Albert, Kath, Dave and Helen.

The previous Wednesday it was touch and go whether this trip was on as Tom had come across a weather forecast that predicted 26mph winds. However, Sunday morning dawned, the sky was blue, the birds were singing and most important of all the tops of the trees were barely moving. As we drove up the motorway we were all fairly confident that we were in for a reasonably gentle day's paddling.

It felt a bit breezy once we arrived in the car park at Parsonage Bay, but we went to the office to pay for the car park and the launching permits and were assured that the wind was forecast to top 13mph from the north. Fine, nothing wrong with that. Plan A was then to paddle north to lunch then let the wind calmly blow us back down to the get out. We had to put Plan B into operation when we learned that there was to be a yacht race at the northern end of the lake.

We began by crossing the lake on a route more or less parallel to the car ferry and then headed south. Having all wrapped up for a cold day we soon began to get quite hot in the winter sun and several were quite happy to paddle hatless and gloveless for much of the morning.

All the action on Windermere today must have been up the other end as we saw very little traffic. None of the big ferries appeared to be running, one or two powerboats were pootling along and the few jet skiers we saw kept well out of our way.

The further south we travelled the more we became aware of the increasing size of the waves but happily convinced ourselves that this was because the gentle zephyr from the north was now blowing tiny waves into the narrowest part of the lake and they simply seemed much bigger than they really were. It was only when we got to the steamer terminus at Lakeside and decided to cross the lake to Fell Foot that we were forced to accept we were probably wrong. Tom executed a

stunning manoeuvre between a sailing boat and its mooring buoy.



Since very few people were using the cafe at Fell Foot we took over some of their outdoor seating and ate our Sunday lunch around a table. Roy had bought a coffee so, in a sense, we were patrons.

Once back in the boats it was pretty clear that we were in for a hard paddle back to Bowness. Luckily we were going into a headwind so no problems with steering, unluckily it was a very strong headwind and we had at least six miles to paddle. We thought first of all we would make frequent stops in sheltered locations to get our breath back. Unfortunately sheltered locations were few and far between and in general we just kept ploughing on. Sheltered locations were far from Iain's mind as he paddled his Mum up the middle of the lake looking for even bigger waves and more excitement. Just how much excitement Janet can take is a matter of conjecture, you'll have to ask, she looked pretty wet at the end of the trip but was still smiling.

I resorted to counting the number of strokes I was putting in between reference points and reckon I took 96 paddle strokes to cover the length of two tennis courts. It really was pretty exhausting although, because we were heading directly into the wind, I think everyone felt fairly stable. We did manage a brief rest by the Temple of Heroes where we

could hear the waves slapping against the other side of the breakwater.



Rounding the Temple was a bit interesting. Either the wind was stronger or we had rested for so long we'd forgotten how powerful it had been. Whichever was the case the last mile or so was quite hard work. We knew we were heading for a spot just the other side of the ferry slipway but the ferry never seemed to get any closer and even crossed the lake two or three times as we were paddling. In the end we did espy that very welcome sight, our get out. I wasn't the only one whose knees and feet had locked in position and had trouble getting out of the boat, let alone standing up. People may scoff at my little set of wheels but I was ever so glad I didn't have a boat to carry. It had all been a good test for Dave's new boat; he stayed in it and the right way up so he must have found it ok.

Having changed and loaded up (the launch fee incidentally entitled us to a free hot shower but none of us took the offer up) some folk set off for home and the rest of us walked the short distance into Bowness to the Ship Inn for a bit of refreshment. Walking back to the car park well, you've guessed it; the sky was clear, the geese were honking and the tops of the trees were barely moving.

Janet Porter

Pool Supervisors

You know those Friday night pool sessions at Fulwood Leisure Centre (the swimming pool, not the pool table in the bar)? There's always a club member patrolling the poolside, looking for drownings and generally making sure everything runs smoothly and safely. By having one of our members on the pool side we significantly reduce the cost of pool hire and so keep the cost of the open sessions, courses etc. down to a minimum.

Of course, this involves people giving up an hour or so every so often to be on the pool side instead of in the pool. If we had a few more people on the rota it wouldn't come round quite as quickly. It would also lighten the load for the "usual suspects" who've been doing this for quite a while now. This, I hope, is where you come in.

We have agreed with Fulwood that the requirement for Pool Supervisors should be changed from Bronze Medallion to Canoe Safety Test ("CST"). The CST is much easier (if you're a canoeist rather than a swimmer), less time consuming, far more relevant to canoeing and is one of the pre-requisites for coaching qualifications. We are in the process of sorting out some training/assessment for CST (the club pays).

So, if you can spare a couple of hours every 6-8 weeks, want a free qualification and want to put something back into the club get in touch with a committee member and we'll get you trained up and on the rota.

John Kington

Bad Joke space...

A Frenchman, an American and a paddler were captured by a fierce tribe in the rain forests of Brazil. Not long after their capture, the chief walked up to them and said, "The bad news is that now that we've caught you we're going to kill you and use your skins to build a canoe. The good news is that you get to choose how you die".

The Frenchman said, "I take ze poison". The chief gave him some poison. The Frenchman said "Vive la France!" and drank the poison down and died.

The American said, "A pistol for me, Bub." The chief gave him a pistol. The American

pointed it at his head, said "God save the President!" and blew his brains out.

The paddler said, "A fork, please". The chief was puzzled, but he shrugged and gave him a fork. The paddler took the fork and started jabbing himself all over: the stomach, the sides, the chest, everywhere. There was blood gushing out all over the ground and all over everyone. It was horrible.

The chief was appalled, and screamed, "What are you doing???"

The paddler looked at the chief and said, "So much for your canoe!"

Chairman's Chat

It was very pleasing to see well over fifty at the AGM last month. I think the venue and food were well up to expectation and I didn't hear any complaints about the organisation – so if there are any suggestions for next year, please do voice them.

The same goes for any concerns any member may have regarding the Club, its organisation, equipment, trips, venues etc. – please do mention them to me or any Committee Member as soon as they arise. In this way problems can be attended to immediately or the Committee can reassure you if a problem has been attended to already or is in hand.

I like to think that I and the Committee are all very approachable and are around at meetings and trips quite a lot. If a face to face isn't convenient, the telephone numbers of all the Committee are in the magazine and mine is at the bottom of this article.

Two of the wonderful things which happened at the AGM, were that Dave Ellison volunteered to organise the River Courses this June and Debbie Dowe volunteered to organise the Christmas Do. What a joy it is to have people coming forward to volunteer rather than having to chase round and press people to take things on.

I hope that all the award winners (named elsewhere) were pleased to receive their just desserts, and that no-one felt left out.

Don't forget the Club is looking for Pool Supervisors to put on the rota for Friday nights. We are arranging training and assessment for the Canoe Safety Test for those interested. As I understand it the Test remains valid for qualified Instructors but for non-Instructors will need renewing every two years.

Terry Maddock

Ullswater Camp

19th – 21st August

The camp takes place at Waterside House camp site, on the shores of Ullswater, about a mile and a half south of Pooley Bridge, on the Eastern shore of the lake. The club will congregate in the 2nd field (the big one over the hill.)

Some will arrive on Friday night and probably walk along the lakeside path to Pooley Bridge for refreshments as it becomes dusk. The late arrivals appear on Saturday morning, when your choice of fun is only

limited by what you bring with you, or can borrow - cycle, walk, sail, canoe, BBQ, wind surf or what ever.

On Sunday there is a canoe trip down the nearby River Eden, an easy grade river down a picturesque valley, one of the "must do" local rivers. Come along and join us.

Steve Wilkinson

Setting off on a trip...

When arriving in the car park, it is important that somebody goes to check the price of the 'pay and display':



Next, it's a good idea to check the Tourist Information noticeboard in case there are any important notices:



Now before setting off, some stretching exercises are essential to avoid injury:



Finally it's time to go! At the last moment, of course, somebody will realise that Grahame didn't actually pay at the 'pay and display', and will have to go back to pay and then hurry to catch up:



[All photographs at the Waterhead car park in Ambleside after a trip down the Rothay on the 'Carlisle is cut off' Sunday in January.]

For Sale

Sit-on-top white water kayak

good condition

£200

Barry 07979 260801

Master 2 kayak

Red, good condition

£120

Roy Garriock

01282 693012 or 07812 598571

Box trailer with upstands

5ft by 4ft lots of space split lid, can carry all kit and 4 kayaks, bit old

£150

Complete beginners windsurfer

Longboard, easy to stand on

£150

Roy Garriock

01282 693012 or 07812 598571

Ribble CC Library

To borrow a book or video, just ring Clive Robinson or see him at the Hand & Dagger. Donations of books or videos are always welcome.

Technique:

General technique

BCU Handbook

Franco Ferrero

The Practical Guide to Kayaking and Canoeing

Bill Mattos, Andy Middleton

Canoeing & Kayaking

Marcus Bailie

Kayak

William (not Bill) Nealy

The Bombproof Roll and Beyond!

Paul Dutky

Eskimo Rolling for Survival

Derek Hutchinson.

White Water Safety & Rescue

Franco Ferrero

Weir Wisdom

Donated by Terry Maddock

How to paddle weirs safely

Playboating

The Playboater's Handbook

Ken Whiting

Sea Kayaking

The Complete Book of Sea Kayaking

Derek C. Hutchinson

Sea Kayak Navigation

Franco Ferrero

Open Canoeing

Path of the Paddle

Bill Mason, Paul Mason

Canoeing

Laurie Gullion

Open Canoe Technique

Nigel Foster

Guidebooks:

English White Water

Franco Ferrero

Scottish White Water

Andy Jackson

White Water Lake

District

Stuart Miller

An Atlas of the English Lakes

John Parker

Expeditions:

Travels with a Kayak

Whit Descher

On Celtic Tides

Chris Duff

Blazing Paddles: A Scottish Coastal Odyssey

Brian Wilson

Dancing with Waves: Around Ireland by Kayak

Brian Wilson

Paddling to Jerusalem

David Aaronovitch

The Last River

Todd Balf

Paddle to the Arctic

Don Starkey

Canoeing across Canada

Gary & Joanie McGuffin

The Canoe Boys

Sir Alastair Dunnnett

Odyssey among the Inuit

Jonathan Waterman

General:

The Rough Guide to Weather

Robert Henson

The Liquid Locomotive

John Long (ed)

Many Rivers to Run

Dave Manby

Norwegian rivers

Donated by Jane Bentham

Videos / DVDs

Tony Morgan in the Grand Canyon (DVD)

You've read the article (Nov/Dec newsletter) now see the film!

LVM Lunch Video Magazine (DVD)

Liffey Descent (V)

Deliverance (V)

Extreme Sports Canoeing (V)

A Taste of White Water (V)

Wicked Water 2(V)

Ribble Newsletters (CD)

Drill Time (V)

Donated by Terry Maddock

Solo Canoe Playboating

Pool sessions

The following lists the pool sessions booked at Fulwood Leisure Centre, the contact for the courses and the lifeguard on duty for each session. All sessions are Friday 9:00pm – 10:00pm.

DATE	SESSION	CONTACT	LIFEGUARD
Mar 18 th	Beginners' Course	Tom Byrne	Terry Maddock
Mar 25 th	<i>Easter – No session</i>	N/A	N/A
April 1 st	<i>Easter – No session</i>	N/A	N/A
April 8 th	Canoe Safety Test	John Kington	Terry Maddock
April 15 th	Canoe Safety Test	John Kington	Terry Maddock
April 22 nd	Slalom Skills	Jacky Draper	Sara Withall
April 29 th	Beginners course	Tom Byrne	Andy Rushton
May 6 th	Beginners course	Tom Byrne	Peter Benett
May 13 th	Beginners course	Tom Byrne	John Kington
May 20 th	Open	N/A	Steve Wilkinson
May 27 th	River course	Dave Ellison	Sara Withall
June 3 rd	Open	N/A	Andy Rushton
June 10 th	River course	Dave Ellison	Peter Benett
June 17 th	River course	Dave Ellison	John Kington

The Canoe Safety Test sessions are training sessions for new Pool Supervisors (see the advert elsewhere in this newsletter) and not open to other members.

Prices: Beginners Course £20, Rolling Course £15 (both plus club membership).
All other sessions £3.

Please book in advance for the Beginners and Rolling Courses by phoning the named contact.

Editor's bit

And Finally...

“Even today, the Eskimo displays very little gustatory qualm. Near Fort Chimo, Quebec, I was offered a snack of, I thought, crowberries. One taste told me the truth. They weren't crowberries, but caribou droppings cooked in seal fat. I declined any more. The man who offered them to me shrugged and continued to pop them into his mouth like salted peanuts.”

From: “A Kayak Full of Ghosts: Eskimo Tales” by Lawrence Millman.

Dates and deadlines

The next committee meeting will be on May 3rd at 7:30 at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on May 17th. All submissions to me by Saturday May 14th at the latest please.

Martin Stockdale
secretary@ribblecanooclub.co.uk



Area of Interest	Ribble Canoe Club																						
	Contact	Telephone																					
Committee												Contact	Telephone										
General Information	Access Agreements	Canoe Courses	Instructor or Coach	Lifeguard	Hand & Dagger Keyholder	Social Events	Flat Water & Lake Trips	Beginners River Trips	Intermediate River Trips	Advanced River Trips	Sea Trips	Open Canoeing	Canoe Surfing	Beginners Slalom	Advanced Slalom	Mens Polo	Ladies Polo	Junior Polo	Other				
Christmas Party (Debbie)			✓		✓					✓									Andy & Debbie Dowe				
Rolling Course																			Bob Smith				
								✓											Memb. Secretary	Brian Woodhouse			
Website							✓												Chris & Janet Porter				
Library, Training Coordinator																			✓	Clive Robinson			
Summer Course								✓	✓										✓	Dave Ellison			
																			✓	Grahame Coles			
																✓				Ian McCreerie			
																		✓		Jacky Draper			
																			✓	Hon. Treasurer	John Kington		
																			✓	Mark Loftus			
																			✓	Hon. Secretary, Newsletter	Martin Stockdale		
																					Mick Huddlestan		
																					Nick Pope & Sam Turner		
																			✓		Peter Jones		
																				✓	Quartermaster	Steve Swarbrick	
																				✓		Steve Wilkinson	
																				✓	Hon. Chairman, Calendar	Terry Maddock	
																				✓		Tim Langridge	
d'Ribbler's Award (swim reports)																				✓		Tom Byrne	

CALENDAR

Last minute trips organised at Hand & Dagger (Weds, 6:30pm onwards) or Fulwood Leisure Centre (Fri, 9:00pm).
If you have any dates for the calendar please contact **Terry Maddock**

Ribble CC organised trips are in **bold**.
Other Ribble CC events are in *italic*.
River information:
Burrs 0161 764 9649
www.activity-centre.freeserve.co.uk
Canolfan Tryweryn 01678 520826
www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk
Tees Barrage 01642 678000
www.4seasons.co.uk
Washburn 07626 978654
yorkshire.bcu.org.uk/washburn.htm
Wharfe
yorkshire.bcu.org.uk/wharfe.htm

Trips / Events

March

27 **Moving Water**
R Ure, West Tanfield, W Yorks
Brian Woodhouse

27 Washburn White Water
9.00-5.00pm, nr Blubberhouses

April

3 **Beginners' Trip & Slalom**
Div 3/4 Marple, S Manchester
Terry Maddock

6 Washburn White Water
4.00 - 7.30pm, nr Blubberhouses

9 UK Canoes Demo Session
Brown Howe, Coniston
UK Canoes 01524 388850

10 **Washburn White Water**
9.00-5.00pm, nr Blubberhouses
Grahame Coles

17 **Greta White Water**
R Greta, Keswick, Cumbria
Andy Rushton

17 **Flat Water Trip**
Lake Bala
Tom Byrne

24 **Lune Estuary (HT 11.30am)**
Halton to Glasson Dock
Clive Robinson

27 Washburn White Water
3.00 - 8.15pm, nr Blubberhouses

May

1 **Beginners' Trip & Slalom**
Div 2/3/4 Bala Mill, Bala, Wales
Terry Maddock

3 *Committee Meeting*
Martin Stockdale

4 Washburn White Water
3.00 - 8.15pm, nr Blubberhouses

8 **Greta White Water**
R Greta, Keswick, Cumbria
John Kington

14 *Newsletter Deadline*
Martin Stockdale

15 **Flat Water Trip**
Trent Mersey Canal
Tom Byrne

15 **Tees Barrage**
Stockton on Tees 12.30 - 6.30
Tony Morgan

22 **Moving Water**
R Ribble, Ribchester to Alston
Brian Woodhouse

25 Washburn White Water
4.30 - 8.45pm, nr Blubberhouses

28/29 **BCU Northwest Weekend**
Tees Barrage
Grahame Coles

June

1 Washburn White Water
12.00 - 8.00pm, nr Blubberhouses
(Children Go Free)

5 **Beginners' Trip**
R Wenning, Bentham, W Yorks
Terry Maddock

11/12 **Washburn White Water**
9.00 - 5.00pm, nr Blubberhouses
Tony Morgan

12 Tees Barrage
Stockton on Tees 11.15 - 5.15

19 **Flat Water Trip**
Derwent Water / Derwent
Tom Byrne

19 **Eden White Water**
R Eden, Lazonby, Cumbria
Andy Rushton

22 Washburn White Water
4.00 - 9.00pm, nr Blubberhouses

26 **Ribble River Course Trip**
R Ribble, Ribchester to Alston
Brian Woodhouse

26 Washburn White Water
9.00 - 5.00pm, nr Blubberhouses

26 Tees Barrage
Stockton on Tees 11.15 - 5.15

Slalom

Please see www.canoeslalom.co.uk for event details and to confirm dates.

April

2/3 Marple 3/4 Double
Manchester CC

16/17 Oughtibridge 3/4 Double
Sheffield CC

30/1 Bala Mill 2/3/4/Open
1st Ormskirk Scouts

May

14/15 Wagon Lane 3/4 Double
Bradford & Bingley CC