

TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK



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MAY/JUNE 2004

Warning - Low bridge!



Skipton Canal, 25th April, 2004

Paddlers: Tom, Chris, Janet, Clive, Janet, Iain, Albert, Kath, Nick, Sam, Steve, Rob, Ged and Shelley

We parked in the car park of the recently renamed Bay Horse (formerly known as The Tadpole), just south of Skipton. The get in here isn't easy, the side of the towpath is fairly steep and overgrown and several of us fell foul of the stinging nettles along the bank. It was a close call but there were no swims.

The local swan looked a bit of a bruiser, he watched us from a distance and made a show of flapping his wings and coming a bit closer but he left us alone. We set off southwards and way from him so he settled down to harassing interlopers on his own patch.

The sunshine was glorious today and we all started work on our suntans. Nick and Sam are evidently becoming narrow boat aficionados and were frequently heard discussing the decor of many of the boats we passed. Rob was in a new boat (one of those that looks as though it's had a bite taken out of the back end) and lost no time in feeling very much at home in it.

This stretch of canal boasts a surfeit of swing bridges. The first we came across looked certain to be a portage until a kindly couple in a moored narrow boat offered to open it for us. It then became clear that this was a brand new bridge and was completely automated. One turn of the key brought down barriers to stop the traffic and then with a click and a

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hum the bridge began to swing open. We felt quite important as we paddled through.

It wasn't long before we came to the next swing bridge. Luckily this had just been opened by the occupants of another narrow boat, which was travelling in the opposite direction. They left it open until we had passed through.



The landscape surrounding the canal varies tremendously. Much of it is open countryside but the favourite stretch for many of us was through a beautifully wooded area thickly carpeted with bluebells. We also saw the first of this year's ducklings today – all very tiny and in imminent danger of being mown down by canal traffic.

We paddled for a mile or so before coming to swing bridge number three. This was quite low and as we all struggled to get under, a woman sitting on a nearby bench asked why we didn't open it. She had a point, it could well be worth our while investing in a key before we try another such trip.

The fourth swing bridge, in the village of Kildwick, was easy by comparison requiring us to simply duck our heads a little. We got out at the next bridge (a proper stone one this time) and had our lunch by the towpath.

Several of us fancied paddling a bit further, unfortunately the next swing bridge was so low we would have had to portage and there was no easy get in on the other side. The towpath was a good few feet above the water line and the edges of the canal were lined with

stone. Alright so we could have seal launched but we might have removed the bottom from some of the boats by doing so. We made the decision to set off back to the get in and then those who wanted to would carry on towards Skipton while those who felt tired could go for some restorative medicine.



None of the bridges was open for us on our return trip and the kayakers favoured two basic methods for passing beneath them. Firstly there was the press your nose to the front deck and paddle slowly forward method and secondly there was the lie back and think of England while bits of dirt fall in your eyes method. The canoeists, on the other hand, tended to disappear totally inside their boats. Most of the bridges were negotiated fairly successfully until we came to the last. This final bridge was quite low, Chris went through first without mishap then I followed and got jammed. I would like to think that this is one of the hazards of being a girl. Sadly, I know I'm not built like Jordan I simply had too much stuff in my front pocket and the back of my buoyancy aid caught on the underside of the bridge. I wasn't the only one to get stuck – it all added to the fun of the day.

Chris and I were the first to arrive back at the original get in and while we were waiting for the others to catch up and to decide who was going to continue paddling and who was going to get out, we watched the resident swan attacking a toddler on the towpath. The child's parents had to take it out of the pushchair and lift it high up out of the swan's

reach. The bird then got back on the water and eyed us from a distance – I felt like an extra in a Hitchcock film.

Nick and Sam were keen to go further so we encouraged them to check out the swan's mood before anyone else followed. They had only gone a short way when the swan took off and flew straight for them. Both parties backed off a little then the swan had another

go. Suddenly the choice of paddling or going to the pub became a lot simpler. Whilst getting out of the boats we watched as the swan once again left the water to attack a small dog which was trotting along the towpath with its owners. That pint just got better and better.

Janet Porter

River Kent

21st March 2004

After a Friday trip on the Greta with water up to the fence and a quick look at the Kent thumping over Force Falls I was convinced that we might at last have weekend water for a Sunday trip, rather than going to the Tryweryn.

Sunday started with an optimistic drive to the Duddon in the hope of water, quickly followed by a return trip to catch the remainder of Friday's water exiting down the Kent.

In some ways it was a repeat of the previous trip, most of the group were here and the level was up, without being high. Hopefully for those on their second trip this was a more relaxed affair, by now they knew what was coming. It certainly looked that way from the paddling and brief inspections just to check the lines.

No epics, just the usual Kent antics, everyone ran every rapid and at the end seemed to have (in retrospect?) enjoyed the experience.

Tom and Daniel are paddling well and were joined by Helen, who may have made the youngest 'Ribble' descent. Good effort paddling something that is a bit more intimidating than you're used to in such good style, I've run it a heap of times and it always gets my pulse up.

A couple of pints in the Kings at Burton in Kendal rounded off the day. Thanks for the company and thanks again to Martin for the shuttle.

In no particular order the cast was Ian Mc, Helen, Tom, Danny boy, Grahame, John K, Tony.

Tony Morgan

Hand & Dagger paddling

Now that the weather is improving and the evenings are staying lighter, a lot of people are going out paddling on a Wednesday night at the Hand & Dagger.

I would just like to remind people that it is normally assumed that anybody paddling will be off the water by about 9pm.

If you want to stay out later than that, it's not a problem, but please make sure that people are aware of this so they don't start worrying about you.

Also, please make sure that you have access to a key or that a key-holder is prepared to wait for you to return.

A day to remember



Steve Wilky had arranged a paddling trip in sea boats and it was to be about a five mile paddle, a stop for lunch, and for those who fancied, a return trip to the start point. Those that didn't could exit at the lunch spot and return by car.

The trip from Bardsea, just west of Ulverston, was originally in doubt because as we drew up on to the car park near the shore, there was no water to be seen. Our trip 'contact point', maintaining a confident air, insisted that his tidal predictions were correct and as we prepared for what we expected to be a long walk, an excited shout drew our attention to the water approaching at a rate that surprised us all. We carried the boats to the sand and the water arrived.

Off we went!

The plan was to stay close to the shore so I left behind my deck mounted compass and map to reduce the clutter on the deck.

Amongst the party were one or two newcomers to paddling on the sea and even though it was really an estuary and sheltered from swell, we had an early swimmer who became unseated by a wave. He was quickly sorted out and the trip progressed. The incoming tidal flow was brisk and we soon reached the lunch spot.

At this point four of the party opted for the drive back, leaving the rest of us (about 6 or 7 people) a stimulating paddle into a head wind. The tidal flow had by now changed direction and was on the ebb at a similar speedy rate as we had experienced with the flood. The trip back to the cars started off as an easy paddle

although the quickly reducing water level created difficulties with sand banks which all of us could feel beneath our boats. We needed to go further and further away from the shore to find the channel and once there we made good progress towards our destination.

Chapel Island drew near which is located about 1km from the mainland shore and almost adjacent to our destination. A quick discussion ensued. Should we go round it or not? Democratic decisions made, we headed towards it but found that it had already dried out and was surrounded by sandbank which was only noticed due to several birds landing on the sand. It is incredibly difficult from a paddlers eye height, to see the margin between sea, sand and sky and shortly I was going to have ample time to reflect on this phenomena.

The party was making good progress towards the shore and our finishing point when a squall arrived. A stiff breeze transformed the flat water surface to a remarkably choppy surface within a matter of a minute or two and those who had made the quickest dash to shore did not observe our least experienced member lose his balance and capsize. Luckily Steve Wilky, Peter Roscoe and I were soon alongside him and Wilky put his recently practised boat righting skill to good use. Our unseated friend, Brian, was fairly soon back in his boat. This was the beginning of a formative experience and the exact moment when it became apparent that the absence of certain items of equipment, and skill, would speedily transform a pleasant trip into what became a most anxious period which, for all of us, will be a day to remember.

Although the boat had been deftly drained of water by Wilky, by the time Brian had clambered into the cockpit it was already beginning to fill up again because of the waves breaking over the deck. Partly installing the spray deck helped and using a hand pump, we drained the cockpit. We were rafted very firmly and drifting at an alarming rate in totally the wrong direction. Having turned the raft around with great difficulty so

that Brian was at least pointing in the right direction, we split up and recommenced our paddling. It was a hard and frustrating paddle and progress was slow. So slow in fact, that transit bearings did not show any appreciable change in our favour.

Brian was very wobbly and it was apparent that he would fall out again if we didn't support him. We rafted up again and Wilky connected a tow rope. Wilky towed and I paddled as best I could whilst leaning over the rear deck of the 'other' boat with an extended paddle. This was never going to be easy but we persisted for what seemed like about 15 or 20 minutes until opinion was expressed that no progress was being made. We split the raft and the instruction was issued, 'lean into the wave and paddle like hell'. Well everyone can guess what happened next. Brian again capsized and unlike his previous experience, discovered that he could stand up on what appeared to be firm sand and he announced that he would walk ashore. At the time I thought that this sounded like a good idea although looking at the distance involved I did have reservations.

Progress, at last, seemed to be going in our favour. We paddled and paddled, and Brian walked and walked, and things continued to look better. Distance travelled and distance to the shore was very hard to gauge, as was time, because one of the items I didn't have was a timepiece.

Suddenly I lost sight of my three companions. It appears that we all entered an area of very fast current although none of us could see the different water flow. In isolation, it did not cause me a problem, but by the time I regained sight of my companions, I was hundreds of yards away and no matter how hard I paddled, I could not reduce the distance. For the next hour and a half I paddled firmly towards the shore and although the water surface was not really disturbed, my overall feeling was of frustration at not making visible progress. By now my companions were specks against the shoreline and barely discernible.

I was aware that I was being set offshore by a current but I have to say that I could not see any water flow or disturbance to indicate the current and my feeling of helplessness and frustration was strong. I altered my course several times to see if I could improve my progress, but to no avail.

I did, however, have one piece of equipment which gave me a lot of comfort and I considered for a long time whether it was the right time to do something with it.

I called up the coastguard with my handheld VHF marine radio. The money I parted with seemed like the best £250 that I ever spent. I hailed the coastguard with a PanPan call which, in fact, is VHF chat for an urgency call. For those that are aware of these finer points it will be known that this is the level below Mayday which is invoked when there is danger to life.

Liverpool coastguard responded within seconds and expressed great concern about my wellbeing. During the next 30 minutes or so they asked me several times how I was, what is my current position, where are my companions, what is the water doing and my response got very repetitious because the only element that really changed was the state of my energy which was rapidly running out. The coastguard informed me that rescue facilities had been despatched and would arrive shortly and would I attract their attention by whatever means I had. They asked me if I had flares and I told them that I had a pack of mini flares but I didn't consider it proper to set them off under the circumstances. We had a sort of a chat about that and I said that until I was in real trouble I wouldn't. And that was that!

I thought I could hear a boat and I wondered if a RIB had been despatched. I wondered about what I would say when they arrived and whether they would just tow me ashore in a very simplistic sort of manner. However, the engines I heard turned out to be a Sea King SAR helicopter which flashed across in front of me and landed on a sandbank in the

distance. The crew got out and had a chat to Wilky, Peter and Brian who informed them that they are OK and about to walk to shore but they had a companion out there somewhere.-meaning me!. The helicopter took to the air and came to hover in a position about 100 yards behind me.



I had spoken to the helicopter on the radio but couldn't hear if I got a response because of the noise so I just carried on paddling because I didn't want the ignominy of appearing so tired that they wanted to lift me up and leave the kit behind. Whilst all this was happening I observed a darkening to my left and for some time I considered the cause. I puzzled whether it was a storm cloud. Could it be some sort of wave? It partly merged with the sky at times and at others it could have been white flecked water. It turned out to be a huge sandbank which had appeared from below the water surface which till now had been all round me.

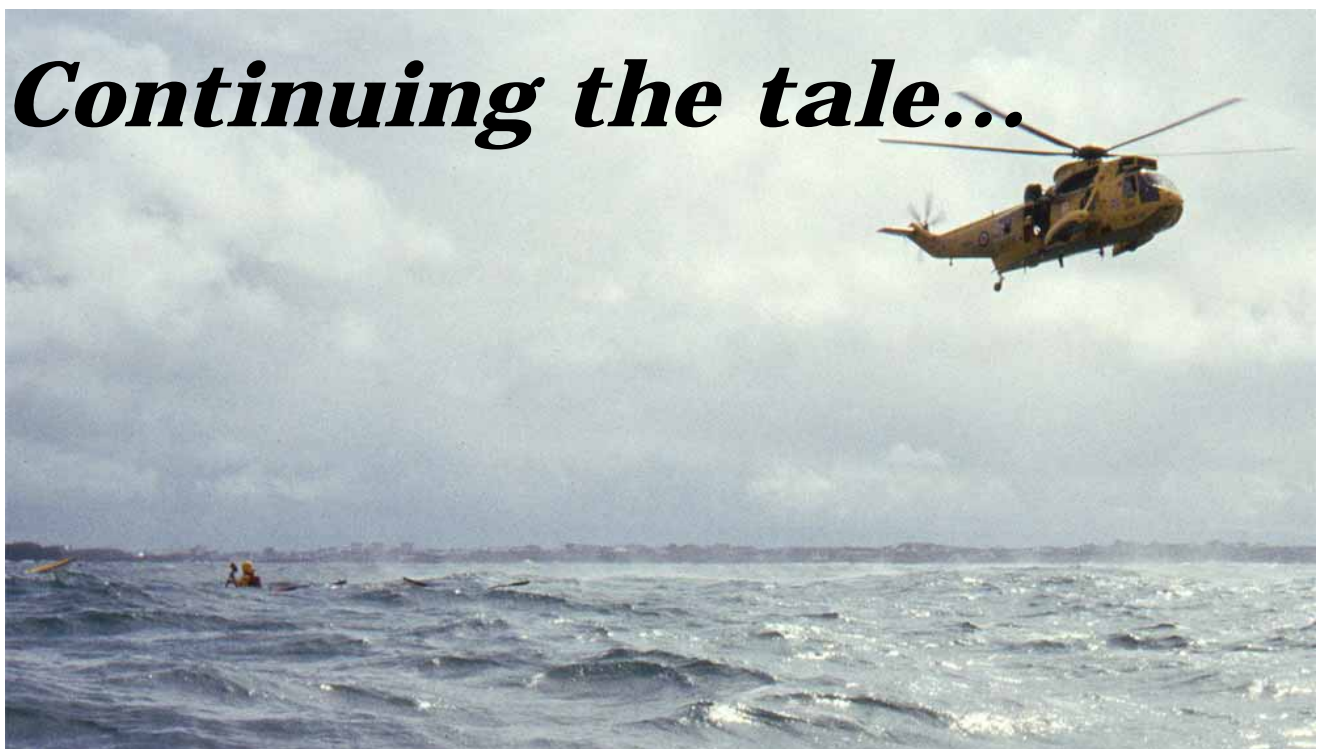
So when I eventually recognised it I headed towards it at the best speed I could muster and at this time I spotted a figure running along the sandbank in my direction. It soon became recognisable as Peter Roscoe who had come out from the shore as soon as the water allowed and he helped me ashore. We both waved at the helicopter winchman who was hanging out of the cockpit and the machine disappeared from view over the sandbank and away. Soon, three more figures appeared to help carry the boat and before long we arrived back at the shore.

The things that must be acknowledged are interesting and serve to act as a lesson for future trips.

The equipment I should have had with me was a compass and a map. Just imagine the situation if rain or mist had come and I think back to my earlier remark about clutter on the deck! Our unseated companion questioned us on two or three occasions about the wisdom of his accompanying us. We did think that he would be ok and benefit by the experience

although with the wisdom of hindsight it is easy to question this decision. Participants in future trips ideally must demonstrate a suitable level of proficiency for the conditions that 'might' occur although the downside of this is how does one develop to gain the skill in the first place. Arriving back at the cars I walked into a welcoming assembly of two policemen and a coastguard.

Bob Smith



At the time Bob lost sight of the group, as he was turned away from us by the current, I became aware that the group was rapidly being split up. As Bob and Peter moved away with the ebbing tide, the water pushed at the back of Brian's legs as he stood firm in the water trying not to be moved and I had to paddle hard to get back to him.

I realised that I would not be able to stay with him for long, as we had entered an area of stronger current flowing away from the shore and I made a foolish suggestion to Brian. I was concerned that he would be left stood on his own, but, if I could empty his boat and get him back in, we would at least drift as a group, which I thought would be safer. As

soon as I got hold of the end loop and tried to lift his boat, mine swung around in the current and I had the sinking feeling, like a novice holding onto a tree branch over a river.

After a failed roll in the fast moving shallow water I was soon struggling to hold on to all my kit as my feet dragged across the sand, until I could dig my heels in and steady myself. I then eventually rejoined Brian and we slowly walked out of the faster flow, to shallower, slower water flowing over a sand bar, but this took us away from the shore. Our only plan now was to wait until the power of the tide dropped enough to allow us to cross back towards the shore, a helpless situation to be in.

Peter, in the meantime recognising where the fast channel was, had moved out of it to slower water and made his way back up to join us. Bob was not so fortunate and as we watched him struggle with the wind and tide, he never got any nearer to us, or to the shore. We eventually crossed back towards the shore when the tide allowed, the helicopter landing just as we were starting our long walk back across the sand banks to the cars.

Steve Swarbrick had made the difficult choice to call the rescue services from shore, after observing Bob (despite his best efforts) slowly disappearing into the distance. As Bob has said, we will learn valuable lessons from this experience. I for one will have more respect for the wind and if future trips have to be cancelled because of adverse weather, so be it.

A more rigorous assessment of an unfamiliar paddler's ability before committing them to open water trips is essential as we only found out on the water that Brian was unable to paddle "across the wind".

Extra kit could have helped. If more paddlers had carried tow lines we might have made better headway against the wind.

Estuary trips on an outgoing tide obviously have the potential for great danger. If, over the last mile or so before the finish, I had kept the group together and travelled close to the bank where we intended to get-out, our problems would not have arisen.

Steve Wilkinson

[I would like to thank Bob and Steve most sincerely for this article, which explains graphically just how easy it is for a trip to go wrong for even the most experienced paddlers.

The photographs are taken from the internet, and not actually from the trip – if Bob and Steve had been able to take photographs while all this was going on they would truly be superheroes! – but I'm sure that they won't mind me using them to illustrate the situation. MSJ

Canoe Club Container - Hand and Dagger

The club container is looking a bit worst for wear at the moment so needs some loving care and attention. That translates to:

- Removing the rust and any loose paint.
- Giving it a coat of grey primer and then a green gloss finish on the back and sides.
- Bitumen paint on the roof.
- Tidy the inside and repair any damage to the floor or racks.

Easy when you say it fast, so if you can help with any or all then we can do a working

party on Wednesday nights in July (starting first Wednesday).

Also if you have access to, or can suggest cheap supply of the following: generator, grinder, de-scaler (kind of powered wire brush), welder, wire brushes, paint brushes, paint rollers and trays, suitable paint, steps, brush cleaner, strimmer. Any thing else that you think will make the job easier to do and last a long time.

To volunteer, advise or supply stuff contact (preferably by email):

Tony Morgan

Coniston

29th February 2004

Arranged on the fly on the night of the AGM this trip turned out to be pretty well attended, the weather just got better as the day went on and the arms got weaker.



Meeting at Brown Howe at various versions of 10.30 we eventually headed south paddling to the mouth of the Crake and down to the first 'pool', which I later found out is called Allan Tarn. Not sure why we did this but most people agreed it was a great place to have a caravan after seeing three on the hill looking downstream.

Back North towards Peel Island for the lunch stop using a variety of routes and speeds, only to find a fleet of sailing canoes were blocking the harbour. So we dropped back down to a small beach on the east shore sat round eating lunch, admiring Janet's comfy chair and watching Allan adjust Joanne's thigh braces to try and solve a pins and needles issue. Steve rather proudly produced the world's smallest bottle of whisky, which considering his previous reputation just made me think how the mighty have fallen. In the past he used to spill more than that just finding his mouth. Back in the boats we headed North up the east shore, Steve and Bev set off home from here, the rest crossed to the west at Coniston Sailing Club and another short break a bit further up at the Ferry jetty. Dave carried on to Peel Cottage and reported the gondola

was moored there but didn't report seeing Harry and Jean (it's their second home you know). Toilets and ice cream in no particular order split the group for a while, the rest of us hanging around on the beach, playing with a windometer gadget. The light northerly breeze previously measured, with said gadget, at 15 mph, in the middle of the lake had now dropped to 4.7mph. This was raised to 4.8mph when Brian giggled and laughing raised it a further 0.1mph, honest, ask Chris. With toys like these you can see why Tom's flat earth paddlers have such a good time and can even measure it to point one of a mph.

The return to Brown Howe, and the rest of the day felt more like September than February and your egress time depended on your energy levels, which were getting a bit low for some.

Special mention must go to Jo for paddling her Pyranha Creek the whole way (a distance variously estimated between 10 and 13 miles) and dad Allan for having the tools and excuses to help her. Ian for paddling a little creek boat at sea kayak speed. Rick for convincing his family and friends that him paddling and them walking and watching was actually a 'family' day out. Dave for not letting his case of 'dysentery' get out of control, via his wet suit legs. Nicola for adding a few more miles, and a red face, to her 'training schedule'. Janet and Chris for cheating on the flat earthers, don't tell Tom, it could be padultery, is that 0.1mph on the gauge? Steve and Bev for just being Steve and Bev. Finally Brian for all the pictures he took that we have yet to see.

A couple of pints in the pub on the way home just finished the day.

Tony Morgan

Swimming for Beginners

Three months with Ribble CC – Part 2

5 – Better with a Book

My river swimming experiences made me wonder about the wisdom of white-water kayaking. Perhaps, I thought, I would be better in a comfy chair with a good book!

I had got a good book back in October and had started at the beginning. Now where was I up to? Oh yes. Page 58 “Holding the Paddle”....

That Friday at the open pool session I tried Forwards, Backwards, Stopping, Sweeps and the Draw stroke. Plenty to learn in one hour.

6 – Indoor Inspiration

I had not intended going to the pool on Friday 16th January. Slalom training seemed like something for experts. But someone had told me the week before that it would be ok to join in, so there I was.

I knew that turning tightly was something that could unbalance me, but the pool was a good place to capsizes and I knew it would do me good to push my technique. By now I had read about the stern rudder, bow rudder, low brace and high brace. The bow rudder looked like certain soaking for me, but I was by now quite happy using a low brace to turn the boat.

The evening was excellent. With only 8 in the pool we had lots of space. I could really get some speed up and then try to turn sharply round the poles. In the race at the end I took more than twice the time of the winner (instructor), but I had gone the right way through all the gates and stayed upright!

7 – Latex and Neoprene

The slalom training had convinced me that I had a chance of enjoying this sport, so, after a

walk on Warton Crag I popped in to UK Canoes in Lancaster to buy a waterproof top.

Price had narrowed my choice to four jackets, and availability in my size brought it down to just two. Did I prefer Latex or Neoprene? This was a question I had not considered before! Never in my wildest dreams had I been asked that!

I tried on the Palm Viper, with Latex cuffs and a Latex neck seal. It was hard to get my hands through and even harder to get it over my head. Why does latex try to constrict the flow of blood through every vessel it touches? I realised this was not the jacket for me, but when I tried to remove it I got stuck. I asked for help and the man in the shop spent 3 or 4 minutes getting me out. He told me that stretching the seals with a football and two tennis balls was a good trick, but I had already decided I hated latex!

The Yak Kurta jacket was much friendlier. The latex cuffs had covers and the neck seal was made of neoprene. It was comfortable to wear and, most importantly, I could take it off on my own with no assistance!

8 – Fun at Fulwood

On 23rd January I turned up at Fulwood for the first pool session of my beginners' course. We began in the crèche with Terry pointing out various bits of a boat and asking us what we thought they were for. I knew exactly how to use the grab handles, and told him that my paddling ambition was surviving a river trip without having to use one!

On the water we learnt a lot of useful techniques, including lifting a flooded boat out of deep water. Maybe I should have started with a session like this?

9 – Happiness at Halton

My third trip to Halton (25th January) was much better than the others.

As I was packing boats away in the cellar at Fulwood I spotted the boat that I had used on my first river trip. On Saturday night I went back to Fulwood with my roof rack and collected it. At the Hand and Dagger I found a neoprene spray deck that fitted both the boat and me. I arrived at Halton better equipped than I had ever been before.

I knew that I could control a boat in a swimming pool (not true before any other trip!). If I capsized the spray deck would stay on and my new waterproof would keep me dry until I could get back up again. If it all went wrong I had a boat that I could get out of without grazing my legs. I was happy and confident!

We ferried between eddies and worked our way up to the rocks. We then battled against a side stream to get between rocks and up to a nice standing wave. We played here a little and then pushed up the side stream on the right to get up as far as the weir.

I had never been this far up the Lune and it was interesting to watch the more experienced paddlers playing in the rough water. Most of them looked in control, but two of them were having fun in the fastest bit of the stream near

what looked like a big whirlpool. They were skilled enough to work their way up into the flow, and then turn back to join the others. These two paddlers, in their sleek slalom kayaks, then moved to the left hand side of the river and paddled up the weir!

By this time Terry had a plan for us in the slow group. We moved off across the river, below the rough water, to go into the main stream, and then break out below the rocks in an anticlockwise loop. As usual I left a gap between me and the paddler in front, and when he capsized, I waited to give Terry (now out of sight) some time to rescue him. After a minute or two I decided to loop round the near rock, so I headed left and paddled down through the small wave we had played on earlier. I then pushed back upstream on the left to get back to the weir. A few of our group had done this shorter loop, and while we waited for Terry I went round twice more.

The big loop was even more fun, and I continued to play within sight of the experienced paddlers until I got hungry. I tried a few break in and out manoeuvres on a manageable bit of stream and then headed back. When I got to the strange piece of sculpture, I knew I was back in calmer water. I had achieved my ambition; a river trip without a capsized!!

Peter Thomas

Ullswater Camp

20th – 22nd 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

Summer Course 2004



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.

The course is suitable for people aged over 10 through to adults and will cater for beginner, improver and intermediate paddlers.

The course will take place on the River Ribble at Alston (near Longridge) on Wednesday and Thursday evenings in June/July (June 9th/10th, 16th/17th, 23rd/24th, 30th/July 1st) with pool sessions on Friday evenings June 4th, 11th and 18th at Fulwood Leisure Centre. Assessment for 1, 2, and 3 star awards will take place on the last day of the course.

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. The only additional cost will be a fee payable directly to the BCU for the certificate and badge if you successfully pass a star award test.

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

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

Brian Woodhouse

An Educational trip



Paddlers: Tom, Rob, Chris, Janet, Alan, Lesley, Joanne, Stephanie, Clive, Janet, Iain, Albert, Cath, Steve, Bev, Nick, Jane, Ian, Ged, Shelley, Brendan Martin and Ann-Marie.

As the first of the crowd started arriving at Keswick Information Centre to purchase passes for a day's paddling on Bassenthwaite the good folk in that office declared that, if we were an educational group then, rather than paying £3.50 each we could get a permit for the grand total of £5 which would cover a day out for all of us. So, on the basis that we all learn something new every day and most of us are prepared to listen to advice, we called Tom "Sir" and let him pay!

We were also very helpfully told that the best place to launch boats is at Peel Wyke where there is a public slipway. (For those who weren't with us and would like to go on their own some time, follow the A66 along the side of the lake and take a left turn near the end of the dual carriageway, signposted Pheasant

Inn. The car park is through a gate on the right. But remember to buy a permit first).

Once on the water we thought a good plan might be to paddle the top end of the lake before the yacht club began racing in the afternoon. Unfortunately it soon became very clear that it was really quite windy. Also, we had a fair few beginners with us today and they were finding it a struggle to cope with the conditions. Initial confusion meant that half the group had crossed the lake before realising that the other half were still near the get in.

Having reached the other side of the lake we were then faced with the choice of paddling the length of the lake whilst being battered and buffeted broadside or re-crossing to join up again as one big educational group. We, sensibly I feel, chose the latter option. The other group meanwhile had made their way up the lake as far as the yacht club and were then going to turn round and paddle down the western side of the lake towards the picnic site. They assumed we were going to continue down the eastern side and cross over later but

then they spotted us coming back towards them. We all met up once more by our original get in and after some swapping around of boats we set off southwards in the lee of the wind.

We became a bit strung out as we paddled along. A measure of how straggly the group had become is that some of those near the back reported having been caught in a rain shower whereas those at the front remained dry. To have different weather conditions at either end of a party of canoeists is perhaps a little unusual. However, we all arrived at Beck Wythop at more or less the same time where there was plenty of room for us all to get out for a spot of lunch - our enjoyment of which was marred slightly by Tom telling us to watch out for ticks!



Although it didn't feel too windy on the left hand side of the lake, we suspected it still might be quite blowy if we crossed over so we made the decision to retrace our steps, as it were. Rob and Nick, however, struck out on their own, went south to the next headland then crossed the lake and paddled northwards in the wind. They were jolly fast too, we were quite impressed, it's nice to see people working hard especially as the going was fairly easy on our side.



We got back to Peel Wyke in reasonable time and then, with the exception of Tom and Jane, we paddled around the top end of the lake which is very pretty and comes highly recommended. Roughly half way round we met up with Nick and Rob (who had started leaking). We paddled a little way down the eastern shore of the lake but the wind was still fairly strong although it had dropped slightly from the morning.

Our return trip back to the get in would have us paddling directly into the wind – great fun and just the way we like it. However, some of the party felt too weary to face the paddle. There were enough of us, however, to split into two groups and whilst the more adventurous/foolish (delete where applicable) of us took a route directly through a yacht race the smaller group paddled back the safer way. Those who did make the trip across found it an exciting end to the day's paddling, the rest find excitement isn't all its cracked up to be.

Afterwards we all felt in need of some rehydration therapy and predictably found the Pheasant Inn closed – shut pubs are a special feature of flat-water trips. However, Steve stated with absolute confidence that he knew of a pub in Braithwaite which was certain to be open. He was quite right too.

Janet Porter

West Tanfield Camp

9th – 11th 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 the River Ure.

Camp fees are £12 per pitch (including 2 people), additional adults £2, children £1 per person.

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 on the Sunday 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, 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.

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

Brian Woodhouse

Rhosneigr Surf Camp

30th July – 1st August

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. 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 30th July – 1st August. 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

Marple 3/4 Double



Saturday

After a loading my canoe and gear into the car, it was still early as we headed off to Marple. We managed to find the site in good time without getting lost, for a change! As some of you know the track leading to the super new clubhouse isn't exactly smooth, and Dad was worrying about the chassis of the car.

We were the first ones to arrive, probably as a result of not getting lost. However, more paddlers soon arrived. The river was extremely shallow, but the course wasn't too bad; care had to be taken not to get stuck on the bed of the river. After several practice runs I was confident of getting all the gates without too many penalties. I got off the water and went up to the clubhouse for a bacon butty.

My first run went ok, it was clear and it felt reasonably fast. I checked the results and I was first with a clear run and a time of 170 seconds.

I was pleased with this and went for something to eat. During the lunch break I went back onto the water for some slalom coaching from Karen, a Manchester Canoe Club coach, who I'd met the previous year.

When it came to my second run I got on the water feeling even more confident. The run was again clear and it felt quicker.

As I looked at the score sheets I was still first with a time of 167 seconds and clean. However my joy was short lived when I was informed that another paddler was intending to lodge a complaint, claiming I had hit a gate, and it had not been recorded. There was much talking and debating, and eventually I was awarded the event with a one second advantage over the paddler who had raised the

objection. My prize was a very nice metal trophy and more important 100 points.

Sunday

It rained heavily all night and by the time we arrived on Sunday, along with Terry's merry band of beginners (and Richard Draper who came along for a practice session), the water levels had risen dramatically (2 foot).

The course was much harder than it had been on Saturday. The second half was very fast flowing and the organisers had to place several rescue boats to catch those who overshot the last gate. Some of the division 4 paddlers looked terrified (not mention some div 3).

So Peter Thomas, Peter Bennett, Charles and his Dad Martin took to water for their first slalom event. We had lots of time to practice, and Terry on the water to give out words of wisdom and support. During the practice session there were several swimmers, but I'm much to kind to name them. (They have been reported!)

At last the first run began, with the judges going first – what happened Terry?- are you meant to be overtaken in a slalom event?! My run was a disaster: I hit four gates and was so slow Terry could have caught me! However I was much relieved when I checked the times to find I was lying first. It appeared everyone had found the conditions as difficult as me.

Then it was the turn of Terry's boys. First to go was Martin who chose to test the safety people at the top of the course. Next out was Peter B, who had a slow but clear run until he met gate 17, where he too tested the skill of the safety boaters at the bottom. Peter T followed, he stayed upright and completed the course, sadly collecting 10 penalty points. Finally Charles set off, he also stayed upright, but he gained even more penalties.

During lunchtime we got back on to practice, again Karen was there to offer advice to

anyone who needed it. At this point I discovered that the paddler who had given me so many problems the previous day, had again lodged an appeal against a fifty second penalty she had incurred. The appeal was this time upheld and she was suddenly ahead of me, by five seconds. Oh no, my Mum went into panic mode.



The final runs of the weekend started, and Terry made it down without being overtaken. It was my run next, and this time it was clean, and a lot faster, I knocked a total of 23 seconds of my time. Even the dog swimming across the river did not unnerve me.

Then it was Martin, who again decided to test the safety boats at the top of the course. Yes he had swum in exactly the same place as before (perhaps the dog was there again). Peter B again was having a clear run until he also swam at the same place as before. Peter T stayed upright and dry, only hitting two gates, a good performance. Finally it was Charles to go, he did very well, with some excellent ferry gliding, and he may have been a lot faster, if he had replaced his bung, and not taken on board so much water! (Was his Dad trying to sink him?)

My first place gained me a very smart glass trophy and enough points to get me promoted to div 2. (Despite my parent's efforts to keep me in div 3 as long as possible). Hopefully it was a fun event for Terry's boys, who will have a lot to remember their first slalom by.

Helen James

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

White Water Safety & Rescue

Franco Ferrero

Playboating

The Playboater's Handbook

Ken Whiting

Sea Kayaking

The Complete Book of Sea Kayaking

Derek C. Hutchinson

The best introduction to sea paddling, this man is a legend in his own bathtime. Enjoy the humour in the accompanying drawings. Rightfully puts our sport in the context of it's Inuit origins.

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

Brilliant, flippant stories of river trips around the globe. A good antidote to 1001 macho outdoor adventure books. Unmissable! Don't read it looking for reliable info...

On Celtic Tides

Chris Duff

A very well written account of paddling around Ireland, comparable with 'Dances with Waves'. Recommended for beardies.

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

Odyssey Among the Inuit

Jonathan Waterman

The Canoe Boys

Sir Alastair Dunnnett

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

LVM Lunch Video Magazine (DVD)

Liffey Descent (V)

Deliverance (V)

Extreme Sports Canoeing (V)

A Taste of White Water (V)

Wicked Water 2(V)

Donated by Jane Bentham

Ribble Newsletters (CD)

Chairman's Cat

Things don't tend to get too dull in Ribble Canoe Club. We had 34 people (and some were Members) in Scotland over the Easter week. Many thanks to Tom for organising the booking and to various people for sorting out the informal programme of multifarious events on a day to day basis. In particular thanks to Steve Swarbrick who shepherded the three Loch/Sea paddles (like herding cats, he says). And thanks to all the chalet mums (you know who you are!) who looked after the sick, lame and lazy as only mums can.

I thought Kate's suggestion of a barbecue night instead of the pub meal was ridiculous. Needless to say it was a resounding success on a beautiful sunny evening with the picnic tables out in front of the chalets and 34 hungry and thirsty people all contributing. So, I was wrong OK. I love the way the Easter trip demonstrates the benign face of anarchy – all Indians and no chiefs. Many white water trips were run especially in the wetter second half of the week. It was gratifying to see some of our younger paddlers gaining confidence on big water, notably Tom Kington and Helen James.

The April Beginners' Trip was to Marple Slalom near Stockport. Helen won her Division on both days (by a large margin on Sunday) and was promoted to Div 2 where she'll find her white water skills very useful. I did a bit of judging and was overtaken on my first judges' run, much to the amusement of a highly disloyal faction of the club (Helen).

On the same day, many miles further north in the Kent Estuary, excitement was at a peak as Wilkie reacquainted himself with his pals in the air-sea rescue services following a couple of swims by members on the trip, a rapid outgoing tide and strengthening wind. Epics like this are useful learning tools but let's not have another for a while. I believe there may be details of the above two trips elsewhere in this bulimic biopic.

Don't forget we meet on Wednesday evenings at the Hand & Dagger for paddling and/or pleasure. We're there from about 6.30 to 9.00 pm and we sometimes number over twenty (and the food gets better and better!).

Terry Maddock
chairman@ribblecanoeclub.co.uk

Editor's bit

Membership renewals

If you have paid your fees you should have a membership card in with this newsletter (or in the post in a few days if you receive email newsletters). If you haven't paid yet, there will be a final reminder with this newsletter. Please pay as quickly as possible since your membership has now expired and you will not receive any more newsletters.

Dates and deadlines

The next committee meeting will be on July 6th at 7:30 at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on July 20th. All submissions to me by Saturday July 17th at the latest please.

Martin Stockdale
secretary@ribblecanoeclub.co.uk

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
21 st May	Polo	Jacky Draper	Steve Wilkinson
28 th May	Open	N/A	Terry Maddock
4 th June	River Course	Brian Woodhouse	Sara Withall
11 th June	River Course	Brian Woodhouse	Andy Rushton
18 th June	River Course	Brian Woodhouse	Peter Benett

Prices: Beginners Course £20 (plus club membership)

Rolling Course £15 (plus club membership)

All other sessions (Open, polo, special) £3

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

For Sale/Wanted

Pyranha Acrobat 270 kayak & equipment

This plastic kayak is in good condition – some scratching to bottom

~ Includes ~

OLS Olympian buoyancy aid in very good condition.

Busta Kag & Spraydeck

Wildwater helmet

Paddle mitts

Paddle

£235

Mark O'Dell.

Perception Vista

2-seat expedition kayak

Anthony Ellis

Prijon T Canyon

Indestructible polythene Kayak in very good condition with air bag and full plate footrest.

Good for big rivers and/or big paddlers.

£110 ono

Fiord Sea Kayak

By P&H, with skeg, watertight bulkheads and hatches. V good condition.

Includes neoprene spraydeck

£400 ono

Childs Buoyancy Aid

Helly Hansen for 6-9 yr old VGC

£8.

Alan Clowes

And Finally

The BCU are reporting on a scam targeting paddlers offering boats for sale – if you receive an ‘odd’ offer for something you’re selling, involving a foreign buyer and a UK cheque, beware!

www.bcu.org.uk/news/newspaddlersbeware.html



Other	Junior Polo	Ladies Polo	Mens Polo	Advanced Slalom	Beginners Slalom	Canoe Surfing	Open Canoeing	Sea Trips	Advanced River Trips	Intermediate River Trips	Beginners River Trips	Lake Trips	Flat Water & Lake Trips	Social Events	Hand & Dagger Keyholder	Lifeguard	Instructor or Coach	Canoe Courses	Agreements	General Information Access	Committee	Area of Interest			
																						Contact	Telephone		
								✓							✓		✓					Andy Dowe			
Rolling Course																	✓	✓					Bob Smith		
										✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	Brian Woodhouse		
Website													✓										Chris & Janet Porter		
Library																					✓	✓	Clive Robinson		
																					✓	✓	Grahame Coles		
Christmas Party			✓											✓									Ian McCreerie		
	✓																				✓	✓	Jacky Draper		
													✓			✓				✓	Treasurer	✓	John Kington		
																					✓	✓	Maria Parkes		
																					✓	✓	Mark Loftus		
											✓				✓					✓	Secretary, Newsletter	✓	Martin Stockdale		
Paddles Up competition			✓	✓																			Mick Huddlestan		
							✓	✓		✓													Nick Pope & Sam Turner		
				✓	✓										✓					✓	✓	✓	Peter Jones		
									✓	✓													Simon Cole		
									✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	Quartermaster	Steve Swarbrick	
						✓		✓		✓						✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	Steve Wilkinson		
					✓						✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	Chairman	Terry Maddock	
Training Coordinator										✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	Calendar	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

Teesside 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

May

23 **Teesside White Water**
10.15-4.15 Teesside Barrage
John Kington

26 Washburn Evening Cruise

30 **Greta White Water**
R. Greta, Keswick, Cumbria
Grahame Coles

June

2 Washburn White Water
Children go Free 12.00-8.00pm
Norman Taylor

6 **Beginners' Trip**
Wyre Estuary
Knott End to Skippool & back
Terry Maddock

12/13 Washburn White Water
West Yorks CC Peter Dawson

13 **Eden White Water**
R. Eden, Lazonby, nr Penrith
Harry Hull Mo-Th

20 **Flat Water Tour**
Bridgewater Canal
Tom Byrne

20 **Teesside White Water**
09.15-03.15 Teesside Barrage
Tony Morgan

26-27 **Sea Trip / Camp**
Lleyn Peninsula
Andy Dowe

27 Washburn White Water
Leeds CC Justin Scott

July

4 **Beginners' Trip, R Rothay**
Waterhead, nr Ambleside, Lakes
Terry Maddock

6 *Committee Meeting*
Hand & Dagger

9-11 **West Tanfield Camp**
R.Ure, Slenningford Mill, Ripon
Brian Woodhouse

10-11 **Sea Trip / Camp**
West Wales Coast
Andy Dowe

11 **Flat Water Tour**
Thirlmere
Tom Byrne

18 **Tryweryn White Water**
Bala, N. Wales
Steve Swarbrick

25 **Greta White Water**
R. Greta, Keswick, Cumbria
Check website for contact

25 Washburn White Water
Sheffield CC H Pashley

28 Washburn Evening Cruise

30-1 **Rhosneigr Camp**
Tim Langridge

August

1 **Beginners' Trip Ribble Estuary**
Preston to Lytham
Terry Maddock

8 Washburn White Water
GreenStarCC E Mathews

20 **Flat Water Tour**
Selby Canal (N. Yorks)
Tom Byrne

15 **Tryweryn White Water**
Bala, N. Wales
Check website for contact

18 Washburn Evening Cruise
Norman Taylor

20-22 **Ullswater Camp**
Waterside, nr Pooley Bridge
Steve Wilkinson

29 Washburn White Water
L Wharfe CC K Reece

Slalom

All slalom details are taken from the calendar published at the beginning of the year: please see www.canoeslalom.co.uk for event details and to confirm dates.

May

22/23 Sowerby Bridge 3/4 X Double
Halifax Canoe Club

June

19/20 Stone 3/4 X Double
Stafford and Stone Canoe Club

July

3/4 Ironbridge 2/3 X Double
Telford Canoe Club

10/11 Washburn 1/2/X Double
Yorkshire Slalom Committee

17/18 Pan Celtic Cup, Welsh & English
Regions Championships
Chapel Falls Division 1/2
Canolfan Tryweryn (Chapel Falls)

August

21/22 Fairnilee 2/3/4/X Double
Selkirk CC

28/29 Grandtully 1/2 X Double
Forth Canoe Club