

TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK



MARCH/APRIL 2007



Seeing double on the Rothay

Paddlers (in no particular order): Terry, Daniel, Adrian, Robert, Nicky, Clive, Iain, Kath, Albert, Pat, Norman, Mark, Grant, Adam, Andy, Barry, Sharon, John, Andrew, Allan, Lesley, Steph, Frankie – apologies if I've forgotten anyone.

The Windermere Weatherline forecast was for heavy rain with storm force winds gusting up to 60 miles an hour. However, Ribble Canoe Club paddlers are a hardy bunch, and determined not to be put off by the likes of Michael Fish, 23 (I think) of us met at Waterhead car park for what must have been

one of Terry's largest beginners trips on the Rothay for quite some time.

Inspection of the hotel weir confirmed that the trip was on, and the complicated business of car shuttles began with boats, gear and paddlers being dumped over the wall near Grasmere at the get-in. Those that had been dumped then paddled across the lake with the driver's boats in tow, to collect those more sensible souls who had dropped the cars off at the National Trust Car Park and walked up to the lake.



For no reason other than it seemed like a good idea at the time – the time being the Hand & Dagger and a couple of J2Os - I had agreed to paddle the Topo Duo with Iain piloting from the back. The worrying part was that everyone who spotted the Topo on the car seemed to smirk knowingly when told of the plan. Did they know something I didn't, but was obviously soon to find out? It was too late now, and we took to our craft with a short practice on the lake before heading for the first weir at the start of the river.

Terry had split us into two smaller groups made up of experienced paddlers and beginners, but Iain and I were deemed to be one on our own (I've heard that said about Iain many times) and decided to paddle between groups 1 and 2.

The river level was low but if I'm honest I can't remember much about the stretch down to Rydal water other than Iain insisting on catching every eddy no matter how small and also any photo opportunity no matter how

small. He took great delight in photographing the 'No Swimming' sign just before Rydal Water with a suitable dig in Norman's direction as a reminder of the time he swam there several months ago when demonstrating his rolling prowess in front of a group of about 30 school children.



By this time the rain had set in and I can only describe the paddle across the lake to our lunch spot as being akin to being in a submarine. The sizeable waves, wind, and the short stubby nose of the Topo seemed to combine to ensure that I was continually submerged by spray, so much so that breathing was becoming a problem and a snorkel would have been appropriate. However, no harm done and we soon found a comfy log to sit on to eat our sandwiches and await the arrival of the final two groups.



Once on our way again the river got more interesting with sets of small rapids (and lots of eddies to keep Iain happy) and we seemed to be soon at Pelter Bridge rapids. Despite the rain the water level was still low and we got the Topo well and truly stuck on a rock so

that Iain had to hop out, pull us clear, hop in again and complete the rapid minus spray deck. None the less it was good fun, and we sat in the eddy watching the others come down whilst Grant performed moves which seemed to defy the laws of gravity. The next obstacle was the stepping stones which were well exposed and necessitated several of us getting out to carry round, whilst others hauled themselves through on edge. Not one to miss an opportunity, Iain stood in the middle of the river taking photos of everyone's efforts.



At the next small wave Iain had us dropping backwards out of the eddy and on to it and we managed a short surf before heading on down the river. A quick note on wildlife spotted which seemed to amount to several dippers, a grey wagtail and a glimpse of some of Lakeland's delicate wild daffodils. I think everything else would have been tucked up in some warm and cosy spot.



The grand finale of the hotel weir was soon upon us, and again, once we were safely down and in the eddy on river left Iain was off taking photos of everyone as they shot it and then played on the wave afterwards. I think he was feeling bereft at not being in his

Jackson and, once on board again and despite my protestations and best efforts at backward paddling, I found that we were gradually getting nearer and nearer to the top of the eddy. Suddenly, there we were out on the wave, back, and out again. One member of our group was heard to ask Albert 'Does your wife always scream so much?' The answer is a resounding 'Yes!' when Iain takes charge!

Heading back down to Lake Windermere we were aware that the weather had deteriorated even further, and the weathermen were absolutely right for once. The waves rolling up the entrance to the river from the lake were the largest I have ever paddled on, and we seemed to alternate between going over and crashing through them making a snorkel once again seem desirable. The paddle across the lake was 'interesting' but we all made it back safely. Unfortunately (or fortunately depending on how you look at it) in all the excitement Iain and I forgot to attempt to roll the Topo, so that will have to wait for another day.



Sorry Tom, no swims to be reported today, a fact of which we should all be proud as Terry normally expects between 1 and 3 swims on his Rothay trips.

Janet was waiting to run us back up to collect our cars, and due to the atrocious conditions she looked wetter than we did – so many thanks should go to her. Drinks, chips and hot chocolate at the hotel bar opposite the car park made a suitable end to what had been a grand day out.

Kath Risely

AGM 2006

21st February 2007

A good turnout again this year for the AGM. The meeting was quorate with over 50 members attending.

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 2006 (Martin Stockdale)

At the end of December 2006 we had 281 members. There were 6 General committee meetings in the year, one of which was not quorate.

A major change in the last year has been the move to an email newsletter, brought about by the loss of BAE Systems sponsorship. I am pleased to report that this move has been received very favourably by the club members; I am now emailing the newsletter to over 130 people, and our print run has dropped from well over 100 copies, each up to 30 pages long, to less than 30 copies, each typically only 6 pages long. This has saved the Club from a very large expense every month.

Finally, as you are no doubt aware I am standing down as Secretary this year. I'd just like to thank all the committee and all the club members for the support they have given me over the last four years.

Treasurer's report 2006 (John Kington)

Income from membership subscriptions has increased over the previous year, reflecting an increase in the subscription. The profit on courses has fallen, reflecting increased pool hire fees and a reduction in the numbers allowed in the pool. The summer course was

very successful and showed an increased profit despite our having to pay substantial launching fees at Leisure Lakes.

BCU affiliation fees have increased again. If you're an individual BCU member please let Brian Woodhouse know - it's cheaper for the club.

As last year we've spent substantial sums on new boats - 6 new river boats, a Sealion sea kayak, a Kiwi 2 seater and another £1000 tonight on junior boats from Chorley Adventure Youth Club - whose sad demise is our gain.

Overall, the accounts show a surplus of £1141. Not a spectacular financial performance, but a healthy position for a voluntary non-profit sports club of our size.

Competition Secretary's Report 2006 (Susan Shaw)

Slalom

Name	End of season position
Richard Draper	Div 1 Position 4th
Mick Huddleston	Div 1 Position 36th
Alex Jones	Prem Position 47th
Tim Meyrick	Prem Position 62nd
Nicky Marsh	Div 1 Position 33rd
Jacquelyn Shaw	Div 1 Position 5th SS
Jonathan Shaw	Div 1 (K1) 55th SS Div 1 (C1) 7th SS

Specific awards or results by the end of season:

Jacquelyn Shaw, Peak UK best Newcomer to Div 1 Ladies and Semi finals of International Class C race Llangollen.

Jonathan Shaw, World Class Olympic Junior Development Squad for C1 2006-2007

training, and J14 England Canoe Slalom for K1 in 2007.

Freestyle

5 junior members of RCC took part in the BCU youth freestyle series in 2006.

In the female under 18 category, Jo Hacking took the overall series win in her category and was awarded a shiny new boat from Pyranha for her efforts.

In the under 18 male category, Dominic Brayfield secured 2nd overall and received the prize of a Dagger kayak.

Joanne, Dominic and Ben went on to compete in the GB team 2007 selection event held at Nottingham, Joanne and Dominic won junior places on the GB team for the world championships. Ben was unlucky and missed out on a squad place by just one position.

Chairman's Report 2006 (Terry Maddock)

The Committee has recently been changed and considerably enlarged by co-opting new members to bring in a wider range of canoeing interests and to spread the work load. Let's not forget all the hard work done by those retiring from the Committee and those Officials standing down.

Many thanks to Chris Porter for his work over the past few years on our website and we hope that the hand over to Tom Kington will be relatively painless.

Access for canoeing is developing into a political issue and could improve radically over the next few years if it doesn't fall foul of lethargy, fishermen and landowners who can exert considerable political pressure. We need to keep up the pressure ourselves individually, as a Club and as members of the BCU. I would like to bring to your notice the important work being done on this Club's behalf by Allan Hacking and Pat Green and Norman Green with regard to access on the Ribble, at Halton and at Brockholes Quarry respectively. These approaches bode well and

alleviate our disappointment at losing Alston. But if Halton can return after all these years maybe Alston has a future in the future.

Our new Instructors are making themselves felt. I occasionally feel surplus to requirements - a sad feeling tempered by a warm stove and a toasting currant teacake as I sit at home in my slippers listening to the radio and thinking of where I could be, out in the cold putting boats away at Fulwood or paddling through the wind and rain on the canal. Carry on lads! And thanks to our Club Coaching Organiser, Clive Robinson, our updates are being maintained and new coaches encouraged. A Club Coaching Forum is being established to encourage communication between coaches and assistants within the Club and to help regulate standards in granting awards.

Several 4-star courses have been run successfully by Tony Morgan and he is approaching the A1 Endorsement to Level 3 Instructor which will allow him to assess, as well as coach, 4-star.

So what are we going to do over the coming year? Well, I think we'll more or less carry on as before. Why change a winning formula?

Election of Officers

Kath Risely was elected onto the committee as Treasurer.

Grant Dillon, Mark Dillon, Adam Fielder, Allan Hacking, Nicky Marsh, Tony Marsh and Iain Robinson were elected onto the committee.

Peter Jones, John Kington, Steve Swarbrick, Martin Stockdale and Brian Woodhouse were re-elected.

Any Other Business

It was questioned why the club consistently has a considerable balance in the bank, and what we were planning to do with this money.

The committee discussed this question in more detail at the subsequent committee meeting.

The club presently holds around £9000 in the bank. This amount has accrued over many years, and is lower at the end of 2006 than 2005. The club wishes to retain the capital in order to give us some security against the following situations:

- The container at the Hand & Dagger was purchased second hand and despite ongoing repairs and maintenance it still leaks and will probably need to be replaced in the foreseeable future.
- Many of the boats are not insurable. Whilst they may have low values on the 'Property Schedule' this is due to depreciation and they would still need to be replaced following theft or damage.
- The spraydecks, buoyancy aids, paddles and helmets are similarly uninsurable and are at greater risk of suffering damage, loss or theft. They are also subject to wear and tear and need to be replaced at regular intervals.
- The club is very reliant on the goodwill of the landlord at the Hand & Dagger. Our use of the land there is rent free and has been for many years. With seemingly increasingly rapid changes of landlord it is increasingly likely that the situation may change, and we may find ourselves in the position of having to pay commercial rent to keep the container there, find an alternative location, or rent alternative secure storage at the market rate.
- We benefit from free storage of boats and other kit at Fulwood Leisure Centre under arrangements that could be described at best as informal. As the Council looks for more things to charge for we cannot be certain of keeping this beneficial arrangement.

Our profit margin is relatively slim - around £1,000 p.a. Taking the above points into consideration the committee feels that it is prudent to carry this level of capital. To fully cover all of the above eventualities, we probably don't have enough!

Trophies

This concluded the official business. Trophies were presented by Andy Biggs:

Driftwood

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

Runners up: Adam Fielder, David Gordon, Grant Dillon, Joanne Hacking, Kath Risely.

Winner: Albert Risely

Competition

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

Runners up: Alex Jones, Dominic Brayfield, Jacqueline Shaw, Joanne Hacking, Richard Draper.

Winner: Jonathan Shaw

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.

Runners up: Grant Dillon, Iain Robinson

Winner: Joanne Hacking

Author of the Year

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

Runners up: Allan Hacking, Iain Robinson, Norman Green, Tony Marsh.

Winner: The Stig

Philip Singleton Trophy

The Philip Singleton Memorial trophy is awarded for significant contributions to the club

Nominee: Allan Hacking

Awarded to: Martin Stockdale

D'Ribbler Trophy

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

Runners up: Tony Morgan, Jacqueline Shaw, Martin Russell, Martin Atherton, Jonathon Shaw, Clive Robinson.

Winner: Mark Dillon

Martin Stockdale

A New Year's Resolution

Since my last rubbish was put to print in the January/February newsletter those ardent followers of crap paddling may remember the New Years Resolution I made, that being 'to attempt to roll before going for the deck release'.

The swim toll so far tells the story of this being harder to do - and be successful in the roll - than would first appear. It has been suggested that 'I just need more practice and things will start to slot together' and also that 'at least I'm trying to roll up now instead of bailing out'. Perhaps more accurately one of my midweek paddling buddies has said - and I think he may be right - that "I'm happier swimming than rolling".

Anyway, back to the resolution and how it's progressing. This year I have been very busy again with the mid week paddlers but have also managed a few weekend sessions, one of which was at Burrs where I was doing an assessment. Guess what, you're not going to believe this but, I rolled up. Yep, that's right, I actually rolled up in moving water without setting up first, when I caught an edge whilst side surfing. How awesome is that, only a few weeks into the year and there you go I've cracked it. Rolling up in fast water, easy, what have I been doing wrong all the past year.

On with the assessment and with the moving water roll out of the way nothing was going to stop me enjoying my day apart from my next two swims on the wave under the bridge, aahhhhhhh. I don't believe it. There I was doing my best 'high cross' and looking fantastic as usual when the edge caught and in I went, but I rolled up, then I plopped back over, rolled up and plopped back over again and swam. It's a crazy old game isn't it? So, undeterred but a little fed up I went to do another 'high cross', and went in again, damn, two more failed rolls and I was swimming again. You can only imagine how I felt if you are sat here nodding when you read this. Euphoria followed by the ultimate

disappointment, and all whilst on an assessment too.

As I said I have been busy paddling and on another midweek trip four of us - Tony Morgan, Pete Roscoe, Albert Risely and myself all had the good fortune to have a trip down the Kent on a beautiful sunny day with an ideal water level. What an amazing river that is, set in a glorious valley with some really testing drops. We got in at Kendal town centre and enjoyed some pre-trip surfing on several small weirs around the town before heading down to the trickier stuff.

As we approached each rapid we all got out of our boats to get a closer look at the rapids, an exercise which although is necessary and very helpful does put the fear of God into anyone as bad a paddler as me. On top of this when Tony then asks you to stand ready with throwlines whilst he shoots the rapid you know it is rapidly coming up to bath time for someone.

Tony made it look so easy, as did the rest of the group so it was down to me to show them how to traverse a fall whilst enjoying an out of boat experience. On occasions like this I get so nervous that I can hear my heart beating inside my head, but there was no going back and with a decent line and a huge quantity of skill I too got through okay.

So far so good, and onto the next fall where the same procedure was followed but this time with a really cool swim by me, drat. As on most other swims I think the back edge got caught and before I knew what was happening I was over and setting up for the roll in the middle of the fall and guess what, I rolled up, then went over again only to hit the edge of the drop too late for another roll attempt, so swam. Fairly pleased with my line and attempted roll we then passed the next drop with no mishaps but huge exhilaration as waves burst over us and the whole group

doing some neat manoeuvres on our way down.

The following drop produced a scene similar to the earlier one where I again took a swim after missing the roll, but the final drops produced some good clean passes by us all and no swims to end a superb day of very testing paddling and excellent company. So, there you have it, my assault on the D'Ribbler trophy 2007 continues in a fairly positive manner with a total of nine swims so far in 2007, the other swims coming at Halton, Leven and another at Burrs. Be warned all you paddlers, if you're going to win the D'Ribbler you're going to have to get cracking because I am now in full flow and look like I'm going to get a head start on you all.

Stop Press:- I've just heard about some competition: there's a guy from Clifton village taking soap with him because he's in the water so often. Keep an eye out for him, you'll recognise him by his pink Mohican haircut and several easily identified markings on the bottom of his boat. He's still learning but has already scored about 4 swims this year, and also there's a beginner who swam on the canal, man, wow, respect, he has got to be in with a shout for the D'Ribbler trophy if he's that tough and doesn't die of something horrible.

Finally, a message for the committee for next years AGM, how about a nice trophy for the person who has 'Made a significant contribution to rescue training and practice' I know someone who may be in line for it.

Will Dewitt-Soon

For Sale



HOLIDAY CHALET

Peaceful location close to Loch Awe
Sleeps 5. Fully furnished & equipped.
0.9 acre woodland plot. Freehold.
Own use or holiday let.
Mooring & fishing rights included.
Fabulous walking, canoeing, cycling,
birdwatching.
Convenient for west coast sea kayaking &
whitewater rivers.
£61,000
Telephone: (Albert or Kath) for more details.

Wanted

Starter boats, recreation/river
(G3, Super Sonic).
Also sit-on-top.
Paul Binks

Surplus gear for sale

1 Typhoon Ladies long Jane wetsuit
Size 14, zip up front, blue.

£15

1 Long John wetsuit

think size small adult, fit average 14-16yr old
dark blue, Velcro and stud shoulder fastening

£15

Yak buoyancy aid similar to Kallista
Model but with pocket on front.

Front zip style, size small/medium
Suit teenager or slim adult.

£20

Crewsaver neoprene gloves hardly worn
Size xs/s. as new

£7.50

Allan Hacking

West Tanfield Camp

6th – 8th 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 Sunday 8th July.

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

Brian Woodhouse

Rhosneigr Surf Camp

3rd – 5th 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 – stand up Michael Moul. A playboat with a planing hull is ideal, but the club's Rotobats work very well too.

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.

John Kington

I don't understand

It's probably because I'm a man, and specifically that I'm a dad, and more specifically the dad of a teenage daughter that I don't understand.

In my mind canoes and horses aren't all that different. Both started out with utility in mind as modes of transport – and very effective they were too in their own right. Both have progressed in the UK as mainly recreational pursuits now with both enjoyed at the occasional, “when I feel like it” level and the “every waking thought devoted to it” level, depending on your level of commitment.

Other similarities include the enjoyment of the outdoors either on your own or with like minded comrades and family members

(please bear this bit in mind). Both also have the potential (tendency!) for spending lots of money, getting hurt!, being cold, wet and dirty.

Why then am I persuaded to do all this so my teenage daughter can go horse riding but she won't be persuaded to come canoeing unless Greek island holidays and lots of sun are in the equation and then only as long as I do all the paddling!

Anyway, as I said, I'm a man and a dad and therefore I don't understand. Any suggestions welcome - ever hopeful!

Paul Binks

New for Wednesday nights

This year we are going to have extra coaching sessions at the Hand and Dagger on a Wednesday night.

The sessions are aimed at paddlers who have completed the beginners course and want to move on to the weekend trips, but feel they need a little more time on the water.

Any other paddlers who feel they need that little extra coaching/practice or paddlers new to the club will be most welcome to join us.

The sessions will be geared to meet the needs of YOU, so let us know what you want to do, if it's the Bow rudder or Hanging draw or just

paddling in a straight line that you want to sort out, we will do our best to help.

We will be paddling on the canal so we will be trying to avoid support strokes and other wet endings. The sessions will start on the 18th April, meeting in the Hand and Dagger car park at 7.00pm.

Any club coaches or helpers who wish to assist would be appreciated.

Anyone planning to come along or for further info please contact:

Allan Hacking

(When Allan is in Canada in April, please contact Martin Stockdale)

Weekday paddling

If you work shifts or are a ‘person of leisure’ and are free during the week, why not join our weekday paddlers? Tony Morgan coordinates

the trips, just ask him to add your name to the list and you'll be invited along.

River Mersey Canoe Trail



Stockport to Carrington

Paddlers: David Roughley, Ray Fowler.
Swimmers: David Roughley, Ray Fowler.

This is a newly opened stretch of River Mersey. Starting at Hollywood Way Bridge in the centre of Stockport (at the Pyramid) and finishing at Carrington playing fields, it passes through Heaton Mersey, Burnage rugby club, Chorlton Water Park and the Mersey Vale Nature Park. The 28-kilometre canoe trail offers diverse paddling conditions suiting the beginner to the experienced.

We had started to plan our trip on the Thursday evening after seeing the weather forecast for the weekend was rain, followed by more rain. So Stockport it was.

I phoned Carrington Parish Council to ask for the key to open the gates for the playing field at the end of the journey. We were planning a Sunday trip and in my naivety I thought that the playing fields would be full of kids playing Sunday Football matches. Wrong! This is the downfall of this trip, because at the

end of the trail a key is needed from Carrington Parish Council to open up the playing fields and I was advised that a week's notice is required. Bah! Not to be outdone, we had already sussed out a 'get out' approximately quarter of a mile from the end at Flixton Road Bridge. We met there on Sunday morning with two cars, complete with Hilti Drill and eye bolts. Why a tool kit you may ask? Well, we needed something to tie up to at the end of our paddle. The river is running at approx 3 knots at this point, so for ease of landing an eyebolt, as used by scaffolders, is ideal.

Leaving one car at Flixton Road we headed off to Stockport for the start at Ford Street. We unloaded the kit there and promptly headed under the bridge by the side of the river. Having been watched by a couple of 'hoodies' and leaving your car in the middle of a trading estate, I started to wonder will it be in one piece by the time we arrived back later in the day. (Thankfully it was - Tip No. 1

if doing this trip, leave your car across the road where it can be seen by passers by.)

We started off around 11.30am Sunday morning and according to a local, who was watching us, the river was 'flowing very well' and suggested we use the middle of the first weir and you will be fine. The Brinksway weir is literally 300 yards further down the river and steps for portage are signed. Tip No. 2 coming up. After setting off from under the bridge head straight for the portage steps. You have one chance at this since the flow is aggressive, otherwise use Tip No. 3, do not go down the right hand side of the weir since you will be greeted with a shopping trolley lying just under the water. After 30 seconds in my boat I went straight nose first into the trolley and went swimming down the Mersey. My paddle was ripped from my paddle leash (I know, I didn't pass the paddle through the loop – just relied on the Velcro. Why? I don't know. Never done it before and I'll never do it again. Must have been a senior moment.) I said goodbye to a trusted and loyal friend which together have shared many a peaceful mile and is now either in somebody else's care or floating down the Manchester Ship Canal. Goodbye dear Lendal Kenetik Tourer, it was a pleasure!!

Anyway, back to the story. I scrambled back to the bank and Ray, who had successfully managed the weir, phoned for rescue. Within minutes a car was sent and I was promptly driven to Decathlon Sports Shop in nearby Stockport.

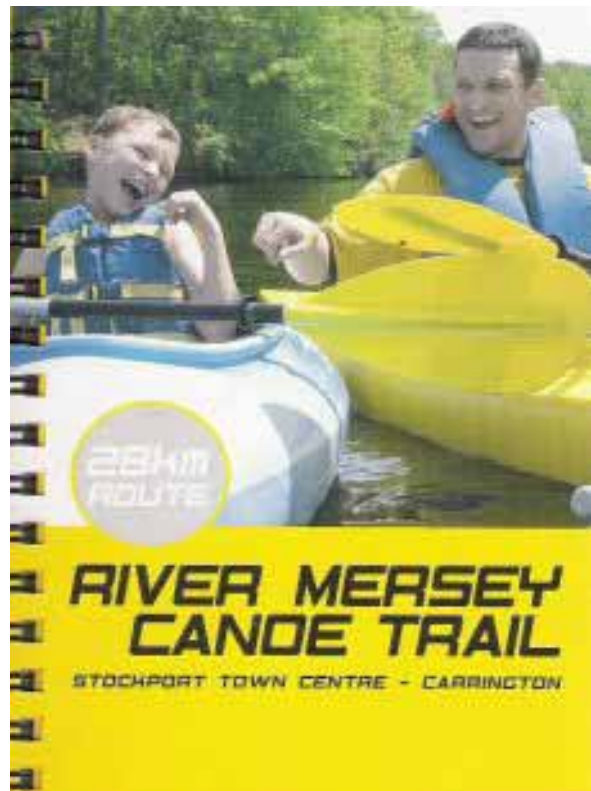
I needed to buy a cheap paddle to get me home and one I can keep for emergencies. Dripping wet in my kag top, wetsuit and boots, and leaving puddles everywhere I said, "I'd like to buy a paddle please". This was one of those moments where a TV advert was waiting to happen: 'PRICELESS... and for everything else there's Mastercard!' So £29 quid and 45 minutes later the trip continued.

In total there are 4 weirs to descend with each one being well signed and having portage facilities. However, I still think that whoever designed the steps was not a canoeist and in the overall scheme of things, a few pounds for half a dozen eye bolts and life would be a lot simpler.



Northenden Weir

Stockport Tourist information centre have published a free booklet for this trip which is well worth sending for, but don't let the little boy on the front of the booklet fool you. There are a number of white water sections with no portage points, which I think are not suitable for absolute beginners.



Finally Tip No. 4. Watch out for the odd sunken car and groups of youths that gather at certain points where the rapids are, ready for you to run down ‘bombing alley’. I don’t mean to paint a bad picture of the trip since it was a long day, but during the summer months, on a sunny afternoon, it really is worth the effort.



Ashton Weir

Nearing the end of our journey, I turned to Ray and called him ‘Dirk Bogart’.

“Why Dirk Bogart?” he asked.

“It’s a bridge too far” I said. But just as the light was fading, we spotted the steps leading up the bank to our car.

Carrington is the end of the line. Miss that and your next stop is the Manchester Ship Canal. From the river to the car park at Carrington is a fair old trek crossing a couple of fields.

My advice would be to cut short your journey and finish at Trafford Metrovick Rugby Club where access from the river to the car park is a matter of yards. Here is a good finishing point having toilets and a bar. The parking is secure and the staff at the club are very friendly.



Flixton Bridge

In conclusion, the trip would be better suited to using ‘playboats’ but we used Tsunami Tourers and to be fair they did us proud. Although at the portage points they proved to be on the heavy side since one particular access - Ashton Weir - was designed for somebody with a small rucksack carrying a handkerchief. Having to negotiate an obstacle course and carry your boats 150 yards when tired was the last thing we needed.

The trip took us 7 hours in total, but take off the time spent shopping for a replacement paddle, watching a fox stalking ducks, deciding whether the sunken car was a Fiesta or a Corsa (ended up to be a Fiat), allow between 4 and 5 hours for the trip.

Useful Tel Nos.

Stockport Tourist Centre (for booklet)
Tel: 0161-480-494

Carrington Parish Council
Tel: 0161-775-7813

David Roughley

P.S. After purchasing a new paddle (and writing on my postcode in indelible ink on the blades) Kevin at Brookbank informed me that a number of people have fallen foul to “The shopping trolley of Brinksway Weir.” Humm! sounds like a good title for my diary page.



Would you like to learn to canoe?

Ribble Canoe Club is running a beginners' course in May 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 three outdoor sessions, at the end of which students will be able to take (and hopefully pass) the BCU 1 star award! No previous experience is necessary.

The pool sessions will take place on Friday nights 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! (Flip-flops or water shoes and an old t-shirt would also be a good idea.)

The outdoor sessions will take place on Saturdays at one or more locations near Preston, details will be confirmed on the course. Again, the club will provide all the equipment, but 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.

The course dates are as follows:

Date	Location	Time
Apr 27 th	Pool	7:45pm – 10:15pm
May 4 th	Pool	8:45pm – 10:15pm
May 5 th	Outdoor	TBC
May 11 th	Pool	8:45pm – 10:15pm
May 12 th	Outdoor	TBC
May 19 th	Outdoor	TBC

The course will cost £30 per person, which includes the cost of the instruction and pool hire. In addition you will need to be a member of Ribble Canoe Club, maximum cost £16 per person.

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

Tom Byrne

Chairman's Chat

Well, that's the AGM over for another year. It was an interesting meeting due to various hiccoughs in the organisation by the Chairman - the clot forgot to bring Susan Shaw's Competition Report and, indeed, his own report. Can you believe that? However, an impromptu Competition Committee of Allan and Jo Hacking, Mags Brayfield and Mick Huddleston got together and saved the day. Our Secretary was able to recover my report from the bowels of his laptop and the same day was saved again.

Many thanks to our celebrity member Andy Biggs, co-author of "Welsh Sea Kayaking" and photographer, for handing out the awards. I hope everyone enjoyed the evening including the hot pot - and that reminds me, I owe our new Treasurer £2 as I'd forgotten my money as well!

Welcome to all the keen new members we've got coming into the Club. If you're one, we want you to feel part of what's going on. We often worry about how others, especially new members, see us and whether there are other things we can do to ease their passage into the

social and paddling side of the Club. Your Committee is always pleased to get feedback from you, especially if you're new to the Club. So please, new members, e-mail or ring me or anyone else on the Committee to pass on any comments you may have.

Following the question raised at the AGM by Roy Garriock, your Committee has already looked at some ways of reducing our cash surplus whilst maintaining a healthy balance sufficient to meet possible future requirements (a good trick if you can do it). Following a suggestion from Adam Fielder, we have decided to make token monetary awards to any members who gain a position in a national team. The costs involved in attending training sessions and events can be prohibitive. Any club member receiving such a token award would be provided with a hood or top bearing our logo, and when attending national team sessions and events, would be expected to wear it on pain of death!

Terry Maddock
chairman@ribblecanooclub.co.uk

Wot no Summer Courses?

For many years now, we have run Summer Courses catering for all skill levels from absolute beginners and covering the whole range of BCU skills from 1 star to 3 star. Recently these courses have become increasingly complicated to arrange and run, and so we thought that it was time to revamp them.

As mentioned a few months ago, the old 'Beginners' courses are now longer and take new paddlers all the way to a 1 star qualification. We have already run two of these courses, with a third due in May, and they have been a success so far. Now we're moving on to 'phase 2' of the changes...

The 'Summer Courses' won't take place this year. Instead, we will be running a 2 Star course in June. This will be shorter than the old course, and students will only be allowed on the course if they already have their 1 star award - so if you're thinking of doing this course this June and haven't got 1 star, you'd better get booked on the May 1 star course!

We will be running a 3 star course, but not until later in the year - we'll publish dates shortly.

If you've got any questions about the courses, please feel free to contact Terry or me.

Martin Stockdale

2 Star Course



**Book Early to
Avoid
Disappointment**

Call Terry

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

The course is suitable for people aged over 10 through to adults: the only prerequisite is that you must already have the BCU 1 star qualification (or be able to demonstrate this skill level), and be able to swim of course. If you haven't already achieved a 1 star award, take a look at our 1 star 'Beginners' course in May.

The course will take place on Wednesday evenings at the Hand & Dagger, and on Thursday evenings on the River Ribble. In addition there will be two pool sessions on Fridays at Fulwood Leisure Centre to practice capsize skills, and a day trip on a Saturday, probably in the Lake District.

The course cost including instruction and test fees will be £32 for children and £39 for adults.

If you are not currently a member of Ribble Canoe Club you will need to join at a maximum cost of £8 for children and £16 for adults.

Club equipment will be available for loan on a first come first served basis. You will need to make arrangements to move boats to and

from the course locations and store them securely between the sessions.

Provisional Program

Day	Date	Location
Wednesday	6 th June	Hand & Dagger
Thursday	7 th June	Ribble
Friday	8 th June	Fulwood LC
Wednesday	13 th June	Hand & Dagger
Thursday	14 th June	Ribble
Friday	15 th June	Fulwood LC
Saturday	16 th June	TBC
Wednesday	20 th June	Hand & Dagger
Thursday	21 st June	Ribble (Assessment)

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? Don't be! Call me and we'll come up with a cunning plan.

Please Note: ALL candidates will be required to show 1 star certificate before their place on the course will be confirmed.

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

Terry Maddock
chairman@ribblecanoeclub.co.uk

Ribble CC Library

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

Technique:

BCU Handbook
 The Practical Guide to Kayaking
 Canoeing & Kayaking
 William Nealy's "Kayak"
 Bombproof Roll and Beyond!
 Eskimo Rolling for Survival
 White Water Safety & Rescue
 Weir Wisdom Rapids
 Canoe & Kayak Games
 The Playboater's Handbook
 Complete Book of Sea Kayaking
 Sea Kayak Navigation
 Path of the Paddle
 Canoeing
 Open Canoe Technique
 Anglesey Sea Paddling
 Rowing it Alone
 The Handbook of Survival at Sea
 BCU Coaching Handbook
 Sea Safety: The Complete Guide

Guidebooks:

English White Water
 Scottish White Water
 White Water Lake District
 An Atlas of the English Lakes
 Canal Companion: Cheshire Ring
 Welsh Sea Kayaking
*by Jim Krawiecki and Andy Biggs
 (Donated by the author, Andy Biggs)*


General:

The Rough Guide to Weather
Robert Henson
 The Liquid Locomotive
John Long (ed)
 Many Rivers to Run
Dave Manby
 Norwegian rivers
 Canoe Focus
 Working out of Doors with Young People
*Alan Smith
 (Donated by Jane Bentham)*

Expeditions:

Travels with a Kayak
Whit Descher
 On Celtic Tides
Chris Duff
 Blazing Paddles
Brian Wilson
 Dancing with Waves
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
 Barbed Wire & Babushkas
Paul Grogan

Videos:

Liffey Descent
 Deliverance (18)
 Extreme Sports Canoeing
 A Taste of White Water
 Wicked Water 2
 Drill Time
 Destination Nowhere
Westgarth.TV
 Path of the Paddle: Doubles
 Whitewater
by Bill Mason

DVDs:

Tony Morgan in the Grand Canyon
 LVM Lunch Video Magazine
 Ribble Newsletters (CD)
 Doubleyouess
 Without a Paddle (13)
 Whitewater Kayaking
 The Cockleshell Heroes (U)
 Mags Brayfield in Nepal
 EJ's Advanced Playboating
 The Chaos Theory
 Jackson Kayak Promo
 It's Different Every Time
Norman Green
 EJ's Playboating Basics
Eric Jackson and Chris Emerick
 Wavesport: Sessions
 Fort William 2005/06 Trip
Tom Kington
 The 7 Rivers Expedition
*A John Grace Film
 (Donated by Iain Robinson)*
 Locks and Quays
Featuring Ribble Canoe Club

Pool sessions

Note: Pool session times have changed! To avoid problems and potential accidents during the overlap between the Swimming club session and ours, we are not allowed into the pool area until 21:05. We then have until 21.15 to get boats in and get on the water. Our session then runs until 22.15.

The following lists the pool sessions booked at Fulwood Leisure Centre, the contact for the courses and the Supervisor and Committee member on duty.

Date	Session	Contact	Supervisor	Committee
Mar 23rd	Open	N/A	Mark Loftus	Brian Woodhouse
Mar 30th	Open	N/A	Mark Green	Allan Hacking
Apr 6th	No session (Easter)			
Apr 13th	No session (Easter)			
Apr 20th	Open	N/A	Clive Robinson	John Kington
Apr 27th	Beginners/1 star	Tom Byrne	John Kington	Peter Jones
May 4th	Beginners/1 star	Tom Byrne	Grahame Coles	Mark Dillon
May 11th	Beginners/1 star	Tom Byrne	Allan Hacking	Tony Marsh
May 18th	Open	N/A	Mark Green	Terry Maddock
May 25th	Touring Safety Session	Allan Hacking	Mark Loftus	Nicky Marsh
June 1st	Open	N/A	John Kington	Kath Risely
June 8th	2 star course	Terry Maddock	Grahame Coles	Adam Fielder
June 15th	2 star course	Terry Maddock	Mark Green	Martin Stockdale
June 22nd	Open	N/A	Mark Loftus	Brian Woodhouse
June 29th	Polo	Nicky Marsh	Allan Hacking	Iain Robinson

Prices:

Beginners Course £30, 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

Website – and forum!

Tom Kington has taken over running the website now, and not only does it have a shiny new look, but the forum is back!

Please take time to look there, post there and discuss things there. A forum is a great way for the club to communicate, but it only works if everybody makes an effort to use it.

Also please support Tom by providing him with photographs and information to publish on the site.

Dates and deadlines

The next committee meeting will be on May 1st at 7:00pm at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on May 15th. All submissions to me by Saturday May 12th at the latest please.

Martin Stockdale
secretary@ribblecanooclub.co.uk

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 development trips are in **bold**.
Ribble CC recreational events (assumed risk) are in **bold italic**.
Other Ribble CC events are in *italic*.
Events in normal type are external events listed for information only.

River information:

Burrs 0161 764 9649

www.burrs.org.uk

Canolfan Tryweryn 01678 520826

www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk

Tees Barrage 01642 678000

www.4seasons.co.uk

Washburn/Wharfe 0845 833 8654

<http://www.yorcie.org.uk/>

Trips / Events

March

25 White Water
R Leven
Newby Bridge to Backbarrow

25 *White Water*
Upper Lune
Sedbergh
Andy Rushton

April

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

4 Evening Cruise
R Washburn

7-14 *Easter Scottish Activity Week*
Roy Bridge, nr Spean Bridge
Tom Byrne

8 White Water Cruise
R Washburn

18 **Wednesday Trip**
Arnside Bore
HT 10.3m @ 12.48pm

22 **Flat Water Trip**
Macclesfield Canal
Tom Byrne

22 White Water Cruise + Rafts
R Washburn

25 Evening Cruise
R Washburn

29 *White Water or Lake*
R Greta or Lake
Threlkeld Bridge to Keswick
Steve Swarbrick

May

2 Evening Cruise
R Washburn

6 **Beginners' Trip**
R Ribble (subj access)
Clitheroe to Ribchester
Terry Maddock

6 White Water Cruise
R Washburn

12/13 *Sea Paddle weekend*
Anglesey
for experienced sea paddlers
Andy Dowe

19 Peak Challenge
R Washburn

20 **Flat Water Trip**
Ennerdale
N W Cumbria
Tom Byrne

20 *White Water*
R Greta (Keswick)
Threlkeld Bridge to Keswick
Andy Rushton

23 Evening Cruise
R Washburn

30 Children's Evening Cruise
R Washburn

June

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

9 Boat Demo
Talkin Tarn
Scenic spot near Carlisle
Carlisle Canoes 10.00 - 16.00

9 White Water Cruise
R Washburn

9/10 *Sea Paddle weekend*
Llyn Peninsula
for experienced sea paddlers
Andy Dowe

17 **Flat Water Trip**
Wastwater
Cumbria
Tom Byrne

20 Evening Cruise
R Washburn

24 White Water Cruise
R Washburn

30/1 Teeside White water camp
Mark Dillon

July

6-8 Family Camp
R. Ure, W. Yorkshire
Sleningford Mill, West Tanfield

21 Triathlon – Kayak, Run, Bike
Short & Easy (says Tony M)
www.madyaker.co.uk

August

3-5 Surf Camp
Rhosneigr, Anglesey

NOTE: Trips may be changed or cancelled at short notice. Always get in touch with the trip organiser the day before to check!
If you don't, and you have a wasted trip, don't blame us.