

# TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK



Sponsored By

BAE SYSTEMS

**JULY/AUGUST 2004**

## *Roy Bridge*

## *Easter 2004*

It was with a degree of trepidation that I approached this trip. It wasn't my first paddling trip to Scotland, nor Tom's, but I'd just abandoned the comfort blanket of my Microbat in favour of a relatively untried Perception Madness and Tom was hell-bent on getting me to ride the Fort William World Cup Downhill course (aka throwing oneself down a mountain side on a bike). The week unfolded something like this.

### **Easter Sunday**

Drove up, unlike most who travelled on Saturday. Some paddled the Findhorn from Randolph's Leap – sounded good from the reports. Obligatory re-hydrating and carbo-loading in the Strangledbasset (Stronlossit Hotel to the literally minded) in the evening.

### **Easter Monday**

Arisaig. Due to the lack of rain, plus favourable tides, the annual seal-spotting pilgrimage to Arisaig took place today. There are some places that you never seem to tire of no matter how many times you visit them – Arisaig is one. White sand beaches, perfect clear water, lots of rocky islands, spectacular views across to Rum, Eigg & the Cuillin on Skye for starters. Add in sheltered water, the scope for venturing into more exposed water outside the islands – and the seals – make it a perfect introduction to sea paddling – or a relaxing alternative to rivers for those wedded to short plastic boats.

I will not attempt to list those who took part – a multitude at least. Special mention must go to Steve Swarbrick for making it happen, Bev

BAE SYSTEMS

for producing a birthday cake for Martin Russell at the lunch stop, Tom & Helen for demonstrating how to roll the Topo Duo despite the cold water and Terry for taking his ritual swim in that oh-so-cold water. With sunshine to finish the paddle then hot chocolate in a hostelry afterwards – a fine day out.

## Tuesday

Spean Gorge. Visited last year in very low water this was entertaining in its way. Rather more water this year – but still not high – made for a thoroughly entertaining trip. Those present – Martin Russell, John & Tom Kington, Helen James, Barry Aldridge, Clive & Matt, and Adam Croft. Dr Tony Davis was also on the river with a group from Glen More Lodge – met him while portaging the fall known as Headbanger.

Memorable points. I discovered that the new boat performs sweet pop-outs without reducing me to a jelly. Neither Tom nor Barry could persuade it to stern-squirt – so it's not just me. Fairy Steps contained one particularly meaty stopper and a swirling eddy that might have been better avoided – the break-out was a doddle, the subsequent break-in took three attempts. Headbanger – for those who ran it – Clive, Matt, Tom & Barry – the latter two having to roll up after being looped and capsizing respectively.

## Wednesday Morning

Tom's urge to throw himself – and me too – down the steep slopes of the Downhill course on bikes had to be satisfied today. My attempts to worm out of this trauma were thwarted by Barry having brought along a substitute for the absent Mikey – in the form of Paul, an old friend - who happens to be into mountain biking, especially the downhill variety. To compound things Paul had arranged to hire a suitable bike (and accompanying body armour – I kid you not) on which to run the course. Having coaxed Paul's monster bike into the car and reached the course we set off up hill. From May to

September the course is officially open and bikes can be taken up on the gondola - we had to walk/ride.



The absence of suitable paths – and energy – meant we only got 1/3 – 1/2 the way up the course, but that was sufficient for me. A steep gravel bank led into a sequence of twisty, rocky singletrack with a couple of rocky drop-offs (I walked off), a descending banked turn to a bridge followed by a wooded section with roots, mud and more rocks to negotiate. Crossing a forest trail led into a more open section with jumps and flowing turns before a precipitous drop – entitled the Wall Jump – with chicken-run alternative to the finish. No prizes for guessing who took the alternative. The walk/ride up took around 20 minutes, the descent 2-4 minutes depending on whether you rode a downhill bike with a death-wish or a cross-county lightweight with a view to self preservation. Having made three runs down and had a play with the 4-Cross course at the bottom (something akin to BMX racing with jumps) we called it a day and headed home for the second instalment of Wednesday.

## Wednesday afternoon

We'd agreed that in the afternoon Tom & I would team up with Rob Byrne to paddle the lower section of the Roy. I'd never paddled any of the Roy before and had it not been for the cycling in the morning we'd have joined Barry, Clive, Adam & Matt who spent the day running the whole river. In the event the top section was continuous grade 4 and they portaged the gorge. We found the lower section a pleasant, almost continuous low

grade 3. Plenty of interest, lots of nice friendly waves to play with, the odd meaty hole to avoid – and the sun shone too. All in all, a very pleasant way to spend an afternoon. The one grumble? Overshooting the get-off and having to carry the boats back through the woods behind the site.

## Thursday

I'd heard and read about the Pattack and what a great little river it is. Well, it had rained and the river was running at a good level. Having obtained permission from the estate office and trailed up the forest track to the put-in, a small group – Martin Russell, Steve Swarbrick, Helen James, Tom & I – set off. No-one felt the urge to run the Falls of Pattack – thirty feet onto rocks didn't seem like a good idea. Fairly continuous grade 3 rapids with lots of blind corners made for constant involvement.

We all portaged the grade IV/V fall half-way down – might have been OK if we'd got the lines right, but the consequences of getting it wrong looked nasty. The final section of the river involves a diagonal angle across a shot to avoid the rock/stopper at the top and rocks at the bottom. If you cope with this and the subsequent stopper a 200 yard section of easy stoppers and small breakouts (but few rescue opportunities for those who get the entry wrong) leads to two awkward drops separated by a nasty swirling pool/eddy and undercut rocks. Helen opted to walk it, Steve and I provided bank support and never quite managed to get back into our boats. Tom & Martin ran the whole section.

I didn't see the entry, but it apparently went smoothly. Martin led the final two drops. The first drop is split by a rock and offers a 1m drop-off with powerful stopper or a curving rock chute with cushion wave. Martin opted for the drop-off, got dragged back by the stopper, rolled up and spent a moment or two bracing in a determined manner in the swirling waters. A near capsizes on the eddy line led into the final drop – straight down, through the stopper to finish. Tom took a more robust approach, taking the drop-off at

full-tilt flying (boofing?) over the stopper and into the pool. A bit of edge and more power dealt with the swirly eddy and the final drop. Hopefully the admiring crowd – Bev, Kate & Charis – have some photos of this.

The last few years we have eaten out en masse chez Strangledbasset. This year we didn't. While they serve good beer and whisky – very good beer in fact – the food is pub-grub standard, but at hotel restaurant prices. Added to which the previous occupants of our chalet had left us a barbecue. So we had a barbecue – which was very enjoyable with various blackened things being wolfed down enthusiastically, helped by some excellent salads and lots of pop.



## Friday

The fleet – Martin Russell, Rob Byrne, Matt & Clive, Adam Croft, Helen James, Tom & me. One of the Roy Bridge rituals is finding out when the Garry is releasing – its dam fed. Once upon a time there was a regular release, but now its timing is a mystery known only to the water board and the rafting companies who pay to use it. By virtue of some whispered conversations with devious types in the Strangledbasset we established that Friday was the day. Note – on a subsequent trip to Skye with non-paddling types we stopped off at the Garry on a Wednesday and a Sunday out of curiosity to find it running at the same level as we paddled it.

The Garry is only a short run – perhaps a mile - but it packs in plenty of interest. A fast start

with several small drops leads down to a play wave/hole that kept us happy for best part of an hour. Lots of rolling went on – even I rolled – the first in anger for around four years. An easy section of eddy-hopping is followed by the first significant fall – the river narrows over rocky shelves to a wide drop-off with a stopper of varying power. Martin's pep talk and instructions re: signalling were rendered redundant when we lost sight of him. No matter – everyone but Helen got down OK. Helen strayed too far right, caught a rock and went swimming. She was quickly extracted river right, her boat took a bit longer and emerged river left – subsequently sorted out. A couple more drops brought us to the get out. The final drop creates a powerful hole which only Clive really mastered – I saw Martin emerge upright at speed and the club website has a picture of the underside of Tom's boat at this point.

## **Saturday**

The sensible people went straight home. Tom seemed to think that a final visit to the Downhill course would be a good idea – so

we went there. Much the same as before except we only managed two runs, but much faster than before. We both nearly wrapped ourselves round trees, but survived intact and had enough change left to buy hot choccy in the café. To finish, a brief trip to Fort Will to stock up on eatable, drinkable things with too much tartan on the packaging and then head for home. Felt sorry for the two cyclists slogging over Rannoch Moor in the horizontal rain. Felt sorry for myself debating whether to stop at Abington services (better burgers) or Annandale Water (better coffee). And it always seems downhill all the way back home.

Regrets? Almost too few too mention, though it would have been nice to bag a few Munros – but it was a paddling trip, we paddled every day and the hills will be there next time. Finally, thanks to Tom Byrne for handling all the boring bits, such as booking the chalets and chasing people for money, that made the whole thing happen.

***John Kingdon***

# ***Calling All Trainee Instructors***

There is a need in Ribble Canoe Club for the next generation of kayak instructors. The principal qualification is the BCU level 2 instructor. This qualification is the first level of instructor leading ultimately up to level 5. It is my intention to get a party of about 6 people together and use Plas y Brenin or a similar institution to intensively train the group over a couple of weekends or so.

The pre qualifications are :-

- BCU 3 star kayak
- Canoe safety certificate
- Aquatic first aid certificate.

It is hoped that the club will cover a large proportion of the cost however there may have to be some contribution by the individual.

The return by the individual to the club would be a commitment to train other members as the needs arise either on the summer course or at the baths courses etc. Therefore there should be the understanding that anyone accepting financial assistance in gaining this qualification will stay in the Central Lancashire region for the next few years.

If you are interested in taking up this challenge or want to talk about it further please contact me. However you must be advised that this is a commitment not to be taken up lightly.

***Tim Langridge***

# Can you help?



## Have you seen a crayfish?

The native white-clawed crayfish has been in severe decline across Britain since the 1980's. To help save our native crayfish we need to know where they are found, but to date we have no data as to their whereabouts on the river Lune and tributaries.

The Environment Agency is undertaking a survey to try and find crayfish on the Lune catchment, and we need your help! If you have any information on where any crayfish can be found, or have childhood memories of crayfish in the Lune rivers, please let us know.



Please contact Bernadette Lobo on 01772 714027  
email [bernadette.lobo@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:bernadette.lobo@environment-agency.gov.uk)  
OR  
Martin Pugh on 07779 618111



ENVIRONMENT  
AGENCY

# Hydrotherapy



Lousy time to start, but leaving Fulwood at 7.15 meant we arrived just half an hour after the course had started releasing. Three boats were quickly unloaded from Barbara's car and off we went. Richard and Helen were in the kind of small playboats that most people are paddling at the moment especially at sites like this. I was in the open boat and as usually happens I was the only person with only one blade. Richard and Helen both tried the canoe with a couple of runs down the course, not sure if they'll give up their kayaks though. We even watched a seal swimming around the boats at the bottom of the course.



Anyone who has been to Teesside will know that the next few hours consists of surfing, or paddling into trouble then trying to either get yourself out of it or trying to look controlled when you don't. Lots of downtime and roll practice from all sorts of weird positions; a kind of karma sutra kayak experience.



If you haven't been but have paddled some grade 2 and want an experience on something bigger then think about Teesside. It releases most days of the year; the start and finish times vary and can be found on the Internet ([www.4seasons.co.uk](http://www.4seasons.co.uk)). The drive from Fulwood to Stockton-on-Tees is about two

and half-hours and around 110 miles. Water quality seems OK, there's a campsite close by, a café, changing rooms & shop, and it cost £8 to paddle. The centre requests that paddlers are 3 star standard and can roll in white water. Interpret that the way you like but I have never met a paddler that can guarantee a roll, you don't get tested or removed for swimming, I swam twenty times on one trip! I assume they want to bring your attention to the basic criteria that you can manoeuvre around other paddlers and stop or slow down in moving water.

You don't need an instructor or trip leader: this is one of the places that a new paddler can go exploring, preferably with a carload of friends. If you can go mid week then the course is usually very quiet. Summer is best when there's no water anywhere else and the water here is warm.

Some points to think about are that the course is sometimes reserved for competition only, so is closed to recreational paddlers. At certain times the "bottom drop" either creates a big stopper or is totally flat, it's OK to paddle at these times but more fun at the times in between. Ring and ask the centre (01642 678000) before travelling or if you want more information. Check the website ([www.4seasons.co.uk](http://www.4seasons.co.uk)) for release times and availability.

Hopefully the next Teesside article will be written by someone who attended the June river courses or from Terry's winter Sundays at Halton. Finally thanks to Barbara for driving and photography.

***Tony Morgan***

## ***Ullswater Camp***

***20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> 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***

## ***Rhosneigr Surf Camp***

***30<sup>th</sup> July – 1<sup>st</sup> August***

Location: Rhosneigr campsite 01407 716085. Off the A4080, Grid Ref 736 323. Bodfan Farm is behind the fire station. If you're coming into Rhosneigr village with the sea on your right then go past the fire station and turn left: the farm entrance is then straight on.

You will need a canoe of any description with a spray deck, and normal camping gear. There will probably be a barbeque.

***Tim Langridge***

# *Crummock Water*



**Paddlers:** Tom, Chris, Janet, Nick, Jane, David, Ian, Alan, Lesley, Joanne and Stephanie.

Having each spent £3 at Wood House for a canoeing permit we were all looking forward to getting onto the water but we hadn't reckoned on the huge number of people visiting the area today and the subsequent lack of parking spaces. We finally ended up on the National Trust car park at Scalehill Bridge. We had wondered about paddling up the stream to the lake but the scouting party reported back that the water level was quite low and there were a couple of weirs and that there was little alternative to a two-thirds of a mile portage through the woods. We were hoping to see some red squirrels on our trek but only managed to hear a cuckoo – hmm! Was it trying to tell us something? As most of us were carrying sea or touring kayaks we all felt we'd had a day's exercise by the time we reached the lake. Too exhausted to do anything but sit down and get our breath back, we ate our picnic and admired the view before setting off.



We paddled the lake in an anti-clockwise direction in brilliant sunshine and, to begin with, hardly any wind. The scenery around Crummock Water is stunning. I'm quite sure the geology is extremely interesting but I know very little about it except that the mountains are all nicely knobbly and covered in grass, bracken, bluebells and sheep. We saw several sandpipers as we paddled along and towards the Buttermere end of the lake there were a few Canada and Greylag geese. There were two or three people with parachutes who kept throwing themselves off the tops of mountains. They were quite colourful and it looked good fun.



After paddling the length of the lake we pulled up in a little bay quite near to Wood House where we had a drink break and soaked up the sun. David and Nick both tried out some of the touring boats while the rest of us simply relaxed and eventually toyed with the idea of doing some more paddling ourselves.

On our return journey, close to Cinderdale Common, we noticed a female goosander with her chicks swimming near the edge of the lake. It was lovely to watch the family dive and the babies bob up again like corks.

We continued to paddle towards Lanthwaite Wood while trying to decide what we were going to do next. Whilst still sitting in our boats pondering, Ian thought he might try to roll in the sea kayak. We were all suitably impressed and he earned himself a ripple of applause.

One possibility for leaving Crummock Water was to pull up at our original get in then, avoiding the first weir, paddle back to the car park. We reasoned that even if the water was too shallow to paddle we could at least float the boats back and save ourselves a long portage. However, we were a bit concerned that fish might already be spawning in the gravel (and whatever we feel about fishermen many of us enjoy a bit of trout and salmon) so we made alternative arrangements. David very kindly offered – or was volunteered – to walk back to his car and drive round to Hause Point (It seemed a bit mean really as this was

his first trip with us). Meanwhile, the rest of us would paddle there towing his boat, so at least he wouldn't have to carry it, then he could pick up all the drivers. Alan, being the proud owner of a hitherto unused towline, offered to do the towing so we all set off.



By now the wind was beginning to pick up I measured the wind speed at 12.2mph and we were heading into it. There were some quite nice long, splashy waves and white horses were starting to appear. I think even those who were beginning to feel a bit tired, enjoyed themselves. We watched the rescue helicopter circling around in the hills and hoped they weren't looking for any of the para-gliders we had seen earlier.

We knew that David would be at Hause Point waiting for us because as we were making our way towards our exit we had watched him execute some innovative parking; it's amazing what you can do with a 4x4!

The chaps all set off to fetch their own cars and we women folk sunbathed as we guarded the canoes – very stressful. Luckily some of the day-trippers had set off for home and by the time our transport arrived there were just enough parking spaces for everyone. It wasn't long before we were all changed, loaded up and on the way to a pub in Braithwaite for a well-earned drink, then home to rub in plenty of after sun.

***Janet Porter***

# ***From the Rhinns of Galloway to the Mountains of Antrim***



I'm forty now and in the past twelve months several conversations about a trip to Ireland had gone on in jest based on my arrival at "that age" but as with most good ideas - remained ideas.



However, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 2003 Major Matthew Harper-Tichener of the Royal Military Police was ambushed and killed in Basra, Iraq. I first knew Matt and his family when I was a young Scout leader in Southport in the 1980's. I saw him grow up from a boy through adolescence into a young man before he left for a commission in the Army. What moved me to want to do something in Matt's memory were the valuable qualities that he possessed as a person that we sometimes overlook in life. Matt was a quiet, sometimes reserved young man, often shy of praise, never the one to demand attention but always

willing to take the responsibility of leadership and committed to helping others.

I did some research in the next few months, reading great adventures of paddlers covering 65 and 85 mile crossings and went to a lecture by Peter Bray who canoed the Atlantic!!!!!!!

Great inspirational stuff but in the cold light of day I decided on a crossing from Portpatrick in Galloway to Larne in Northern Ireland. The first question was who? Well I'd had conversations with Jez Webb about the venture and he seemed keen to have a go. He lived up in that part of the world and had previous experience sea kayaking in Chile. Over the next few months we managed to involve Richard Cree and Tom Alcott and completed practice trips round Cumbrae and over to Arran.

On the Friday before leaving I got a message on my mobile from Phil Britton. Phil is a friend from the past, he said that he had heard we were having an adventure and asked whether he could join us.

We rolled into Portpatrick about half an hour late to meet with Phil, Matt's widow, Raqual, her children, and supporters. It was all very busy to get into the water but what I do

remember was a local man walking his dog on the beach who reminded me of private Frazer from Dad's Army. A friendly chap who offered his experience as an engineer on the high-speed catamaran and how we were all "doomed, doomed" if we continued. I'm sure he thought he had our safety at heart, but it just wasn't helpful at all.



After photos and a call to the coast guard we set off at 9:00 am with cheers and a wave from our support team and well wishers. Clearing the harbour we stopped after only a few hundred metres and requested a radio check from Clyde coast guard.

The wind was from the North West and I was confident that through the day the cloud would clear and the wind would drop. There was a gentle, irregular swell, which bobbed us about and we seemed to cut through it quite easily.

Richard was out in front with the rest of the group chatting while we made progress. It wasn't long before we could see a distinctive silhouette of Ireland and although I knew we weren't going to miss Ireland it did concern me that we could end up bumping into the wrong bit due to tides and straying from our course.

I'd plotted the position of Larne into my GPS the night before so I knew where it was and had to pit our combined skills against the will of the tides. After two hours we spotted our first ferry in the distance and it wasn't long before we realised that they were going to

stay out of the way. During the trip we came across about a dozen ships ranging from yachts to bulk carriers. All passed without any problems and we continued on our way.



By midday the weather had cleared and the wind had dropped, the sea levelled out to a glassy calm and we could begin to distinguish features of the Irish coast. As we looked north we could see the ferries busying themselves back and forth, with the Mull of Kintyre in the distance. It began to get warm and some of us stopped to take a bite to eat and strip off some of the waterproof layers.



We seemed to develop a natural rhythm of paddling for about 20 minutes and then stopping to collect the group up, have something to eat, watch a ship go past, answer a phone call or have a pee. I hope Jez has bought Carol a new measuring jug by now! I was really surprised how many calls we got during the trip either from well wishers or people arranging to meet us in Larne. Reception was mixed with voice mails ringing repeatedly throughout the trip.

By early afternoon we could easily pick out the Maidens rocks north of Larne and behind,

the mountains of Antrim. I began to count down the distance to Larne on my GPS. As we had experienced previously, the land often looks closer than it actually is and my compatriots started to doubt the distances, “9.8 miles – never ... got to be closer than that...” Little did we realise why our progress was slowing.

The tidal flows across the North Channel are faster on the Irish side. I knew that in the last few hours of the journey the tide would be flooding south; however, if we turned directly towards Larne too early off our bearing we would encounter the tide almost head on. It's great in hindsight to learn from the experience but our attraction to the closest land meant that the scenery slowed down and our paddling became more prolonged as stopping meant we were actually going backwards.

We were starting to run out of time and tide and Katie and the Army were trying to find out where and when we were to arrive. We were probably only a mile away from them but it seemed an age as we pushed along the coast against the tide. At last, approaching the point ahead I could see a break in the current and beyond slack water. As I passed over it the kayak seemed to glide along and as we turned the corner you could see Katie's bright yellow water proof in the distance doing a dance all by itself. Minutes later we were up on the beach stumbling out of those cramped spaces that had been home for the last eight and a half hours.

Celebrations all round as Carol and Katie broke open the champagne and took pictures of the weary crew. The Larne Gazette appeared along with Major John Hipkinson and his driver of the Royal Military Police, Lisburn. Pictures were taken, champagne quaffed and cheque presented by the Major. John said that he knew Matt and had lived with him for 18 months. On behalf of the Military Police and the Army he thanked us and then it was all over.



Boats were packed onto the trailer, clothes changed and the car parked in the queue for the ferry. Our trip to Ireland seemed oh too brief after the build up to getting there. Once rested, we began to feel the aches and pains from the trip. Our sunburn limited to extremities made us appear as if we had our hands and heads stitched on.

It was after 10 when we arrived back in Cairnryan and we spent our final half hour swapping boats, cars and equipment for our respective journeys home.

Our little adventure has come about from a set of circumstances that I have not been able to ignore. It has been driven from childhood dreams, a chance to celebrate a birthday, the loss of a friend and the hope that inevitably rises from so much sorrow. I have been astonished at people's generosity, willingness to contribute and express themselves through this event. Through this I have once again found many friends from the past, built existing friendships and made new ones.

There is a quote both Jez and I picked up from the past and have used with others when they are facing their own personal challenges.

“Ships are safe in harbours,  
But that is not what ships were built for.”

*Anon*

***Jonathan Martin***

Have a look at more detail on  
[www.forceschildrenstrust.org](http://www.forceschildrenstrust.org)

# *A Rainy Day*



***Bridgwater Canal  
20th June, 2004***

**Paddlers:** Tom, Chris, Janet, Tim, Clive, Janet, Iain, Nick, Eileen, Albert and Kath

umbrellas but, nevertheless, they managed to look as though they were having a good time.

No chance of any sunburn today, we mused, as we sat in the service station at Charnock Richard, clutching our cappuccinos and staring out at the rain. Someone, who had bothered listening to a weather forecast, said we were supposed to have sunshine and isolated showers but as the day wore on it became obvious that we were to experience showers interspersed with spells of persistent (and often heavy) rain. We were in no hurry to go anywhere and eventually set off a full fifteen minutes after our scheduled departure time. As we neared the Thelwell Viaduct the rain became still heavier and when we parked up, next to our get in at Grappenhall, we sat in the cars for ten minutes or so in the forlorn hope that the little patch of blue in the distance would come our way. Instead, as the windows of the cars steamed up, that little patch of blue rapidly filled in and became a dull grey.

After a while most of us managed to persuade ourselves that paddling in the rain might be fun! Lots of narrow boaters were out and about this morning though admittedly most of the folk were tucked well inside the boats while the poor souls driving them were hunched over the tillers under golfing



Once we made the decision to spend the day paddling it wasn't too long before we were all on the water. The get in is fairly easy here, even so, those in the smaller boats all decided to seal launch. They seemed to make hard work of it. The grass wasn't at all slippery and an awful lot of rocking backwards and forwards and squealing noises went on as each boat made its painfully slow entry into the canal.

Albert and Kath had forsaken their usual Canadian and today Kath was paddling a Carolina, Clive has a new river boat and Albert and Janet were sharing the Kiwi. It made a change for Janet to be hit over the head by someone else's husband!

We set off eastwards in the direction of Lymm passing through some very pretty countryside. We were soon paddling under the M6 just south of Thelwell Viaduct though we couldn't see that mighty edifice from the canal so are unable to report whether or not there really are men working underneath. Personally I think they're an urban myth – one of those things everyone has read about but no one has ever seen.

Whilst canoeists reportedly do very little damage to the environment we do seem to be very adept at separating tiny ducklings from their frantic mothers and there are an awful lot of mallards on this stretch of waterway so we had ample opportunity to unwittingly engage in this activity. We can only hope that parents and offspring were reunited soon after we passed by.

Tim and I discovered that narrow boats make a very satisfying crunch when they hit the bank pointy end first before the incompetent Dad driving has realised that he should have slammed the thing into reverse; of course, slowing down a bit would have helped. The children on board enjoyed it though!

A quick glance at the map shows that some areas we paddled through today are substantially built up, however, most of the buildings are residential and well maintained and, apart from the rain, a pleasant morning was had by all. As we approached Lymm itself a colossal roll of thunder greeted us. Never having paddled in a thunderstorm before I was rather hoping for some more but sadly this never materialised. As we passed under Lymm Bridge there was a bare patch of land containing nothing more than a huge and very dead fish so we decided this would be the ideal spot to have a picnic.

Iain, evidently expecting a flood, chose to sit in his boat to eat. Chris, Tim and I sat in the rain and everyone else stood under a tree whilst being dripped on. As we were eating the rain stopped very briefly and the sun came out; then we noticed that everyone was beginning to steam! It was more obvious on

some folk than others, Nick's hat looked like a chimney but we each had our own individual little microclimate. Albert took his hat off but immediately put it back on when it was pointed out that the red dye had run. England fans sport a red cross on their heads but Albert was wearing a slipped halo.



After eating, some people felt like paddling a bit further while others were more or less ready to go back. Tom and Tim carried on with us to the next canal wind then turned back and Nick and Eileen wanted to look round the next corner then they too went back. The rest of us carried on through open countryside until we came to two big boat yards in the middle of nowhere. The boatyards both looked deserted but the nearby pub seemed to be doing a roaring trade. Opposite the pub, beside the towpath, was an enormous triangle and a notice to ring for the ferry if in need of a drink.

We experienced the worst of the weather on our return trip. One moment I was pondering just how much heavier rain could get and the next moment I found out. Interesting old buildings and photo opportunities meant that Chris and I were lagging behind a bit at this point and when we caught up with the rest of the group we found them sheltering beneath a bridge. It's strange that, although we were all out in the same weather, Kath looked so much more drenched than everyone else. In the scarce few moments when the rain did ease off on our return journey we noticed that the canal was beginning to steam – it was quite eerie.

When we finally reached our get out we discovered that the others had only been back for five or ten minutes. At last the rain stopped and we were at least able to get changed in the dry though there were some fairly large puddles in the car park and I don't think I was the only one who got wet feet while manoeuvring boats. We then made our way to a nearby hostelry where Nick, who

was feeling a bit peckish, ordered a light snack, the table sagging under the weight. We had hoped to sit outside with our drinks but felt that would only be tempting fate. I am coming to the conclusion that we are that isolated shower.

***Janet Porter***

## ***Criminal Records Bureau***

As many of you might already know there is an increasing requirement on clubs to have all adults who are involved in the education or instruction of children registered with the CRB.

Any adult who has any contact with children on club activities, even on an infrequent or casual basis, should be registered. Preston Borough Council are insisting that any adults assisting at Fulwood Leisure Centre are CRB cleared.

Some people already have forms: more will be handed out to instructors and regular helpers as soon as possible. The CRB forms

and supporting documentation should be posted to the BCU in Nottingham. Despite what the form says, photocopies of the documentation are acceptable rather than original documents.

Would anybody who already has a form or is given one please fill it out and return it as quickly as possible. Anybody who currently instructs or anticipates instructing or supervising young people should contact me for a form.

***Tim Langridge***

## ***Pembrokeshire Sea Trip***

**N. Pembrokeshire, St Davids Area.**

**28/29/30 Aug Bank Holiday weekend.**

I am planning a static camp on a campsite with loo/shower /tap and series of day trips. Round Ramsey Island, Strumble Head, St David's Head, Skomer Island and the Bishops and Clarks islands are possible give reasonable weather, though not all in the same day!

The area has strong tidal flows and there are play waves on the Bitches and surf at Whitesands Bay and Newgale. In dire weather

there is plenty of sheltered water in Milford Haven. In good weather there are spectacular caves and cliffs with birds, seals, porpoise and the occasional dolphin.

There is also plenty of climbing and walking on the coast if you want a mixed weekend, and boat trips, cathedrals, aquariums and beaches if you have non-canoeing friends/partners/kids.

It is well worth the drive.

***Alan Clowes***

# ***Learning: - To Stay Dry***

## ***The Beginners' Challenge ! – Part 1***

### **1 – Taking Stock**

In my first three months with the Ribble Canoe club I had been out four times. One wonderfully civilised, warm and dry, Flat Water trip; and three trips on the Lune at Halton, in which I had capsized three times! I had also been to two Open Pool sessions, one Slalom Training, and my first Beginner's lesson.

What had I enjoyed the most?

What did I like the least?

What kind of paddling did I want to do?

What did I want to achieve?

How was I going to achieve it?

I liked the excitement of river paddling and the comfort of flat water. I found swimming cold and uncomfortable, and I didn't like capsizing. I liked to make the boat do what I wanted, and I didn't like the river doing unexpected things to me. I wanted to be good at kayaking! – But, worst of all, I wanted to stay reasonably dry while I learnt!

It sounds like a good challenge! But is it possible? Are there people in the club who have already done this? If so, I want to talk to them and find out how they did it!

I decided that I would go on the beginner's river trips, all events in the pool that I could, and possibly a few moving water trips. I would avoid the white water trips until I knew how to roll!

### **2 – Worried about the Wenning!**

I went to Fulwood for my second beginner's lesson. We practiced various things, including bow rescues. I had got into the habit of watching, from underwater, for the bow of a boat to arrive and then grabbing it. Visibility in a river would not be as good, so I practiced

sweeping my hands much further forwards and backwards when searching. This lesson was reinforced when I was doing the rescuing, because it was much easier to get the bow of my boat within 2 foot of the centre, than right where the man was. I wondered how long it would be before I could stay up well enough to help someone back up on a river!

Afterwards, in the bar, I asked Terry about the beginner's trip on the Wenning. Where were the put in and take out? Was there a path (for white-water walkers)? How hard was it? Did I have a chance of staying dry?

I didn't like the answers. The trip down the Wenning was quite long, and Terry was wondering about putting a vehicle at the half-way point so people could stop if they wanted to. There was a weir to go over, though it would be possible to walk round it. (That sounded like a good idea to me!) My chances of staying dry? Very low! Terry told me that I would probably swim three times even if I bypassed the weir! As his pint went down Terry became more and more enthusiastic about the trip! I went home distinctly worried!

### **3 – Saved by the Rain**

It rained all day on Saturday, and when we met up at Fulwood on 1st February more rain was forecast. The river levels were very high and Terry had decided to stay away from the Wenning. We headed up to Ambleside to have a go at the Rothay.

Waterhead car park was partially flooded and even the Rothay was full. A group of experienced paddlers drove up to start that river, leaving Terry, Brian and Tony with the beginners. Tony's group paddled from Waterhead, while Terry drove directly to the Brathay pool. Getting launched was quite

interesting, with a small patch of calm water by the steps and then a break-in and break-out manoeuvre needed to get to the eddy in the centre of the pool. Some of the group were swimming within 30 seconds of securing their spray decks!

Tony's group had somehow managed to paddle up to the bridge, but still needed to carry their boats up the last bit to avoid the rapids. After a brief period where we were all in the main pool, Tony's group ferried across to the steps to go up a little higher. Terry and Brian stayed with the rest of us practicing ferry gliding and breaking in and out. They also spend some time rescuing swimmers.

Then we saw the bolder members of Tony's group descending the rapids above the pool. They were going quite fast when they got to us and some, who had stayed upright all the way down, forgot to lean when breaking out into the eddy and ended up swimming. The keenest of them, plus some who had watched, went back up to do it again before lunch. We got out and ate our sandwiches while we watched them.

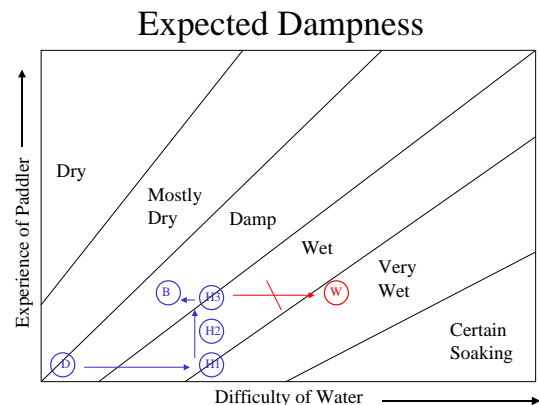
After lunch Tony's team headed back and we discussed having a run through. Should we go from the top or the middle of the rapids? The rain was by now getting quite heavy and my legs were getting wet just staying on the bank. I thought that I would probably swim if I went from the top, so I decided I would have a go from the middle first. Perhaps we could have two goes through?

By now Terry was getting a bit concerned about the river level, so he went down from the top and broke out at the middle where we had put in. Our run down the lower half was good fun, and far less scary than I had imagined. Our trip from the top was, however, cancelled. We practiced techniques in the pool again, and as I still had lots of energy and could see my car with all my dry clothes in it, I was keen to play. A good fast run up and then a break in seemed to work very well. There was no doubt about when I

had to lean and brace, or when the river would turn the boat. I played until Terry and Brian wanted to pack up!

#### 4 – The Dampness Diagram

I felt I had been very lucky to stay dry on Sunday. The Wenning would have been far too hard for me, and even the trip down the full rapid at the Brathay could easily have led to a capsized. I wondered if the beginner's river trips were designed for paddlers straight out of the course in the pool, or whether people normally get some flat water experience first? Clearly the chance of a soaking is related to the paddler's experience and difficulty of the water he is on. I decided to draw a "Dampness Diagram" to illustrate the problem.



Derwentwater was flat, easy water.  
Halton 1, 2 & 3 were harder, but I got better.  
The Wenning would have been very wet if I had gone on it!  
The Brathay Pool turned out OK.

I want to progress upwards in experience, while staying away from the hardest rivers. If I try for "Dry" I might not learn anything. If I go for "Very Wet" or "Certain Soaking" I would be highly placed in the d'Ribbler's award. I can be cautious when I expect to get "Wet" and bold when I think I will stay "Mostly Dry". "Damp" would suit me very nicely!

***Peter Thomas***



## Would you like to learn to canoe?

Ribble Canoe Club is running a beginners' course starting on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2004 which will teach the basic skills necessary to paddle a kayak.

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

No previous experience is necessary.

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

The course will run from 8:00pm until 10:00pm on the 8<sup>th</sup> October, and 9:00pm until 10:00pm on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> October. Please arrive about 15 minutes before the start time to give time to get equipment sorted out.

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

The maximum cost of the course will be £34 per person, which includes the cost of the instruction, pool hire and membership of Ribble Canoe Club for 2004/2005. Membership costs are less for junior members and for additional members of the same family.

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

Tom Byrne



A hint of sunshine and they're off, after a check of the forecast and quick phone call round it was decided that this was it, our first paddle trip of the year.

I didn't introduce my companions last time but as they may appear in subsequent adventurous tales it may be prudent to slip them in somewhere. In boat one, we have Ruth playing Engine No.1, Carl as Engine No.2; coming up at the rear we have Rich as Skip. Boat Two consisted of Kev (the photographer - all credit!) and me.



Meeting in the Eurospar car park, 7 of us headed off to Lake Sommen in southern Sweden. Lake Sommen, according to ancient folklore, got its many islands and its fringed shoreline from the wild kicks of a great angry

cow called "Sommen-Koa", I'll let you make your own mind up on that one.

It's now the summer season (but not quite summer) so the ferry now operates which was a superb start to the trip. We waited patiently for the ferry, not really noticing the wind or the white horses on this huge expanse of water. It was only when we boarded did we realize that things were not going to be quite as smooth as the journey down. The glorious sunshine which had accompanied us on our journey south had been replaced by cloud, shades were removed and cags slipped on.



I'd hastily booked the boats that morning and was advised that they only had two 17ft

Canadians left, so we squeezed three in one and two in the other (the mathematicians amongst you will have noticed the numbers don't match, be patient).

We hired the boats from a campsite on Torpon which is a sort of island accessible by ferry from the north and causeway from the south. It's basically one big nature reserve and an excellent place to paddle as the lake is quite an odd shape full of islands.

After some quick tips on getting in, not falling out and steering we headed out of the shelter of the mini marina and into a hefty swell, the wind was blowing right down the lake and I started to regret offering to meet the cyclists for a BBQ down the coast (that's the other two, Tash and Katka). We soldiered on trying to grab shelter in the lee of islands where we could, the boats were pitching quite a lot which was quite good fun if not for the fact we had to paddle quite hard into the wind (you need something to make lake paddling interesting). The boat of three had Canadian virgins, they only paddled kayaks last year for the first time. Looking across I could see their boat pitching wildly and I remembered that the lake had been thick ice only 6 weeks before. They were not the lightest of boats, so I was dreading one going over.

After an hour and half we decided to take a snack break and headed for one of the islands. I pulled up alongside a large rock. Meat balls, Pringles and Fanta were passed around as we struggled to stay warm. This really wasn't the day out we'd planned.

10 minutes was enough time to see people starting to shiver so we headed out again after some hasty and quite rough map reading to our so called rendezvous.

Thankfully it wasn't that far and the thought of tucking into some BBQ nosh was keeping us all going. Ruth clambered out of her boat to ask for directions (being the designated semi Swedish speaker) to be met by a very hairy blonde local (who she took a liking to

straight away) who didn't seem to understand anything she said but just stood there staring at her with big doughy eyes, probably wondering what kind of monster this was that had emerged from the great lake.



Sounds of a lawn mower (that great English weekend tradition) attracted her attention and she headed up the hill with her new blonde friend following obediently behind. A broken Swedish conversation took place which resulted in us finding out that we were in the right place, that we could leave our boats on his beach and that we had to walk up through his huge garden and up the hill to the road to find the others. While Ruth was relaying the message her blonde friend was doing his best for international relations. I've never met a trilingual Golden Retriever before but this one seemed to cope quite well!

We lugged all the gear up the hill consoling ourselves that the bags would be lighter on the way back and that the wind would be behind us, a prospect I was definitely looking forward to.

Fate is a cruel bugger, we climbed the hill to find no cyclists, so made the decision to go back to the boats, paddle up the lake (wind assisted), then drive out to find them. So having lugged all the food and BBQ up the hill in high spirits at the prospect of our feast, we trudged down again. Blondie spotted us and came bounding over as fast as an old, over weight retriever can do, tail flailing about. You could just tell he was laughing at us! We looked out onto the lake and realized

watching us looking suspiciously like they'd been in the Café all day.



Which is exactly where we all headed, after a hot chocolate and slice of cake the world looked a lot rosier and when we ventured back out into the real world we were greeted by glorious sunshine so headed back across the water for a BBQ on the lake shore.

All in all, not a bad trip. It's a beautiful part of the country and the changing weather highlighted just how unpredictable this place can be. The demon of winter has been exercised; now we can plan our next trip, which might well be a camping trip in the Vanern Archipelago or a Beaver Safari early July up North followed by paddling in Norway. It's a hard life!

***Dave Ellison***

# *Chairman's Doggerel*

forward so far. A total of 11 swims were reported.

The River Courses and associated Ribble Trip (another article please) seemed to go well. Many thanks to Brian for organising West Tanfield, the River Courses and Ribble Trip – in the midst of redecorating his house. Some more zzzzzzz's there I should think.

I'm looking forward to Rhosneigr (Surf) Camp next week-end and I know that at least 9 people and 2 dogs are going so far. Perhaps we need a new class of membership for our K9 friends.

Your Club is a wonderful organisation (is that the right word?) of hard working volunteers – not the least of whom is probably sat by his computer right now wondering where the heck this article is. So cheerio and see you Wednesday or at Rhosneigr or at Ullswater.

***Terry Maddock***

# Presentation Night



Did you pass a star award on the Alston River Course this summer?

Would you like to celebrate your award in style?

Would you like to know what all those people you paddled with really look like when they're dry and properly dressed?

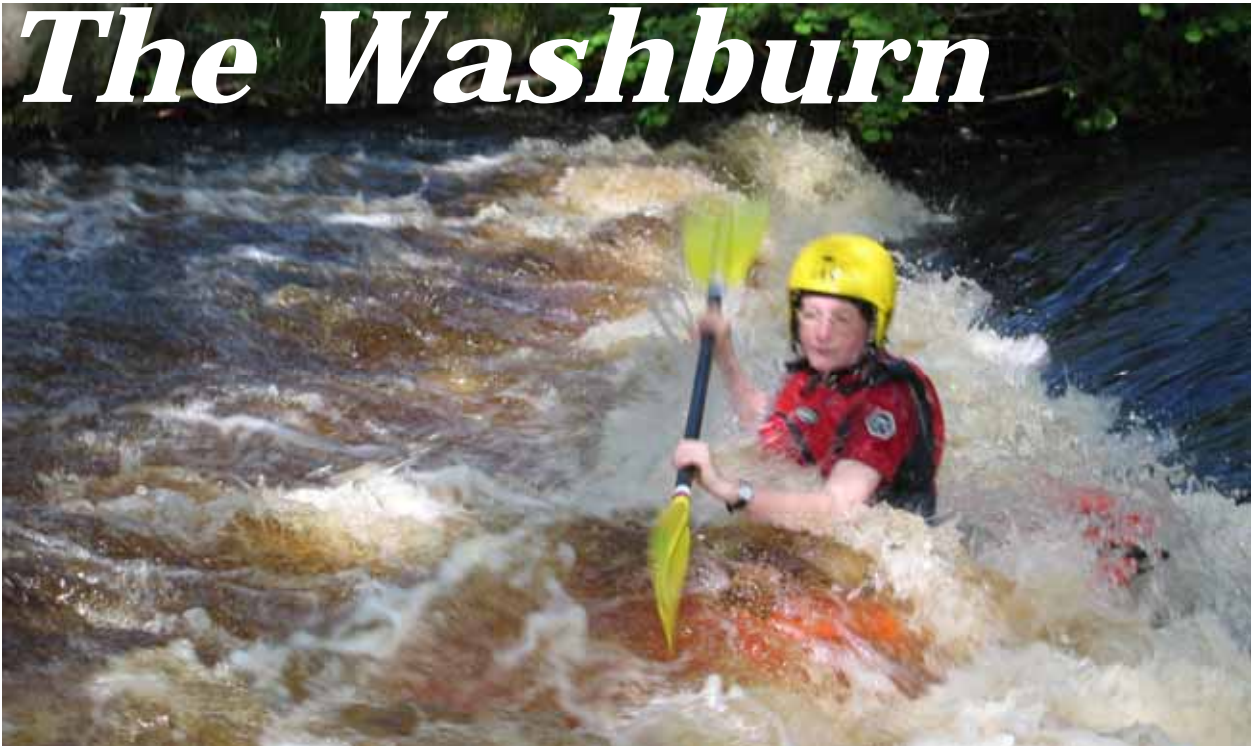
If so, make a note in your diary **NOW** and don't miss the River Course Presentation Night.

Enjoy an evening out with good food and drink, good company, and be presented with your award by our...

## Surprise Special Guest!

*Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September, 7:30 for 8pm,  
Hand & Dagger, Salwick*

# *The Washburn*



**Paddlers:** Helen, Tony Morgan, Grahame Coles, and later Tony and Peter.

After meeting at the Myerscough Hotel at 9am, we agreed that Grahame would take Tony, with both his Savage and Eskimo, and my Mum would take me. The journey up was fairly un-eventful, unlike the journey back from Teesside the weekend before where my new boat fell off the roof of the car, just as we arrived back at Fulwood Leisure Centre.

We decided to get straight on when we arrived. Then the first problem of the day – What to wear, it was a beautiful sunny day but, would the water be cold?

We got on the water; I opted for short wet suit and no cag. Before I had got settled in my new (slightly scratched) boat, I was upside down and swimming, we hadn't even reached the first bridge.

After some very quick paddling Grahame managed to get both boat and paddle to bank (luckily the same one as I was at).

During my exit from The Skip I had managed to loose both my new socks, and collected a large graze down my shin and a cut knee, now

I wished I had worn my dry pants! Graham had pulled a muscle helping retrieve my boat, but fortunately he was able to continue paddling.



We made it down to the big drop without any more swims, with those who wanted to play, getting plenty of opportunities.

They have changed the big drop since I was last there –they've made it so you can only go down on river left, and they've dug out the pool at the bottom which means that you get pushed into the eddy.

They have also created another smaller drop beneath the big drop. After getting out and inspecting it, Grahame informed us that it was straight down the middle. I followed Grahame down with Tony behind me.



We got out several hundred meters down stream, and as Tony and Grahame were feeling the heat they both jumped in to the water to cool off. (Perhaps the short wet suit and no cag, wasn't such a bad idea) Getting out here meant that there was a long trek back to the top, where we meet Peter and Tony with cups of tea in their hands. We agreed that we would wait until they were ready before doing our second run. So we had lunch in the sun.



Our second run was without incident and we got out at the same place. Graham decided that as he hadn't swam, he would have to make do with a technical swim instead (I think he wants the D'ribblers Award again.).

Up at the car park we decided that our last run of the day would be a full run, so Graham and Peter took their cars down to the bottom and Mum gave them a lift back to the top. While this was happening several of us decided that even though we had brought our own food, we would sample a burger from the tent, and they tasted as good as they smelt.



Tony met someone who he knew, and allowed him to do a run in his Savage so Tony went down in his Eskimo. Again this run was uneventful, with people playing where and when they wanted.



Below the big drop we just gently floated down stream, not putting very much effort in, until we reached the bottom. Here Peter decided that he wasn't satisfied with staying dry and that he too, would have a technical swim.

We had a good day, and if my face was anything to go by, the weather was very hot and sunny. All swims mention have been reported, don't worry.

I did find one sock, so if there any one legged paddlers out there, perhaps we could do a deal!

***Helen James***



After twenty hours driving we finally splosh through the puddles into a wet and cold campground on the banks of the Allier River. The campground is closed but the tent goes up anyway and the holiday starts under a threatening evening sky.

The trip is a ten day Easter jaunt to the Massif Centrale area of France. Mike H put the trip together, has been to the area before, but more importantly can order drinks and ask directions in French. Myself in the open boat and three other kayakers, Sten, Alistair and Ian Mc fill up the remaining seats of the two cars.

The trip doesn't start well for me when I slice the end of my thumb off preparing the first meal, despite yards of duct tape, and most of the contents of the first aid kit it continues to throb and bleed for most of the trip. On the bright side it did give everyone a chance to have a go at fixing it up; Sten's use of steri strips was particularly artistic. Bloody hands, mainly knuckles became a feature of the trip,

and by the end of the week most had a yard or two of adhesive tape attached.

In the morning it had stopped raining, unfortunately this was because it was now snowing. This was not much of a surprise to those of us that heard the change of weather on the tent walls, as we lay awake due to all the snoring. Like bleeding, snoring became a common topic over the next few days. After a direction orientated 'parlez vous Francais' and a short detour we arrived at the put on for the Allier and carried down the track to launch. Ahead is 10 km of III/IV, a good warm up in paddling terms but the weather was trying it's best to cool it with a combination of rain and snow. This was enhanced with a character building, bitter, upstream wind, that blew a fog of snow in your eyes every time you arrived at a horizon line. Luckily it was a fairly straightforward run with only a couple of inspections and a roll to remove any remaining heat you had under the layer of snow on the buoyancy aid. In any other weather this trip would have

been a blast with lots of surf and playing, but today it was just good to finish, which was not the best way to start.



More snow and more snoring brought a white morning, everything hidden under inches of cold stuff. A sluggish start, tromping around in the slush, was only ended by moving just two of the boats onto the shuttle car for the drive to the head of the Chaperaux, a tight III/V. Only Mike and myself were prepared to drag our boats through the snow and launch. It was bitter cold but at least I had managed to borrow Sten's gloves which I convinced myself would keep me from freezing. Mike's mitts were 'au naturel'; he was heading for frostbite. Two hours later after a couple of portages and a "you might want to catch this eddy" move, above an uninspected narrow slot, we dragged the boats back into camp. The tent was packed, cars were locked and ready to go, the rest of the team were no were to be seen, we were cold, wet and hungry. A fruitcake buried in the bottom of my boat only helped with the last one.

The previous evening we all did a roadside inspection of what appeared to be a pretty gnarly rapid. Today the group decided that watching us get through this would make interesting viewing and had hiked up the road for a look. Fortunately for us we had whizzed through these sections without any drama, but this now meant a long wait until the car keys arrived and we could get dry. After an hour of hanging around we hiked up the road and met the group coming back. Changed, we drove

east to try and find better weather around Florac and the Tarn Gorges. Through misted up car windows the snow gave way to sleet, then rain, then, a large yellow thing. Life just got better. Once in Florac a quick trip to tourist information was followed by a trip to another unattended camp site, then success, it was out with the money and into a Gite, home sweet home. All the wet stuff was hung, draped, dumped on every available high point, the fridge was stocked. Pasta on the boil, wine in the glass and a big dose of sponge and custard to finish. Oh how these Brits live it up.



Starting the Mementai next day was in complete contrast to the baltic conditions of the last two trips. Clear water, sunshine and less than ten layers of clothing. The river made it's way in great style back toward the town of Florac, class III/IV, through a beautiful wooded valley. Made even better by the Cadburys Creme Eggs Sten had given us all that morning, it was Easter Monday. Back home and Alistair soon had his shirt off, next day it was breakfast on the veranda, fresh croissants, we were enjoying the change of weather, does it get any better? Head down the Lower Tarn and it quickly gets a lot better. The Tarn River is a classic, not just in the area but probably the country. The river

cuts a deep clear channel through the granite bedrock, surrounded by towering cliffs, the upper section would be our eventual destination but for now a warm up on the easier lower section, class III/IV would act as a taste of things to come.

The put in was a bit of a drag, literally, if like me you are too weak to carry your boat for hundreds of yards. The early rapids were a maze of boulders, not difficult paddling but you couldn't relax for a second else you would be pinning or heading down a blind alley. As the valley opened up the riverbed became a solid slab of granite, creating great rapids as it steepened up and clear water rushed over the sculptured bed. Very photogenic stuff, especially the 2 minute video clip of me swimming most of the second rapid. After collecting the bits I dragged them all back to the top and managed to avoid a repeat performance but like the other guys who ran the final right slot I managed to get some vertical airtime leaving the hole.



Next day it was further up the valley heading for the Upper Tarn, 8km of VI/V/IV. Not sure about the others but I was just glad to get on the water and start paddling. On the journey up nerves had kept me quiet, I knew there would be a long day ahead, I wanted to paddle more than portage so that meant I'd be paddling closer to my limit than I had for a long time. We finished eight hours later, tired,

bit bruised, but buzzing from the experience. My overriding memory was looking back up stream and seeing the river tumbling down a mountainside of rapids, a mix of slabs, chutes and huge boulders. This was a river that begs to be paddled more than once, it was truly awesome, put it on your list, it's a true classic.



After the physical excess of the Upper Tarn we used the next day to both rest and travel. East to the Vervieze. This plan was delayed slightly when the manager of the Gite refused to return our deposit because it wasn't clean enough. Fifteen minutes of scrubbing and polishing and we had the 35-euro deposit back in the kitty.

However the further we drove the worse the weather got, river levels were low and finding a campsite was difficult, seems like most French campsites don't open until May. On the bright side the guide book raved about the Vervieze Gorge, a grade III classic, we headed out there next day, the weather had improved but the trip wasn't quite the classic we expected. After another wet night we

headed for the Upper Dordogne, it needed a minimum 4 cumec dam release to be paddled but we had no way of knowing if it was up. After a long drive we arrived at the put in but no matter how optimistic we tried to be we all agreed it was too dry and headed back toward the tent hoping to find water on the way. We found the water but it was a bit disappointing, the Chevalon, a class II trip with short gorge that was a bit harder, and then it started raining again.

On the way back we detoured to the Corveze, which looked like the Ogwen, it might be a possibility if the rain continued overnight and everyone got up very early next day to break camp, paddle, then rush for the night ferry.

An end of trip meal was the only thing we were thinking of now but like the campsites the restaurants were all closed. We finally had a meal but it wasn't the sort of thing France is famous for.

By breakfast, nobody mentioned paddling, it was just a case of pack up in the rain and start the long drive North; we hopped an early ferry, carried on driving, and arrived at Ian's by two the following morning.

Thanks to Ian and Alistair for the driving, Mike for the organising, Sten for the minor surgery and Ian again for all the pictures.

***Tony Morgan***

## ***Driftwood Rejuvenated***

The Driftwood Trophy paddler has now finally got what every paddler wants – a wave to play on!



Our sincere thanks to Nick Pope who designed and created the spectacular new wooden base.

Also, thanks to Rick Grimshaw who repaired the damage to the metalwork and also modified the legs to be able to fit into the base.

Finally, apologies to Mark Loftus who is the current holder of the trophy but hasn't seen it since the AGM! We hope he enjoys having it on display in its new shape until next year's AGM.

## ***For Sale/Wanted***

### **Canoe Trailer**

Small rectangular 3 layer frame. Mini wheels with Indespension units and with ply box on bottom layer for kit storage . Unbraked. Used for College Canoe Club. I have carried up to 12 kayaks on it behind a transit.

Out of use for some years but garaged.

Good for group use. No reasonable offer refused!

### **Wanted: River racer**

for canal use will trade/ part ex for the above.

**Contact Alan Clowes**

# 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, flippanant 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 Benthham*

## 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 Benthham*

### Ribble Newsletters (CD)

# ***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
Sept 3rd	Open	N/A	John Kington
Sept 10th	Polo	Jacky Draper	Steve Wilkinson
Sept 17th	Polo	Jacky Draper	Terry Maddock
Sept 24th	Polo	Jacky Draper	Sara Withall
Oct 1st	Open	N/A	Andy Rushton
Oct 8th	Beginner's Course	Tom Byrne	Peter Benett
Oct 15th	Beginner's Course	Tom Byrne	John Kington
Oct 22nd	Beginner's Course	Tom Byrne	Steve Wilkinson
Oct 29th	Open	N/A	Terry Maddock
Nov 5th	Open	N/A	Sara Withall
<b>Nov 12th</b>	<b>*Demo Boat night*</b>	<b>Martin Stockdale</b>	<b>Andy Rushton</b>
Nov 19th	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Peter Benett
Nov 26th	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	John Kington
Dec 3rd	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Steve Wilkinson
Dec 10th	Open	N/A	Terry Maddock
Dec 17th	Open	N/A	Sara Withall

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.

# ***Editor's bit***

## **Resignation**

The Committee is sorry to have to report that Jim Clift has been forced to resign from the club following advice from his union.

Jim has always been a great help with club training and has been a regular on the pool lifeguard rota for many years, and his contributions will be greatly missed.

## **Child Protection**

The club has two contacts for Child Protection enquiries and issues: Terry Maddock and Jacky Draper. If you have any

questions or concerns regarding Child Protection please contact either of the above.

## **Dates and deadlines**

The next committee meeting will be on September 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on September 21<sup>st</sup>. All submissions to me by Saturday September 18<sup>th</sup> at the latest please.

***Martin Stockdale***  
[secretary@ribblecanoecub.co.uk](mailto:secretary@ribblecanoecub.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 organised trips are in **bold**.  
Other Ribble CC events are in *italic*.  
River information:  
Burrs 0161 764 9649  
www.activity-centre.freemove.co.uk  
Canolfan Tryweryn 01678 520826  
www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk  
Teeside 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

### July

- 25 **Washburn White Water**  
9.00-5.00pm, nr Blubberhouses  
Martin Stockdale
- 28 Washburn White Water  
4.30-8.30pm, nr Blubberhouses  
07626 978654
- 30-1 **Rhosneigr Camp**  
Tim Langridge

### August

- 1 **Beginners' Trip CHANGED**  
at Rhosneigr (See Above)  
Terry Maddock
- 8 **Tryweryn White Water**  
Bala, N.Wales  
Andy Rushton
- 8 Washburn White Water  
9.00-5.00pm, nr Blubberhouses  
07626 978654
- 15 **Flat Water Touring Trip**  
Selby Canal (N. Yorks)  
Tom Byrne
- 18 Washburn Evening Cruise  
4.30-8.30pm, nr Blubberhouses  
07626 978654
- 20-22 **Ullswater Camp**  
Waterside, nr Pooley Bridge  
Steve Wilkinson

- 22 **Eden White Water**  
Lazonby to Armathwaite  
Steve Wilkinson
- 29 Washburn White Water  
9.00-5.00pm, nr Blubberhouses  
07626 978654

### September

- 4 Washburn White Water  
Slalom, WWW and Freestyle  
competition open to all  
07626 978654
- 5 **Beginners' Trip**  
R. Wenning, Bentham, Yorks.  
Terry Maddock
- 8 Washburn White Water  
4.00-8.00pm, nr Blubberhouses  
07626 978654
- 12 A Rest Day or Go Paddling  
with your Friends! The Tides,  
accesses and tours are awkward.
- 19 **Flat Water Touring Trip**  
Ullswater  
Tom Byrne
- 19 **Teesside White Water**  
10.45-16.45 Teesside Barrage  
Tony Morgan
- 26 **Ribble Moving Water**  
Ribchester to Alston  
Brian Woodhouse
- 26 Washburn White Water  
9.00-5.00pm, nr Blubberhouses  
07626 978654

### October

- 3 **Beginners' Trip**  
R. Rothay, Ambleside  
Terry Maddock
- 8 to 12 **Scottish White Water Trip**  
Roy Bridge, nr Spean Bridge  
Ian McCrerie

- 10 **Wharfe White Water**  
Hebden to Barden Bridge  
John Kington
- 10 Washburn White Water  
9.00-5.00pm, nr Blubberhouses  
07626 978654

- 17 **Flat Water Trip**  
Llangollen Canal  
Tom Byrne

- 17 **Estuary, Moving Water**  
Arnside Bore  
Steve Wilkinson

- 24 **Calder Moving Water**  
Gt Harwood to Ribchester  
Brian Woodhouse

- 31 **Teesside White Water**  
09.15-15.15 Teesside Barrage  
Tony Morgan

### November

- 5-7 **Tyne Tour**  
Bunkhouse accommodation  
Ian McCrerie

## Slalom

Please see [www.canoeslalom.co.uk](http://www.canoeslalom.co.uk) for event details and to confirm dates.

### August

- 21/22 Fairnilee 2/3/4/X Double
- 28/29 Grandtully 1/2 X Double

### September

- 4/5 Marple 3/4/X Double
- 18/19 Oughtibridge 3/4/X Double
- 25/26 West Tanfield 3/4/X Double
- 25/26 Bala Mill 3/4/X Double

### October

- 16/17 Stone 3/4 Double