

# TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK

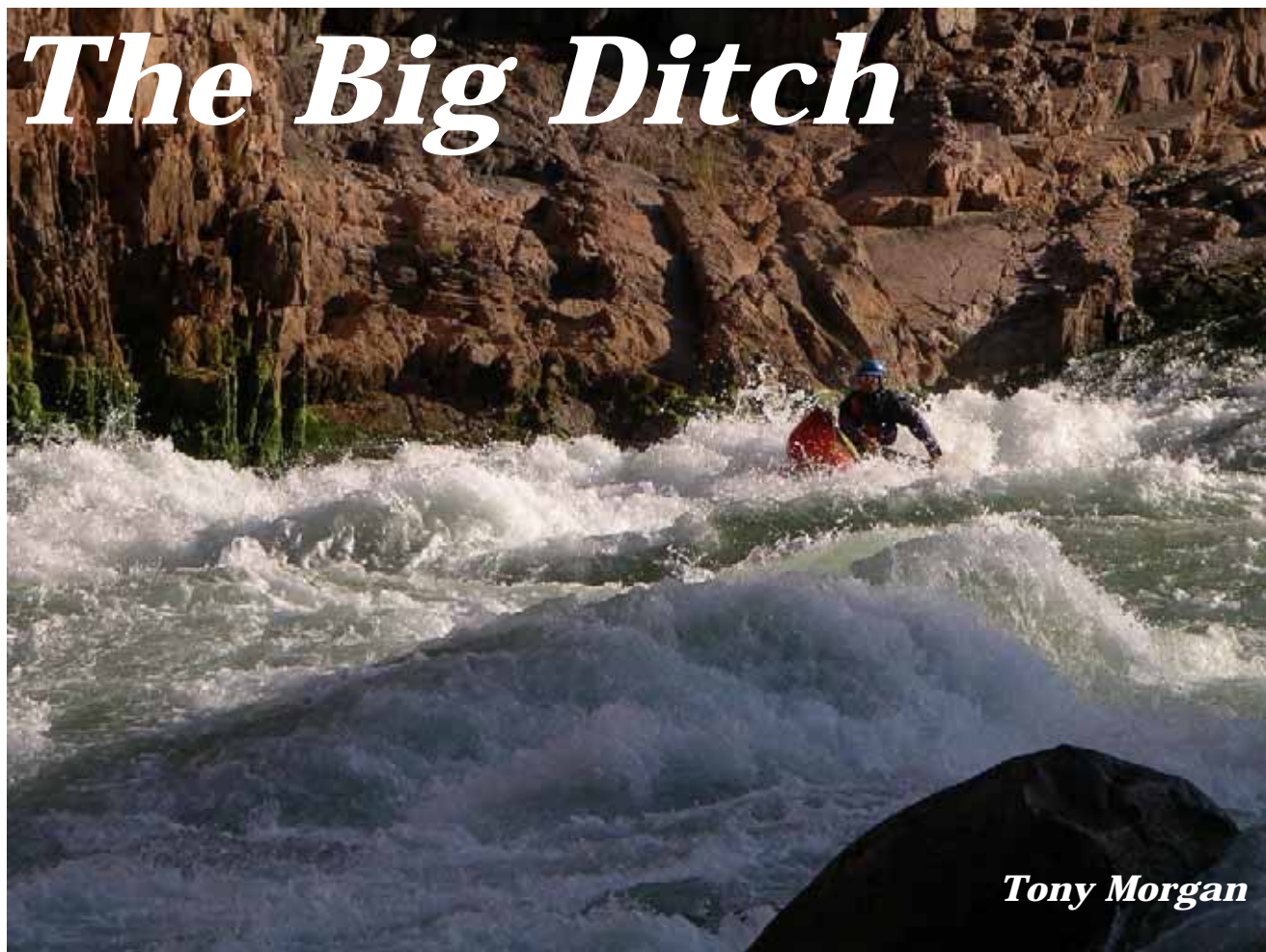


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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2004

## *The Big Ditch*



*Tony Morgan*

Not sure when the thought of doing 'IT' came onto my radar. Most people have some idea about 'IT', from a distant geography lesson, BBC documentary, travel article or standing on the rim, gazing down, whilst doing the American road trip. As a boater your exposure increases, pictures from the seventies showing long plastic boats crashing through brown soup, big water was fashionable then, rafting trips on holiday programmes, all of it being something other people do. I'd already had the chance of a trip launching September 2000, all the paddlers had a disability of some sort, but it was a guided raft trip: I wanted to paddle it. I

gambled, I waited. Three years after they finished I was at the launch site, Lee's Ferry, ready to start. Who says gambling is a mugs game. Downstream of me was a 220 mile, 21 day trip in a 12 foot open canoe, I would be doing 'The Grand Canyon', doing 'IT' my way.

Previous to this I had spent time paddling in the States, making a lot of friends, I was invited by one these, Russ, on his private trip with 15 others. Russ had patiently waited 15 years for his name to move to the top of the park service permit list, now he was completing the final paperwork on the boat

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ramp. The ranger was doing a final check that we had all the required equipment and paperwork to set off on one of the most heavily regulated and policed pieces of water in the world.

Getting here had involved most of us driving the 1300 miles south from Portland, Oregon, to Arizona, re-grouping and amalgamating several car loads of gear together into two shuttle vehicles, finally collecting food, and other essentials and re packing the whole thing one last time. Another 120-mile trip had us arriving at the put in to reassemble it all and pack it on the rafts.



It was a mixed bunch, six rafts, two tandem canoes, two kayaks, one inflatable kayak and me, in the red canoe. Sixteen people, some I knew well, others just met. Experience was just as mixed: Jon had rafted the canyon 16 times, Joanne, partner Karl, Jurgen, Audrey and Dennis had several raft descents between them. Bill had canoed it the year before, but Witt, Dave, Laurie, Martha, Becky, Doug, Russ, Rolley and I were canyon virgins.

I was armed with two great pieces of paddling information from a friend back in Oregon:

Q: "What are the rapids like Hank?"

A: "There's some big, scary, shit down there"

Q: "Any advice on how I run it?"

A: "Just go down the middle and manoeuvre as necessary"

I was thinking about this as I paddled away from the concrete ramp, accelerating on small riffles between rising cliffs, leaving habitation behind for 3 weeks. No worries.

The plan was to split the 220 miles of paddling up into 15 days, which meant daily mileages of between 8 and 22 miles. This would leave 6 layover days where we could hike or rest, or paddle if we hadn't kept to the schedule. Witt in the kayak and myself in the open boat would run the biggest rapids first acting as probes and safety boaters. Witt was also the video man, which is fortunate, because when I tried, I held the camera the wrong way round, looked down the lens and filmed my ear.



The rafts tended to paddle in a group, through the big stuff, needing the deep water, hard shell boats more spread out, having more choice of where to go in the rapids and could sneak some of the bigger ones down the rocky, more technical chutes, closer to shore. I figured I was unlikely to paddle here again and wanted the big water experience so was following Hanks advice "down the middle and all that". It didn't always work out upright, I had 4 swims and two rolls but it was a wild ride whichever way up you were.

The nature of the river is 'pool drop', meaning long flat stretches finish with a huge roaring noise at a horizon line, then a tongue of green water propelling you towards the white stuff at speeds of up to 18 miles an hour, which is freakishly fast. Generally the rapids are caused by boulders being flooded



out of huge side streams, which blocked the main river until it burst through, rolling the boulders down stream before settling down again to a calmer pace. Very few of the longer rapids had a straight run through, requiring some compulsory manoeuvring around 'holes' varying in size, but on average big enough to happily swallow a 17ft raft.



The daddy of these is the hole at Lava Rapid, which must have been 30 feet wide and at least 10 feet deep. As a no go zone they get your attention pretty early on, but it was a real buzz weaving between them having to just clip the edge of one to pass another, briefly looking into your nemesis if you get it wrong. Some of the bigger more notorious rapids such as Granite and Lava have no clean line through, everything is confused, water exploding and pulsing, you take your chances, you have to run a hole or two or climb up the huge lateral waves if you want the hero line.



Others can be huge, but fun, the wave train at Hermit was so big you had to paddle up the

face and hope you hit the lip before it broke. Each day had a dozen or so big rapids punctuated by sections of floating and gentle paddling: time to take in the scenery and give the adrenal gland a rest. The river has its own grading system 1–10, 10 is the hardest, being equivalent to our class V. I decided it was all class II but you needed a class V low brace. If you swam in the big stuff it was long, cold, and often hard catching your breath, but with nothing hard to crash into it wasn't serious.

Statistically the Colorado is a very safe river, most accidents happen in or around camp and drownings are very rare. Russ was adamant that no kayaker had ever drowned, he was a bit more vague when I asked about Englishmen in canoes.

Generally the water of the Colorado is mud brown; this is caused by sediment from the surrounding desert being washed in following a storm. The biggest contributor being the Little Colorado, on our trip the desert was dry and the Little Colorado ran turquoise blue, this meant that the Colorado itself was clear almost until the end. Making rapid reading and the photographs a whole lot nicer. The Little Colorado flows free though the desert, collecting some heat, which meant we were all naked, washing and swimming within 10 minutes of arriving. Despite also running through the desert the Colorado is actually released from a dam making it extremely cold all year round, we had air temperatures of 60–80 degrees, but the water was too cold for anything but the briefest skinny dip.

Power for Las Vegas is the reason for the dam, constantly releasing water at different levels throughout the day to coincide with the demands in supply. The water takes about 18 hours from release at the dam to arriving in the turbines; this produces a mini tidal effect and gradually changes the river level about 3 feet. This meant we often had to anchor the rafts overnight in the flow to avoid them being beached in the morning. When this happened one of us would sleep by the boats and keep checking they were safe every couple of hours, losing a boat would cause

major problems. Luckily the only thing we did loose on one of these occasions was a net bag of beer, cooling in the water but not very well attached. Easy come, easy go: we had found the stash floating in an eddy the day before and despite our best effort had only managed to halve it before it went on its watery way.



A further reminder of how business would like to use the river came around seventy miles into the trip when we noticed small excavations in the canyon walls at 40 foot intervals, these were test bores carried out by the power company who were planning to dam the canyon. After a last minute campaign by environmentalists it was stopped otherwise more pristine countryside would have been flooded to provide cheap power for the neons and air-conditioners of the SouthWest.

Life on the river requires a certain amount of routine; for example, to make the logistics of 3 meals a day and making/breaking camp less of a burden we divided into teams of four and had allocated work days. This meant that the work teams would set up the kitchens, prepare and serve food, clean up, take down the kitchen for a couple of days then the next team took over. This was the only practical way it could have worked, breakfast started in the dark at seven with real coffee followed by pancakes, fruit, toast, sausage, bacon, cereal, porridge... the list went on. Lunch was cold cuts of meat, salad, fruit, nuts, cookies and juice. Evening meal started with hors d'oeuvres, cocktails and munches before a two or sometimes three course meal. The

menu had been decided between all of us before the trip with veggie alternatives.



Food was packed, together with ice, in cool boxes previously chilled in an industrial refrigerator, in the order it would be removed. This meant that we had fresh meat, fruit and vegetables for most of the trip. An A4 folder gave the location on the rafts of each item, another list told you how much and of what you needed. A final, third sheet was the menu and how to prepare the meal. Might sound anal, but think about it, we had to produce forty-eight meals a day, a thousand meals before the trip ended with many made in the dark, others in a sandstorm, or torrential rain.

Drinking water came from the river and had to be filtered through a stirrup pump into Jerry cans then treated with chlorine, between 10 and 30 gallons a day. As in most American national parks what you take in you bring out. That means all rubbish, this included sieving all the washing up water to collect any bits of food and eating over a tarpaulin to catch any spills.

All this food and water going in had to come back out, peeing in the river is acceptable, but easier for the men than the women. For things more solid we had metal ammunition boxes, fitted with a toilet seat, fill them up, then start a new one and hope the seal worked correctly. Dennis carried the toilets - he also carried all the cooking gas, nobody wanted to think about the consequences of an explosion.

If people wanted to wash that was up to them, but hand washing at the toilet and before entering the kitchen was compulsory, the consequences of a bug getting loose in the food chain was serious, a rescue would be difficult and very expensive.

Booze wasn't on the group menu but if the rafters had luggage space after the other essentials were packed you could take what you liked. Most went for strong alcohol in clear plastic bottles that tasted like mouthwash and removed the enamel from your teeth, Bill, as always, produced a couple of cans of Guinness each night as a starter before the firewater.

Evening activities usually involved a lot of talking; with such a big, interesting, well travelled group, there was no end of subjects. On Halloween we had a party complete with fancy dress costumes, trick-or-treat candy, candles and double act of Dave and I dressed as preachers and giving a sermon. All rounded off with a singsong around the campfire.

The last night was also party night, a time to finish off the booze and in Rolley's case get too drunk, too early, and turn up in the kitchen naked, apart from an apron. In his defence he said he doesn't usually drink, he didn't elaborate on the dress code, oh dear, all those photos. Too be fair to Rolley he was more severely affected than the rest of us by the sight of Joanne who served food topless a few nights before. His homily to her was not as good as the real thing. I guess this is the sort of thing that happens when there's no TV.

Sleeping arrangements usually followed the pattern that first at camp got the prime spot; most rafters had camp beds keeping them off the sand - although not an issue now, in the summer the sand is too hot to sleep on. One thing we all needed to do was check our sleeping bags for snakes, scorpions and fire ants before you got in and your shoes for the same in the morning. Some had tents but the rest of us slept out under the stars, including

the two nights of sand-storms, which was quite an experience, my teeth crunched for days after. The sandstorm was part of two days of winds, hitting 40mph. Jon, a Canyon veteran, said it was the windiest weather he had ever encountered in his 16 trips. This upstream wind meant every paddle stroke was felt: I needed a kayak paddle to make forward progress. Sometimes the hard shells had to push the rafts by bumping them downstream just to keep them moving. Hours of hard work over two days kept us on schedule with a lay over day to look forward to.



Lay over days were planned to be at trailheads or particularly beautiful campsites. What you did was up to you, but most of us swapped paddling for hiking, heading up through layered canyons to the rim on two occasions, visiting ancient Anastazi Indian ruins and camps, exploring natural springs, creeks and side canyons. Dennis spent much of his spare time tracking animals, a hobby of his, its called 'dirt time'. He'd find tracks, scat (turds to the English) or chewed branches and follow them around. We spent a day tracking ringtail cats, rats, snakes and lizards around the camp. I got so interested that at night I would smooth a wide circle of sand



around the kitchen and in the morning you could check the tracks to see what had been visiting in the night. At one camp I was kept awake by a ringtail cat rifling through the kitchen looking for food, being nocturnal they have huge eyes which would catch my headtorch as I tried to follow it up and down the rock face. The biggest animal we saw were the families of bighorn sheep precariously picking their way up and down the rock face, grazing by the water's edge, or licking salt which leached from the rocks.



On a hike up Havasu creek we came across a tarantula, snake tracks were common but sightings rare, lizards, mice and pack rats the most common visitors to camp. Another less welcome visitor was the raven. In its quest for food this super intelligent bird could operate zips, enter tents, open milk cartons and peck through dry bags, if it wasn't nailed down or hidden, these guys would have it.

As for humans, it was eight days before we met others on the river. One group were rangers monitoring the problem of Tamarisk bushes, this non-native plant has taken over the water's edge crowding everything else out, including the willow which was food for several animals. The other group were scientists checking water supplies from side streams to try and locate the source of a virus that had entered the river and caused debilitating sickness in several groups the year before: 63 people, unable to continue, had to be rescued. Throughout the second half

of the trip we would hopscotch down the river with these groups.

However our main interest was not their sterling environmental work but one of the female raft guides, blonde, 6ft tall, with a cowboy hat. We named her the rodeo queen and two days before the end of the trip came around a bend in the river to find her, and all the other girls, naked and lathered like something from an x-rated bathing commercial, the rodeo queen still had her hat on.



Apart from those groups one other group came past on a faster 14-day trip and we caught up a group of dories near the end. Dories are rowing boats, with a small deck covering an upturned bow about 14 feet long. I had seen dories paddled on white water rivers all over the west coast, just great to watch but unlike rafts or kayaks, if you hit a rock you could be sunk, literally.

In the early days of river exploration before the Second World War this was the only craft capable of travelling on this type of water, Buzz Holstrom from Oregon ran the Colorado and other rivers alone, just him, the rowing boat, and hundreds of miles of wilderness. The end of the war brought army surplus rubber rafts and wetsuits onto the market, add more spare time, a restless population, and the wilderness rivers were opened up. Although not everyone uses a boat to travel on the Colorado, in the fifties, two friends decided to swim it. With flippers, wetsuits, camping gear in dry bags, a cine camera, and absolutely no

idea what they were letting themselves in for. They survived and wrote a book but I don't think anyone has followed them.

Those are a few from hundreds of amazing stories from the Colorado, but one of the most incredible would have to be the first descent by Civil War veteran, Colonel Powell and his team in the late 1860's. In unsuitable rowing boats with no experience the one armed colonel and his men spent months navigating the Colorado. The story has been recorded in a book 'Into the Great Unknown' and is one of the most amazing stories. Powell's daily diaries of the event are also in print, I took a copy with me, each day I ran a section I would read his account of the same section.



Two particular rapids, Sockdolanger and Grapevine, left me in awe of his group's bravery. Both have sheer canyon walls on each side rising straight out of the river, which thunders down the gap in a train of exploding white water. With no way of inspecting, lining the boats down or portaging, no way of knowing if a huge waterfall was around the corner they pulled

on the oars and headed for the centre of the river.

Happily the spirit of adventure still isn't dead and after a rapid called Upset I watched a couple on the beach, blowing up a supermarket quality inflatable canoe.

Apparently they had abseiled thousands of feet down from the rim with the boat, climbing gear and camping gear, they intended to float and portage a short section for a few days, doing some climbing on the way. Then they would make their way back up to the rim and across the desert to the nearest road. All totally illegal in this national park, apparently they had a hiking permit and were planning to act dumb if challenged. I never got chance to talk to them and they declined the offer of an escort from us to our next camp, but Laurie said one had a 'Scottish accent', ha, Brits abroad.

For the last 40 miles of the trip I traded my canoe with Dennis for his oared raft and got the chance to try another watercraft. This was 16ft long, had a metal frame in it which supported a single seat and the oars. You would travel backwards on the flat bits, turn round for the rapids, line it up, and if you got the angles right bounce through. Once in the rapids changing direction is difficult, you often only get one pull on the oars. Travelling this way along the remaining few miles I shipped the oars, crashed out on the deck and drifted towards the finish. The longer this takes the better; I didn't want to go home.

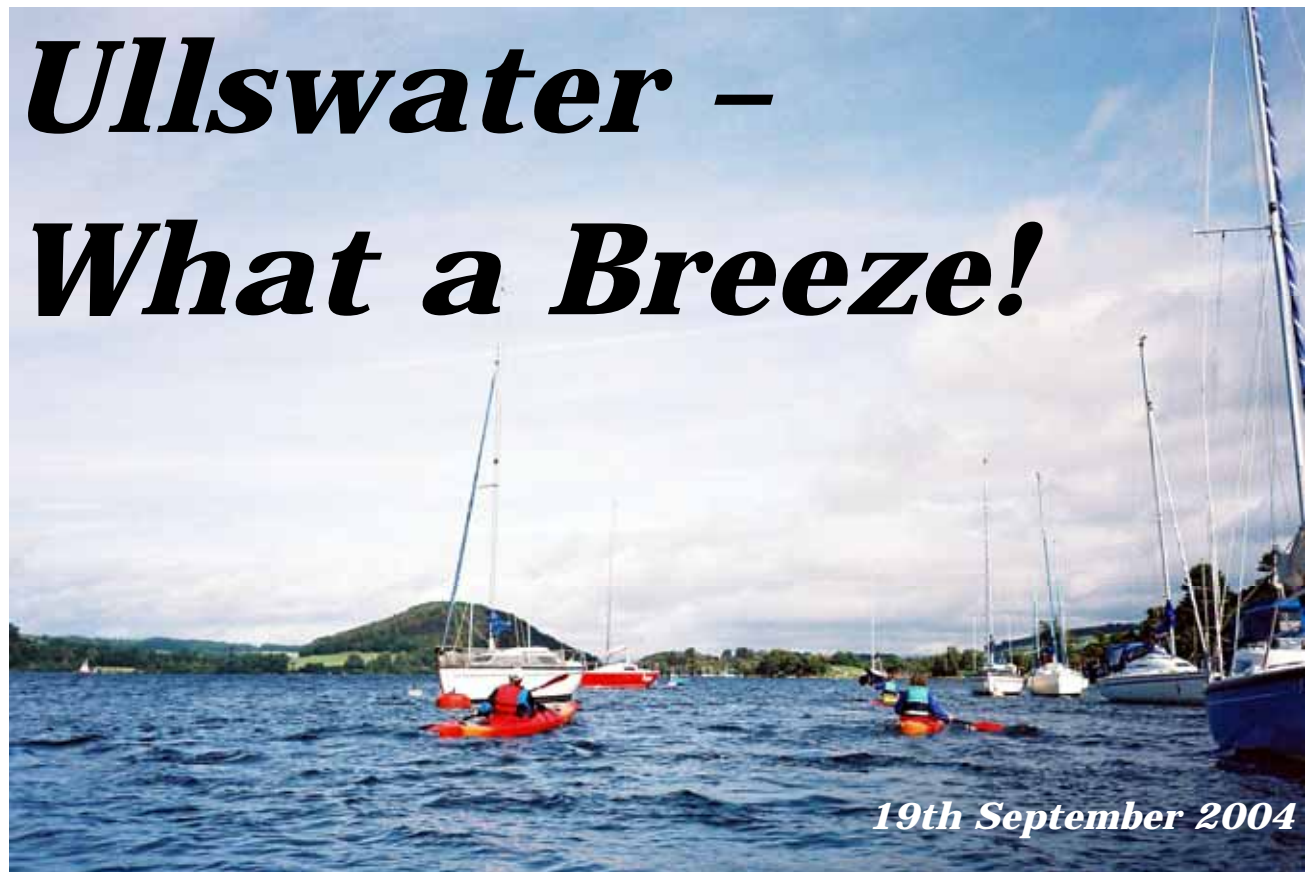
# ***River Wye Weekend***

**22 and 23 Jan 2005**

A lovely white water touring river with several grade 3 rapids and a couple of grade 4 in high water. We will probably paddle Builth Wells to Llyswn (12 miles) and Llangurig to Rhyader (10 miles). If enough people contact

me early enough I may be able to book a bunkhouse otherwise it will be camping.

***Andy Dowe***



Paddlers: Tom, Mark, Chris, Janet, Clive, Janet, Iain, Albert, Kath, Allan, Jo, Steph, Ian K., John, Pauline and Keith.

Before we set off from Glencoyne it was decided that we would split into two groups. Those who might fancy circumnavigating Ullswater would form one group, while those who didn't want to paddle quite so far, would form the second. Because the two groups didn't meet up at all during the day we have decided to share writing about what turned out to be a slightly unusual trip.

### **Janet's bit**

Our group consisted of Clive, Janet, Albert, Kath, Chris and myself and for the first few miles John and Pauline who must have done some Hawaii Five O type paddling in order to keep up with us in their Canadian before finally dropping back to join the other party.

We began by paddling south as Chris had read somewhere that when the weather gets bad, conditions on this stretch of the lake can deteriorate rapidly and we thought it would be

a good idea to get it over with early on - we had paid *some* attention to the weather forecast - *honest!* The bit of lake around Glenridding was very quiet and really rather pretty and at this stage the weather was damp but otherwise OK.

In general, paddling during the morning was fairly easy and we felt we were making good progress. Just over two hours after setting off we rounded Geordies Crag and stopped for lunch among the bracken that was declared by Albert and Kath to be prime sheep tick country though, to the best of my knowledge, no one succumbed.

Unfortunately, almost as soon as we began our afternoon paddle we were hit by a strong cross wind as we crossed Howtown Bay. Kath's hat blew off but no one was confident enough to go back to look for it. The wind was still strongish as we went up the lake but we surfed some waves, occasionally struggled to go straight and on the whole made rapid progress. We were soon speeding past the yacht club then the campsite and not long after were at Pooley Bridge.





We crossed the lake through some very splashy waves, luckily with no mishaps. It was hard work but good fun. Chris had this theory that the west side of the lake would be more sheltered - hollow laughter. During the afternoon I never managed to summon up the courage to let go of my paddle for long enough to use my wind gauge but it was strong with a capital B\*\*\*\*\*! It wasn't all doom and gloom; we particularly liked all the cormorants sitting in the trees though they did take on the aspect of vultures as they watched us paddling by.

We ploughed on through strengthening winds until we reached a point when Kath and I knew we just couldn't manage the last three miles. We were going forwards but only just and it was exhausting. We pulled the boats up in Gowbarrow Bay and the chaps walked back to the car park. At some point Kath received a text message from Iain to say the other group were at Howtown Bay; we assumed he'd found her hat and wondered where the rest of her was! We three gals sat at the side of the road awaiting the chaps' return and attracted some strange looks from passers by. When I say attracted well, you know, we were all a bit cold and bedraggled and I suppose three women wearing buoyancy aids, sitting at the side of the road on small chairs in a howling gale did look a bit unusual. As Chris, Clive and Albert walked back they met Ian K. near Aira Force who was waiting for Tom to come back with *his* car, but that's another story....

## Allan's bit



The remaining paddlers set off about 15 minutes after the first group on what was *supposed* to be a more gentle affair, we too headed south for Glenridding and enjoyed a relatively relaxed pace as Mark got used to being in Tom's Carolina touring boat. Some of the group took a closer look at Goldrill Beck, the river flowing into the lake and thought it would be nice to investigate further, but being unsure of the access situation and the fact that the others were waiting patiently in the lake we rejoined them.

As we turned to start our journey north along the east shore of the lake it became apparent that all was not well in the borrowed Carolina. Mark was suffering from the effects of jet lag from his business travels a couple of days earlier, add to this the after-effects of a sociable evening the night before and he was not a happy chap. As we plotted a solution to Marks problem, John and Pauline appeared in their Canadian heading in what seemed to be the wrong direction. A navigation error?? No they had gallantly abandoned their attempt at the circumnavigation, as they didn't want to hold up the others. *I think they had seen the real weather forecast.* On finding out about Mark they volunteered to accompany him back to the car park, Tom went along as well and arranged to rejoin us at the lunch stop near Aira point.

We were now split into 3 groups on the lake and the wind was starting to gather strength, but was not yet causing concern. Good progress was made to the lunch halt, was it

the tail wind or was everyone hungry? With Mark having called it a day, Tom, John and Pauline rejoined us. Lunch was a reasonably leisurely affair; Keith even produced a stove and cooked his food on site. After discussing the possibilities, John and Pauline wisely returned to the car park whilst the rest of us decided to continue along the lake to Howtown bay, we crossed the lake and continued up the eastern shore unaware of what was to come.

After a floating rest halt at the entrance of the bay the wind was becoming more noticeable, and it was decided to return down the east side of the lake as that would afford us the most shelter. We made good progress as far as the headland near Sandwick but by now the wind was starting to form white tips on the waves and the sight of a reasonable sized yacht almost on its side made us all sit up and take notice. We ran the boats ashore on a small beach to rest and take stock of the situation, we were on the opposite side of the lake to our cars and either had to cross or paddle all the way round the southern half of the lake. Cue more discussions, did we cross going head into wind or go with the wind behind us. We noticed the wind was blowing diagonally across the lake at this point,

directly towards a house on the opposite shore, a suitable target we thought. Some of us had remained in our boats on the beach and as if to decide for us, a strong gust of wind now blew Tom off the beach and away towards the house. Ok decision made, follow our leader, we go across with the wind behind us. The wind seemed to ease as we crossed and eventually we all turned and headed into the wind, making landfall about 2.5 miles away from the car park at Dobbin wood. There now followed the hardest paddle I have ever endured. Ian K despite a brave effort in a very short playboat was forced to give up with a pulled shoulder muscle at Aira point and Tom joined him for the resultant walk to the car park. That left 5 paddlers attempting to get back. Youthful determination/madness saw Iain R, Joanne and Stephanie return, Keith was likened to the Duracell bunny for his flat refusal to give up. My excuse, well if my teenage daughters could do it I had to keep face somehow, or was it the fact that I was sharing a tandem with one of them and 2 paddles in one boat is easier. Maybe the Kiwi 2 isn't such a bad boat after all.

***Janet Porter & Allan Hacking***

# ***Ladies Novice Polo***

## ***Tournament 1 (York, 30th Oct 2004)***

Five of us; Kathryn Howarth, Rebecca Sly, Nicky Marsh (the captain), Trish Allen and Helen James, arrived at Yearsley Pool, York for the first tournament of the season. We were about to play our first game with no idea of what to expect.

The first match was against Lancaster Uni. An early goal by Nicky cheered us all up, and was quickly followed by a second from Trish. At half time we were feeling quite elated, and in an unknown position, leading. Might we actually win a match? Fine play from everyone enabled Kathryn to get her first

goal, a powerful throw that wasn't going to be stopped by man or beast, let alone a paddle! Nicky's second goal of the match gave us a final score of 4-0. Our first win, and deserved after some good play.

After a short break we were back on the water, this time against York Uni, after 7 minutes of hard play the score was level at 0-0, despite some good attempts on goal from both teams. During the second half, some fantastic play from Helen meant that many loose balls became ours. A push saw Rebecca upside down, out the boat and swimming for

the side. At last a goal from Nicky put us in the lead, and some great goal keeping from Trish kept us in the game. With Rebecca back on the pitch (you have to get back on behind your own goal) a second goal was scored before the final whistle. Two wins in two games! Could we keep it up?

After one game off we were back on the pitch ready to face Green Star. These were by far the strongest opponents so far and despite a good effort, our tiredness and lack of practice saw us let one or two goals past! With a final score of 0-6 we'd rather not talk about this one! (Although we'd like to note that this is still a huge improvement on some of last years scores!)

At this point we had over an hour for a break so we grabbed a bite to eat and tried to stay awake and warm. I'm not too sure that the star jumps helped but it kept us occupied! The tournament was (as ever) running behind schedule by now and so we were being asked to line up before we'd even got on the water. This fourth match was against Sheffield Uni. The lack of opportunity to warm up and wake

### Results:

Game No.	Team	Score	Team	Score
1	Lancaster Uni.	0	Ribble CC.	4
4	Ribble CC.	2	York Uni.	0
6	Green Star CC.	6	Ribble CC.	0
11	Ribble CC.	0	Sheffield Uni.	1
13	Liverpool Uni.	0	Ribble CC.	5

### League Results After Tournament 1

5 points for a win, 3 for a draw and 1 for a loss.

There were no friendly matches that would have counted as 3: 1 losses.

	Games Played	Won	Drew	Lost	Goals For	Goals Against	Goal Diff.	Points
Sheffield Uni.	5	4		1	10	5	5	21
Green Star	4	4			18	1	17	20
Ribble CC	5	3		2	11	7	4	17
Lancaster Uni.	5	2		3	2	13	-11	12
York Uni.	5	1		4	2	7	-5	9
Liverpool Uni.	4			4	1	11	-10	4

up on the pitch was apparent as we leisurely paddled around. Wait a minute - this is meant to be a fast aggressive sport! We picked up and played some good polo, unfortunately it proved to be a tough game with an actual goal eluding us. We hit the goalposts and the goalie's paddle a number of times.

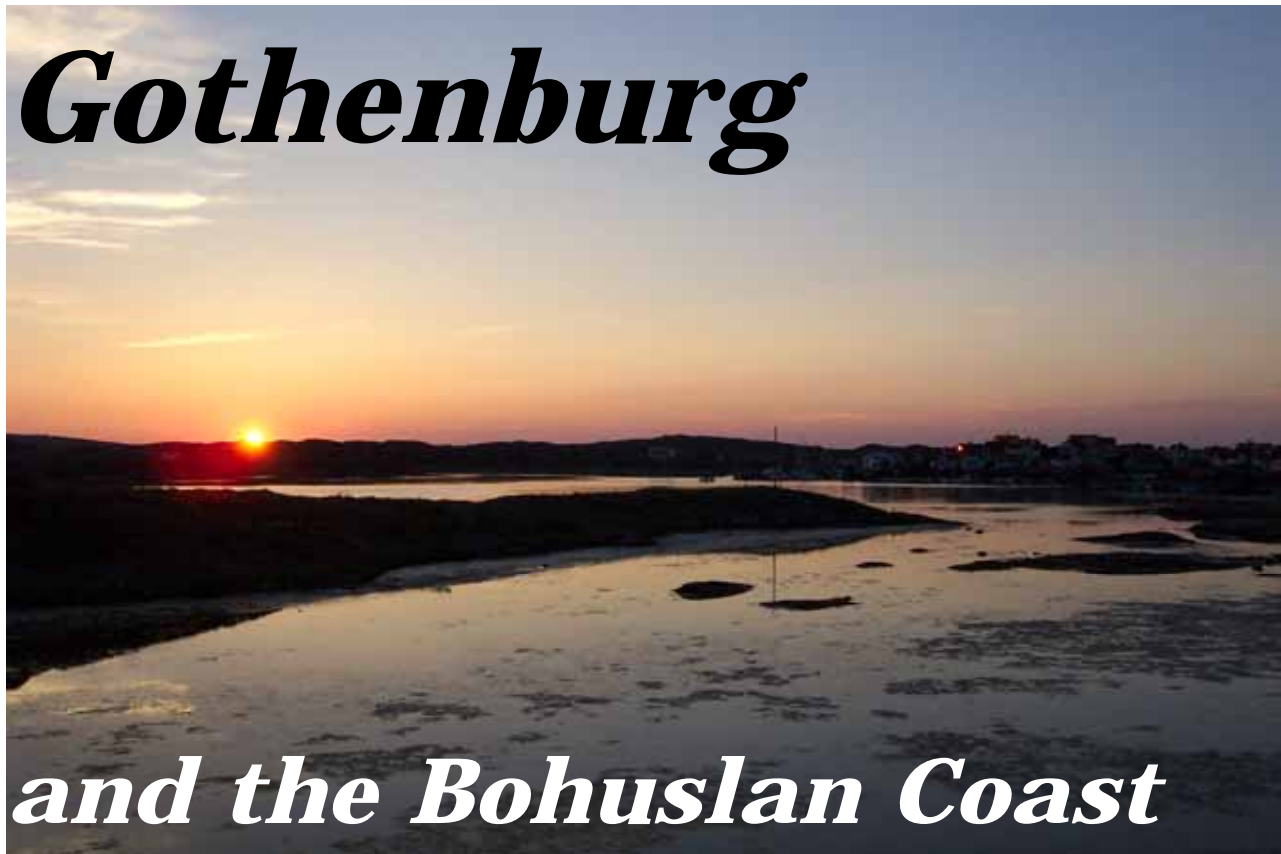
Unfortunately Sheffield snuck a goal past us and we just couldn't equalize.

We were quickly onto the last game, Liverpool Uni, much more awake and raring to go (I think feeding Helen sugar helped!). An early goal by ourselves set the pace and by half time we were 2-0 up. Trish scored her second goal of the tournament and Rebecca got her first. The final score an impressive 5-0 win.

All in all a brilliant start to the season. We've already beaten our winning tally of last year and saw some fantastic play all round. We sprinted, defended, attacked, swam, rolled, lost, won (and Helen did all this unable to move her little finger due to an injury in the first game). In all, an awful lot in a short space of time.

***Helen James and Nicky Marsh***





Late July and summer finally arrives. Kate and I decided to dash off to the coast for a long weekend cycling, exploring and lazing. We weren't too sure where we were going but wanted to explore the islands North of Gothenburg: the Bohuslan region. This lies about an hour's drive from Gothenburg and is the boating paradise and play ground for the Swedes.



The larger islands are linked by bridges, the smaller are only accessible by passenger ferry. Not really knowing the area, I decided

to apply my 'wine selection method' to finding a camp site. I'm sure we all do it, it's just that I'm honest enough to admit it: I choose wine by the label; not the name, but the style. If it's funky, it's tasty! Works every time! So, back to the campsite. Applying this theory to destinations is tricky but my eyes were drawn to a village called Ellos - mainly as it's a Spanish sounding version of my dogs name and she's cool, so that place must be alright. Ellos is on the reasonably large island of Orust.

We arrived at Ellos to find a small community, but no campsite. There was a sign back down the road for a place called Stocken and as luck would have it, a campsite. Totally random selection had brought us here and I class it as fate that Stocken camping just happened to be the home of Orust Kayaks ([www.orust-kajak.se](http://www.orust-kajak.se)).

I'll skip a day now as you're not interested in us moving pitches due to screaming kids and enormous mozzies or cycling and crazy golf. The only thing worthy of note is that we booked a double kayak for an exploration of the Coast.



Orust Kayaks is a very professional set up, unlike some of the kayak rentals we've had over here. After signing disclaimers and handing over the cash, the guys took us to meet our boat. Armed with a paddle float (new toy for me that), a pump, chart, food, drink and sun cream, we headed out with the many other paddlers into the crystal clear water. It's odd to think that this coast shares the same water as Newcastle. As we glided effortlessly along (doubles are great if you're in the back with a rudder!!), I remember pondering the difference between the chocolate brown water on our East coast and this crystal blue on their West coast - my conclusion being sewage!



It was a beautiful day, clear blue skies and a gentle breeze. Peace was soon shattered as we rounded the headland separating the campsite from the marina and saw what appeared at first glance like a marine motorway. As I alluded to earlier, this area is a play ground for the Swedish Yachting set and seeing how as many Swedes own boats as cars, it can quite hairy in the channels between the major islands. We had to get across as the peace and tranquillity was on the other side of the

'road', so we aligned our boat with the traffic, then waited for a gap large enough to sprint through. This was the most unpleasant part of the trip as we were bounced by wash then counter wash from the shore as we picked the spot. A gap soon opened up and we dashed across the first imaginary lane. Then, gliding in behind a motor launch, we scooted across to the safety of the other side.

After only a few minutes, a smaller channel appeared on our right and we were through, no boats behind and an absolutely stunning view in front. We relaxed into a gentle rhythm as we glided amongst the islands. I won't bore you with details of each paddle stroke, but rather tell you a little about what the Swedes get up to. The weekend pursuit for most seems to be, grab a boat or canoe, find an island, get naked and lie in the sun and swim. The water is teeming with jellyfish so there was no way I was going skinny dipping!



We found our island, enjoyed a great picnic in stunning surroundings, then paddled off down South towards an island settlement (Karingon). As we approached Karingon, the traffic increased. We fancied an ice cream and this seemed like a good place to try. So, we drifted in behind a yacht which was negotiating the entrance to the small harbour. Once in, we quickly discovered that this place is not set up to cater for canoeists. The only landing spot was a slip way which looked like the North Face of Everest. Kate sensibly decided to stay in the boat and I gave my 'Teva spider rubber' a chance to prove itself. Going up wasn't too bad, but coming back with two Magnums was tricky. Not half as tricky as getting back into the boat though.

KT held the ices and I performed what can only be described as a text book re-entry.



We bobbed around near the slip way enjoying our ices, much to the amusement of the watching locals all sat in their luxury yachts. We may have mumbled the odd obscenity, I really can't remember! We used the same plan on exit as we did on entry and slipped in just behind an exiting yacht, waves were exchanged for nods (well how the hell are you supposed to wave and paddle!) and we were free.

A full day's paddling and exploring the archipelago left us hungry for more. Regrettably we didn't take our tent with us, as

a night out on an island would have been so perfect, watching the sun slowly sink below the distant horizon.

## Facts and Stuff

The Bohuslan region is about an hour's drive from Gothenburg, which is regularly serviced by ferry from Newcastle. It's a fabulous coastline stretching from Kungälv up to the Oslo Fjord!

Stocken Camping is a great base camp and Orust Kayaks supply some excellent quality equipment. This is a tidal coastline and although you are largely sheltered from large waves by all the out lying islands, you are exposed to wind and currents. If planning on camping, you need to bear in mind that the islands are basically large rocks, so securing your tent and getting shelter could be tricky so seek local advice. The Orust kayak website should contain all the advice you need.

This area is a must paddle, we will be back!

***Dave Ellison***

# ***Ribble Ladies Polo team***

## **Who are we?**

We are a group of ladies of mixed age and ability who make up Ribble Ladies. We play in the Northwest and Yorkshire Ladies Novice League, meeting for 4 tournaments a year.

I'd like to say that we are serious, training regularly and striving to win. But it would be a lie. Last season (2003/2004) we failed to win a game and found ourselves at the bottom of the league. Not to be deterred we've entered again this year... we can only go one way!!!

If you fancy trying polo, are female (sorry chaps, organiser's rules not mine) and are

game for a laugh let us know. We're allowed a squad of 8 at each tournament, 5 on the pitch at any time with up to 3 rolling substitutes. So far we have yet to have enough players to have a substitute. My name's Nicky and I'm the captain, you can get my details from Terry or Martin.

## **Table of tournaments**

30th October 2004	York
27th November 2004	Irlam
30th January 2005	Doncaster? (tbc - Ribble not playing)
12th March 2005	Irlam

***Nicky Marsh***



# *Rothay Rampage*



Who was paddling? A rather large group of twenty-five, which included: John and Tom Kington, Allan, Lesley, Joanne and Stephanie Hacking, Phil and Sam King, Mark and Helen James, Sue Sharman, Dave Hull, Barry Eva, Mark Loftus, Terry Maddock, Tony Morgan, Philip Garsed, Richard, my dad, Clive, and me, and a small contingent from Chorley Adventure Youth Group.

We arrived at Waterhead Car Park at 10:30 to find most of the group already there. As we pulled up at Waterhead Tony, Sam and his dad were leaving to inspect the levels of the Rothay. Terry followed soon after to check the levels elsewhere.

A few minutes later the first inspection car arrived back with news that the stepping-stones were nearly fully covered. Terry arrived back soon after to report that the Hotel Weir was flowing fast. What proceeded was the usual commotion surrounding any Rothay

trip. Various people, boats and kit swapped cars and headed off to the get in at Grasmere.

Our car, now with Sue and Helen in, was the second car to set off for the get-in; we were hoping to get all our things over the wall before everyone else arrived. Allan and the rest of his family drove past the get in, but returned shortly after realising that we had pulled in.

As we looked down to the lake the tricky climb over the wall was made that little bit harder; a fisherman was sat, under his large, green umbrella, at the bottom of the wall. I climbed over the wall and after a short talk with the fisherman paddling kit started coming, from various directions, over the wall. I can happily tell you that the fisherman was not harmed during these proceedings!

I got on the water pretty quick once our car and Allan's car had been emptied; the shore was filling up with boats and more had still to

come. I sat out in the middle of the lake with Sue and my dad watching the other cars unload. Then the fisherman stood up. Oh dear, what had happened? He started reeling in his line, he had caught what we thought was a fish, but later it was said to have been his bait. Oh well, I had thought our noisy activities had awoken them!



Half an hour later, the rest of the group was on the water waiting for John and Allan to return in our car with my mum driving. Whilst we waited Terry explained the situation regarding the paddle downstream to Windermere. As the group was so large and there were six moving water virgins we buddied up. Tom, John, Dave, Barry, Mark Loftus and myself had a new paddling partner for the day as we led the six inexperienced paddlers down their first river.

The stretch between Grasmere and Rydal went past in a haze as I chased Tom, a member of the youth group, down the river, whilst trying to explain the fundamentals of moving water. I hope he understood what I told him. Well perhaps he did; he didn't swim once.

During this small section of river there were no swims. Terry said this was slightly unusual. It was all to change on the second section of the trip. We paddled across Rydal Water and stopped for dinner just after the islands, on the opposite side to the road.

Dinner was a long affair, and during this forty or so minute interval Tom Kington tried to

roll Tony's Savage canoe. He failed, but he had three attempts before he parted company with Tony's boat. It was a good effort regardless of the outcome.

Shortly after Tom's 'swim' the group got back onto the water and began paddling again. I think there were about seven swims on this section of river. I witnessed two of these: Mark James capsized in the rapids, just after where the lake joins the river. Tony, fastened to a throw line, assisted him out of the rapids. The second swim was from a young member belonging to the youth group who became entangled in a tree, the outcome was inevitable!

My dad did swim at the bottom of the rapids where Mark had swum. Well it wouldn't be a moving water trip if my dad didn't swim. He tells me that it wasn't his fault. He had made it through the rapids and was looking to breakout. However, the paddler before him, a member of the youth group, capsized and looking for aid saw my dad's boat. He grabbed the boat and in fell the rescuer, who now had to be rescued. He also tells me that he had to rescue himself as everyone else was dealing with the other swimmer.

From these rapids down to the Hotel Weir the Rothay takes a bit more of a subdued approach. There was the odd ripple, and small stopper, but nothing of any interest for the adrenaline junkie. I suppose there were the stepping-stones, but the level was just right and you could paddle over the top of them on river left. Terry however ended up in the water. He was assisting the more adventurous paddlers who wanted to take the hard way. Terry was stood astride a gap in the stepping-stones directing them through a gap when one paddler nearly went through his legs! Terry quickly stepped backwards to avoid the paddler and ended up knee deep in the water. Definitely not a swim!

The small weir between the stepping-stones and the Hotel Weir looked to be quite good for side surfing because of the level. I had one

run, but never seemed to get back onto the wave.

Next came the Hotel Weir. The highlight of any Rothay trip has to be the play wave formed here.



I paddled down the weir backwards to check on Tom as he made his approach to the drop. I had told him previously about the weir and he had been looking forward to surfing the wave, but for some strange reason he flew down the drop, lost his paddle and never quite returned for that illusive first weir experience. I however had some good runs on the wave. My buddy, Tom, was sat in an eddy with Phil King just around the corner.

John, Tom Kington, Barry, Dave, Mark Loftus and myself spent a good twenty minutes zipping along the wave. There was nothing too fancy from me, but John had some good long runs on the wave and Tom also seemed to enjoy himself; the stern and bow of his boat frequently disappeared under water.

The paddle down to Windermere is always the most boring part of the trip. However, the first group leaving the weir were following a Kingfisher and a Dipper down the river. During the two hours that we had been paddling down the river the wind had picked up to something around the 15mph mark,

according to Terry, and there were some sizable waves washing into the river's delta. Tom and I crossed the lake, hassle free, to Waterhead where the rest of the group were playing.

My buddy got out of his boat and pulled it ashore, but I stayed on the water for a roll or two. Tony's Savage canoe was sat on the shore and it looked like it would be fun to paddle. It took some getting used to; I had a slight wobble half-a-meter from the shore and had to put my hand down on the shallows to stop myself from capsizing. Once I had regained some of my balance my confidence grew and I paddled a little further out from the shore, but then quickly returned to the side. I swapped positions with John. Tom persuaded him into having a go, I think! John, like myself, paddled out from the shore and then hastily returned.



In all, everyone enjoyed the day, I hope. There were a number of swims and I hope they will be reported sometime in the near future. Thanks must go to the driver of the Chorley Adventure Youth Group minibus and my mum for assisting in shuttles and getting some great photos of the trip. They helped make the trip run that little bit smoother.

***Iain Robinson***



# ***AGM 2004***

Notice is hereby given that the Ribble Canoe Club AGM will be held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2005 at 8:00pm. The venue is yet to be decided and will be confirmed in the January newsletter.

This meeting is open to every Club member and is your opportunity to raise any issues you may have about the Club, its organisation and the way you want the Club to be run in future. Items of discussion for inclusion on the Agenda and proposals for new committee members are therefore invited and should be notified in writing to the Hon. Secretary, Martin Stockdale no later than 31st December 2004.

Current Committee members are:

Chairman	Terry Maddock
Secretary	Martin Stockdale *
Treasurer	John Kington *
Competition Secretary	Vacant
Quartermaster	Steve Swarbrick *

General Committee	Tom Byrne *
	Grahame Coles
	Jacky Draper
	Peter Jones *
	Tim Langridge *
	Mark Loftus
	Clive Robinson
	Brian Woodhouse *

Co-Opted during 2004	Tom Kington
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Resigned during 2004	Maria Parkes
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Those marked \* are due to retire by rotation (every 2 years) and being eligible offer themselves for re-election.

The General Committee propose the following members for election onto the general committee:

Dave Ellison  
Tom Kington

Proposals for the role of Competition Secretary, as well as any other proposals for committee members are most welcome and should be notified to Martin Stockdale as described above. Agreement will then be sought at the AGM.

The full Agenda for the AGM will be posted in the January edition of the newsletter.

***Martin Stockdale***

# ***Slalom News***

Overall, this has been an excellent season for Ribble's slalom paddlers. Alex Jones started the season ranking 21st in Div 1 (K1 Men) and moved up 7 places to 14th. Mick Huddleston had his best ever season, moving up from 29th place to 23rd place in Div 1. These are great results as the competition at the top of Div 1 is extremely fierce.

Richard Draper started the season ranking 118th in Div 2 and finally managed to get promoted to Div 1 on the very last race of the season. As a result of this, Richard has been accepted onto the World Class Start Programme (a programme funded by Sport England for developing and nurturing junior paddlers "who have the necessary characteristics to achieve future world class success").

Helen James also had a very good season. She started the season ranked 5th in Div 3 (K1 Women), was promoted early in the season at Marple, and finished the season ranked 12th in Div 2. Given this performance, promotion to Div 1 early next season should be on the cards!

Following a very successful beginners trip with Terry to Marple earlier this year, we've also had a grand total of 4 paddlers promoted to Div 3. Well done to Iain Robinson, Sam King, Jonathan Shaw and Jacquelyn Shaw!

The slalom season proper starts in March next year, but in the meantime, there are the Staffs and Stone mini slaloms on:

23 Jan 2005

06 Feb 2005

27 Feb 2005

These are handicapped informal events, open to all abilities of paddlers. We're intending to organize a trip to at least one, and probably two, of these slaloms. They are a great way of introducing novice paddlers to slalom competitions. News about these will be posted on the website nearer to the event.

In the New Year, we also intend to organize a couple of training sessions for those people who feel that they would like to learn a bit more about slalom paddling. Keep your eye on the website or email me.

***Jacky Draper***

## ***Attention all Parents!***

Ribble Canoe Club is committed to ensuring that we comply with all current Health & Safety guidelines to the best of our ability.

With **immediate** effect, all junior members taking part in club trips and events will be required to bring a completed consent form with them which should be handed to the trip organiser before the trip starts.

The trip organiser will refuse to allow a junior member on a trip if a completed and signed consent form has not been provided.

The form is a standard form, so it should be a simple matter to complete a form and take several photocopies of it – it might be a good idea to keep a few copies in the car so they're always available!

A form is attached to the back of this newsletter. Alternatively, you can download the form from the BCU website ([www.bcu.org.uk/pdfdocs/Consent form.pdf](http://www.bcu.org.uk/pdfdocs/Consent%20form.pdf)).



Paddlers: Tom, Chris, Janet, Clive, Janet, Iain, Nick, Eileen, Allan, Lesley and Steph.

Having first of all met up at Chester Services for the now traditional, pre-paddling cup of coffee, we drove through some pretty dismal weather on our way to Trevor but arrived in the dry and soon were changed and onto the water. We began our trip by first of all crossing the Pontcysyllte aqueduct. I confess I had felt a tingle of apprehension about going over the aqueduct myself but once on it any nervousness I'd previously had disappeared and I thoroughly enjoyed the experience. The ability to maintain a straight line is useful in such a narrow stretch of water and the two years of paddling experience I have gained since last tackling the aqueduct really paid off.

The Pontcysyllte aqueduct is the most amazing piece of engineering and a monument to Britain's industrial past. It elegantly spans the Dee valley on the slenderest of legs, from the top the views are spectacular, in the distance to the east there is a huge railway viaduct and farther along the canal we know, because we looked at a map, there are two tunnels a further aqueduct and another viaduct, all built to fetch limestone

from a quarry. The Pontcysyllte opens the canal network a mere four and a half extra miles into Llangollen and one has to wonder whether the expense was really worthwhile. (No disrespect to Llangollen intended). Having crossed the aqueduct once we had no choice but to turn around and go back again as there is a very low lift bridge blocking our way in the Chirk direction. No one minded, we had all enjoyed going across the first time and it was fun to go back again. There were quite a lot of people walking over the bridge this morning, some of them clinging to the handrail, so it was quite nice to look brave and paddle passed them.

Once back at Trevor we took a sharp left under a bridge and headed down the valley towards Llangollen. Despite the unpromising start the weather wasn't too bad and the rain held off for most of the day. We suddenly remembered that the last time we paddled this canal we had trouble finding anywhere to stop for lunch because of the high concrete edgings alongside the towpath. However, we went straight passed the bridge we got out at last time as no one recognised it. The next stretch of canal was interesting, we were right next to the road for some of the way then, when the canal did pull away from the road it



became very narrow. Notices told us it was only one boat width wide for the next 300 metres and suggested we sent out a runner to warn oncoming boats but we decided to trust to luck and some fast paddling.



The next bridge we came to, Wenffrwd Bridge, was get outable at even though it was still in the very narrow bit. Most of us sat in the sheltered but shady bit to eat our lunch whilst Nick and Eileen preferred the sunny but windy bit, they also preferred the comfort of a park bench. It rained a bit whilst we ate but only Tom sought the shelter of the bridge, the rest of us are hard!

After lunch Tom, who had already paddled some distance the previous Wednesday and was worried his shoulder might begin to ache and Lesley, who hasn't paddled much in her own boat and was finding things a bit wearying, decided to set off back to Trevor.

The trip up to Llangollen was very pleasant, we got caught for a while behind a narrow boat but since we were on yet another stretch of canal which was only one boat wide (500 metres this time) it possibly worked to our advantage. This part of the journey was very

slow, there is probably a speed limit that we knew nothing about but the narrow boat can't have been going above two miles an hour. The unhurried pace gave us time to look around and wonder just how long it took to quarry this section of canal out of the side of a mountain.



We pulled into Llangollen alongside what looked like an old-fashioned railway platform complete with tearoom. There was a horse drawn narrow boat full of tourists about to set off along the stretch of canal marked 'no boats beyond this point'. It was a scene from another era.

We paddled hard through all the very narrow bits on our way back and didn't meet anything coming the other way. I'm not sure what we would have done if we had, they really were very narrow, we may all have had to get out but the high sides of the canal would have made that very tricky for the less agile of us and getting back in afterwards would have been interesting – Tom may well have been adding some of us to his little list.

We saw several birds of prey as we paddled along, one or two kestrels and quite a few buzzards, one of which fell out of a tree. I think he spotted me at the same time as I spotted him and he did what comes naturally to most birds when surprised. In an effort to save face he decided he needed a bit of

preening but failed to notice that he was about to be attacked by a crow. Having fallen out of the tree he realized he was never going to regain his dignity so flew off.

We came across several narrow boats being driven by novice drivers and on several occasions came to the conclusion that the safest option was to pull into the side and wait until they had gone passed. One, it had to be a woman didn't it, exhibited some spectacularly crunchy steering as she piled a nice little wooden narrow boat into a nasty concrete

slab, at speed. We were very glad we'd held back a bit there.

Thanks to a slight current on the canal the return journey was a little quicker and we were soon all back in Trevor. Chris and I decided to go for one final jaunt over the aqueduct but we were the only ones. Once we were all changed and loaded up Nick and Eileen decided to go for a walk for a bit of exercise and the rest of us repaired to the nearest pub.

***Janet Porter***

# ***Beginners Pool Course***

## ***8-22nd October***

Once again the beginners pool course was a victim of its own success, being oversubscribed way before it even started. Thanks to Tom B, for allocating places, collecting information and being diplomatic to those unable to join this time. Hopefully the sixteen that enrolled found it useful, educational, and, apart from moving the boats, fun.

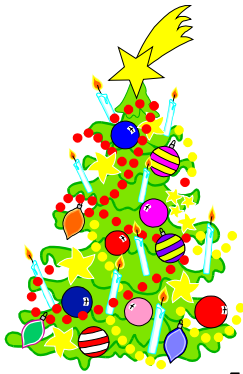
The group was a good mix of ages, some brought previous paddling experience but all came with the intention of enjoying themselves and a desire to get stuck in. This was commented on by more than one 'instructor' and really makes life easier when it comes to teaching. Out of those on the course, eight decided to take up the offer of a H&D canal trip, in two groups of four, over two Saturday mornings. Due to other commitments or previous paddling experience others will probably have put the things they learned into practice at Halton, by the time this is published.

If you were on the beginners course, we hope to see you again and remind you that there are regular Wednesday night meetings at the

Hand and Dagger, which is also where most of the club equipment you are entitled to borrow, free of charge, is kept. A beginners trip is run, first Sunday of each month, other trips especially flat water trips appear regularly on the calendar (last page of your bi-monthly newsletter). Most weekend social events take place in the warmer weather but there is an all year round programme; you just need to pick up the phone and call the contact, alternatively call me, I'll try and steer you in the right direction.

Finally, welcome to Adrian & Robert, Mark & Oliver, Ben & Heather, Dave & Jenny, Sean & Heather, Lewis & Hannah, Ann & Michelle, John and Dave. Hope you get as much out the canoeing experience as we do and that we see you again, preferably on the water, this year, next year, you get the picture. Thanks, as always, to those prepared to give their time and effort in and around the pool, Terry, Steve S, Helen, Tom B, Tom K, John, Peter B, Andy, Simon, Martin R, Martin S and Chris T.

***Tony Morgan***



# PARTY WITH RIBBLE



**CHRISTMAS DINNER & DISCO**  
**AT FERRARI'S Country House Hotel**  
**Thornley, Longridge.**  
**SATURDAY 11<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2004**

## STARTERS:-

**DUO OF BRAISED MUSHROOMS, IN A PORT & VEGETABLE SAUCE.**  
**MELON GARNISHED WITH FRUIT,**  
**MEDALLIONS OF BEEF PATE, ROLLED IN BACON & OVEN ROASTED WITH SALAD & HORSRADISH SAUCE.**  
**PRAWNS SALAD,**  
**SOUP OF THE DAY,**



## MAIN COURSE :-

**ROAST TURKEY AND CRANBERRY SAUCE.**  
**FILLET OF SALMON COATED WITH A SAFFRON & TARRAGON SAUCE.**  
**SIRLOIN STEAK DIANE,**  
**POT ROAST SHOULDER OF LAMB WITH MINT GRAVY.**  
**PASTA WITH ROASTED VEGETABLES, IN A GARLIC, TOMATO & BASIL SAUCE.**

## SWEETS:-

**CHOICE OF SWEETS OR CHRISTMAS PUDDING & RUM SAUCE**

**PARTY  
TIME**



**COFFEE AND MINTS.**

**PARTY  
TIME**

**PARTY NIGHT PRICE £27.00. TO BOOK, RING OR  
E-MAIL IAN OR ANN.**

**All bookings must be followed by full payment as soon as possible to guarantee a  
place, closing date , when we're full !**

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**PLEASE RETURN THIS SLIP WITH YOUR REMITTANCE.**  
**Cheques made payable to Ribble Canoe Club.**

**NAMES-**

**PHONE No / e-mail-**

**STARTER-**

**MAINCOURSE-**



# *Halton's 'Hard Rock Café'*



*7<sup>th</sup> November 2004*

The weather was pleasant and it wasn't too cold for the large group of paddlers who headed north up the M6 to junction thirty-four for the first weekend of a three-week schedule at Halton. This Sunday there was a reasonable level: however my head still banged along the bottom when I capsized.

However, it wasn't the water activities, which made this Sunday's trip interesting. It was the 'Hard Rock Café', which really livened up the day's activities.

I think it was the first time paddlers at Halton have come off a wave and headed to the island for a rest and seen a small camping stove roaring away heating up the water for the next brew.



Tony, Ben and Sophie were running the 'Hard Rock Café' on the island in the middle of the river. A small donation was asked for before you could sample the hot dogs, tea, coffee or hot chocolate served by Tony.

At some points the café was self-service as the chef and his assistants disappeared off in the club Canadian to surf a wave or two. Once on a wave, Ben and Sophie would be up out of their seats, performing twirls and various other acrobatics before returning to their seats and the island. The three of them at one point ran the rapids from above the second groyne then returned to carry on feeding and hydrating the hungry masses.

Refreshments aside – let's talk more about the on-water activities. The level was fairly high considering the lack of rain the previous week. However the rain from Saturday must have raised the level to form some good waves to surf.



I spent most of my three hours on the water surfing every possible wave in the close proximity to the rest of the group who were practicing ferry gliding and breaking in and out.

This trip was littered with swims. There were many moving water beginners who were joining the intermediate and advanced paddlers today. This of course meant swimmers and the shout of 'swimmer' was heard through out the day as the current flipped another boat and parted company with the occupant.



Everyone seemed to enjoy him or herself whilst on the water. The pictures really show what happened on the day.

***Iain Robinson***

**Want to improve your paddling or gain BCU qualifications?**

**Coaching and Training for Individuals or Groups**

**Kayak/Canoe/Flat Water/Moving Water/Pool Sessions/ White Water**

**Safety/Day trips/Canoe Camping Trips/Taster Sessions**

**For Details and Prices Contact Tony Morgan**

**Also Available: Indoor/Outdoor Climbing/Sailing/Team Building/Multi  
Activity Day's/Guided Walks**

# ***Chairman's Chat***

The river canoeing season is upon us again, and for some, the river is upon us again. Halton was packed on the first Sunday of November, and only one or two paddlers weren't Ribblers. Many were d'Ribblers and a lot of work went into building scores towards the trophy of the same name.

If you're a newcomer you may not know of our Club's awards made at the Annual General Meeting in February. One is the d'Ribbler Trophy, awarded to the member who has gained the most swimming points in the year up to 31 December. The tally of swims is kept by Tom Byrne who depends upon "friends" of those who swam, ratting on them and giving him a ring or e-mail.

However, to win the d'Ribbler Trophy is an honour and an accolade – most of the best paddlers in the Club have won it at some stage of their careers (a word well chosen, I think). It brings a whole new meaning to those chilling words “Your careers down the river, lad”.

Other awards are:

- Junior Challenge Trophy for the under 18 who's improved the most.
- Competition Trophy for the most impressive performance in competition (usually slalom or polo)

- Driftwood Trophy for the most improved paddler throughout the year.
- Shakespeare Award for the best contribution(s) to the magazine.
- The Philip Singleton Memorial Trophy awarded for contributions to the club. This one isn't awarded every year, only when the committee feel that a club member has made long standing significant contributions to the club which should be recognised.

If you've just joined the Club, you aren't likely to win an award this time, but you certainly could next year. So come to the AGM and see what you need to do if you do win something next year. We try to keep things as informal as possible – to the extent this year of not telling you where it's at. Let's hope we know by the next issue or it could be a quiet meeting.

Finally, on behalf of the committee I'd like to wish everybody a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

See you around.

***Terry Maddock***

## ***Teeside 31st October 2004***

8.30am start, 5 people, 2 cars, long drive, sign in, paddle out, meet 3 more, 1 broken paddle, 3 sticky holes, umpteen rolls, 1 more run, chips in the café, tall tales, heading home, M6 blocked, A6 too, B road detours, home at

7pm, everything aches. Usual Teeside, starring Tom, John, Richard D, Rob, Richard N, Christian, Sam.

***Tony M***



# ***Ribble CC Library***

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

## ***Technique:***

### ***General technique***

#### **BCU Handbook**

*Franco Ferrero*

#### **The Practical Guide to Kayaking and Canoeing**

*Bill Mattos, Andy Middleton*

#### **Canoeing & Kayaking**

*Marcus Bailie*

#### **Kayak**

*William (not Bill) Nealy*

#### **The Bombproof Roll and Beyond!**

*Paul Dutky*

#### **Eskimo Rolling for Survival**

*Derek Hutchinson.*

#### **White Water Safety & Rescue**

*Franco Ferrero*

### ***Playboating***

#### **The Playboater's Handbook**

*Ken Whiting*

### ***Sea Kayaking***

#### **The Complete Book of Sea Kayaking**

*Derek C. Hutchinson*

#### **Sea Kayak Navigation**

*Franco Ferrero*

### ***Open Canoeing***

#### **Path of the Paddle**

*Bill Mason, Paul Mason*

### **Canoeing**

*Laurie Gullion*

### **Open Canoe Technique**

*Nigel Foster*

## ***Guidebooks:***

### **English White Water**

*Franco Ferrero*

### **Scottish White Water**

*Andy Jackson*

### **White Water Lake District**

*Stuart Miller*

### **An Atlas of the English Lakes**

*John Parker*

## ***Expeditions:***

### **Travels with a Kayak**

*Whit Descher*

### **On Celtic Tides**

*Chris Duff*

### **Blazing Paddles: A Scottish Coastal Odyssey**

*Brian Wilson*

### **Dancing with Waves: Around Ireland by Kayak**

*Brian Wilson*

### **Paddling to Jerusalem**

*David Aaronovitch*

### **The Last River**

*Todd Balf*

### **Paddle to the Arctic**

*Don Starkey*

### **Canoeing across Canada**

*Gary & Joanie McGuffin*

### **Odyssey Among the Inuit**

*Jonathan Waterman*

### **The Canoe Boys**

*Sir Alastair Dunnnett*

## ***General:***

### **The Rough Guide to Weather**

*Robert Henson*

### **The Liquid Locomotive**

*John Long (ed)*

### **Many Rivers to Run**

*Dave Manby*

### **Norwegian rivers**

*Donated by Jane Bentham*

## ***Videos / DVDs***

### **Tony Morgan in the Grand Canyon (DVD)**

### **LVM Lunch Video Magazine (DVD)**

### **Liffey Descent (V)**

### **Deliverance (V)**

### **Extreme Sports Canoeing (V)**

### **A Taste of White Water (V)**

### **Wicked Water 2(V)**

### **Ribble Newsletters (CD)**

# ***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
Nov 19 <sup>th</sup>	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Peter Benett
Nov 26 <sup>th</sup>	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	John Kington
Dec 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Steve Wilkinson
Dec 10 <sup>th</sup>	Open	N/A	Terry Maddock
Dec 17 <sup>th</sup>	Open	N/A	Sara Withall
<i>Dec 24<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>Christmas – No session</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Dec 31<sup>st</sup></i>	<i>New Year – No session</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Jan 7 <sup>th</sup>	Beginners' Course	Tom Byrne	Andy Rushton
Jan 14 <sup>th</sup>	Beginners' Course	Tom Byrne	Peter Benett
Jan 21 <sup>st</sup>	Beginners' Course	Tom Byrne	John Kington
Jan 28 <sup>th</sup>	Open	N/A	Steve Wilkinson
Feb 4 <sup>th</sup>	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Terry Maddock
Feb 11 <sup>th</sup>	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Sara Withall
Feb 18 <sup>th</sup>	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Andy Rushton
Feb 25 <sup>th</sup>	Open	N/A	Peter Benett
Mar 4 <sup>th</sup>	Beginners' Course	Tom Byrne	John Kington
Mar 11 <sup>th</sup>	Beginners' Course	Tom Byrne	Steve Wilkinson
Mar 18 <sup>th</sup>	Beginners' Course	Tom Byrne	Terry Maddock
<i>Mar 25<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>Easter – No session</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>

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

All other sessions £3.

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

## ***Editor's bit***

### **Beginners' Courses**

You may notice that the pool calendar is rather full of beginners' courses.

We have a considerable backlog of people waiting for a beginners' course, so we decided to put an extra course on.


Apologies if this has left us short of other sessions, normal service will be resumed as soon as we are sure what is normal anyway!

### **Dates and deadlines**

The next committee meeting will be on January 11<sup>th</sup> 2005 at 7:30 at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on January 25<sup>th</sup>. All submissions to me by Saturday January 22<sup>nd</sup> at the latest please.

***Martin Stockdale***  
[secretary@ribblecanooclub.co.uk](mailto:secretary@ribblecanooclub.co.uk)



Ribble Canoe Club			Help List	
			Contact	Telephone
Area of Interest	Committee		Andy Dowe	
			Bob Smith	
	General Information	✓	Brian Woodhouse	
	Access Agreements	✓	Chris & Janet Porter	
	Canoe Courses		Clive Robinson	
	Instructor or Coach	✓	Grahame Coles	
	Lifeguard		Ian McCerie	
	Hand & Dagger Keyholder	✓	Jacky Draper	
	Social Events	✓	Hon. Treasurer	
	Fiat Water & Lake Trips	✓	Maria Parkes	
	Beginners River Trips	✓	Mark Loftus	
	Intermediate River Trips	✓	Hon. Secretary, Memb. Secretary, Newsletter	
	Advanced River Trips		Martin Stockdale	
	River Trips		Mick Huddleston	
	Sea Trips	✓	Nick Pope & Sam Turner	
	Open Canoeing		Peter Jones	
	Canoe Surfing		Simon Cole	
	Beginners Slalom	✓	Quartermaster	
	Advanced Slalom	✓	Steve Swarbrick	
	Mens Polo	✓	Steve Wilkinson	
	Ladies Polo		Hon. Chairman	
	Junior Polo	✓	Calendar	
	Other		Tom Byrne	



# CALENDAR

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

Ribble CC organised trips are in **bold**.

Other Ribble CC events are in *italic*.

River information:

Burrs 0161 764 9649

[www.activity-centre.freemove.co.uk](http://www.activity-centre.freemove.co.uk)

Canolfan Tryweryn 01678 520826

[www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk](http://www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk)

Teeside Barrage 01642 678000

[www.4seasons.co.uk](http://www.4seasons.co.uk)

Washburn 07626 978654

[yorkshire.bcu.org.uk/washburn.htm](http://yorkshire.bcu.org.uk/washburn.htm)

Wharfe

[yorkshire.bcu.org.uk/wharfe.htm](http://yorkshire.bcu.org.uk/wharfe.htm)

## Trips / Events

### November

**21 Moving Water Sessions**  
**Halton on Lune, Lancaster**  
**Clive Robinson**

**28 Wharfe White Water**  
**Hebden to Barden Bridge**  
**Grahame Coles**

### December

**5 Beginners' Trip**  
**R.Wenning, Benthams, Yorkshire**  
**Terry Maddock**

*11 Christmas Do*  
*Ferraris*  
*Ian McCrerie*

**12 Leven White Water**  
**R.Leven, Newby Bridge**  
**Grahame Coles**

**19 Flat Water Trip**  
**Top Lock, Wheelton**  
**Tom Byrne**

**19 Crake White Water**  
**R.Crake, Greenodd, Cumbria**  
**Tony Morgan**

### January 2005

**2 Beginners' Trip**  
**Ribble, Clitheroe to Ribchester**  
**Terry Maddock**

**9 Leven White Water**  
**R.Leven, Newby Bridge**  
**John Kington**

*11 Committee Meeting*  
*Martin Stockdale*

**16 Flat Water Trip**  
**Lancaster Canal**  
**Tom Byrne**

**16 Beginners' Moving Water**  
**R.Lune, Halton Near Lancaster**  
**Clive Robinson**

*22 Newsletter Deadline*  
*Martin Stockdale*

**22/23 River Wye Weekend**  
**Andy Dowe**

**23 Greta White Water**  
**R Greta, Keswick, Cumbria**  
**Grahame Coles**

**30 Beginners' Moving Water**  
**R.Lune, Halton Near Lancaster**  
**Clive Robinson**

**30 Leven White Water**  
**R.Leven, Newby Bridge, Cumbria**

### February

**6 Beginners' Trip**  
**R Rothay, Ambleside, Cumbria**  
**Terry Maddock**

**6 Leven White Water**  
**R.Leven, Newby Bridge, Cumbria**

**13 Leven White Water**  
**R.Leven, Newby Bridge**  
**John Kington**

**20 Flat Water Trip**  
**Windermere, Fell Foot**  
**Tom Byrne**

**20 Moving Water**  
**Ribble, Clitheroe to Ribchester**  
**Brian Woodhouse**

*24 AGM*  
*Martin Stockdale*

**27 Crake White Water**  
**R Crake, Coniston to Greenodd**  
**Grahame Coles**

**27 Leven White Water**  
**R.Leven, Newby Bridge, Cumbria**

### March

**6 Beginners' Trip**  
**R.Wenning, Benthams, Yorkshire**  
**Terry Maddock**

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

## Slalom

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

### January 2005

**23 Stafford & Stone Mini Slalom**  
**Jacky Draper**

### February

**6 Stafford & Stone Mini Slalom**  
**Jacky Draper**

**27 Stafford & Stone Mini Slalom**  
**Jacky Draper**

## Ladies Polo

### November

**27 Irlam**  
**Nicky Marsh**

### March 2005

**12 Irlam**  
**Nicky Marsh**



## Would you like to learn to canoe?

Ribble Canoe Club is running beginners' courses starting in January and March 2005 which will teach the basic skills necessary to paddle a kayak.

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

No previous experience is necessary.

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

The first course will run from 8:00pm until 10:00pm on the 7<sup>th</sup> January, and 9:00pm until 10:00pm on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> January. The second course will run from 8:00pm until 10:00pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> March, and 9:00pm until 10:00pm on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> March.

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), at a venue to be agreed. You will need to wear warm clothing and a cagoule (but they may get dirty or wet so don't wear your best gear!), and bring a change of clothes. Again, all other equipment will be provided.

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

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

Tom Byrne

# Consent Form



Where young people participate in trips or events away from the Club parents/carers should be given full details regarding the organisation and administration of the activity, trip or event.

This form should be signed and returned to the Club before any activity or trip takes place. One copy should be given to the activity organiser/coach which should be kept with them at all times the original should stay with a nominated Club official.

Name of child  
Date of birth  
Parent/Carer

Address: Please give your home address and phone numbers. If you will be away from home during the trip please give an alternative address where you, or a relative or friend acting for you, can be contacted.

Address:

Post Code:

Tel (day): (eve):

Mobile:

Alternative Contact Name & Address:

Post Code:

Tel (day): (eve):

Mobile

Relationship to child

Family Doctor  
Doctor's Tel No

Consent, please read carefully:

- I have had the activities of the Club explained and agree to my son/daughter taking part in these activities.
- I confirm to the best of my knowledge that my son/daughter does not suffer from any medical condition other than those listed.
- I consent to my child receiving medical treatment which, in the opinion of a qualified medical practitioner, may be necessary.
- I confirm that my son/daughter is not subject to any court order prohibiting publication of their image.
- I consent to my son/daughter travelling by any form of public transport, minibus or motor vehicle driven by a club coach or any other parent attending, to any event in which the club is participating.
- I agree to be at the pick-up/drop-off point at the agreed time.
- I understand that the Club or Organisers accept no responsibility for loss, damage or injury caused by or during attendance on any of the clubs organised activities except where such loss, damage or injury can be shown to result directly from the negligence of the Club or the Organisers.
- In your child's interests, it is important that the organising staff should know whether he or she suffers from any illness of medical condition. Please use the space below to state in confidence any health or other matter concerning your child or which accompanying club members should be aware. Please also indicate if your child is receiving any medication, with details and dosage, and/or specific dietary requirements.

**BRITISH  
CANOE UNION**

**Tel: 0115 9821100  
Fax: 0115 9821797**

John Dudderidge House  
Adbolton Lane  
West Bridgford  
Notts NG2 5AS

[www.bcu.org.uk](http://www.bcu.org.uk)

Please state medical condition and/or medication

Signed: Parent/Guardian  
Date: