

TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK



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MARCH/APRIL 2004

The Icebreakers



A Smashing day out

The Rufford Canal, Sunday 18th January 2004

Paddlers: Tom, Ian, Janet, Nick, Eileen, Clive, Janet, Iain, Rob, Alan, Lesley, Joanne and Stephanie.

As we crossed the canal at Tarleton on our way to Rufford I was fairly sure that the canal was frozen, however, others in the party who had come along the same road were not so convinced. I was right though!

As soon as we got to the canal side at Rufford we realized that the water was indeed frozen but with about a 50ft break in the ice where we were to put in. I got in first and headed off towards the ice to see just how thick it was. Some of it was a bit slushy but most was

fairly solid though thin enough to smash through given the right technique with a paddle, although I found that an asymmetric blade is not ideal for ice breaking: something with pointy corners would have offered a distinct advantage. Having a large and pointy boat was quite useful though.

After a bit of consultation we decided to give the trip a bash so to speak. If we found it too much like hard work we could always turn round and go back.

I can safely say, without a word of a lie, that this is the noisiest trip I have ever been on. The sound of eleven boats (thirteen paddlers) pounding through the ice was colossal, we were unable to hear each other speak and Chris, who had driven round to watch us from one of the bridges, could hear us coming from

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over half a mile away. It was, quite literally, enough to frighten the horses.



We chuckled at the thought that we wouldn't see any anglers today but how wrong we were. The first two we came across had each found a hole in the ice about the size of a dinner plate, goodness knows what they were expecting to catch; seal probably. Normally most of us try to creep quietly past fishermen but there was no point today and we just crashed by. After most of us had gone through they asked Tom if he could break up the ice a bit more for them. It's not often we come across anglers grateful to see canoeists. In total we met five people fishing – they must have very unhappy home lives.

Being at the front of the convoy was extremely tiring and several of us took turns to break through the ice. The bigger boats were obviously very useful for this purpose but a few of the youngsters with us also enjoyed the experience in their little riverboats. As well as the din of shattering ice many of us were struck by the quieter hissing/tinkling sound as it closed in behind us.

When we first set off we were fairly sure we would never manage the four miles to Tarleton Lock, it was hard work, earned a few people a few blisters and took us very nearly an hour and three quarters but we did it. We back tracked a little to one of the three swing bridges and got out for our lunch. Not the most beautiful place for dinner, sitting on a brick wall in an industrial estate, overlooking

a car park but we weren't there for very long – it was too cold.



Whilst getting back into my boat I managed to sit in a cowpat, it was the only thing for miles around that wasn't frozen, in fact it was so not frozen that I now firmly believe cows poo antifreeze.

The ice that we had crunched through on our outward trip was still broken on our way back, it was also beginning to thaw slightly though there was still enough left for those who nurtured violent feelings to enjoy a smashing experience.

It took far less time to get back (just over an hour) but oddly most of us felt colder in the afternoon than we had in the morning and we were all acutely aware that our feet were either on or below the waterline.

The last of the swing bridges is almost certainly the lowest and I was grateful that I had overeaten at Christmas and that my boat was consequently fairly low in the water otherwise I'm not sure I would have got under. As it was I felt my buoyancy aid rub the underside of the bridge.

It was quite a trudge back to the car park from the get out along quite a busy road, past a brand new and already well-used marina and over a level crossing. No pub today, we were all feeling the cold and wanted to get home to warm up; also I had some serious washing to do.

Janet Porter

AGM 2003

26th February 2004

A good turnout this year for the AGM, thanks to all those people who made the effort to attend. I counted 50 adult members, plus numerous juniors who kept moving around so I lost count!

Secretary's Report 2003

At the end of December 2003 we had 263 members, 3 less than last year.

In the past, member information has been based primarily upon the situation when members joined the club, or updates provided at renewal time. This year, I will be issuing much more detailed renewal forms which will show all the information which the club has on record about each member.

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

Treasurer's report 2003

Copies of the report were circulated for members to read. This consisted of a list of assets, the accounts, and notes to the accounts. The Auditor, Turner & Brown, were once again approved.

Chairman's Report 2003

The committee has changed over the year. We've lost some useful members but we're getting five new members ratified at this meeting, which has to be good. Maria represents women and the younger members' view and Jackie represents women, Junior Competition and family memberships. Clive is a regular flat water paddler with all his family and paddles the frothy stuff with son Iain. Mark is a fairly recent paddler making rapid (geddit!!) progress on white water with his son Nathan. Sea canoeing is represented via Steve Swarbrick and other lesser sea paddlers.

Junior Polo took a knock this year with the demise of the NW Junior League. However Jackie Draper took on the onerous and awesome task of pushing both Polo and Slalom Juniors and she is hoping to promote interest this Spring and Summer in Junior Slalom following with Junior Polo into Autumn and Winter.

Touring, both white water and flat water continues in strength.

Chris's new web site regularly updated is a showpiece for the club and has already attracted several new members. Due to pressure of work, Chris had to leave the Committee but thank goodness he can make time for maintaining the web site.

The calendar is currently full and has led to well attended trips. The challenge will be to keep it strong throughout the summer when less venues and waters are available.

Tom has taken on the dribblers' list and I think this years Dribbling Points will show how well reported and recorded swims have been. And I know that next year's list is already well under way.

The River Courses and Summer Camps went well and Halton was used extensively during the three short months of access.

The Hand & Dagger changed hands; the new landlord seems to like us and the food, beer and atmosphere are even better than previously.

Martin started and developed the library and has now managed to pass the buck (sorry!!) to Clive.

The Christmas Do survived a change of venue and with more advanced notice and a better night this coming year we hope to have even more members enjoying themselves.

Several members quietly got on with achieving considerable progress in Slalom – notably Alex, Mick, Richard, Alastair and Helen.

So what are we looking to achieve over the coming year?

- Maintain the strength of white water, flat water and sea touring. I think these must be considered the core activities of the club.
- Maintain a strong committee with fuller representation – adult competition to be better represented and a Competition Secretary appointed.
- Support Jacky and achieve a strong presence in both Junior Slalom and Junior Polo. We need to get a raft of parents & supporters to assist with transport and coaching/refereeing.
- Maintain the strength of the web site and achieve greater use by members and others.
- Maintain/improve the strength of the calendar.
- Maintain/improve the strength of our awards system.
- Improve links with other clubs and the BCU in order particularly to support the weaker areas of the club's activities.
- Consider introducing Freestyle into the club's activities.

Election of Officers

Terry Maddock was re-elected as Chairman. Grahame Coles, Jacky Draper, Mark Loftus, Maria Parkes and Clive Robinson were voted onto the committee.

Trophies

The trophies were presented by Bill Stansbie:

Driftwood

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

Winner Mark Loftus (Runner up Tom Kington)

Competition

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

Winner Mick Huddleston (Runners up Richard Draper, Helen James, Alex Jones)

Youth Challenge

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

Winner Tom Kington (Runners up Helen James, Daniel Stockdale)

Author of the Year

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

Winner Jon Westaway (Runners up Janet Porter, Stephen Singleton)

Philip Singleton Trophy

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

Winner Andy Rushton (Runner up Steve Swarbrick)

Life Membership

Awarded to people who have made ongoing contribution to the club for a considerable period of time.

Winners Kevin Singleton, Stephen Singleton.

d'Ribbler's Award

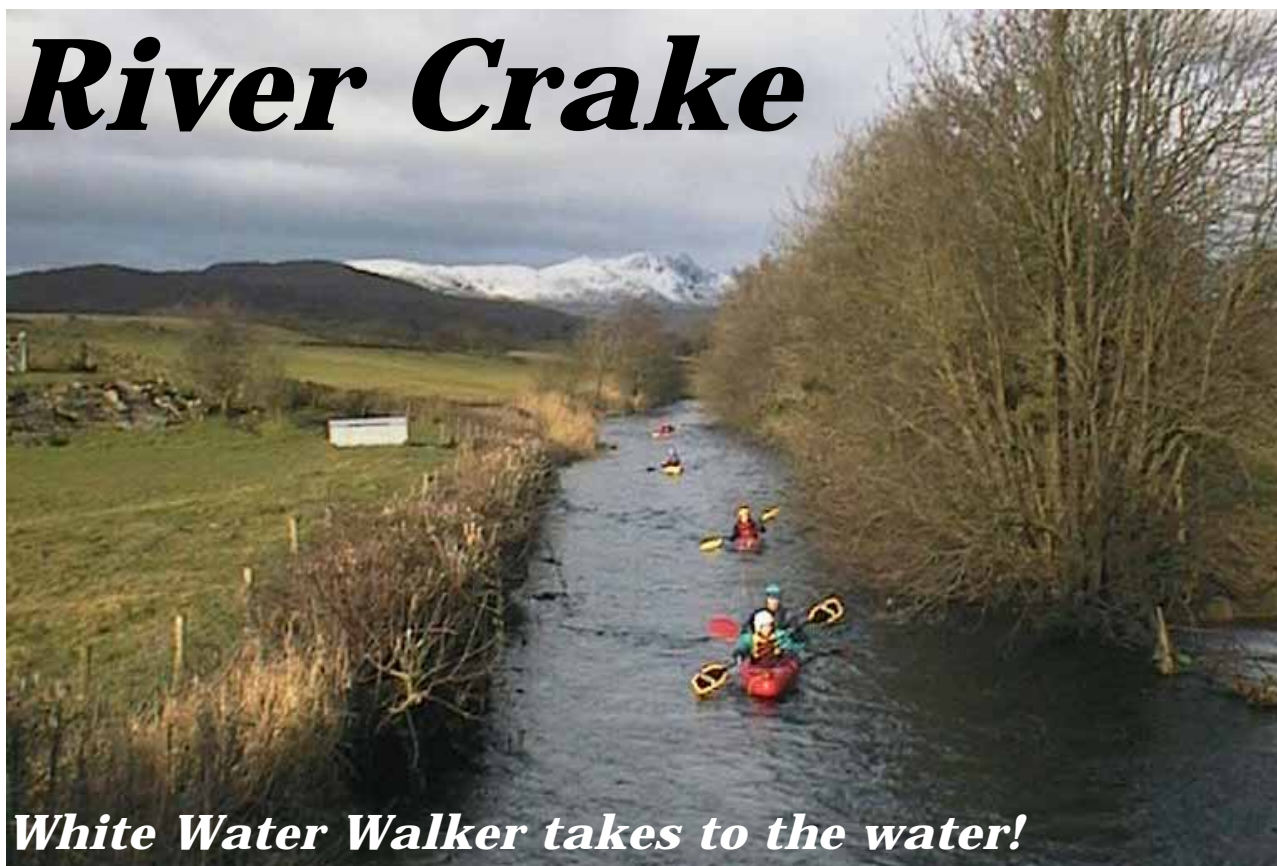
Awarded to the person who swam the most during the year.

Winner Grahame Coles (Runners up Tony Morgan, Tom Kington, Helen James, Maria Parkes, Martin Russell)

The full minutes, all reports and the d'Ribbler results are available on request.

Martin Stockdale

River Crake



White Water Walker takes to the water!

21st December 2003

Paddlers: Daniel Stockdale, Mark and Helen James, Barry Eva, Tony Morgan, Maria Parkes, Steve Swarbrick, Graham Coles, and a group from a club in the lakes whose names we don't know. John and Tom Kington may have been there but they were camera shy and don't appear on any pictures so we're not sure!

We woke up to a bright, crisp winter's morning with snow glistening on the hilltops. Our usual band of cheerful canoeists met at the garage at Greenodd where the Crake reaches the estuary.

At first glance everything looked normal with the James' taxi appearing with Helen's boat on top. This however was very deceptive, as one of the 'White Water Walkers' was abandoning his usual Sunday hobby. Lurking on Tony's van was the Topo duo, Mark was about to experience his first river trip.

After our typical car rearrangement exercise, the canoeists set off from the Brown Howe car park and paddled down Coniston Water to meet the river. Helen and Daniel enjoyed surfing the waves on the way (which were bigger than the ones at Anglesey on the second day). During this time Mark was trying to get used to the concept of paddling without hitting or soaking Tony positioned behind him, and getting used to winter conditions on the water.



Some experienced paddlers decided to play boat swapping; Helen was in the club's Inazone 220 and Maria was using Tony's Eskimo Topo.

River conditions were ideal for an introductory swim paddle. Tony's control at the back of the boat calmed Mark's initial nerves as we entered faster flowing currents, and much to his surprise he kept upright all day long! During the journey Tony continually provided back seat coaching and encouragement to ensure he also arrived at the other end dry.

The first set of rapids we met were easy to negotiate except for those rocks only just covered by fast flowing water, which caught out a few people. More experienced paddlers spent some time playing at this point, whereas those who preferred to stay dry, sat in the eddies and waited patiently for the others to have their fun.

Next came several natural weirs that were negotiated without any swimmers. There were a few good waves and holes to play in (Helen even spotted her Dad and Tony surfing!).

Our final set of manoeuvres before lunch were down Bobbin Mill Rapids where one of the lake district group swam.



Arriving at the bank for lunch Mark was in for a big surprise, as his legs were no longer functioning! Daniel was feeling a bit chilly and was complaining that his boat no longer fitted him so he decided to stop (the wussy).

[The wussy was in for a shock a short while later while sitting in the car warming up, because I had put his boat on top of the car and was walking down the grass slope to get his paddle when there was a loud crash behind me as his boat slipped off the car roof, bounced off the wing mirror next to him, over the stone wall and ended up embedded nose first in the grass! – Martin]

The final feature comprised of a weir giving the canoeists one last surfing opportunity. After that the river remained flat until we reached the estuary.

Helen and Mark James

Missing Kit

This seems to be a regular theme in the newsletter these days, but once again we are missing kit from the lockup at the Hand & Dagger.

A number of items are missing, but in particular a neoprene spraydeck has been missing for some time now. It is a gasket deck (it has a rubber ring around the edge rather than the usual cord) and is labelled something like "**Extreme White Water.**" This deck belongs to the Topo Duo and the boat cannot be used properly without it.

Please make sure that all loans, even of small items like decks and buoyancy aids, are booked out through Steve Swarbrick and are returned as soon as possible after the trip. It is not acceptable to keep kit because you may want to use it again – by doing so you are preventing other members of the club from making use of it.

Steve Swarbrick

River Lune

February 8th 2004

A cold day, plenty of sunshine, a mixed bunch of paddlers and the remnants of the previous week's rain keeping the level up is how I remember this trip.

With a reasonable water level we tried a higher put in at Borrow Beck, south of Tebay, this added a few class II kilometres to the usual trip, but avoids the yomp down the hill with the boats. People had mixed feelings whether it was worth it but I'd definitely do it again.

Seems like folks came out of the woodwork for this one and we had a big group, all levels of experience, most ages and at least two genders. Lune veterans and virgins headed off downstream meeting at Low Gill for a quick break before doing the remaining 8.5km to Killington New Bridge.

Despite the cold and the odd swim I think everyone enjoyed it, at this level it's a great trip, with enough to play on. As usual most of the 'interest' occurred at the Strid but with the afternoon getting on and the temperature falling the last section was a race to the cars and warm clothes.

Well done to Mark for using the Lune as his first serious river trip, beats the Rothay.

Belated welcome to Richard, new to the club but returning to paddling. He added a retro element to the trip: facemask, Schlegels and a club Freestyle, might have also been listening to Slade and T.Rex on the way up.

The Topo Duo made the voyage with a new crash test dummy (Nicola) in the front seat, oblivious to the history of the driver. However, thanks to the loose tongues of some of the regulars most blank spaces with regard

to previous disasters and reputation have now been filled in. Names, dates and places have been deleted to protect the innocent.

(On the subject of the Duo any paddlers out there wanting to coach, introduce paddlers to white water or just have fun, give it a try it makes for a good trip.)

Thanks to Martin for once again making the shuttle a whole lot easier and following us down the river with dry clothes if it all went pear shaped.

Just for the record here's the cast in no particular order: Tim, Daniel, Steve Wilky, Tom, Mark, John, Tony, Bob, Ian, Andy, Peter, Nick, Richard, Martin R, Martin, Nicola, Rebecca, Grahame. If you're not on the list sorry, result of a tiny mind.

Tony Morgan

[The Upper Lune is a very enjoyable White Water Walker's river for one simple reason – there's actually not a footpath anywhere near most of it! Hence, rather than worrying about all the tedious messing about walking along the river carrying a throwline and a camera, I spent a very relaxing day driving along the moorland road high up the valley side, and stopping to sit and eat my sandwiches in the sunshine.

It was therefore rather a shock to meet with the paddlers at Low Gill to discover that they were all rather cold and miserable!

The lack of a path does mean that I'm afraid there are no pictures to go with this article. A small price to pay for the peace and quiet!
Martin]



Would you like to learn to canoe?

Ribble Canoe Club is running a beginners' course starting on Friday 30th April 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 on the Lancaster Canal.

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 30th April, and 9:00pm until 10:00pm on the 7th and 14th May. Please arrive about 15 minutes before the start time to give time to get equipment sorted out.

The final session will take place during the day on a Saturday (date to be decided) on the Lancaster Canal near the Hand and Dagger at Salwick. 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. 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

Swimming for Beginners

Three months with Ribble CC - Part 1

1 – Lulled by the Lake

My first trip with the Ribble Canoe Club was on Sunday 19th October 2003. A friend of mine had arranged to lead a bike ride in Yorkshire on that date, and called me a week before to see if he could switch it to the Saturday. “The canoe club have changed the trip to Derwent Water and I’d like to go” was his reply when I asked him his reasons.

It sounded quite good to me so I asked Nick if it would be possible to go along. A couple of days later it was all sorted. I got a lift to Keswick with Nick and Eileen, and borrowed a load of equipment from Tom Byrne. I had canoed perhaps 5 times in 25 years, the last time being about 12 years ago, so Tom’s Acadia was a good choice of boat for me; Slow, Stable and Safe. There was a nice hatch in the rear where I could put my lunch, and even a spray-deck! I never used one of those in the cubs.

It all went very well in the morning, my one concern being how to go in a straight line. Perhaps a longer boat with a deep keel was the answer? Tom seemed to do very well in his. It was all very civilised. I even managed to canoe far enough up the beach that I kept my feet dry when I got out for lunch.

As we sat and ate our sandwiches I asked one of the group if he had done any white water canoeing. “Been done by white water – you mean!” he said. Clearly there was not just one type of paddler in the RCC. I had found an experienced kayaker with a sleek 14ft boat who did not like white water.

On the way back we got a slight headwind and I thought how nice it would be to have a sailing boat and get some speed and exhilaration out of those gusts, instead of just slower progress. Minutes later I saw the motor launch approaching from Keswick. The

driver was clearly having a lot of fun seeing how fast it could go, and his bow wave was quite high when he passed our group of kayaks. I was a little to the side of the main bunch, and I turned to face the wave, but by the time it got to me it was smaller than what the others had experienced.

As we got closer to Keswick I felt more confident. I still had lots of energy left and I wanted to play. The 2nd motorboat came out and I headed for his wake, but he was going much slower than the first. When I saw the 1st launch returning I prepared for some fun, but the driver had mended his ways and the wave was only half what he had produced the first time.

Once again I got out of the boat with dry feet, and although the spray-deck splashed some of its collection of water on my legs, this was by far the driest kayak trip I had ever had. I had been warm and comfortable all day!

2 – Rolled by the River

My experience on Derwent Water had made me keen to do more; but something more challenging was in order. White-water still sounded a bit fierce, but maybe moving water would be fun?

On 9th of November I collected a boat, paddle, buoyancy aid, & spray-deck from the Hand and Dagger. I also had a helmet, which I hoped would not be tested in earnest. We drove up to Halton and prepared to paddle.

There were four of us in the car park, several others being on the river already.

I had my thermals and a pair of tracksters plus a waterproof top I had found in the container at the Hand and Dagger, but for some reason the other three, who were all better paddlers

than me, were wearing wetsuits. Did they know something I didn't?

When I asked, Terry told me that he expected about three swims on each Halton trip. Somehow I didn't think that the other three would claim them all!

We set off upstream, my boat occasionally veering off course (It was only 11.5 ft long) but I wondered how the others stayed straight in their 8ft boats? We got to some rapids, ferry glided across to an eddy, went up a little further and ferried back to some rocks. The river level was very low so we then carried our boats over and got back in on the other side. We then practiced on a gentle bit of stream on the extreme right. We ferried back across the main stream and then tried breaking in.

It looked ok when Terry demonstrated it. Lean downstream he said, but he looked fairly upright to me. Not wanting to fall in I paddled out with the smallest possible lean and ended up in the water!

Now I understood what I had been told by the lake. I had been done by white-water and it was cold!

I pulled the spray-deck, and off it came, but all that happened was that the boat filled with cold water. The river was so low that I was lying sideways and I had to wriggle out.

"Next time you go over" Terry said, "stay in your boat, bang on the hull and when the bow of my boat comes along you can use it to roll up again." It all sounded quite simple. Next time came around quite soon; breaking out with insufficient upstream lean. But, just as promised, the bow of Terry's boat arrived and I got back up. The only sign that I had been over was a sag of water in the elbow of the waterproof which had entered through a hole under my arm. Foolishly I tried to tip it back through the same hole. Another learning point!

1 Trip, 2 Capsizes, but I had learnt a lot.

3 – Placated by the Pool

I went to the pool at the earliest opportunity. I needed more skills. I spent the whole hour capsizing and rolling back up; first towards the pool edge, and then away from it. Changing from left to right was confusing at first. Once or twice I looked for the edge on the wrong side and had to double back to find it. This was so much warmer than the Lune! When I was happy with this I capsized in the middle of the pool, banged on the boat and then felt for the bow of Terry's boat. I now know exactly what it looks like and what that grab handle is for!

4 – Spray-deck Sinking

I returned to the Lune on 4th January 2004 a little warier than before. There were two pieces of equipment I wanted to find at the Hand and Dagger; the waterproof that had stopped me getting completely soaked, and the boat that had the best clearance for my legs, so that I could get out quickly. Both were gone.

The river Lune was higher than before. I didn't know whether this was good or bad. I wended my way upstream until we were at the faster flowing water. This time there were several other beginners and it was not long before one was swimming. I had never seen anyone else's boat upside down before, and I took some comfort knowing that there were other people who found it as hard as I did. I knew, however, that it was only a matter of time before it was my turn.

My boat seemed very wobbly, and I wished I had had some time at Fulwood, to practice the "low brace", which Terry assured me was a good thing to learn.

Breaking in was nerve wracking. I knew what the river could do, so I came out slowly, waiting for the stream to grab the bow of my boat, ready to lean downstream as soon as it did. When I wobbled I tried the low brace, which seemed to work. I then paddled downstream and tried breaking out again. I

was never quite sure when I was going to turn upstream, but I was ready to lean and then brace when it happened.

On one occasion I tried an "S" shaped manoeuvre, where I would have to lean left breaking in and then right breaking out. I wobbled one way breaking in and both ways breaking out; avoiding a capsizes by an enormous paddle slap!

Whenever we did an exercise I made sure that the person in front was out of the current before I went into it. Terry sat and watched from an eddy like a great big crocodile; ready to rush out and grab anyone who struggled. In Africa the wildebeest tend to swim across all at once, making sure that the predators are busy. My survival strategy was completely different. I wanted that wise old crocodile to arrive promptly!

We tried ferry gliding across the fastest bit of the stream. When I was part way across, the stream grabbed the bow and turned me downstream. I leant and braced, then paddled

down a few yards. I then turned back towards the others and tipped over into the Lune. This time I was calm. I had practiced this bit in the pool, and the buoyancy aid kept me high enough to breathe air. Terry's boat arrived with no gnashing teeth, but a big yellow handle to pull up on.

Just when I thought it was all sorted, I looked down at my nylon spray-deck. It was off and the kayak was full of water. Terry towed me to the bank in my flooded boat. By the time we got there we were 50 yards downstream and he was a good deal hotter than I was.

We paddled up to join the others and then made our way back to the car park for lunch.

2 River Trips, 3 Capsizes - 150% chance of a soaking!

Peter Thomas

[The rest of Peter's story will follow in the next issue - Martin]

Ribble CC Clothing

This advert for Ribble CC clothing has been filling a gap at the bottom of the page for several issues now:

Sweatshirts, polo shirts, rugby shirts, T shirts and other items of clothing with the new embroidered Club logo can be obtained from :

Appli - K

155 Shakespeare Street, Southport, PR8 5AN
Tel / Fax: 01704 501818

Prices are:

Sweatshirts - £17.95

Polo shirts - £15.95

T-shirts - £11.95

Rugby shirts - £20 - £24

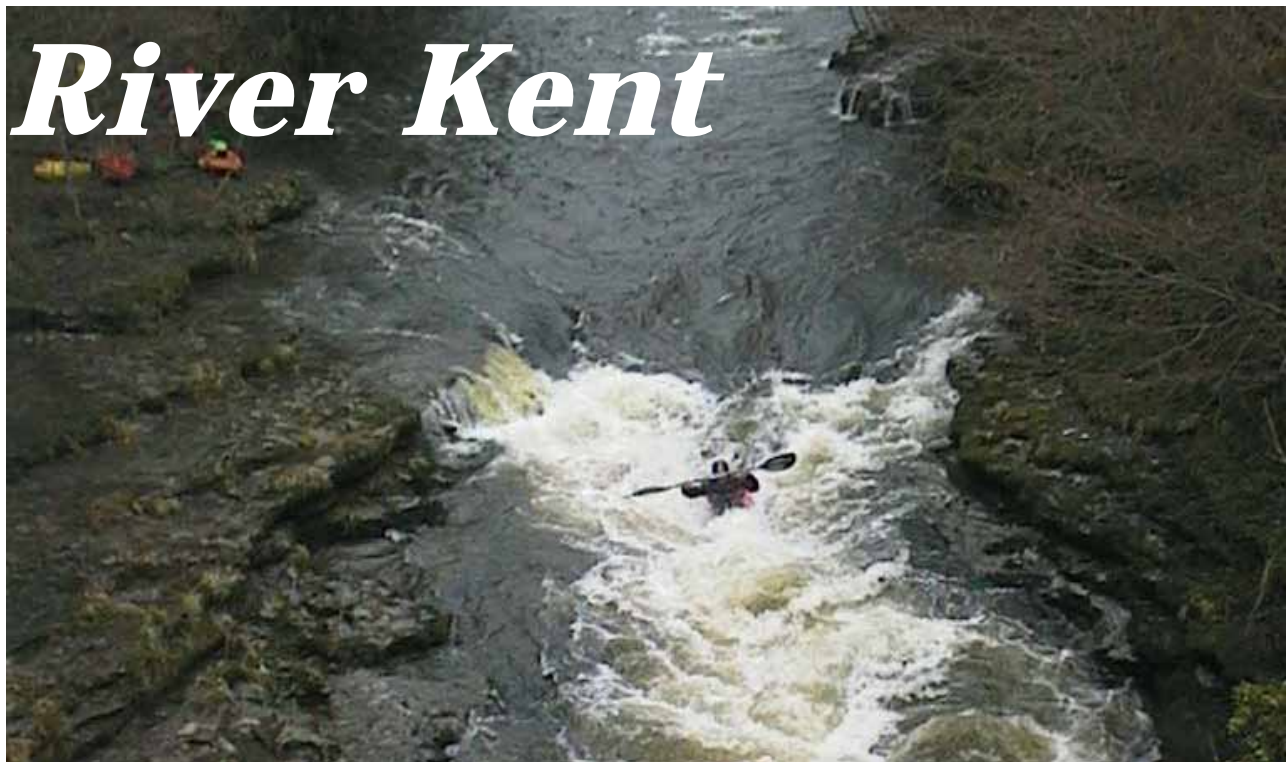
Fleece - £23.00

Reversible fleece - £40.00 (fleece one side, showerproof the other)

Please contact Maria for more details and to place an order.

Maria Parkes

Maria has finally decided to do something about it, and try to get a bulk order together so that the newer members of the club can look as stylish and debonair as the older (sorry, more established) members.



Paddlers: Tony Morgan, Daniel Stockdale, John & Tom Kington, Martin Russell, Helen James, Simon Cole, Grahame Coles, Alan Clowes.

It seemed such nice weather when we set off. OK, it was January and you never know what to expect but it wasn't too cold and seemed quite settled. The first stop was at the get-out to examine the gorge section which ends the trip. A fairly unpleasant-looking drop leads into a narrow gorge with undercut sides, then under the road bridge to Sedgewick Bridge Fall, an 'L' shaped fall with a very nasty stopper at the corner.

Tony emphasised that it was vital to cross the main current here into the quieter water at the side of the 'L', from which the drop was quite straightforward. You didn't want to paddle over the bottom or the corner of the 'L' - you definitely didn't want to swim into it...

From here a short, fast section lead to the final drop, Force Falls - a grade 4, 3 metre drop! Having stood and looked knowledgably at this section with all the paddlers, my first thought was 'It won't take long to drive back to Halton', but the Kent first-timers (Daniel,

Tom, Helen, Grahame and Alan) didn't seem too phased by it (either that or they're better actors than me!) so it was back into the cars and on to Kendal Leisure Centre.

It was here that the weather started to make itself known, and everybody was soon struggling to get changed whilst sheltering from the hail, wind and rain.

A short carry down the main road to the river (much to the amusement of passing motorists) and a final safety chat on the bank, then everybody was into the water and away. Even here the relatively flat water was moving pretty quickly, reminding the first-timers that this was definitely a more difficult river than they were used to.

Mark James, Fiona and I met back up with the paddlers at Prizet Bridge at the start of the first gorge. This drop looked straightforward (at least it did from our vantage point on the bridge) and everybody ran it without incident. Fiona had brought her new camera along and, advised by her dad, took up a good position to take pictures. I don't think either of them realised just how undercut the bank was below where she was sat - it became even

more apparent when Simon sat in his boat in the undercut directly underneath her.



Who's that trip-trapping over my bridge?

We planned to follow the paddlers through the gorge section so as to get some photographs and provide bank support - unfortunately we chose the wrong bank to walk along and the path was high up above the river - not good for photography and even worse for bank support!

I found out later that several people swam in the gorge; some more than once. Martin Russell demonstrated his 'self abuse' approach to swimming by swearing at himself very loudly as he surfaced, to the obvious bemusement of the lady who was walking her dog!

We met up with the paddlers again at the final gorge. On second inspection this looked every bit as horrible as on first inspection, and Helen wisely decided not to paddle it. I bet Grahame wishes he'd made the same decision as well...

Tony and Daniel took up positions on the bank with throw lines - I was behind Daniel and holding on to him with a sling to give him some extra support. We also had a good audience, with at least a dozen people

watching from the bridge. Martin and Simon paddled the first drop without problem, and eddied out below it while Grahame came down. The river gods were obviously not in a good mood that day, for within moments Grahame was swimming in the exact place where the guidebook says 'rescue of a swimmer would be a problem', and heading towards the very drop where Tony had said you didn't want to be swimming!

Tony got a throwline to him, which at least stopped his downstream progress, but the line was soon caught on the rock overhang. Daniel got a second line to him, and with the two lines it was possible to guide him around the rocks and into an eddy where John, Tom and Alan pulled him out. Once he'd recovered he headed downstream to find his boat. I noticed that our audience had also disappeared - maybe they decided they'd seen enough carnage for one day!

After all this Daniel was looking decidedly apprehensive, but John, Tom and Alan ran it without a problem so he decided to have a go. He and Tony got into their boats and I took the throwline with Mark bracing me with the sling (and with my heart in my mouth).

Fortunately they both ran the first drop without problem, and apparently everybody negotiated the 'L' shaped fall OK - I say 'apparently' since by the time Mark and I got up to the bridge to look they were all paddling away downstream.

Grahame's footrest had gone for a swim by itself so he was trying to use the debris from the riverbank to make up a footrest, but without success.

Simon and Martin both swam again on the final drop. Daniel obviously thought that wasn't enough, and having managed the whole river without any problems decided to fall into the water while getting out of his boat for a technical swim to give a total of 9 swims for the day!

Martin Stockdale

Summer Course 2004



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Brian Woodhouse

Windermere

15th February, 2004

Paddlers: Tom, Chris and Janet P., Ian K., Clive, Janet and Iain R., Albert and Kath, Nick and Eileen, Tony M. and Jane.

We set off this morning from Waterhead at about 11o'clock in glorious weather on a flat calm lake. We had three new members with us today - Albert and Kath, who have been introduced to the touring group by Clive and Janet, and Jane who, having experienced Halton rapids from all angles, has decided to give the less frightening flat water paddling a try.



We struck out in a southerly direction, that really being the only way to go from Waterhead and found that we were, as Tony so poetically put it, paddling along a sunbeam. Since we see the sun so rarely, no

one was complaining but many of us had sacrificed warm ears and woolly hats for the peaked cap or wide brimmed look and were very glad we had done so.

Today's trip was no more uneventful than usual. The only waves were those made by the ferries and the few powerboats we saw. One or two of the powerboats made quite an exciting wash, which Iain Robinson chased after. A wave did prove large enough to break over the bow of Tom's boat and hit him full in the chest but we've been on trips when nearly all the waves have done that so that was about the extent of the day's excitement. Calm and unadventurous was the order of the day. Just the way we like it!

We must have presented quite an attractive picture as we made our rather stately way down the lake. Lots of flashguns went off as we passed Brockhole. I suspect that my unsurpassed beauty was of less interest to the photographers than the prospect that one or all of us might fall in.

There wasn't much water coming into the lake down Troutbeck. Young Iain made a halfhearted attempt to paddle up it but ran aground very early on and gave up.

We pulled the boats up on a shingle beach at Millerground Landings and ate our picnics under the trees overlooking the lake.



Since most of the powerboats were on the other side of the lake, and Jane was beginning to look a bit weary, she, Tom and Tony decided to paddle back the way we had come. The rest of us opted for a change of scenery and crossed to Belle Grange Bay before continuing the journey back towards the top of the lake. I think a few people had secretly nurtured the hope that we would find some powerboat wakes to play in, however, our sheer numbers seemed to intimidate the power boaters and they disappeared to the other side of the lake to dash up and down near Tom and his gang.

We have come to the conclusion that paddling Windermere in a clockwise direction is the best plan since the ferries, which are surprisingly quiet (except for the occasional commentary, which is inexcusably loud), cruise round anti-clockwise and therefore can't creep up from behind. The wake they create though can take a surprisingly long time to travel across the lake and on a few occasions we found we were in a swell that seemed to have come from nowhere.

We didn't see any unusual birdlife today but we were lucky enough to see a couple of deer on Gale Naze Crag, Chris has seen them there before so was on the lookout but I still think we were very lucky to catch sight of them. I'm not sure what breed of deer we were looking at but they were largish with white bottoms.

By the time we got back to Waterhead, Tom and Jane were already off the lake but Tony pulled in with the rest of us. After loading up the boats and stowing kit away we had a swift pint in the pub across the road - the first place we've ever seen mulled wine on tap - and then made our weary ways home.

Janet Porter

West Tanfield Camp

9th - 11th July

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

The River trip is grade 2 with the exception of Hack falls which can be portaged. At normal levels the trip takes about 3 hours, but at low levels has taken 5. There is a long walk in (thankfully downhill all the way), but once on the river you pass through pleasant wooded areas and farm land. We normally take lunch and stop on an island just below a weir to eat. The river is restricted access and so we will be making the trip on the Sunday 11th July.

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

Brian Woodhouse

Rhosneigr Surf Camp

30th July – 1st August

Yo dudes, like, surf's up man...

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

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

If you've not surfed before this is a good opportunity to learn. As long as you have reasonable control of your boat and are prepared to swim a bit you should have fun – the D'ribbler award was won one year on the basis of an afternoon at Rhosneigr – stand up Michael Moul. A playboat with a planing hull is ideal, but the club's Rotobats work very well too.

This year the camp will be on the weekend of 30th July – 1st August. Rhosneigr is on the North West corner of Anglesey. If you've been before you'll know where the campsite is, if not get in touch with me and I'll direct you. The site is fairly basic – no water park or cabaret, but it has hot showers and is not normally crowded. We usually travel to Anglesey on Friday night, but you can always come up on Saturday. The club does have a large frame tent that you can sleep in, but you'd be better off with your own tent.

Tim Langridge

Ullswater Camp

20th – 22nd August

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

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

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

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

Steve Wilkinson

Ribble CC Library

The library has now been taken over by Clive Robinson, who I'm sure will carry on developing the library with even more enthusiasm than me, and who also manages to get to the Hand & Dagger more often than I do! To borrow a book or video, just ring Clive 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

Playboating

The Playboater's Handbook

Ken Whiting

Open Canoeing

Path of the Paddle

Bill Mason, Paul Mason

Canoeing

Laurie Gullion

Open Canoe Technique

Nigel Foster

Sea Kayaking

Sea Kayak Navigation

Franco Ferrero

Rolling

The Bombproof Roll and Beyond!

Paul Dutky

Safety

White Water Safety & Rescue

Franco Ferrero

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:

Blazing Paddles: A Scottish Coastal Oddysey

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, donated by Andy Dowe

This is a story about one man's journey through the Northwest Passage.

The Canoe Boys

Sir Alastair Dunnett, donated by Terry Maddock

The story of two boys who travel north, by canoe, from the Clyde along the West Coast of Scotland visiting some of the many diverse and distant communities along the way.

General:

The Rough Guide to Weather

Robert Henson

The Liquid Locomotive

John Long (ed)

Many Rivers to Run

Dave Manby

Norwegian rivers

Donated by Terry Maddock

Printed notes dating from 1985.

Videos / DVDs

LVM Lunch Video Magazine (DVD)

Liffey Descent (V)

Deliverance (V)

BBFC rated 18.

Extreme Sports Canoeing (V)

A Taste of White Water (V)

Ribble Newsletters

(CD)

Copies of the newsletter dating back to 1975!

Chairman's Chat

It's been a busy couple of months. Thanks for such magnificent support at the AGM – over 50 members attended and the hot pot didn't run out (next year the staff at Fulwood Leisure Centre will try walking on water). Reports from the AGM will be printed elsewhere in this March madness.

For all beginners and improvers there's a wonderful opportunity on Sunday 4th April to try slalom. The Division 3 / 4 event at Marple, South Manchester (near Stockport) is ideally situated on the gentle waters of the River Goyt. You can attend both Sat and Sun, camping overnight if you're really keen (twice the opportunity to win prizes). I've got maps of the site location for anyone who cares to ring me or we can head down there in convoy if you prefer. Healthy food such as egg, bacon and sausage butties, burgers, tea and coffee will be available on site.

Entry fees are payable (reduced if you're an individual member of the BCU) but at this stage I'm not sure what they are.

The last Beginners' Trip attracted a total of 26 people to Waterhead and despite an abundant lack of water, I think all enjoyed the event (including Mark James who took an early bath but remained in the game).

Keep your eye on the calendar for coming events and please plan to come on one or more of the week-end camps this summer (July & August). Their dates and contact details are published elsewhere herein whereto for you can make advance arrangements.

Terry Maddock
chairman@ribblecanoecub.co.uk

Editor's bit

Membership renewals

Included with this newsletter (or following in the post if you receive the email newsletter) is a membership renewal form. I've updated these dramatically from last year, to show all the information we currently hold about you. Please take a moment to look through the form and either correct any mistakes or fill in any blanks (according to the database, Stephen Singleton wasn't interested in sea kayaking!), then return the form to me with your payment.

I won't be sending out any club membership cards until the next newsletter (May), and I would very much appreciate it if all the membership renewals were returned by then.

Finally, if there is any problem with the renewal form (for instance you receive one and you think you've already paid) then please get in touch with me and I'll sort it out – I've tried very hard to make sure they're right but there are bound to be some teething problems!

Dates and deadlines

The next committee meeting will be on May 4th at 7:30 at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on May 18th. All submissions to me by Saturday May 15th at the latest please.

Martin Stockdale
secretary@ribblecanoecub.co.uk

Pool sessions

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

DATE	SESSION	CONTACT	LIFEGUARD
19 th March	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Peter Benett
26 th March	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	John Kington
2 nd April	Open	N/A	Steve Wilkinson
9 th April	Easter, no session		
16 th April	Open	N/A	Sara Withall
23 rd April	Slalom	Jacky Draper	Terry Maddock
30 th April	Beginners Course	Tom Byrne	Andy Rushton
7 th May	Beginners Course	Tom Byrne	Peter Benett
14 th May	Beginners Course	Tom Byrne	John Kington
21 st May	Polo	Jacky Draper	Steve Wilkinson
28 th May	Open	N/A	Terry Maddock
4 th June	River Course	Brian Woodhouse	Sara Withall
11 th June	River Course	Brian Woodhouse	Andy Rushton
18 th June	River Course	Brian Woodhouse	Peter Benett

Prices: Beginners Course £20 (plus club membership)
 Rolling Course £15 (plus club membership)
 All other sessions (Open, polo, special) £3

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

For Sale/Wanted

Wanted

2 ladies medium wetsuits and cags.
 2 children's wetsuits and cags, for a 9 year old and a 6 year old

Ged Thomason

And Finally

Particularly appropriate to getting this newsletter ready:

“I love deadlines. I especially like the whooshing sound they make as they go flying by.”

***Douglas Adams,
 Author of “The Hitch-Hiker’s Guide to the Galaxy”***



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

CALENDAR

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

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

Other Ribble CC events are in *italic*.

River information:

Burrs 0161 764 9649

www.activity-centre.freeserve.co.uk

Canolfan Tryweryn 01678 520826

www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk

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

March

- 21 **Flat Water Tour**
Bassenthwaite, Cumbria
Tom Byrne
- 21 **Kent Estuary**
Arnside
Steve Wilkinson
- 28 **Leven White Water (last)**
Newby Bridge, Cumbria (£2.00)
Graham Coles
- 31 Last Day of Access
Rivers Crake, Ure and Leven

April

- 3/4 Appletreewick Falls/Gorge only
R.Wharfe, W Yorkshire
- 4 **Beginners' Trip (Slalom)**
Marple, S.Manchester
Terry Maddock
- 4 **Estuary Trip**
To Be Arranged
Steve Wilkinson
- 7 Washburn Evening Cruise
- 9-16 **Easter Surf Week**
Hell's Mouth, Abersoch
North Wales
Phil Haworth
- 10-17 **Easter Scottish week**
Roy Bridge, Nr Fort William
Tom Byrne
- 25 **Flat Water Tour**
Leeds/Liverpool Canal
Tom Byrne
- 25 **Greta White Water**
R. Greta, Keswick, Cumbria
Harry Hull Mo-Th

28 Washburn Evening Cruise

May

- 2 **Beginners' Trip**
Lune Estuary (Halton - Glasson)
Terry Maddock
- 4 *Committee Meeting*
- 5 Washburn Evening Cruise
- 9 **Estuary Trip**
Knott End to Glasson Dock
Steve Wilkinson
- 15 *Newsletter Deadline*
- 16 **Flat Water Tour**
Crummock Water
Tom Byrne
- 16 **Tryweryn White Water**
Bala, N.Wales
Martin Russell
- 19 Washburn Evening Cruise
- 23 **Teesside White Water**
10.15-4.15 Teesside Barrage
John Kington
- 26 Washburn Evening Cruise
- 30 **Greta White Water**
R. Greta, Keswick, Cumbria
Graham Coles

June

- 2 Washburn White Water
Children go Free 12.00-8.00pm
Norman Taylor
- 6 **Beginners' Trip**
Wyre Estuary
Knott End to Skipool & back
Terry Maddock
- 12/13 Washburn White Water
9.00-5.00pm, nr Blubberhouses
West Yorks CC Peter Dawson
- 13 **Eden White Water**
R. Eden, Lazonby, nr Penrith
Harry Hull Mo-Th
- 20 **Flat Water Tour**
Bridgewater Canal
Tom Byrne
- 20 **Teesside White Water**
09.15-03.15 Teesside Barrage
Tony Morgan
- 26 R. Ure, White Water
West Tanfield, W. Yorkshire

26-27 **Sea Trip**

Lleyn Peninsula

Andy Dowe

- 27 Washburn White Water
9.00-5.00pm, nr Blubberhouses
Leeds CC Justin Scott

July

- 9-11 **West Tanfield Camp**
Brian Woodhouse
- 10-11 **Sea Trip**
West Wales Coast
Andy Dowe
- 30-1 **Rhosneigr Camp**
Tim Langridge

August

- 20-22 **Ullswater Camp**
Steve Wilkinson

Slalom

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

April

- 3 / 4 Marple 3 / 4 X Double
Manchester Canoe Club
- 17/18 Oughtibridge 3 / 4 X Double
Sheffield Canoe Club
- 24/25 Matlock 2 / 3/ Open
Matlock Canoe Club

May

- 1/2/3 Fairnilee 2/3/ 4/Open
Selkirk Canoe Club
- 8/9 Mile End Mill 2/3/4
Llangollen Canoe Club
- 15/16 Wagon Lane 3/4 X Double
Bradford & Bingley Canoe Club
- 22/23 Sowerby Bridge 3/4 X Double
Halifax Canoe Club

June

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