

TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK



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MARCH/APRIL 2006

Loch Ken



A five day trip to Loch Ken in Dumfries and Galloway

Beverley and Charis Saville, Steve Swarbrick, Allan, Leslie, and Stephanie Hacking, Clive, Janet and Iain Robinson, Terry Maddock.

Allan makes a cunning plan

I made an observation, hand a Hacking a little seed of an idea and before you've driven home and made a cuppa a full blown plan will have been formulated, researched and organised. As a little posse of Wednesday evening munchers, sorry canoeists, realised a

combination of school holidays, shift patterns, and retirement had coincided to make most of us free towards the end of October, I had a feeling such a seed was being planted. Sure enough, in the twinkling of an eye the phone rang, it was Allan, he'd found some accommodation, he'd got some people interested, did Steve and I want to go to Loch Ken? I said yes and then I had a think.

Doubt sets in

Monday ...October dawned and as Charis, Steve and I set off I was feeling a little worried. The area looked interesting, the

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company sounded good, it was the accommodation that was worrying me. Allan had booked two caravans on a holiday park by the shores of the loch.

Perhaps I've been watching too much reality TV, but the words caravan and holiday park were producing some fairly horrific images in my mind. Shell suit clad nights singing Karaoke in a club house with a tartan carpet, whilst children called Kylie and Wayne run amuck around me fuelled by copious quantities of chips and coke.

Then the return to the caravan. Six people crammed into a tin box, all that 'excuse me' 'Oops could I just get past' 'sorry...oops...excuse me, sorry, sorry, sorry.' The elaborate ballet of trying to move in a small space, the claustrophobia, the condensation, the compromising! As the car splashed along, yes I mean splashed, the M6 was a river, I was getting more and more worried. We had decided to take a scenic route along the Solway coast, bad move, the road seemed to have merged with the damp landscape, the rain was falling even harder and we seemed to be speeding through a solid wall of water towards our tartan tin can. Help!

We arrive

Sorry Mr Hacking, I should not have doubted you, as we pulled onto the holiday park my spirits instantly began to lift. No sigh of a club house, lovely small well located site sitting prettily by the shores of the loch.

When I stepped into the caravan I could hardly believe my eyes, it was bigger than some new houses bearing the label 'executive home' and best of all it had a huge window with a fantastic view of the loch, and if the loch had been any closer we could have seal launched off the veranda. In fact we found out later that if we had been there a couple of weeks earlier we would have been able to, as the whole caravan park had been flooded.

Let's have a look

When we arrived it was already late afternoon, the sun was low and a cosy drift into evening seemed really appealing, but I hadn't bargained on the Labrador puppy syndrome which seems to afflict many members of Ribble Canoe Club. Black neoprene seemed to be making an appearance, figures were scuttling between shore and caravan, boats were lining up along the shore.



I cast an apprehensive glance at Charis, we were going to have to think fast or before we knew it we'd be sucked into the maelstrom of activity. I quickly grabbed my paints and declared the beautiful sunset worthy of my attention; Charis played the revision card staring intently at some incomprehensible notes on genetics. It was close, but they were dealing with masters of canoeing evasion with years of practice.

Soon a little posse of eager beavers set off to explore the Loch, quickly fading into the evening light. Due to the rain the loch was very high and the explorers returned with tales of raging rivers spilling into the tranquil waters, some of the braver souls even regretting not bringing their play boats.

Home sweet home

Steve, Charis and I were sharing a caravan with our illustrious chairman Terry, and Pat and Norman Green, next door were Clive, Janet and Iain Robinson, and due to arrive tomorrow were three Hackings: Leslie, Allan

and Stephanie. As always seems to be the way with Ribble a relaxed atmosphere prevailed with everyone working hard to make things go well, lots of banter and tales.

As the first evening progressed an interesting and heart warming story emerged, little orphan Terry was adopted by a very caring couple Pat and Norman. Steve could only stare with resigned awe over my latest vegetarian delight as Terry dined in style on Pat's amazing evening meals, purred appreciatively whilst tucking into cooked breakfasts and protested mildly as he was handed yet another fabulous packed lunch.

Exploring Loch Ken

The next day looked dull, but not too windy and everyone, even me, seemed keen to explore further. Leslie was driving a dozing Allan straight from the night shift to join us, and we all pottered contentedly getting ready as we waited for them to arrive. Whilst paddling the double M-Ocean Charis and I had noticed one of the drawbacks of the large comfy cockpits was cold feet, and we were keen to try out a plan we had to combat this.



We had decided to place a lovely hot water bottle in the cockpit with us, I have to report this was quite a success and recommend it to all softies out there. No one need know, you could disguise your hotty as a throw line.

We were about half way along the shore of the loch, so when Allan and family had arrived the only decision which remained was

right or left? By that strange process by which group decisions emerge we went left. Looking at the map before we came, Loch Ken looked a little boring, being surrounded by gently undulating hills rather than dramatic mountains, but on closer acquaintance it's one of those places with quiet charm. The autumn colours were beautiful, Red Kites soared above us and the low sun cast beautiful shadows on the misty landscape. And beside all this poetic stuff I had warm feet, was paddling a double, so half the effort, and best of all had my feet on a rudder.

In praise of the rudder

I know that one should take pride in the skill of sweeping and edging and generally manoeuvring a beautiful sea boat through choppy waters, but I love rudders. From the first twitch of the bar transferring into a movement of the nose of the boat I was hooked, and I intend to continue my guilty addiction. The best thing about the rudder in the M-Ocean is it is controlled from the front where the least competent paddler (usually me) goes, this means I can turn for home whenever I choose, thus thwarting the plans of Steve 'it's not much further' Swarbrick.

In praise of edges

Places where things meet are interesting, sky meeting water, grass meeting rock, rock meeting water. If you stick to this principle it gives you a plan for a paddle which works for me, and we followed this plan on Loch Ken. Meandering along the shore, investigating the reed beds, poking around and in and out, looking up at the sky, ahead to distant hills, down into the inky water. This is the true joy of paddling to me, I can't bring myself to care how far I've paddled, how fast, I don't want to plough up the middle, give me the edges every time. And I was happy to be in sympathetic company, with people who wanted to know what lurked in the reeds, where that stream goes, what that bird is, happy to truly enjoy every aspect of the day. Loch Ken is actually part of the river Dee which has been dammed, and we paddled

until this became obvious and a definite flow towards the dam could be seen. On the return journey we went to see the entry of a river into the loch, and some explorers even left their boats and followed the stream up to another loch.

Let's go right today



Being right on the shores of the loch made life very easy, no shuttles, no putting heavy boats on cars, warm place to get changed, so the next day we went, you've guessed it, right. Another pleasant meander in mist and rain to the point where loch becomes river again. We stopped for lunch in the rain and cold, but luckily a certain Boy Scout spirit lives on in

the hearts of our own little boys and Allan and Steve set about rigging up a shelter, dragging sodden logs from the woods and lighting a fire. All this turned a fairly damp, dull lunch stop into a fairly entertaining event. The journey back was made more entertaining with a few fiercely contented races and some boat swapping.

Time for a walk

On the last day of our trip we decided to go for a walk, which we foolishly decided to let Steve 'it's not much further' Swarbrick plan, the about 7 miles was more like 14, and having no rudder I was forced to comply. All agreed we'd had a splendid little break and I'd like to thank everyone who went for the pleasure of their company. As you may have heard, on my return from the trip I had a little break of my own carrying a boat down the drive, sustaining what Steve reassured me was a sprained ankle, until I gently pointed out that my foot seemed to be pointing in the wrong direction. Thanks to everyone who sent me good wishes, it really meant a lot.

Beverley Saville

Ullswater Camp

18th – 20th 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.

Contact to be confirmed

Crackin' Craike

Sorry no photos, I know it makes it more interesting but we were more concerned about keeping out of trees and staying the right way up.

Paddlers; John Fuller, Tom Fuller, John Kington, Grahame Coles, Mark, Grant, Tim, Frank, Oliver Bamber, Mark Bamber + 1.

Says father to son the night before a trip:
 "Are you happy with the set-up in your new boat, foot pegs OK?"
 "Yes" came the reply, "Why?"
 "Because they need to be right to help with bracing, turning, edging etc."
 "Oh, yeah it's OK."

So, on a fine Sunday morning a gaggle of paddlers set off from Brown Howe across a windy Coniston Water, low winter sun burning a drink induced sensitive retina. The group soon becomes two groups as five of us paddled at a 'small boy in windy weather' pace.

Having caught up at the river mouth the running order was decided and actually worked for the majority of the trip, so reasonable discipline was maintained by all except for the 2-3 boat's length gap between us. A swift reminder of this rule was delivered which definitely had its rewards further down river. Moving fast with most rocks covered, the first half went without hitch except for the full aerial movement I took having failed to recognise that the wave I was about to bounce through was there because of a rather large, and thankfully rounded, boulder. Yet another notch on my, now not so new, boat.

Stopping to play on one wave Mark decided he was in need of a leg stretch and exited whilst going down river, upside down. Nothing new in that I thought, however the chase that ensued was new for me. The first part of the river was awash with eddies large and small but when you are in need of them

they can't be found. With four paddlers and two runners we eventually harnessed the boat ¼ mile downstream. Time for tea and butties whilst the others joined us.

"Right" we were told, "Next is Bobbin Mill, group up at the big house. First obstacle is the weir, simple affair, right hand bend, keep left and regroup past the bridge, paddle hard off the weir". OK, seems straightforward. As I tipped the boat off the edge I thought "Crikey", well perhaps a little stronger than that, turned into the right hand bend, all going well so far and then I saw the long down hill stretch and thought "By Jingo". My true thought is certainly not publishable for such a family magazine. With all the rocks covered it was a real blast and, to me at least, quite an exciting run.

Tom didn't have such a good time having capsized at the bottom of the weir he bounced his way down the 2-300 metres finding all the rocks I had luckily, as opposed to managed, avoided or flew over oblivious to their existence. A bruised and battered Tom emerged from the bridge clinging to John K's boat, his boat chased and brought to a halt some metres away, his paddle going round and round in a stopper out of reach. Mark offered his split paddle just as Tom's came into view, perfect, well except that his spray deck had somehow come off. Being the perfect gentleman John K offered his, somehow Tom's deck was recovered further downstream.

A game of tig started as a means of getting warm which must have been a bizarre sight for the houses overlooking the green as man and boy ran around in full paddling gear playing tig. To add to the humour of this was one man's discovery that Kumquats were not quite the fruit for him and spending the next 5 minutes spitting and trying to remove bits of said fruit from his mouth, not the thing for

respectable and sophisticated paddlers like what we are from Ribble CC.

Now, going back to the discipline of 2-3 boats length. As we all set off from Spark Bridge, 200 metres, left bend, right bend and a large tree trunk river centre. More unpublishable expletives going through my head and then "Where's Oliver", a breath of relief as he made a better job than me of avoiding it, going river left as I had hit it with my stern going river right. John F hit it side on with the inevitable capsizing, being on the other side of the tree I was getting concerned as I couldn't see any signs of exit. Blue helmet visible over the trunk and a red kayak firmly wedged under it, another sigh of relief.

Here the lesson starteth; had we continued in our undisciplined and rabblely manner of less than one boat length and a bit more water this could have been a sticky pin with very little time to react when you are sat on somebody's stern. Beware if you are doing this river. Lesson II; if there had only been two of us, as sometimes there is, it would have been impossible to retrieve the boat. It took two on the bank, one on top of the tree and me pushing the boat from behind the trunk to dislodge it. Oh yes and lesson III, always

carry a throw rope for yourself and others and a couple of karabiners wouldn't go amiss either. Here the lesson endeth.

The remainder of the trip was a pleasant bumble downstream to Greenod. In all, and in hindsight, it was a very good trip. Three swims, perfect river flow, almost bank full and no lost kit. For me the southern lakes are the most scenic and enjoyable without hordes of walking wannabes with their virgin Gore-Tex kit & £300 boots and this river made it the more enjoyable. Thanks to our experienced guides who provided no end of helpful tips and river running strategies, how John K found an eddy half way down Bobbin Mill amazes me. The first one I found was near the bridge whilst I sat and waited for Oliver to come down. It was the size of a small front garden, still at least I can now find them. In summary it was a bobbins trip.

Going home in the car father turns to son. "How was your new boat in all that then?" "Good," came the reply, "Only problem was I couldn't reach the foot pegs!"

Mark Bamber

West Tanfield Camp

7th – 9th 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 9th July. This is an ideal first river trip following the summer course.

Brian Woodhouse

AGM 2005

16th February 2006

A good turnout again this year for the AGM. I think our new venue is popular with members: the guest ale certainly was!

Once again the meeting was quorate with over 40 members: hopefully, gone are the days of asking everybody to sit still while a head count was taken, then waiting for a few minutes in the hope that the count would reach 30.

A summary of the proceedings is below: if anybody wishes to see the full minutes for the AGM please feel free to contact me and I will provide a copy.

Secretary's report 2005 (Martin Stockdale)

At the end of December 2005 we had 276 members. There were 6 General committee meetings in the year, all of which were quorate.

Treasurer's report 2005 (John Kington)

Copies of the report were circulated for members to read. The club's accounts for the year ended 31/12/05 show the club to be in a healthy financial state with increased profit and assets.

In the past year we have spent almost £3,000 on additions to equipment. The largest item is £2,002 on six new boats for pool use. We had hoped to secure grant funding to help with this, but it was not forthcoming so we made the purchase from our own funds. We had been hoping to secure grant funding for new river boats, but that seems unlikely to materialise and we expect to make further purchases from our own resources.

The purchases made and those proposed will help to bring our bank balances down and direct our resources to where they are needed – better boats.

Chairman's Report 2005 (Terry Maddock)

At the last AGM I set out the Club's aims for the year, and I believe that we have achieved most of what we set out to do, as follows:-

Maintain the strength of the Club's core activities:

Our white water coaching at Halton this year has again been very popular and many members of various ages have benefited. The calendar included white water trips for most Sundays although these were more of a problem in summer due to access restrictions and water levels. The trips were well attended. Flat water trips organised by Tom Byrne were regular monthly events and were well attended. Sea tours were held for various levels of experience over several week-ends and holiday weeks.

Maintain a strong Committee with full representation:

All Committee meetings were more than quorate. I think all disciplines in canoeing as carried on by this Club are represented on the Committee. Sue Shaw is coming onto the Committee as Competition Secretary and we thank Jacky Draper for all the work she has done and will hopefully continue to do to support competition. Tom Kington represents the younger end of our membership.

Maintain a strong presence in Junior Slalom:

I think the results in Junior Slalom speak for themselves - the only unnerving point being

the inexorable progression of junior paddlers to senior. They grow older remarkably quickly - it must be something in the water. Fortunately last year we had some notable young entrants onto the slalom ladder including Jonathon and Jaqueline Shaw, Joanne and Stephanie Hacking. They have climbed the rungs rapidly. The Junior Leagues for polo haven't materialised as yet, but the Ladies Polo Team under Nicky Marsh have taken the young players on board.

Maintain the high standard of our Club magazine:

We have Martin Stockdale to thank for his sterling work in editing the magazine so effectively once again over the past year - also the copying and distribution system (BAE Systems, Andy Rushton and Brian Woodhouse). I remain convinced that our magazine holds the Club together more than anything else.

Maintain the Website and encourage greater use by Members:

Many thanks to Chris Porter for his work maintaining the site. He overcame a glitch during the year when we lost the site for a short time. I think many of our new Members come through the Website; its professionalism, ease of use and friendliness telling them much about our Club before they even meet us (and then it's all downhill).

Maintain the Calendar:

I do this, so if you've any complaints you can just shut up now. But seriously all suggestions are welcome.

Maintain our awards system:

It seems to be working!

Improve links with other clubs and the BCU. Support the development of Freestyle within the Club:

Not sure about these.

Support the BCU in its attempts to improve access for canoeing:

Several of our Members attended the BCU north west access meeting at Burrs. A report will be in the next Newsletter, so please follow its recommendations to lobby your MP. Advice on how to do this is on the BCU's website.

Maintain our store of kayaks, canoes and equipment:

Our purchase of six new boats for the pool is now complete and we are moving on with the purchase of six new river boats. Our pool boats failed to attract grant aid, and the Committee is yet to decide whether we will apply for grants for the river boats.

Support existing and encourage new Instructors, Coaches and Pool Supervisors:

A whole swathe of new Level 2 Instructors is on the way, including some of our younger Members who have been following instruction from a grant aided course at Clitheroe Canoe Club.

Support the organisation of 4-star courses and assessments for Members:

Tony Morgan has run a 4-star course, and assessments are about to be carried out any day now.

Aims for 2006

Our aims for the coming year are much along the same lines as the past year, although one or two ideas are in the pipeline but not yet ready for publication. If anyone has ideas they'd like to see pushed forward, please mention them to a committee member, but be warned - if the committee decides to push the idea officially, you may have just volunteered to do the work.

Election of Officers

Susan Shaw was elected onto the committee as Competition Secretary. Terry Maddock, Mark Loftus and Clive Robinson were re-elected.

The committee expressed their thanks to Grahame Coles and Jacky Draper, both of who are stepping down from the committee.

Increase in Membership Fees

For 2006 the club membership fees will be:

Full member	£16
Junior member	£8
Family member	£4
Affiliated organisation	£35

Trophies

The trophies were presented by Bob Smith:

Driftwood

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

Nominees: Ali Ainsworth, Mark Bamber, Richard Collins, Adam Fielder, Sarah Fitzpatrick, Allan Hacking, Albert Risely, Sue Sharman, Peter Thomas.

Winner: Sue Sharman

Competition

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

Nominees: Richard Draper, Mick Huddleston, Helen James, Alex Jones, Nicky Marsh, Jacquelyn Shaw, Jonathan Shaw, Ribble Rebels slalom team.

Honourable mention: Richard Draper and Jonathan Shaw, both in England Junior Development Squad

Winner: Ribble Rebels Slalom Team

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.

Nominees: Oliver Bamber, Richard Draper, Joanne Hacking, Stephanie Hacking, Helen James, Sam King, Danny Markland, Iain Robinson, Jacquelyn Shaw, Jonathan Shaw, Matthew Woods.

Winner: Jacquelyn Shaw

Author of the Year

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

Nominees: Tony Morgan, Janet Porter, Iain Robinson, Andy Rushton, Peter Thomas, Sara Withall.

Honourable mention: Iain Robinson

Winner: Tony Morgan

Life Membership

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

Winner: Bob Smith

d'Ribbler's Award

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

Winner: Jacquelyn Shaw

Runners up: Helen James, Joanne Hacking, Jonathan Shaw, Grahame Coles, Alison Ainsworth.

Martin Stockdale
Hon. Secretary

Winter Slalom

So you think slalom paddlers hang up their light weight Double Dutch paddles for the winter months?! Not so - here is a taste of what Ribble slalom paddlers have been up to...

Halton

Every weekend our resident 'coach' Mick gathers the clan up at Halton, either on the Saturday or Sunday. Rain, hail, snow and shine! You can almost see the muscles growing as they stamina train by paddling all the way up the rapids to the weir - some taking longer than others - some occasionally getting out! Then consolidate surfing across the weir before surfing practice on the waves on the way down. A good 1 or 2 hour session depending on air temperature.

Midweek madness

Wednesday sees Jacquelyn, Jonathan and Richard down at Parker's Pit. Big thanks to Ken Cunliffe and the Ormskirk Scouts for taking them under their wing. It got down to a core of just four paddlers training over the icy winter months; breaking the ice forming part of the warm up! It blows a cold wind over the flat land near Rufford. Ken is great at giving them increased skills in gate technique and passing on the latest information he has learnt through his voluntary coaching with World Class Start. Even down to gym ball exercises on the scout hut floor.

Thursday's since Christmas, Mick has taken a few paddlers down on the canal at Preston, stamina training in the dark. There was a tale about one of the paddlers landing in a bush - don't know how true this was. Jacquelyn and Jonathan plan to join him as soon as it is lighter when they move to Garstang for the spring & summer, they prefer the bonus of floodlights at Manchester, and a warmish changing room.

Holme Pierrepont

Richard, Jacquelyn and Jonathan survived a bitterly cold week between Christmas and New Year - it snowed, it froze (plus fog), then it rained - and we were only there three days. Whatever it throw at them they paddled - morning and afternoon sessions of one and half hours. Their hands turned blue; there were icicles on the bottom of the slalom poles - and on their buoyancy aids! The wind blew up the course from the East. Still they rolled.



Snow



Freezing fog

Grandtully

February brought the rain one week and cold temperatures the next. Richard went on the first England Junior Development camp and

most of the time it rained. River levels were reasonable though and Richard felt he had taken part in a very worthwhile week.



Jonathan followed him the week after on the second England Junior Development camp. The first day the river levels were high following the rain from the previous week, then the levels slowly dropped. Excellent training ground and Jacquelyn made the most of it as well and got on the river every time England had their allotted slot.



The Welsh also had a camp on during the week. Richard and Jonathan not only trained on the water, but off as well; the longest run being 4 km. Mark, Jacquelyn and I enjoyed the more leisurely approach and luxury of a warm cottage. The lads had stayed in an outdoor centre, a radiator came off the wall during Jonathan's camp, and there was no

heating (no drying room) for 2 days, just a touch chilly as temperatures reached -3°C outside. Our cottage resembled a drying room with all the wet kit that came back with us each night.

Stone

The Stone Winter Slalom Series winners date back to 1980 on the cup which is now sitting proudly on Jacquelyn's shelf.



For you older slalom paddlers the names include Andrew Baillie & Paul McConkey; Laura Blakeman (GB ladies team) appears twice, along with Rob Neave (current U23 England team). So she is in good company, hopefully some of it might rub off on her results this year. Before anyone gets too excited at the prospect of an Olympic champ in 2012 for the club, she did get a few seconds handicap in her favour because she is still in division two.

For non-'slalomers' Stafford & Stone CC run a series of 3 races in January & February. At each of the races points are awarded. The top ten paddlers then race in a super final. Eight of the ten paddlers this year were local Stafford & Stone CC members but Jacquelyn managed to beat them all on their home ground.

Stone is a great place to try slalom if you have never had a go. Steph Hacking came for

the first time and enjoyed herself. Allan uses the excuse it improves his paddling technique... Screams and other un-printables are heard when Jacquelyn and Jojo C2. The event manages to rope in top paddlers looking for some pre-season racing experience through to novices at their first ever race.

Very latest

Jacquelyn won the first Division 2 race of the season at Shepperton on March 4th, so one more win and she goes up to Division 1 - watch this space. Jonathan had tough competition in the form of Army & Navy paddlers - just slightly bigger muscles than him!!

Shepperton Division 1 slalom was cancelled so Mick gathered the crowd at HPP on March 5th for a spot of training. Sorry to say he got more than he bargained for. After following Jacquelyn through a gate which she set swinging, it caught him square on and gave him a shiner (sorry no pic of it - but no competition cup for her next year!). I think he'll be sending someone down in between next time and allowing time for gates to stop swinging. Rolling in the 'office' is the penance next time she has been told.



"The Office"

So there you go... slalom paddlers do not hang up their Double Dutch paddles for the winter, far from it. To hit the new season running, training takes place all winter but it is fun and lots of enjoyment has had through the team camaraderie.

Fancy joining in? Check the calendar for division 3/4 races or email me and I will point you in the right direction. Ken & the scouts run an excellent slalom weekend at Bala Mill on May Day weekend, April 29th/30th, a Div 2/3/4 event (suitable for anyone), camping on the field is cheap, basic facilities but friendly. Bring a BBQ!

Susan Shaw

Rhosneigr Surf Camp

28th – 30th July

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

One of the few things that you can do in a kayak that beats surfing a glassy green wave on a fast river is surfing down the face of a glassy green wave on the sea – especially if the sun's shining. Every year we have a weekend camp at Rhosneigr on Anglesey.

The idea is to pack in as much surfing as possible and have a generally sociable weekend. We don't always get brilliant surf, but there are other attractions – seal spotting around some of the offshore islands, beach games, kite flying, beer and barbecues - whatever.

If you've not surfed before this is a good opportunity to learn. As long as you have reasonable control of your boat and are prepared to swim a bit you should have fun – the D'ribbler award was won one year on the

basis of an afternoon at Rhosneigr – stand up Michael Moul. A playboat with a planing hull is ideal, but the club's Rotobats work very well too.

Rhosneigr is on the North West corner of Anglesey. If you've been before you'll know where the campsite is, if not get in touch with me and I'll direct you. The site is fairly basic

– no water park or cabaret, but it has hot showers and is not normally crowded. We usually travel to Anglesey on Friday night, but you can always come up on Saturday.

John Kington

Anyway Up

After two Rolling Courses, several open sessions being tutored by a variety of experts such as Allan, Bob, Norman and other kind people I still can't get my head around the roll. It's not that I don't know what to do, or in what order, it's just that once I go upside down I can't seem to put it all together, particularly in moving water.

You see it's not that I haven't managed a roll, and that's the annoying part about it. In the pool I have done up to 20 rolls in succession, but with the application of brute force to compensate for poor technique. This has led to lots of advice and help being offered - for which I am grateful - but as soon as I attempt to follow the advice the whole thing goes to pot. The problem is not with the teaching I have had, it is entirely down to me.

In fact the problem seems to be my head. No it's not too big, it just doesn't like being in the water and if any part of my body is going to come out of the water it ends up that my head does - first. To all those that know how to roll, you will know that this is the cardinal sin, and inevitably it means that I am dragged back down to the depths of Fulwood pool. On the moving water my head coming up first isn't the problem, because once I'm upside down my hatred and fear of water kicks in and my first reaction is to get out of the boat as fast as possible forgetting all I've been taught. I know it sounds crazy for a kayaker, but I have a fear of water.

This lack of talent in the rolling area has led to a variety of interesting swims down a lovely selection of moving water.

Of late my aquatic acrobatics have been on display at venues as far a field as the Rivers Tees, Ure, Lune, Crake, and others I forget, but it has been commented on that I look calm when swimming – so something good may have come out of it at least.

Perhaps my most spectacular swim was at the Middle Tees where I managed to swim almost a whole section of rapids whilst displaying several cartwheels, dunkings, bumpings and grindings in a most controlled and deliberate action. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

However, it's the Crake swim that allowed me to collect the finest collection of bruises, cuts aches and pains so far with the added enjoyment of roughing up my first time out kayak and tearing my new dry pants.

I shall not be deterred, because I enjoy the paddling too much and let's face it, a good swim will rarely lead to something more than money and/or surgery can't put right.

There is however light at the end of the tunnel. I think I'm getting near to clearing my head of the blind panic that grips me once the inevitable - in my case - happens, and am looking forward to the next few open pool sessions to make my roll bullet proof and practice rolling in the style that Glynn has

recently shown me. I wonder if he would have bothered if he knew what a hopeless case I was.

I know I'm getting there as during my most recent dunking I actually set up for the roll instead of reaching for the deck release. It could have been a text book 'pool roll' if once upside down I didn't prepare myself by taking a deep breath – I'd done this every time at the pool and it had been okay, the only difference now was that I was upside down - damn. This lead to a spluttering coughing Halton swim but with a nice gentle mid river bump and scrape that ended up with Nicky being very disappointed that she didn't get to use her throw line because I'd come to rest with my bum on the bed rock and feet on a ledge.

Disappointingly I felt the extra gallon of water I had swallowed ruined my buoyancy 'status quo' therefore preventing me from getting in a triple-salchow with bent axel to finish the move or more likely allow me to progress gracefully and kayakless to the next rapid for some more rough and tumble.

So to all those people who have spent their time helping a no hoper and fishing me and my gear from a delightful selection of venues, I say a huge thank you. Your efforts have been greatly appreciated, and I long for the day when I turn up for a river trip and the person running it doesn't frown and check the throw line is packed.

S. Wimmer

Dull wardrobe?



Do you feel that your wardrobe needs brightening up?

You need look no further than the Ribble Canoe Club spring collection, exclusive to Ribble Canoe Club members.

Sweatshirts, T-shirts, Rugby Shirts, ¼ zip and full zip Fleece emblazoned with the Ribble Canoe Club logo.

New for 2006: Hoodies and Knitted Beanies.

Other items available on request, also if anyone has an item of clothing they wish to be embroidered with club logo, please contact me.

Large range of colours to choose from, and club logo co-ordinated to match the garment. For more information about these top quality garments, at exclusive prices contact:

Clive Robinson

Stories from a Teenager: Winter



November 05 to February 06

Sat on the water at the top of Halton Rapids, 27th November, 05

Over the past couple of years I have kept a logbook of my days out on the water. Below are just a couple of notes, from entries in my logbook, on what has happened during times of low and high water, this white water season.

6th November, 05

What a way to kick the white water season off. Halton was too high for anyone who wasn't in a slalom boat so after a quick transfer of kit I set off for the Duddon with eight other club members. I travelled up with the James' whilst my boat and kit headed north in a different car.

The Duddon is a really nice, scenic, grade three/four river with numerous good quality rapids. It was just a shame that at the end of the day we had to stand around for so long waiting for the cars to come back from the get

in. All the roads up the valley were flooded so the drivers had to walk for a good two miles after Mark James had dropped them off below the largest section of flooded road.

On the return journey I came back in the same car as my boat and kit; the James' were heading back to Teesside. I was dropped off at Tony Morgan's house, before I eventually arrived in Penwortham at half eight.

13th November, 05

Paddled Halton for the first time since January 05. It was still fairly high, but not as high as the week before. I'm not entirely sure how much lower it was, as I never went down to the river the week before to take a look – I was too busy trying to get my boat on someone's car so I could get to the Duddon!

Had some good fun surfing on the large waves, but can't remember that much. What does stay in my mind was going over the Groyne, when I mis-calculated a ferry glide above it. Side surfed it for a while before working my way to the end and getting flipped, tucked up and set up to roll, then waited for a while in a hope that I would float downstream and not stay in the hole. Luckily it worked and I am now always wary of ferrying above the Groyne in high water.



Below the Groyne in high water, Halton Rapids. 13th November, 05

27th November, 05

(Grahame Coles running a Wharfe trip)

Halton again, but this time at a much lower level. There was a club trip to the Wharfe, but this was cancelled because of the lack of rain. Unfortunately, we didn't see much rain for the rest of November and December – it could have been Christmas when we started seeing the rivers rising again.



Trying to catch a wave in low water, Halton Rapids. 27th November, 06

1st January, 06

(New Year's Day)

First paddle of the year was at Halton at a very high level. I was there with my dad, the Green's, the Risely's and Catherine Devey. Only Norman and Mark Green and myself got on the river; the others didn't feel happy paddling at such a high level. Had some great fun in the huge water. The only problem was getting anywhere; the current was that fast you really did have to work hard.

[I've no pictures for this, but I did appear on the BBC North West website courtesy of a photo taken by Albert and Kath Risely.]

2nd January, 06

(Bank Holiday)

Second day into the New Year and the second day paddling. This time it was the Kent. Arrangements were slightly complicated regarding transport. I was dropped off at Lancaster Forton services for Allan Hacking to pick me up at twenty-past nine. We were at the Kent by ten. The river was packed with boaters even though there wasn't much water. I enjoyed the river even at a low level. However, it wasn't what I was expecting – I had heard all these horror stories of long swims and boats getting foot blocks ripped out.

The arrangements home were also quite complicated. Allan had to be at work for seven o'clock and the motorway was backed up. With little time to spare, and a detour to Penwortham out of the question, I was dropped off at the Tickle Trout. Luckily, my dad was picking my brother up from work; a quick text and I had got a lift back to my house. I think Allan got to work on time, I can't say I remembered to ask!

8th January, 06

(John Kington running a Leven trip)

Halton again, as the Leven was too low, but this time in a new boat, my Jackson All-Star. The level was very low, according to the

Environment Agency's River Information Service it was 0.18 above its summer level, this was the second lowest reading I had seen all winter, the lowest being on the 27th November. The only real reason I paddled was because I had just got my new boat the day before and I was eager to get it out on the water. I really enjoyed my time on the water, even though it was so low.



Surfing at Halton Rapids. 8th January, 06

14th January, 06

Halton again, but it was back at a medium to high level. There was quite a big group of us on the water so there was plenty of fun and games, which usually resulted in someone rolling or getting fairly wet.

21st January, 06

Met Tony Morgan at Halton at nine o'clock for a Four Star Training day. Halton was too high to make the training worthwhile so we carried onto the Wenning. This was surprisingly low, compared to the high level Halton. Anyway six hours on the water and we all felt ready for assessment – how wrong we all were! Read on to find out why!

22nd January, 06

(Tom Byrne running a Flat Water trip)

Went out paddling with Tony Morgan again. This time it was the Kent. Again the transport arrangements were complicated as my parents were going on Tom Byrne's Coniston trip.

Anyway, I was dropped off at Fulwood Leisure Centre for nine o'clock. I travelled up to the river in Peter Dilworth's car along with Tony. However, my boat travelled up in Richard Nutter's car! The river was at a similar level to the previous time I had paddled it and all four of us seemed to enjoy ourselves.

This was the first 'proper' river I had taken my playboat down and I was worried about the bow burying and me getting a bit of a soaking, but it seemed to skip off the surface when running drops and I was happy with that. The transport arrangements home, were, again complicated. On the return journey my boat and I travelling to Fulwood Leisure Centre with Tony and Peter. Then, a quick change over of kit to Tony's van saw me back home to Penwortham.

29th January, 06

This was, what we all thought to be the last time at Halton for this season. However, Pat Green had managed to contact someone at some organisation, somewhere and get the access 'extended', all be it slightly confusing. We've got 50% of the river up to the end of March, as no one knows who owns the south bank. This session at Halton was the best I had, had for a while. I think this was because there was a really nice surf wave higher up which no one seemed to be going for. Each ride lasted a good five minutes.



Heading higher up at Halton Rapids. 29th January, 06

4th February, 06

The Hacking's were to thank for this trip. They managed to persuade a fair few of us to drive for two and half hours to catch the falling – or is it rising; I'm never quite sure – tide at Teesside. All had great fun, I think! I especially enjoyed the day as it was the first time I had been out in my playboat where there were reliable play features. Didn't manage to cartwheel or loop, but it wasn't for the want of trying. However I did manage to spin in Happy Eater. After countless rolls, I was ill for the next two or three days.



Half way through a spin in Happy Eater, Teesside. 4th February, 06

12th February, 06

(Grahame Coles running a Leven trip)

Paddled the Lune from Rigmadden Bridge to Devil's Bridge for the Four Star Assessment. It was a nice, scenic river, even though there wasn't much water. Anyway the five of us who went for assessment didn't pass; we were deferred because of some very poor throw line skills.

18th February, 06

For the first time ever I paddled Halton in February. There were no angry fishermen barricading the get on and couple this with a reasonable level due to a week of intermittent rain, a good day was had by all. There were a

couple of reasonable waves to front surf and attempt spins, but nothing spectacular – it was just nice to be out on the water, with the sun shining overhead and not a cloud in sight. Before the day was out I tried to pass the throw line section of the Four Star and this time I was successful with a couple of well-aimed throws.

19th February, 06

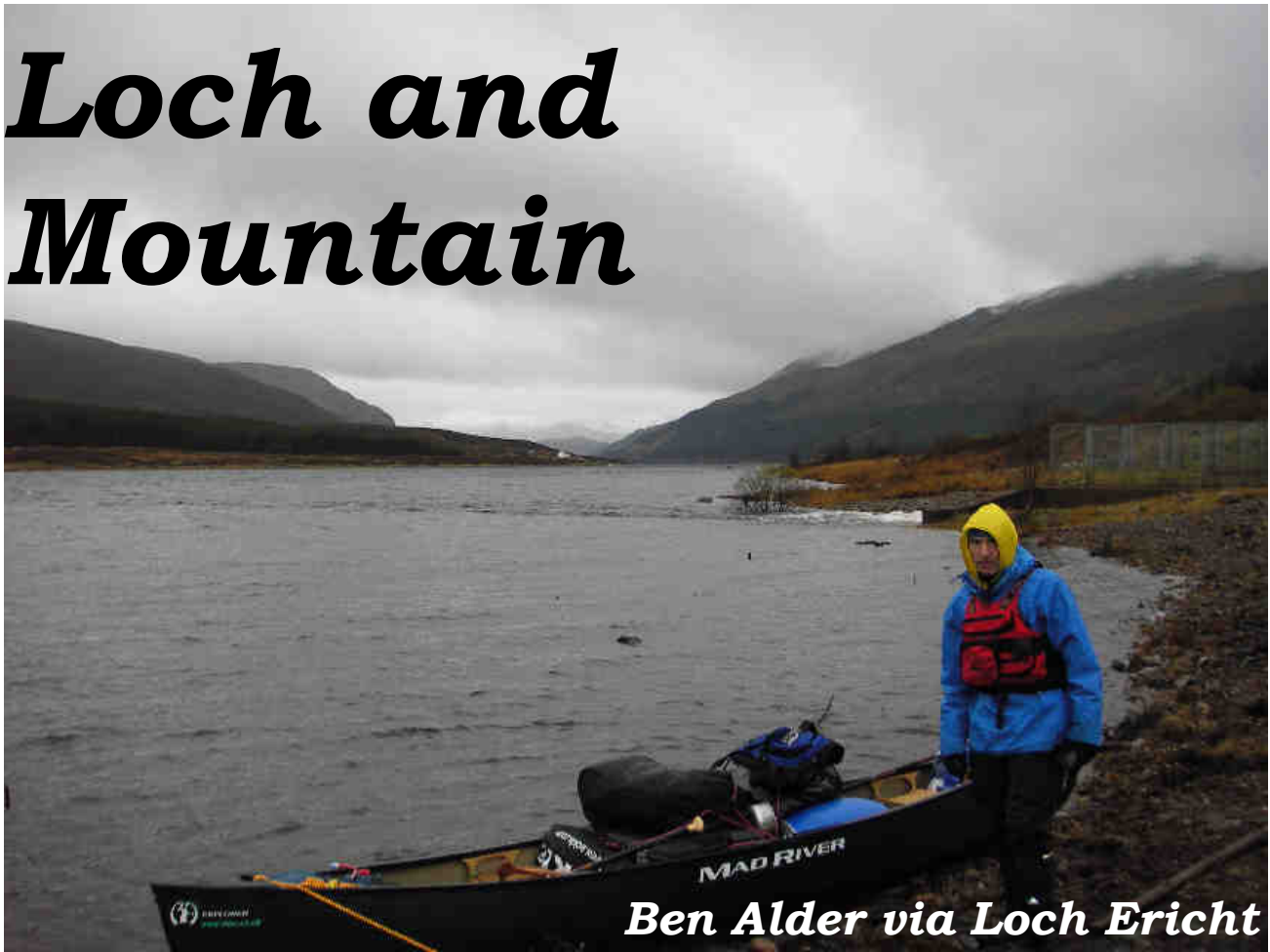
(Tom Byrne running a Flat Water trip)

Paddled the Calder with Brian Woodhouse and ten others from the club. The level was down on the previous time I had done this river, so it wasn't as good as I had remembered it to be. However, I did discover a nice seal launch, which kept us all occupied whilst the cars were shuttled the ten or so miles to the get out. The stanchions of Martholme Viaduct, where we got on, had a nice ledge, which was about three meters out of the river. I gave the depth a quick check before launching myself into the water. Grant Dillon followed suit. Then, always up for a soaking, I tried a backwards seal launch. Grant and Joanne Hacking then did a forward seal launch. The three of us seal launched once more when the drivers arrived back. This time Joanne and myself found ourselves rolling as we ended up upside down.

Just as an aside: I had paddled 14 out of the 119 days November, December, January and February span, and had travelled roughly 1075 miles to get to and from the rivers during these months. However, as I am unable to drive I have had to rely heavily on people for lifts for my kit and myself. For this I must thank my dad, Mark James, Nick Hepburn, Allan Hacking, Peter Dilworth, Tony Morgan and Richard Nutter.

Iain Robinson

Loch and Mountain



Ben Alder via Loch Ericht

Paddlers: David Warren and David Kershaw

Ben Alder is near the western end of Loch Ericht which is close to Dalwhinnie in the Highlands of Scotland. It is one of the more inaccessible mountains as it entails a long trek in before you even start the ascent. There are three ways of getting close: walking, mountain biking to Culra Bothy or canoeing to Ben Alder Cottage Bothy. We chose to canoe the twelve miles to Ben Alder Cottage.

Background

I think I first got the idea of using a canoe to get into Ben Alder Cottage after a week long Lochs and Mountains holiday with Glenmore Lodge, this was based up near the Summer Isles and entailed paddling across some of the lochs and climbing Suilven, Stac Pollaidh and Cul Mor (not all on the same day).

I had checked with a local about the trip and he said that it is a fantastic trip but do not do it with a south westerly wind as the loch is long and narrow and is aligned towards the south west so funnels the wind so making it hard work, especially in a Canadian.

I had had one abortive attempt the previous year which had been abandoned due to a strong south westerly and had not had chance during the year to do the trip and time was running out so we decided on the weekend of the 18th November as being the last chance for a 2005 attempt.

Training

We had two hours on the Lancaster canal the Saturday before the chosen weekend, after this it was decided that one of us was good at paddling and the other was better at keeping the boat in a straight line.

Preparation.

The plan was to paddle in on the Saturday, sleep in the Bothy, do the walk up Ben Alder, stay in the Bothy one more night then paddle back out. For this we decided to do it in comfort so the kitchen sink was duly packed. It was decided that if the forecast was for strong south westerlies we would abandon the trip, at the beginning of the week we were in for just that; however, luckily the BBC changed its mind and a northerly was forecast.

Friday

Friday night was a bit windy; in fact the Forth Road Bridge was closed so we decided to set off late (this was nothing to do with late packing). Once on the motorway north of the border the car was a bit twitchy due to the boat on top and the high winds catching it. We arrived at Dalwhinnie about three o'clock, parked up just outside the village and settled down to a comfortable night's sleep in the car.

Saturday

When we awoke about seven there was a strong wind blowing, a lot of cloud and a strong inclination on my part to head for the café. It was decided to "have a look as we have come so far" so we drove to the head of the Loch and had a look, the high clouds were being blown by a northerly wind but at the water level it was definitely a head wind, the thought of the café got stronger on my part but we had breakfast at the car and decided to give it a go with the intention to see how far we got and if we were not getting anywhere after two hours we would pack in.

The loading of the canoe took some time but eventually we got everything strapped down and were ready to set off at ten o'clock.

The waves were definitely higher than I had experienced and Dave got a soaking a couple of times when the waves came over the front (cycling waterproofs are not designed for

being up to your waist in water), meanwhile I was fine at the back.

We made slow but steady progress against the wind and quite enjoyed the battle so decided to carry on. About half way along the loch is Ben Alder Lodge, this is an old hunting lodge that has been completely rebuilt, at this point the wind died and we started to make good progress but after the wetting Dave was starting to feel the cold so we stopped to refuel, put on some extra clothes and set off, soon after this we started to get a tail wind, all I can think is that the mountains funnel a northerly wind and it splits halfway along the loch. Now we made excellent progress and arrived at the bothy with about fifteen minutes of daylight, there had been some comments just before this along the lines of, "If this bothy is not round this corner I am going to get the tent out."

Luckily we were the only inhabitants that night (no ghosts or mice were spotted), Dave did his Ray Mears bit and got the wood stove going and warmed everything up, I got the whisky out and warmed up internally.

After smoking the place out with the BBQ we had steak and sausage, whisky and settled down for the night.

Sunday



The next day was a complete change with no wind and blue skies, ideal for paddling, but we were walking.

After a leisurely breakfast we set off for Ben Alder, it is a consistent climb but not too hard with fantastic views of the loch.



Unfortunately the cloud closed about fifteen minutes short of the summit so we did not get the full view; this means that it has to be done again. After a bit of compass work we descended via a different route making it a pleasant circuit.

We needed some more wood so used the Canadian to get to some nearby woods and collected a few bits and pieces to keep us warm for another night and leave a bit for the next set of guests.

After another BBQ and more whisky, we then tried to get some sleep and rest in preparation for the next day, this proved difficult due the howling gale that was blowing outside, in fact

we were both thinking “how do we get out of this?”

Monday

The morning arrived and the wind had subsided but there will still white horses outside of the sheltered bay, but we had no choice really but to give it a go, it is paddle or walk and we did not want to leave the canoe.

We set off in the calm water of the bay but as soon as we were out in the loch proper the wind picked up so we put out a sea anchor to help keep the boat in line. After about an hour and a half we stopped for a snack, Dave took his buoyancy aid off and put it on the ground, while we were sat there a small whirlwind came and moved it about five feet, which was a bit worrying as we did not want that to happen while we were on the water, luckily that was a one off.

As we got farther down the loch and as the amount of fetch increased so did the wave height, at times we were close to surfing which was fun but tiring.

After five hours we were back at where we started, thanks to the wind this was two hours less than the paddle in.

We then loaded up and I got my trip to the café two days late.

David Kershaw

The Ingleton Greta

It was no good, I needed to stop and sort out my balls. Needed to move them around a little and then I could carry on. I'd been pushing them down under the airbag, but they were starting to pop out again, no wonder really, I had about twenty in there.

Pete was now probably regretting pointing out the first ones, but how could he have known there would be so many. Thirty as it turned

out, including a tennis ball and two small footballs. At the take out Pete guessed at twenty five, but I'd been collecting when he wasn't looking, so thirty it was, an Asda carrier bag full.

We didn't actually speculate too much about how they found their way down the river, but it must have been when the water was higher, most were up the bank, temptingly within

reach of a bit a fancy work from the paddle. Those further afield got harvested following a pedestrian foray on the bank getting three or four at a time.

At 10 o'clock when we met at Halton the level was well up, so we motored on to paddle one of the Lune tributaries, leaving one car eight miles North East, by the Ingleton Greta, heading off in the other to Ingleton. Even though the water here was running brown this level was about as low as you'd want to set off.

Two other boats had the same idea and were getting ready on the other bank as we got there. We left before them, I now wonder if they were actually on an 'official' ball collecting mission, maybe they were professionals?

Arcing into the flow with great big sunny views behind to a backdrop of Ingleborough wearing a dusting of white, a ribbon of constant rapids in front with only two, short, flat sections, on the way to the Bridge at Burton. Difficult ball hunting country.

There were no numbers on them, the only difference being colour: yellow, turquoise, purple, blue and orange. If this was some kind of fund-raising 'Duck Run' you must have had to choose your colour beforehand, didn't make sense to me.

More likely it was the conclusion of several years of study into the intricate underground water passages of the entire Yorkshire cave systems. Each cave filled with its allocated colour, balls carefully placed amongst the stalactites, waiting for the all-important rain to flood the chambers and carry the balls

through sumps and constrictions, activating the multi million pound experiment.

Only later by carefully mapping, collecting, counting and collating could someone analyse the facts and finally complete their 22-year study and submit their PhD, culmination of an academic life's work. An entire, final, conclusive, mapping, of the entire Yorkshire subterranean water network.

After the Bridge things went hectically down hill for a hundred yards then eased off, so did the balls, not many down here, don't know what effects that would have had on the final thesis. Personally I think it was the reduced landing spots due to gorge walls of the lower section that accounted for that, but I'm not a scientist.

Well, wherever the water came from we were grateful, I'd repeated one of my favourite paddles, I now owned loads of balls and although Pete still had his chest infection, leaving him wheezing and rattling, he looked happy, in between the coughing fits.

So while we had fun, the scientific evidence collected later that day, by two paddler/scientists only amounted to one orange ball. For their theory to have worked, and funding to continue until 2012, they had previously calculated that they needed to collect a minimum of twenty five balls.

Millions of pounds and years of combined university work had come to nought, despite having looked so promising only a week before. They simply couldn't understand how they could have been so wrong.

Tony Morgan



Would you like to learn to canoe?

Ribble Canoe Club is running a beginners' course starting on Friday 28th April 2006 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 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 course will run from 8:00pm until 10:00pm on the 28th April, and 9:00pm until 10:00pm on the 5th May and the 12th 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 or Sunday (date to be decided), either on the Lancaster Canal near the Hand and Dagger at Salwick or at another similar venue. 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 £36 per person, which includes the cost of the instruction, pool hire and membership of Ribble Canoe Club for 2006. 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

Chairman's Chat

I mentioned in the last edition of this literary organ that should we lose BAE Systems' sponsorship, articles may have to be shorter and that consequently someone would have to take out Peter Thomas. Of course I meant for dinner, as I explained to the court when I answered the charges of incitement to murder. It's tricky keeping up with all Mr Blair's new laws. He's nearly as bad as the BCU for contriving new hoops for us all to jump through.

So what went on of any importance at the AGM? Well, the hot pot was very good and so was the apple pie. Awards were presented by club ancient, Bob Smith, including the last one to himself which had him even more confused than usual. Someone tells me that he'd not been listening to my detailed explanation of the award (several others had fallen asleep too) and just heard his own name at the end and wondered what he'd won.

Formalities were quickly dealt with and the raffle run. A surge of enthusiasm amongst the younger members for freestyle courses made itself known and I hope that those concerned will keep pushing. Tom Kington is the your representative on the committee so Grant Dillon, I suggest you and he get together and organise something and get back to the

Membership Renewal

Included with this newsletter (or following in the post if you receive the newsletter by email) is a membership renewal form. These 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, then return the form to Brian Woodhouse (**not Martin!**) with your payment. Please note the new membership rates.

committee as soon as possible. If you present the committee with one or more proposals, the committee will give very serious consideration to subsidising costs.

Our recent committee meeting was attended by Gareth Field, the BCU's NW Paddlesport Development Officer and he could be a big help to you in organising courses both for doing freestyle and for coaching it.

Bad news is that following changes in land ownership at Alston on Ribble, our June river courses are very unlikely to be held there. New venues are being sought and investigated, but are unlikely to be finalised by the time this magazine goes out. Ah well, as one door closes, another one shuts!

The committee is proceeding with the purchase of six or so new river boats - but which ones. That's the difficult bit. Thirteen committee members means thirteen different ideas.

Many thanks to all involved with the AGM and with the ongoing organisation of our club.

Terry Maddock

Please try to make sure that your membership form is returned before the next newsletter (May) since this makes our job much easier.

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 Brian and he will sort it out.

Brian Woodhouse

The Inexplicable Appeal Of ... Applied River Hydrology Or... Why Engineers Like To Paddle.

First off, the disclaimer. This article is not meant to offend. Its purpose is to explore why paddling appeals to people of a technical nature and to provoke bar room discussion. Its not based on scientific study, its based on my experience so I guess what I'm saying is please, don't take it too seriously!

As wrong as it is to do, the world can be split into two distinct groups, the artists and the engineers. By engineers I mean scientists, mathematicians, technicians, mechanics and of course engineers. Basically people with a practical mindset who at school enjoy the sciences and in the work place are employed in technical fields. Artist are the opposite, with a leaning towards making things look nice and not really having a clue about DIY. I am an artist. I have a BA (Hons) in History and Politics and I specialised in grave architecture 1300-Modern Day, and religious groups during the English Civil War. Not really much use to anyone and I am unable to saw wood in a straight line.

In the canoeing world I am a freak. The vast, overwhelming majority of paddlers are engineers. The percentages are staggering. In the university canoe club I ran there were about twenty regular members. Of these only myself and one other person studied arts subjects. It's been a similar proportion with every single club or group I have paddled with in the last 19 years. Think about yourself and the people you play out with. Scary isn't it?

There has to be a reason that artistic types don't paddle. It could be agoraphobia. The great outdoors is exactly that, its vast. More than that it's often cold, and wet, and leaves you smelling like hamster wee. It's not very appealing when you could hang around art galleries drinking expensive coffee and looking cool. It might be that the idea of

canoeing is just too energetic. Why, when you've only four hours of lectures a week, would you do anything other than sleep? Of course the most obvious reason is that artists are busy doing something artistic such as decorating, crafting, making home homely.

But there's more to it than that. What about the analytical nature of paddling? Whether its reading white water, plotting lines through a slalom course, sea navigation, or polo tactics, canoeing requires collection and analysis of information, often quite quickly. It's problem solving. It's theoretical. It's everything that artists are generally pants at. The appeal is the same appeal that climbing holds.

The vast array of gadgetry available to paddlers has to play some role in all this. Even from the most basic level there's an amazing amount of toys to consider, research, and ultimately buy. To butcher Marx, gadgets are the opium of the engineering population. Take buying a paddle for example. On the face of it a relatively simple design unchanged for hundreds if not thousands of years. But then beneath the surface lie the decisions, the heart of the gadget. Shaft length, shaft construction, blade shape and construction, where the flex lies, feather, crank, diameter, grip shape. And it's the same for all kit no matter how simple. The worst discipline for gadgets has got to be sea kayaking, probably because of the need for self-sufficiency and not getting lost.

In conclusion what does all this mean and does it matter? No, not really. Artists don't paddle because they don't want to; engineers do. I for one am happy to be an island of creativity in a sea of practicality, especially when my car breaks down at the get out!

Tony Marsh

Summer Course



**Book Early to
Avoid
Disappointment**

Call Terry

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.

Suitable for people aged over 10 through to adults, the course will cater for beginner, improver and intermediate paddlers.

Location has yet to be finalised, but the course will take place at outdoor venues on Wednesday and Thursday evenings with pool sessions on Fridays at Fulwood Leisure Centre.

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.

For three star there will be an additional fee payable directly to the BCU for the certificate and badge if you successfully pass the award.

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

Provisional Program

3rd June – Enrolment, Kit collection and Introductory Outdoor Session for Beginners at The Hand & Dagger

7th/8th June – Outdoor skills sessions

9th June – Pool session – Capsize & Rescue

14th/15th June – Outdoor skills sessions

16th June – Pool session - Rolling (3*) and Rescue

21st /22nd June – Outdoor skills sessions

23rd June – Pool session - Rolling (3*) and Rescue

25th June - Outdoor Trip (Ribble or Lune)

28th June – Outdoor skills session

29th June – Assessment/Return kit

Interested?

What do you need to do next? Simple, just call to book your slot, most of the follow-on correspondence will be conducted by email so please have your email details handy.

Concerned about missing some of the dates or boat collection? Don't be! Call me and we'll come up with a cunning plan.

Please Note: ALL candidates will be required to swim two lengths of the pool before the first session.

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

Terry Maddock

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:

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

Weir Wisdom Rapids

Tim Parkes

Canoe & Kayak Games

Dave Ruse/Loel Collins

The Playboater's Handbook

Ken Whiting

The Complete Book of Sea Kayaking

Derek C. Hutchinson

Sea Kayak Navigation

Franco Ferrero

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



Canal Companion: Cheshire Ring

J.M. Pearson and Son Ltd.

(Donated by Terry Maddock)

General:

The Rough Guide to Weather

Robert Henson

The Liquid Locomotive

John Long (ed)

Many Rivers to Run

Dave Manby

Norwegian rivers

Canoe Focus

BCU N/W Newsletter

Expeditions:

Travels with a Kayak

Whit Descher

On Celtic Tides

Chris Duff

Blazing Paddles

Brian Wilson

Dancing with Waves

Brian Wilson

Paddling to Jerusalem

David Aaronovitch

The Last River

Todd Balf

Paddle to the Arctic

Don Starkey

Canoeing across Canada

Gary & Joanie McGuffin

The Canoe Boys

Sir Alastair Dunnett

Odyssey among the Inuit

Jonathan Waterman

Barbed Wire & Babushkas

Paul Grogan

Videos:

Liffey Descent

Deliverance (18)

Extreme Sports Canoeing

A Taste of White Water

Wicked Water 2

Drill Time

DVDs:

Tony Morgan in the Grand Canyon

LVM Lunch Video

Magazine

Ribble Newsletters (CD)

Doubleyouess

Without a Paddle (13)

Whitewater Kayaking

Ken Whiting

The Cockleshell Heroes (U)



Mags Brayfield in Nepal

(Donated by Mags Brayfield)



EJ's Advanced

Playboating

Eric Jackson and Chris Emerick

(Donated by Iain Robinson)



The Chaos Theory

Fat Cats Productions

(Donated by Iain Robinson)

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	SUPERVISOR
Mar 24 th	Rolling	Bob Smith	Mark Green
Mar 31 st	Rolling	Bob Smith	Clive Robinson
Apr 7 th	Open	N/A	Terry Maddock
Apr 14 th	*Good Friday*	No Session	
Apr 21 st	*Easter*	No Session	
Apr 28 th	Beginners	Tom Byrne	Grahame Coles
May 5 th	Beginners	Tom Byrne	Allan Hacking
May 12 th	Beginners	Tom Byrne	Mark Loftus
May 19 th	Rolling	Bob Smith	Mark Green
May 26 th	Rolling	Bob Smith	John Kington
June 2 nd	Rolling	Bob Smith	Terry Maddock
June 9 th	River Course	Terry Maddock	Clive Robinson
June 16 th	River Course	Terry Maddock	Grahame Coles
June 23 rd	River Course	Terry Maddock	Allan Hacking
June 30 th	Open	N/A	Mark Loftus

Prices: Beginners Course £20, Rolling Course £15 (both plus club membership).
Rescue/Rolling clinic £5. All other sessions £3.

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

Editor's bit

Dates and deadlines

submissions to me by Saturday May 13th at the latest please.

The next committee meeting will be on May 2nd at 7:30 at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on May 16th. All

Martin Stockdale
secretary@ribblecanoecub.co.uk

And Finally...

How many playboaters does it take to change a lightbulb?
Six. One to change the bulb and five to discuss the gnarly hole.

[Thanks to Tony Marsh for this truly bad joke. Think you can do better? Send them to me.]

CALENDAR

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

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

River information:

Burrs 0161 764 9649
www.activity-centre.freeserve.co.uk
Canolfan Tryweryn 01678 520826
www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk
Tees Barrage 01642 678000
www.4seasons.co.uk
Washburn/Wharfe 0845 833 8654
<http://www.yorcie.org.uk/>

Trips / Events

March

- 26 *R. Leven white water*
John Kington
- 26 Washburn Sunday Cruise

April

- 2 **Beginners' Trip**
R Wenning, High Bentham
Terry Maddock
- 5 Washburn Evening Cruise
- 9 *R Greta White Water*
Tony Morgan
- 9 *Flat Water Trip*
Lake Windermere
Tom Byrne
- 9 Washburn Sunday Cruise
- 14-21 *Easter Surf Week*
Abersoch, Llyn Peninsula
Andy Rushton
- 15 *Introduction to Sea Kayaking*
Farne Islands
Rick Patterson
- 15-22 *Easter Scottish Activity Week*
Roy Bridge, nr Spean Bridge
Tom Byrne
- 26 Washburn Evening Cruise

May

- 3 Washburn Evening Cruise
- 6 Tees Barrage

- 7 **Beginners' Trip**
R Rothay, Ambleside, Cumbria
Terry Maddock
- 7 Washburn Sunday Cruise
- 14 *Flat Water Trip*
Trent Mersey Canal
Tom Byrne
- 20/21 **Intro to Sea Kayaking**
Welsh Coast
Andy Dowe
- 20/21 BCU NE & Cumbria Paddfest
Derwent Marina
- 20/21 Tees Barrage
- 20/21 Washburn Peak Challenge
- 24 Washburn Evening Cruise
- 27/28 BCU NW Weekend
Nene, Northampton
- 28 *Estuary Trip Wyre (HT12.48, 9.2m)*
Knott End - Skipool & Back
Clive Robinson
- 31 Washburn Children's Day

June

- 3/4 Tees Barrage
- 4 **Beginners' Trip**
R Wenning, High Bentham
Terry Maddock
- 7/8 **1,2 & 3 Star Courses**
Terry Maddock
- 10/11 Washburn Weekend Cruise
- 11 *R Greta White Water*
Tony Morgan
- 14/15 **1,2 & 3 Star Courses**
Terry Maddock
- 17/18 BCU Coaching Festival
- 17/18 Tees Barrage
- 18 *Flat Water Trip*
River Ouse
Tom Byrne
- 21/22 **1,2 & 3 Star Courses**
Terry Maddock
- 21 Washburn Evening Cruise
- 25 **Course Trip**
R Ribble Alston to Walton-le-Dale
Brian Woodhouse
- 25 Washburn Sunday Cruise
- 28/29 **1,2 & 3 Star Courses**
Terry Maddock

July

- 2 **Beginners' Trip**
Derwent Water
Terry Maddock
- 7-9 *West Tanfield Family Camp*
Brian Woodhouse
- 28-30 *Rhosneigr Family Camp*
John Kington

Diary Dates

- 19-20 Aug
Experienced Sea Kayaking
Welsh Coast
Andy Dowe
- 18-20 Aug
Ullswater Family Camp
- 6-10 Oct
Scottish White Water Week
Roy Bridge, nr Spean Bridge
Ian McCrie

Slalom

Please see www.canoeslalom.co.uk for event details and to confirm dates, or contact Susan Shaw

March

- 25/26 Sowerby Bridge Div 2/3 Slalom
W. Yorkshire

April

- 15/16 Marple Div 3/4 Double
Stockport, SE Manchester
- 22/23 Matlock Div 2/3/Open Double
Derbyshire
- 29/30 Bala Mill Div 2/3/4 Double
Bala, N. Wales, camp by river.
Susan Shaw

May

- 6/7 Wagon Lane 3/4 Double
Bradford & Bingley CC

June

- 3/4 Hatfield Park 4/Open
Green Star CC (Yorks)
- 10/11 Sowerby Bridge 3/4 Double
Halifax CC

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