

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Trip Grading

<u>Tuesdays</u>	18.30pm every Tuesday evening: The Haven, Mudeford You will all have to wait for the spring	
<u>Sundays</u>	10.00am every Sunday: The Haven, Mudeford Regular Sunday mornings unless a specific event has been organised somewhere else	
<u>Sat 29 November</u>	Club Pool Session: 7.30pm at the Ringwood Recreation Centre	0
<u>Sunday 23rd Nov</u>	Exe Descent	3
<u>Sunday 23rd Nov</u>	River Dart: Day run on the Loop : alternative for those without the energy for the Exe, and, with luck, the river may be quiet. Contact Graham B	3
<u>Weekend 5-7th December</u>	Perth-Y-Pia: Paddling the Usk for more white water - a well attended annual event in (for RCC) luxury accommodation.	2
<u>Sat 13 Dec.</u>	Christmas Party: at Steve & Liz's (I think)	6!
<u>Sund 21 Dec.</u>	River Barle: Day trip : Tarr steps to Exebridge : Grade 2/3. Contact Graham B : NB Date changed & I still haven't heard back from the LAO	23
<u>Sunday 11 Jan</u>	Upper Dart: Whitewater day trip - Grade 4+ - Contact Graham B	4
<u>17 Jan</u>	Club Pool Session: 7.30pm at the Ringwood Recreation Centre	
<u>31st Jan</u>	Club Pool Session + Committee Meeting: 7.30pm at the R. Rec Centre	
<u>17 18 Jan??</u>	River Dee, Llangollen: WCA's <i>Frost Bite</i> tour Grade 3/4 - should be around this weekend	3
<u>Sunday 1st Feb?</u>	River Dart: Day run on the Loop (subject to rain/access!) . Contact Graham B	3
<u>14 & 28 Feb</u>	Club Pool Session: 7.30pm at the Ringwood Recreation Centre	
<u>Weekend 6-8 February?</u>	Canadian canoeing: At Delaware Outdoor Education Centre, Gunnislake: an introduction to Canadian paddling on the River Tamar. Contact Barry	1
<u>Sunday 15 Feb</u>	Upper Dart: Whitewater day trip - Grade 4+ - Contact Graham B	4
		5
<u>21 22 Feb</u>	Canoeing '98: International Canoe Exhibition. NEC, Birmingham	0
<u>Sund 8 March.</u>	River Barle: Day trip : Tarr steps to Exebridge : Grade 2/3. Contact Graham B	23
<u>14 & 28 March</u>	Club Pool Session: 7.30pm at the Ringwood Recreation Centre	
<u>Weekend 20-22 March</u>	Boscastle: Renting the YHA in Boscastle - with possible surf &/or coastal paddles. Suitable for families . This has probably been cancelled as few have expressed an interest - if you are keen - phone Nick today!	0 6 3
<u>Sund 29 March.</u>	River Barle: Day trip : Tarr steps to Exebridge : Grade 2/3. Contact Graham B	23



CANEWS

December 1997

Fun-out-of-the-Sun : Treweryn: July 97

I had last paddled the Treweryn about 20 years ago - a students slalom competition. Distant memories of fun water were sufficient to encourage me to make the effort to revisit the river this summer.

Canolfan Treweryn is the National Whitewater Centre managed by the WCA (Welsh Canoeing Association). It is based on the Afon Tryweryn about 4 miles north west of Bala, in the Snowdonia National Park.

Afon Tryweryn is dam controlled and is fairly unique in that it is one of the few white-water rivers that you can paddle during the summer months - with 'guaranteed' releases from Llyn Celyn reservoir normally at least once a month. Theoretically, therefore, this was an opportunity to paddle good white water in a t-shirt and shades ('fun-in-the-sun'), a nice change from breaking the ice on the Dart in winter. However, I had forgotten that this was Wales

Karl and I set off at about 5pm on Friday, arriving at the camp-site on the river at about 10.30 pm. The midges were out in force and so, having rapidly thrown up the tent, we grabbed some cans, located one of the other RCC tents and dived through the flap (waking Mike up in the process). Steve C, Steve F and Pete, who had arrived earlier, were discussing some of the mishaps that they had already encountered on the river.

Morning arrived earlier than expected, with typical Welsh drizzle. We scrounged the necessary ingredients for a cooked breakfast and wandered down to the Centre to purchase our day passes for the river (£5 for a very fetching high-visibility helmet tag).

Having inspected the river we elected to start the first run of the day below the infamous 'Graveyard' section. As things turned out this was probably a wise precaution, the water proved to be a good grade 3/4 and, with a few rusty paddlers, there was a need for a warm-up. Of course, on such a short run (2km's) there's no real warm-up water available on the Treweryn and, consequently, poor Mike paddled 100yds and swam 300yds before we were able to pull boat and swimmer to the side. Mike had a few bruises, and the conquest, (which had continued down the river in Mike's absence and displayed some superior hole-riding and cartwheeling skills) with a split deck.

Mike retired to the tent and the rest of us completed the first run and reflected on our rapid introduction to the weekends paddle.

The second and third runs of the day were from the 'Fish Pass' at the top, taking in the 'Graveyard' (which proved fine).

While we shared the river with many other paddlers there was plenty of opportunity to play on the many waves and holes that the river has to offer. The hole at the bottom of the 'ski jump' probably gave us the best entertainment. Pete managed to submerge Steve's Enigma gracefully (and to loud applause) while most of us just got 'trashed'! Chapel Falls proved a little meaner (didn't it Steve!).

All in all it proved an excellent and exhilarating days paddling. That night, Karl, myself and Mike set off home. From all accounts Sunday proved just as good - Steve C never did go back into the Chapel Falls hole (but then he had already busted his paddle at the Ski Jump)

Ed

Wait for the Rain

A few of us were too anxious to paddle on the opening weekend of the season. I had arranged access on the Loop for Sunday the 5th October (arranged in July!!), but, as is always the case, during the week before we heard "it's been the driest September in living memory" (what short memories people have, I'm sure it was the same last year). Anyway, with the wonders of modern communications, I was getting up-to-the-minute reports on the dwindling river levels all week, until finally Fiona (the Access Officer) suggested that I could re-schedule the trip to another weekend (without losing the fee)

But none of us were too keen to stay at home and do the gardening. I searched the surf forecasts - they reported moderate surf at Croyde with a Westerly. Bearing in mind that the previous weekend the same source had reported that Croyde would be flat, but Nick and company found '6 footers', we decided to give it a go.

The surf forecast proved to be optimistic this time - we found 2' at best, and debated whether or not to cut our losses and return home. In fact despite the conditions we did manage to have some fun - the waves were small but very clean and, after we had swept the boardies away, we were able to get a few good rides. But, as I said to myself last year, and I will again next year - be patient and wait for the rain - it's sure to come.

Loop : 2nd November

Elliott and myself met at Graham B's - much to Graham's surprise we were there well before the arranged 7am. We set off to meet the others at Kilmington Cafe for breakfast

and plenty of beans for the 'after burners'. There were 6 in the party (Graham, Danny, Pete, Steve F, Elliott and myself). I don't know quite how I had got into this situation but quite honestly I was looking forward to this day-trip down the Loop, having done it two weeks previously.

On arriving at Newbridge, with only two cars the shuttle was a piece of cake and we were soon kitted up and on the water. While the river was as low as we had ever seen it we managed to find plenty to play on. After a shaky start my confidence grew and I enjoyed playing on the small stoppers and waves. Everybody capsized at least once (some more than others) and rolled. Six was a good number - we could all play on the features.

Lunch time saw us trying to climb out and straight up a sheer rock face. Of course I swam and was not too pleased thinking it was a "bloody silly place to stop"

But Pete had other ideas - he had planned a surprise for Graham, a fantastic (to watch) seal launch. Graham started from the rock face while Pete went way back in the woods. They both came up smiling but there was no way that they were going to talk me into it.

Altogether we were on the river for 4 1/2 . At the top drop of Triple Falls there were pop-outs galore but no one could coerce me to have a go I was happy to watch the action.

On getting out at Holne Bridge Danny managed a spectacular back flop - all the swimming of the day was due to trying to get out of the canoes.

Thanks lads for a good day on the Loop and Graham for organising it.

Mike

Shooting the King's Gutter

Pete Ambrose had suggested (I think) that I joined a few Solent Club paddlers for their annual remembrance day paddle on the Erme. I had heard lots of tall stories about this particular descent, and having vowed to paddle one new river each season, this seemed like a good idea. After the driest October in the history of the planet, and not having sat in a Kayak for many weeks, or tested out my newly acquired 'spud', a few of us had scraped down the Loop the week previously as a 'warm-up'. This, however, did not prove the ideal preparation for a river like the Erme!

The Erme is one of the handful of creeks, running off Dartmoor, that are only really paddleable after a good deal of rain - so the diary date was somewhat speculative. However, it poured right through the first week of November and the trip was confirmed on the Saturday night.

I had scoured the guides for some hint of the type of river that I was contemplating, the only reference that I could come up with was "*a spate river worth checking out*". Not much help! Pete had told me that the river is known as the *King's Gutter* - which, on inspection, gave a pretty good idea of the character of the river.

There were six of us that made the trip, and we took the precaution of wandering a few hundred yards up the gutter to inspect some of the falls above Ivy Bridge. Sometimes It's best not to look, but put your trust in an experienced 'probe' - this was just such an occasion. Looking at the torrent cascading down a narrow gorge under the viaduct almost had me scampering back to the warm sanctuary of a locked car. I now appreciated why Pete had said it's a 'spud only' trip

There was a fairly long carry-in to our access point, followed by a gentle grade 3 warm-up section (but I couldn't get that viaduct section out of my head). Confidence gradually grew only to be shattered when we reached the first serious drop of the day - what the 'probes' described as a 'drop and slot' (i.e. shooting a fall down into a narrow gorge). I elected not to 'bank-inspect' what was beyond the drop, figuring that providing I could see the line I had to take, knowing what was in store for me over the drop was probably not a good idea. 'Solent Mike' got throw lines ready and Pete made the first run. I saw the tip of his boat and paddle at peculiar angles, watched Mike throw the line, and was trying to remember if I had ever seen Pete in difficulty before. I hadn't! - he made it through though, without assistance.

Steve Champion took the next turn - and I didn't see anything of his boat (or him) for about 15 minutes. There seemed to be an awful lot of activity down there - something wasn't quite right. I saw Steve being hauled out (it transpired that he had been well and truly circulated), another 10 minutes and the boat had been dislodged and Mike, standing at the top of the drop, gave me the all-clear as if nothing had happened. It was not until I launched off the top of the drop that I was able to fully appreciate why things had gone wrong before, there was a mean tow-back into a wall-to-wall stopper - I closed my eyes and put on the power to claw my way out. But I felt a little irresponsible and would think twice before making that particular drop again! (particularly after hearing Steve's vivid account of being held fast at the bottom of the river and developing a technique of spring-jumping from the bed to get air when he needed it!)

The pace began to quicken as we approached the Viaduct with a rollercoaster of a ride, punctuated by some good 'S-Bend' drops. I made plenty of errors and a few novel descents, back end loops, etc. but, otherwise, all went well. The Viaduct section proved reasonably straight forward at the end of the day - after all, if the river is only 6' wide, there's not much difficulty in choosing the right line!

Shooting the King's Gutter is something I have already put in my diary for next year!

Ed



FOR SALE

Pintail

Jaqui is selling her Pintail sea Kayak

£500 to a good home,

including 'bits and bobs'

Tel: 01703 282710

Pirouette S

Denise and Colin are selling a Pirouette S light blue and good nick

only used on the sea.

£300

Tel: 01425 273392

Club Logo : Stickers

Is anyone interested in purchasing RCC club Logo Stickers ?

These are available in Black (or colour) on white or white on clear for window stickers. Depending on the number ordered (50 or 10) and the size costs would be:-

- 100mm : £1.32 to £4.40 each
- 75mm : £1.13 to £4.20 each
- 50mm : £1.00 to £4.00 each

Contact Pete Ambrose

Come Away With Me For the Weekend!

Little did I know what this meant when Colin uttered these words to me!

The weekend he was, in fact, talking about was the camping/canoeing weekend on the River Dart in the company of 14 other canoeists and 4 more than capable young children (the Deakin clan). Not what I would call a weekend away.

However, I met the challenge and duly prepared myself for what lay ahead. Colin had decided that it would be a good idea to invest in a double Kayak (well, I think that's what it is called) and coach me the previous Sunday at Mudeford. I was not sure who was surprised the most, but I don't think I let the side down and was soon into the swing (or paddle) of things. After a couple of hours, I was ready for the big one - the River Dart.

Now as you are all probably aware, I do like my home comforts and the next bridge to conquer was the camping. I prayed that it would not rain. Colin was, for a change, very organised and planned everything down to the last pair of knickers that I was allowed to take!

The weekend had arrived. I had taken the afternoon off work in order to leave early to enable us firstly to paddle and secondly to put up our tent while it was still daylight. Colin, as usual, was running late and consequently we arrived at Totnes as dusk fell.

Graham Deacon was also in the car park followed shortly by Paul and his son. We packed as much as we could into the boat and I felt sure it wouldn't float! Paul was swapping cars around and told us to go on ahead and he would catch us up. So we

togged up and launched the 'Queen Mary' as it became known by the end of the weekend.

I was extremely nervous but was determined to get over my fears and enjoy my weekend away. By now it was pitch black and the only thing lighting up the river was the Disco boat that got in the way and created big waves! Graham kept saying 'just round the next bend' and, like a fool, I believed him.

At last, we could see a flicker of light - could this be my bed for the night? Yes, young Paul was showing us the way with his torch.

Having successfully landed, the next challenge was to put up our tent by torchlight. This took a while and by the time we made it to the camp fire, all the food had disappeared but there was plenty of bread and beer! After a few stories and chatter, it was bed time. Now I had to find a tree I was told. Oh no!

Colin fell asleep very quickly but I seemed to be constantly trying to climb up the tent (we were on the side of a hill). Snoring was rife from the next tent and I don't need to mention names. I was freezing cold but somehow I was happy.

Saturday morning arrived. The birds were singing, someone had made up the fire and I got up for a warm. The water was on for a hot drink, and I had my cereals. Cooked breakfast came later. We packed up and launched 'Queen Mary' again.

Today I felt much happier on the water. Everyone was so helpful and friendly. I was really enjoying myself although I was still very nervous. My left paddle seemed to soak Colin with every stroke, but after a few more instructions shouted at me, I made progress and only soaked myself! I got tired so I hitched a ride with Karl and his son at one

stage. It was so peaceful on the water and I can see why you all enjoy it so much.

We stopped for lunch and pitched our tents in a farmers field (with permission). I made sure we were on level ground this time.

After lunch, a group of us felt like a drink. The only drawback was that we had to paddle another 5 miles or so to Dartmouth for that luxury. We negotiated lots of boats that kept getting in our way and eventually arrived at Dartmouth Marina alongside a chain ferry which caused me a lot of concern. As you all know I don't drink but I did have a lager shandy to steady the nerves. Dartmouth is a very picturesque little town which I am told sells the most delicious liquorice ice-cream, for which we went in search. The shop had sold out but alternatives went down a treat. A bit of window shopping and taking in the sights, then back to the pub for another drink before catching the tide for the trip back to camp. Barry and Bev had stayed behind and cooked a delicious curry for dinner which was very gratefully received, as were the dry clothes, camp fire and hot drink.

At this stage I must mention that the so called 'professionals' now took out the 'Queen Mary' for a paddle to practice for the Devizes to Westminster race. We helped them into the water and they almost capsized within the first 100 yards! Their paddles were out of time and I am certain that the

back man was not in fact doing anything. Keep practising is all I can say.

I was exhausted but amazingly content. I had enjoyed my day on the river and although very tired was looking forward to the paddle back to Totnes on Sunday. I slept like a baby with my hot water bottle - thanks Jaqui.

We disbanded camp and as usual Colin and I were left to bring up the rear. We soon caught up and overtook. By now I was struggling. The bruises and cuts on my hands were very sore, I needed a shower and hair wash and most of all I needed a soft bed to rest my aching bones.

I can honestly say that by the time I got back to Totnes, I was completely knackered and unable to paddle another stroke but I was smiling, especially when drinks and sticky buns were mentioned at the nearby Cyder Press.

A thoroughly enjoyable weekend with lovely people.

Thanks for my weekend, Colin

By a very nervous (but happy) amateur 'canoeist'

Stour Descent Canoe race 1997

Sunday 7th December : 15 mile time trial or go along for a 'jolly'.

If you are interested let me know - as there is an entry fee to pay

Holne Barn : October 97

This years annual pilgrimage to the barn was well attended - something like 21 paddlers arriving at various times between Friday afternoon and Saturday morning

On arrival, Graham D and I checked out the accommodation first, before joining other 'river warriors' at the Pub. Elliott kept his stomach busy by wolfing two main courses (paid for by Debbie, of course) - so Barry can now pick on Elliott about eating habits, instead of me!

Being the first white-water for some time everyone was excited and optimistic - the main topic of conversation was "would there be enough water in the river?" - especially for Elliott with all that excess weight!. Peter Moreton (a very rare and unseasonable sight) was standing at the bar drinking copious amounts of 'Speckled Chicken' and praying that the Indian Summer would last until Sunday.

Early Saturday morning found us all up discussing various things, such as how many hours sleep everyone had and who made what noise when?.

Nick and Marion put a stop to all this by serving up a 'Full English'. The weather was cool and misty but with a promising forecast.

A few of the more experienced paddlers split off down the Loop, hoping to meet up with the rest later in the day. The main party was to meet Barry and Bev at Holne bridge (with Bev having despatched the boys to Granny. How we all got where we were supposed to be was a small miracle. I left the drivers to instruct me where to put my dry kit because I get confused when there is more than two cars in a shuttle.

Holne Bridge access was rather crowded but we managed to keep our group together and the new paddlers went upstream to learn the intricacies of ferry gliding, breaking in and out, etc. Pete took his first white water ducking and I can't quite remember the sequence of who went in where, when and how. Elliott, Graham and myself were kept busy with the rescues anyway.

Steve showed everybody how to undertake a vertical pin and it was Graham to the rescue. From where I was I couldn't see all the action as minor incidents were occurring all the time.

Buckfast weir provided excitement and some deliberation before the more adventurous paddlers decided where to take it. (Some idiot had planted a tree in the main shoot).

Once again Elliott provided entertainment, capsizing and rolling up in the main flow. Barry seal launched into the Salmon steps and crunched the bow of his boat.

Most of us were exhausted by the time we reached the egress point and I was thankful that Barry had arranged to park the cars in the Little Chef car park, saving us from the usual drainage ditch hike.

Back at the barn we all sorted ourselves out and waited for tea and shower tokens. the meal was marvellous - a huge dish of Lasagne thanks to Jaz and Mike. Elliott managed to eat 1 1/2 portions of a silver foil container.

Bev, Barry and Lee joined us at the pub where Lee demonstrated his 'behind the lace curtains' drinking every time the Landlord passed.

It was during the evening that I was volunteered for the Loop - as Bev needed someone to look after her! Besides, Elliott and Graham were keen and I couldn't let them down.

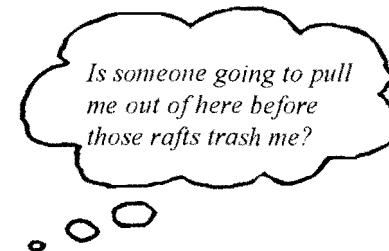
We were all awakened on the Sunday morning by Graham pirouetting around the kitchen crashing into plates and metal dishes. Elliott responded immediately (although he still asked "is that Mike?")

Anyway, because Graham crashed into Sunday morning we were all up and ready to leave by 9 o'clock. Once again we set off for the river in two groups. Debbie and Marion were exhausted from a 'grade 3 shopping trip' the previous day, but rose to the baby sitting detail. Jake, who would rather have been "noking" than walking with the girls, waved us off.

After all the apprehension it was worth doing the Loop. Bev took a swim at Lovers Leap and Colin got pinned, waiting patiently until Steve waded out to him.

I would like to thank everybody for making it a good trip. Barry for organising and instructing, Nick and Marion for breakfasts and Mike and Jaz for Saturday's meal

Mike



Steve Campion - on the Treweryn

Avon Snaps

Where are all the Kayaks?



Now, what do I do with this bit of kit??

Winter Pool Activity

Barry has managed to secure our normal arrangements with Ringwood Rec. for 3 courses and club pool sessions. There are 9 booked on the first beginners course - an improvement on last year. The Rec. has taken steps to advertise the course fairly widely.

The centre has also asked if we can provide our own 'life-guard' (to supplement their own staff) at pool sessions. They are not expecting a trained life-guard but a competent swimmer who can 'take the chair' at sessions.

In October a few of us provided an hours 'staff training' at Ringwood Rec. This went very well, with a great deal of 'wet enthusiasm' from the staff that took part. The centre has since written to extend their thanks.

Pool Canoeing Courses: Tuesdays : 22:00 to 23:00

BEGINNERS 1997	BEGINNERS 1998	ROLLING '98
4th November to 9th December	13th January to 17th February	24th February to 31st March

Bookings have to be made direct to Ringwood Rec. and there charges are £24 for members (of the rec) and £27.30 for non-members

Club Pool Sessions: Saturday 19:30 to 20:30

29th November	14th February	14th March
17th January	28th February	28th March
31st January		

EDITOR'S CORNER

Thanks to the contributors of this issue - and, for everyone else, the usual plea for something to put in the next issue

Merry Xmas

