

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Sundays **10.00am every Sunday: The Haven, Mudeford.** Regular Sunday mornings unless a specific event has been organised somewhere else
- Sunday 5 Jan **Upper Dart:** Whitewater day trip - Grade 4+ - Contact Peter
- Poole Harbour: Ice Breaker:** 10:00 at Rockley Sands - wrap up warm and bring a packed lunch (Contact Paul Toynton)
- Sat. 11 Jan **Club Pool Session:** 6.30pm at the Ringwood Recreation Centre
- 11-12 Jan **River Dee, Llangollen:** WCA's *Frost Bite* tour Grade 3/4
- Sat. 25 Jan **Club Pool Session:** 6.30pm at the Ringwood Recreation Centre
- Sund 2 Feb. **River Barle:** Day trip : Tarr steps to Excebridge : Grade 2/3. Contact Graham B
- Sat. 8 Feb **Club Pool Session:** 6.30pm at the Ringwood Recreation Centre
- Sunday 9 Feb **Keyhaven:** Meet at the landward end of Hurst Spit (SZ 300908) at 10:00. A mornings paddle and bird watching: Grade 1
- Sunday 16 Feb **River Dart :** Day run on the Loop (access booked for 8) Grade 2/3: Contact Graham B
- Sat. 22 Feb **Club Pool Session:** 6.30pm at the Ringwood Recreation Centre
- 22-23 Feb **Canoeing '97: International Canoe Exhibition.** NEC. Birmingham
- Sun 2 March ? **River Frome:** whitewater day trip. Grade 2/3. Contact Pcte Ambrose
- Sat. 8 March **Club Pool Session:** 6.30pm at the Ringwood Recreation Centre : Followed by **Committee Meeting** in the Crown (everyone welcome/encouraged)
- Sun 16 March? **Kennet & Avon Canal/River Avon :** Starting on the canal at Limpley Stoke and paddling to Bradford-on-avon, returning via the river. A gentle introduction to canal and river paddling. Grade 1. Contact Elliott Gully
- Sat. 22 March **Club Pool Session:** 6.30pm at the Ringwood Recreation Centre
- Sund 30 March. **River Barle:** Day trip : Tarr steps to Excebridge : Grade 2/3. Contact Graham B
- Tuesdays : **18.30pm every Tuesday evening: The Haven, Mudeford.** Regular Tuesday evenings throughout the summer unless a specific event has been organised somewhere else
- Early April >
- Sun. 13 April ? **Kennet & Avon Canal:** another one-day trip on the K&A canal - this time around Crofton? Grade 0. (exact location to be arranged)
- Sun. 27 April ? **River Avon :** our annual paddle along the privately owned section of river Longford Castle > Downton. A gentle paddle grade 1. Contact Barry

NB: "?" means date not yet confirmed



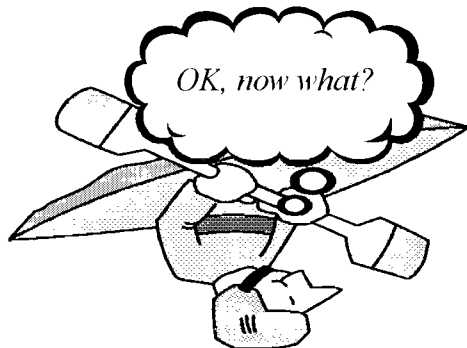
CANEWS

January 1997

Pool Courses & Sessions Winter 96/97

The dates for the winters pool courses and club pool sessions are reproduced below

Please note that the next Committee Meeting follows the club session on Saturday 22nd February 1997 : everyone is welcome



The New Logo

The observant amongst you might notice the difference in the clubs new (and simplified) logo - thanks to Pete Moreton

Nick Wins Two Events


You might also have picked up that Nick has managed to win both a hayfever competition and a caption competition in the Canoeist over recent months (watch out for the bloke wearing a unique t-shirt and shades) - sadly, he has yet to win the lottery - but watch this space!

Treweryn Rodeo

Congratulations to Pete Ambrose and Steve Frampton for their commendation in their first competitive Rodeo event on the Treweryn - Pete was judged the most promising novice to the sport

<u>Pool Canoeing Courses</u>		<u>Club Pool Sessions</u>
<u>Beginners Course '97</u>	<u>Rolling Course '97</u>	
7th January	18th February	19th October
14th January	25th February	2nd November
21st January	4th March	16th November
28th January	11th March	11th January
4th February	18th March	25th January
11th February	25th March	8th February
<i>All Courses : Tuesday 10pm > 11pm.</i>		22nd February
<i>All Club Sessions Saturday 6.30pm > 7.30pm</i>		8th March*
* Committee Meeting : 8th March 1997		22nd March





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River Dart : 19/20 October 96

Making up for the lack of water on the Barle, it had rained a fair bit in the intervening two weeks and, consequently, the Dart had filled up nicely to a fairly healthy low to medium flow.

As always, our annual 'Camping Barn Trip' was well attended (I think 21 in all). People turned up throughout Friday night and Saturday morning

I arrived early on the Saturday - to listen to the main topic of conversation which (as always) was the 'who snored last night?' debate.

The group split into two loose parties, the first getting on the water at Newbridge before 9:30. While the water level was still on the low side, the *Washing Machine* and *Triple Falls*, particularly, provided some good entertainment. The infamous *Lovers Leap*, where water piles up against a rock face in higher water, was not really working on the day (although this bloke Eddie proved what could be done in a squirt boat if one had the inclination)

Our passage down the Loop took some two and a half hours (there seemed to be so much to play on) and, consequently, we did not arrive at Holne Bridge until noon.

Convinced that we would never catch-up with the second group (who had started from Holne Bridge at around 10:30) we decided to pause for an early lunch : courtesy of the Sambells (Steve was taking no chances after the Barle)

Having demolished the contents of our lunch boxes we paddled for what seemed like 3 minutes and, impossible though it may seem, encountered to motley second party. It

appears that some extended training and familiarisation of white water paddling for the novices, coupled with what sounded like a catalogue of mishaps and swims, had somewhat delayed the passage of this second group. But, everyone was in good spirits and those that had enjoyed a swim seemed to be smiling the most - so onward.

With so many boats on the water, there was some confusion, with paddlers milling around wondering how the party was to be re-split. A concensus was reached, however, and we drifted away in the original two groups, maintaining hailing distance and congregating at the more difficult sections.

By this time, however, the novices amongst the party were no longer novices - everything that was going to happen to them, had already, so they tackled the water with minimum fuss. Young Paul Deakin positively whooped as he took everything in his stride - and the expression on Jaz's face as she encountered her first white water was memorable (somewhere between a broad grin and a grimace of determination)

Indeed, it was the more experienced of the party that came to grief - when they elected to shoot Furzeleigh Weir. The flow here was such as to make the run down the weirs slot an exhilarating ride, requiring some agile and heavy bracing. In retrospect, we should have elected to shoot the weir on the right (and I am sure Liz and Ros would agree) but hindsight is a wonderful thing. Anyway, we all relish 'incidents' don't we and other than Ros's broken paddle, the girls didn't lose anything but a little dignity on their bumpy swim down the steps. Having said all that, we did witness a paddler from another party tumbling around in a stopper until she was pulled out (by Nicks throw line)

We arrived at Buckfastleigh (to negotiate the egress ditch) at around 4pm. All in all, the days paddle gave everyone lots to talk about in the pub that night. Exhaustion, coupled with the superb curry provided by the Leatherdale's and the inevitable ale meant that no one noticed any snoring on Saturday night.

Jaz and Mike were no novices at preparing breakfast - I stumbled out of the sack on Sunday morning, bleary eyed, and was handed a 'Full English' before I had had a chance to adjust to the new day. The cooks fed everyone with equal professionalism and no hint of the terror and panic that I feel everytime I prepare eggs and toast for the family (which always ends in removing the batteries from all the smoke alarms)

Those paddlers that had missed the Loop section the previous day were keen to try it out on the Sunday. As a consequence, the bulk of paddlers ran this section. While the water level had dropped a few inches overnight, the river still provided great entertainment. It was on the Sunday that Mike fulfilled another of his ambitions - a successful *Roll-on-the-Loop* - but that deserves an article in itself, doesn't it Mike!

Thanks to : Steve and Liz for the lunches, Nick and Marion for the Curry. Jaz and Mike for breakfasts and Barry, of course, for the organization

Perth-y-Pia 23/4 November 96

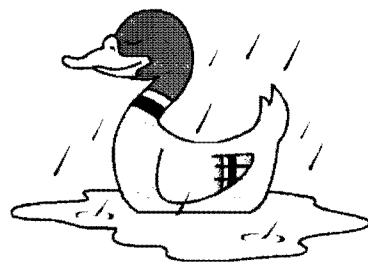
It had been raining heavily all week - on Tuesday there had been severe weather warnings covering the Brecons - with floods and snow blocking roads. I was stuck on the M6 in Derbyshire for hours but kept sane by relishing the effect of all this weather on

Mill Falls during the forthcoming weekend. The icing on the cake, so to speak, was when, a few hours before we set off on the Friday night, Steve was passing on a message from the farmer that snow was forecast and the track up to Perth-y-Pia may be blocked. Where did all this wet stuff go? It certainly wasn't in the Usk!

15 of us arrived at Perth-y-Pia on the Friday night (the earlier arrivals benefitting from a choice of accommodation and time for a bevvie in the pub). The snow had failed to arrive and the track was passable. Larry, Jaqui and John arrived over breakfast on the Saturday morning.

It was a cold morning. As we stood in the snow at Sennybridge, contemplating the collective stupidity of 18 people, all excited at the prospect of paddling in this weather, I was thankful of the full cooked breakfast provided earlier by Jane. We had elected to paddle a short (5 mile) stretch from Sennybridge to Aberbran, thus avoiding the 'slog section' of the last run to Brecon.

The river level was very low and, consequently, there were few features to play (and warm up) on along the way. The main topic of conversation was the relative merits of various designs of pogies, and how many socks you could get inside your neoprene boots (and still leave room for the feet).



Mike chose great conditions for a swim - and provided some spectacle at a break for coffee, charging around the mountainside, vigorously flapping his arms like a demented Cormorant, trying (in vain) to get warm.

We arrived at Aberbran in the early afternoon and, with teeth chattering, changed in the farmer's courtyard, where our cars were parked. A vote of thanks from all of us to the farmer in question (unfortunately his name was noted on a sweet wrapper and has, consequently, been lost forever) for allowing us to egress and park here - thus saving us from what would have been a fairly gruelling paddle on to Brecon in these conditions. A collective apology, also, on behalf of Karl, for any expletives that he might have used during his fruitless search for his Y-fronts.

Back at Perth-y-Pia, Debbie (who had paddled the Canadian along the Canal with Barry and Jake) had taken charge of the Kitchen. Elliott, who (according to him) was very anxious to assist in the preparation of the evening meal, was not allowed near the food. This arrangement seemed to work - producing (with minimum fuss) copious quantities of a delicious risotto, followed by mince pies - all washed down by ample wine provided by Larry and Jaqui (as always!)

The evenings entertainment was provided by a riotous game of Pictionary, over a Norfolk Punch (again, provided by L & J). This was rightly voted a better option than the long trek down to (and, more specifically, back from) the pub. Unfortunately our team was handicapped by a few non-participants, including myself - the restored circulation in my toes, loads of risotto and the wine and punch sent me into a dose (interrupted only

by the raucous laughter and bantering of the likes of Albert, Karl, Steve and Barry).

Sundays weather was worse, the cold had been accompanied by a driving wind and sleet/snow.

The days paddle was from Talybont to Llangynidr - a stretch of water that I really enjoy, whatever the river level. From Mill Falls on, the river is full of play spots, jets, waves, etc. - and even at low levels there is plenty of entertainment.

Barry had elected to paddle one of the clubs Scouts, solo - and he really rose to the challenge. He battled valiantly against the squally head wind along the slow stretch of water above Mill Falls and then shot the falls, and all the rapids below, with real grace and expertise (you could even be forgiven for thinking that he knew what he was doing and had done it loads of times before!)

Others were less fortunate, Larry and Jaqui repeated last years swim (in almost exactly the same spot on the river) and Liz joined them.

Karl also swam - while walking along the bank to inspect Mill Falls, he elected to risk the slippery route across the rocks. He paid the penalty with a spectacular head-first dive which was worthy of a slot on 'you've been framed'.

It was a great weekend - thanks to Steve and Liz for the organisation and lunches, Debbie and Elliott for the evening meal, Larry and Jaqui for the grog, and everyone else for the company.

'Trip Grading'

Details are given, below, of a classification system that the club will adopt to indicate the level of paddling difficulty that might be anticipated on a given trip, and, thus, the suitability of that trip for the individual paddlers.

<p>Rivers</p> <p>A recognised International Grading System exists to classify rivers in terms of the difficulty of their navigation. While this grading system is very useful, you should be aware of its limitations:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grades are vague, to cover a wide variety of types of river and rapid and grading is very subjective • It gives no information about the volume of water • While, generally, the risk to life and limb rises with the grade, this is not always the case and danger is not specifically included in the grading • A rivers grade will normally rise (and sometimes fall) with rising water levels • Weirs are excluded from the grading - these, as a matter of course, should be inspected 	<p>Sea</p> <p>There is no recognised system for classifying the sea or coastal waters. Hardly surprising, as the difficulty of any stretch of coast will be dependent on the sea state at the time, which will be a product of the weather, particularly in terms of wind speed and direction, and the tides</p> <p>We have attempted to classify varying sea states with the IGS grades applied to rivers. Advanced notification of trips will indicate a grade based on the normal conditions of the coast in question for the season. But with the vagaries of our climate, the degree of difficulty of a coastal trip will normally only be known the evening before (or on the day!)</p>
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Grade	Paddler Ability	Description of Water	Description of Water or Sea State
O <i>Placid</i>	The <i>Novice</i> : a complete beginner under supervision	Small lakes, canals and sheltered still inland waters	None: since waters around our coastline and estuaries are always moving, there are no areas or conditions that can legitimately go 'ungraded'
I <i>Easy</i>	The <i>Beginner</i> : 1-star intro to moving water	Gently moving water with occasional small rapids and few or no obstructions. E.g. River Avon	Quiet, enclosed harbours or holiday beaches with minimum or no surf and close inshore in calm weather.
II <i>Moderate</i>	The <i>Improver</i> : a 2-star paddler	Small rapids which are easy to navigate with an easily recognisable route with regular waves, small stoppers, drops and eddies. E.g. Dart: Holne Bridge to Buckfast	Simple coastlines with easy landings and no tide races, overfalls, or short open crossings with no shipping. Calm or slight seas with small wavelets with crests beginning to break. Beach surf up to 1' to 2'
III <i>Difficult</i>	The <i>Intermediate</i> or <i>Proficient</i> : a 3 or 4-star paddler with some white-water experience	Larger rapids with irregular waves, stoppers, drops and obstructions. While the route is still recognisable, more complex manoeuvres are required to negotiate rocks, stop in eddies and cross currents. E.g. Dart: Loop, Usk: Mill Falls	More complex coastlines, or short open crossings, with slight to moderate seas. May encounter other vessels or shipping. Small to moderate waves, with frequent white horses and a moderate to fresh breeze (force 4/5) or Beach surf of 3' to 4'
IV <i>Very Difficult</i>	The <i>Proficient</i> or <i>Advanced</i> : a 4 or 5-star paddler. Rolling ability is often needed	Large rapids and falls with long continuous stretches that may be difficult to read. Inspection is usually necessary from the bank. Precise manoeuvring required to negotiate challenging water. E.g. Upper Dart, Dee: Town Falls	Complex coastlines, or long open crossings, with limited landings. Moderate to rough seas, with moderate waves with white crests and spray. A strong breeze (force 6/7). Tide races and overfalls. or Beach surf of 4' to 6'
V <i>Extremely Difficult</i>	The <i>Advanced</i> : 5-star paddler. Rolling ability: bombproof	Complex and difficult rapids. The water is always fast, often heavy, with holding stoppers, narrow passages, steep gradients and falls. Inspection is essential, the route is often difficult to detect. A hazard to life. E.g. Upper Dart @ high levels	Rough seas and rough weather. Wind force 7+, larger waves forming. Sea heaps up with white foam from breaking waves or Beach surf of over 6'
VI: Crazy	Go with another club!	Extreme - nearly impossible and high risk	Someone missed the forecast!

Devon Canoe-Camp Weekend : 14/15 September

This weekend had included the possibility of a sea paddle and Barry had thought out a shuttle to enable the participants to paddle round Berry Head to the Dartmouth camp site.

However, only Steve and I were keen on a long sea paddle and neither of us wanted to bother with a shuttle so we decided just to paddle down to the sea and away. We left camp before the others and were soon at Dartmouth where we pulled into the little harbour on a falling tide and went for some provisions and, more important, a cup of coffee.

When we returned to the boats the tide had fallen a long way and launching was a bit tricky with laden sea kayaks but we made it and set off for the open sea.

It was a glorious day and as we left the estuary we were almost immediately treated to a really good view of a Peregrine carrying a gull as it flew overhead and landed on a ledge to eat its prey. We paddled out to the Mew Stone, a collection of rocks not far off shore, where Steve suddenly heard a strange noise which he thought sounded a bit like an owl. We listened to this for a while and I, as the naturalist, suggested it was someone calling! We went closer and Steve saw that it was, in fact, a Common Seal lying on a rock and calling loudly. We paddled quite close and then saw a young seal haul out alongside. A superb sight.

With such glorious conditions we paddled on to Berry Head, stopping en route for lunch on a very quiet beach. Off the head there was quite a strong tide rip and we played about for a short while before heading for home.

this time hugging the coast to avoid the tidal stream as the tide was now rising. The wind had also risen and the sea was no longer flat calm making the return a nice contrast with the outward journey.

By the time we reached the entrance to Dartmouth there was a difficult tide running across the bay making this a really hard slog at the end of a long paddle. It is always surprising how far it is back! We had, in fact, paddled about 25 miles and had covered twice most of the route that Barry had planned for us to do just once!

We paddled up past Dartmouth looking for the welcoming signs of the camp and were soon rewarded with a spiral of smoke from the fire. We had realised earlier in the day that we had most of the food in our boats and were hoping not to be too unpopular with the hungry campers as we were rather late. We were lucky that it was a glorious warm and sunny evening and no-one seemed bothered by the wait.

Supper was soon on the go and we sat watching a flock of Little Egrets in a tree on the opposite bank as the evening drew in. A perfect end to a great day's paddling. Thanks Steve!

Paul Toynton

Paddle or Punt - Episode 1

Friday September 13th: It was with a mixture of anticipation and trepidation that I left work with the cries of "you don't really want to do that" and "what, **you** camping!!" from my colleagues ringing in my ears. Well, it did give me a moment's pause for thought, after all I was not 'a canoeist', not even a novice and it was the dreaded 13th. However, reassured by Nick 'that I'd be fine' and not wanting to disappoint Karl, we manhandled the Canadian onto the car and set off for Totnes.

Journey uneventful, only got lost twice in narrow country lanes trying to avoid the inevitable hold up at Fenny Bridges, arriving at Totnes in mellow September evening sunlight. It was still light, sun still shining and still no rain - things were looking up. Packing the Canadian was worse than packing for a fortnight's holiday did we really need all this gear but better safe than sorry and the weather could change!!

First problem encountered - the canoe was too heavy for us to lift down the slipway, so after much unpacking, lifting and then repacking we glided effortlessly into the water. At last we were on our way and yes I was paddling, was I finally to become one of the chosen - a paddler with Ringwood Canoe Club?? Well, no not really, after five minutes it was quite apparent we weren't paddling anywhere apart from in rather large circles. Problem solved, it transpired that I needed to sit in the front since apparently Canadian canoeing does require specialist steering from the back - well now I know. Would I ever reach that level of expertise to sit in the back??

Manoeuvre completed, we continued on our way to base camp 1 where we hoped to meet

up with others of the party. After several false alarms, Nick managed to recognise the place aided by the smell of woodsmoke that mingled with Jake's cries. Debbie and Elliott attempted to get the camp fire ablaze whilst Barry, Bev, Paul, Zoe, Milo, Daniel, Nick and I set about putting our tents up. I had been warned that this was an *au naturel* form of camping. Trying to find a level spot in the pitch black did exercise the initiative and where did Bev say the loos were???

Tasks complete, fire blazing, we enjoyed our barbecue, aided and abetted by a rough red wine - well you don't have to give up all luxuries. As night closed we were joined by Liz & Steve and later - much later - by Paul, Mike & Karl. A fairly peaceful night broken only by Milo's & Daniel's long conversation about topics best left to the imagination - but Elliott admitted he learnt a lot.

Saturday September 14th: A cold dawning but still no rain - could this really be true? A smoky breakfast enjoyed by all - where does Jake put all those sausages?? The arrival of Jackie and Larry was much appreciated as they had a flask of coffee; a commodity we did not have - Paul had lost his list and guess what was on it? Nick now in the safety of his kayak and me in Karl's capable hands (so to speak) the group set off.



Have you ever seen a Canadian canoeist with inflated lilo strapped to canoe? I have and I was told this was a no-frills camping trip. If I ever survive to paddle again, then next time I'll bring my own lilo. With Karl's expert advice we made easy progress up the Dart: Barry in the family Canadian, Debbie and Elliott, Jackie and Larry..... the rest in their kayaks. Scenery beautiful, bird life in abundance and at 11am after a quick trip up the creek a pub that was open - now this really is a trip I approve of.

Saturday evening and Sunday morning - see next issue of Canews!

Marion L.

Founding Fathers Return North

Lepe beach on a Sunday morning: a brilliant summer's day, with a slight swell and the tide set fair for France (well, Gurnard Bay, IOW, at least). Nick, Steve S, Barry and Paul in sea kayaks (Nick courtesy of Larry's generosity, Steve in his bargain-buy), with Pete and Steve H in standard boats. A beautiful trip across, but with a breeze that made paddling hard work for those without length; after a coffee stop, Pete and Steve H decided to let us go our own way, and paddled up the Medina for lunch before making their way back.

The four of us continued past Cowes and across Osborne Bay, reaching Wootton Creek by lunchtime. One of our party observed that in all the years we've been paddling with the club, this was the first time that we'd been allowed out on our own! The creek is disappointing - it's a popular tourist destination, with a regular ferry service from Portsmouth, but is actually quite built-up. This didn't deter us from stopping for a pint

and sandwiches on the lawn at Wootton Bridge, before paddling back along the coast to King's Quay - a much more interesting creek that we'd spotted earlier. Steve, Barry and Paul fully explored the creek, while Nick (feigning neck ache, but truthfully fairly knackered) sat and watched the Solent traffic.

By now the tide was running fast and the trip back was a stiff paddle. The main shipping lane was extremely busy, and at times it was difficult to know whether craft coming down the Solent were heading towards the west end of the IOW or simply taking a wide berth into Southampton Water. Either way, we stood off and gave everything a wide berth, since it's difficult to accurately gauge how fast your moving until you encounter a fixed reference point like a buoy.

Heading 320° all the way - oh the joys of having a compass! - we arrived back at Lepe beach merely yards from where we'd started. Impressive navigation, with excellent tidal estimation and safety consciousness thrown in for good measure. A very good trip all round.

Nick L.

Karl's Bonfire 25th October 96

As always, Karl spared no energy in ensuring that his annual Halloween 'burn-up' was a roaring success - a massive fire, large and well-stocked marquee and a sizzling barbecue ensured a good social evening - thanks, again, Karl.



River Barle : 6th October 96

Eight of us, all perhaps a little too anxious to get on the rivers at the start of the season, made the trip from Tarr Steps to Exebridge. Unfortunately, being so early in the season, the river was very low and the trip proved to be a bottom scrape for most of the 10 miles. What made matters worse was yours truly's insistence on reaching Dulverton before a break for lunch - by which time Steve and Nick were both fading fast!

Never mind - the breakfast at Kilminster was good and there were a few white bits to play on on the way down

Skittles Night : 13th December 96

The Churchill Arms, in Alderholt, provided a very civilized venue, and excellent food, for this year's skittles night. For a club that is supposed to be non-competitive, the game of 'killer' brought out some remarkable 'base instincts'. There were howls of anguish as we dropped like flies to Paul's flying woods.

A good social night was had by all

The Loop : 15th December 96

Only five of us made this day trip. I had predicted: a quiet Sunday (so close to Christmas); reasonable water levels; a short paddle and home in time to finish off decorating the tree. Wrong on all counts!

The river was very busy: which was probably just as well as we were able to find another club who could provide Karl with a spray deck (saving him from a very long wait)

The river level was low - indeed, lower than our October run - I'm finding it as difficult to get the Dart is spate as winning the lottery.

Despite the low water, there must have been plenty to play on as we took over 4 hours to reach Holne bridge!

