
EDITOR'S CORNER

RIVER GUIDE

My project this year is to prepare a short 'summary' guide to all the rivers that the club paddles on a fairly regular basis (Dart/ Barle/ Frome/ Lyn/ Erm/ Tavy/ Tamar/ Avon, etc).

This will provide details of Access Period, LAO's, Map Refs, River Features, Distance, Grade, etc.

Anyone who fancies contributing to this will be richly rewarded (i.e. my eternal gratitude)

TODDLER BUOYANCY AID

The Sambell's have donated a toddler life jacket to the club. While the jacket was originally bought for Lorna when she was a toddler! It's in pristine condition and should prove a useful addition to the club's kit list. It fits Finn who's a small 5 year old.

Thanks, Steve and Liz.

MORE FRACTURES PLEASE

If a club member fractured a limb once every three months I would have no problem filling the pages of Canews!!

A DECADE OF FUN

RCC celebrated its 10th anniversary in style on the 4th April, courtesy of Liz and Steve. At the start of the evening, it looked as if the food-laden table smacked of over-enthusiastic catering, but during the course of the evening some 28 people (spanning an age range of a few months to, well, more than a few months) did their best to ensure that Steve was still going to have to make sandwiches for the following day's paddle on the K&A.

Many thanks to Liz and Steve for hosting the event, and for their extremely generous provision of food and drink, which included an entire polypin of bitter - Ringwood, of course!

Here's to the next ten years with RCC!

Nick



CANEWS

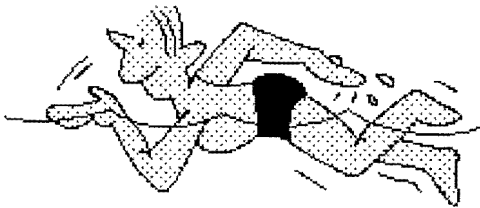
July 1998

TREWERYN: SWIMS

Well, I thought I better come clean before the ribald comments get out of hand.

Four of us went to Canolfan Treweryn in June (Pete A, Karl W, Elliott and I). There's nothing like paddling white water in the summer (except in Wales when it's much the same as paddling the Dart in January!)

Rain and midges aside we had some fun. Being Dam released, the water level was a guaranteed ¾, and there's always lots to play on. Two runs on the Saturday, a sound sleep and another run on the Sunday.



But not everything went right. This year I decided to follow Pete in to play the hole at Chapel falls. I remember last year Steve Campion did the same thing and got trashed so I should have known better. Pete does make it look easy, and, having played the hole tentatively half a dozen times I began to get cocky. Wham - roll - wham - roll - wham - bubbles - paddle lost - eject - circulate - more bubbles - rescue - splutter.

I couldn't help noticing that Pete didn't go back in to the hole (although he had changed boats - to the Enigma!). We all stuck to the more friendly hole at Coopers Bridge after that.

Having swum, I had to buy the drinks and suffer the indignity of being the butt of all the old jokes that night.

Anyway, we developed a good plan for the Sunday - we were going to try to catch

some of the micro-eddies in the Graveyard. We all failed, however, having, instead, to make a mad dash through this section chasing Karl's boat before it reached the ski-jump. Yes, he swam too!

It was last year on the same river that I tried out a spud - an expensive experiment. 'Once Driven Forever Smitten' in my opinion is more appropriate for a Topo than it ever was for a Vauxhall!. Within 3 months I was paddling my own.

It was, therefore, with 'malice aforethought' that I encouraged Elliott to go the same way this year and try out a spud for the Sunday run - and, sure enough, 3 weeks later I caught him sneaking his brand new spud out of the Pewsey exhibition.

Try it, GB

TAMAR FEBRUARY 1998

At last I'd arrived! About 3 years ago I had visited the Delaware Centre prepared to give Canadian canoeing a try. At this time the accommodation was incomplete, the Saturday's planned paddle was called off in the face of adverse weather conditions. On the Sunday's paddle I was about 10 minutes into it and had to come off. The next year I couldn't make - but everyone who went on it reported on how brilliant it was. So here I was on the Friday night of the third year ready to have a go and looking forward to a good weekend.

Nick and I had set off from Wimborne at about 4 o'clock - a Canadian canoe perched on top of the car. I had this feeling that I had forgotten something, as it was unusual to go away without a Kayak. We took a detour into the moor to pick up Albert near Bovey Tracey. We were thinking that we might arrive at Gunnislake first until Nick lost it, and us, completely - taking us all over Devon. Of course I was daft enough to think that with a local in the car we were safe, so I didn't participate in the navigation. Maybe if I had we would still be looking now.

Arriving finally at the Delaware Centre we found the Deakins well entrenched with Jake on look-out at the window. He was getting excited at a car load of his playmates arriving.

On this visit the accommodation was complete - spacious, comfortable and warm. Kit was dumped unceremoniously in the bedrooms and Nick, Albert and myself, famished, went down to the pub. The arrangement was to meet the rest and all head for a pub in town.

This pub, from the times I have been there, is always packed - all the locals in a semicircle, squashed against the bar as tales of rapids, weirs, stoppers and pop outs echoed around the pub.

Later that night when we had all returned to the accommodation there was some discussion about the weekends coming events and some interesting videos to watch. One of the videos showed all the delicate, and not so delicate, maneuvers that can be carried out in canadians - hand-stands, roly-poly, emptying single handed and a severe seal launch off a jetty were just a few. Also the video KAVU was there - full of breathtaking and dangerous stunts.

Saturday came and we got up at sporadic intervals. A quick glance out of the windows showed a misty valley with the promise of a sunny day.

Colin and his wife Liz were there when Paul, Debbie and Elliott arrived from various parts of the country. I met Colin the SI for the first time, he had the unenviable task of looking after us on the water but I could tell he had a sense of humour the way he said he always enjoys paddling with RCC.

Barry, meanwhile, had been quietly organising the Canadian crews: Bev + Albert, Debbie + Elliott, Liz + Steve, Paul + myself - now that's Barry's sense of humour showing. Mike, Dot, Colin, Graham D and Nick were to be in Kayaks. I took a back seat as the shuttle was organised. The launch of this great Armada was to take place at Greystone Bridge.

When all boats were at the bank, Colin gave us a safety talk and explained some rescue techniques. All loose kit was tied in and most of us took off quite gracefully. Not Paul and I, we had a few teething problems and our entrance was anything but graceful! We didn't know where to sit, couldn't tell the stern from the bow and didn't know which side to paddle. The consensus was that Paul and I, with our winning combination, would do all the swimming that day. It seemed no time

before we were at the first feature. We had been practicing maneuvers and as a result Paul was sure that we would swim and it was too early in the day for that. I followed Paul's lead and declined to run this weir, the others were willing to have a go. We all went to inspect the monster - a weir with a big V and very turbulent water going 50yds beyond the drop. From the bank it looked very - shall we say - challenging. Albert and Bev were first to try it - the bow of their boat seemed doomed to dig into the water even though Bev had edged so far back she was sitting on Albert's lap. The boat soon filled and over they went. This feature claimed the most casualties of the day, Liz and Steve met the same fate and I thought I heard some nasty crunches which proved true later. Debbie and Elliott made a sterling effort to stay upright even though they were almost completely submerged - there was "no way" Debbie was going to swim.

Paul was a slave driver and I was out of condition - we practiced and practiced . It did pay off as by the end of the day we resembled something like a working crew. High crosses, ferry glides, break-ins and outs were all pretty confusing in an open canoe. I was taking it very seriously and was dedicated to staying in the canoe. My pink! helmet and access tags made Paul believe he was paddling with Dr Spock!

At one stage I was nearly decapitated and knocked completely off my perch by a passing branch because we couldn't master steerage away from the bank.

We tried to iron out a few faults by watching Debbie showing Elliott what to do - they looked very skilled. Elliott provided some entertainment with a beautiful piece of stopper maneuvering , managing to sink the boat much to Debbie's disgust and humiliation. Nobody went to the rescue as we were all laughing too much. Mike's kayak

performed an excellent seal launch (without him!). Dot proved very brave , practicing a break out, followed by a failed roll, twice.

We arrived at Horse Bridge tired but happy and hauled the boats up to the waiting cars. Hot showers, tea and biscuits awaited us back at the school. A smashing meal was dished up compliments of Barry and Bev. I was trying to take notes of the days events but Jake wanted me to read to him on my knee and so I hope this account makes sense. I think there was a bit of an eating competition going on between the big eaters (Barry, Elliott, Graham D) Elliott and Graham had a problem with a couple of tarts (it said on the pack remove wrapping before eating). Some had the energy to adjourn to the pub.

Most people were sleeping in but I had Sgt Major Barry telling us to get up from slumber as breakfast was ready. There was a lot of intense talk by the organisers trying to arrange the days paddle. Things were not quite as simple as yesterday as we were to split into two groups - Kayaks down the Lynher, Canadians up the estuary to Morwellham Quay (with the tide on our side going up, and the flow of the river coming down).

Our group consisted of Debbie and Elliott, Liz, Barry and Jake, Paul and Myself, Dot and Mike. The tide was going out but after paddling a while it should have turned, helping us upstream, but this never happened.

Paul and I watched in fascination as a Peregrine sought out it's prey and went for the kill. As it came down, talons out, the Kingfisher flew low and fast out of harms way. A quiet paddle it wasn't, it became a very hard slog and once again

Continued.....

Paul drove me on mercilessly and going upstream against the flow my arms were fit to drop off. I turned around just to say "couldn't I just..." "no you can't" came Paul's stern reply guessing that I wanted a break between bouts of pain. Anyway, we made it to Morwellham Quay and met Bev and Lee. Jake had paddled as much as anybody in his position amidship, with his very own paddle. We handed Jake over and went upstream planning to return to the Quay for lunch. Upstream at the weir Debbie was exhausted and felt she had been conned by people saying it was an easy paddle. We had lunch and Jake just kept eating sandwich after sandwich. The return trip downstream was a cruise.

Thanks to Steve and Liz for breakfasts and lunches, Barry and Bev for tea and Colin for keeping an eye on us. And Barry for his usual organising skills - and everybody for making it such a good trip.

Mike Scott

ILFRACOMBE WEEKEND 'BREAK'

The weekend started fairly well. Dot and I found the 'Seagulls' after only 15 minutes, following Nick's explicit directions involving a roundabout that exists only in a parallel universe! We were greeted by Anne and John with a welcome cup of tea and dumped our gear. Nick and Paul were already there, and when the contingent was completed with the arrival of Elliott, Debbie and Albert, we adjourned to the town for nourishment. Eventually we staggered back to the Seagulls with a full load of ale, Cod and chips. So far so good.

Saturday dawned bright and breezy and we soaked up the fantastic view before going downstairs for breakfast at 8am, yes, 8am! Breakfast is perhaps a misnomer - 'genteel feeding frenzy' would be more appropriate. Eventually we

loaded up and drove down to Woolacombe. The waves were not as good as predicted but after a quick huddle the Surfmeisters decided we would launch from Barricane and have a look anyway. We were on the water so early that we would have plenty of time to pack up and move on to somewhere else like Thurso or Waikiki in the afternoon. After an hour or more the surf weakened and we started to paddle around to Morte Point, rock hopping on the way. Once out of the shelter of the bay the water became very messy, so we decided to beat back around the 'horn' and land for dinner at an inaccessible cove, hereafter to be known as "Whythehellididhavetobreakmybloody armhereofallplaces cove" After a diverting half hour eating and watching Elliott and Debbie scrabbling behind the boulders trying to find a lost canister lid, I went for a wander around the rocks. Suddenly my attitude switched from the vertical to horizontal as 14 stone of pure twerp crashed onto a hard part of the scenery. Fortunately I had the presence of mind to shout 'Oh * * * *' as I went down, however, at the debriefing it was shown that the damage limitation effect of this action was negligible!

Luckily we had our own 'Bones' with us in the shape of Elliott, who, calling on his specialist training diagnosed that I had fallen on a rock and hurt myself. The pain indicated that a break was likely and the problem then became how to get me back to civilization. The choices came down to calling out a helicopter or towing me across the bay. As nowadays there is every possibility of a film crew being on board the chopper and Dot didn't have her make-up bag with her, we opted for the latter.

Getting me into the boat and out of the cove was difficult. I couldn't move my arm enough to put my buoyancy aid on and was about as much use as a chickenwire

kayak for anything else. Eventually with Paul towing and Bones rafting up to stop me capsizing we lurched across the bay, during which time the wind got up and I started shipping water down my spraydeck which I couldn't pull up. With no buoyancy aid and never having learnt to swim with a broken arm I soon realized that if I capsized I was going to die. I quickly put these thoughts behind me and turned my attention to the more worrying matter of my Nookie Cag, which was almost certainly going to have to be cut off. Meanwhile, back at the front, Paul was slogging away towards the shore, while Elliott had handed the Baton to Albert in the mountainous surf - well about 2' anyway. With all hands assisting, Dot whisked me off to Hospital in Barnstable. The excellent staff patched me up and sent me home with a letter, having first offered me a weeks holiday if I had a pin inserted from my shoulder to my elbow.

Back at the Seagulls it was decided to hold a Chinese Takeaway Banquet in my honour for providing such entertainment. The meal wasn't bad and through a combination of wine, good company and painkillers I actually quite enjoyed the evening.

The next day we packed up and followed the team to Combe Martin, where we waved them away from the shore with tears in our eyes. For me the war is over.

To be continued.....

Many thanks to all present for their assistance, particularly Paul, Elliott and Albert for their physical exertions.

Mike Farnden

NOOKIES SAGA

Those who have read the account of my Ilfracombe weekend 'Break' will know that at the end of my narrative I was left in a Cag threatening condition. The following versus are a tribute to the staff of Northern Devon Hospital who employed non-cutting edge technology to save me.

Before my first trip to the dart
my wallet was blown right apart.
For I needed a Cag
but woodmill had no old rag
so I had to pay dear for my art.

My needs I clearly explained
but they couldn't be simply attained
'tried every cag in the shop
till the man blew his top
but only the one fitted my frame

A Nookie Tuvalik was the one,
and I started feeling quite glum,
but the salesman looked brighter
as I walked away lighter
one eighty pounds sterling the sum!

It was twice what I wanted to pay
but the dart was a weekend away
The comfort was good,
the darn thing had a hood
(just the job come boxing day)

The spring came breezy and bright
Nookie suited conditions just right
and when the weather got hot
it mattered not
'cos Nookie felt comfortably light

Then came that fateful weekend
when I nearly lost my expensive old friend
T'was out in Morte Bay
on that dreadful day
I discovered my arm wouldn't bend!

For I slipped on a Devonian rock
and my Humerus snapped with a 'thwock!'
It wasn't a laugh -

my arm was in half
and I'm facing six months in dry dock!

But my companions were stalwart and true
their Dunkirk spirit showed through and through
Through the wind and the spray
we rolled 'cross the bay
Me and dear Nookie in blue.

At last we beached on safe ground
It was then that the whisper went round
"He's looking quite rough" -
"that cag won't come off"
"they'll cut it - I bet you five pounds!"

As the rumour started to spread,
the colour drained out of my head
But I wasn't in shock
Just mental shock
about dear Nookie, soon to be shred.

In accident I crawled to my place
where the pain was etched on my face.
As I said to the nurse
"it couldn't be worse,
my Nookie you'll have to erase!"

"Don't afear" the hearty lass said
"We'll get the bugger right over y'er 'ead"
"We've done 'em before"
"and we'll do it once more"
"Tis rarely they end up quite dead"

I Breathed Nitrous Oxide in waves
The nurses were working like slaves,
and during the slaughter of latex and seawater
came brave cries -
"Your Nookie is saved!"

So to the moral my friend,
when you find that your limbs just won't bend
North Devon's the place
or you'll just have to face
buying new gear in the end!

Thanks to : North Devon Hospital
Apologies to: The English Language
Mike Farnden

WORLD RECORD CANOE RAFT

Bishop's Waltham Scouts in Hampshire are organizing an attempt on the World Record for the largest canoe raft.

Although lead by Scouts, around 750 kayaks are needed on the water so other organizations will also be involved. The BBC's Record Breakers team intends to be there.

- AT: Poole Park, Dorset.
- On Saturday 26 Sept 1998.
- £: Registration up to £2.50 per canoe (to raise funds for the organizers and recover up-front costs; publicity, first aid, tentage etc).

Poole Park Lake is class C (safe training) water. No formal qualification is required but a minimum equivalent skill level of BCU 1* is essential to be able to achieve the raft.

For more information:

- Telephone: John Perkins, 01489 894437
- E-mail: JhnP@GlenCare.co.uk
- www.d-k-gray.demon.co.uk

The club could raise funds for itself through sponsorship - forms will be provided. It might also be good entertainment. I have promised that I will try to muster up as much support as I can, including safety cover etc. So if you can make it please let me know. (Graham B)

GB

ATTAK

The new club boat is a low-priced short playboat from Pyranha. It's 2.15m long (shorter than the spud), with plenty of volume around the cockpit but a flattened profile at both ends.

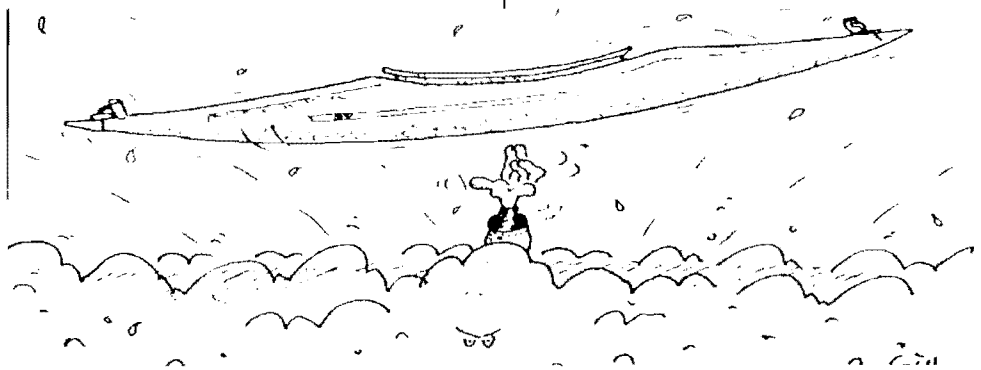
It's designed as a cheap fun/rodeo boat that should allow members with the inclination to practice stern-dipping, flat spins, loops and blasts etc. in very small river features.

Barry and I had the opportunity to play with it in a good stopper the day after Barry picked it up from Woodmill. It's surprisingly forgiving in holes and has a more rounded profile with less hard-edges than a first glance would indicate.

It's not a boat to use on the Hengistbury head race, but I'm sure it will be in demand for the river trips this winter.

Why not use the Attak to try some of the basic 'hod-dogging' moves illustrated here!

GB.

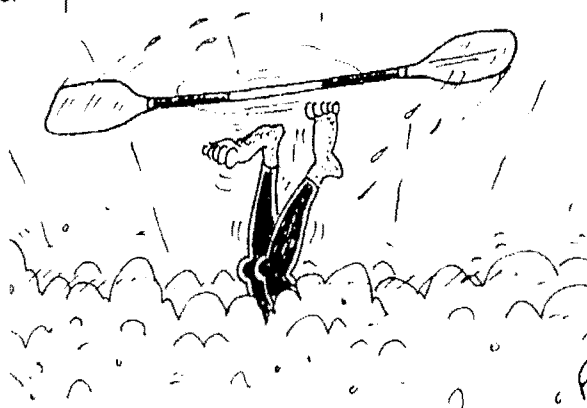


'THE LITTLE ONE THAT TIPS YOU IN'

Reminiscing about the river Lynher recently, Bev couldn't remember its name but referred to it as 'The Little One That Tips You In'

Debbie, Liz, and several others will have similarly fond memories I am sure. In my experience the term could be applied equally to the club's new Attak playboat!

Barry.



HENGISTBURY HEAD RACE FOR THE JULIAN BUTLER MEMORIAL PLATE

The event postponed from two weeks previously was held with a brisk south westerly breeze and with a very strong incoming tide. Mike Scott opted not to race and was volunteered as timekeeper and to supervise the novice paddlers who were considered too vulnerable to paddle the exposed section individually. I was volunteered to set the handicaps on the spur of the moment, and chose to base these mainly on the type of boat rather than paddler strength, as there was little variation in that respect. As is often the case in handicap events, it is the level of handicaps which governs the result and, since I set them, I was fortunate to win!

The race was a good tactical event with a wide range of routes across the harbour to use the tide or avoid shallow water. Some chose a short cut portage across the Hengistbury Head groyne, and most opted to portage across mudford spit which is now a very long detour to paddle round. There were some capsizes and excitement off the exposed beach below the headland. Graham chose a fast, very narrow, lightweight kayak and found its seaworthiness to be somewhat lacking. Similarly Steve Frampton was going well across the harbour in his slalom C1, but struggled to keep it going in the right direction in the big waves at sea. Bev would have been quicker had she not run gallantly back across Hengistbury Head to help Paul carry his boat - the epitome of the RCC competitive spirit.

Steve Champion was the hardest hit by the handicapper, who hadn't appreciated the problems this strong paddler would have as a relative novice C1 paddler in a converted kayak. Elliot relaxed gratefully

into the role of sweeper and accompanied him to the end.

Any disputes regarding timing should be referred to Mike Scott who was busy supervising the novice group but gamely tried to get back to the finish line when I came into view, or to our Chairman to whom he had transferred responsibility. Nick did not race because he was nursing an arm injury, and was seen strolling to the finish line, beer in hand, while half of the field were already recovering on the slipway. Fortunately Mike memorised the first few times while Nick found a suitable platform for his beer and took over with the pencil and paper.

Results in order of finishing:

In order of Finishing	H'cap	Elapsed Time
Barry Deakin	5	41:41
Ros White	0	47:48
Pete Ambrose	10	39:00
Paul Toynton	5	44:10
Steve Frampton	5	45:52
Graham Deacon	15	46:12
Bev Deakin	0	53:48
Gary Fussell	5	57:42
Steve Champion	5	60:12
Elliott Gully	10	60:12

Many thanks to all competitors and helpers for their efforts in maintaining an appropriate level of competitive spirit for this annual memorial event. Those who knew him will remember the approach of Julian Butler, a modest paddler who entered the race purely for fun and with no expectation of crossing the line in front of anyone else. He started in great spirits but died of a heart attack during the race.

Barry.

THAMES NOV 97

A murky November day saw Mike and I arrive at Cricklade for the Thames trip. We were the first there and in some doubt where the put in spot was, as the river looked so narrow, not much more than a stream really.

Jaz and Mike rolled up soon to be followed by Steve and Marrion with a Canadian. While we were having a chat a whirlwind appeared in the form of Paul and Liz eager to get afloat.

We soon had the cars shuttled to Hannington Bridge and were able to get under way. The first part was very narrow and shallow and we soon came to the first of many fisherman. The river opened up slightly, although it was impossible to see much of the surrounding countryside because of the high banks.

Progress was leisurely, partly due to the meandering nature of the river and partly due to the number of fisherman that we encountered, one of whom made Steve's day by commenting that "it is here for all of us"

We arrived at Castle Eaton and stopped just downstream of the Bridge for lunch. Mike took an early bath getting out of his kayak (he says it was because his back stiffened up but we think Jaz pushed him)

After lunch we came upon a long stretch which was quite choked with reeds. Mike entered a reedy cul-de-sac in the Cyphur and emerged with a thatched kayak! A Little Grebe surfaced next to the boat and paddled around nonchalantly, indicating that the wildlife was friendly, although a rather grumpy swan escorted us a long way down the river. As the sky darkened and time moved on we made the decision to call it a day at Hannington Bridge, rather than carry on to Lechlade. Mike went for another swim, getting out of his boat again claiming back problems.

Although we suspect that he still hadn't apologized for whatever it was that Jaz pushed him over for in the first place.

The decision to take an early shower was vindicated literally as it started to rain heavily on the way home. Although not a very exciting river we enjoyed the day and look forward to another trip on the Thames, perhaps picking up where we left off.

Dot

CLUB BBQ.

Paul and Mary had obviously worked hard through a scorching day to make the preparations for this years annual club BBQ. Sign-posts and parking, repaired garden furniture, bountiful dishes, etc., etc.

Loads turned up for a great evening - how the three small BBQ's coped with the thousands of sausages, kebabs, vegie's, etc is a marvel. They even managed Gary's huge frankfurters!.

The challenge to finish all the beer on the night was met with gusto by some. While us driver's contented ourselves with lashing's of Nick's home made Salsa dip.

A good night thanks to the Toynton's

GB

SOME NOT SO SERIOUS CANOEING TIPS FROM MIKE S

This time we will cover Seal Launching and Support Strokes

Seal Launching

In most cases 'seal launching' with Ringwood canoe Club does not resemble the graceful entry from a height by nature's beautiful seals.

1. Seal launching is an art, and should only be attempted (especially of Mudeford quay) when you have your support strokes in place. Otherwise this leads to other peoples kids being offensive by saying things like (after the fourth attempt) "look mum, it's that funny man again" as you float past alongside your upturned kayak.
2. Make sure you are sitting in your kayak: this prevents the embarrassment of trying to get someone's attention to chase it down stream whilst you stand bewildered on the bank.
3. Seal Launching with Graham B and Pete A is an experience that should be avoided. Don't attempt to keep pace with them as you will probably need an oxygen mask and a complete lack of fear, plus a good insurance policy for the wife and kids.

Support Strokes

These are a necessary skill for kayaking, especially useful when attacked by an angry man that tries to capsize you (low brace). Try a high brace

to lean on the Swan's head to cool it down a bit.

Happy and safe paddling fellow 'River warriors'

Mike Scott

Below: Pete - 'mid-flight'

