
EDITOR'S CORNER

THANKS FOR THE ARTICLES!

DON'T FORGET THE WEB SITE –

the event list is kept up to date and the notice board, trip reports, etc. are there for you to fill !

www.ringwood.canoe.btinternet.co.uk

+ - the photos are in colour – by the time this has been through the photo-copier it loses so much!!

CORUH 2005.

Andrew and I are joining Chas and his son Richard for a June trip on the Coruh in Turkey this year. We are going along on the Water by Nature trip and there are still a few places available (I think). Anyone fancy joining us?

Basically big warm water – with the option to walk any of the more difficult rapids. Anyone happy on grade 3/4 and with a good roll would enjoy this I am sure

CAPTION COMPETITION



It's Hell I tell you! We're doomed to sit in this eddy until somebody writes a caption!

From Bob (The Bear) Mackenzie

Visit the web site for the Caption Competition

THIS IS THE SEA VIDEO

The club has purchased a copy of Justine's video – anyone wishing to borrow it please let me know

And can whoever borrowed my own DVD copy (Paul T?) let me have it back some time!!



CANEWS

February 2005

SWANAGE 9TH MAY – DOLPHINS

AT LAST

I was surprised to find that only Mark and I turned up for this event as the weather was good and there is always something of interest on this trip.

I was told by a local that Bottle-nosed Dolphins had been seen in the bay that morning so we started by paddling out toward Ballard Point. We met some rowers there who told us that the dolphins had moved on so we decided to head for Durlleston.

There was quite a swell running and as we began to round Durlleston the seas got bigger and bigger calling for a change of plans. We decided to go back to Old Harry instead where we were in much more sheltered seas.

As we approached Ballard Point I suddenly saw a dolphin curve out of the water about 100 metres away. I shouted to Mark and headed off as fast as I could toward the area. Mark turned and followed. A few minutes later two Bottle-nosed Dolphins emerged side by side right by Mark and then dived under his boat!

For the next ten minutes we had dolphins all around us, not jumping but continually appearing. A cow and calf side by side "porpoised" just a few metres in front of me. Then they were gone.

We continued to Old Harry seeing a Peregrine on the way and potted around the cliffs before returning to Swanage. One of my canoeing dreams fulfilled.

Paul

MUDEFORD 24TH OCTOBER

I rarely go to Mudeford on a Sunday now and expected to see a few canoeists, but no one. "Probably gone to Highcliffe" I thought. Anyway there were a few waves out at sea so I went out to play and had an hour of really nice surfing. Not the big spectacular stuff but some lovely long rides. Certainly one of the best Mudeford surfs. What happens on a Sunday nowadays?

Paul

DO WE HAVE THE RIGHT OF NAVIGATION ANYWAY?

A major new piece of work has been researched and published by the Rev Douglas Caffyn. Doug, a former Chairman of the Access Management Committee, has produced the paper based on a thesis submitted to the University of Kent for the degree of Master of Laws. This is a summary of the report:-

The preface to an Act of 1472 stated, "Whereas, by the laudable Statute of Magna Carta, among other things was made for the great Wealth of all this Land, in avoiding the Straitness of all Rivers, so that Ships and Boats might have in them their large and free Passage."

The paper reviews the evidence that prior to 1830 there was a generally acted public right of navigation on all rivers which were physically navigable. The wording of River Navigation Acts are examined and are shown not to be inconsistent with this interpretation of the law.

In 1830 H.W. Woolwrych claimed that all non-tidal rivers are private unless a public right of navigation has been established by statute, long use or dedication. The errors in his text are examined and it is argued that subsequent commentators have followed his misconceptions. Four leading cases from the 19th and 20th centuries are then considered.

In the paper it is shown that the public right has not been lost but that there always has been, and there continues to be, a public right of navigation on all non-tidal rivers which are naturally physically navigable by small boats.

The BCU intend to use the paper as part of the case for greater access and are seeking further legal advice. The paper has already been given to DEFRA and the

Environment Agency who are currently reviewing the paper with great interest.

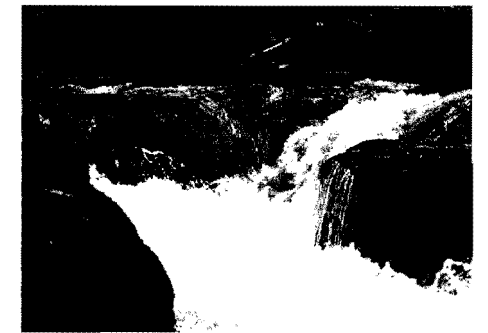
For information on how to obtain copies of the paper please contact

Info@riversaccess.org

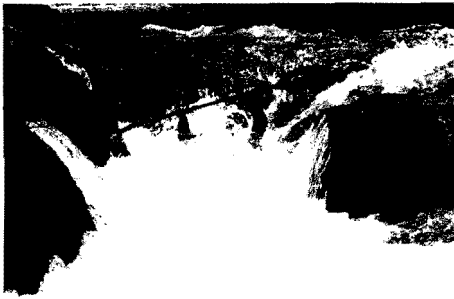
MOOR DAYS

We have enjoyed some pleasant day trips to the moors this season. Starting with a 4 hour paddle on the Barle on the first Sunday of the season – only 6 made the journey, but the levels were paddable, the weather mild and a good day was had by all.

The last weekend of October saw 10 of us on a 5 hour paddle from Bedford Bridge on the Walkham to Denham on the Tavy. This proved one of the most entertaining trips of the year. The weather was mild and dry yet the river levels were well up. This section of the Walkham provides fairly continuous grade 2 and 3 paddling in a tight valley with a wealth of small drops, micro-eddies, twists and turns. The Walkham runs into the Tavy, below Tavistock - a more mature river that, at the levels we caught, provides an endless supply of surf waves.



Ross lines up for a drop (ask him what happened next!)



Chris tanks it

Lots of excitement, 4 swims and a load of happy faces

It didn't rain much in November, and by the end of the month the Dartmoor/Exmoor rivers were too low to make the drive worth while. Consequently, 12 of us took a trip down the Frome – which retained a lowish but paddleable level and provided paddle starved boaters with a little entertainment. In my opinion the day would have been substantially better had not Elliott eaten my Little Chef breakfast at the outset. But, hey, it was good to see him out after a months nappy changing.

5th December – and the first weekend that the Upper Dart was open and Southbourne CC had tickets (but we cancelled – there was no water)

By Mid December the moors were even drier – indeed, by the 11th December there hadn't been a drop for 16 days – a Drought was now official. This was the 'Adventure Paddlers Weekend' at the Dart and I had booked accommodation and tickets for the upper. Some hasty emails and the weekend was saved when a load of water-hungry paddlers made the long trek to Polzeath, in Cornwall, to enjoy some glassy clean 5' surf. The evening's entertainment was great including sneak previews from Rob Coffey and Simon Westgarth on there latest files, a slide show from Deb P, and technical lectures from Cheesy

The following week, however, rain arrived and the forecast was excellent. Another flurry of emails and a long awaited 'Upper' trip was scheduled for early Sunday (19th Dec). Full of excitement, Andrew and I left the house at 05:30, driving through torrential rain and snow blizzards to arrive at RDCP for breakfast at 08:00. By this time Dave Frances had already been out to Holne to check the levels – the Dart was running through the 3rd arch at Newbridge (i.e well over 7') – too high!!!! Aahhh!

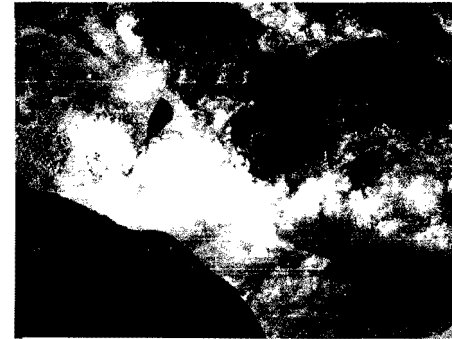
A group of us got together to discuss alternatives – and 18 of us (from Southbourne, Ringwood, Surrey and Oxford) decided to split to 3 groups and run the Walkham/Tavy. Good levels, plenty of nice surf waves and an enjoyable day – but still not the elusive 'Upper Dart' - we parted company hoping for a run Early January

The Bland Family spent a 'twixmas' break for 3 days at Croyde where the surf was blown, cold but biggish.

The first Upper trip of 2005 was planned for Sunday the 9th Jan. But the forecast was for rain Friday night. All who had expressed an interest in this trip were backing out (recovering from flue, washing hair etc.). Consequently, I joined Mark R and Chas C on the Saturday. We checked out the Plym first (but too low) so diverted for a morning run on the Erme – levels were medium to low and enjoyable, and the gorge was clear of trees despite the gales. It was 14:15 by the time we got to Dartmeet and so we 'straight lined' the Upper (at a perfect ledge height) in around 1 hour! After so long it was nice to be back on one of my favourite rivers – it never fails to disappoint

A few weekends later and Andrew and I joined Chas and Jack of Southbourne CC for a more leisurely run of the 'Upper' – Just off ledge height (a good level), and

this time spread over 3 hours. One of those sun block and antifreeze days – beautiful.



The first weekend in February - and back to the Dart again. This time for a whole weekend on a boney and cold Loop, taking Explorer Scouts from Sandleheath and Barton. Ross also tagged along – and enjoyed a full facial



After 3 runs of the loop even the most enthusiastic scouts were happy to stop for cheesy chips and a sleep on the drive home



The following weekend it was the Tamar. An early start and a long drive on Saturday. I took the Princetown route – through Dartmeet – enviously checking the ledge full levels. It would have been a superb run on the upper that morning. But on to Horsebridge to meet the weekenders. A good turnout. 14 of us stood on the bridge looking at the swirling brown torrent spilling the banks – I could sense a little trepidation – it's not common to find 'big water' on Dartmoor.

Quite a flotilla set off at a romping pace (eddies were few and far between – and generally up in the trees). I couldn't remember this river but had read that the ominously named 'Coffin Weir' was evil in high flows. How was this big flotilla going to catch an eddy before dropping to doom!!

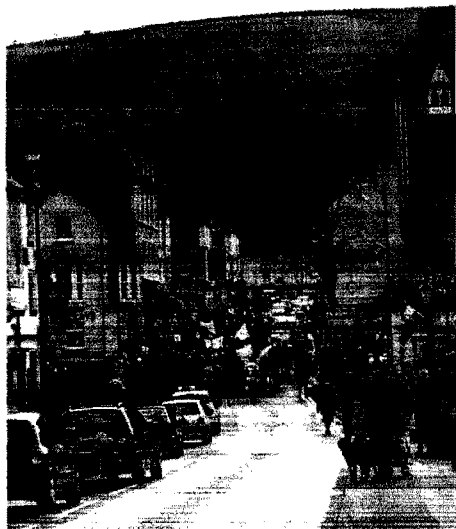
As it transpired – all the weirs were washed out wave trains. With the exception of one unnamed unfortunate tripping up on an eddy line and paying with a 200m swim the trip was incident free. We even managed to find an eddy for the traditional RCC picnic lunch.

A long drive back – and a message was waiting – we are off to the East Lyn Sunday – see you there? – Nope, that's enough driving for this weekend. There were still a few more weekends of the season to look forward to.

Graham

DEE DAY 21ST NOV 2004

Sunday 21st November 2004 saw the first 'Access March' since the Crack campaign many years ago.



Around 200 paddlers turned up to march through the streets of Llangollen – receiving a great deal of support from the locals. This proved good natured and peaceful rally that managed to achieve some local TV coverage. However, this was far from the big event that was hoped for.



I, for one, couldn't make it – but hope to be there to swell the crowds at the next.

Good on those that made a long trek to North Wales to take part.

We need to raise awareness of our access problems – in my experience, non-paddlers are always surprised when they learn that we are not allowed to paddle our rivers. It is a sad fact that throughout the summer months I always receive lots of phone calls from families and individuals who have just bought 'canoes' and wonder where the best put-in is for the Avon!!!

Following the 'Dee Day' there has been a little, but growing, media exposure of the issue. In December 2004 Radio 4's 'You and Yours' included a short debate on the issue and in January River Access featured on BBC1's 'County File' programme.

Small beginning .. but from little acorns etc..

Have any of you any ideas of ways in which we can raise awareness of the issues?

WOODMILL

Hello,

I thought that it was time that we updated you with the current situation on the weir at Woodmill in Southampton.

2004 was incredibly frustrating for all of us here as we waited.....and waited for the engineers to move in and sort out the tidal weir at the back of the centre. Having initially intended to make a start early in the Autumn the work finally got done in December. Fortunately the low rainfall in December meant that the work went ahead relatively easily.

We are currently advising paddlers that the Weir is back in use but would advise extreme caution as nobody really knows how the wave will shape up at all the different combinations of river level and tide height. Initial impressions are that at the present river level (January 6) the weir is quite 'boily' at low tide. There appears to be quite a good surf wave early in the tidal cycle and again late in the cycle but right on low water it is more of a hole. At big river levels the hole is very big and scary and we would advise people to stay away. The concrete blocks either side of the weir act as a good gauge, when river flow covers them you probably don't want to be on the weir!

The Woodmill web site will be updated to advise the paddling community of this news. In the meantime we would be extremely grateful if you could post this updated info on the UK Rivers Guide website.

We would remind paddlers that the weir is tidal and works for around two hours either side of Low Water (Southampton). It has public access from downstream. There is a public car park down the road from Woodmill and a limited amount of car parking space on hard standing next

to Riverside Park where there is public access to the tidal River Itchen. Please DO NOT park in front of Woodmill Outdoor Centre's doors as access is required at all times. Also please do not park in Woodmill Outdoor Centre's own car park unless you are actually attending Woodmill Centre or Shop. There is no public access to the weir from upstream. The jetty, slipway and grounds at the back of the centre do not have public access.

It is likely that Rafts or canoes/kayaks from Woodmill will run the weir from upstream at various times, please remember that students from the centre may be in the early stages of learning to paddle on white water so please be patient with them and observe the kind of courtesy that you would hope to find on a river.

Please remember that Woodmill is a busy outdoor centre and that we are not here solely to answer the phone and answer questions about tide times!

Many thanks, Patrick

And email from George ..

Just a quick note to let you know what's happening here at Woodmill !

I am sure that some of you are aware that the Weir at long last has been made safe. I hope that we will see some of your members having a paddle soon. Meanwhile this does mean that Demo's are now available on the weir when we have a member of staff free. We have also decided to open the shop on Sundays on the days that the weir is running. Hopefully this will help those that have forgotten bits and pieces but also we will be able to Demo then.

Thanks See you all soon

George