



# CANEWS

January 2011

## EDITOR'S CORNER

THE WEB SITE – [www.ringwoodcanoe.co.uk](http://www.ringwoodcanoe.co.uk)

**Sadly a very short edition this time – blame the lack of contributors and, big thanks to the few that did!**

### RCC HISTORY

Old issues of Canews are available to download and savour. See some real old school paddling!, find out what happened a decade or so ago, and for those RCC long-timers, relive some memories and cringe at what you, or others, said at the time.

DON'T FORGET .....

#### RCC Forum



Don't miss out on impromptu trips, gossip and banter

#### RC Photo Gallery



Share your photos with all members

### CAPTION COMPETITION

Visit the web site for the Caption Competition.



*Never put unleaded in your diesels*

Graham B

Mike W suggests 3:

- 1 *Hey mate, did you get rolled over or did the numbers of entries for the caption contest bole you over?*
- 2 *I thought there were more of us?, , maybe I didn't count correctly!*
- 3 *(Q) Where are the others?*

*(A) Still clinging to the pole in Chinese Whispers.....*

Rich J has:-

- 1 *After the exhausting paddle back from France laden, with duty free, Rich and Ben insisted on stopping and clearing the barnacles from their hulls.*
- 2 *As Ben raked for cockles, Rich still thought buckets would have been a better option.*
- 3 *Local heroes help in the clearing up of old discarded plastic from beach.*

***Or what was really said before we saw Claire on the beach with her camera.... "If we keep quiet about this, no one will ever know"***

## SUNNY SMILES EMPTY RIVERS

The first RCC 'Dartmoor Day' trip saw beautiful sunshine and completely empty rivers. Short of any alternatives we spent over 4 hours bumping our way down the loop. For all that, we found enough water for 4 swims!



James demonstrating some extreme edging



Mike hides behind bushes



Nicky surfs in the last of the autumn sunshine

What can be better than paddling with ....



Helpful friends



Advisors and



And rescuers

## WOOL TO WAREHAM ON THE DORSET FROME

Sunday 24th October. It was warm and sunny, a lovely autumn day. We parked a vehicle at Wareham on the quay, where we intended to finish and took the LR with David's open canoe and my kayak on to Wool. Here we put in just upstream of the old bridge. There was plenty of parking and an easy get-in. Cags were removed fairly soon after setting off as we warmed up.

It had rained the day before after a dry spell, so the river was lowish, but running fast enough to help us, though we had to pick our route carefully in some places where it was shallow. We went past a couple of friendly fisherman after a short while and on to first portage at Bindon Mill, having already passed a "no canoeing" sign. There was a lot of work was going on here, diggers and mud everywhere. There was no-one around so we managed the portage, but it would probably be impractical when people are working. They are installing a screw turbine generator in a newly excavated turbine channel. The whole area looks quite different to the views on Google. We got the impression the portage may not be possible once



the works are complete.

We continued on our scenic trip, admiring kingfishers and grey wagtails and a family of swans with a very vocal goose attached! We had no problems at portage at the fish-counting station (see photos), but getting out is not trivial as the bank is high. It was quite comical hauling the boats out of the water!



After passing under the bridge near East Stoke we encountered more "no canoeing signs", but fortunately there was no-one around! Yet more wonderful, peaceful scenery and warm sunshine.

Some time beyond this, near West Holme Farm, we came across a fisherman, fly fishing. As we approached him a swan, not happy at being trapped between a fisherman and some kayakers decided to take off with vast amounts of noise and splashing. The fisherman, annoyed at the disturbance, told us we should not be there. We were quite polite, and he calmed down and asked if we would wait there for 5 minutes whilst he fished a pool a short way on. We agreed to this and pulled in to an eddy. He waved us on a little later and we chatted to him as he walked on down the river. I offered to portage past his pool and explained we had "googled" the route and no-where had we seen anything which suggested we could not canoe it. We then had an amicable chat about access, fishermen and canoeists. He appreciated our efforts to help him and we parted on friendly terms.

Shortly after we went under the bridge at Holme. A little way after this there were more "no boating or canoeing" signs and many more swans. We meandered on, doing great loops as the river really could not decide which way it wanted to go. We saw the same herd of cows several times as we did a near

circuit of their field. There were egrets, herons, lots of ducks (mainly mallard & a few wigeon) and more swans. We came to the railway bridge, then the noise of traffic and the road bridge, but there was no-one around at all until we reached Wareham Quay.

The whole trip was scenic as promised, easy flat-water canoeing, but lots of interest in the scenery and wildlife. It took us about 3 hours, but the river was not flowing fast and once on the tidal stretch both wind and tide were against us.



An enjoyable trip, such a shame you are made to feel guilty being there.

Ros W

## A SUNDAY TRIP TO THE LOWER DART

Being inexperienced on white water can be intimidating, frightening and precarious, but worst of all you could end up with the embarrassment of being on the RCC swim list and never live it down so, with this in mind Richie suggested that it would be a good idea for The Adams family and I to get some practice in before the impending white water season.

The day started at the unearthly time of 6.30am (still the middle of the night if you ask me) when Richie, Dot, Ben Claire and Greg turned up in convoy to collect me and head on down to Dartmoor. Shortly after leaving, Richie decided that we were not going to get very far on the fuel light, so pulled into the Esso Garage at Merly. A diversion which in it's self was a calamity considering that the whole computer system including those controlling the pumps had crashed, and the attendant was now making 'slit throat' signs at all new customers attempting to use the pumps.

After 20 minuets of thumb twiddling and herumphing a plan was decided that we would find diesel else where and just risk having to push the van. Finally- detour over we could once again get on our way, only stopping again for some breakfast and horror stories at Kilmington.

Arriving in Dartmoor we decided to put in at a lay-by just below the butterfly farm at Buckfastley .With all the faffing,shuttle and suitable comedic comments about Richie's 'Star Trek style' dry suit over - we eventually got onto the water about 10am. The conditions were perfect, water levels not too high, but high enough to keep a group of novices entertained for a few hours and the rather grey morning turned into a bright sunny day.

Dot was the first on the water, demonstrating how it should be done and we nervously followed, but soon found our feet after attempting some ferry gliding bracing and breaking in and



out. We felt confident enough to proceed on down the river, and did incident free, well... for the time being.



The first few rapids proved to be good fun, and our confidence steadily grew with Dot' and Richie's excellent tuition.



The river that day was quite quiet with only a few other canoeists passing by now and then. The most canoeists we saw in one go being about 7- a tired looking bunch who had stopped for a mid morning break and bite to eat while sat on the bank.



It was when passing these canoeists and feeling quite pleased with ourselves for navigating the latest rapid that Greg decided he would show us all up, firstly by getting caught in a rogue wave and being flipped over, then by missing two attempts at a roll and then by having the first swim of the day. I think it was ok though, I think we managed to make it look completely intentional, and all part of the training exercise.

With Greg safely rescued and back in his boat we carried on down the river and had great fun on the rapids and Richie even managed to find a few mini waves to play on.

All was going well until Ben decided to show us his swimming skills on Staverton Weir. His main excuse being that "he was just cooling down" and back up excuse was that Richie told him to "mind the rock at the bottom" but failed to mention that sticking to the wall on the right hand side was the only way to do this. Oh well at least he swam on a feature!

The last feature to contend with, before reaching the home straight along the estuary, was Totnes Weir which was really a more of a water slide with a stopper at the bottom, rather than the massive intimidating torrent of water it made it's self out to be. A feature which we all made through uneventfully.

On approaching the get out, Sun still shining and unusually warm for October, not content with letting me go home all dry, warm, and with the glory of not swimming, every body started picking on me (with the exception of Dot) and a huge water fight broke out which resulted in every body being thrown in one way or another (some more than others) and a great lot of laughs, embarrassingly all caught on camera by Claire who was stood on the bank.



We then decided to finish the day off in the usual RCC tradition of going for a relaxing beer at Dartington Hall before heading home.

Nichola Ross