



CANEWS

October 2008

EDITOR'S CORNER

THE WEB SITE – www.ringwoodcanoe.co.uk

CANEWS IS AVAILABLE ON-LINE

This (and the last few) Issue of Canews is available in Acrobat pdf format for download direct from the web site (right hand click and select save as). The photos are in colour – by the time this has been through the photo-copier it loses so much!!

If you don't need a hard-copy posted in the future (and you feel like saving some forests and my time and costs on copying, envelopes, etc). let me know

THE RIVER AVON 'BLOG'



If you have any photos, information etc. on the river Avon that might be appropriate for the 'Blog' – please let me know

See: <http://theriveravon.blogspot.com/>

CAPTION COMPETITION

Visit the web site for the Caption Competition



"Gordon realises that his new paddling style is all but washed up!"

HarrDrBob?

RCC ON FACEBOOK

When I originally set up the RCC website (way back in 1999) I had the idea that it would largely be for trip reports and future calendars (i.e. 'Canews' and 'Events'), together with background information about the club, what we do, how to contact us etc.

Over the last year or so, as members have acquired digital cameras, I have received an increasing number of photos for posting up on the web site. A sign of the times – in this digital age, and with the onset of broadband, people (me included) like to see galleries of photos for each trip rather than read one persons account of it. (This wasn't really feasible in the 'dial-up-days' when the site was created)

The RCC website can't really function (in its present form) as a depository for a vast number of photos. Facebook might offer a simple and readily available solution. The main website will continue to operate as it has done before and provide the main source of club information etc. and the main club 'portal' – but those members that wish to share more photos and discussions can do so by joining the Facebook group. It is an experiment – let us see if it proves useful. It is free and it is easy to pull the plug.

JULY SURF

July saw some unseasonal weather (indeed, so did August!)

But it did offer some entertainment at Highcliffe for a couple of Sundays and Tuesdays



13 SECONDS TO GET OFF CHARTON BAY



The August Bank Holiday weekend started off fine enough - and Ladram Bay proved a good launch site. A smooth sea, impressive stacks, light winds and sun. There were only 4 of us (Elliott, Rich, Simon and I) - which kept the faff and shuttle to a minimum. We were on the water by 09:30

We made the 24 kms to Charton Bay by 2pm (despite trying to keep things slow and easy)



We knew that this was the best camp on our way to West Bay, in hind sight we should have continued but we opted for a lazy afternoon on the beach. Besides It gave Elliott a chance to practice his camp skills



However, growing storm clouds and rain extinguished our fire and found a design fault in my bivvy bag. The outcome - a sleepless and soaking night. (I should have paid a little more attention to the design of my pit - a lesson learned).

While the storm had passed by first light, it left a 'boat breaking' dumping surf in its wake.



We sat on the beach all morning waiting for a 'break in the break'. The heavy dumpers were coming every 7 seconds and we reckoned there was little chance of a successful launch of 4 boats in these conditions. We walked the mile long bay to check out the launch conditions and to try to raise a mobile signal for a shipping forecast (continuing F4 all Sunday, heavy rain showers overnight, picking up to F5 Monday).

Eventually (by mid day) the period between large dumping sets had stretched to a respectable 13 seconds. Was this enough to launch the 4 kayaks or should we wait it out for another wet night on the pebbles? And a stiffening forecast?

In reality the launch was a piece of cake and we rode a 2 meter swell on to Lyme Regis and the sanctuary of the Cob. Here we arranged for a 'Taxi driver from hell' to re-unite us with the vehicle at Ladram

It was a fun weekend. Lots of laughs, a little tension and lots of education

Graham B

PADDLING IN FINLAND

This year the Deakin family summer holiday was in Finland, and as usual we inflicted some heavy doses of rain on our hosts. The lakes were well above their normal summer levels, up to a metre in some cases, and this represents an impressive amount of rain considering how much of the country is covered by lakes.

We stayed at the summerhouse of the Gleed family, old friends of ours and now club members, which is a fantastic old log house beside a lake in central Finland. We had hoped to spend several days paddling, but the weather was fairly cold, windy and wet, and we weren't inspired to go camping. We did hire a couple of lake touring kayaks for the day, from a campsite a few miles away. Jake and I paddled them to the summerhouse, and all the adults and children there had a very happy time in them. They are excellent touring boats: light, tough and with enough directional stability for any novice to paddle them where they want to go. Mark Gleed and I paddled them back again late at night, and that was a very relaxing night paddle.



We also hired two Coleman open boats and two touring kayaks for a day from another base. The owner took us 20 km upstream of his base and our two families paddled back through the lakes and connecting rivers. We were really lucky with the weather that day, with plenty of sun and the wind behind us or calm. The scenery is lovely, but with no high hills and most of the ground tree covered, a canoe is a great way to see it. If you walk you only tend to see a few metres around you, but out on the water the views are much wider. It was a very varied trip, with lakes and islands of various sizes, and the rivers between them sometimes flat, sometimes with simple rapids. Mark didn't agree with the description of "simple", as he navigated down 200 metres of grade 2 rapid, with quite a few hazards, on his first day in an open boat. No problem though. There was only one essential portage on our route, around a small power station, and that was effortless because an excellent trolley was provided.



There are summerhouses scattered around the lakes, but they are mostly inconspicuous, there are hardly any people, and other boats are a rarity. We were there in late August, relatively late in their summer season, but it would never be busy. An advantage of that time of year is the low numbers of mosquitoes, and they weren't a problem for us. Also in low numbers were the birds. We saw very few anywhere and that was probably also because we were after the breeding season. Fish were abundant though, and the boys caught plenty on rods and in a fish trap, mostly pike and perch.

Canoe hire was about 25 Euros for 24 hours, but transport was extra. As in the rest of Scandinavia, you can exercise "everyman's right" and camp virtually anywhere for the night, but there are designated fireplaces along walking trails and popular canoe routes. Many of these have firewood provided, and often with a sleeping shelter and perhaps even a toilet.



It is very much as I imagine Canada to be, with similar scenery and more water than you could paddle in a lifetime, but much closer.

Barry.

WOOLACOMBE SEPTEMBER 2008

It was supposed to be a surf weekend!

All I have heard is, from Ross:-

There was some very small ocean swell but no wind. It did feel like being on a lake at points. We went for a 12k paddle around the rocks as well. There were enough waves to get martin swimming more than once!!

Some photos from Barry attached



LIFFEY DESCENT

Just a picture (from Nick L) of Dave and Jo Ratford having run Wrens Nest weir



PUZZLE

This is the first time that Canews has included a puzzle page (and it will probably be the last!). I originally made this word puzzle to make the BCU theory learning a little more interesting for Sandleheath Scouts but thought I would share it with you lot.

LEARNING LESSONS ON THE WAY TO DANCING LEDGE, OCTOBER 2008

The first lesson was learned on the way to the meeting point for the trip at Swanage: don't rely on the Sandbanks ferry outside the holiday season. It was closed for rebuilding of the slipway, and some of us didn't know. Fortunately, those that were taken by surprise, including me (supposedly the organiser), were in good time and went the long way round without delaying the ones with the better local knowledge.

Lesson two was a completely new one to me. We had put three sea kayaks on the car the evening before, for Bev, Jake and I, to give ourselves a more relaxed start the next day. When we took them off at Swanage Bev gave a cry of surprise: "There's a pigeon in my boat!" Yes, always check your boat for stowaways, even if you loaded it on the car yourself. A young pigeon must have perched on the kayaks, slipped between the two cockpits, and rode from our house to Sandbanks, then the detour round Poole harbour, to Swanage. It looked pretty ragged and confused to say the least. Dot put it under some bushes in the park, but I can't help thinking a knock on the head might have been the most humane action.



Despite the various dramas we were away from the beach by 10:30, and enjoyed a lovely paddle to Dancing Ledge. There was a gentle swell of a little less than 1 metre, but the reflection of this off the cliffs, together with some smaller waves, confused the sea and made it a bit more interesting. It was still calm enough to get in close to the rocks though, and enjoy the detail of the geology and the bird life.

Graham's Events List had stated Swanage to Dancing Ledge as the trip route, but I was hoping to go further. When we got there though, young Jake was getting tired, or bored perhaps, and Graham Mussett working hard to keep up in a white water boat, so he was already thinking about how tired he'd feel on the way back. The swell on the ledge would make landing a little tricky, but the alternatives further West I thought might be more difficult. We agreed to stop there for an early lunch, and I asked a couple of the plastic boaters to go in first and help those in fibreglass boats to land. They had interesting landings in the surf that was breaking onto the ledge. It wasn't

big, but the ledge slopes down from West to East, so the surf was complicated by a reflected wave running across the ledge sideways. Unfortunately some paddlers thought the best way in was to ride the surf, which might work in small surf on a friendly beach, but wasn't the easiest ride there. Inevitably they were broached by the breaking wave or, if they controlled that, by the reflected wave, and were pushed up the beach sideways or on a diagonal. Poor Richard Jennings, in his brand new boat, did just that and christened the bottom with some scratches through the pristine gel coat. Ouch. Sitting with those watching and worrying on the sea, I recommended they wait for a small wave to lift their boat, and paddle in on the back of the wave rather than surf it in, but the advice from those already on the ledge was different, with shouts of "Paddle!" as a breaking wave curled at the next person's stern. A couple more kayaks went bouncing up the ledge, with a few grazed hands and arms after boats capsized. Fortunately, Bev and Jake were last in. They understood the problem and the solution, and made perfect landings. Phew!



As usual, after a relaxed lunch in the sun, there was little appetite for paddling any further, so we helped each other to launch off the ledge again. The waves had reduced a little but it was still interesting, trying to time the launch to avoid the bottom of the swell which left the edge of the ledge a couple of feet above the trough. Mike Worth was noblest of us all, and found himself last and alone on the ledge, but a walker took pity on him after his first failed attempt and gave him the hefty shove he needed to clear the ledge. We returned to Swanage on a slightly smoother sea, with fantastic views of a peregrine working its way along the cliffs above us for several minutes, and fascinating views of the seabed below.



Apart from the kayakers' guide promoted on our site, there is another great guide to this bit of coast: "Inshore Along the Dorset Coast" by Peter Bruce, now in its fourth edition. I know Peter, having worked with him on another of his books, "Heavy Weather sailing", and have a lot of respect for him and his books. This guide contains excellent photos, navigation notes, tidal information and history, all designed to be of interest for those pottering along within spitting distance of the rocks. A good one for the Christmas present list perhaps.

Barry.

DOG LOW LOOP – IRRESPONSIBLE PADDLING?



Mid October - it hadn't rained for two weeks, the rivers were going to be low. But we had our first white water day trip planned. Diaries had been set weeks (if not months) in advance.

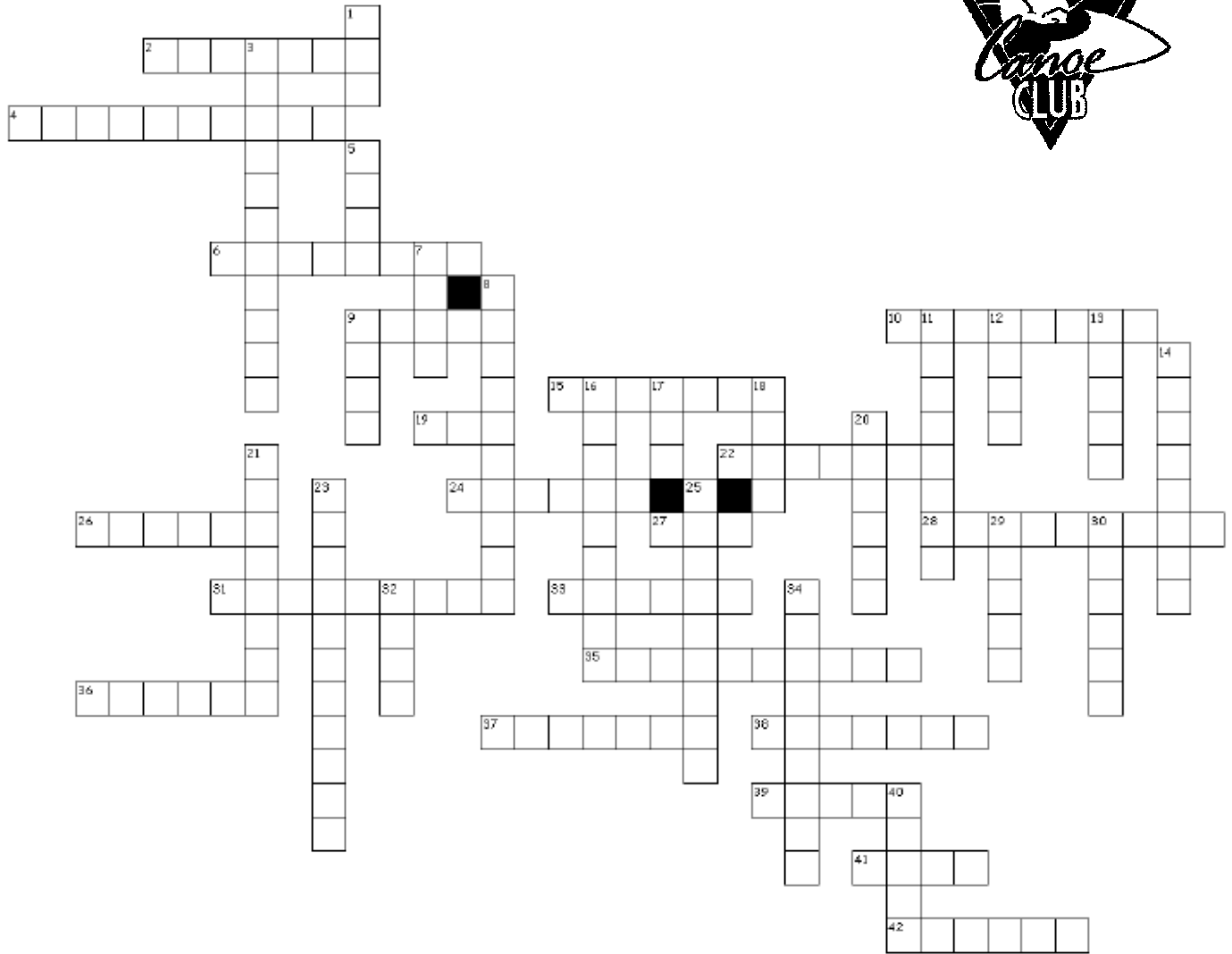
It is debatable, in my view, that paddling the Loop section of the river Dart in low conditions has any significant impact on the environment. However, the current consensus seems to be - only paddle when the rivers are full.

For those of us that are unfortunate enough to lead busy lives hundreds of miles away from white water, the options for 'organised' trips such as this are usually cancel or paddle regardless - re-arranging for another weekend, particularly when this involves obtaining access permission, is often not an option

Well, we went ahead, paddled responsibly, and enjoyed a good day on the water



Graham's Kayak Puzzle



Across	
2. A Modern boat material	28. end to end, round and round
4. A kayak blade that is not square	31. Old school move for kayak dancers?
6. Kneeling and using one blade	33. Flotation for your boat 3/3
9. Of Pheasants or preventing a capsized	35. An Inuit Sandwich maybe 6/4
10. A Perception boat or injury	36. A kayak or a weapon
15. A River Hole	37. Common to Canoeing and Badminton
19. pushing away with a Canoe paddle	38. A fishy boat with sharp teeth
22. Hole for Fowl kayakers	39. rats cause this disease
24. Through the gates	41. Grey, common or launch
26. Keeps the kayak going straight	42. Toe in water or means of propulsion
27. Dry or Summer it keeps you warm	
Down	
1. UK's paddling organization	17. Nasty on a river but OK for a tailor
3. Safehouse for hypothermics 8/3	18. Police may subdue this kayak maker
5. Mexican, river or ocean	20. A bouncy tide
7. Small tide	21. A tree in a river forms this
8. Using current to cross a river 5/5	23. Shivering and stumbling could be
9. Styling a drop with air	25. Screw gate or Wire Gate
11. Found on farms and big rapids 3/5	29. Old Style Freestyle
12. Sailors Drink left	30. A kayakers Lid
13. the strict end of your boat	32. Out of the flow
14. Keeper, Full-plate or ladder 4/4	34. Ensures dry legs 5/4
16. A swimmer will be grateful 5/4	40. Chimney, Sooty or Turn