

TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK



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BAE SYSTEMS

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2003



The Planet of the Poncho People

Paddling the Moidart coast, 9th - 15th May 2003

Attending: Kevin Singleton, Steve Singleton, Steve Swarbrick, Steve Wilkinson, Nick and Sam, Bob Smith, Jon Westaway, Peter Dilworth.

As I drove through the wind and rain I reflected on the wisdom of me telling everyone that the weather was 'always' great early in the season in Scotland. A series of vigorous lows were bumping into Scotland and turning over trucks on the M74 and it did not look promising. There was some blue sky at Ballachullish, which gave me hope, and as I pulled into nice Mr. MacDonald's campsite at Gortan Sands, Arisaig, we seemed to be right on the edge of all the foul weather. I sat

in the tent cooking tea, looking out over the Sleat peninsula on Skye. Nature was pulling all the stops out in her special effects department, with a low sun lighting up banks of dark clouds. Beams of sunlight curved across the dark waters like solar spinnakers. Big fat squall-lines advanced from the south west with rain dangling below them like jellyfish tentacles. The 17:56 shipping forecast said 'windy' and I was glad I wasn't out at sea. I sat around for ages looking at the sky until I began to wonder where everybody else was and if I was going to have a Billy No-mates experience. About nine the rest of the group began to turn up, then went straight to the pub.

BAE SYSTEMS

Next morning was very windy and wet. As this was a leisurely trip, I thought it was a golden opportunity to lie in my tent, maybe visit the chip shop in Mallaig, but the Ribble C.C. is made of sterner stuff and the decision was made to set off. The plan was to nip out of the Arisaig South Channel and head a little way down the coast. Packing was miserable, with everyone periodically diving into their tents to avoid the downpours. We set off late morning on the last of the flood tide. As we left the shelter of the campsite and snuck through the tidal channel at Gortnachullish we started to paddle south into a force six headwind. The three kilometres through the skerries felt like ten and we began to get split up. There were also some pretty chunky gusts. Being unfit, I was knackered by the time we got to the mouth of the South Channel and slightly apprehensive about heading out into the Sound of Arisaig.

I was right to be worried. As we turned the corner there was a strong south westerly piling up the waves over the skerries at Rubh' Arisaig. We were on a lee shore and it was all I could do to make way to windward, trying to avoid the breaks and to keep going. We were heading for the beach at Eilean a' Ghail, three kilometres down the coast, a twenty-five minute paddle in good conditions. It must have taken us thirty or forty minutes to cover a kilometre and by then I was stoved in. Kevin very kindly kept a watchful eye on me as we surfed in to find some shelter for a rest. I was finding it increasingly difficult to get steerage and turn the boat and badly needed a rest. I was really glad to see Steve, moments later, waving us in to the beach at Port nam Murrach. As we landed however, it very soon became clear that we were missing a few of us. Bob it transpires, untroubled by the briny mayhem, had paddled on down the coast and had landed on Eilean a' Ghail and, finding himself alone, was trying to raise us on the VHF radio. Meanwhile, Nick had found a wave with only one side to it. He had got up one side OK but then dropped off the other side and gone in the water, and hurt his arm to boot while trying to roll. He got back in the boat with Kevin's assistance and they thumbed a lift with Wilky, who gave them a tow back in.

We eventually regrouped and pitched camp, or tried to but then Nick and Sam's tent pole snapped. This was eventually mended with a very ingenious tent peg splint. The weather was pretty dismal most of the evening. The forecast for the next day for Malin and Hebrides was for SW 5, 6 occasionally 7, becoming cyclonic 4, 5 with squally showers and very showery on Sunday. We all decided to stay put the next day and have a rest. We spent the evening amusing ourselves with the usual foraging for firewood and burning stuff routine. It was then that I began to notice some rather strange behaviour amongst my colleagues. Very soon, most of the group were wearing cheap ponchos and flapping around in the wind like nylon Clint Eastwood imitations. Steve, Bob and Steve all had green nylon Gelert ponchos and Kevin and Peter had ex-Dutch Army brown ponchos. Standing around in the cold drizzle, having survived the first day of my 'holiday' (just), it slowly dawned on me that I had been abducted by some weird cult.



As we had a few more beers my suspicions were confirmed. The 'poncho people' are in fact aliens intent on colonising the dampest, wettest planets in the solar system and lighting smouldering, smoky fires full of old plastic fish boxes and damp heather. They have a complex social structure: the brown ponchos are the elite, the green ponchos the drones. They communicate by flapping their arms around and impersonating pterodactyls. They are far more advanced than us humans and can stand around a fire without setting their ponchos alight (almost). I was starting to feel like I was in a Spinal Tap video when, just to top the evening off, Bob revealed his pyromaniac tendencies by blowing the fire

sky high with two empty gas canisters, ending day one with a bang.

Sunday was a much-needed day of rest, which we spent bird watching and pootling about, the only exercise being pumping the water filters. In the sunshine we sat and watched the sea, occasionally taking cover from showers. The Sunday evening forecast was for SW in Malin, veering WNW, 4, 5 occasionally 6 later. Monday morning was nowhere near that windy, probably force 3 westerlies, so we set off south at 10:00 and crossed Loch nan Uamh to Smirsary in 1hr 20min. It was cold for the time of year, with snow on Rois Bheinn in Moidart and snow away to the northwest on the Cuillin. The group split up at the mouth of the North Channel of Loch Moidart, some paddling in, the rest going down the coast to the South Channel. The coast of Eilean Shona here is very rocky and the sea bucks and heaves even in light winds. The pilot warns of a steep sea at the entrance to the South Channel when the ebb is against a westerly. We crept in near the top of the flood tide in a light westerly and it was still bouncy. Inside Loch Moidart was like a millpond.



We had lunch at Castle Tioram, a gothic ruin of a place that guards the inner loch. It was so cold I had to sit in my orange survival bag over lunch to keep warm, something I have never done before. It was slightly better when the sun came out. We circumnavigated Shona and blasted up the North Channel in a force five headwind, arriving at the beach at the mouth of the channel at 16:00. What a beach! Two beaches really, with raised turf meadows and golf bunkers. It had panoramic views of Ardnamurchan, the Small Isles and the southern shore of the Arisaig peninsula to our

north. There were whimbrel on the beach, cuckoos in the woods behind us and, late at night as we stood around the fire, an owl hooting. The weather was good and there was no sign of the poncho people.

Tuesday was another rest day with strong winds forecast. They had swung around to the northwest and had been a good force five, with sunshine and squalls. We had time to go for a walk and have a look around, some of the group even taking a shower under a small waterfall. It was magnificent to just sit and look at such a beautiful place. The rock to our north was all bleached white. Under dark skies with the sun shining through the clouds, the rock shone. All the rock strata dipped to landward and it looked like the coast was recoiling from the sea. Around 16:00 we began to get a strong tang of fish on the air as the tide reached HW and began to churn up the wrack along the coast. To seaward of our golf course campsite was a raised beach that would probably be awash at HW springs. It consisted entirely of crushed shells, some with their tops cut off, some ground down to nothing. It was a beautiful place to sit and watch the sea on both sides, waiting for its chance to curl up both beaches and meet in the middle. The poncho people put in an appearance as well during the showers, often huddled together for shelter like disconsolate penguins, waddling to the sea edge and holding up their anemometers to appease the sky gods.

Wednesday dawned bright and clear. I lay in my tent and watched the sun creep down the flanks of Eilean Shona. As we got on the water at 10:00 the whitecaps had disappeared from the sea and the wind was NW 3 to 4. We paddled up the coast and into Loch nan Uamh (pronounced LOCH-NA-NOOH-AM). The further in we paddled, the colder and greyer the weather got. We paddled up to Eilean nan Gobhar and Eilean a' Chaolais and then headed across to the Borrodale islands, having lunch on the beach at Camas Ghaoideil, another chance to dive in the survival bag to stay warm.

As we paddled west in the afternoon we got into the sunshine and we had a great paddle up the coast from Eilean a' Ghail to Rubha'

Arisaig, tackling a force four headwind, weaving our way up the coast in the lee of islands and skerries. The last bit of the trip involved paddling back through the skerries that form the mouth of Loch nan Ceall. The sea was flat amongst the skerries, the sun blazing. The island of Rum dominated the western horizon and we had panoramic views of the South Morar hills around Arisaig. Squadrons of seals kept popping up around

the boats like inquisitive marmots and to top it off, a rainbow came out over Arisaig. I had to go home the next day to resume nappy washing duties but there was a plan afoot to paddle across Loch Nevis and visit the Olde Forge pub in Knoydart, said to be the remotest pub in Britain. I will leave it up to Steve to tell you what happened next.....

Jon Westaway

Chairman's Chat

The Summer Camps are over and, it seems, the Summer itself. The camps went well and were evidently enjoyed by all the lucky folk who attended. I believe that a full report on Rhosneigr is included elsewhere in this commodious compendium, but I must just say that the Beginner's Trip at Rhosneigr took the form of a paddle along the coast. The waves were moderate and the sun was strong. Steve Swarbrick and I accompanied Mark Loftus and his intrepid son Nathan and we enjoyed the sunbathing and Nathan the rock climbing and the hurling of old fizzy drink bottles to explode against the cliffs – obviously a budding sea canoeist of the Bob Smith school. Meanwhile the more experienced paddlers ploughed on to more distant goals and then failed to spot us waving and hollering as they passed on the way back.

The camp at Ullswater was notable for the high proportion of non-members attending. These were ex-members who had failed to pay their subs, their families and various other hangers-on. A vote of thanks was proposed at the recent Committee Meeting to these non-members for making the Ullswater Camp the enjoyable experience it was. However, it would be appreciated if the late payers would rectify the situation. [Since they haven't paid, they won't receive the newsletter so they won't read this – good try anyway, Terry! – Ed]

There was a ceilidh band playing in the barn on Saturday night and I therefore have to apologise for the dancing (especially the Duelling Banjos number). Sorreeee! (or should that be soooooe?). Despite this, Sunday morning saw the traditional 3-mile run and lake swim followed by a big fry up.

Martin's baby, the library, appears to be going well, with a lot of book exchanges going on on Wednesday nights at the Hand & Dagger. I have to admit I'm struggling with Todd Balf's 'The Last River' – "A thrilling read about a terrifying expedition" according to Men's Journal. I'm stuck at page 97 and so far I can honestly say only the first five pages were exciting. I think the quote says more about Men's Journal than it says about the book.

If you've read a book from our library, why not write a brief criticism and send it to Martin for publication. You have the chance to be a Victor Meldrew or someone who isn't like Victor Meldrew at all.

All you wannabe canoe polo players note that Jacky Draper has come forward to help Pete Jones organise junior polo. Many thanks to you Jacky, and good luck to both Jacky and Pete in their efforts to get junior polo going again for the new season.

Terry Maddock

The Ouse



20th July, 2003

Paddlers: Tom, Robert, Hazel, Chris, Janet, Tim, Steve, Tony, Nick, Aileen and Ian.



We began our trip at Linton Lock a few miles north west of York. The lock itself is very deep and is next to an enormous weir and salmon leap. We weren't the only canoe club paddling this trip today; quite a large group from Hull were just about ready to set off

when we arrived. This was the first time in a while that the flat-water people have had to use the shuttle system with cars. It took ages, as the centre of York is busy on Sundays, especially during the holiday season. Luckily for those of us left at the lock the day was warm and we were able to indulge in an hour or so of sunbathing.

Before we were allowed anywhere near the water we had to nip into the bar next to the lock to pay the £2 per person launch fee; easy money as no expense had gone into making launching simple – an extremely steeply pitched slipway lead into shallow and rocky water. A variety of launching techniques were put to use, luckily all of them successful and we were soon on our way although we were a lot later than planned, in fact the first boat didn't hit the water until around 1 o'clock.

Once on the river it rapidly became clear that there was very little current and with sixteen

miles ahead of us we realised that today was going to be hard work – especially for Tony in his Canadian and for those who had come with river boats. Just to add to the hard work, it wasn't long before we noticed that if anyone stopped paddling for a brief rest, they could easily find that they were being blown backwards. This wouldn't have been quite so upsetting if the wind had been strong but it really didn't rise much above a gentle breeze all day.

The Ouse is a very pretty river but is steeply banked and none of the villages, which we passed close to, came down to the river so the landscape became a little monotonous. We did, however, see some very beautiful dragonflies like iridescent blue butterflies with broad, black tipped wings. In some places there were little clouds of them fluttering just above the surface of the water. We also saw sand martins darting in and out of the holes they had burrowed in the riverbank.

We found a small sandbank to pull the boats onto at lunchtime. Some of us climbed the steep banking to enjoy our picnic on the footpath overlooking some rather flat farmland. Others, preferring not to risk the fall back down the banking, ate by the boats. We kept a constant lookout for Tony, who was somewhat behind the rest of us and very much hope that we gave him long enough to eat his lunch before we got back into our boats and set off again.



The river traffic was a bit different to that found on the canals and lakes we normally paddle. Although there were a few narrow boats, there was a large number of very

expensive looking motor launches – many of them sea going judging by the radar array on the masts (We're talking serious money here, you'd still struggle to buy some of them if you won Millionaire). One small but very powerful speedboat deliberately made some very impressive waves for Robert to play in, he seemed quite grateful. We also had to be sure to keep out of the way of the numerous touristy type cruise boats as we got closer to York.



Having been aware all along that the trip might be too long for some, a couple of cars had been left at the Youth Hostel at Clifton and it was here, next to a rather unedifying modern road bridge, that Tony left us. Nick and Aileen, who had originally thought that they may also have to get out here, decided to carry on for the next six miles or so.

We caught our only glimpse of the Minster across some playing fields on our approach to York. In fact, apart from the bridges, it wasn't very easy to see any of York's historical landmarks as the flood defences are very high. We did see bits of wall and I think we got a quick flash of Clifford's Tower but York is a surprisingly small city and our journey through the centre was all too short. We also had to concentrate hard on our paddling as we passed through York as the wash from all the shipping created some very odd waves which ricocheted back from the concrete flood defences at some very strange angles bobbling the boats about and making steering difficult, so at times just looking around was a bit tricky.



Even when the mighty Fosse joined the Ouse any increase in current was significantly absent and we continued our slow and stately progress out of York and back into the countryside, eventually passing the Archbishop's Palace at Bishopthorpe.

None of us had really been looking forward to paddling past a particularly large sewage works just before our get out but it's obviously a well run establishment as there

Halton Rapids

Did you pass your 2 star in summer?

Have you been on a couple of beginners trips since then and want to progress?

Then read on!

We are very lucky as a club to have an excellent stretch of rapids, on which you can learn the basics of paddling on moving water, less than an hour's drive away. We are very unlucky, however, because the vagaries of English law mean we are only allowed access in the deepest, darkest winter months (when the fishermen have all gone into hibernation!).

The good news is, winter is nearly here! Access to Halton Rapids (on the Lune near Lancaster, just off junction 34 of the M6) starts on November 1st.

was little or no smell and I don't believe any of us would have known it was there if we hadn't previously spotted it on the map. Robert was even caught playing in the outflow until it was pointed out to him that this might not be a very bright idea.

Our exit at Naburn was onto a slipway owned by the Yacht Club (their name for those enormous boats). Without exception we were all pleased to get back onto dry land as by now it was 7 o'clock! Nevertheless, we had all had a good day and felt a sense of achievement at having covered such a distance.

We had hoped to eat in the pub just over the road. Unfortunately, Sunday is steak night and they were fully booked. Most of us had a drink though and decided to search out food as and where we could on our journeys home.

Janet Porter

For any paddler who has good basic skills and is keen to move on, paddling at Halton during the winter is a must! You approach this set of rapids from the bottom, and they start off very easy, getting harder the higher up you move, so it's an ideal way to get to grips with moving water without being thrown in at the deep end (so to speak).

If you haven't been to Halton before but are keen to do so, please get in touch with Tim Langridge. Tim will explain how to get there, and will either meet you there to help you out or will make sure that one of the other experienced paddlers in the club will be there.

The only essentials – by November it's pretty cold on the river, so make sure you've got plenty of warm clothes, and a flask of hot coffee, tea, whiskey, brandy, Theakston's Old Peculier...



Rhosneigr Camp

Friday 1st – Sunday 3rd August 2003

Paddlers and Spectators: John and Tom Kington, Steve Swarbrick, Terry Maddock, Michael Moul, Tony Morgan, Graham Coles, Mark and Nathan Loftus, Mark, Barbara, Helen and Fiona James, Ian Krauklis, Martin and Daniel Stockdale, Martin and Charles Atherton, Nick Lay and Aileen Ball.

Friday

After the considerable lack of rain which had the knock on effect of a lack of river trips, everyone (I think?) was looking forward to a good weekend of sun, sea and ~~sand~~ SURF!!! The weather was looking good if the BBC weather forecast is anything to go by. But surf was a little unpredictable at this point in time.

After some last minute packing we finally loaded our kayaks (which were gathering dust and cobwebs through lack of use) onto the car. After saying a quick goodbye we were off, we set off at 4:50pm and were expecting to be at Rhosneigr at about 7:30pm.



When we finally arrived at the campsite in Rhosneigr, Steve had a lovely little fire going in a small stainless steel box, raised off the ground, this also doubled up as a BBQ. After setting up our tents we started up our BBQ, which dad had insisted we bring to cook our tea on. The BBQ however proved even more useful when Mark's attempts to cook a burger and several drumsticks had not gone to plan and were definitely inedible; however, 10 minutes on our blast furnace turned the

drumsticks from white to black and the burger looked like an extra large piece of charcoal.



After tea we sat round the fire and chatted about some pointless things involving Terry's guitar strumming feet and if it was possible to drum your toes like your hands, until the fire turned to embers and the thought of crawling into a warm sleeping bag was welcome.

Saturday

After a rather hot and fairly generous shower a good, cooked breakfast was in order. Soon frying bacon, sausage, egg and whatever else could be slung into a frying pan and eaten could be smelt. Kettles were whistling and the sound of frying fat could be heard, all very pleasant until Terry's gas cooker could be heard roaring like a Jump Jet.

When everyone was up and had eaten, we discussed the day ahead, after the washing up from breakfast had been done we set off to Cable Bay which was the usual bay we surfed at Rhosneigr. The waves were about 1-1½ft with the occasional 2ft wave.

At about 11:15am we were joined by Martin and Daniel Stockdale; Daniel was looking extremely excited as, like several others, this was his first time surfing on the sea. And what surfing session would be complete without a few swimmers?

At about 12:00pm the waves dropped so much as to become barely recognisable and we decided to come off the water for a bit. With the prospect of any more waves looking very unlikely, Tony and Michael drove to

Aberffraw beach further down the coast in search of better surf.



[Interrupting here for a moment: during lunchtime, Terry tried to persuade everybody that one of the traditions of Rhosneigr was going for a swim in the bay. The general reply was: "What a good idea Terry, off you go!" Undaunted by the lack of support, Terry set off into the water, but returned fairly quickly complaining about the cold! – Ed]



After about 20 minutes Michael phoned Martin from Aberffraw with news that surf was looking good at the beach. We all scrambled to get our boats onto the cars and get down to the new beach quickly. As we were leaving Cable Bay, Nick, Aileen, Martin and Charles pulled up in their cars and followed us to Aberffraw. We met Tony and Michael down there who were ready to go. Once we had all our kayaks and gear ready we started paddling down the small river, which opened out into the sea, this was OK as a warm up section but was perhaps a little too long for most people's liking. Once we were on the sea everyone's spirits lifted as the

waves came into sight. Tony and Michael were right, these waves were definitely better than at Cable Bay. After a good few hours surfing and a few swims later, everyone was contented with the days surf, but more to the point tired, which was not good as the walk back to the car was about ½ a mile over the sand dunes. Once back at the campsite everyone was ready for some tea, which was fine by me as I was ravenous. After a good meal, similar to the previous evening we sat back and chatted, but not for long as we were all tired after the days events.

Sunday

After another long and lazy breakfast we decided to pack up our tents and equipment before we headed to the beach. Everyone finished packing at different times so some were down at the beach before others. We left just before Terry, Steve and Tony. When we arrived at the beach (Cable Bay), there was no surf to speak of.



We messed around on the beach for a bit before heading around the bay. Daniel and Martin decided to head back home and Nick

and Aileen who had been staying in the village never showed up anyway, but apart from that, we had a full house. We started to paddle around the coast a bit, the waves were getting quite choppy now. When we got to the mouth of the bay we decided that some of us should carry on round while some should wait for the others to catch up, so John, Graham, Ian, Helen, Martin, Charles and I headed round the bay a bit more, as we approached an island the waves were getting fairly big, but weren't breaking...fortunately, we went in between the island and mainland and we went a bit further, we stopped and had a rest for about 10 minutes, we were all tired by this point, we had a discussion and decided to head back to the beach.

As we were heading back we heard some whistling noises, we assumed they were from a woman walking a dog, but were later informed that the rest of our group were sat on the mainland waving frantically at us and shouting, but, as the waves were still swelling at 5ft we could neither see nor hear them. As we landed on the beach we all leapt from our boats, carried them back and got changed as the waves in the bay were still tiny and not worth even looking at. We waited for the others to return and after about half an hour they did. As we sat and chatted at the cars we all agreed that the weekend had been fun and a success, but as always we hope the waves will be bigger next year, and maybe a few more may join us.... Who knows?

Tom Kington

Weil's disease

There have been three confirmed cases of Weil's disease (Leptospirosis) in the local area recently. It is strongly suspected that these cases have been caused by paddling on the River Lune between Halton Weir and Skerton Weir. (This is the stretch of the Lune below Halton Rapids, alongside the Army camp.)

Weil's disease is a rare but very serious illness. The BCU advisory notice about Weil's disease is at the back of this newsletter.

If you intend to paddle this stretch of the Lune, or in the adjacent area, you must contact the River Access Advisor, Laurence Arnold at UK Canoes on 01254 388850 beforehand to check on the latest situation.

Ullswater



17th August, 2003

Paddlers: Tom and Robert Byrne, Chris, Janet and Tim Porter, Clive and Janet Robinson, Tim Langridge, Steve Miller, Keith and Phil Lawton, Nick Lay and Aileen Ball, and Hazel Gilkes.

The day-trippers met up with the campers at Waterside Campsite at around 10.15. Tom generously sorted out the necessary day visitor fees for all of us. Not all the campers were paddling with us today but we were delighted that we can now number Tim Langridge among the flat-water devotees. We were particularly impressed that he was planning to paddle one of our increasingly long trips in a boat about the size of the average plimsoll. It was also good to have Keith and his son Phil with us, the majority of flat-water paddlers may be past the first flush of youth but we enjoy the company of the young people who join us.

We set off from the campsite in glorious weather, the mountains looked magnificent from the head of the lake and in a matter of seconds Ullswater became my new favourite

lake. A stiffish breeze blew up for about ten minutes which created a few popples on the surface, these were further enhanced by the wake from the ferries. Some people found the waves a bit splashy and ended up with an eye-ful of water but there were no white horses today.



On the whole it was a good job the weather was fine because we had to keep a wary eye out for shipping. Sailing boats whizzed by often through the middle of our group and missing kayaks by only a few feet. Co-

operation by both sailors and canoeists meant that no tempers or lives were lost – they certainly added to our enjoyment of the day and I hope they too found the additional hazard we afforded them entertaining.

After paddling for about an hour or so, we pulled up on a little shingle beach in Howtown Bay and had our lunch. Phil was finding the trip hard work and he and Keith left us after we had eaten to make their own way back to the campsite at a more gentle pace. He actually did very well, I think all those using riverboats found the distance challenging.



The rest of us, after studying maps and agreeing that Glenridding was much further than we had at first thought, decided to head for Aira Point. Fewer yachts and less wind meant that we made very good time and despite varied map reading skills we arrived at the right place. It was satisfying for us oldies to note that the three youngsters were all too tired to paddle that far and had to rest further up the shore where they rejoined the group as we made our return trip.

The journey northwards was fairly uneventful. The wind had dropped to virtually nothing, the surface of the lake was flat and one or two people were getting sunburn. The yacht race was still in progress and we decided to make our presence felt by paddling

straight up the middle of the lake. This had little effect on anyone as most of the sailing boats had slowed to a snail's pace with the exception of a small catamaran that shot in front of Chris pretty well out of control. Its occupant yelled something as he sped by but we couldn't catch what it was – it didn't sound like 'help' so we presume he was ok.



We were all quite pleased to arrive back at the campsite. A combination of weary muscles and a surfeit of fresh air had tired most of us out. Nick tried rolling but the water wasn't deep enough so he just pushed up from the bottom. He did, however, manage to keep his hat on which we felt was a noteworthy accomplishment.

Most people wended their own way home after loading up the boats but the more thirsty canoeists paid a visit to the Sun Inn at Pooley Bridge before making tracks; we had after all, paddled just over nine miles and felt we had earned a bit of a rest.

Janet Porter

Incidentally, our computer doesn't recognise 'Ullswater' and suggests I should substitute 'flyswatter' – well, it amused me.

[My computer also suggested 'Pulsated' – maybe these flat water trips are more exciting than then appear! – Ed.]

Evolution of the Poncho People

For the first 5 days of this trip we had been in what the weathermen would euphemistically describe as "a showery air stream". In reality we had experienced all the variety the weather gods could throw at us (see "Planet of the Poncho People"). Jon Westaway had departed on Thursday morning to take up his parental responsibilities, and left us packing the boats for a 2 day trip into Loch Nevis and the small settlement at Inverie. After a clear night and a hard frost (yes, at sea level in mid May!) the weather looked settled and with light winds and clear skies there were no ponchos to be seen. Obviously the poncho people had evolved into 8 almost humanoid lifeforms whose bare flesh, now exposed to the warm spring sun, had a sort of blue-white hue.



We all enjoyed the easy paddling from Mallaig into the entrance to Loch Nevis, the clear skies giving stunning views of the surrounding snow-capped mountains. Due to the arm injury sustained in the capsiz off Rubh Arisaig on the first day, Nick had travelled by local ferry to Inverie where we had arranged to meet later in the day. There is no campsite at Inverie, but the games field near the river is recognised by the locals as the camping ground. Landing at high water (good planning?) meant only a short carry to our chosen camping spot. Nick soon arrived

and was complaining of considerable pain in the injured arm thus giving Peter the opportunity he had been waiting for to use the Acupuncture kit he had been carrying in his first aid box. Peter soon had Nick sitting on the grass with a smile on his face doing a good impression of a pin cushion while we pitched the tents.

The "Old Forge Inn" provides a warm welcome (even to slightly smelly humanoids) and serves good food. When one of our party fell ill later in the evening, the staff were most helpful in providing a private room and even called the Mallaig lifeboat to be put on standby in case we needed to evacuate the patient. I'm pleased to report the lifeboat was not required (Steve Wilky retains the distinction as the only member of our group to have made use of this service).

On Friday morning, some of us took the opportunity to hike into the interior of the Knoydart peninsula. When we stopped for a break at an old fishing lodge, Peter surprised us all with his forethought and preparedness by producing a large pork pie complete with bottle of brown sauce from somewhere. We considered his choice of blister inducing footwear (wellies) much less impressive, and I think he was pleased to make it back to the camp by early afternoon. Heavy rain was forecast for that evening so we returned to Mallaig with the assistance of a useful easterly wind. Just as we arrived the expected rain arrived making unloading the boats a wetter experience than paddling them.

We learned on this trip that the weather in Scotland can never be relied on, but even so, this trip had still been enjoyable, perhaps enhanced by the unseasonably cool and unsettled weather.

Steve Singleton



PARTY

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!NEW VENUE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

WITH RIBBLE

**CHRISTMAS DINNER & DISCO
AT FERRARI'S Country House Hotel
Thornley, Longridge.
FRIDAY 5th DECEMBER**

FOR THE MEAL CHOOSE FROM THE FOLLOWING:

STARTERS:-

- MUSHROOMS SAUTEED IN STILTON SAUCE.
- MELON GARNISHED WITH FRUIT,.
- HOMEMADE PATE, SERVED WITH MELBA TOAST.
- PRAWNS SALAD,.
- SOUP OF THE DAY,
- INVOLTINI Di AGNELLO, (LAMB & SESAME SEED FILO PARCELS)



MAIN COURSE:-

- ROAST TURKEY AND CRANBERRY SAUCE.
- FILLET OF SALMON COATED WITH A SAFFRON & TARRAGON SAUCE.
- ROAST DUCK & ORANGE SAUCE.
- SIRLOIN STEAK DIANE,
- POT ROAST SHOULDER OF LAMB WITH MINT GRAVY.
- VEGETABLE & PASTA BAKE.

SWEETS:-

- CHOICE OF SWEETS OR CHRISTMAS PUDDING & RUM SAUCE



COFFEE AND MINTS.



**PARTY NIGHT PRICE £20.00. TO BOOK' RING OR
E-MAIL IAN OR ANN.**

**All bookings must be followed by full payment as soon as possible to guarantee a
place, closing date , when were full !**

**PLEASE RETURN THIS SLIP WITH YOUR REMITTANCE TO Ian McCrerie (please check
our address as it is due to change soon) Cheques made payable to Ribble Canoe
Club.**

NAMES- _____

PHONE No/e-mail- _____

STARTER- _____

MAINCOURSE- _____



PADDLING THE LANKY

Since first learning to use kayaks we have felt that we would like to paddle the Lancaster Canal from Preston to Tewitfield Locks and thought that as sponsored events go this one was a little different. So, having set a date for the event at the end of August, it was our hope that Fulwood Methodist Church would benefit.

There were a few anxious days in July when Janet thought she might be paddling the canal alone while Chris languished in hospital with appendicitis but, thankfully, he recovered without the need for surgery and the original plans were back on.

On day one we loaded the two Carolinas onto Janet's little Metro. It all looked a bit unbalanced and top heavy but it didn't creak too much. We managed the drive to the end of Aqueduct Street with no problems and parked opposite Kirkham Funerals – the canal is, after all, a dead end! We were quickly on the water and waving goodbye to Tim our driver by 7.30am.

Before we even reached the first bridge we ran into duckweed. Parts of the canal were thick with the stuff and the new holding basin at the top of the Ribble Link was completely carpeted. The duckweed was a nuisance and made canoeing unpleasant as it clung to

paddle shafts and began to make our hands sore – not something we welcomed so early in our endeavour. We finally saw the last of the dread weed next to the Hand and Dagger.

Our first scheduled stop was to be at Owd Nell's. We enjoy paddling most of the canal but both agree that the stretch from Barton to Bilsborrow is one of the most boring sections. The scenery is very flat, there are few bridges to use as landmarks, not many people use the towpath and the canal passes beneath countless pylons and cables that click and buzz (especially in the drizzle). In our eagerness to get this bit over we must have accelerated and so arrived at Owd Nell's at 10.30, a full half hour before we had asked the children to be there. When our support crew finally turned up, we sat outside at one of the picnic tables with a tray of tea. We had to hang around for a little while here as one of our church members was due to come to offer her moral support. She turned up bang on time but her plans to walk alongside the boats were scuppered slightly because we paddle a little bit faster than walking pace and had really got into our stride by now. However, Elizabeth had offered to keep her company for the next four miles or so, which meant that the two of us didn't have to worry that anyone was being left behind.

We found a closed gate blocking the towpath at a bridge near Brock. Knowing that our hikers would find it difficult to get around, Chris gave it a prod with his paddle. It was only after Janet had gone under the bridge and looked back that we realized there was a herd of cows being ushered across by the farmer and the gate was there to prevent them from straying in the wrong direction. Fortunately, the farmer had put up another gate further along the towpath so no one got trampled (well, not anyone we know anyway!)

Our next stop was in Garstang where we were to have lunch. Tim had driven round to meet us and was already there when we arrived and soon after starting to eat the others caught up with us. This had been a noisy section of our journey as for the last three miles the motorway, canal and railway had run alongside each other.

During the afternoon we devised a cunning plan to help us survive the privations of long distance kayaking. We decided that we would paddle for an hour then stop and have some chocolate; paddle for another hour and stop for more chocolate. In fact, have chocolate whenever we felt the need.

The last few miles of our paddle today were really very attractive and took us past Ellet Grange, an impressive pile built in 1857 for a merchant by the name of William Preston. The Grange is served by one of the most attractive bridges across the canal leading onto the estate. The next bridge along is very wide and was built to serve two farms. Unfortunately the two farmers didn't get on so required a bridge with a wall down the middle so neither could use the other's side – some people! We hope this is a true story, we will have to go back one day and check.

Near Galgate we paused for a few minutes at the top of the Glasson branch where a rather dainty little bridge crosses the first of the locks. Then came the last of our paddling for today as we passed through the marina towards Galgate Bridge where we could see Tim and Elizabeth waiting for us. A few final photos of the day and we scrambled out of our boats. We carried the boats to the car park at the cafe and shared a well-earned cup of tea

with a few friends from church who had come to the cafe to meet us.

Janet drove home, it is her car after all, but with four adults inside and two enormous kayaks on the roof the brakes felt well dodgy.



Day 2

Day two of our expedition began back at Galgate Bridge. The weather this morning was glorious and we started the day's paddling on time at 9.30am. We began by paddling through what must be the posh part of Galgate where some very big houses backed onto the canal; big conservatories, own moorings, that sort of thing. After that, we were in open countryside and heading towards some hills. It wasn't long before we entered a very deep and heavily wooded cutting. This was the part of the canal which we enjoyed most and would love to paddle again at a future date. There was a wide variety of trees and other plant life, we were well away from the hum of the motorway and the architecture of some of the bridges was fascinating particularly Brantbeck Bridge which was huge and dwarfed the kayaks. We could have spent ages there it was so peaceful.

Once out of the cutting we suddenly rounded a sharp right hand bend and there we were in Lancaster. We had been warned that the canal through Lancaster can be a bit grotty and not very nice to paddle. We couldn't disagree more and felt that the city takes a certain pride in this amenity. It was cleaner than we would have expected a city canal to be and newly built flats and offices have been constructed in sympathy with their surroundings. It was while paddling through Lancaster though that the wind began to pick up.

Back in the outskirts of the city and round another sharp bend – left hand this time – we reached the approaches to the Lune Aqueduct where we could see Tim and Elizabeth waiting for us. The Aqueduct is not a very elegant structure but is good, solid engineering and built to last. We had a break here for twenty minutes or so. Elizabeth had been impressed on her walk to the Aqueduct by just how clean the water was. She had seen several fish swimming about; luckily for them they were nowhere near the anglers. Tim was fulfilling his role as our driver very well and was managing to arrive on time at all our rendezvous points. It was pleasant to lean over the parapet of this impressive bridge and sip tea but the wind was already beginning to slow us down and we felt we should be pressing on

The wind, though not incredibly strong, was enough to make progress a bit tiring as we passed through Hest Bank. The canal runs very close to the sea here and there are beautiful views across Morecambe Bay, which we could only see through gaps in the hedges but which must be quite lovely when seen from the deck of a narrowboat.

After an hour or so we arrived at Hatlex Swing Bridge, our scheduled lunch stop. We had to get out here as the bridge is kept closed to canal traffic and is too low for the kayaks to pass beneath. Nevertheless, the get out is not easy as the sides are very high. Chris went first 'cos he's a boy and can cope with adversity and it was while he was lying across the towpath with his feet hanging over the water, that a passer-by offered to open the bridge for us. We smiled politely and said we'd be ok then Chris clung onto Janet's buoyancy aid as she made a rather inelegant exit from her boat. The swing bridge forms part of the driveway to a single house in Hest Bank, we rather like this idea, it's a bit like having a draw bridge although we're not sure who has to maintain it. We ate our picnic by the bridge while we watched a guy take a little narrowboat through.

Having paddled through Bolton le Sands we were back in farming country again. The one disappointment of today was that we didn't

see a single heron (on our first day we had seen seven or eight). Our regret at the lack of herons was alleviated somewhat by the number of kingfishers we saw. We became very adept at spotting them over the two days of our journey and are pleased to report that these lovely little birds occur throughout the length of the canal. There is no shortage of mallards on the canal either and all the swans we saw on our trip were fairly friendly even though most had young with them.

Paddling became hard work for Janet during the afternoon although Chris seemed to get his second wind. A combination of tiredness and blustery weather meant that we were well behind time when we arrived at Carnforth, our least favourite town along the canal; the water is always filthy here and the whole place has a back of beyond feel to it.

The journey from Carnforth to Tewitfield normally takes us about an hour to complete so we were beginning to scent home. We decided a cunning plan to help us over the last few miles would be to set little milestones. The first of these was to reach the motorway bridge. Once under the M6 we stopped briefly, studied the map and struck out for our next target, the Keer Aqueduct. We didn't stop again but definitely found the last couple of miles hard work. The next few milestones came closer and closer together, first the Capernwray Arm and then Borwick Hall.

Just before the final bridge we were aware of a little knot of people standing on the towpath some of whom were waving at us. They were Tim, Elizabeth, a little group from church and some members of Janet's family. It was nice to have a ripple of applause as we approached the end of our marathon.

We finished in triumph, paddles held high, as we thumped into the end of the canal. We felt a real sense of pride at having achieved something that few people have done before – the fact that very few people would want to emulate us did nothing to dampen our spirit.

Chris and Janet Porter

Paddling down the Ribble



[A little background: a couple of months ago we were contacted by Adam Giddins who was planning to paddle down the Ribble with his friend in their 17ft Coleman open canoe and were after advice. We gave them what advice we could, and a few weeks later Adam sent me this email, which with his permission I am reproducing virtually unedited. – Ed]



We completed our Canadian canoe trip from Clitheroe to Lytham yesterday, and I have to say what a fantastic trip it turned out to be. After a good deal of research and several visits to different parts of the river, we

decided to put in at Edisford Bridge, Clitheroe.

Fortunately, after the heavy rain the previous week, the river levels were fairly high, so although there was a bit of scraping, it was only on a handful of occasions that we had to walk the boat down shallows. We did encounter several fishermen, some of whom were a little 'arsey', but by and large, a cheery 'good morning' seemed to placate them! Some seemed genuinely interested in what we were doing and wished us well.

We had permission from the landowner at Osbaldeston (opposite Hothersall Lodge) to make camp for the night on the river bank, and after a good night's sleep we rose early to head down to Preston. The river becomes a completely different animal after the last bridge at Penwortham, and despite a very strong head wind we decided to continue.

The ebbing tide seems to have very little effect until it has dropped a good 3 or 4 feet when a pronounced rip can be felt. This was greatly welcomed and helped carry us at a

decent pace out past Clifton, the Douglas confluence and Warton.

The channel seems to flow much faster on the left of the river, so we decided to stick to the right to avoid the most turbulent water. The relief we felt on seeing the windmill on the front cannot be described!



Saltcotes would have been impossible to navigate in anything other than high-tide, so you were right to recommend Lytham lifeboat jetty, plus, we earned the dubious honour of

being the first craft to land at the newly built jetty since it was officially opened by the Mayor that morning!

We'd put-in that morning at 8.30, and arrived at Lytham at around 3.30pm. We'd missed the highest tide point at Preston by almost an hour, but to be honest, I think we'd have found it more difficult in the headwind without waiting for the stronger ebb.

I'd thoroughly recommend the trip to any one, but I must say, I'm glad we took the time to talk to as many people as possible - yourselves, Preston Waterski Club at the Marina, the Ribble Cruising Club at Lytham and the Coastguards - as well as visiting as many stretches of the river as possible.

Thanks very much for your advice, and we'll try and make it to the H&D one evening for a pint!

Adam Giddins

For Sale

Pyranha Stunt Bat

including a neoprene spraydeck

£150

Martin Welsh

01282 617388

Vauxhall roofrack

to fit Cavalier or Vectra

£15

Martin Welsh

01282 617388

Perception Dancer

The original White Water Touring Kayak, Yellow, J+R Type footrest, Backrest and Bow cap. Good Condition.

Good for flat water touring and White Water.

£ 100

Andy Rushton

01772 744129

Gents 'Carlton Corsair' Racing Bike

25" frame, 27" alloy quick release wheels, 10 speed, Reynolds 531 Butted Main Tubes, 52/42

front chain rings, Raleigh Gears and

Centrepull brakes, Mudguards, toe clips and bottle cage. (Been in shed for a few years and

could do with a service, good bike when

cleaned up. Shed clear out forces sale.)

£ 40

Andy Rushton

01772 744129

Ladies Racing Bike

19 1/2" frame, 26" wheels, 10 speed, 52/42 chain rings, Simplex gears, centrepull brakes, mudguards. (Been in shed for a few years and

could do with a service. Shed clear out forces sale).

£ 25 ono

Andy Rushton

01772 744129

Ribble CC Library

The library is going very well so far, but I have noticed that most of the books are being borrowed by longer standing members of the club. The library is for everybody, and the books and videos will be a great help to those of you who are just starting out in canoeing.

I take the library to the Hand & Dagger every Wednesday night, and if you can't get there and want a book just give me a ring or email me. Donations of books or videos are always welcome!

Technique books:

General technique

BCU Canoe and Kayak Handbook

Franco Ferrero

The Practical Guide to Kayaking and Canoeing

Bill Mattos, Andy Middleton

This has finally arrived from Amazon, and is an excellent book for a beginner to learn more about the sport.

Canoeing & Kayaking

Marcus Bailie

Kayak

William (not Bill) Nealy

Kayaking and Playboating

The Playboater's Handbook

Ken Whiting

The book with the longest waiting list so far. I can't understand why so many people want to be upside down so often!

Open Canoeing

Path of the Paddle: An Illustrated Guide to the Art of Canoeing

Bill Mason, Paul Mason

Canoeing

Laurie Gullion

Open Canoe Technique

Nigel Foster

Sea Kayaking

Sea Kayak Navigation

Franco Ferrero

Rolling

The Bombproof Roll and Beyond!

Paul Dutky

Safety

White Water Safety & Rescue

Franco Ferrero

Guidebooks:

Scottish Whitewater

Andy Jackson

White Water Lake District

Stuart Miller

A brand new guide to the rivers of the Lake District and the North-West of England. Comprehensive and very detailed.

An Atlas of the English Lakes

John Parker

Expeditions:

Blazing Paddles: A Scottish Coastal Oddysey

Brian Wilson

Dancing with Waves: Around Ireland by Kayak

Brian Wilson

Paddling to Jerusalem

David Aaronovitch

The Last River

Todd Balf

"Only the first five pages were exciting" (Terry Maddock)

Paddle to the Arctic

Don Starkey

"He really doesn't know what he's doing" (Martin Russell)

Canoeing across Canada

Gary & Joanie McGuffin

General:

The Rough Guide to Weather

Robert Henson

The Liquid Locomotive

John Long (ed)

Videos / DVDs

Liquid Logic (DVD)

Donated by Tom Kingston

A DVD full of extreme Americans doing extreme things in extreme boats. What more could you ask for?

Liffey Descent (V)

Donated by Tony Moxham

The Liffey is an Irish whitewater river which flows into Dublin. The Liffey descent is a race down that river. Tony was there!

Deliverance (V)

Yes, the classic 70's movie starring Burt Reynolds and John Voight. Duelling banjos? "Squeal like a pig"? It's all there. Not for the squeamish, BBFC rated 18, and I will be enforcing that rating.

Canal Closure

Our favourite section of the Lancaster Canal, from the Hand and Dagger to the Motorway bridge, is going to be closed this winter!

The section of canal between Bridge 26 (Salwick bridge at the Hand & Dagger) and Bridge 29 (the bridge just north of the motorway) will be closed from 3rd November 2003 until 12th March 2004 for bridge reconstruction to take place.

The canal will be dewatered, so there's little point in planning pirate runs. However, there might be a chance of recovering the paddle which got stuck in the mud some months ago!

For updates please check with British Waterways, www.britishwaterways.co.uk or 01524 751888. In the meantime, all is not lost because as far as we are aware the canal to the south will still be usable, and I'm sure there will be plenty of people going to the Hand & Dagger for tea and a drink as usual!

Stop – Paddlers Crossing!

The road past the Hand & Dagger can be busy at times, and passing cars are often travelling fairly fast. The complicated junction means that drivers are looking out for other cars, and are not necessarily watching out for the unexpected – like a canoe walking across the road!

Please take great care when crossing the road to and from the canal. Remember to check for traffic from all different directions before you

cross, and please make sure you can see the road as you cross and aren't blinded by your boat.

Parents: please be on hand to help your children across the road – don't assume that somebody else will be looking after them. We haven't had an accident yet, but with the dark nights drawing in we must all be even more careful.

Editor's bit

Lifeguards

I would like to apologise to our current lifeguards, who have to be on duty more often than we would like due to limited numbers.

We are training up additional lifeguards as quickly as we can, and the rota should be back to normal in the New Year. In the meantime, your help is very much appreciated.

Dates and deadlines

The next committee meeting will be on November 4th at 7:30 at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on November 18th.

Martin Stockdale
martin@stockdale.fsbusiness.co.uk

Fulwood pool sessions and lifeguard rota

The following lists the pool sessions booked at Fulwood Leisure Centre, the contact for the courses and the lifeguard on duty for each session. All sessions are Friday 9:00pm – 10:00pm.

Special Event: Demo boat night

The special event on October 10th will be a demo boat night, arranged by UK Canoes and Brookbank. They will be bringing a number of boats from their demo range for you to try out in the pool. There will also be some experienced playboaters there to give you some hints and tips about paddling techniques.

I suspect this will be a popular night, so I would suggest you either bring your own boat along or get out a pool boat to use when there isn't a demo boat available.

We're not intending to try to book people into boats at particular times, so please play fair and not hog a boat for too long so everybody can have a go.

If there's any special boat you'd like them to bring, please let me know – no promises, but I'll ask and see what happens!

The normal 'Open Session' price of £3 per person for pool hire will apply.

DATE	SESSION	CONTACT	LIFEGUARD
19 th September	Beginners Course	Tom Byrne	John Kington
26 th September	Beginners Course	Tom Byrne	Andy Rushton
3 rd October	Beginners Course	Tom Byrne	Sara Withall
10th October	Demo boat night	Martin Stockdale	Jim Clift
17 th October	Open	N/A	Peter Benett
24 th October	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	John Kington
31 st October	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Andy Rushton
7 th November	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Sara Withall
14 th November	Open	N/A	Jim Clift
21 st November	Polo	Phil & Lorraine Haworth	Peter Benett
28 th November	Polo	Phil & Lorraine Haworth	John Kington
5 th December	Polo	Phil & Lorraine Haworth	Sara Withall
12 th December	Open	N/A	Andy Rushton

Prices

Beginners Course £20 (plus club membership)

Rolling Course £15 (plus club membership)

All other sessions (Open, polo, special) £3

Please book in advance for the Beginners and Rolling Courses by phoning the named contact.

CALENDAR

Last minute trips organised at Hand & Dagger (Weds, 6:30pm onwards) or Fulwood Leisure Centre (Fri, 9:00pm).
If you have any dates for the calendar contact **Terry Maddock**

Ribble CC organised events in **bold**.

River information:

Burrs 0161 764 9649

www.activity-centre.freeserve.co.uk

Canolfan Tryweryn 01678 520826

www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk

Teeside Barrage 01642 678000

www.4seasons.co.uk

Washburn 07626 978654

yorkshire.bcu.org.uk/washburn.htm

Wharfe

yorkshire.bcu.org.uk/wharfe.htm

Trips / Events

September

- 17 **Presentation Night**
Hand & Dagger
- 20 **Ribble Link Birthday**
Preston Basin
Martin Stockdale
Pete Jones
- 21 **Teeside or Tryweryn**
NE England or N Wales
Tony Morgan
- 28 **Flat Water Tour**
Macclesfield Canal
Tom Byrne
- 28 **Washburn White Water**
T'other side of Blubberhouses
Tony Davis

October

- 3-8 **Scottish Trip**
Roy Bridge, near Spean Bridge
Ian McCrerie
- 5 **Beginners' Trip**
R. Wenning, Bentham
Terry Maddock
- 12 **Washburn White Water**
(Final Event!)
Martin Stockdale
- 12 **Wharfe White Water**
Hebden to Barden, W. Yorkshire
- 19 **Flat Water Tour**
Lancaster Canal
Tom Byrne

- 19 **Wharfe White Water**
Hebden to Barden, W. Yorkshire
Steve Wilkinson
- 26 **Ribble Moving Water**
Clitheroe to Ribchester
Brian Woodhouse

November

- 2 **Beginners' Trip**
R. Lune, Halton, Lancaster
Terry Maddock
- 4 **Committee Meeting**
Hand & Dagger
- 9 **Moving Water Practice**
R. Lune, Halton, Lancaster
Tim Langridge
- 16 **Greta White Water**
R. Greta, Keswick
Steve Swarbrick
- 16 **Flat Water Tour**
Derwent Water
Tom Byrne
- 18 **Newsletter deadline**
- 23 **Wharfe White Water**
Hebden to Barden, W. Yorkshire
Steve Wilkinson
- 30 **Ure Moving Water Trip**
R. Ure, West Yorkshire
Brian Woodhouse

December

- 5 **Christmas Party**
Ferraris, Chipping Rd, Thornley
Ian McCrerie
- 7 **Beginners' Trip**
R. Lune, Halton, Lancaster
Terry Maddock
- 14 **R. Greta**
Keswick
Grahame Coles
- 21 **R. Crake**
Coniston Water to Greenod
Tony Morgan
- 31-1 **New Year Barn Camp & Bonfire**
Wroster's Barn,
East side of Coniston Water
Steve Swarbrick

January 2004

- 4 **Beginners' Trip**
R. Lune, Halton, Lancaster
Terry Maddock

Pool Sessions

See Pool Lifeguard Rota

Polo

Lorraine Haworth

Beginners

Terry Maddock

Rolling

Bob Smith

Open

Martin Stockdale

Slalom

See www.canoeslalom.co.uk for event details

September

- 20/21 **Stone 3/4**
Stafford & Stone CC
- 20/21 **Oughtibridge 3/4**
- 27/28 **West Tanfield 3/4 x Double**
West Yorkshire CC

October

- 4/5 **Sowerby Bridge 2/3 x Double**
Halifax CC
- 4/5 **Mile End Mill 2/3**
Llangollen CC

Polo

September

- 27 **Youth League match**
Liverpool Queens Dock
Jacky Draper

October

- 4 **Youth League match**
Liverpool Queens Dock
Jacky Draper
- 18 **Youth League match**
Liverpool Queens Dock
Jacky Draper



Weil's Disease



Weil's Disease is a RARE but very serious illness. It is caused by bacteria carried in the urine of rats (and some other animals), which get into the waterways.

PRECAUTIONS:

- ✘ Avoid capsizing or rolling in stagnant or slow moving water
- ✘ Wash or shower after canoeing
- ✘ Cover minor scratches on exposed parts of the body with water proof plasters
- ✘ Use foot wear to avoid cutting feet

The illness is very rare, but can be contracted anywhere. The descending scale of risk is: Stagnant water, canals and slow moving rivers (particularly after flash floods), swifter streams.



Should you become ill after canoeing (2-19 days) with a flu-like illness (temperature, aching limbs and joints) call your doctor and tell him/her you are a canoeist – see your *member's yearbook* (2003,pg.96). Contact the BCU office for more information.



Weil's Disease

Weil's Disease



What is it?

Leptospirosis is a zoonosis, that is an infection transmitted to man from animal sources. Leptospirosis in humans can produce a range of clinical manifestations from a mild flu-like illness to meningitis or renal failure. The more severe end of the clinical spectrum is known as Weil's disease, which is rare in Britain but can occasionally result in death.

How do you catch it?

The infection is caused when leptospire, minute bacteria, enter the human host through a skin abrasion or through the lining of the mouth, throat and eyes after contact with an infected animal's urine or contaminated fresh water. There are many different types, or serovars, of this organism. Each tends to be associated with a different animal species. The most commonly found serovar in this country is *Leptospira hardjo*, which is associated with cattle. *Leptospira icterohaemorrhagiae* also occurs here and is associated with rats.

How serious is it?

It can be a serious illness requiring hospital treatment and can lead to kidney or liver failure. Weil's Disease is a notifiable illness.

Do I need to do anything?

Simple precautions can reduce even further the small risk, precautions to be listed as appropriate for the groups being addressed by the card. These could include a selection of the follow:

Cover all cuts and broken skin with waterproof plasters.

Wash your hands or shower after canoeing.

Avoid capsizing or rolling in stagnant or slow moving water.

Use foot-wear to avoid cutting feet.

If you have flu-like illness after canoeing go to your GP early – tell him/her you are a canoeist.

What should I do about it?

If you are taken ill after canoeing, particularly from 2 to 19 days following, tell your doctor about your work or regular water sports activities and show him/her this information. You must call the doctor early. The most common early symptoms are: temperature, an influenza-like illness and joint and muscle pains. (Pains in the calf muscles are often particularly noticeable). Jaundice and/or conjunctivitis may be present, or develop, although the absence of any of these symptoms does not mean that the illness is not Weil's Disease – nor does a symptom in isolation necessarily indicate that Weil's Disease is present.

(To the doctor: A canoeist's work/leisure pursuits may expose him/her to the danger of leptospirosis. Early treatment can be helpful in limiting the course of this infection. Serological testing is available for leptospirosis. However, it is only appropriate for confirming an initial clinical diagnosis and not for the purposes of whether or not to commence treatment. Your local Public Health Laboratory or hospital consultant microbiologist should be able to offer advice on the appropriateness of testing and preferred antibiotics.)