

Totnes Canoe Club

Newsletter September 2011

The summer is over and the white water season is fast approaching. There are no more full Club sessions until next April, but there is still plenty to do! Please take a look at the Yahoo Group for peer trips, whether these are flat water, sea or estuary trips, beginners white water, or more advanced, and don't forget that you can suggest a trip if you fancy getting out for a paddle.

Pool Session

The next session is on Saturday 24th September, 5.00 to 6.00 for beginners; 6.00 to 7.00 for improvers. The place to practice support strokes, rescues, and learn to roll in the warmth. Great preparation for white water or just to keep your paddling going in the warm.

Please remember that the boats are provided – please do not bring your own without the prior agreement of the Committee.

Yvette will usually have the Club library of books and DVDs about kayaking at the pool sessions so do have a look and borrow something inspiring!

Club Trips

After having to cancel the Exe trip and the Fun Day the Club did manage to get out on several formal outings.

Tryweryn

The annual visit to the Welsh National White Water centre near Lake Bala was attended by 27 Club Members. See later in this newsletter for more pictures. The Tryweryn is fed from a dam and so has controlled



Pic by Fern, Caption by Jack, Spelling & grammar RIP

releases to guarantee good paddling. The upper sections are grade three, the longer lower section is a pushy grade two (with one grade four drop), so something for everyone. We had a 9 cumec release (that's nine tonnes of water every second), which was plenty, although some did yearn for bigger things.

An early party paddled the relatively gentle River Dee down towards Llangollen on Friday.

The bunk barn delivered for the third year in a row, with great food and comfy beds. On Saturday night we played the now infamous 'Rizla Game' where a character is written on your forehead and you have to work out who it is by asking questions - but maybe you needed to be there to understand.

Thanks to Jeremy for making the arrangements, and to repeat Jeremy's words, thanks to everyone who came for making it such an enjoyable weekend.

Tamar: Calstock to Saltash

The group put in a Calstock after a long wait in the sunshine while cars were delivered back down to Saltash for the shuttle.



Above: Jordan tries the Sea Kayak; Top: Calstock & viaduct Tamar Pics by Paul Rutherford. More pictures are available to view on the Yahoo Group

Paddling with the falling tide, but with a headwind against us we passed under the viaduct, through the deeply wooded valley and on past the beautiful Cotehele Estate (National Trust).

As the trip progressed the sun ran away and hid behind clouds and the wind started to increase. As the estuary widened this wind against the falling tide created some interesting waves and it felt like paddling at the beach at times.

The lunch stop meant battling some mud as the tide was falling fast, and there are very few decent landing spots on this stretch of the tidal river.



Lunch amongst the mudbanks



Bill and Neil sensibly stayed mud-free

After lunch the weather worsened and the waves increased. The stretch towards Saltash would only get worse so the decision was made to curtail the trip a few miles short at Cargreen, with only the drivers carrying on to Saltash. The decision was proved right as they had to battle stronger headwinds and bigger waves. The rest of the group sheltered while waiting for the shuttle to return, good news - it was at a pub, bad news - it was closed!

Thanks to Paul Tweed for organising this and to everyone who came along for staying in such good spirits despite the inclement weather and waiting around. As ever, it is safety first.



Group shelter in action - there are at least six people in there!

Avon: Bantham to Aveton Gifford and back

A there and back again trip. I believe this was well attended and a good time had by all. There don't seem to be any pics and your illustrious editor wasn't there so the rest is up to your imagination. But it would have been beautiful!

Surf weekend



Another good turn out for the trip to Woolacombe and the weather was relatively kind. The pictures tell the story here. The Club's surf boat got good use, and you will notice some more specialist boats in use.



Supper al fresco



Jon in his surf boat



Surfing pics by Chas and Andy

Christmas Meal & Club Awards

You should already have this date in your diaries, but if not mark it now. Friday 2nd December, 7.00 at the Riverford Field Kitchen. Join your fellow members for an evening of great food and company. The annual awards will be presented:

- # Paddlepower Paddler of the Year
- # Junior Paddler of the Year
- # Paddler of the Year

And everyone at the dinner will be able to vote for the person they think is Club Personality of the Year - this usually goes to one of the coaches, but anyone is eligible. Its for someone who has made an outstanding contribution to the Club during the year.

Website

This is the Club's public face. Mik Wells has kindly taken over the management of the site and is gradually updating and improving things. If you have any suggestions for things to be added (or removed!) please let Mik know by emailing website@totnescanoecub.org.uk

Committee & Coaching

Remember that all your coaches are volunteers. The committee is always keen to encourage new members onto the committee, especially non-paddlers and non-coaches in order to get a good spread of ideas.

Some coaches will not be available next season due to personal circumstances, and some will be away at University. We are therefore keen to hear from anyone who would like to undertake coaching training - the Club will fund this in varying degrees depending on need, provided the person has shown a commitment to the Club.

We have four people so far interested in coaching training and are planning this training over the next few months. If you want to join them, or simply want to know what would be involved, please discuss with any of the committee.

Forthcoming Events

White Water Courses

You will have seen Jeremy's emails about these courses and demand for both has been high. Both courses filled up pretty much immediately. For those of you lucky enough to get a place please send your cheques for course fees directly to Sarah Rea, payable to Totnes Canoe Club.

For those of you who didn't get a place there will be peer group trips - you need to keep an eye on the Yahoo Group for these. Some will be suitable for beginners, some not. In general we find children tend not to have the stamina and body fat to keep warm - there is no hard and fast rule, but to join a white water peer trip you need to be fairly self-sufficient and able to take responsibility for your own decisions. Technically you should have 2* Kayak or above.

A peer trip is not the same as a Club trip. On a peer trip everyone is paddling as a group of friends. It is not a lead trip with a coach in charge. That said, experienced paddlers will be on hand to share advice and experience, and everyone works together to ensure safety,

Paddlepower Taster: 2nd Oct, one-off session,

Understanding that there is great interest in paddling moving water, there will be a one-off taster session for those Paddlepower members interested. However, this is restricted to people of secondary school age & who are at discovery level in Paddlepower.

Martin is organising this and more details will follow soon. Please contact Martin for more information.

All contact details are shown on the website.

Night Paddle

Set for Friday 7th October. Jeremy is arranging this and we will paddle upstream in the twilight, have a barbeque and then paddle back in the dark. Bring a torch, some food and some scary stories to share.

Junior Night Paddle

There will be a Junior night paddle on Friday 14th October for Paddlepower members of any age and ability. There will be a high ratio of coaches to ensure complete safety. Contact Alex for information, although an email will follow shortly.

White Water Safety & Rescue

There will be a free safety and rescue course next Sunday 25th Sept for anyone wanting to do white water this winter. Rob will be emailing details shortly. The course will involve throw-rope training, followed by defensive swimming and rescue practise on the river at Spitchwick.

Paddlepower Passports

Apologies for the delay but we are awaiting paperwork from the BCU in order to complete the passports for the Paddlepower paddlers.

Yahoo Group

Go to <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/totnescc/> and follow the joining instructions
Ideas for trips and outings, things for sale, and pictures of trips. You can customise settings to either receive posts by email, or not, and so on.

2012 dates

The committee has just agreed the dates for the 2012 courses., so please make a note in your diaries.
Mondays (Juniors): 23 April to 16 July - 2 sets of six weeks (no sessions on bank holidays as usual)
Tuesdays: 24 April to 19 August 3 sets of six weeks (no session on Tues bank hol at Whitsun)

Taster session 31st March 10.30 to 1.00 - open to all comers on the day. Tell your friends!

Discount at Millets & Blacks

Sarah advises that Millets and Blacks stores are offering a Specialist Group Discount Scheme which will give 15% off all purchases at Millets or Blacks – you can also get this discount on top of sale prices! Bargain! You just have to belong to a club – fill out a form in one of their shops, adding Totnes Canoe Club as the club obviously, and then they send you a discount card in the post. And remember that if you are a member of the BCU then you are automatically entitled to a discount at all Cotswold shops.

Fees

If anyone still owes any fees for courses, boat hire or for anything else please ensure Sarah receives it soon!



The Car Park at the bunk barn



Paul & Sam looking at safety cover



Don on (in? under?) the grade 4 Bala Mill Falls



Left: boat rescue; Above: Mik at Mrs Davis' Bridge



All pics on this page & the following taken on the Tryweryn Trip
For more pictures go to the Yahoo Group and follow the links.



Tryweryn pics by Jack, Fern & Roger