



NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO.2



Nene Whitewater Centre Trip

2nd May 2004

Four club members made a trip to the Nene white-water centre in Northampton on Sunday 2nd May, myself (Steve Lee), Rob Lee, Steve Chinn, and Tony Nitzov. This was Steve Chinn's first taste of moving water, so of course he had a swim first run down, but this is such a user friendly place to learn, you just walk to the side and empty your boat (unlike Nottingham with all the stress of throw lines, damaged boats etc!). He soon got the hang of it, as you can see in the photo. Tony Nitzov was banzai as usual, throwing himself into everything, let's not forget he hasn't done much white-water. Rob spent most of the day working on his arial loop - good job his roll works!

This was a good learning day for all four of us, it's an ideal place for beginners to white-water. Look it up at www.nenewhitewatercentre.co.uk



BCU Closed Cockpit Kayak 1 & 2 Star Training Course Sat 12th/Sun 13th June 2004

This course, will be run by Norman (BCU L2 Coach) with the help of other qualified assistants dependent on numbers. The venue will be Maidstone Canoe Club and the adjacent River Medway. Candidates will be coached towards 1 and 2 Star CCK standard and suitable participants will be assessed as part of the course.

Cost: £25 per head payable to Maidstone Canoe Club. Candidates passing assessments will be given a Star Test form endorsed by the coaches. Please note that successful candidates will also incur a cost of £3:00 (payable to the BCU directly) for certificate and cloth badge, when they submit the Star Test form to claim the award.

What you will need:-

Canoe/Paddle/Buoyancy Aid - which, subject to numbers, may be available from MCC.

Suitable clothing/footwear/headwear for paddling and a wind proof cagoule.

2 star candidates will need a spray deck and must be able to show evidence of having completed at least 1 journey of 6km prior to the course.

Sun block cream if weather is sunny.

For further information or to register a place please contact Norman on 01634 241350 Closing date for entries is 3rd June 04.

Hotfoot Easter Club

Congratulations to Paul Newman and Steve Anstee for running the Hotfoot Easter Club. They had 72 children over a period of 3 days in boats on the river and managed to raise £355 for the club as well as bringing in 14 new members!

There will be a summer club being held this year and we will be looking for **YOU** to help Paul and Steve out where and when you can! These sessions are fun with a capital 'F' and when the dates are released by Maidstone Council we will let everyone know, so please watch this space.



Sea Paddling in the Western Isles 2004

For many years now groups of paddlers from Maidstone Canoe Club have travelled to Scotland around the middle of May to paddle various parts of the Western Isles, which comprise the Inner and Outer Hebrides. We choose to go in May to avoid the infamous Scottish midge, which, if you have experienced them yourself, will know why.

May can be a bit variable as far as the weather is concerned but this is preferable to the midges. This year we planned a trip to the island of Colonsay and to take in Islay and Jura. The original number of around eight gradually reduced as the time got nearer and the final party consisted of myself and three former MCC Chairmen; Martin Howes, Brian Smith and Daniel Prior.

We were ready to go at about 1:30 and made good time up to Oban on a following tide.

For those who have not done any sea paddling I should explain that there are two main things that need to be considered when setting out on a trip, firstly the wind speed and direction and secondly the tidal flow. The wind is the more important; if it is too strong paddling becomes risky. The Beaufort scale is used to denote wind speed, anything up to force 6 is generally manageable 7 is very uncomfortable, 8 and above is dangerous, 11 & 12 suicidal. The tidal flow can increase or decrease your paddling speed quite considerably so you generally try to plan the start time so that you paddle with the tidal flow, although this is not always possible.

On Saturday, we decided to leave the tents where they were and do a circumnavigation of Colonsay and Oronsay. By heading south first we would get the best of the tidal flows so that by the time we reached the bottom



of Oronsay we would have a rising tide to take us up the west coast of Colonsay. The total distance was estimated at about 24 miles, we generally measure distance in terms of Farleighs this being the distance of a paddle from the club to East Farleigh and back, about 6 miles, so the days paddle was about 4 Farleighs, this is most confusing to non-Maidstone paddlers. It was a good mix of sea conditions from absolutely flat in the shelter of some of the smaller islands to quite boisterous around the headlands but it was a very good warm up especially the last Farleigh which was into a strong south westerly probably about 3-4.

On Sunday we decided to set off for the north of Islay an



The crossing from Colonsay, dead smooth

open crossing of about one and a half Farleighs, the sea was very flat and we made good time to land on a sandy beach for a spot of lunch. In the afternoon we made the crossing to Jura and started looking for a suitable campsite, one was fairly obvious on the OS map because it showed a large stream and a sandy beach tucked into Loch Tarbert. When we got there we found a large grass field with a house on it. We landed and on investigation found that the house was shut up and was almost certainly a hunting lodge that would be used for deer hunting later in the season, there are many red deer on Jura.

We decided to camp here for two nights and spend the following day, Monday, doing some walking and climbing. Just to the south of us were the Paps of Jura three peaks of around 750 Metres, one of which Martin had scaled on a previous visit, he and Daniel decided to bag at least another one. We usually get in some hill walking during these trips it makes a good rest from the paddling and is a great opportunity to see some spectacular landscapes and wildlife.

Tuesday, was still a bit windy and we could see the white horses beyond the loch but we decided to start our journey up the west coast of Jura. We paddle across the loch onto a sandy beach where we were able to get out and have a look at the sea state on the west coast, which was exposed to the south westerly. It was not very inviting, the sort of conditions that we knew we could paddle if we had to but when you are already in a safe place you think twice about leaving. The weather forecast was for the wind to get stronger if anything so we decided to pitch tents and wait; the tidal flow was still against us anyway. The wind got stronger during the afternoon and it rained continually so we were confined to our tents, all thoughts of leaving disappeared. Not the ideal way to spend your 65th birthday, still it could have been worse, at least we had some whisky, cheers Brian.

The next day we set out with a slackening wind to paddle up the west coast. We had just got going when we sighted an otter making for the water, he then surfaced a couple of times before disappearing. You generally only get a quick chance to get a photo, I failed again this time, the



The Eurasian Otter, a gracious animal, is classified as 'vulnerable to extinction'

one above is from <http://www.otter.org>

We planned to camp on the northwest tip of Jura and then tackle the Straits of Corryvreckan the next day. The straits between Jura and Scarba, known to sailors and paddlers as 'The Corryvreckan' are notorious for very hazardous conditions when in full flow. The tidal flow rushes through the gap and can form a large whirlpool around a rock pinnacle on the sea bed where it meets the main flow coming past the islands. A team of researchers once put a dummy with the same weight and density as a man into this whirlpool and it went straight to the bottom, the worrying thing is that it was wearing a full buoyancy aid. They called the dummy Norman for normal man and this has a worrying ring to it for one member of the club who could not make the trip this year. Tackling the straits is not therefore to be taken lightly and needs to be done with someone with good sea experience; we had no worries with Martin to lead us, did we!

We made good progress up the west coast and realised that if we stopped for a short while we could go through the straits at about high tide Oban, which is optimum conditions. We had lunch in good sunshine but sheltered from the wind by a whitewashed bothy with a red tin roof, a bit out of tune with the landscape. From a hill we could see the white line of surf marking the tidal race that flowed toward the Corryvreckan. When we got going again with a following tide and the wind on our backs we made it to the straits a good bit before high tide. We raced through ferry gliding to the southern end of Scarba on big

Future Events

- 4-6 Jun** Tryweryn Tour weekend, Bala, N.Wales. Organiser Steve Lee
- 12-13 Jun** BCU 1 and 2 Star Closed Cockpit Kayak training course based at clubhouse. Organiser Norman Brooks
- 20 Jun** Maidstone Marathon. Run from clubhouse. Organiser Paul Newman/Geoff Orford. This is OUR clubs Marathon and we expect all members that are available to assist in the running of this event. We need lots of help on the day especially with safety and also cheering on the racers. This is our opportunity to show off Maidstone club and it's committed members and also a chance to see the racing side of OUR sport, meet at the club for 9 am ish. Briefing about 11:30 for racers. Races begin from 12:00noon.
- 25-26 Jun** Estuary Barbecue. Start Gillingham Strand, leaving 7pm. Return same night or Camp-over to Sat am (leaving 8:00am to avoid mud!) Organiser Norman Brooks

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swells in places, quite exhilarating. It was calm on the east coast of Scarba and we paddled round the top making for a campsite on the northwest tip. This meant going through Grey Dog, the straits between Scarba and Lunga. Not as big as Corryvrackan but we hit this one going against the tide and after a long days paddle we were relieved to get through it.

The next morning, Thursday, was sunny but the weather forecast was for the wind to veer from southwest to northwest so we decided not to paddle out to the Garvellachs, a string of islands to the west of Lunga, but to head east towards the marina.

The wind did indeed come from the northwest and got decidedly colder. We paddled across the Sound of Lunga making for Cuan Sound and it is here that I admit to a slight indiscretion, I mistook our destination on the far coast and paddled my own course too far north. This was not a wise thing to do but no harm was done, on this occasion. A very enjoyable trip despite the up and down weather; good paddling, glorious scenery and wildlife in excellent company. No midges to speak of on the entire trip was a real bonus!

For the full account and pictures from this trip including B&B and food details please look on the notice board.

Wokingham Win

Aaron Jordan and Dean Terry paddled away from the opposition at the third turn to take a good win in Division 7/8 K2. It was a large field, with loads of paddlers turning up to have a look at the Nationals site for later in the year. Matt Binstead entered the Lightning race, and despite looking very impressive off the start, got into difficulties shortly after and took a swim. He still finished with a very creditable performance amongst a good field in his FIRST race.

Horses for Courses", or, "Boats for the Water"

There are two main types of propulsion we use. Human, using paddles, and natural, using gravity. There are also two main hull types: displacement, where the water is pushed out of the way; and planing, where the boat slides over the surface of the water. Both hull types displace water when being paddled by us. To plane, hulls need to reach a speed greater than we can sustain by paddling e.g. by sliding down a wave on the sea or a river, pulled by gravity. Displacement then, is what we use mainly on the Medway, there not being too many waves to slide down to reach planing speed.

To work out how fast our boats will go under our power (displacement), which is called "hull speed", where the boat is caught between the wave thrown up at the bow, and the stern wave, we can use a simple formula. Hull speed = 1.34 X (square root of the waterline length) this gives us the answer in Knots. 1 knot = 1.15mph.

This is very much a generalisation, and needs to be accurately done by a marine architect for an accurate result because of the differing shapes of hulls and their wetted surface areas, but worked out for a boat of 2m or 4m, illustrates the differences of pushing inappropriate designs around on flat water.

Wednesday Night Paddle Club

I would like to thank all of you that mailed me with your words of thanks and encouragement, it means the news letter is working and more of us are aware of things happening within the club.. I will be starting the Wednesday night paddle club as from the 23rd of June, I have had an amazing response to this and look forward to seeing you all there . The club house will be open at 6.30pm to be on the water by 7.00pm ish.

If you have anything you would like to see included in the next issue of this newsletter, please contact Steve Anstee by e-mail: seanstee@blueyonder.co.uk or alternatively Tel: 01622 716325, thank you!