



..Above is our beloved bus!

You can do anything if you believe it

29th November. Rivers are dry, weathers cold, things at home are stressful. So, what do I do? End up booking a cheap flight to Nepal, But ahh, I'm flying out in 2 weeks!! What have I done!! First things first insurance...but then again where's the best places to kayak over there, and with whom?? Ummmm.

11th Dec Flights don't you love them! 5 hour delay at Istanbul, so in total 9 hours (but little did I know that was nothing to complain about). On finally landing in Kathmandu, I need to find a company called GRG, they have a trip I can join! I find GRG but I need to be back in Kathmandu on the 22nd December!

I decide to head to Pokhara out of the smog of Kathmandu!

It's cold this week. I haven't been in a kayak for what feels like a decade so I speak to Paddle Nepal to find out if there is a river trip I could join. I decided to take a two day trip, tagging on as an extra safety kayaker with a raft company, kayaking down the lower Seti (low water it's a chilled class II/III run) but it was nice to get out on the water. It's an overnight camp, due to transport, though we had some fun. If, anyone has spent any time with raft guides well..... We were all sat around the camp fire as everyone was heading to bed 'Michelle I've forgotten my sleeping bag!!' I thought I'd be mean! I will explain all the guides were sleeping under a tarp and I was in a tent So I went "you're welcome to sleep in my tent"he came in the tent I was cuddled up in my sleeping bag ... then came a voice 'you know I would sleep better if I was warmer' my reply 'I don't think my boyfriend would be to happy!!' By that point he couldn't really get up and leave!!

The next morning I got up and asked another guide 'so where is the spare sleeping bag?' What good rafting company doesn't take a spare bag if they have space! The guide replied it's here! As I thought. So I was a bit cruel and told all the other clients who were rafting on the trip the whole story, much to his embarrassment.

After this two day trip I was wishing I had brought my dry suit with me, anyone who knows me knows how cold I get and my dry cag and trousers are only semi dry they are so old! But it's was a bit late by that point!! I was just hoping it would warm up.

Back in the metropolis of Pokhara I had managed to get used to the electricity back outs and planning my showers around the sun, or the electric (there is even a phone app that will tell you when the electric will be on for each area!). I was really excited and nervous about the next kayaking adventure.



Our camping spot and my beloved boat!

22nd December I'm back in Kathmandu and I'm sitting in the GRG offices when 4 Dartmoor paddlers walk around the corner! I came all this way to paddle and end up paddling with them! But, really it wasn't that.. Knowing how good the Dartmoor guys are I thought I would never be able to do any of these rivers! Although being assured I would be fine on these rivers I panicked. I was so nervous! My panic had set in, I just wanted to run away, but it was too late!

23rd December we on the way to the Trisuli it's a large volume class II/III river I don't know what boat I'm paddling, as so far they don't have any small boats in Katmandu. I get on the river in a mini mystic it's not a good day! It's a tough paddle, as with this boat it's like hitting a brick wall every time I hit a 4' plus wave, on reaching the top of one wave I look and realise there is a stopper at the bottom, but I managed to get out still upright!! That's why I realise the guides were running river right!! On this river though I ended up swimming several

times and knowing the rivers were only going to get harder, I wasn't happy. The boat had to go. That evening we returned to Pokhara, so at least I was back to somewhere I could call home!

24th Christmas Eve – upper Seti class IV– having not seen the guides this morning and dreading what the day may bring I decided to go see the guys at Paddle Nepal, I want my boat back, so I go get the zet from Paddle Nepal, (I spent a whole half day getting comfy in it) and yes it's mine for the next 10 days but I need to get it back to Pokhara on the 1st January.

On the river bank I'm really nervous, I'm dreading the day but, I've said I'll do it so that's what I'm going to do... I jump on the river this one is more like rivers in the UK, except the weather has finally warmed up and the water is clear blue! There are still rocks and holes to negotiate. On the first rapid I tripped over a rock but, feeling much more comfortable I got the boat straight back up and dropped down backwards until I found space to turn around. I slowly began to feel relaxed on this day, and what made me giggle was we scouted a rapid I made the most beautiful line, but at the end I relaxed everyone was sat in the eddie, I looked at them, whilst still in the flow turned to see where I was and yes I was facing a rock, apparently my face was a picture! But, my confidence had improved, I enjoyed the river and the day. As we were changing two young Nepalese girls came up to us! They were so cute and we gave them a small amount of coke cola that was fine until we had to go. They chased the bus!

26th Modi-class IV – a brilliant river loved every section a short run, in reality needs to be double the length would love to have done it again, it's much like the upper dart. Easy way to explain it. Very technical but beautiful backdrop. So far my 3 rolls a day is holding up!

27th Marsyandy- class v (yea I did it lol)- there was two days on the Marsyandy, the first day below the dam, the second day above the dam.

The first day was good on the scouting rapid it was really hard! I took a really sneaky line around the edge! Still managed to screw it up but rolled up!

My class V experience came the following day- this was once the best continuous class v in Nepal but it's been dammed, at the end of our paddle we paddled across the reservoir, the class V was deep below me!!!

29th Belephi – class IV on the way to the river today the driver hit a dog!! Woops! but over there hitting a dog is more like hitting a bird here! Our driver was convinced it would move! The day continued a bit like that! I ended up swimming and this was a river you didn't want to swim in because it was sooooo shallow! It was another really pretty river and the tonight we were stayed in a tea house next to the Bhote Kosi. It was good to get to bed! The boys have decided to go and do the Tamba Kosi and after reading the guide book maybe I'll do it when I'm much better at kayaking!

30th December - Lower Bhote Kosi is no more than class III at that level, maybe one harder rapid. This one got me out was a must make line (except I found the one exception), you run from hard river right, to hard river left back to river right again! Simple! Or so it seemed! I

got the river right to left but then scooted though a boat width size rock which in high water I could see would have a killer hole beside it!! because of another rock next to it!! But I was fine!

On the get out Ramesh my guide, who I'd been left with, decided we would take tea at a place where he used to work, I also think he was suffering from the cold!! I wasn't I had sooo many layers on by this point! Then it was time to catch a bus... Yes a bus back to where we were staying! We wait 30 mins, 40 mins right it's time to hitch hike 1h after we started, I managed to smile sweetly and a pick-up stopped! Ramesh spoke to him and told the driver a bus hadn't come along yet! So we got in the back of the pick-up with the boats and were taken back to our little tea house!

I had a choice that night I could go and do the Belephi the next day or the one I had just run. However, considering our recent transport issues I thought it would be best to stick with the slightly dull, but we know we're going to get there, Bhote Kosi!

31st December - the last day of 2014 I had a relaxed morning having got everyone very drunk the night before! Jumped on the river for a play and guess what I didn't get my head wet! The highlight of the day was, once getting off the river, we took bets on how long a bus would take to come! It took 20 mins to catch a bus, (no I didn't win the bet) once we did, we sat holding both ourselves and our boats on top of the roof.

I realised I could not see the New Year in, looking in the state I did, I washed my hair under the tap! (no hot water there) baby wipe bath and put on my one set of clean cloths. All packed up ready for return to Kathmandu! I just needed to wait for the boys from Dartmoor to return from their adventures! I hoped they were ok! The day before they had an epic getting there, as the bus broke down, I was hoping they all had a good day on the river. In the meantime, the rum had come out and I started to feed my guides a bottle of rum ... a bottle later the bus arrived. I told the other guides not to let them tie the boats on the roof but does any man listen (sorry guys reading this). Back on the bus heading to Kathmandu for New Year... If we make it in time.... Stops for toilet breaks, not forgetting to tie the boats back on the roof again! The funniest toilet stop was, once we were on the edge of Kathmandu everyone was fairly drunk by then, but we were stuck in traffic and stopped, so three of the lads jumped off the bus heading for a dark corner. With that the bus took off up the hill at quite a speed, we didn't seem to be slowing, there were guys hanging out the door shouting for them to run faster. All three made it back but they weren't keen of the up hill sprint.

We were lucky to make it to our hotel to dump our stuff and make it to the local bar, before midnight I didn't see our guides until after midnight. However, I think I didn't make it to bed that night until 3 am... Not late you say...

1st January 6 am my alarm goes off apparently I can take my boat on the tourist bus back to Pokhara (I hope so, because all I want to do is sleep)!

I had a very nice gentleman carry my boat to the bus station! Sometimes there is an up side to being female! But no they wouldn't take it, so public bus it is!! Yea! The way I'm feeling

this isn't going to be fun. Let me explain something, public bus drivers are crazy. The buses are clearly dangerous bald tyres and you're lucky if you get a seat. Let alone trying to catch the right one! But, I got back to Pokhara boat and me intact. There ended my kayaking adventures!! And for the last ten days of my trip I did some less adventurous undertakings, still amazing in their own right but may be not for a canoe club newsletter.

My flight on the home was worse than on the way out I had a 14h lay over in Istanbul never again.

But my point of this it could be you.... Everyone can do what I did, it didn't cost as much as what you might think! Even I didn't believe I could do some of those rivers, but I did. If, you're still learning, I'm not saying go jump on a grade four river, but there is nothing stopping you going to Nepal kayaking, there are easy rivers over there. However, it also applies closer to home. If, you say on a river you cannot do something, it's not going to happen, like my day on the Trisuli, but if you are determined and confident, it's more likely to go right!



