

Paignton Canoe Club Member

Well iam back from my trip to the other side of the world. Didn't do much paddling, it was far too hot, but it's good to see that members were making up for that back here. There has been a few first for people this season a couple of which you will read about in a sec.

What with summer up and coming attached to this email are the tide times for Torquay. Hopefully this should be useful. Many thanks to Rob Porter for getting these

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this month's newsletter. Please feel free to contribute to the next one.

Jeremy (vice chairman and editor)

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## From The Chairman

The last weekends of the winter paddling are nearing & time to give others the chance to enjoy our lovely rivers. The chance to catch one last run of the Dart is strong & with the paddlers party on the 14<sup>th</sup> it's time to look further afield: Cardiff and the Tryweryn for consistent white water or to the surf for a similar thrill. Club members are heading off to Slovenia and the French Alps for excitement and sunshine. With the storms of winter fading, longer trips on the sea become feasible. Whatever paddling you end up doing, write it up & send it in for the newsletter.

Of course, let us know what you're planning & maybe others might like to join you & share some great paddling.

Cheers Rob

## Latest News and Recent Events

## **Land at the River Dart**

(by Tim D taken from facebook)

Please note that the RDCP is now closed to paddlers use, both as a kayaker's car park, and as a launch/recovery location for Loop and Middle sections. This is not an issue of river paddling rights, it is one of private land use. There are other options albeit smaller and less user friendly. Please respect these calendar restrictions; we need to keep RDCP on our side! <http://www.riverdart.co.uk/kayakers>

Tim D

(And from a letter received from Canoe England South West posted by Jon on Facebook)

The RDT owns some land 200 yards below Holne Bridge on river left which is used as one of the access points for the river Dart. This winter there has been a lot of work done to cut down and remove the dead trees, trim the hedge along the road and the paths within the site and replace the gate.

Please can you advise your club members that no access is permitted to the field as this is private property. Please walk back with your boat and exit through the woodland; a path has been created to make this easier. Also please do not block the field gate, this is the owners' access to their field and is used regularly by them.

## **First Trip on the Upper Dart**

(by Richard O,B)

On the 28 February 2015 I completed my first decent of the Upper Dart. The arrangement for this to happen was made about 5 weeks prior to me actually doing it; due to levels and others commitments by Amy Elworthy and myself. It also gave me time to get into the right frame of mind to do it (stop shaking!!).

I kept it a bit of a secret as I wanted to do it with a clear mind of what to expect. If I had told everyone I was doing the upper, I would have had a brain overload of everyone's lines and advice on how to run different parts and features. The only person I wanted to listen to was Amy. Amy Elworthy is a five star river leader and know's the Upper Dart like the back of her hand. She was so precise in what she was telling me to do and so explanatory in what the water would do to my boat and where to put my paddle and what strokes to even take. She is probably one of the best people anyone could wish to lead them down the Upper on their 1st decent.

I did walk some features which looked very scary indeed: Surprise Surprise; Euthanasia and Lucky Tor. I had 2 swims and also hit what they call the Magnetic rock by boofing it backwards and staying up right, so not a clean run 1st off either.

The Upper Dart is in my opinion (I'm no expert) a massive step up from the Loop in the sense that there are not many places where you can actually relax and let the river guide you down like the Loop mainly does. You really have to work for your lines on the Upper and if you miss some of them there are consequences. Like a very bumpy swim or worse. It stretches your ability mentally and physically. I was totally cream-crackered after my decent.

My goals this "season" were to push myself to eddy hop as much as possible down the Loop and to do a decent of the Upper Dart. I have completed my goals for this "season" and will be setting myself some equally harder ones for the next "season".

Rich

P.s I would like to thank Rob Porter for helping with my 3 star training which was assessed by Julie Elworthy on the same day as my first Upper decent, which I passed.

## **Canoeing the white water – for the first time**

(by Rob C)

Having been to a talk by Gary Peverill at AS Watersports on the previous Thursday evening & with little water forecast, I was looking for something different to do.

While there was a trip down the Upper Dart\*, that didn't quite float my boat. A later start, the offer of a lift & the chance to paddle with a number of the clubs fantastic cake makers, guaranteeing a fun trip that just needed added spice.... RDCP down to Buckfastleigh by Canoe!

My first white water in a canoe, this was something I'm not sure Tim knew when he offered his fine boat to me. Tim was paddling the Topo with Jo R, so there was room on the roof rack.

Trying to get the whole canoe experience in one trip was the plan although in hindsight the solo carry down to the river was something I won't be doing again. It emphasised the need for trim even when carrying the boat. Too much weight forward & you can't see where you're going! Eventually I got to above the Anvil, the first weir on the trip & the first rapid. Of course, I'd have to run it... how I could say no, especially with others looking on! Getting into the boat, the feeling of instability & my lack of recent canoeing made me wonder whether this was a good idea.

Too late to turn back with the audience on the bank & the chance of some good pictures I paddled warily away from the bank. A couple of ferry glides & time to line the boat up with where I was going to run the weir. Aim for it, paddle smoothly & try to stay low & balanced. Phew, down it safely & into the first rapid. Very wobbly but ok, not too much water in the boat, now time for my first breakout, success!

Time for a brief rest, while waiting for everyone else to run the weir & down the rapid.

A few tentative crosses of the flow & downstream we went, aiming for every eddy & trying to copy every ferry glide the kayaks were doing. It was more akin to rock hoping in a sea kayak, where you can only force the boat so much & it's all about angle of the boat to the flow. Having a plan, flexible enough to be able to change yet set up to give the best chance of success.

Down to the rock ledge & cleanly through; time for a cake stop, a bite to eat & a bit of playing. Having been down the clean tongue of water when we arrived & with a number of people wanting to do the drop again, I chose to try the most vertical part of the drop. I'm pleased to say everyone survived!

More eddies & what seems to be being called the devil's elbow in Hembury Woods was next. A tricky rapid, due to the diagonal wave lurking at the end: the technique summed up by Jo Lihou was "Aim for the wave" simple really! Down the rapid I went; ready to turn towards the wave. Turn & try any keep control. As I went through the wave, most of the water went into the canoe, all but swamping it! The boat rolled one way & then the other as the water built up momentum back and forth. Narrowly avoiding a capsize the eddy & an emptying of the boat was most welcome. During this epic struggle, Jo's water bottle floated off from under the lines on the airbags & it was up to Jason, on his first trip on white water for a number of years to successfully chase boat. Nice paddling there!

That's about it, more eddies, surfing, photographing & walking Abbey weir, while some ran the eel ladder & the rock at the bottom splitting Dave's boats. Down to Buckfast & the worst bit, the carry to the car... Followed by more chatting & cake. Thanks to Tim for the loan of the boat; Cake from Jo R. Bee & Jo L. Advice from Rob P. & sharing the river with Dave & Jason.

\*Congratulations on Jody Tratye & Rich O'Brien's first descent of the Upper. Good work guys!

Rob C

## **Intermediate Edging Practice**

In the January Newsletter I wrote a bit about the basics of edging and balancing the kayak on its edge. This is a fundamental skill in kayaking as edging turns your boat and allows you to carve. (see the January Newsletter for that article) There was some basic advice and a way of practicing balancing on edge. Being comfortable balancing the boat on its edge and being able to quickly change edges is a key skill in developing your kayaking. So here is an intermediate practice technique to bring your edging up to a better standard.

Once you are comfortable edging when still and whilst gliding forward (without using your paddle as support), you can start to use your paddle, but not to support your edge!

Whilst on edge paddle forward, hold the edge, don't let it drop but keep paddling, use your paddle exactly like you would paddling with the boat flat.

Keep paddling forward and swap edges, try and do this quickly but smoothly and then hold that edge whilst paddling forward.

Now do the same paddling backwards! With enough practice you should be able to hold edges on both sides and be able to quickly and smoothly switch between them without ever needing to use your paddle for support. In fact you should be able to do all your upright paddle strokes both sides as easily on either edge as when the boat is on the flat.

## **Upcoming Events and Trips**

All Paddle sport has a certain risk to it. It is not and never will be 100% safe. Anyone attending any and all Paignton canoe club activities does so at their own risk.

Pcc rules can be found at: <http://www.paigntoncanooclub.org.uk/ClubRules.html>

### **Paddlers' Party – River Dart Country Park, 14<sup>th</sup> March**

This social and fundraising event is in aid of the Dartmoor Search and Rescue Team, Ashburton.

This year the event is sponsored by South Coast Canoes, who are supplying their team paddlers for leading trips down the Upper, Loop and the middle sections of the Dart. There are only limited space left for the Loop and Middle sections left and at £25 pp they'll go soon. The £25 goes to the pot for charity.

There will be raffles and auctions with LOADS of prizes, and talks in the evening at the party. All welcome so please come and enjoy the day/night.

### **Club Social 24<sup>th</sup> April**

We will be having a Club Skittles Night on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April starting at 7:30pm. It will be at The Manor, Preston. The skittle alley is in a rear room behind the pub, separate from the bar areas, so suitable for partners and families to join in the informal fun if you would like to bring them along and pick up some paddle points. The evening is free of cost, but if you would like to be part of a finger buffet then a payment by 10<sup>th</sup> April latest of £5 is needed. There is a limit to space, so please express an interest if you would like to come. Drinks can be purchased at the bar.

We are looking to make this a regular yearly event, so that we have three events spread around the year with the AGM and the Christmas do. We are not sure what to call this event, so please make some family friendly suggestions on the Forum.  
<http://www.paigntoncanooclub.org.uk/members/phpBB3/posting.php?mode=post&f=2>

## **Sponsorship Request**

(By Jo Lihou)

On June 26th I will be walking 50k along the Grand Union Canal towpaths as quickly as possible for The Alzheimers Society. It is a charity close to my heart as I lost my gran to this horrid disease and most of the funded research is done in Cardiff which is where I spent my Uni years! Training walks have been shunned for the moment in place of paddling trips... I need some motivation to get back on it. I was wondering if any lovely Paignton Canoe Club members would be kind enough to sponsor me a few pennies?

Here is my just giving link: <https://www.justgiving.com/LihouJ>

Many Thanks  
Jo Lihou

## **The Women's Sea Kayak Festival - South Devon**

(by Julie)

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> – Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2015

We attended the successful Scottish Women's Sea Kayak Festival held on Bute in 2014, and having discovered that the organisers were taking a break this year, decided to host a similar event in South Devon. Our base will be near Salcombe giving easy access to the varied paddling the Devon coast has to offer.

Joining us is a great selection of inspiring female coaches leading three days of trips and workshops from Four Star Training, Trip Planning & Paddle Skills to Marine Safaris, Surfing and early morning yoga for the very keen!

Dinners will be provided in our marquee on the Saturday and Sunday evenings by Hannah Jones from Totnes Canoe Club (<http://thekitchentable.org.uk>) and her colleague Sima using fresh locally sourced produce. Evenings presentations by guest speakers including Justine Curgenven and Eila Wilkinson.

The cost includes camping from Friday to Sunday night, all coached/guided sessions, two hot evening meals, event T-shirt and tea and coffee at only £210.00 per paddler.

There is an option to stay on at the campsite after the Festival and join informal local paddling trips, also, Justine Curgenven will be running a 'Mini Expedition' for anyone wishing to try kayak camping.

Watch our Facebook page and website at: <http://womensseakayakfestival.co.uk/southcoast/> for more details and to book a place.

We look forward to paddling with you, Julie, Natalie and Esther.

## **Surfing**

(by Rob C)

Surf competitions for this year have been advertised. More details can be found on the excellent [surfakayakskills.com](http://surfakayakskills.com) website but here are the current dates.

4/5 April (Easter weekend) [surfakayakskills.com](http://surfakayakskills.com) Surf Sessions based from Skern Lodge, North Devon, including riding with some of the England Team. Details will be online early 2015.

25/26 April Shoreline & Bude CC present Black Rock Surf Contests, Bude

16/17 May Cornish Open, Godrevy, organised by Pete Blenkinsop

(6/7 June Cornish Open reserve date)

28 June - 5 July World Championships, now online at [www.xtremepantin.es](http://www.xtremepantin.es)

18 - 26 July Santa Cruz Ocean Spirit, Portugal

19/20 September Irish Open, Easky

Date to be announced - Putsborough

Fancy some extra inspiration? Well there's a new book out: "Sitting in The Green Room" by Pete Blenkinsop.

Ever wondered where surf kayaking originated? Who has surfed the biggest wave and where? What are the most impressive tricks being performed today? 'Sitting in the Green Room' answers all of these and is an essential guide to surf kayaking, charting the fascinating history of this high octane sport to cutting edge manoeuvres and equipment. Written by a Cornish man who has travelled the globe in search of the best waves, this guide is full of great pictures, stories and information which will be of interest to the once a year recreational surf kayaker to the avid morning, noon & night professional.

Available from here: <http://www.peterblenkinsop.com/sittinginthegreenroom/>

All Boats and kit used in the pool needs to be clean inside and out.

All paddling trips and events are entirely weather dependent and because of this are often organized (and can be cancelled) at the last minute. So please keep yourself up to date with what's going on using.....

## Club Communication

**Emails:** [info@paigntoncanooclub.org.uk](mailto:info@paigntoncanooclub.org.uk)

[newsletter@paigntoncanooclub.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@paigntoncanooclub.org.uk) Please use this for anything relating to the newsletter and only the newsletter. Please do **not** give this email out to non-members.

**Website:** <http://www.paigntoncanooclub.org.uk>

**Club Forum:** (for members only)

<http://www.paigntoncanooclub.org.uk/members/phpBB3/index.php> To access this and any other password protected part of the site you will need.

**Username:** pcc      **Password:** paddles

This is for all members and only members to use. Feel free to contribute, your input matters and we want to hear it.

**Facebook:** Love it or hate it, it's used a lot. PCC has a facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/44208464189/> which we allow anyone to join and use, so please only put on there what you want the whole world to see.

**Committee Telephone Numbers:** (For Members only)

[http://www.paigntoncanooclub.org.uk/restricted/Members\\_Contact.html](http://www.paigntoncanooclub.org.uk/restricted/Members_Contact.html)

All Committee members are unpaid volunteers with separate full time Jobs

## The Next Newsletter

We want you to contribute to the Newsletter. ALL MEMBERS please email to [newsletter@paigntoncanooclub.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@paigntoncanooclub.org.uk) anything you want to put into the newsletter.

Newsletter Info (including what we are looking for) can be found at:  
<http://www.paigntoncanooclub.org.uk/members/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=4&t=1434&p=5196#p5196>

We store members' names, email addresses and telephone numbers on a Gmail account, if you do not wish to have your details stored in this way then please email [newsletter@paigntoncanooclub.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@paigntoncanooclub.org.uk) and request to have your details removed.

The cut off date for content for the next newsletter will be the 28<sup>th</sup> of this month.

Happy Paddling  
Jeremy