



Magazine

Winter 2006

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Editorial

A bumper issue to start the New Year! As well as tales from around the UK, there are stories from further a field too – Steve tells all about the Marathon exploits in Portugal, and Stewart looks back at his almighty swim on the Severaise back in the summer. Mark also gives us a polo update, with the Pitbulls heading for the top...

Also inside is the latest club programme and members list. If you haven't completed your membership form for 2006/7 there's one at the back, so send it off to Robin ASAP! Remember, we also have a website at www.bristolcanoeclub.org.uk where you can see lots of pictures and trip reports.

Jon Kerswell



Some suspicious characters on the Upper Guisane, France

BCC AGM Minutes

Chairman's Report

Irrespective of dry spells the club has accomplished a lot of paddling, with a number of trips abroad: Portugal, Italy, France.

Treasurer's Report

The accounts have shown a big improvement on the 'Barass Years'. There's a surplus on accounts this year due to a more active approach to collecting contributions. Equipment expenditure has also been far lower this year too.

Secretary's Report

Last years minutes approved.

Equipment

A number of kit donations made this year. Few purchases made, a piece of foam was acquired to put a footrest into one of the white water boats.

Kit cataloguing continues very slowly unmarked private items left in the cage risk being marked as the club's!

The missing boat has been found in the cupboard. The cupboard is now accessible again after the building works

A suggestion to store BAs in the cupboard during the winter months

Membership

Remains healthy at over 100 members

Marathon

The Endeavour Race Team of club members took another 15 minutes of the course record.

Polo & Pool

Polo is expanding again after a lull in 2005. The beginners Polo sessions have been a great success. The pool hours have stabilized. SLM Sport Leisure Management will be managing the pool.

Slalom

Avis our sole Slalom paddler has done seven events and is now in div 2.

White Water & Touring

Richard Puttock arranged the trip to France. Kiwi Nick has been working with beginners. One sea trip was undertaken thanks to Reg.

Coaching

Lisa ran a beginners course which earned the club £600, a brilliant effort again, many thanks to Lisa for her unparalleled contribution. It was noted that female numbers were up since Mackey left! [I think we all feel a bit safer! – Ed]

Magazine

JK has now taken on the position of editor, printer, and errand boy and dogs body. He makes a plea for more articles please

Any other business

None

Election of New Committee

John Leopold and Teresa Treasure are standing down as Treasurer and Secretary respectively having served three years.

Lisa Gunton's also retiring from the committee after long service and having 'done all the position'.

The lucky three taking their places are:

Chair: Conor

Treasurer: Reg

Secretary: Helen

Other Committee Members:

- Robin
- Teresa
- John
- Kiwi Nick
- Theron
- Stevie B
- Sarah
- JK
- Richard Puttock
- Martin
- Jim (if he pays his membership!)

BCC 2006 Awards

Phil Longrigg Trophy: **Lisa Gunton** for huge and sustained contributions to the club for many years.

Most improved white water paddler:
None

White water River God: **Kath**

Most improved youth: **Mark Shackleton**

Polo (Most Valuable Player): **Chris Stone**

Most improved marathon paddler: **Ian Hisset**

Fish of the Year: **Teresa Treasure***

Chunder Bucket: **Tony Barass...** [or me, I can't seem to remember?]

* It would be unfair not to note that no kayaks were involved in this, and that Teresa received the award for stripping to her underwear and jumping into Saltford weir to rescue a rather drunken gentleman!

The World Cup

My mate 'Darkie' said to me "there's a race in Portugal – all you have to do is pay for the flight – everything else is paid for". As he is one of the top marathon paddlers in the country and has a tie-up with a Portuguese canoe manufacturer he was to take over a GB select team – but his mates went instead.

We were met at Lisbon airport by Annabelle the race organiser's wife Jaõ and taken to our hotel which was right on the beach! A slap up meal first night – all free – so we had a pizza eating and beer drinking contest – much to the amusement of all the other competitors!

Next day we were taken to their club house which they share with the yacht and rowing mod, bar and café etc – right on the sea front. Then we find out that the race is the World Championships for sea kayaks K1 & K2! Out round a lighthouse that I couldn't see, back and up and down the beach a bit round some buoys for and against the tide.

We thought we had better do some practice and tried out the club K2s – massive things with a 'dreadnought' type prow – brilliant in the swell – if its coming towards you, a bit hairy when you get hit on the side!

Day of the race – our boat didn't arrive, so we had to use one of the club boats with half the fittings missing – thanks to the two Hungarians paddlers who scavenged bits for their own K2. Tealeafs. I managed to torture them enough to tell us the they left the footrests back at their hotel room & save us the key! Tris ran back & got the bits which were in bits – hasty repair and certain gesticulations to the Hungarians – universally recognised signs. These lads are actually world K2 marathon champions. And we lined up on the start line with the best in Europe and Stan and Keith from BOA canoe club!

After a lengthy delay to let huge freighters go by it was the sea and Lisbon is a big port! The race was amazing! Mass start washes & waves all over the place was blasted out to the light house. We were joined by all the motor boats from the marina and everyone else who had a speedboat in the world who wanted to see what was going on – which turned a choppy sea into a total mess with 6' waves and a rip tide forcing us away from the turn buoy – Trist & me bashed away & finished 8th K2 – well pleased! Could have done better, could have done a lot worse.

The race organisers were brilliant & we all went to a sports hall for presentations & free beer, wine food, more beer & wine and food

and Portugese Ant & Dec entertainers. Great laugh. All out for a last night meal – all free. Brilliant weekend. Special thanks to the organisers Jaō and Annabelle.

Select GB team members:
Simon Park; Stan Missen; Keith Owen (B.O.A.); Tristiano Turner; Stefanovich

Bennett Bristol CC and out ethnic rep. Jim Morrissey from Ireland. PS. We watched the other world cup Portugal v a very crap England side in a place called Cascalles – picturesque seaside town in the Plaza with 600+ Portuguese fans. It was a great atmosphere – shame about the footy.

Steve Bennet

National Championships, Reading

In August Tris and Steve valiantly tried to retain their Div 3/4 gold medal – but were beaten on the line after 12 miles of tough tactical racing into silver medal position. It was a top class race with all 10 K2s burning off as one group went into the first turn – that was a 2 mile flat out sprint! I made sure that we were in a good position at the head of the pack on the left side as we were about to turn round an island in the Thames. We

put in one almighty burn with Stan and John Elliot from B.O.A. reaching the turn first and then we cleared off. A couple of good maneuvers on the next laps and the race was ours! Except Stan squeezed us against a motor boat with 500m to go just as we were about to deal with them – never mind. That's racing!

Steve Bennet

Bristol Harbour Race Chequers

Out club race was a total success with plenty of competitors – lots of support and help from club members and friends. It was a great all round social event and a nice bit

of river to paddle on - looking forward to next year's race.

Steve Bennet

BCC BBQ

The club BBQ was held at the 7th Scouts campsite at Lower Failand, it was a total success – massive fire loads of food & drink and people could camp over in a really nice fire with all the facilities.

Harvey opted to sleep in a tree though. We will definitely do it again next year now that everyone knows where it is!

Steve Bennet

Warning from the EA – Dihydrogen Monoxide

Many sewage and chemical plants use dihydrogen monoxide in their processes and surplus amounts are finding their way through leakages, spillages etc into the River Thames and other sections of the inland water ecosystem.

Prolonged exposure to dihydrogen monoxide can cause puckering of the skin; it restricts breathing and if inhaled can cause

asphyxiation; if swallowed in excess vomiting may occur. It is corrosive, causes erosion and in vapour form is a major constituent of acid rain.

All river users should be aware of the potential risks and take appropriate measures.

Polo Report

Writing about Polo has its temporal difficulties, as by the time this article is published, we'll have played at least one more tournament and I will no longer have the second highest goal tally. However, I will at least have had my moment of glory while you are reading this article.

Polo has started the winter season in good fettle. Participation on Wednesday night is well into double digits, and the sparring between players continues to be rougher off the water than on. Currently, Kath (yes, Kath the quietly spoken saviour of Somerset's cows!) holds the accolade for upsetting another polo Player – off the water too.

Our recent attempt to persuade other members that Polo really is fun and not aggressive at all (on the water at least!), led to a number of new players join our beginners session. Not only did the normal players behave themselves, but the new players seemed to be smiling at the end too (was that relief?). Anyway, we hope to see you all again at the next one.

On Sunday October 29th, when some polo players felt the lure of the Upper Dart, six

members of Bristol Canoe Club faced our first tournament in The South West League. This tournament is held at Millfield School, which has the dubious merit of providing a 50 metre pool – somewhat bigger than Bristol South! The team consisted of my good self, Dan Peel, Simon Pearson, Jenni Essex, Harvey and Rob. Rob eventually turned up after turfing his guests out of Fawly Towers in Bath.

I won't drone on about our subtle tactics, mean spirited defence, reckless attacks, or the courageous tackling. Though, Simon did lose his rear bumper, and I managed to get my yellow and green cards mixed up while referring. Other than that the table below shows our results.

Hope the next article moves us up a notch further. I wonder if Kath will still be unpopular then???

Mark Gillett

In fact, the magazine was delayed, so the table below shows the most up to date results – ed.

Team	Played	Won	Lost	Drawn	Goals For	Goals Against	GD	Points	Ranking
Uwe Old Boys	9	8	0	1	24	5	19	26	1
Pony Club	9	7	0	2	22	5	17	25	2
Bristol Pitbulls	9	7	2	0	23	6	17	23	3
Sutton Bingham	9	6	3	0	22	8	14	21	4
Queens A	9	4	3	2	14	9	5	19	5
Cornish Ladies	9	4	5	0	14	13	1	17	6
Hayle	9	3	5	1	14	19	-5	16	7
Pembroke	9	2	7	0	9	29	-20	13	8
Soton B	9	0	8	1	0	24	-24	6	9
Soton A	9	0	8	1	0	24	-24	6	9

Polo Update

Bristol Canoe Club offers a Polo session every Wednesday between 8-45 and 9-45pm at the Bristol South Pool on Dean Lane in Bedminster BS3 1BS (Tel: 0117 966 3131).

PLEASE arrive by 8-30 to ensure a place in a team. Depending on numbers we will play either 3 teams (4 games each) or 4 teams (3 game each); this decision is at the discretion of the organiser.

Beginners are VERY welcome, and the Polo Organiser will ensure new players are initiated gently!!!

Time on the water is valuable. Please ensure you are ready with appropriate kit before your next game starts.

Cost is £6 each, and money must be paid to the Polo organiser immediately after the session. Correct change is VERY WELL Appreciated.

Kit required

Personal Kit: Swimming kit, black surf rash, and possibly wetsuit boots. No jewelry, rings or watches should be worn.

Canoe kit: Club plastic boats are available during polo sessions. Please select a boat with **at least "some" padding** on the bow (front!). Polo buoyancy aid (must not have buckles or loops that can attach to another player), spray deck, CE approved helmet WITH face guard, and legal paddles with minimum blade thickness of 5mm. If you wish to purchase a Polo Vest, then please contact Mark Gillett for information on colours and a designated number. Club members have a variety of kit and will be pleased to offer advice on boats etc.

Tournaments

The Club participate in two tournaments as Bristol Pitbulls; National Div 4 held at Kingswood Pool in Bristol and SW Div 2 at Millfield School in Street. The Div 2 team is a developmental squad designed to encourage more people to play in tournaments.

If you are interested in playing you will need BCU membership and legal kit. Please speak with Mark Gillett for further details. **Next tournaments are Div 4 on Jan 20th, & Feb 3rd, with SW Div on Feb 18th & Mar 18th.** More information

Please email a request to Conor.ONeill@andrew.com, with your email address so you can be added to our Bristol Canoe Club Polo Group. Here we publish valuable information about Polo sessions, polo gossip, rules, gripes and competitions.

Other good links include www.canoepolo.com and www.canoepolo.org.uk where the full list of Polo rules is published.

Mark Gillett
Polo Team
0117 973 4721 or 07779 881121
mark.gillett@uk.compuware.com

The Dirty [bakers] Dozen Descend the Dart

Le Bambino threads his way through the entry rapid to Pandora's Box and then boofs over the large rock guarding the drop, flying through the air before... CRUNCH... pinning across the fall with water pouring over his head. Anyway, before we resolve that one, here's the background...

A bit of rain had brought the Upper Dart into contention and surprisingly almost the entire universe of BCC paddlers wanted to give it a go. 13 paddlers and 1 walker arrived at the get in ready for an epic day.

We split into two groups, not for practical reasons but because the complicated logistics of organising shuttles for so many people meant Steve 'Slasher' Venton went AWOL and some people had to wait for him.

I set off with team A, while the rubbish paddlers (aka team B) lounged around in the globally-warmed winter sunshine waiting for Slasher.

Some nice easy rapids gradually warmed team A up for the Mad Mile where my shiny new creek boat received its first proper battle scars.

We were moving quickly, threading through the rocks and rapids, stopping to play occasionally. I got away with some horrendous lines on some of the drops, only being saved by my boats 'autoboof' abilities... and my emergency decision to stop following Little Rich Puttock as he guided me into yet another hole of doom.

At one point Mat 'no lines' Jones advised me to definitely not go left at the drop coming up. I promptly went left at the next drop and enjoyed a few moments frantic paddling to escape the towback. In my defence, the 'drop' wasn't worthy of the term 'drop' being only a few feet high – a sure sign I'm

becoming less of big girl's blouse when it comes to river running.

We inspected Euthanasia, giving the rubbish team a chance to catch up. The first few paddlers all rolled on the cushion wave at the bottom. Le Bambino and Jungle boy decided to boof straight into the cushion wave rather than go down the slide. This had the advantages of looking really cool and saving them a roll.

Everybody down safely (including first timers me, Ray and Brian), Jungle Boy decided on an extreme race to Pandora's Box and we all set off, taking rubbish lines, hitting rocks and each other at random.

When we got there the drop looked horrendous. Jungle Boy crunched over it first. Le Bambino pinned, only being saved by a handy paddle being shoved at him. Then Slasher crunched over it with his arms above his head in an 1980s paddling homage. Funnily enough everybody else decided to walk.

At the next rapid, Neville – who had rolled a few times and had some minor pins – attempted a head rudder to get through the rocks. Unfazed after a nasty swim, he was reunited with his boat and we struck onwards to the finish, blitzing the final few easy rapids.

A quick pie top-up in the Ashburton Spar, and the Puttock wagon was back on the road home, with Norwegian death metal playing at volumes that utterly failed to keep me awake.

Too many paddlers to mention (actually I can't remember half of them), but thanks to everyone for a great day on what's rapidly become my favourite river.

Jon Kerswell

Lessons from swimming the Séveraise

Wednesday was “other side of the mountain day” to run the Bonne and Séveraise. Nick, Mat Jones, Rich, Mark, Steve and I took to the water, Conor and Lisa walked the bank (with video camera), and Teresa and Jon stayed around Guillestre and went biking for the day.

Having taken a shoulder/head bashing and a modest swim on the Guil the day before, I declined the Bonne, but thought the guide book claims of 3/3+ for the Séveraise would be fine. However, finished up taking a pretty heavy swim and hope the lessons I learned will be useful to others.

The run started with a bouncy G3 section – all good fun and enjoyable. At the old Roman bridge over the river, it narrows a bit and moved up a notch – which is where the fun started!

Lesson 1: Read the guide book and take note of local conditions.

The guide book says that the river comes up by 5:00pm, as the sun starts to catch the snow on the north side of the mountain. We went on at 6:00pm on a v. hot day and the additional water made a difference which I should have noted. One guide describes the offending stretch at 4, at high level. Whatever the grade, I had not allowed for the volume / speed/ flow or planned ahead.

Lesson 2: Team order.

On a river that you do not know, and when paddling with a more experienced group – make sure you’re not near the front of the group. There’s more chance of a throw line reaching you early if you take a swim when towards the rear of the group!

Lesson 3: Concentrate at all times

Steve was in the big eddy river left. Too relaxed, I was talking to Steve rather than focussing on the river! The eddy line caught me – not sure if I even attempted a support stroke – and over I went. Far too relaxed and not reading the river.

Lesson 4: Stick with the plan.

Normal plan = wait until I’m ready and then roll. After a good head banging on a

shallowish and fast section of the Guil the day before, I tried rolling before mind fully engaged on task. No joy = swim. (Better plan still, improve technique!)



Le Swimmer

Lesson 5: Interesting swim requires good BA.

Hmm! I’ll be interested to see the video, as it felt like long periods underwater. Having used an old Kogg BA for years, two points: (a) it does not have a quick release harness loop. This could have been fatal if I had not freed myself from encounter with underwater tree trunk and branch, or been pinned and needed a rescue line, and (b) it is rated at 60N. In those conditions I really would have preferred 75N lift!

Lesson 6: Paddle with a good team.

Probably the most important point. Fantastic team effort - great skill, determination and teamwork rescue of me, boat and paddle (Rich’s which I had borrowed). Great rescue - especially on Rich’s part whose throw-line technique was absolute precision. Many thanks guys, really appreciated. Also, if someone has been kind enough to throw you their throw line – don’t let go of it when you get to the bank, especially if it is one that the owner treasures dearly. Fortunately, it was recovered later – sorry Rich.

Lesson 7: Have a good First Aid kit in the team

Steve (Slasher) Venton may be a dab hand with the knife – but also a fine first aider. His handiwork with Steri-Strips praised by the A&E team. Very efficient A&E – so if you need a couple of stitches in your leg, France is as good a place for it as anywhere. But do

not forget your European Health Insurance Card (replaces the E111).

Stewart (Ouch) Anderton

p.s. I only have residual pain in one toe and fingers!

Correspondence from the North

Don't you just love it when a plan comes together!!

Do you recall how in your youth you invited all your mates around for a party if your parents ever went away? Despite being 40 and not having lived at home for over 21 years the departure of the folks to NZ for a month saw me once more on the phone inviting all my kayaking chums over. Admittedly I am quite lucky as they have rather a nice cottage between the Dales and the Lakes which has the advantage of the fantastic River Rawthey running behind the house.

Alas dates were not the best so it fell to Mr & Mrs Aplin to fly the flag and venture the 5 hours north on a Thursday night. Unfortunately no rain had fallen so we decided to spend Friday “peak bagging” and headed off to conquer the mighty Hellvelyn; despite Mark’s grumbles about the weather looking a bit dodgy and rather windy (which to his credit he never said “ I told you so later” !!). It all started well with nice views and a brisk wind, but soon turned to a howling gale and monsoonal rain! Our original ridge ascent was soon abandoned after Kath got blown past me and another of the ridges was traversed virtually on all fours. Full wet weather gear and all additional clothing was employed and as conditions deteriorated maps & compasses came out as we sought out the peak in truly atrocious weather. Once “bagged” it was a full speed descent back to the Tea shop in Glenridding, to drip water everywhere. As other soggy individuals lamented the terrible weather we were grinning manically and planning the following days paddle fest!

6.30 am on Saturday saw me out checking River levels (a bit pointless really as it was

still dark and I could not see anything !!) and at just gone 7.30 we were launching onto the River Clough. Admittedly I am slightly biased but this River does not get the praise it deserves. Approx 7km long, lots of 1&2m bedrock steps, a cracking Gorge, a sustained section of ledges and rapids, a great gradient, finishing with a 3 metre fall. Continuous at its grade and set in the most sublime scenery (plus on our trip – deer wandering around on the banks, herons flying around, mink drinking from the waters edge and an enormous great salmon which leapt clear of the water within inches of Marks boat !). Admittedly it does go up and down as quickly as the proverbial “tarts knickers” which I think may be the problem. You really have to live very close to catch it.

The other good thing about the Clough is it flows into the Rawthey so within 5 minutes of finishing the Clough we were getting out in the field behind the parents house and heading indoors for our well deserved breakfast. Once we were all fed and watered my car was loaded up and we headed to the Rawthey get in (Kath’s car was left at the Clough get in). Sadly (& frustratingly) the level had dropped to a “low” paddle able level. Mark & myself entertained ourselves with a descent (using the term loosely) of a little beck which entered at the get in and at just gone 10.00 we were on our way. At this level it was a bit of a scrape in places but the scenery was magnificent and there were still plenty of drops and rapids. Kath demonstrating her “old skool” pop outs on one of the falls; the main triple drop fall was run successfully after a quick check for trees (my last trip had rather an alarming moment when a crap line saw my paddling buddy

disappearing under a wedged tree on these falls). A quick portage around the nasty undercut slot in the gorge and then we found another beck flowing into the River to bag a 1st descent. It really was a nice short slabby slide under a bridge. The only problem was that where you wanted to get in i.e. the other side of the bridge was someone's garden!! This meant a seal launch straight into the action. Three very inelegant descents later and we decided it probably was not worth the effort in hindsight. A gentle amble a bit further saw us once more in the parent's kitchen by 1.30 enjoying lunch.

Although slightly disappointed the Rivers had run off so quickly we were pleased we'd paddled two rivers and rather tired after our early start and 5 hours paddling we settled down for lunch. A leisurely feed saw us dropping Kath off to get her car at about 2pm and then heading to get my car back. This was the point at which things started to get rather silly and surreal. Despite having not rained on us all day (in fact it had been gloriously sunny) as we drove back up the Rawthey it became patently obvious that the River had risen quite significantly since we'd got off and was now at a very nice level !! What were we to do? We had about 2 hours daylight left, we'd need to get changed and get back up here with our boats plus we were all knackered. Obviously we did what every sensible paddler would do.....drove back to the house at full speed, grabbed Kath (who was just about to get in the bath) and headed back to the River !! At just gone 3.00 we were back on a rapidly rising river which did not bear a whole lot of resemblance to the one we'd just paddled ! One hours daylight left on something that had just taken us over 3 hours to paddle !! Silly and irresponsible possibly but boy did we have a ball!!

The first main fall (where Kath had been doing her "old skool" pop outs previously) saw myself and Mark sat in the eddy after a couple of must make boofs to clear the tow back. As Kath sat above the fall Mark casually commented; "I bet she fails to boof and pencils in". No s**t Sherlock - Kath went straight down and disappeared completely. In fact she was down for so long we did reach the slightly panicky stage!! Eventually she reappeared a long way down stream

after what turned out to be rather a prolonged underwater beating and rolled up spluttering the immortal words "that's it I'm buying a creek boat !!"

The river was rising quickly and our speed of descent got faster and faster. Before we knew it we were back at the main event "Triple falls". The previous descent had just been a drop into each pool working from left to right. This time myself and Mark just about managed the same route but the force of the water saw Kath pushed over to the left on the final drop where she crashed down upside down and eventually rolled up in the bottom (how glad are we she is the clubs reigning river God and has bomb proof roll !!). Darkness arrived at approx the same time as we reached the last fall in the gorge and despite it looking slightly easier we again portaged quickly and continued down stream in the gloom.

One hour after getting on saw us staggering up the River bank for the third time that day and heading for the parents house. A combination of the adrenalin from all the concentrating from our last run and the sheer amount of paddling we'd done (3 rivers 6 hours and 24 km) had left us absolutely knackered, but what a day !! Without a doubt it ranks as one of my all time best river days and that's pretty impressive after over 20 years paddling !!

The Sunday saw us getting up to glorious sunshine and no water (again!). This time we opted for a leisurely paddle down the Lune where we met up with a couple of Canadian open boat paddlers as we ambled down the river. Things were still early so after a quickish shuttle we headed off to the Lakes to try the Troutbeck but alas the Rivers were dry. It was sad we did not get another River done but deep down possibly not that concerned after the previous day's epic. I left Mark & Kath to their long journey home as I popped across the "tops" back to Chez Millington. I did feel for them with the long journey ahead but I'd happily drive that distance again and again if you could guarantee the weekend we'd just had!!

Mike Millington

Summer Picnic Paddle

The one trip when you don't want rain is the summer picnic paddle and it pours most of Friday of course but we are paddlers and keen, so have planned a camping trip the night before – actually an excuse to go to the pub and not have to drive.

Having found an excellent spot at the end of 'Miss Grace's Lane' for £2.50 a night with running water, toilets and a great view over the Wye we eventually have a full party consisting of Mat, Martin, Tony, Barry, Sue, JK and myself. So as we put the tents up in the rain Tony produces some bubbly, it being the weekend before he gets married. I get a bit excited (it only takes a few bubbles) and lead us off to the pub a mile away or in our case about 45 minutes. At least it had stopped raining.

Although they had stopped doing food they managed to come up with some grub for Barry and Sue which was a relief to the rest of us as Barry looked like he might want more than a few packets of peanuts... The landlady appeared to have what with the sparkling, some Guinness to keep Mat happy and some beer because it was so yummy. Coming back was even more interesting – it was the correct route but should we go Tony's way or Barry's way? In the end we followed Barry (His voice was louder – especially when reminding Mat to keep his voice down!). Top route finder, we were back in the tents in no time. His skills are wasted on rivers where the route generally

goes from top to bottom. Although there are one or two members of the club who get this wrong occasionally.

The next day we fuff for a while because that's what we are good at, while JK gets paler and paler and eventually sinks into his car and goes home – that particular trip being another story. Avis and Ernst then turned up, we got in at Ross on Wye and paddled down a lovely stretch of river, the sun was out and when we had our halfway stop all the girls and Martin went for a swim. One of those where you walk into the water in a bikini and get in gradually as opposed to the ones where Mat turns your boat upside down and end up coming out cold and spluttering. We then paddled the second half which was more like ¾- who chose this route?! Tony's back was hurting and in order to keep everyone amused Mat organised a game of lets soak each other and especially Teresa until she is completely saturated because she is rubbish at soaking anyone else. Again.

Somehow we managed to go straight through Symonds Yat with barely a wave played on and several hours later we reached Redbrook. A brilliant 24 hours and I apologise for the lack of water descriptions but this was the Wye, in summer.

Teresa Treasure