

The Trasher



Tetley Times - Triathlon Edition

- Dave Hodgkinson

Firstly, thanks to everyone that came along to offer support and encouragement to the athletes taking part. Also, a big thanks to those that helped set up and run the event. Most importantly, a huge thanks to everyone that entered the event - the aches and pain WILL go away eventually.

The 2004 Todd Morris memorial triathlon saw a record turnout with 15 KCCers, PYCCers and friends entering the event and many more helping out and supporting the athletes. Todd's family also came along to offer support and catch up with friends in KCC. Despite the dire weather forecast, the rain held off apart from a brief shower during the event although the wind was determined to remove Dave S's gazebo - luckily we had Martyn's van to anchor it down.

Needless to say I had chosen the 12th so the Mayor could visit and so the brass band could make it for the start of

start having been to the weir car park. He was a little rough after many beers in Oxford the night before.

For those that missed the start of the race, you missed an unexpected treat from Tom Wood. He treated half of the canoe club to an amazing acrobatic performance in his sailing boat. To the untrained eye would appear to be a capsize, but I'm sure it was more advanced than that. Tom kindly took the flak from the upset sailing club safety officer who was cleverly pointed in Tom's direction by Joe. Apparently we started our race in the middle of a sailing race - it certainly explains why they were coming straight for us on the water (well apart from Tom who was up to his neck in water).

There was a great atmosphere during the race with everyone encouraging each other along the way. Luckily not too many were lost in action although the

a jumbo sized shopping basket on the back of her bike. It was certainly a welcome distraction from the sick feeling that was gradually taking over me. Also Lisa's socks were something special - they wouldn't have been out of place in "Fame".

Todd's father presented Frances with the new commemorative trophy and a bottle of bubbly. Apparently there is space for the names of 10 winners on the trophy so there are plenty of opportunities to get your name on it.

After the race formalities, KCC collectively managed to shatter the record for the largest number of people around one BBQ, the most sausages cooked on one BBQ and the largest number of sausages cooked per person all in one go - I think we were into double figures. It would seem that the triathlon certainly gave everyone an appetite.

The rowing club kindly donated

Position	Name	Kayaking Time	Cycling Time	Elapsed Time	Running Time	Total Time	Notes
1st	Frances Burge	0:16:17	0:20:45	0:37:02	0:19:38	0:56:40	
2nd	Dave Hodgkinson	0:16:05	0:20:46	0:36:51	0:21:03	0:57:54	
3rd	Richard Morley	0:15:47	0:21:05	0:36:52	0:21:56	0:58:48	
4th	Lucille Savin	0:17:24	0:22:44	0:40:08	0:22:40	1:02:48	
5th	Michael Neal	0:16:40	0:21:21	0:38:01	0:24:54	1:02:55	
6th	Wendy Williamson	0:17:00	0:23:34	0:40:34	0:25:45	1:06:19	
7th	Lesley Dix	0:19:13	0:22:45	0:41:58	0:24:58	1:06:56	
8th	Dave Surman	0:16:48	0:25:59	0:42:47	0:25:53	1:08:40	
9th	Andy McMahon	0:15:43	0:28:24	0:44:07	0:25:33	1:09:40	"Problem with gears"
10th	James Dixon	0:16:56	0:27:14	0:44:10	0:30:01	1:14:11	
11th	Lee Royle	0:17:12	0:23:08	0:40:20	0:35:11	1:15:31	1st PYCC
-	Athene Smith	0:19:27	0:51:07	1:10:34	-	-	Lost during cycle
-	Lisa Parke	0:19:44	0:51:08	1:10:52	-	-	Lost during cycle
-	Neil Murton	0:16:33	-	-	-	-	Kayaing only
-	Simon Knox	0:16:37	-	-	-	-	Lost during cycle

the race. It was amusing to see Lee Royle keeping a low profile as he had bunked off from the brass band playing for the rowing club so that he could enter the Triathlon - good choice.

James Dixon beat the odds-on favourite Wendy for the title of last to arrive for the race. He arrived 5 minutes before the

cycling took more victims than I expected. Andy Mac had problems with the chain on Lee's bike - although Lee protests that there is nothing wrong with his bike. I suspect he was peddling the wrong way. Then again, at least Andy didn't get lost this year.

A memorable moment for me was seeing Athene cycling with

a box of beer. A cool pint of beer was more than welcome for me after having a (near) alcohol free Saturday evening in preparation for the race.

Finally I hope you all enjoyed the day as much as I did. Hopefully you are all inspired to enter the triathlon next year - lets make next year even bigger!

Mega Surf

somewhat bigger than kilo surf which itself is bigger than plain-old surf

- Martyn Green

“The G-Spot is of such high quality that it should exist only as a figment of the imagination“

Forget the Banzai Pipeline in Hawaii, probably the most famous surfing break in the world, known to surfers from across the globe. The new mecca is the G-spot whose exact location is still a secret, but is somewhere off the west coast of Ireland – yes, you read right - Ireland, you know the emerald isle to the west of Wales.

The west coast of Ireland is regularly pounded by 20 ft waves, but the biggest breaks are over reefs up to four miles out to sea. However, they travel too fast for surfers to paddle into without assistance. To overcome the problem, surfers Richard Fitzgerald and Gabe Davies copied the tow-in technique from Hawaii. Somewhere off the coast of Co. Donegal, they

used jet-skis to tow them on special surf boards (equipped with foot straps) into the path of the monstrous waves. Dubbed “Europe’s heaviest wave” by the magazine *Surf Europe*, the G-spot is one of several huge waves recently ridden by a small band of extreme surfers. Another is a wave at Mullaghmore Head, infamous as the site where Earl Mountbatten of Burma was blown up by the IRA in 1979. This wave is better known and is detailed in the surfers’ handbook, *The Storm-rider Guide*.

The waves form because the water over reefs is so shallow, sometimes 6 ft or less. With a large swell and off-shore wind, the surf rises and peels with venomous force as they break and form long barrel sections

which collapse into heavy³ whitewater. Local surfer, Richard Fitzgerald wears a helmet and a special impact vest as protection in case he impacts the limestone reef though he admits with rocks in front of you, shallow water beneath and this massive mound of water above him – it makes him nervous.

A quote from *Surf Europe* “The G-Spot is of such high quality that it should exist only as a figment of the imagination”. Gabe Davies, a professional surfer from Newcastle-on-Tyne “..the best wave right now is out their in Ireland.... it’s so hollow, so fast and so heavy.... it beats everything else.”

(Based on David Lister in *The Times*, 25 September 2004.)

Are you a kayakist or a canoer?

– Roger Wiltshire

.... Correspondence found on the internet (and only changed a bit).

“I draw on both personal and received wisdom and experience to state categorically that most canoeists I know have beards and the kayakers do not! Well, the girlies don’t anyway.

I have a beard - I sometimes go canoeing in a kayak with my local canoe club. We have lots of kayaks and some canoes and often take the kayaks out canoeing. The canoeists like that. There is a kayak club not far away , but they have no canoes? I’m

not sure if the Scottish CANOE Association or the British CANOE Union have any either. Maybe the Scouts do - oops, no, they only have CANOE Proficiency Badges.

And, while we’re on the subject, why am I am kayakER but not a canoeER ??? The Kayakers who kayak - are they different from the canoeists who canoe? I’m a canoeIST - why don’t I become a kayakIST when I’m kayaking? Hmmmm?

When I take my sexy red Nordkapp out and go play in the sea, I become a Kayaker. When my bat-

tered old river boat gets flung down some river (sometimes with me in it - sometimes following it) I’m going Canoeing.

Can’t see the point personally of those open things - - - - -

Which brings me to my final learned point m’Lud - the defense rests by suggesting that Mr Michael Smith, in deepest, darkest Perthshire is talking thro a hole in his head-wear when he suggests that canoeists are causing his fish to suffer fishy stress type problems. There are NO canoeists on the Tay - only kayakers.”

“Can’t see the point personally of those open things “

Pathfinder Trip to Trywern: 5/6th September 2004.



Paddlers: Pathfinders 1 (Seth)
 Kingfishers 5 (Simon, Dave H, Dave S, Ben, Richard and Seb)
 Others 3 (Neil, Anna and Martin)

Well with the traditional ration of pathfinders to others the annual Trywern trip took place, once again showing the usual amount of co-ordination.



Arrival Times: Friday, 1900 hours: (Dave H, Richard, Martin and Seb.)
 Saturday, 1015 hours: (Simon and Anna.)
 Saturday, after lunch: (Dave S, Seth, Ben and Neil.)

Due to over commitments (that contrary to popular belief didn't involve a pub) I couldn't make the Friday night drive to The Goat. Still this meant that I could give Seb's mate Anna a lift on Saturday and stop the trip being a male event. So after leaving Oxford at 07.00 we managed to catch up those who'd left the previous night arranging a shuttle for the first run of the day round about 10.15. Not the early start I'd expected them to make the reasons for which soon became clear.



Friday Night's Damage:

Hangovers	4	(everyone)
Barfing	1	(Dave H)

Seems the 6X in The Goat was too much for some. Still it meant we could all warm up run from just below the Ski Slope to Bala together. Stopping at the campsite wave for a quick play and a stretch of the feet at Bala Mills Falls the paddle went smoothly* though somewhat longer than we wanted.



Using Dave's car and the conveniently laid on shuttle mini-bus we quickly went back to the top with the intentions of just running the top section down to the camp site wave. Our plans changed when we discovered the remaining members of our group getting on at the campsite for their first run of the day.



Dave S, Neil, Seth and Ben managed to convince us to run the lower section again this time not quite as smoothly. Somewhat unexpectedly Richard managed to go over Bala Mill Falls on his head after being back looped halfway down. Still his roll was perfect at the bottom. What most of us considered to be even more disastrous was that we discovered that we'd missed the last shuttle bus when we got to the take out.



Fortunately help was at hand with the appearance of Rob Yates and his rather luxurious minibus. Giving us drivers a lift back to their cars we quickly rushed back to collect the others only they, their kit and our kit had all vanished.



Oh dear, seems that some bright soul had managed to phone the Trywern centre and convinced them to send down a minibus and trailer. Eventually the errant paddlers (and more importantly my kit) were found back at the top of the river.



So the days paddling over the plans for the evening; A slide/video show was apparently arranged for ticket holders at the old school. Unfortunately we didn't have tickets and neither did the people who were supposed to be selling them.

Ah well I didn't mind a night of drinking in the Goat. Strangely Dave didn't look quite so keen. It was around this time that we remembered that Anna had announced it was her

Pathfinder Trip to Trywern: 5/6th September 2004.



birthday earlier. So it seemed we had an excuse for the drinking but it seems Kiwi traditions are a little different to those that I'm familiar with, still I'm not too proud to let a lady buy me beer.



So a fun evening was had by all. But exactly what sort of faces were everyone making at Anna to make her laugh so much? And why was Dave Surman stealing pints of San Miguel from one of our number.

Saturday Night's Damage:	Hangovers	1	(naughty boy)
	Sleepless night		Plenty

So reasonably well rested we set out for Sundays paddling, a quick shop at the kayak shop in Bala then straight to the top, down to the centre then back to the top again where we met up with Neal who'd spent the night before in a field with Rob Yates, Boothey and the rest of the Pangbourne group.



Joining up with this group we decided to paddle en mass down to the campsite, which with around twenty of us was a little confusing. Anna decided to take this one from the bank and became our official photographer. Unfortunately Seth took a swim in the graveyard (I think his head wasn't quite in top form) and managed to lose the padding from his helmet ending his paddling for the moment.



Our final run of the day was a bit better with a smaller group and this time Seb became official photographer number two, getting out at the centre we called it a day and managed to be home by 20.00 hours.



At least that's the way I remember the weekend.



Thanks to Dave S, Neal and Richard for letting me paddle their boats (and Dave for loaning me his S:6 for the weekend). If your planning a visit to the Trywern I think we'd unreservedly recommend the Goat even though Dave still claims there was something wrong with the 6X.

- Simon Knox



*Martin and Seb may disagree, but hey that serves them right for following me. And hey I didn't get pinned on the rock did I?

RODEO GRANDUDE NEWS

- Dave Surman



Yes Rodeo Grandude is back in Blighty, preparing for paddling rehabilitation. Nice rivers are cool, scary monsters are off limits for the time being. So first of all whatsa-comin` up?

WEEKEND DAY RIVER HITS.

In addition to the usual Darting and South west weekends I hope to get day trips to mid Wales for some intermediate rivers and hopefully the tributaries. Because of the nature of river levels these may well be organised at short notice. If you`re interested express your interest to me now.

Am hoping something decent will be running Sunday November 7th. Touch base on this one if interested.

It seems kinda wacky that my first white water river since that fateful day last December was on a remote jungle river in Costa Rica accessible only by four

STEVENTON KAYAK SHOW PRESENTATIONS START WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 24th

Yup the first of this winter`s series is scheduled for the above date. Everyone is welcome.

COSTA RICA FOR HEROES AND HUMANS. Chris Wheeler, Andy MacMahon, Dave Surman

Steventon Sports and Social Club, Milton Lane (by the Green in Steventon)

8pm. Bar. Admission by donation.

Everyone welcome, spread the news. Bring your spanish dictionaries.

WEEKEND OF NOV 20/21 TWO EVENTS

EITHER Dart Playboating Party

OR DEE ACCESS DAY AND

DEMO. Rodeo at Mile End Mill on Sat and demo on Sunday. This could presumably be combined with some paddling on some rivers, maybe dare I say it the Dee Best source of info seems to be www.ukriversguidebook.co.uk. Read the community pages for the latest news/gossip on this one.

LAKE DISTRICT PADDLING

Have just come back from a coupla days at Colin Littens BnB in the lakes. Am trying to arrange a weekend. Good rivers when there is rain. If no rain there are still some easy fallback rivers or go walking. If you are interested let me know so we can arrange a suitable date.

RANDOM THOUGHTS/ IDEAS

Also any ideas for the Christmas /New year period Ireland?

Also any body interested in skiing.?Would have to be school holiday times or a long weekend to Andorra via Easyjet?

CONTACTS WITH ARGENTAN

I have spoken to Manu who has indicated that they hope to invite us over to paddle with them. This would probably be for a long weekend either to the dam release River Orne in Normandy or to meet up at Geneva to paddle the Dranse. The former would involve driving the latter Easyjetting out.

FUTURE NEWS ALPINE TRIP SUMMER 2005

This would need to be the first and possibly the second week

of the school holidays i.e. from 23 July, I am available from 21st. One possible scenario is to spend the first week in the Briancon area of France then move on to Austria for the second week. Some time in the new year we will have a meeting to gauge interest, meanwhile informal expressions of interest and ideas would be welcome.

Rodeo Grandude rises again or the renaissance of Rodeo Grandude.

It seems kinda wacky that my first white water river since that fateful day last December was on a remote jungle river in Costa Rica accessible only by four wheel drive. The day after I landed I trundled onto a local bus to meet Mark and Cheryl in Quepos to be told that we were all set up to do the Rio Naranjo the following day. This river didnt go above grade 3 and it was relief that I realized my shoulder was fine. I notched up another 3 rivers, Sagreve, Pejibaye and Sarapiqi, all similar grade which was a good confidence booster. Whilst the hair boaters were off falling over waterfalls I was doing nice things like visiting rainforests and drinking coffee!!!!

On my return to the U.K. we goated it at the Tryweryn and followed this up with a coupla low Dart Loops. I hit the Nene a coupla times getting back into playing and rolling. Then went sea kayaking (weird huh!) and hit a coupla low Lake district rivers, (Middle Duddon and Great Langdale Beck)

ANY THOUGHTS , QUESTIONS, IDEAS ON ANY OF THE ABOVE PHONE ME ON 01865 373115 davidsurman@hotmail.com

Tetley Times - Scotland Edition

- Dave Hodgkinson

Amazingly, I'm back in Oxfordshire and in one piece. Well, apart from a garlic bread injury but more of that later.

In case you were not aware, Andy McBoof and myself went up to Scotland on the 15th November for 8 days of quality hard-core paddling. Lee Gill and Andy Newell went up on the Sunday and finally Lisa Parke joined us on the Tuesday. The trip was almost called off by Andy on the 14th due to fears that there would be no rain up there - luckily we went up anyhow as there was loads of the stuff for the whole week.

Whilst we were up there, we teamed up with Neil Farmer and a few other Scottish paddlers for some of the days. In summary, team KCC paddled a total of 18 sections over the 8 days. According to the guidebook we covered 69 km of grade 3 to 5 rivers. In the process we managed to tot up 6 KCC swims and an unbelievable 14 including the ones by the locals. Also, one set of Scottish paddles was lost and one KCC set was broken. My car clocked up 1850 miles in the process. If such a record existed, I'm sure we would have shattered the faff-ing world record over the 8 days too.



The trip started with the pleasurable 7-hour Friday evening drive up to Glasgow where we crashed out at Andy's Mum's place. On arrival, I had the delight of trying the traditional Sausage supper (battered sausage and chips) washed down with Irn Bru for good measure. On top of the burger King in Charnock Richard services on the M6, this marked the start of 10 days of truly unhealthy eating.



On the Friday evening, the weather forecast was showing that the rain would be in the east for the weekend moving to the west during the week, so needless to say that is what we did. A great plan it was too.

Over the weekend, we did the North Esk, Blackwater and Braan, all ideal for perfecting the 'boof' using the Scottish 'boof or die' learning approach. I have to say the Braan was my favourite section which was done late Sunday afternoon. The put-in is in itself a mission where you have to abseil down a 20m muddy cliff to get to the put-in that is directly below Rumbling Bridge Falls. The first half of the section is continuous grade 4 with the Splitter (Grade 5) which all passed without event. Next is the Coffin Drop (Grade 5+) that was portaged by everyone but Andy and local paddler Paul. Paul didn't get the right line and swam after a heavy landing which popped his deck. There were more grade 3/4 rapids before Hermitage falls (Grade 6) which was portaged. The remainder was thankfully grade 2/3 as this was run in failing light.

On Saturday evening, we had nowhere to stay so we descended on the nearest Scottish town called 'Kirkriemuir'. Within minutes of stopping in the high street to find somewhere to stay, the local police had checked us out. We also had a random bloke insisting all

6 of us could stay at his place. Luckily we found a hotel that put us all up in one room for 80 pounds including breakfast, served food at 9pm and also had a bar open until the early hours. When we were in the bar, someone asked us if we were from New Zealand - the reason being they had heard there were lads from New Zealand in town and as they didn't recognise us they concluded we were them!

On getting off the Braan on Sunday, we had a call from Andy N and Lee who had just arrived in Fort William and were wondering what the plans were for accommodation that evening. The cunning plan was immediately hatched - Andy N and Lee had to find us all accommodation whilst Andy and I headed west. Luckily they found a bunkhouse in the middle of nowhere. After driving round Fort William for 40 minutes, we finally found the place at 11pm.

Monday saw us all head north to do the Findhorn. This eased Andy N and Lee into Scottish rivers and the now traditional getting off in the dark. Because it was dark, we actually missed the get-out and had to clamber up a cliff then hike back for 20 minutes to the cars at the proper get-out. On the lower gorge, Andy N, Lee and myself took the hard option and decided to portage the trickier rapids. This provided good practice for the portages from hell that would be coming up later in the week.

After the gentle warm-up on Monday, Tuesday was the day for the Etive. For those that haven't heard of it, this is a classic Scottish river. The put-in is immediately above Triple Falls (grade 4) providing no warm up at all. Unfortunately, this claimed the first KCC swims with Andy N being swallowed by the second drop and Lee being swallowed by the third drop. Letterbox (Grade 4+) and Ski Jump (Grade 3) then followed with no events. Next is Crack of Doom (Grade 4+), this is a tricky narrow slot with a bouldery run-in and a tricky stopper at the opening to put you off line. To top that off, immediately you have to do a hard paddle left before a fall. Unfortunately an undercut rock above the second drop caught Lee out and he had his second swim of the trip. When emptying his boat he managed to lose his bung on the riverbank. After all this fun, Lee decided he'd had enough and got off the river. Above the next feature, Crack of Dawn (Grade 5), I heard McBoof tell Neil that we had better get a move on as the river was rising and not to tell the others - just what you want to overhear! Within minutes, Neil had told both Andy N and me that the river was rising and we had better get a move on. With this in mind we pressed on. Luckily both the Crack of Dawn and Rock Slide (Grade 4) passed without event. The next feature was Right Angle Falls (Grade 4+ at normal levels). The river was so high that there was no longer a right angle as the water was running straight over rock above the fall. The pool below the fall had become one large boil. It

KCC Swim league		
Position	Name	Swims
1	Lee	3
2	Andy N	2
3	Dave	1

was so high that Lee and I didn't recognise it as right angle falls. After much chin scratching, McBoof could spot a line and successfully went for it. Not wanting to be left behind, Paul then went for it but unfortunately didn't get quite the same line and had to be rescued from being re-circulated behind the fall. In the process he lost his £280 paddles. After the fun and

games of his rescue, everyone else gave Right Angle Falls a miss. McBoof and the others continued down the Etive but Andy N and I cut our losses after spotting the portage from hell for 500m of paddling. After the fun of the Etive they moved onto the Coe (Grade 4/5) but Lee, Andy N and I gave it a miss having already had enough fun for one day on the Etive. Tuesday evening Lisa joined us and we moved into our holiday home for the rest of the week - perfect for drying 4 sets of kit every evening.

On Wednesday whilst international pro-paddlers Johnno and Jim from Reading were instructing Lisa on the Roy, the rest of us did the Orchy (3/4 (5)). If I remember rightly, it was 1.5 on the gauge, which is low/medium. The Orchy is basically a grade 3 river with a handful of grade 4 rapids and one grade 5 rapid thrown in for good measure. Despite McBoof's assurances that it was safe, Lee, Andy N and I portaged Eas an Dbuha (grade 4) as it looked like a perfect pinning opportunity. Afterwards, McBoof recalled that the first time he did it he got pinned. McBoof, Andy N and I ran Eas A Chathaidh (Grade 5) taking the hard left line avoiding the large drop on the right that has claimed several lives in the past.. Wednesday was unusual as we actually finished in daylight.

It rained hard all Wednesday night making most of the rivers too high on Thursday. After

much faffing, we started with the lower Coe (grade 4/5) that requires lots of water to run. This was a great section despite claiming 2 KCC swims. Back Door Man (Grade 5-) and Entry Falls (Grade 4+) gave us a good warm up before the committing gorge. Luckily both rapids passed without event, apart from me running most of Entry Falls backwards and upside down thanks to an undercut rock. The Gorge (Grade



4+) is around 500m long with no eddies and vertical sides that make rescuing in the gorge virtually impossible. Things were going well until half way down the gorge when Lee decided to go for a swim. As there are no eddies until the end of the gorge, he had a long swim. In true tradition, the only thing I heard was "paddles, get my

paddles" the few times he managed to get his head out of the water. Once the gorge was over Lee could get into an eddy and onto the bank. McBoof then continued to find the precious paddles and boat. Luckily for our eardrums, Andy found the paddles and boat minus footrests about 1km downstream. McBoof, Andy N and I completed the section which finishing with a Grade 5- rapid. Unfortunately, the final drop claimed my only swim of the

trip in the boil.

The second section of the day that Lee sensibly sat out was the Kiachnish (Grade 4 (5)). At 7km, this would be a fantastic section to do over a day, but 2 hours before getting dark is not such a good idea. It is paddled from Lochan Lunn Da-Bhra (a loch up the hill from Fort William) down to

Loch Linnhe (The big loch next to Fort William) through open glen, gorge then finally woodland. This started off as a pleasant trip through the glen (grade 3/4). The start of the gorge and failing light signified the start of a mission involving a few portages from hell round grade 4 and 5 rapids to avoid any incidents. I foolishly missed an eddy and successfully probed one of the rapids. Andy N got pinned on one of the drops and broke his paddle. In true Tetley tradition, I got my line wrong and dropped straight into a strainer that was across most of the river. Luckily I stayed upright with my body out of the water and with McBoof's assistance managed to get free. The guidebook describes one final grade 4/5 rapid before the remaining grade 3 down to the loch. As it was now virtually dark, each time we portaged a tricky rapid there was the hope that it was the elusive final grade 4/5 rapid. On again hopping into the final eddy above a now invisible drop, Andy N decided that he had had enough and opted to walk through the forest despite McBoof's now regular assurance that this must be the final rapid. With images of getting lost in a forest running through my mind I opted to continue on the river. Luckily, it really was the final rapid as it was so dark that I couldn't see McBoof in front. After 15 minutes, joy filled the air as the outline of a road bridge signifying the end could be seen ahead. Amazingly, as we were getting changed, we could hear the hollow thud of a kayak being dropped then Andy stepped out

Day	River	Grade	Guidebook	A	M	D	H	A	N	L	G	L	P	Notes
Saturday	North Esk (Upper)	4/4+	P219	Y	Y									Dave portaged ledge drop
	North Esk (Lower)	3 (4)	P220	Y										First finish in the dark of the week
Sunday	Blackwater	4	P226	Y	Y									
	Braan (Lower)	4/5	P205	Y	Y									Dave portaged coffin drop (apty named!). Another finish in the dark
Monday	Findhorn (Top)	3 (4)	P166	Y	Y	Y	Y							
	Findhorn (Upper)	3/4	P167	Y	Y	Y	Y							
	Findhorn (Lower Gorge)	4 (5)	P169	Y	Y	Y	Y							Randolf's leap, Triple falls and The slot portaged by Lee, Dave and Andy N. Yet another finish in the dark
Tuesday	Etive (Middle)	4 (5)	P135	Y	Y	Y	Y							"Right Angle Falls" only run by McDoom as river in spate by this point
	Coe (Lower)	4/5	P126	Y										Dave, Andy N and Lee sit this out after the Etive mission.
Wednesday	Roy (Lower)	2/3	P113									Y		Lisa instructed by Jim and Johnno 'international paddlers' from Reading
	Orchy (Middle)	3/4 (5)	P146	Y	Y	Y	Y							Dave, Andy N and Lee portaged "Easan Dubha". Lee portaged "Eas A Chathaidh" (Grade 5)
Thursday	Coe (Lower)	4/5	P126	Y	Y	Y	Y							
	Kiachnish	4 (5)	P82	Y	Y	Y								Another finish in the dark. Several grade 4 and 5 drops portaged to avoid any incidents in the dark. Andy N walks off on stumbling upon the 3rd grade 5 drop in total darkness
Friday	Spean (Upper)	4	P105	Y	Y	Y								On 4 pipes. Lower gorge portaged as directly before "Inverlair Falls" - quote from guidebook "a one way ticket out of here"



of the dark. Luckily, he had found a track that led through the woods to his car at the get out. It was at this point that Andy N vowed to not finish in the dark again.

By Friday I was starting to hurt. Needless to say my moans fell on deaf ears. After a great deal of faffing waiting for Neil Farmer to come up from Glasgow and trying to find a river at the right level, McBoof, Andy N and I ran the Upper Spean (grade 4). This starts directly below Laggan Dam and ends just above Inverlair Falls (grade 6). The dam was releasing 4 pipes and was also overflowing over the dam, which is a good level. This section is great fun being fast, big and bouncy with a few holes to avoid along the way. It took less than 20 minutes to cover 4km with more time spent getting in and out. To avoid any incidents above Inverlair Falls, the lower gorge immediately before it was portaged. Neil later recalled a time when they had 3 swimmers in the lower gorge so I was glad we portaged it.



After the Upper Spean, the plan was to run the Roy (Gorge) and the lower section down to Roy Bridge once Neil Farmer arrived. We checked out the gauge (ledge) at Roy Bridge to which McBoof concluded 'should be fine, that's a low level and Neil runs this all of the time'. When Neil arrived at 3:30, the first thing he did was check the level to which he said 'that's high, I haven't run this for ages'. That made my mind up - there was no chance I was getting on the river after the fun and games the previous evening. Rather amazingly Andy N didn't spot the signs and agreed to do it. Once we had got to the put in and they had scouted the first rapid, it was 5:20pm, a whole 40 minutes before it gets dark! After waving goodbye, Lisa, Lee and I went to the pub in Roy Bridge and waited. It was 7:30pm and 3 pints later when they got to the pub. Afterwards in the pub, Andy N appeared to have aged 10 years in those 2 hours.



As Friday night was Andy N and Lee's last evening, we went out in Fort William and stayed out until we had been kicked out of every pub. This led to everyone being worse for wear the next morning - ideal for running the Etive again! When we had gone back to the cottage, I managed to burn my hand on the oven tray whilst baking garlic bread, which I don't even eat! Lee was so rough the next morning, he gave the Etive a miss!

Mark and some other Scottish paddlers joined us on the Etive. This gave us the pleasure of wit-



nessing the Scottish kayaking training technique that had been used on McBoof many years ago. Mark had brought along a friend that had up to this point only paddled grade 3 rivers, so the Etive was the next logical step! He capsized between the first and second drop of triple falls and went over the second drop upside down before swimming. This didn't put him off and he completed the section and only had one more swim. Andy N didn't get the right line on the Letterbox (grade 4+), dropping straight into the hole. After much fighting he failed to get out and pulled the deck. Rather than washing out of the hole, he stayed in it, fully submerged with just his hand out of the water. McBoof threw him a line and dragged him out. Full video footage of this is available. As the river was at a sensible level, we all did right angle falls. I managed to capsize above the main fall and rolled up just in time to find myself dropping over the fall backwards! Unfortunately, Mark has reverse angle video footage that shows my reaction when I realised what was going on.

After the Etive, Andy N and Lee left to return home. The rest of us moved on to Allt a'Chaoruinn (grade 4+). This is basically a kayakers playground and kayak hull wrecker that has featured in a few kayaking videos. It consists of unbelievable chutes and slides that amount to an 80m vertical drop over 1km. With names such as 'Speed', 'Ecstasy', 'Pinball' and 'Chasm' you get an idea of what's involved. The 'flipper' on the Pinball flipped both McBoof and me into the cliff at high speed, where we bounced off completing Pinball backwards. There should be video footage if anyone is interested. Finishing Allt a'Chaoruinn marked the end of the paddling and what a finale it was.

Thanks to Andy McBoof for inviting me, looking out for me on the river and teaching me the sacred art of boofing. Thanks to Andy's Mum for putting me up Friday night. Also, thanks to Andy Newell, Lee, Neil Farmer, Mark and the other Scottish paddlers for looking out for me and saving me from McBoof and his mad ideas.



Diary

OCTOBER	7th KCC	14th PF	21th KCC	28th 1/2 TERM
NOVEMBER	4th PF	11th SCOUTS	18th SCOUTS	25th SCOUTS
DECEMBER	2th KCC	9th PF	15th KCC	23th XMAS 30th XMAS
JANUARY	6th XMAS	12th PF	19th KCC	26th SCOUTS
FEBRUARY	3th SCOUTS	10th SCOUTS	16th 1/2 TERM	24th PF
MARCH	3th KCC	10th PF	17th KCC	24th EASTER 31th EASTER

2004

6-7 Nov	Tyne Tees Tour	Dave Surman
7 Nov	Middle Wye	Ellie Collins (see above)
20 Nov	Playboating Magazine 10th Birthday Party at the Dart	Dave Hodgkinson
20-21 Nov	Dee Day access (protest?)	Dave Surman
21 Nov	Boat trip	Tony Wilkins
Nov/Dec	Lake District	Dave Surman
12 Dec	Usk (possible 4* assessment)	Roger Wiltshire
19 Dec	Charwell	Tony Wilkins
27 Dec	Fleet	Tony Wilkins
New Year	Ireland	Dave Surman
2005		
2 Jan	Usk	Roger Wiltshire (see above)
15-16 Jan	Dart	Vicky Rolls (see above)
13 Feb	Usk	Roger Wiltshire (see above)
Jul	Alps	Dave Surman
23-30 Jul	French Alps	Roger Wiltshire
2-9 Aug	French Alps	Roger Wiltshire

Swimming Pool Dates For 2004/2005

to the left are the dates for this coming winter Contact Pete Collins or a committee member for more details. All KCC dates are highlighted.

Middle Wye Trip.

7th November. We paddle from Builth Wells to Boughrood - about 12 miles.

This is a grade II river with one fall off grade III and highly suitable for introducing paddlers to White Water Trips

Contact Ellie Collins

Vicki's Dart Trip

15th and 16th January 2005. Staying at the Dart Centre, Cost £29 for B&B.

I need to reserve the accommodation by Monday 3 January. You will have to book your own accommodation after this date. Contact Vicki Rolls

Sunday Usk Trips: Provisional Dates

11th December 2004
2nd January 2005
16th February 2005

Three white water trips, available to KCC members and friends. Contact Roger Wiltshire for details.

If any of the details are incorrect or you have any other details or dates to add please let me know please let me know.

TRASHER ONLINE!

Current and back issues are available at:

<http://www.kingfishercanooclub.co.uk>

You'll need to login to access the download links, the current username and passwords are:

Username: kingfisher
Password: hurley

This will direct you to a download page. I've converted all the editions to PDF format so you'll need Adobe Acrobat Reader or a similar program to read them.

IF YOU WOULD PREFER TO SAVE SOME TREES AND ACCESS THE ELECTONIC COPY ONLY LET ME KNOW AND I WILL STOP SENDING YOU A PAPER COPY.

PLAYBOATING 10th BIRTHDAY PARTY

River Dart Country Park on 20th November 2004

http://www.playboating.com/bdaybash_voteform.htm

Dave Hodgkinson is organising a KCC contingent for this, contact him to co-ordinate lifts etc...

RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE

Wet season boating in Costa Rica

White Water Tourist and CKUK contributor Chris Wheeler reports back after a recent trip to Costa Rica and explains why, as a paddling destination, it's due a renaissance.



“we’d endured a 3 hour slog through the jungle, with 30 kgs of boating and overnight kit.”

Day 2 - we’re cruising down Costa Rica’s classic paddle, the Lower Pacuare, through a jaw droppingly stunning gorge, with clear water from side streams cascading over waterfalls and into the river. The paddling was however, rather tame grade 3 and I was starting to daydream....

Day 10 - we’d endured a 3 hour slog through the jungle, with 30 kgs of boating and overnight kit, to get to the river and after only one hour of paddling over rocks, we were confronted with two bad options. We had a choice between either a) running the committing gorge and 60ft waterfall blind or b) hauling our boats up a near vertical 60 ft high wall of jungle and then down another 90 ft high wall of jungle. We opted for option b) but heaven knows, afterwards, we could understand why the infamous Steve Whetman opted for a).

So, which one is the real Costa Rica? Whetman style epic adventures deep in the jungle, or big volume picture

postcard grade 3? We’d headed out to Costa Rica to find out, and being self confessed white water ‘tourists’, we were armed with copies of the new white water guidebook, ‘Chasing Jaguars’, and

cameras, dangling from our necks.

We were a mixed bunch. 4 of us were looking to scare ourselves silly on grade 4/5- Mark, Andy M, Simon and me. Andy L was usually up for paddling most of what we did, often at the very limit of his comfort zone after much coercion. The ‘mature’ member of team, Dave, was recuperating from a dislocated shoulder and was looking for some nice fluffy grade 3 and off the water flora and fauna. Cheryl, Simon’s long suffering girlfriend, was looking for grade 2/3- and to spend some time with him for once! So, were we all going to get what we were looking for, or would not still be talking to each other by the end of the trip?

Peering out the window as we descended to land at San Jose, Costa Rica’s capital, I was confronted with a familiar sight- low cloud- and then out of the gloom came something all together less familiar- a

sprawling city surrounded by hills, covered in dense tropical rain forest. Welcome to the Tropics and the Third World! (sorry, ‘Less Economically Developed Country’, LEDC). Jet lagged and disorientated, my boating buddies, Andy McMahon, and Andy Levick, and I staggered out of the airport to be greeted by the advance party, Dave and Mark. We were barely functioning but thankfully Mark saved the day by diving into the chaotic jungle of taxi drivers and coming out with a minibus with roof rack that would cope with 7 paddlers and 7 boats, and after much pushing and shoving as we squeezed boats and paddlers into and onto the bus, we were quickly on our way. As we headed out towards Turrialba, the Costa Rican capital of white water boating, 40 miles to the east, I stared out of the window at the passing scene. Motorways and McDonalds, it all really looked quite developed. 2 hours later and we were still on the road, winding around hill roads past some very basic houses- Costa Rica still has some way to go and the further you venture away from the strip from the airport to downtown San Jose, the less developed it gets.

We arrived at the popular kayaking Mecca, the ‘Interamericano Hotel’, which was situated in a rather dodgy, scruffy part of downtown Turrialba, next to the old railway station- no, this was not the ‘Hotel Intercontinental’! After the standard diet of rice, beans and beer, we crashed out, with no idea of what was going to happen next. The next morning, as if by magic, everything just seemed to fall into place. Luis, the English speaking hotel manager had rustled up a breakfast buffet and our taxi driver for the week, Martine. Martine didn’t speak much English and to our shame, we certainly didn’t speak much Spanish, but he

RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE

knew the way to the local rivers and just as importantly, drove a truck with an open wagon to the rear for the boats and lots of seats to the front. Enough to cope with the whole group when it was finally assembled entailing 7 boaters, 7 boats and mountains of smelly wet kit! More importantly still, he'd drive us pretty much anywhere at any time of the day or night- if we offered him



“...if we offered him enough dollars. We were in business. We were in business.”

enough dollars. We were in business.

So, we headed off to paddle our first classic, the Reventazon. 2 sections, the Canon and Dries, had been blighted by dams (a truly Worldwide problem) and so were too low, so we decided to opt for a 'gentle warm up' with the 4 sections downstream of the Dries- 18 miles which were rated in the guidebook as big volume bouncy grade 3 to 5-, and so it proved. It was an ideal warm up for a bunch of jet lagged Brits. Having said that, I did manage to get lost on the 100 yards walk to the river and end up flailing around in (I imagined) snake infested long grass. The river itself was easy enough but it did have a habit of pulling surprises. Whenever we started to doze off, we'd suddenly find ourselves drifting towards some rather large holes, including a couple that were almost river wide.

Day 2 and it was onto our second classic river, the Pacuare. The Upper offered up good technical grade 4 to 4+ low to medium volume boating and the Lower, the definitive Costa Rican paddle, with grade 3 rapids running through a stunningly beautiful gorge deep in the jungle. The Lower however, offered us something all together more exciting as we were engulfed in a tropical rainstorm with horizontal rain driving into our faces, complete with thunder and lightning. Within a matter of minutes all the side streams had turned brown, and brown water was cascading into the river. Our grade 3 jaunt had turned into a super fast spate run and we found ourselves amongst a bizarre and quite intimidating mixture of thunder, lightning, jungle mist and brown cascades, as we raced through several miles of brown water to the finish. Welcome to the wet season!

Onto the Upper and Lower Orosi (were Orosi sunglasses



named after the river or is there a Mr Joe Orosi out there?). As we got changed amongst the coffee plantations, the river looked rather low and unexciting. However, as we rounded the first bend, the river dropped away to the right down through a super-steep and congested jumble of boulders, which sparked off much chin scratching and a

small portage as we squeezed our boats past the rounded smooth boulders. Soon afterwards, a capsize by Andy Levick produced our first injury, as his face scraped over rocks, cutting his nose and eyebrow. At the conveniently located hot springs, it was time to test out those mouldy old first aid kits! Simon saved the day with some 'steristrip' to clamp together the wounds and Andy was paddling again ("pull yourself together, man!"), albeit looking understandably wobbly. US Dollars and a travel insurance card are an open sesame to the VIP treatment, and as we headed off for some lunch, Andy was being whisked past a queue of local Mums at the local clinic, who were most amused by Andy McMahon's gloriously tasteless Bermuda shorts. Undeterred, we demoted Andy Levick to 'shuttle bunny' status for the afternoon and picked off two rather easy sections of the Reventazon, immediately downstream off the Canon section.

We returned to Turrialba to find that Simon Wiles and his girlfriend Cheryl had finally arrived, our careful planning and countless e-mails having ensured that the team flew in randomly on different days. We had a repeat run on the Reventazon with Simon, whilst Andy Levick joined Dave and Cheryl for some culture, whatever that is. I believe that in fact 'culture' may have entailed a visit to the local 'Serpentaria', which actually would have provided us with a useful opportunity to identify all those nasty killer snakes and spiders that we were likely to encounter bushwhacking our way to the rivers through the jungle. As for the river, it was noticeably higher and we quickly realised that the fun holes of day 1 were now to be avoided at all costs!

The next day and the 'A Team' was up at 4.30 am ready to

RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE

take on its first major challenge, the notorious Chirripo Atlantico. The early start stemmed from the river's reputation, gleaned from epic tales in the magazines and the warnings of local boaters. The major worry, aside from potential 2 to 10 hour carry in through the jungle, was the 12 mile long committing gorge, a risky proposition in the wet season. As it is, we were saved from ourselves by a night of heavy rain. Mission aborted. We never did paddle the Atlantico, and probably never will.

Undeterred, we made a mad dash northwards to the next paddling area at La Virgen, on the northerly Caribbean slopes. En route, we paddled the nice technical grade 4 boulder gardens of the Toro Amarillo, a paddle that was enlivened by the sight of a JCB rearranging the river in front of us. We put on the Sucio in a thunderstorm, with overhead lightning and torrential rain. What could possibly go wrong? Pausing to take photographs of lethal spiders, we put on. The waters of the Rio Sucio ('dirty river') are unusually, orange, from lava deposits upstream and so it was hard to tell just how in spate the river was. A little way into the trip, a no-name side-stream blasted masses of silty water into the Sucio; the river stepped up several gears and we found ourselves in the midst of some full-on 'balls to the wall' big volume spate boating. We hurtled towards orange and brown horizon lines and some heinous looking holes, sometimes scraping down the sides and sometimes making a break for the far bank. Yes, very exciting, especially as rocks kept loudly moving around in the riverbed. We passed the confluence of the Rio Patria and looked upstream with morbid fascination - this was the epic river featured in Steve Whetman's talk show, with THAT waterfall.

The Toro (Casa Maquinas, Recreo Verde and Upper Toro sections) provided us with a splendid 14 mile paddle. We started deep down in a gorge amidst jungle and incredibly high waterfalls and paddled our way out to the sugar cane plantations of the Caribbean plains, past boulder gardens, and remarkably, a hot springs complete with riverside bar. There was enough boulder action early on for Andy McMahon to break his paddles.



The Upper Sarapiquí was pleasant enough, rather like the Upper Dart in low to medium water but the Poza Azul was to provide us with some excitement, as we bushwhacked our way to a clean 10 m drop. My pencilling technique saved my back but the impact propelled all the gunk in my ears towards my ear drums and my ears were filled with water for the rest of the trip!

We befriended a local boater called Ferdinand, who spent his life raft guiding and making paddles. He turned out to be something of a rarity, a Costa Rican who is into grade 5 creek boating (whereas most of the local talent is into grade 3-4 and play boating). The fact that he is ¼ German may have something to do with this I suspect. We were the sacrificial lambs he was looking for,

as he led us off to probable slaughter on the upper reaches of the Poza Azul, which he had paddled for the first time 3 weeks earlier (a first descent). Boating with strangers is always risky and sure enough, I was cursing him as he got us lost on the way there through the jungle (I mean, how the hell did he forget?) and then proceeded to lead the group upstream. Two more big drops and various gnarly boulders and slots and we were back at the 10 m drop, which we immediately ran without pausing for breath. The result was that I popped up behind the fall as Mark landed. Mark was rather surprised to look around only to see bats flying out from behind the fall followed by a bemused looking Chris, Hurley Weir's very own Dracula, the Prince of Darkness.

The Poza Azul was clearly nothing more than a masochistic tester, because Ferdinand was then talking about teaming up to run the Patria, which, along with the Atlantico, is one of Costa Rica's epic test pieces.

After a couple of easy days on the Sucio and Peyibaye, there we were again, loading up in the middle of the night- 3 am. By 5.30 am, at first light, we were bushwhacking our way through the jungle. After 3 hours of blood, sweat and tears, spent hauling kit along a tenuous 'trail' whilst trying to look out for snakes and trying to avoid a long slide down the steep slope to our side, we finally made it. After an hour of rock bashing down a ditch of a river, we arrived at the portage from hell, as we were faced with a choice between a blind gorge and 60 ft drop and a portage up near vertical jungle clad walls. We opted for the portage but, heaven knows, I'd be tempted to run the falls next time- if I ever

"The Poza Azul was clearly nothing more than a masochistic tester."

RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE

THE FACTS:

Finding out more: the guidebook:

We won't bore you with a lengthy fact file, because pretty much all you need to know is contained in the new guidebook, 'Chasing Jaguars- The Complete Guide to Costa Rican White Water', by Lee Eudy (2003). This book represents a big step forward from the 1987 guidebook. It's comprehensive, covering 20 rivers/ over 40 sections, plus accommodation, rafting companies and even taxi drivers. The book can be ordered direct via www.earthboundssports.com.

When to go:

Costa Rica is in sub tropical Central America, sandwiched between Panama and Nicaragua. Go between June to December, during the wet season. Rainfall peaks in June and October. We were there during the latter half of August during a relatively dry spell, by wet season standards. Expect maximum temperatures ranging from around 22 degs c inland in the hills at San Jose to 30 degs c or more on the coast, and expect sunshine in the mornings and rain from mid afternoon onwards.

Getting there:

Flights to San Jose via Miami are available through kayak friendly British Airways. They team up with other airlines, typically American Airways or Iberia, for the Miami to San Jose flight, who will try to charge you for kayaks on the way home.

Getting around:

Taxis are readily available, consisting of everything from cars with roof racks to cattle trucks and minibuses. The 4 main paddling areas are not far from San Jose but the roads are not great. It typically takes around 2 to 4 hours to travel between each area, so it is possible to paddle every day, without losing a day to travelling.

Where to stay:

Cheap hotels are readily available, with kayak friendly accommodation available in Turriabla and La Virgen.

Where to eat:

Cheap restaurants are plentiful. You will, however, develop a deep seated hatred of rice and beans.

Kayak hire and rafting:

Kayaks are available for hire from the very helpful Phil Coleman in Turrialba but the choice is very limited. I was lucky and found a mint condition H3 to hire after writing off my boat. Fly out with your own boats. Rafting takes place in all the main paddling destinations.

And finally:

Learn some basic Spanish. It's a great help when it all goes 'pear shaped' (and let's face it, it's bound to at some point, it always does).

went back. A cheap comment indeed given that I probably won't!

As we started to look for a suitable camping spot, sure enough it started to rain and to make matters worse, I wrote off my boat, a sharp rock cutting a long gash in the hull. Rather worrying given that we were deep in the jungle and still had some 15 miles to go. Dinner was a grim affair, as we sat in the rain pathetically trying to make a meal out of cheese slices and tins of tuna and scrambled to save our kit as the river started to rise. Poor Mark- he looked so happy and snug in his brand new Goretex bivvy bag, blissfully unaware of the rising waters surrounding him.

The following day, our day of suffering was rewarded with 14 miles of top quality continuous steep boulder garden grade 4+ to 5. Wonderful stuff, and certainly interesting in a boat half full of water.

Our epic adventure was supposed to be followed by a 'rest day'. However, Mark's idea of a rest day was to drive for 4 hours to the south coast and paddle the Buenavista and Upper General, which as it happened, were in big brown water spate.

The Lower Chirripo Pacifico provided us with more great 4+ boulder garden boating, and one more broken boat. For the last 3 days we wound down with runs on Rios Guabo, Division, Savegre and Naranjo. More importantly, we finally found time to chill out by the beach and test out the surfing capabilities of our blobby creek boats. The sea was so hot!

We at long last had time to rest from our punishing schedule and contemplate. Within the space of 16 days, we'd given the new guidebook a thorough road test, paddling 16 of the 20 rivers covered, and both the guidebook and country had surpassed our expectations. Is there more to Costa Rica than a limited number of grade 3 classics and extreme epics? You bet there is. Sure, we experienced both of the above, but also beautiful gorges, waterfalls, spate boating, surfing and an endless supply of boulder gardens rapids. Coupled with tropical rain forest, beaches, volcanoes, exotic wildlife and a wonderfully friendly local population, and it really is about time that Costa Rica experienced something of a renaissance amongst UK boaters.



Chris Wheeler was nervously looking out for snakes 'deep in jungle' with Andy Levick, Andy McMahon, Mark Rainsley, Cheryl Robinson, Dave Surman and Simon Wiles.

MAGIC KNEES NEWS



Chris 'Magic Knees' Wheeler

“Jumping in unfamiliar boats and being fired down the Ogwen gun barrel- exciting.”

I didn't have time to write anything last time- we were deep in the jungle in Costa Rica. Well, I've now just got back from a (non paddling) trip to India and a creek boating weekend in North Wales. I'm not going to bore you with too much detail about what we've been up to since June.

Knees seen flat water touring and sea kayaking....

We've had various weekends away: sea kayaking in Dorset (the St Albans Head tidal race in wobbly sea kayaks- quite exciting); sea kayaking in play boats on the Gower; another Bitches trip (sunshine and 7m plus tides- another good one); and a trip to Cambridge with the boats.

Costa Rica

See the Paddles and CKUK Nov issues. You should find a copy of my CKUK article elsewhere in this issue.

Early start to the UK white water season...

2/3 Oct- Devon

SW Boat Show- a really good event, but really, we jumped the gun- we had no rain and no paddling- a first.

23/24 Oct- North Wales....

A great start to the season. The Ogwen in big spate and then a portagefest on the Lledr, followed by the Upper Mawwdach from the Gain confluence on the Sunday. We were doing a group creek boat test for Paddles magazine. Jumping in unfamiliar boats and being fired down the Ogwen gun barrel- exciting.

Coming up.....

Upper Dart

I asked for 18/19 Dec and 15/16 Jan (4 tickets per day) but it all went quiet. Maybe I should've

sent them some money. Hmm. Anyway, when it rains we'll paddle it anyway.

Lyn

I've got: Lyn: 6/7 Nov, 20/21 Nov, 4/5 Dec, 26/27 Feb (8 tickets per day). Again, we'll go when it rains.

20/21 Nov

Playboating magazine's 10th anniversary party at the Dart Centre.

11/12 Dec (was 18/19 Dec)

Mr Westgarth's Adventure Paddlers weekend, again at the Dart Centre.

And finally...yes I really did show up to a Wednesday night club session. That was probably my first trip to Sutton Courtenay Weir in 10 years. Sure, we were over manned (I must've been one of at least 6 coaches there) but, well, it was about time.

Chris 1 Nov 2004