



Paignton Canoe Club

May 2011

Welcome to 2011??

Firstly, Jon Roberts is updating the website & requires any good photos of any of the clubs activities for the site. Please email him on jon@westcountrybusiness.com There is a thread on the website forum about thoughts & ideas for the revamp & any ideas are most welcome.

From May through to the end of September we are out in the sea. Details of trips can be found elsewhere in the newsletter. Please have a look at some of the thoughts on paddling that we have taken from the information sheet & reprinted to go with the trips... If in doubt, ask for advice. We want everyone to enjoy the trips safely while having a good evening's experience. Please also try to share transport & leave anything valuable or of sentimental value safely at home. Cheers Rob C. 07986898083

December Trip to CIWW - Mike Barnes

It was a cold, cold Saturday in December. Weeks of no rain and an empty river had meant no paddling for longer than anyone wanted to think about. The frustration had finally got the better of Lawrence, Mike, Martin, Neil and Jon and so in desperation we'd organised a trip to Cardiff International White Water Centre. The day started in sub-zero temperatures, chiselling thick ice off the cars for a meet in Newton Abbot. Small doubts over the wisdom of our plan crept in but were quickly dispelled. We then discovered that CIWW had been shut the previous day due to a thick covering of ice on the bottom pool, causing concerns over safety and possible damage to the pumps. More doubts crept in, but collectively we convinced ourselves this was still a good idea. We loaded boats and kit into Mike's car and waited for 9.30am when we could make the phone call to find out if the centre was going to be open. The time came, the call was made and the trip was on!

Martin had arranged to meet us there and arrived ahead of us, so was the first (and only) kayak on the course. When he hit the water the staff were still breaking up the ice on the bottom pool, but undeterred the first run was completed only to find that when he got back down to the pool it had already started to re-freeze! When the rest of us arrived

the car thermometer was reading 2 degrees, but no wimping out now though. We signed in, got on the course, decided to forego the practice rolls in the icy pool and started the runs. Almost immediately hands were numb, bodies were cold and spirits were dropping (and nothing quite motivates you not to capsize than barely above freezing water and ice on the ground).

After just two or three runs we were forced to stop, and our earlier doubts were now clear thoughts of "What have we done? We've just driven over 2 hours for this!!" A trip to the café for a coffee (and the shop for some gloves) re-ignited our enthusiasm and we got back on the water, determined not to let the freezing conditions beat us – and they didn't. We got warmer and the runs got better. Although the temperature didn't encourage the usual amount of playing, you can still have a great time on the course running the drops and hopping from one swirling, boiling eddy to the next. I performed my first impressive and COMPLETELY unintentional loop during a munching on the second drop and Jon put in some excellent runs which were even more impressive considering he'd only completed his Introduction to White Water course a few weeks earlier!

We left at the end of the day in total agreement that making the trip had been worth it. Although we also agreed that next time we'd wait until it was just a little bit warmer...

Cardiff again, Jez & Neil both went up to Cardiff in a bit better weather, the water was liquid this time! The course had been changed to produce more drops & stoppers rather than waves. & so a third trip was proposed through the website forum.

Myself, Neil & Jez went up again, leaving Newton at around 8am we got up there ready for as they changed the flow from 4 cumecs up to 8 cumecs. We hit the course & ran it a few times & eventually spent most of the time on the last wave at the bottom of the course. Both Jez & Neil were doing some great linked spins on the wave with Jez attaining some clean spins – no paddle in the water! After a long day & a

large pasty it was time to head back home. Arriving back at 7 in the evening, another fun trip with glorious sunshine all day long. Suntan lotion in April? Must be a mistake?

Severn Bore – Sunday 20 February

7.50am. Slide down four foot of very muddy bank (please, Lord, don't let me get stuck, nose down in the glutinous mud in front of a hundred or so spectators!) Into an equally muddy but peaceful River Severn meandering towards the coast at about 3mph. Heart thumping now in expectation, listening for the first calls of "there it is!" from the spectators on the bank. Join Rob and Mike in the middle of the river and begin to make our way, with the current, down river where we plan to meet the bore. Other surfers and kayakers catch our eye and smile. We make desultory conversation, counting the minutes, feeling the adrenalin. Nobody that we speak to seems to have done it before. We wait, drifting gently downstream then paddling back to hold our position against the pull and tug of the river, trying to gauge the best place to catch the bore. Position yourself wrongly and it's gone – a long trip all for nothing. You only get one chance. Too far towards the centre and there's just an unrideable swell; too close to the bank and it'll chew you up. Becoming concerned as more and more surfers and kayakers enter the river and paddle even further downstream towards where the river sweeps to the left. Do we go with them and outflank them? Leapfrog them further and even further downstream? The night before in our reconnaissance, we had seen that the wave breaks on the inside of bends and seems to be rideable only about 10-15 metres from the bank. But each bore is different, we are told by a waitress in the Severn Bore Inn. Nothing is the same and it changes depending on the rainfall, the wind, the shape of the river bottom, the curve of the banks. Decide to stay where we are, Rob opting to wait closer to mid river, Mike and I about 10m from the outside bank. Ten minutes to go. Quiet prayer. Five... suddenly two shots are heard – a signal? Someone shooting birds? Paddlers begin to stir, necks craning. It's the spectators who see the wave first. Shouts of, "Here it comes...I can see it!" Heart beats faster. Peer downstream towards the bend in the river. Nothing. Surfers downstream quickly lie on their boards and start jostling for position. It's definitely coming! And then I can see it, a wall of water darkening as it peaks, river centre. The face steepens, darkens and begins to topple into a beautiful right break. (Why wasn't I just there?) A lucky kayaker, just in the perfect spot, paddles for it and he's on, cutting right! Quick glance to the large group of about 6 kayakers and 10 surfers directly between me and the wave. Time to turn and start paddling. The wave is breaking on the right now, bearing down on Mike and me at a furious pace spitting kayakers and surfers out the back (especially those who chose inappropriate boats, including an inflatable double and a very long creek boat that is immediately overturned). I

see what seems like a solid wall of surfboards and kayaks heading straight for me, but I turn and begin to paddle upstream, gaining momentum for when the wave hits. Those bearing down on me will have to give me room or ride over me – nothing I can do about it now. To my left and out of sight, Rob paddles hard but can't get on the wave. His choice of middle river is, sadly, the wrong one and he makes his way to the shore thinking of what might have been. The next few minutes are fairly chaotic with kayaks and surfboards all over the place. I'm on the wave and hurtling along at a furious pace. My main memory of the first few seconds is trying to keep my kayak straight; suddenly it broaches rapidly to the left and I bash into another kayaker and Mike (both, I'm pleased to say, stayed on the wave – not that I knew at the time.) Then, suddenly, it's Mike's (or rather Andy's) kayak that decides to swerve rapidly right and knocks me sideways. Tangled, my bow half over Mike's, we career in the rolling foam up behind three surfers, above them in the breaking wave and fighting to stay on and upright. Then suddenly we part, a surfer falls and Mike gets tangled in his leash; he is pulled rapidly backwards off the back of the wave. At first he thinks he's snagged something in the river but then he sees the leash and frees himself. The wave for Mike is gone, disappearing madly upstream. Even with the whole river surging upstream, there is no way one can catch it. I now find myself on the extreme right hand side of the river, beginning to feel more in control, firmly on the wave and keeping my boat reasonably straight. I am able, just briefly, to think to myself: "I'm riding the Severn bore!" and feel a surge of excitement. But there are six of us on the wave (5 surfers and me) and, as it is only rideable close to the bank, those on the outside, understandably, begin to push towards me, boxing me in against the bank. Tree roots and branches hanging in the water start coming uncomfortably close as we hurtle along. The wave hits obstructions on the bank right next to me and flings great gouts of churned-up muddy water into my face. I steer left, nudging the surfer next to me into deeper water but he bends down and pushes me towards the bank, giving himself more room. It's every man for himself and he's going to stay on the wave even if he has to push me into a tree. It's not personal. I duck under hanging branches of a tree close to the bank and make it through, still on the wave. Again I turn towards deeper water and again my "rival" bends down and calmly pushes me away from him towards the churning bank. I remonstrate loudly but by this time there is a whole tree half submerged in the water directly in front of me. Before I can change direction I hit it and I'm upside down in the water. I can feel turbulent water and branches scraping around me and decide to bail. I make it without further problems to the muddy bank and, after a bit of a struggle, manage to clamber out, empty my kayak and ferry glide across the river. Portage back to the car. Rob and Mike are there, loaded up and ready to rush to Overbridge to see if we can get in front of the bore again. A mad dash and we make it

in about 12 minutes. Large groups of spectators on the bridge and bank. "Has it come through yet?" I shout while running towards the river. No – and we scramble into our kayaks and slide down a very steep muddy bank about 12ft high and into the water. A few minutes later and the bore is on us! Sadly, this far upstream it's not a wave at all, rather a massive surge of water impossible to catch. We drag ourselves out, covered in mud, load up and climb into Rob's even more muddy car to find somewhere for a large hot breakfast. We're still in our canoeing gear but the owner is welcoming. Sitting next to us, two men who were at the Severn Bore Inn and had taken video footage of us on the bore, promise to send it to us via email.

So, that was it! To round off a truly great weekend, we drove into the Brecon Beacons and paddled a section of the Usk – which was fun but made us count our blessings to be living so close to the Dart. And so, tired but content (except Rob who kept on muttering: "I'll be back" as he planned his next assault on the bore) we make our weary way home.

Severn Bore - Mike Barnes

The rush started on Saturday evening – standing on the bank at the Severn Bore Inn staring into the darkness, waiting for the wave. Suddenly the roar can be heard, long before anything can be seen, and then it appears. A surging, crashing wall of brown soup, carrying all manner of flotsam and jetsam races past you and back off into the night. During those fleeting seconds, as the wave passed, my brain went into overtime trying to calculate the optimum spot to catch my ride, which direction to try and steer (little did I know how futile that thought would be) and most importantly how best to avoid getting hung up in a tree.

During a night of broken sleep (only partly due to Rob's snoring, the rest due to anticipation) I planned my ride and played it countless times in my head. Morning came, breakfast was skipped, and before I knew it I was back outside the Severn Bore Inn – this time bobbing around on the water. I was in a boat borrowed for the occasion and selected for the Bore-surfing potential of its design (thanks Andy!). By the time I heard the familiar roar again my heart was racing and the Adrenalin was now coursing through my whole body. All planning went out the window. The wave scooped me up and immediately an upturned creek boat crashed into my side. Who brings a creek boat to the Severn Bore? I managed to swerve, dodge, stay upright and the ride was on! It was pure carnage, with tens of surfers and kayakers all vying for the ultimate spot on the wave – like nothing I've experienced before. The infamous YouTube video shows me that my ride lasted about 150m, until a falling surfer lassoed me with his leash and I was dragged off the wave. Although it was all over in about 30 seconds, those 30 seconds felt like 30 minutes.

Massive respect to Lawrence, our very own 'King of

the Bore', who survived the initial melee to emerge at the head of the wave as the last remaining kayaker – and in doing so got the longest ride of any of us. So as far as the bucket list goes, I can now tick off 'ride the Severn Bore', but that definitely won't be the end of it. Having done it once, learnt a lot of valuable information along the way, I'm already thinking about the next time and the next ride – longer, faster and with fewer surfers wrapped around me.

My turn.... Cruise up to Wales, have a lovely walk along a canal, drive to the Severn & have a steak from the White Hart at Newnham upon Severn, Medium rare.... The bore is due while were eating so the food goes on the hotplate as we rush outside to see a rolling pile of water charge upstream, the level in the river rises rapidly with the fast flowing water. Then calm as the waves subdue & the river just flows by. Minutes later every bit of flotsam & jetsam in the river washes past the pub like a raft of rubbish. Finish our meals & then head upstream to the Severn Bore Inn, we stand & wait, discuss thoughts & tactics & wait for the noise of the approaching bore. Under the floodlights our thoughts are honed & after a visit to one last location & its back to Newport to sleep but it's hard to sleep when your minds been overloaded with thoughts, sounds & fear of the following day. Awake, early, change & head out, Boats & boards on cars & vans everywhere, everyone up for the same challenge. Hit the water at the Severn Bore Inn & await the wave it's like a zoo with so many people on the river. I decided to go for the cleanest bit of wave, further out but hopefully clear of the crowds right by the bank... Here it comes, positioned ok, paddle hard. Those first three stroke that would have you surfing on the sea just stop your backward flow with the river, paddle harder, still not fast enough to catch the bore in that position, maybe a second wave behind the first main wave? No, game over & head to the bank & get the boats on the car to head upstream. Mike joins me at the car & we wait & wait & wait for Lawrence, What a ride he had!

Revenge is sweet... Take the Surfboats... Next large bore a month later, Myself & Lawrence head up on the Sunday night, watch the bore & see that the river level has dropped, more chances to surf with a better wave upriver. Monday morning, Paddle down to meet the bore again, Lawrence again got a reasonable ride but again I was in the wrong position... Time to raise my game. Back to the Severn Bore Inn, a lot less people, Here comes the bore, Caught it, there's 6 of us on it, head towards the bank as far as possible, the Jester surfing smoothly, I'm on it, SURFING THE BORE, Yeehar! I don't know how long I was riding it but long enough to tick that box & have time to think about my ride. Once again Lawrence gets an even longer ride & is equally happy. Head to Overbridge for third go, strange wave there with Lawrence doing a wall ride up the bank close to the trees, Thank God he gets away with it! Time to head home, Happy & stoked with talk of how to combine the Bore with a trip to Cardiff.

Christmas meal, Harbour Lights Paignton, Saturday 18th December

Despite it being a really cold week with snow & lots of ice most people turned up for the meal. Some could not attend due to being ice bound miles away. There was even thick ice on the harbourside & promenade. The food was lovely & thanks to Andrew at the Harbour Lights for their welcome. Sorry to those who couldn't make it & hope you can join us later this year. Afterwards there was the usual trip to the pubs of Paignton for the rest of the evening. Anyone got any thoughts on a location for this year's meal....?

Pool sessions.

These were very quiet for most of the winter & even made a slight loss with money received less than what was spent in pool hire.

The highlights of the sessions have included some excellent games of kayak football with enough for 3 large teams at the Christmas game. We also got to see the return of some members from a few years ago. Colin Walker a regular ww paddler for years returned after a break & we also saw the return of Jordan Pontin, Son of Phil, and a previous Chairman. Jordan scored a goal with a brilliant powerful shot on goal. His skills in a boat or with the ball have not diminished with a number of years in Aus & NZ. Max, his Sister was an enthusiastic player in the same game with some good tussles with older bro! Great fun! We are back in the pool in October! Membership will start from October this year & will give a good reduction in pool fees for members. Join up on the poolside or at the AGM. Is there anything we should be putting on during the winter?

Early notice – AGM – Sept 27th

Location on web forum, FB page & newsletter nearer the time!

Sea trips

There have been a few trips organized by individual members who have included Mike & Dave paddling along the coast to The Erme estuary in two days with camping overnight. A lively Easterly swell kicking up some interesting conditions around Start Point. Photos can be seen linked through the Clubs Facebook page but tellingly none of the Point! Lawrence also executed a superb solo paddle from Tewkesbury down to the first Severn crossing bridge. A long slog down the estuary finishing with going through the exciting stoppers at the Hen & Chickens overfalls. His trip included camping along the route, climbing up the muddy banks to get out & await the passing of the Severn bore! Photos on the Facebook page again.

Other trips

We may have another long Cornwall day trip in July along the coast if there is enough interest? Maybe two day trips with camping & an evening enjoying the local hospitality in the evening? Surfing at Bantham/Saunton/Woolacombe? Keep

your eye on facebook & the forum. Possibly a day trip to N.Devon, with a stop for food in the evening? Any thoughts?

Wye Valley

Anyone fancy a trip to the Wye Valley in July? I'm thinking of the weekend 8th/9th with camping at Bracelands, Forestry Commission campsite? With paddling the usual trip? Or the paddling & do the trip from Ross on Wye to Redbrook? Speak to me if interested or post on the forum?

Club gear

Could you get any books & DVD's back to Jez & into the library? We've bought some more kit... More books & videos I believe & for the courses, some helmets that fit larger heads. These will be most beneficial as it has been a recurring problem on the courses!

Speaking of courses, Thanks To Tim & Kati for running the courses, in the pool & on the sea. The feedback from all the participants has been very appreciative! Both this course & the one last year have seen a week in the harbour with a large swell. Too much for surfing at the beach but a good time to get people to paddle out of the harbour & into a bigger swell to briefly experience a wider sea.

Sea safety course

Jez has organised two sea safety courses with Lee Pooley. They will cover everything from rescues to flares & everything in between? We are looking forward to the feedback from the first course & hope that it will be a useful experience for the club & the participants.

We will probably run another Thursday rescue get wet session sometime during the summer. A great time to share knowledge & to practise on a night when you can dress for the water with getting wet guaranteed!

The website & forum

As mentioned, Jon Roberts is giving the website a refresh & wants any good photos emailed to him for use on the site. Also any thoughts on the new site would be appreciated!

At the moment the old site is still up & running with the forum in the member's area, username pcc & password kayak! Get on the site & then create your own username to login & post on the forum! As is usual the website occasionally suffers with server problems but as a back up there is the Paignton Canoe Club Facebook site/group which has proved quite useful.

Tuesday Night Trips

These all start at 7pm & except for longer paddles go on till 9pm.

For the first 4 weeks in May we will be meeting at 7pm Paignton harbour. There is no parking on the harbour side! You may drive in to drop off your boats but you will need to then find a parking space elsewhere. Please be aware of other harbour users, keep boats away from the slipway & away from any marked pedestrian areas.

The club trailer with the kit will be brought to these harbour sessions but those on the beginner course will get first choice of boat.

After the four May paddles from the harbour we will meet at Young's Park Road (YPR) Goodington. There are no facilities there! Please respect the locals by changing quietly & discretely at the end of the sessions. The trailer will NOT be brought to any other Tuesday sessions as it is impossible to park it most places we go to. Anyone wishing to hire club kit for a paddle will need to organize this with a Committee Member at least 2 days before a session.

31st May

Meet at Meadfoot to paddle towards Tor Abbey or just to Torquay Harbour – chips anyone?

7th June

Paddle from YPR to Silver Cove, next to Elberry Cove for a BBQ, bring your cooking gear, food & drinks. No pedestrian access.

14th June

Meet at Meadfoot again but for a longer & more exposed paddle around the Orestone & Thatchers Rocks. Park at the car park end, or along the roadside. Bring lights.

21st June

Babbacombe to Coombe Cellars. Meet 6.30 at the beach car park, to do a shuttle of dry clothing & cars to the finish point. A longer paddle with a late finish 10.30? Bring lights & even helmets for exploring the undercut cliffs if it's a flat calm sea. It's was a very lumpy trip last year!

28th June

Paddle from YPR for beach games at Broadsands, bring some food & drink. Can the Chairman's side win at rounders again?

2nd July, SATURDAY

BLDSA Cross Torbay swim – Paddlers required – details elsewhere

5th July

Paddle from Stoke Gabriel to Bow Creek & the Waterman's Arms, return late again! Lights, money & some warm clothes for sitting out in the beer garden in the evening. Friends & relatives are welcome to meet us at the pub from around 8pm.

12th July

Paddle from YPR.

14th July, THURSDAY

Rescue practise night. Definitely a wet session! Meet dressed for a swim location T.B.C. either harbour or Goodrington. All good fun!

19th July

Kingswear to Brixham, a 9 mile paddle. Meet 6.30 in the Darthaven Marina car park, Kingswear, to run a shuttle. Late finish, 10.30pm we will stop once at Mansands so bring a snack & a drink. You will need a light for later. Share transport & parking fees. Longer boats only please – It would be a long slog in a 2m playboat!

26th July

Meet Brixham breakwater car park to paddle around Berryhead & explore the caves. Lights will be useful in the caves!

3rd August

Paddle from Stoke Gabriel to Dittisham & return.

9th August

Bay Paddle from YPR, back at a sensible time.

16th August

Exe Estuary, Cockwood to the Turf Lock Hotel, Meet at the Exeter side of the Harbour to be on water for 7.30pm, return late 10.30? Bring lights, money & remember to paddle as close groups on the way back – it will be dark!

23rd August

Paddle from Broadsands to Churston Cove for a BBQ. Note barrier height 1.98m & gate locked at 10pm!

30th August

Meet Stoke Gabriel to paddle up river, exploring Duncannon & beyond.

6th September

Meet Meadfoot to paddle towards Babbacombe exploring Ansteys Cove & Redgate beach.

13th September

Meet Longmarsh car park, past Steamer Quay Bridgetown, Totnes to paddle up towards the weir. Wear helmets if you plan to play on the weir & throwlines just in case! There is the river Hems to explore as well.

20th September

Meet Kingswear to explore Dartmouth in the dark, bring lights.

27th September

AGM – Location to be announced!

Please try to share transport & leave anything of any momentary or sentimental value safely at home.

Coming for a paddle? Have a quick read of this...

1. Listen to the experienced club paddlers if they decide a trip is not a good idea on the day.
2. Be prepared. Have the appropriate kit for the trip and take advice from more experienced paddlers on the stamina required for the trip.
3. Less than three there should never be, less than that & it's not a club trip!
4. Take care of each other. Everybody is responsible for the whole group's safety. Know how many people are out paddling with you. Make sure everyone gets off the water accounted for. Keep as a group or smaller groups of three.
5. Tell us if you leave. If you wish to separate from a PCC group, please make sure that the experienced paddlers know you are going!
6. Try not to be late. But if you are late to a trip and the group has gone you are welcome to catch up but you do so entirely at your own risk and as an individual. No one will know anything about your plans or be looking out for you! Beware!
7. Trust your own instincts & knowledge. Know the times of the tides, the weather forecast, hazards along the trip & local conditions. Be an active paddler within the group!

Finally have fun, it's meant to be enjoyable! Cheers Rob.

There have been a couple of people mentioning boats that maybe for sale.

Firstly a Prijon Fly, See Rob C.

Also with more impending fatherhood, Rob Porter is considering selling his Yellow Capella sea kayak, used maybe twice? Obviously it's in superb condition & as such while he is open to offers, please bear in mind these kayaks are £1000 new! See Rob Porter or contact Rob C for his number.

BLDSA Cross Torbay swim Saturday 2nd July 2011

Fancy helping out on a swim, across the bay & back? The British Long Distance Swimming Association is looking for experienced paddlers to provide swim support for the Cross Torbay Swim. Each paddler will receive £40 for their efforts. You will have to be happy to paddle slowly across the Bay at the speed of a swimmer, keeping your kayak in a suitable line for the swimmer to follow. You will need to be at Meadfoot about an hour before the start to make contact with your swimmer. The Swim starts at 11am from Meadfoot Beach with the swimmers rounding a turn boat off Brixham harbour and returning to Meadfoot Beach- a distance of 8 miles (Veteran swimmers will finish at the turn boat) There will be a time limit of 5hrs. 30mins on the full swim. The number of entries will be limited to the number of boats so if you can spare the time Please contact Mrs Joan Metcalfe tel: 01296 437806 or email her at joanmetcalfe@btopenworld.com

Note: you will be making a commitment to be there on the day & if you cannot make it, please inform the organisers!

Other swim events – There may be a swim down the Dart that will be advertised through the forum. This was a lovely event last year & you should get a breakfast or food at the end of the swim.