

Paignton Canoe Club Member

Well we are into the final month of the club winter calendar. It's good to see that people have pushed themselves and paddled some new harder rivers and had some fun doing it. There is at least 1 polo session coming up to finish off the pool sessions, see below. Soon Tuesday sessions will be back outside.

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

Jeremy (vice chairman and editor)

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From The Chairman

April sees the last month of the pool sessions. We will be advertising our Tuesday nights on the forum & in next month's newsletter. Please let us know where you fancy going or any different ideas. Please remember that the Tuesdays are for those with the suitable skills & if in any doubt about the trip ask for advice. Note that conditions can change & plans can be changed.

We will probably end the pool sessions with an evening of kayak football, keep any eye open on the forum for any announcements.

Many thanks and well done to our secretary Richard O'Brian for organising the excellent paddler's party at the River Dart Country Park! A great time was had by all and lots of ££££ was raised for Dartmoor Rescue

Finally with the lighter evenings as the clocks change, evening paddles are easier to arrange, there's AS Watersports' Thursday Night Splash & it's also possible to get to Bantham for surf for the more experienced,

Enjoy the pool & see you on the water.

Rob

Latest News and Recent Events

Summer Kayak Hire for £20

The kayaks stored on the trailer will be available to hire for the whole of the summer season for £20 each. That will be from May to the end of September, when the winter season starts and we go back into the pool. Members interested will need to contact Jo the treasurer.

Go to the following link to see full details on club kayak hire.

<http://www.paigntoncanoecub.org.uk/restricted/ClubKitMembers.html>

Berry Head Caves

(by Tim D)

There are some wonderful caves if you paddle to Berry Head and turn right, just around the corner. But the area from Berry Head to the Southern Redoubt (the headland of the southern fort) is an Area of Special Protection, where one of the largest colonies of guillemots settles to breed every year. There is especial sensitivity between the end of March and the end of July. Anyone (climber, swimmer, boat user etc) who disturbs nesting birds or their subsequent young is likely to be found guilty of an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. And of course anyone so acting will be messing up our lovely area.

It is best to stay outside the line between the end of Berry Head and the end of the next headland from now until August.

<https://www.countryside-trust.org.uk/seashore/seashore-what-we-do/marine-conservation>

Tim

Great Party Rich!!

Last month saw the Paddlers Party held at the River Dart country Park which was organised by our very own club secretary Richard O'Brien. It was a great success, attended by lots of kayakers, club members and non-members alike, and even a couple who were getting married on the same day at the RDCP!!!

There were some interesting lectures and a disco with some very, how should we put this, creative dance moves going on into the night. There was a raffle (again organized and run by Rich) with lots of great prizes donated by various organisations (not one of which was won by me!!!) and an auction of a top end white-water paddle donated by Gene 17.

A total of £1420 was raised for Dartmoor Search and Rescue. So a big thanks to Richard for all the work he put into setting up and running the Party, and thanks to everyone who came along to make it such a success.

Sea Kayaking

(by Ronnie B)

It starts on Tuesdays, the dialogue of where, if, when, and how? Weather charts and reports are scanned through the week. We are a varied group of people with a variety of boats: Avocets, Wsunamies, Norcap and Anuacuta . Sunday about 9.30am is our usual time to meet around our dramatic coast, Oddocmbe, Goodrington, Breakwater, Kingswear, Dartmouth, Streetgate.

Last year Dave, our angel of the South, dropped us in Kingwear, a secret slipway. What a spectacular paddle, a dazzling sun dancing across the sea, like precious jewels, seals popping up to say hello, as we lazily paddle in and out of caves and coves, around Froward Point, Mew Stone, Outer Froward point, gently bobbing up and down on a south westerly breeze into the remote Puddcombe cove, only accessible by kayak/boat. It's below Coleton Fishacre, home of the Doyly Carts, where the remains of an old sea pool is still evident. John sets up the BBQ on the side of the old pool, it's time for a wild swim through rugged caves and out into the open sea, swimming and snorkelling back into Puddcombe for a BBQ lunch.

We set off again past glorious beaches, Saccabacombe, Longsands, Mansands, round cod rocks. We approach Berry Head and wam! The tide is low, the wind has picked up, the exposed reef has revealed a bumpy messy sea, it feels like we have gone to sea in a washing up bowl as we are tossed about. We battle through only to be met by a figure stood on the rocks below the Berry Head hotel, yes it's our own Angel of the South, Dave, watching for our safe return.

So far our jewel in the crown has to be Lulworth Cove, we kayaked through the famous iconic sea arch of Durdle Door, and then Bat Hole. Oh yes we swam we snorkelled the weather was fabulous for September, under the arch we saw the underwater wonders of purple rocks which looked like diamonds, and the weird tide that dragged you backwards as you tried to swim through the arch. We kayaked, swam, jump, snorkelled the beautiful lagoon of stair Hole. What a superb day! We intend to return this year and we also have a wish list of places we want to kayak from: Budleigh to Simouth, Lyme Regis. Tintagel - Boscastle StartPoint- East Portlemouth. Looe, Rame Head Cawsand to name but a few, you're welcome to join us on any of our trips.

Happy Paddling

Ronnie, Elizabeth , Caroyl, Geoff, John. And of course Dave.

Slalom at Dulverton

(by Martin L)

Rob C. and I (Martin L.) went up on Sat. Morning, ably accompanied by official photographer Lisa, to check it all out. Saturday was practice day with the competition being contested on the Sunday.

The course was on a 200 yard or so stretch of grade 2 water in the lovely village of Dulverton, about an hour and a half from Paignton, just into Somerset. There were 20 gates. 15 (**green**) to be taken going downstream and 5 (**red**) to be taken upstream. Gate 16 (Red) was obviously the tricky one. The water was quite fast down a narrow 2ft drop and the gate was just at the bottom on the right but still in flowing water so if you didn't get it just right you faced a lot of tiring and time wasting strokes to get back up. In the comp. you would be timed start to finish and 2 seconds added if you hit one or both poles at each gate, 50 seconds if you missed a gate (Don't miss a gate!)

We tactically decided to enter the Div. 4 event instead of the 'Open' where there looked to be some handy paddlers. Not medal hunting of course but after seeing a 12 year old absolutely flying down the course getting every gate spot on, his boat hardly touching the water, we didn't want to get in the way. After a few practice runs, not as easy as it looked as they put gates in the most awkward places, we retired to the pub to sample some great local ales - then home.

Jez joined us on Sunday and managed a couple of practice runs with Rob. We all had two timed runs and lo and behold.....Rob won!!!!!! Collecting a lovely trophy and automatic promotion to Div.3, well done Rob. Jez and I had already decided to let him win: 1, He IS the Chairman, 2, He practiced gate 16 at least 300 times and 3, He was better than us (may I add he was also in a quicker boat, creek boats are rubbish for slalom!-ed)! Jez came in 4th and me 5th; a good show from PCC. Thanks to Lisa for some great pics and to Bideford C.C. for organising a flawless event.

Definitely up for the next one.

Martin L

Dulverton Slalom

(by Rob C)

Possibly the first slalom competition for a number of years was recently organised by Bideford CC at Dulverton. A number of our paddlers expressed an interest & on the week before all ears were on the weather forecast. Would it run, will it rain and shall we go? Thursday night & the decision was made, time to plan! The flyer for the event suggested a campsite & a phone call revealed that it was closed until Easter. Searching the internet suggested a bunkhouse, also fully booked but as Dulverton is only 1 ½ hrs away driving both days wouldn't be so bad.

Saturday, myself & Lisa picked up Martin & off we went, discussing everything about slalom in the car (Sorry Lisa). We signed on, Martin suggesting we go in Div 4, the lowest rank. We then looked at the course before changing & heading up to the start of the course to practise, for anyone who knows the River Barle, the slalom was on the last rapid down to the bridge.

It's a simple sport, a test of river running skills. Head through the green downstream gates that were offset and around the upstream red gates in the eddies, time penalties for hitting or missing the gates along with fastest time wins. Paddling Rob Porter's RPM (AKA The swimming boat) looked like a good choice. Fast, manoeuvrable & with low volume ends. Great for stern squirts! All the gates looked simple but with hidden rocks & one upstream gate still in the flow meant accuracy would matter. Practise until around 2pm then with as much done as we could do it was change & pub for beer in glorious sunshine.

Sunday & we'd encouraged Jez out to try it too. A bit more practice & get ready for the timed runs. Everyone was in the pool at the top of the rapid, awaiting their call to start. Your number gets called & after about a minute, you're free to start. Paddle hard over the start line, wiggle through the downstream gates, fast as possible but not too fast, turn for the first upstream gate allowing for the need to turn without hitting the rock in the eddy & head downstream once more, through a little drop & right into another eddy, Gate 16, in the flow with a rock in just the wrong place & upstream! Paddle hard & feel the seconds tick away. A fast s cross & head downstream towards the finish, paddle as hard as you can, cross the line completely worn out!

Both Martin and I had clean runs with Jez, who had not had as much practice, hitting one gate. Second runs, clean again & with Jez across the line it was time to head down to the car park, change & await the results.

I was happy just to have a fun weekend & not to put in too shabby a performance for the club. Think we achieved that. Jez beat Martin with his clean run, all three of us in the top five, not bad for a non-competitive club & I amazed myself with first place in the class! So on to presentation time with the deputy Mayor of Dulverton & time for another beer; all of us remarking on how enjoyable it was & the need to encourage others next time!

Thanks to Rob P. For the boat & to Lisa for driving us all home! Cheers Rob

Bideford CC report: <http://www.bidefordcanoecub.co.uk/slalom-competition-at-dulverton/>

Results & slalom calendar attached!

Did you know the SW region calendar for Canoe England is on line?

<http://www.canoe-england-southwest.org.uk/region11/index.cfm/calendar/>

Go with the flow...

(by Jody T)

River Teign

Ok, so, on Friday 20th February, I paddled a section of the Teign River with some friends. And while I missed having my trusty crew of PCC mates by my side, a great day was had! So, in order to ensure that next time I paddle this section the PCC crew join me too, I was asked to write a short piece about the experience and hopefully wet people's appetites enough to drag them away from our beloved Dart in the near future ;-)

The put in for the section we paddled was at the North/South Teign confluence, and we got out at Fingle Bridge. This made for a trip of about four hours in duration. Our group consisted of six people: myself and two visiting friends from Bristol, along with a couple of Teignbridge Canoe Club members who knew this section well, and one other member of TCC who was new to the section too.

Although I had actually paddled this section before, this was about three years ago on one of my first ever white water paddling trips...and my lasting memory of the day was one of perfecting my white water swimming techniques, as I swam no less than five times! However, I also recalled the sheer beauty and technical challenge of the river in this area and have been keen to get back to it and "enjoy the day" for a while now. So, when I had a rare opportunity to paddle for a whole day, and then I spotted a post on the River Dart Facebook page that someone who knew the river well was looking for others to join him, I jumped at the chance!

As a result of the put in being in very close proximity to Gidleigh Park, the day began with a drive by welcome from none other than Michael Caines himself –early morning celebrity spotting at its finest! We then left our cars safely tucked into the two small laybys present, and got onto the water.

The trip itself is described by the UKRGB as "a good section of grade 3" and, with my very limited knowledge of rivers, I would assume that this is exactly right. But, in my opinion, the grade 3 of this river is very different from the grade 3 of The Loop. The main difference being that there is very little on this section of The Teign in the way of waves/stoppers/drops which can be found on The Loop, and instead, there are a LOT of rocks and tighter technical sections, which makes for a really interesting and enjoyable paddle that certainly keeps you on your toes.

And so it was...very quickly we were greeted by the first of a many "boulder gardens". However, with our knowledgeable guide pointing us in the right direction, we were all soon on our way and negotiating a safe passage through with massive smiles on our faces...which persisted for the remainder of the paddle! And, although there are a couple of longish flatter sections, the majority of the trip is great fun and made for a fantastic day on the water!

Upper Dart

With my appetite for alternative rivers suitably wetted from the successful Teign trip the week before, the following week I was really pleased when Sam Waites offered to “guide” me down the Upper Dart as part of a group of competent paddlers. Paddling the Upper Dart was something that I had been thinking about for a little while now, and, although I was very anxious about it, I knew that Sam and the group which would be paddling with him couldn’t have been better support, and therefore no excuse I might have had was going to be acceptable ...it was simply time for me to take the plunge!?

Upon joining the group at Newbridge, things didn’t get off to a great start when the zip on my dry suit failed. However, my thoughts of the “perfect get out clause” were short lived, as Sam came to the rescue (thanks again Sam!) with a spare bag and trousers...there really wasn’t any getting out of this, and before long the trip had begun.

From the word go, the whole group was brilliant and I felt really well looked after throughout the journey down. In particular, Sam’s expert leadership, and constant words of advice, reassurance and guidance were especially appreciated, and I can’t thank him enough. Also, Jon, Ross and Phil’s regular words of support and encouragement were great too...thanks chaps!

And on to my Upper Dart paddling experience itself. From very early on, it quickly became clear that the mighty Upper Dart was all that I had heard and read about, and it was indeed a big step up from The Loop. Amongst the stunning beauty that the valley provides, there were boulder gardens a plenty, and plenty of challenging white water that pushed my ability to new limits...and beyond!

With my adrenaline levels running high from the off, I’m not entirely sure what features were what, but I do know that when I hit a rock at the end of one particular steeper section and I took my first swim, I did start to wonder how long it would take to walk the rest of the way! However, Sam was excellent at not allowing any time for these questions to surface, and, as soon as I was safely sorted, he would be quick to get me back in my boat and smiling again as the next feature was tackled.

And this is how it continued really. I paddled, swam, grimaced, bounced and smiled my way through the rest of the trip, and had an absolutely fantastic day on the river! As I type this report now on the evening of the experience, I can honestly say that I can still see the exciting visions of the different features up ahead, and can still feel the excitement pulsing through my veins! I really will never forget my first Upper Dart experience –and I hope to return for another go very soon!

Jody T

Upcoming Events and Trips

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

Kayak Football Session Tuesday 21st April

The Tuesday pool session on the 21st April will be dedicated entirely to kayak football. Cost will be £5 per person. Along with a kayak and a paddle you will need a buoyancy aid and helmet if you wish to play.

Club Social 24th April

(by Tim D)

We will be having a Club Skittles Night on Friday 24th April starting at 7:30pm. It will be at The Manor, Preston. The skittle alley is in a rear room behind the pub, separate from the bar areas, so suitable for partners and families to join in the informal fun if you would like to bring them along and pick up some paddle points. The evening is free of cost, but if you would like to be part of a finger buffet then a payment by 10th April latest of £5 is needed. There is a limit to space, so please express an interest if you would like to come. Drinks can be purchased at the bar. We are looking to make this a regular yearly event, so that we have three events spread around the year with the AGM and the Christmas do. We are not sure what to call this event, so please make some family friendly suggestions on the Forum.

<http://www.paigntoncanoecub.org.uk/members/phpBB3/posting.php?mode=post&f=2>

Club Summer Season begins in May

The club summer season will start in May. This means we will be out of the pool and paddling in the local area for Tuesday night sessions until October.

The first summer Tuesday session will be on 5th May, meeting at Paignton harbour, 1900 to paddle in the bay. There is no parking in the harbour itself unfortunately. The beginners' course will be there with the club trailer and club kit. Please do not block the slipway with boats or kit as others will be using the harbour too.

The full 2015 summer season Tuesday night's activities will be published in the next newsletter and the website. Do you have any ideas about what to do for a summer Tuesday session this year? If yes we would love to hear them, contact Rob Cox with your suggestions. Or go to

<http://www.paigntoncanoecub.org.uk/members/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=4&t=1554>

For more details on club summer sessions see:

<http://www.paigntoncanoecub.org.uk/ClubNights.html>

Sea Grass survey

(by Tim D)

A new initiative has been launched to survey the sea grass beds of the south coast in our area. This is a three year Citizen Science Community Initiative supported by The Lottery Fund, Torbay Coast and Country, Living Coasts and others. <https://www.facebook.com/CommunitySeagrassInitiative?fref=ts>

There are sea grass (eel grass) beds in Torbay, homes to sea horses and other wonderful species. They are our equivalent of the rain forest. They only grow in shallow waters and are sensitive to human interference (often accidental). Present decline rates are in the order of 7% reduction in area per year, not sustainable for long. http://www.dbrc.org.uk/i/Seagrass_map_website.pdf

There is a great need for more knowledge of these beds. PCC will be given the opportunity to participate in coastal surveys over the next three years, primarily involving towing an underwater camera and lighting system along preferred tracks along the coast. There will be a GPS and camera output display on the deck in front of the paddler.

Further information, a presentation and training will be coming our way in the next few months. If you are interested in participating please let me know,

Thanks

Tim

tim.durrant1@gmail.com

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

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

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

Club Communication

Emails: info@paigntoncanoecclub.org.uk

newsletter@paigntoncanoecub.org.uk Please use this for anything relating to the newsletter and only the newsletter. Please do **not** give this email out to non-members.

Website: <http://www.paigntoncanoecub.org.uk>

Club Forum: (for members only)

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

Username: pcc

Password: paddles

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

Facebook: Love it or hate it, it's used a lot. PCC has a facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/44208464189/> which we allow anyone to join and use, so please only put on there what you want the whole world to see.

Committee Telephone Numbers: (For Members only)

http://www.paigntoncanoecub.org.uk/restricted/Members_Contact.html

All Committee members are unpaid volunteers with separate full time Jobs

The Next Newsletter

We want you to contribute to the Newsletter. ALL MEMBERS please email to newsletter@paigntoncanoecub.org.uk anything you want to put into the newsletter.

Newsletter Info (including what we are looking for) can be found at:

<http://www.paigntoncanoecub.org.uk/members/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=4&t=1434&p=5196#p5196>

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

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

Happy Paddling
Jeremy