



Newsletter Aug /Oct 2008

Yes, it has been a while since I've produced a regular Newsletter so hopefully this will be the start of a more regular item. So I think we can all thank Ron for holding the fort and keeping us all informed of what is happening out there in the paddling world. It will take another one or two copies to be back on track.

If any member wishes to contribute to the newsletter please feel free to do so. The contribution can be a trip report or even just a note that you have some items for sale or anything related to paddling. This information can be given to Ron Downie for inclusion in the next Newsletter. (November/December)

Just in case you have not noticed, the weather this year had been appalling, well for touring anyway. I can't remember such period of time when the wind has been so strong for so many months of the year, or maybe it's just windy on the days I plan to paddle! As a result there have been quite a few trips cancelled. Hopefully we might get a lull in the weather for the remainder of the year and actually get out and do some real paddling.

Pool

Yes, summer is nearly over and we are back in the pool on Tuesday the 2nd of September at 8pm.

Membership Fees

Club Membership Fees are due by the 30th of September 08, so if you wish to remain a member please pay your membership by then. This can be paid at the pool-side or a trip or by post. Just in case you can't remember the cost they are as follows:

Junior & Unwaged Adult	£15.00
Adult	£25.00
Family	£35.00

Please note that the AGM is just 13 days after the last of the membership payments are due, and there might be a price increase in the membership! So pay now while you know the prices.

AGM

The Club will hold its AGM on Monday 13th of October in the Playdrome at 7.30pm. We would like to see as many members along for the meeting as possible. Should anyone have any points to include in the agenda could they please pass the items to Rab as soon as possible? Remember this is your club, so we want your thoughts and Ideas.

Over the last few years I have been the Chairperson of the club, and now I think that it is time that the club has some new fresh blood to come in and give it an extra boost of new ideas, direction, etc. So if anyone out there wishes to have the job as Chairperson, then come along to the AGM.

Agenda for AGM

Welcome.

Apologies

Chairperson Report

Secretary Report

Treasurer Report

Stores Report

Appointment of new Office Bearers

Club Fees, Trip Fees, Pool Fees, Loch Lomond Fees, and Hire Fees

Any Other Competent Business. (i.e. Your ideas and thoughts for the club)

New kit

As most of you are now aware the club has bought two new Open canoes and a new Cappella Sea Kayak. The Club has also bought a host of replacement items such as foot rests, air bags for the river and Pool Boats and hatches for the Sea Kayaks.

With the two new Open Canoes (Ranger 16's), this will bring the club fleet up to three Open Canoes. This now means that the club can and will start to run Open Canoe trips ether for the Lochs or gentle rivers (Just grade 1 for just now, as the club does not yet have airbags for the new boats.) This also means that the club can now run BCU 2* Awards with the Open canoe being major part of the assessment. It also means that club members can have a very gentle introduction to rivers, to further develop their skills or hopefully get more people interested in river paddling.

With the purchase of the Cappella, which will cater for the larger paddler, the club Sea Kayak fleet now stands at 3 Skerries, 2 Cappella's, 3 NordKaps, and a Double Alut. The club has never been in such a strong position to offer its members such a wide selection of Canoes and Kayaks. Unfortunately the club was unsuccessful with our grant application. As a result the club had to pay for all the equipment out of the club funds, and as such the club funds are now sitting around the lowly £250.00 mark.

Website

You may have noticed that the club website site has disappeared. Tommy Kelly our Web Master explained that our ISP is making changes to their free website hosting.

Tommy will spend some time rearranging the website but it will reappear under a different address. I will let everyone know when it's back working.

Club Trailer

The trailer is now in working order although it hasn't been used this year. With the price of fuel increasing it could be a useful addition on trips. Ian can no longer keep it at his work premises and a new place to store it must be found. If anyone has room on their premises to keep it please let Ron know by the end of August. (Ron 07743342330)

Trips

The clubs touring calendar has been hammered by strong winds and bad weather, but hopefully the weather might give a break for the last part of the year. As can be seen from the list below there are quite a few trips coming up. The trip on the 16/17 August will be somewhere interesting, depending on the weather, but it will be a big trip. So keep in touch for that one. It will be a Friday night start however. On the 30th of August there is a trip up to one of my favourite areas to paddle in, The Sound of Luing, and even better, its Spring tides! Meeting times for this trip are still to be confirmed.

September the 7th see's the first of the new Clubs Open Canoe trips and this is a gentle trip going from Aberfoyle to the Lake of Menteith, and the trip is suitable for everyone, members can also take River Kayaks as well on this trip as space on the Open Canoes are limited. Meeting at the club stores for 8.30am or meeting at Aberfoyle for 9.45am. On the 13th of September there is a trip to the Dundee area, and where we actually go to and from will depend on the wind direction. We will meet at the stores for 8.30am. For the September Weekend trip we will hopefully be heading up to Skye for a crossing to the magnificent Isle of Canna, which is part of the Small Isle group.

October is going to be a busy month for paddles, which is good news for us. The first is a trip to the River Endrick, which again is a grade 1 with one grade 3 Rapid which will be portaged by the Open Canoes and anyone else who wishes to. This will be quite a long trip, nearly 30km, starting at Balfron and finishing up a Balmaha. Meeting time will be 8.00am at the stores. The next trip is a trip "doon the watter" on the Ayrshire coast and it will be a grade A/B, again the location will depend on the wind, as the tide around this area is very weak. Again the meeting times for this trip, is 8.00am at the stores. On Wednesday the 15th we have a short night paddle across to Dunoon for a quick bag of chips and a light refreshment. We will meet up at the stores for 6.30pm for the Dunoon Night Paddle. The last sea trip on the month takes us down to the beautiful Ardlamont Point. There are fantastic beaches to see, and beautiful views over to Arran in this rarely visited part of Scotland. And the trip is quite short around 10 miles and it also has a short shuttle. What more could you ask for in a trip? Again for this trip the meeting time will be 8.00am at the stores. So hopefully the above information is enough to "WET" your appetite for a paddle and we will hopefully see you out on the water.

Photos from the August trip to Skye.



Donald & Iain outside a cave on the Island of Wiay, Skye. Taken by Ron from inside the cave.



Iain beside one of the many fine arches around the shores of Loch Bracadale on Skye.

Atlantic Breakers 2008 Surf Competition 23rd August – Organiser John Inglis

The Surf forecast is looking good for Machrihanish through the coming week with swell size dropping by next weekend. It looks like waves will be small and clean (1-2feet). Keep an eye on Magic Seaweed and the live webcam link it has for Westport.

If you are travelling on Friday night surf on arrival might be a good idea at Westport beach before heading down to the campsite at Machrihanish . I will meet up with you on the beach on Friday or in the Beachcomber(now renamed The Old Clubhouse Bar or some such golfing name).

Please complete an entry form on Friday if you are around otherwise I will make every effort to slot you in on Saturday morning.

I would plan to start the competition promptly on Saturday morning at 0830 and complete as much as possible on Saturday. This would allow Sunday for free surfing or training and development.

There will be classes for The Open- Kayak (long ie 3metres min),the Open- kayak (short ie up to 2.75m), Novice, Women,Junior,Masters (age 40 or more) and Waveski. Classes with less than 4 entries may be combined or curtailed as time allows.

Entry fee will be £10 which will allow you to enter as many classes as you can (no false beards for the masters please. I have to have some chance!).

Any questions about the contest please email or call me on 0771 964 8187 or 0131 467 1508

Thank Goodness for Donald's Duck Tape! (Janice)

On Saturday 19th July five of us from the club went on the weekend trip to Loch Etive. We were Alan, Kevin, Janice and the two stalwarts and trip leaders, Ron and Donald.

The forecast was for a north westerly wind, force 3-4. Our plan was to launch from Taynuilt at nearly low tide (3.50 pm),to travel up the loch to the top (about 10 miles) , find somewhere to camp and return down the loch the next day.

Never having been away overnight kayaking and camping I had to borrow some gear from a friend. The only thing I had was a tent. I found it hard to imagine where all this carefully selected equipment was going to fit in a kayak!

And it was challenging. My newly purchased dry bag to hold a sleeping bag was too big and bulky. So it got left behind in the car. Ron advised me to take things out of the dry bag and stuff wee things I wouldn't need till I camped into the far ends of the kayak, then stuff in the sleeping bag (now in a bin liner) and keep what I needed for the trip in the smallest hatch. After a lot of packing and unpacking I managed to get everything in and felt really pleased not to have to ask anyone to take anything for me!

Then we were off. First we went up the River Awe a wee bit. Then we planned to cross over to the west side of the loch where we thought it would be calmer because of the shelter of the hills. We paddled over to the quarries at Bonawe then up the loch. It was nice easy paddling up the western side. The views were wonderful. There is something special about being in a kayak, so close to the water with huge towering mountains all around you. As we paddled further up the loch the view ahead became even more breathtaking – Buchaille Etive Mhor and Buchaille Etive Beag straight in front of us. They were to remain our view of the top of the loch for the rest of the day. When we camped at night they were the view to the north with Ben Cruachan to the south.

Our first stop was at the bothy (name of bothy?) We went to check it out in case camping proved impossible further up the loch. It was fine if necessary, but disappointing because people had left their rubbish behind. Then we stopped again at a beach a little further on but it was already occupied by 2 tents and a kayak so we set off again. We ended up about a mile short of the top of the loch on a great wee flat grassy patch above a beach.

Soon everyone was getting their tents pitched – apart from me. Once I had managed to get everything I had stuffed into the far ends of the kayak up to where we were pitching the tents I had a wee problem. Nearly all the ends of my tent poles were broken which meant the tent would have no tension on the frame. Ron said it would be ok, we could fix it with duck tape. But he didn't have any. Donald did and he came to help. We had to tape the tent poles together at each end and hope it would be ok. Thank goodness for Donald's Duck Tape! Then I had to bash in the tent pegs. Meanwhile yes, you've guessed – the midgies are out! The outer tent was fixed – just the inner now – along with all those midgies. Aargh ! Then there's water to boil to cook pasta for tea. I had a tiny burner which had to be supported by stones on the uneven ground but I got it lit, got the pot on, with help from everyone else. Soon it was boiling and before long I was sitting at the camp fire with a wee glass of wine and a bowl of pasta. Much better!

My tent survived the night absolutely fine. I slept very soundly till 7 in the morning. I was determined to manage this camping lark better in the morning. So I was up first, going to the stream to fill up that pot to boil water again. And it worked. The stove was stable, the water boiled. A wee cup of tea and spare water for my flask during the day. Maybe I can manage this camping lark?

Then the wind got up. Our kayaks were all packed. We're ready to go up the loch to the top but there are all these white horses on the loch. Is this a force 6? Looks like it will be very challenging kayaking up the loch this morning. I did suggest just heading down the loch – but no – I wasn't going to get away with that. We waited to see if the wind would drop slightly. It did, so we launched to paddle up to the top of the loch. This was hard work. It felt like you were paddling but not moving. I was blown into the side twice. I had to get towed and it helped enormously. We got to the top of the loch and stopped for a rest. Now Buchaille Etive Mhor was no longer part of our view at the top of the loch but the views were still beautiful.

We set off paddling (this time along the eastern side) back down the loch and the wind changed all the time. First it was behind us and for a short distance you didn't need to paddle – the wind blew you down the loch! Then it changed to the north with white horses again. Then straight at us from the south west but it was never as challenging as the mile up the loch earlier in the morning. We stopped after an hour and a half at another beach for lunch. We could see other kayakers over on the western side paddling up the loch. We launched again for the last part of our journey. The sun was out and we had to paddle facing into the sun. It was

beautiful. More breathtaking scenery! - Ben Cruachan again but a different view, and looking back up the loch – Buchaille Etive Mhor and Buchaille Etive Beag. Just wonderful!

Lots more rests for me on this last part of the journey. I was tired .Once we stopped beside buoys for a fish farm and at least 4 seals bobbed up out of the water near us – one really close to Alan’s kayak.

At last we were nearing Taynuilt. Ron, as a responsible trip leader checking to see if I was ok. I was really tired and for the last ½ mile got towed back to the shore, absolutely exhausted but so pleased to have had those two great days kayaking. (I have still to be convinced about camping though!)

Diary

Date	Location	Grade	Contact
August			
16/17	TBC	B/C	Rab 01877 382141
30 Saturday	Sound of Luing Area	B/C	Rab
September			
7 Sunday	River Forth (Canoe/R Kayak)	Grade 1	Rab
13 Saturday	Dundee Area	A/B	Rab
26/29	Isle of Canna	C	Rab
October			
4 Saturday	River Endirck (Canoe/R Kayak)	Grade 1	Rab
11 Saturday	Ayrshire coast	A/B	Rab
13 Monday	AGM at the Playdrome 7.30pm	All	
15 Wednesday	Dunoon (Night Paddle)	A	Rab
25 Saturday	Ardlamont Point (Cowel)	A	Rab

Please remember to phone up the night before a sea trip to check up for the trip status. (Between 7pm-9pm)
If you require equipment or a lift, could you please contact the trip organiser at least a week prior to the trip.

Remember to print and pin this list up, or mark the dates into your Diary.