

Drumchapel & Clydebank Kayak Club

Newsletter Nov /Dec 08

Yes, it has coming up for Christmas again, and another year will have past. Well the good news is we still got a few trips left for this year and there might just be a few interesting trips to look forward to next year!

Hopefully we might get a lull in the weather for the remainder of the year and actually get out and do some more paddling, remember it's your club, so let's see you out on the water.

Membership Fees

Club Membership Fees were due by the 30th of September 08 and members can still pay the old membership fees up until the end of October, as of the 1st of November the new fee's will come into place. This can be paid at the pool-side or on a trip or by post. The new prices were introduced at the AGM. This is the first change in memberships fee's for nine years. Also at the AGM there were other changes to the clubs fees, and they are given from below and they also come into effect as on the 1st of November.

Membership Fees

Junior, Unwaged	£15.00
Unwaged Family	£25.00
Adult	£27.00
Family	£35.00

Pool Fees

Junior	£3.00
Unwaged Family	£5.00
Adult	£4.00
Coach	£3.00

Lomond shores (Summer Evenings) & Club Trips

	With Own Equipment	Requiring Equipment
Junior	£1.00	£3.00
Unwaged Family	£1.00	£5.00
Adult	£1.00	£4.00
Family	£1.00	£6.00
Coach	£1.00	£3.00

Hire of Equipment

Should members of the club require equipment hire from the club out with a club trip the cost shall be £5.00 per day the equipment is used. There will also be a £20.00 deposit of the Stores key to ensure its swift return.

AGM

The AGM was held on 13th October

A decision was made to increase the cost of membership, pool fees and trip fees as detailed in the previous section.

Rab is standing down as Chairman after several years. He has taken the club through a very successful period in terms of member numbers, coaching and great trips. The Committee thanked him for his effort over the years.

Appointment of Office Bearers:-

Chairman	Colin Adams
Secretary	Ron Downie
Treasurer	Donald Smith
Store Keeper	David Vause & Barry Edmunds
Sea Kayaking	Rab Burns
Junior Rep	Davie Gow
Web Master	Tommy Kelly

Last year there were 58 members in the club. We expect about the same this year. The waiting list is empty at the moment.

Colin is producing a new information pack for new members.

2 Star Training & Assessment

If you are interested in taking the 2 Star Award speak to Ron. A training programme has just started. The award covers both kayak and canoe and will involve outdoor sessions as well a pool practise.

Weather Forecasts

As you are well aware one of the biggest problems in paddling is knowing what the weather is doing and what it is about to do? These questions have a bearing on whither a trip goes ahead or if it should be cancelled.

Over the years various club members have asked the question “Where do you get your forecasts from?” Well the simple answer is a wide variety of sources. Remember what you are going to get is just a **FORECAST**. As in horse racing, the race favourite is forecasted to win, but it is not guaranteed to win. The more information on forecasts you have at your hand the better prepared you will be for a trip. What this article is about is illustrating some of the points that I use for planning a trip and highlighting some of the pitfall of some of the forecasts bring.

Illustrated below are three charts, the first was taken on Tuesday 30th September for 4pm that day. The second chart is the predicted weather for Saturday the 4th of October at 4pm taken on the Tuesday. Looking at these forecasts you will hopefully understand the reason why we usually like to wait until the last minute before committing to a paddle. (Look at the charts to see why!) The last chart is for the forecasted weather taken on that Saturday, and for those people who were paddling down the River Endrick or were just out and about you can make up your own minds as to which forecast was the most accurate for that day.

I chose Glasgow and Aberdeen since these are principal towns and on opposite sides of the country thus hopefully they will result in a more accurate forecast? I have not used all the weather sources in these charts, but have illustrated just a few. I have listed some other sources at the end of this article, but this is by no means exhaustive, but where do you end?

Weather Reports

for

Tuesday 30.9.08

Forecaster

Glasgow

Aberdeen

Forecaster	Glasgow	Aberdeen
Metcheck	10mph Westerly and cloudy	14mph Westerly and showers
BBC Regional	12mph North westerly and cloudy	12mph Westerly and sunny
Inshore waters	Force 4/5 Westerly and rain then showers	Force 5/6 North westerly and showers
Magic Seaweed	Force 4 North westerly	Force 4 Westerly
Windfinder	12mph North westerly and cloudy	20mph North westerly and showers
Windguru	13mph Westerly and cloudy	13mph North westerly and rain
Xc Weather	12 mph Westerly and cloudy	10mph Westerly and cloudy

As you can see from the above there is a bit of a difference for the Glasgow area, 10mph being the lowest wind speed and if we take a mid range speed of the Force 4/5 indicated by the Inshore waters Forecast, that would be around the 20mph mark! As you can see that is double the “Metcheck” forecast. The Aberdeen forecast is worse with a 10 mph forecast from “**Xc Weather**”

and a force 5/6 from the “**Inshore waters**” which if we again take a mid range estimate of around 24mph! All wind directions are either Westerly or North westerly.

One point to remember is what type of forecast you are using, if you are using a land based such as the BBC regional forecast, they are mainly of use for towns. Where as water based forecasts tend to be more accurate for when you are out on the sea. Remember the Inshore Waters Forecast is valid for up to 12 miles “**OFF SHORE**”. Therefore if you are paddling close to shore with hills and islands around you, this can have a major effect on the weather.

As we can see from the “guesstimation” for the weekend forecast it can be hard to predict the weather. Which wind direction do we believe? And what can we say about the wind speed, look at the “BBC Regional” forecast and the “**Inshore Waters**”! Hopefully this will illustrate some of the problems in planning a trip, or if a trip should get cancelled.

Predicted Weather Reports

For

Saturday 4. 10.08 taken on Tuesday 30.9.08

Forecaster

Glasgow

Aberdeen

Forecaster	Glasgow	Aberdeen
Metcheck	12mph Southerly and Showers	27mph South easterly and rain
BBC Regional	7mph North westerly and showers	16mph North Westerly and Sun
Inshore Waters	Outlook Northerly strong to Gale force winds	Outlook Northerly strong to Gale force winds
Magic seaweed	Force 3 Southerly	Force 4 South westerly
Windfinder	12mph Southerly and cloudy	20mph southerly and rain
Windguru	/	/
Xc Weather	13mph Southerly and heavy rain	22mph South easterly and rain

Weather Reports

Taken on

Saturday 4.10.08

Metcheck	7mph NW and Rain	14mphNW and rain
BBC Regional	17sw and rain	23mph South and Rain
Inshore waters	F5-7 Occasional 8 Sw-Nw Rain	F5-7 then F8-9 Sw –nw and rain
Magic Seaweed	F2 Nw	F5 NW
Windfinder	21 sw and heavy rain	19 sw and rain
Windguru	24mph sw and heavy rain	15 nw and rain
Xc Weather	24mph Sw Heavy Rain	17mph nw and rain

So there you have it, I hope that this has been of some benefit to you. But remember the most accurate weather forecaster is you. And that is when you look outside and see what the weather is doing there and then, after that it only becomes a forecast.

So where can we find all this forecasted information?

Newspapers: Most local newspapers have a very general forecast and by the time they go to print and then reach the shops the forecast can be 24 hours old by the time you read it! Some broadsheets provide a synoptic chart at least! Great for planning a trip to the shops!

Radio: Most radio stations provide a very general forecast that is best used for when you are about to take the dog for a walk. In some areas where fishing, sailing or other outdoor activities are a main feature of the local area you may get a more detailed weather forecast? Radio Scotland gives the outdoor conditions forecast, which is for Climber and Walkers, and also the Coastal Areas. As a general rule I also listen to the Climbers forecast, as if they indicate that the winds at Munro level (3000ft) are at 30mph you can normally half the wind speed for sea level (They should therefore be around a Force 3/4) And just in case you did not realise the forecast also need to be in the same area! This is just another check to see if the forecasts correspond to the forecasts given in the Coastal Areas. Always double check sources!

Radio Scotland: 1857 Monday- Friday Outdoor Conditions forecast including Inshore Waters

0657 & 1857/1957 Saturdays and Sundays Outdoor Conditions forecast including the **Inshore waters**

Radio 4: 0048 and 0536 LW,MW and FM Shipping and **Inshore Waters**

VHF: Inshore waters broadcasted at 4 hourly intervals. Broadcasted times will depend on which Coastguard station is nearest to your paddling area.

TV: STV and the BBC provide regional weather forecasts, as well as weather conditions on Ceefax and Teletex. Please remember the wind speeds shown are in general, the average wind speed, and they also tend to be in the town's; which is a bit lower than out on the sea. The BBC provided an Outdoor Conditions forecast on a Friday at 1855.

Coastguard: They can provide the **Inshore Waters** forecast for the area you wish to paddle. But please note they will only be able to provide the forecast if there is no emergencies at that time.

The Met Office: The main provider of weather forecasts for the United Kingdom. They provide detailed information for Land, Sea and Aviation organisations. They provide the **INSHORE WATERS FORECAST** that is used by many other organisations such as the Coastguard and Radio stations who provide this service. The **INSHORE WATERS FORECAST** is up dated 4 times per day. Click onto weather, then marine to find out the latest. One very important point to note with the **Inshore Waters Forecast** and the **Shipping Forecast** is that the wind speed indicated also includes the maximum speed of gusts of wind. This then looks as if these forecasts are much higher than others who tend to give just the average speed.

www.met-office.gov.uk

The BBC: The BBC is the main provider of general weather forecasts for the British Isles. They gain their information primarily from the Met Office. Click on to UK, and then click to a part of the UK that you would like more detailed information on. At the bottom of the screen there are button to give a "fly through" with the weather patterns for the next few days, in general I find this forecast to be **very accurate**, though the wind speeds can be a bit suspect. Should you require a 5 day forecast from this page for an area, let's say Oban, the information is "Very basic" to say the least! The wind speeds can vary a fair bit from the "Fly Through" information. The weather is also a snap shot for the day and the weather might be much better or worse either in the morning or afternoon than indicated. This change would be illustrated in the "Fly Through".

If you click on the "Coast and Sea" icon on the left of the screen you will also get the **Inshore Waters Forecast**, although, for some reason this is only updated twice daily. Plus a lot of other very useful information for planning a paddling trip, such as the "Coastal Forecast", "Tide tables" and "Surf Reports" to name just a few links. This is a very good site in general.

WWW.bbc.co.uk/weather

Magic Seaweed: This weather web site is primarily aimed at surfers. It dose have a good local weather forecast, unfortunately, or fortunately depending on where you are it mainly gives forecasts for Surf Areas. Click on "UK and Ireland" (Top left hand side of the screen) then just below that

“Select a surf report” and then pick a location nearest to you paddling area. The obvious “wind chart” is ok for a very basic over view of the UK area.

www.magicseaweed.com

Windfinder: Windfinder is mainly a sailing forecast and is therefore good for paddlers. It is hampered by the lack of mainland West Coast Locations for weather reports. Click on one of the small weather arrows at the set locations for a 3 day “Super Forecast” or a 7 day weather forecast for that area. The Super Forecast has an hour by hour wind speed gauge. I have never found that to be 100% accurate, but it does provide a guide for you. They also provide general “Wind Map” for Scotland, and this is good for filling in any gaps that are not covered by the main set locations.

www.windfinder.com

Windguru: This very similar to “Windfinder”, but I find it easier to use. It again used an hour by hour wind forecast which again is good just for a gauge.

www.windguru.com

XC Weather: This is one of my favourites for forecasts. It gives the actual weather from as little as 30 minutes ago and then you can compare this with their forecast. Again, like Windfinder, the mainland west coast does suffer a bit from a lack of weather stations. XC Weather does provide you with inland forecast station that might be useful to bridge the gaps. It also gives a 6 day forecast.

www.xcweather.com

Sea Kayak Planning Synopsis: Although this is not a weather forecaster as such, it will give you various sources on information to plan a trip. If there is just one web site to remember, remember this one. Try it!

(Sea Kayak Planning Synopsis)

So that’s it for now if you have any questions as to which weather forecaster is the most accurate the simple answer is, none! All have their good points and bad. Most if not all weather forecasters can get the weather pretty much spot on for the following day, usually! After that, all accuracies tend to drop off especially the 4-5 day type forecasters.

The hardest part is trying to interpret the forecasts and then using your own judgement on the day. Remember if all those weather forecasters cannot agree on the current weather, what chance do we have? Try and pick a day and look at the various sources listed to find out your results. If anyone has any questions please ask.

Trips

The trip on the 16/17 August was supposed to be up in the Helmsdale area, but ended up with just three of us Julia, Donald and Rab paddling around the Mull of Kintyre! This has been a trip that has been on the list for a few years now, but the weather and tides was just right for this trip and the

Helmsdale area was forecasted to be covered in fog. Hence the change in venue, and a good choice it was as well.

Setting off from Machrihanish in no wind or swell, we paddled south down towards the headland, at this point the sun was trying to break through the fog that was not forecasted for this area. And the effect of the sun shining through the mist on surrounding landscape was quite surreal. As we passed the Lighthouse the sun finally burst through, and it got very hot, very quickly. We stopped at Southend for a lunch break before heading out to the island of Sanda.

As we crossed to Sanda the mist came down again and we had to use the compasses to navigate the three miles to the island. With the mist and the glass calm water, the effect was like flat light, where you could not tell the horizon was. After an hour the harbour bay at Sanda came into view and we were shocked to find about 30-40 R.I.B.s and about 15 yachts moored there. From the harbour we paddled around the island and landed at the Lighthouse at the south end of the island, just to be away from all the crowds.

We set up camp just below the fantastic Elephant Arch which is next to the equally impressive Sanda Lighthouse. After dinner we walked the mile or so across the island to the pub. The island only has a pub, a small shop on it and several cottages for rent. Never the less, the pub was very busy with all the boaties and the yachties that visit this island. It transpired that all the R.I.B.s were part of a race from Ireland over to Sanda, I assume the loser bought the pints!

In the morning the island's owner came around to check one of the buildings that were near where we camped, and promptly demanded money for wild camping on his land! He never did get paid, and it did spoil the trip a bit.

Once on the water we set off to paddle remainder of the island and to visit some of the out lying small skerries before heading up to Campbeltown and to paddle around the Isle of Danna. Again the sea was like glass the sun shone all day. What a fantastic trip this was, and well worth the wait. This was defiantly a trip that I would recommend.

The next trip was to one of my favourite areas, the Sound of Luing. And even better, it was spring tides! There were six of us on this trip. We left from Arduaine and paddled south to hit the first of the North going tide at the bottom end of Luing, from there we paddled across and went through the "Grey Dogs" just after the first hour of flood tide. I think there were a few eyes that were quite wide at this part of the trip! From here we paddled up to Belnahua, and again introduced a few new people to the power of a fast moving tide. Again, this just illustrates the importance of tidal planning, especially in this area.

From Belnahua we took the tide races across to catch the very last of the flood tide going through the Cuan Sound before returning back to Arduaine and home. The Sound of Luing is an excellent area to go paddling and an eye opener to those who have never paddled here.

Despite all the rain the water level had dropped quite a bit on the River Forth for the first of the Club's Open Canoe trips that went ahead on September 7th. Six people turned up for this trip, Young David in a Kayak, Janice, Colin, and me paddling solo in the Canoes and Andy and Liz paddling tandem. The start in Aberfoyle was good with a few small rapids to entertain on the way. Once past Cobbelands Camp site the water slowed down, really slowed down. This also gave us time to reflect on just how high the water level can get some times as we past a large industrial wheelie bin that was stuck about 10-12 ft above us in a tree!

We then carried on through Flanders Moss Plantation which was very atmospheric, only the sound of a Banjo was missing! On a serious note, the trees along this part of the River Forth hang very low and in some places are intertwined; this would present several serious obstacles to anyone who attempted this part of the river in flood or high water conditions.

From here on to the bridge and the get out point the river was very slow; in fact I think we were going against the current rather than with it! We had paddled just over 10 miles in what seemed a very long five hours, hopefully the River Endrick will prove to be just a bit faster.

On the 13th of September there was a planned trip to the Dundee area, but the forecast dictated that we paddle else where and we opted for the Ayrshire coast. We managed to paddle from Irvine up to Portencross. Needless to say the forecasted wind turned around and faced us all the way to the Castle. Thankfully the winds were light that day.

Well as usual the September Weekend weather was not conducive to a trip out to Canna, however the weather did look much better on the East Coast. Just three people attended this trip, Ron, Donald and myself. The intended 4 day trip was reduced to just two due to the weather. The start point of the trip was at Broughty Ferry which is on the outskirts of Dundee, and a very attractive launch point it was as well.

The route then took us past Barry Buddon, and the military camp and firing ranges that are located there. As we approached we could see that there was red flags flying indicating that there was live firing taking place. And to make things a bit more interesting the danger area for the firing ranges extends some several kilometres out to sea, yes, and you guessed where we were going! We therefore opted to paddle ashore and ask one of the guards that man the perimeter of the range to try and find out more information as to what ranges were being used and when. As it turned out the guard was a lowly Air Cadet who explained that the whole area was out of bounds until all the flags came down, at some undetermined point that afternoon.

After reviewing the situation we opted to go ahead with our original plan abet slightly further out to sea. This bit of the coast is just sand dunes and they were a bit boring to look at. The gun fire soon changed that! The gun fire also took our minds of the fact that the sea was a bit on the lumpy side as well! The remainder of the trip went of with out a hitch. That night we camped in Arbroath and ended up going out for a curry. No bush tucker for us! The following morning we paddled from Arbroath to Inverbervie. I am glad to say that the sun shone all day with light winds that allowed us to explore the small cave that surround this area. This was two days of good paddling that could have been much better is the weather was more settled.

At the beginning of October there was a fantastic river trip down the River Endrick. On the Friday night there was hardly any water in the river, but with the overnight heavy rain still falling we opted for an extra long coffee break to allow the water to rise, and rise it did. Getting on the coffee coloured river at Balfron Bridge we paddled down to Gartness passing and playing in many small rapids. This was an excellent trip despite the rain, which finish needless to say when we got of the water!

As a look forward the last sea trip for October 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. The meeting time for this trip is 8.30am at the stores. What more could you ask for in a trip? Again for this trip the meeting time will be 8.00am at the stores. On the 8th of November there is another trip to the beautiful Loch Leven near Glencoe. Meeting time at the stores will be 8.30am for this trip. On Thursday the 13th we will have a trip to Luss at Loch Lomond and a paddle around some of the Islands and hopefully try and see some wallabies at well! Meeting at the Stores for 6.30pm, and returning around 11pm(ish!) On the 29th there will be an Open Canoe and Kayak trip down the River Leven. There are a lot of small rapids and shopping trolleys to play in and avoid on this trip. The finish will be down at Dumbarton Castle. We will meet at the Stores for 9.00am for this trip.

December sees a wind down for Christmas with a small paddle in the Firth of Forth area on the 6th of December meeting at the store again at 8.30am. And the last planned paddle for the year (At the moment anyway!) is the Mince pie paddle. Remember this paddle is for everyone and anyone, just bring along some food and drink for the BBQ.

So hopefully the above information is enough to "WET" your appetite for a paddle and we will hopefully see you out on the water.

Sound of Gigha Trip Report 26th - 27th September 2008

I remember last April, when travelling down to Machrihanish for the club surf weekend, Phil pointed out the Island of Gigha and said that it was a great paddle to do sometime. Ever since then, I have made a mental note to try and get Gigha 'ticked off' the list. I nearly managed in July when Ron was organising a Gigha weekend trip, but due to high winds, the venue was changed to Loch Etive. So when a window of opportunity opened during the September weekend, I persuaded Phil and Ian to help me get Gigha finally 'ticked off' the list.

The weather looked good for Thursday and Friday, but the forecast was for the winds to increase by Saturday, making any passage across the Sound of Gigha a little more challenging.

We decided to leave Milngavie early Thursday morning and arrived at the ferry slipway at Tayinloan around one o'clock. We loaded the gear into the Nordkapp, Avocet and Carolina on the little sandy beach beside the ferry and left Ian's car overnight in the ferry car park.

Phil called for a bearing of 304 degrees ('Or that big white hoose, just across there!!') and we headed out across the Sound of Gigha getting pushed along by a 14mph southerly wind and 0.7kn northerly tidal stream. The crossing took just under an hour with only one minor incident. I am not convinced if the captain of the MacBraynes ferry did see us, or whether he just fancied some sport with the passing kayakers!

When we arrived at the Boathouse Restaurant at Ardminish, a quick refreshment was called for, to steady the nerves, before pushing on to the south of the island. The wind dropped on the southward leg, but we decided to by-pass Cara Island this time, and try and get as far as possible up the west coast of Gigha before the end of the day. As we turned northward round the Slocan Leim headland along the west coast, we were pushed along by a swell that was at times at least a metre high. For the first time in a kayak, I actually started to feel a little sea sick due to the constant rocking movement and the metre high wall of water moving along in front of me.

We managed to reach West Tarbet Bay, at the north of the island by seven o'clock. Camp was setup on a narrow strip of land that separated Tarbet and Beagh na Doirinne bays. This meant that with a short portage we could save time in the morning by cutting out the Eilean Garbh headland.

I was abruptly woken at seven o'clock the next morning when Ian and Phil were discussing the latest Radio 4 weather forecast. Seemingly the winds from the South West were due to increase around lunchtime due to a weather front coming in over Northern Ireland. The three of us were packed up and on the water for eight o'clock to try and get round to the east side of the island before the weather broke. We arrived back at Ardminish Bay just after midday and we had to make the decision whether to paddle the last three miles across the Sound of Gigha or take the ferry before the weather got worse. After a short team discussion, the Avocet was carried onto the ferry and the Nordkapp and Carolina braved the waves and made the final crossing in just an hour!

The scenery, and wild life (seals, otter and golden eagles) around Gigha made this a memorable trip and I would definitely recommend a visit.

Alan Fraser

Diary

Date	Location	Grade	Contact
Oct			
25	Ardlamont Point	A	Rab 01877382141
Nov			
8	Loch Leven (Glen Coe)	A	Rab
13 Thursday	Loch Lomond (Night Paddle)	A	Rab
23	Loch Lomond	2 Star Training	Ron 07743342330
29	River Leven (Canoe/Kayak)	Grade 1	Rab
Dec			
6	Firth of Forth area	A	Rab
20	Mince Pie Paddle	All	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.

Thanks

Rab Burns