

# Drumchapel & Clydebank Kayak Club

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## Newsletter

September /October 09

### BCU 3\*

#### Training and Assessment

In the beginning of May saw the first of the new BCU 3\* (Sea) training courses to be run by the club, and seven members turned up for this course. The new course is very similar in a lot of respects to the old BCU 4\*, and as such there is quite a big jump in overall standard between the current 2\* and the new 3\*.

On the first day we were fortunate in that Colin managed to secure a training room in the Play Drome. The first part of the course was a bit of a shock for some members. They were all given a theory test similar to what they will receive on their assessment, as soon as they walked in the door. We then went over the paper, and covered a lot more on the various theory subjects that need to be covered. Once we did this we went down to Helensburgh to practice some of the various skills required in the assessment. The weather again was awful, with strong winds and rain; we did manage to find a corner in which skills could be practiced.

The second training day was at the beginning of June, and was held at Port Edger. Again the wind was a major factor in what we could achieve that day, we were planning to spend the morning on skills revision then in the afternoon moving on to Towing and Rescues and Rolling. By early afternoon the wind had not decreased, if anything it increased slightly. This meant we spent all afternoon in the Port Edger Mariner and thus more time on Towing and much too every ones relief dropped the Rolls and Rescues until we moved to Loch Lomond. The water in the Marina was not very pleasant to say the least, and I think that if people ingested the water they might have ended up in Hospital!

Unfortunately during one of the evening training sessions at Loch Lomond one of the candidates managed to dislocate his shoulder while practicing some High Braces and that effectively put him out of the Course.

The day of the Assessment came along in July and four members turned up for the Course. The day began with the theory session, which they all managed with relative ease. So it showed just how much studying every one had done. We then moved onto the skill section down at Lunderston Bay on the Firth of Clyde.

To start with, I think that everyone would agree, was not the best performance that anyone had done. So after several short paddles to brake up the skills sessions the nerves began to ease and the individual performances began to improve. Eventually everyone was turning in some pretty good skills sessions, which was a far cry from their initial shaky start. In the end, everyone who attended the assessment passed, so a big very well done to Bill Gray, Bill Davis, David Vause and Janice Gow. Hopefully everyone who attended the course will have seen their personal skills improve as well as their knowledge.

## **Coast Guard Trip**

As mentioned in the previous newsletter the Club was trying to arrange a visit to the Coast Guard Rescue and Co-Ordination Centre in Greenock. However there is still an ongoing dispute with the Coast Guard Unions which will not allow us to attend until, perhaps November! We will try to arrange another visit for around that time, if the dispute is finished.

## **Summer Evening Trips**

For the “summer” evenings when the Club normally attends at Drumkinnon Bay there was a short interlude when we did something just a bit different and that was Gorge-Walking at the “Devils Pulpit”. For those who attended, and I think I can say for all that it was a fantastic evening, and may of those wished to do it again. (I’m pretty sure that can be arranged, read on.) The following Tuesday it was almost a continuation of the Gorge Walk, but this time Kayaking and Canoeing down the River Endrick down to Drymen, except it was not vey dry! The next evening trip was up to Luss and a paddle out to find the Wallabies. Given that so many turned up and also with all the summer vegetation it could have proven quite hard to spot the Wallabies, however we did sport at least four different animals.

## **Evening Sessions**

Over the next few months there will be a series of evening sessions to be held in the Play Drome covering various aspects of paddling. These will include theory subjects such as the Access Code to Tidal Planning and practical subject such as First Aid. There will also be various slide shows as well. Each session will start at 7pm and last until 9pm.

# **Trips**

Well, what can be said about our so called Barbeque Summer! June was relatively nice but windy, and July and August so far have been a washout with strong winds and heavy rain. Any trips that went ahead in good weather were very lucky indeed. The weekend trip to the Solway Firth at the end of July was cut down to just one day, although a very good day's paddling was had for just three members Ron, Bill Davis and Rab. We left from Coldingham Bay past St Abb's head and up to Dunbar. The weather for the Shaint Island's trips was even worse! From the planned four day trip we ended up with just a short day paddle from Dundee to St Andrews!

## **By Tummel and loch Rannoch**

The return to the UK of Tom Downie (Ron's son) led to a group of club paddlers having a day of river trips. We met at 9am to load boats onto one car, the other 2 people who were meant to have come with us had been out drinking far to late and not up to paddling (not club members of course).

We drove north to do the River Tummel that flows out of Loch Tummel into Loch Faskally. Following a minor navigation error we found ourselves on the road on the wrong side of Loch Tummel so decided to go further and do the upper River Tummel which flowed into the top of Loch Tummel.

This was a river Sandy and Tom hadn't done before, Graham had done only once over 15 years ago and the guide books were all left at home, a recipe for disaster! We got on the river below the dam, and immediately faced a grade 4 drop. For Sandy and Graham it may have been a couple of years since they had last done anything at that grade. Fortunately although a bit rusty there were some skills remaining and it was safely negotiated. After a few smaller rapids to warm up we reached the biggest rapid on the river, a fall dropping 4m over about 20m, the last bit of the fall being a powerful 2m drop. After a lot of discussion Tom was persuaded to go first, while Sandy found a good vantage point to film him from. Fresh from a weeks paddling in Slovenia Tom made it look easy. Graham went next and made it safely to the top of the final drop but missed his critical paddle stroke to "boof" the fall. Fortunately he just had to roll at the bottom.

The river continued on with nice but rocky rapids (grade 3) with the flow level from the dam being enough to mean it wasn't too rocky. This lasted for about 2 miles before the last rapid, a long narrow chute with a couple of small holes to upset any careless paddling. Dropping 5 metres over a distance 50 metres it was fairly daunting. Tom went first again and made it look easy, however he started too fast and forgot to give Sandy time set up the camera! Graham went next, followed by Sandy who managed a 180 degree spin in the middle of the fall finishing it facing upstream. An important point for all you budding kayakers, practice paddling backwards so you can remain calm when you end up backwards by accident.

Safely at the bottom of the section Sandy and Graham waited by the boat while Tom went to get the car. Clearly the midges had seen us coming and clouds of midge swarmed over us. Sandy quickly took a couple of branches off a nearby bush to use as fly swats. Quick thinking as without them we may have been eaten alive.

Once Tom arrived we headed to the lower Tummel. This was a river we had all done few times before. The flow from the dam looked ok so we headed off. The river started slowly with gentle grade 2 rapids and the main focus was choosing lines to avoid scratching our boats too much. Soon the river speeded up with small drops and chutes to navigate. We then approached the more demanding sections towards the end of the river. Firstly a dogleg drop followed by a narrow chutes. Tom went first and did it really badly, needing a roll after the fall and bouncing off the walls of the narrow chute. Sandy and graham then did it well, prompting Tom to carry his boat up to the top and did it again. This is another good lesson for anyone looking to improve their paddling, do things more than once. however notice none of us did the big scary falls more than once, there can be an element of pushing your luck!

After this drop was the Linn of Tummel a famous rapid. It starts with a 2 to 3 m angled drop followed by a 2 to 3m drop a few metres afterwards with only a couple of seconds to recover between the two drops. Again Tom went first followed by Graham, with both making good lines. A couple of minutes later a member of another group got the fall just about as wrong as you possibly could, however rolled up at the bottom uninjured, lucky to have not had some really good bruises.

We paddled across Loch Faskally to the car to get changed and head for. All in all a great day out with plenty of interesting paddling, an encounter with an osprey, a heron and some midges.

Graham

## **Paddles to look forward to.**

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of August there is a paddle in the Firth of Forth area. Launching at Crammond Island with the tide behind us and paddling to Edinburgh and down to Port Seton, at trip of just under 15miles. We will be meeting at the Stores for 8.00am for this trip. Into September, (already!) and we start with another Gorge Walk on Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup>. The venue is at the Devils Pulpit for those who missed it or would like to do it again. You will require a Wet Suit/Dry Suit, Buoyancy Aid, Helmet and trainers or boots, plus a full change of clothing. Meeting at the Stores for 9.00am, and returning around Lunch time. The following week there is a paddle around Ardlamond Point, a relatively short, (just over 10 miles.) but beautiful paddle in the Cowel area. There are no significant tides in this area. We will meet at the stores for 8am for this trip.

The next trip is another attempt at the Shaint Islands, and again the tides are very favourable for this trip. Departing Glasgow on the Friday morning, and returning on the Monday. This is a grade "C" trip, leaving from the north end of Skye to the Shaint Islands and over to the Isle of Harris. We plan to get the ferry back from Tarbet to Uig. (Again, if bad weather strikes there will be a plan "B", even if it is just one or two day trip, so keep in touch if you can't make all four days.

Into October and the first trip is down to the inner part of the Solway Firth and we are heading to Neap tides so hopefully it will not be too eventful. We will meet at the store for 7.30am for this trip.

Although not strictly a paddle, on **Monday the 19<sup>th</sup>** there is the **Clubs Annual General Meeting** which is being held in the **Play Drome at 7.30pm**. Everyone in the club should make an attempt to attend this meeting as there will be some important issues effecting the club and members to be discussed. If you have any points you wish to raise prior to the meeting could you please **contact Colin** at least a week prior to the meeting, or even just now would be great.

The following weekend is the annual SCA Show to be held in Perth. If you have not been before please make an attempt as your eyes will be opened as to what type of boats and equipment is out there, plus there is usually a few bargains to be had as well. There is also the option of car sharing, and the River Tay is also right outside the door, tempted!

To end October with there is an Open Canoe and River Kayak trip down the River Larig past Balquhidder and coming at Strathyre. This is a beautiful little trip with gentle rivers and small Lochs. Any one interested in this trip should meet at the store for 8.30am.

As a look forward into November! The first planned paddle is from Loch Ryan to Ballantrae, which is a relatively short paddle (Around 20km) but has the option of being extended if the weather is warmer!

## River Trips

Sandy is planning to run several river trips over the next few months. The rivers that he plans will depend on water levels and members skill levels. Please contact Sandy well in advance to give him time to organise the trips effectively.

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

### **Coaching Conference**

The Scottish Canoe Association Coaching Conference takes place 11-13th September 2009 at Glenmore Lodge.

The closing date for bookings is Friday 28th August. Don't miss out and book your space before the closing date.

Further details including the programme and booking form available from <http://canoescotland.com/Default.aspx?tabid=482>

### **Strathclyde East Coaching Panel**

Have arranged a modular L1 course which will be taking place at Balloch Country Park on the 7/8 and 21/22 of November. The cost will be £37.50 for SCA members.

Please see [here](#) for details. (<http://canoescotland.com/Default.aspx?tabid=479> )

### **LTPD Workshop**

The SCA are organising a Long Term Paddler Development (LTPD) workshop this autumn for any club requesting assistance. They will be appointing a contractor to deliver the project soon.

# Diary

Date	Location	Grade	Contact
<b>August</b>			
29	Firth of Forth Area	A	Rab Tel: 01877 382141
<b>September</b>			
3 Thursday	Play Drome – Paddlers Access Code	All	Colin
5	Gorge Walk		Rab
6	Loch Lomond	Beginners	Ron 07743342330
12	Ardlamond Point	A	Rab
20	River Trip		Sandy 07962226280
24 Thursday	Play Drome – Wild Camping	All	Colin
25-28	Shaint Islands	C	Rab
26/27	River trip		Sandy
<b>October</b>			
3	River trip		Sandy
10	Solway Firth	B	Rab
11	River Trip		Sandy
15 Thursday	Play Drome – C.P.R.	All	Colin
<b>19 Monday</b>	<b>Play Drome</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<b>AGM</b>
			Colin
24/25	SCA Paddle Show 09 Perth + River Trip		Sandy
31	River Larig to Balquhiddy	Grade 1	Rab
<b>November</b>			
1	River Trip		Sandy
7	Ayrshire Coast	A	Rab
8	River Trip		Sandy

**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.