



MAD PADDLES

NEWSLETTER October 2012

Club Matters - Andrew Millest.

As autumn descends upon us, the season for moving water trips to destinations such as the river Eden starts. As you will have seen from the note that was circulated recently, there are still plenty of club activities to join in with even during the colder months of the year.

The summer was disappointing weather-wise but the rain did not deter club members and we have had great attendances at Bollington and Brereton. The first 3 new Tempest racing boats bought with the Sport England grant arrived in early September and have already been raced and used at the forward paddling sessions. The new K2 and K1 are currently being built and should be with the club soon.

The next major event in the club programme is the AGM which is being held at Bollington Community Centre (Ovenhouse lane, near the leisure centre) on Saturday 17th November from 6:30 to 9:30pm. This is an opportunity for the whole club to get together and hear about achievements and plans – including progress with the Hurdsfield site discussions – and to discuss the cost of membership fees for the 2013 renewals – so we hope to see lots of you there.

New Committee Members Needed

An important post on the committee, which is that of Membership Secretary, is to become vacant this year. After many years in the post Pauline Bett would like to pass on her knowledge to a new person and finally retire from the committee.

In addition, the posts of Treasurer and Secretary are up for re-election; however both Pat Davison and Brian Hamer are willing to serve for a further 3 years.

In addition the committee would like to encourage members with new ideas to become more involved with running the club and join the committee as adult or junior reps. With progress being made on the Hurdsfield site we will definitely need to draw on the brain-power of club members.

The Committee meets once a month and looks after formal things on behalf of the members. Lots of people help the club in many ways without ever joining the Committee, and the club could not exist without that help. However, we do need the Committee to be representative of the membership. The rule for re-election after 3 years is a good way of ensuring a regular turnover of committee members giving a combination of experienced and committed club members and newer faces with fresh ideas and enthusiasm. We have been fortunate to have a full committee in recent years which helps to share the load and people are not expected to get to every meeting. We also do quite a bit of discussion and canvassing of views by email.

Without a committee your club cannot function, so please consider putting your name forward. For more information please speak to Andrew Millest or any other committee member. Elections are held at the AGM, although in practice we normally have only just enough people to fill the committee so there is no competition for places.

Role descriptions for each of the posts coming vacant are available from Brian Hamer or from the 'Documents' section of the club website. If you would like to put yourself forward Brian can provide the necessary (very simple!) nomination form.

Committee Position	Person	Elected	Serves Until	Un-elected roles
Chairperson	Andrew Millest	AGM 2011	AGM 2014	Newsletter Editor, Racing administrator, Marathon race organiser
Vice Chairperson	Alan Armstrong	AGM 2010	AGM 2013	
Treasurer	Pat Davison	AGM 2009	AGM 2012	Welfare Officer
Secretary	Brian Hamer	AGM 2009	AGM 2012	
Membership Secretary	Pauline Bett	AGM 2010	AGM 2013	
Training Officer	Rob Stannard	AGM 2010	AGM 2013	
Adult Rep	Liam Gallagher	AGM 2010	AGM 2013	
Adult Rep	Chris Cleaver	AGM 2009	AGM 2012	
Adult Rep	Nigel Kinge	AGM 2010	AGM 2013	
Junior Rep	Joseph Pickering	AGM 2009	AGM 2012	
Junior Rep	Rosie Saxon	AGM 2009	AGM 2012	
Junior Rep	James Greensmith	AGM 2010	AGM 2013	
	Mark Hayes			Youth Officer
	Neil Evans			Racing coach

Pegs, Double Taps and Milk Bottles (Level One Coach Course)

Andrew & Dawn Hargraves

"How would you two feel about coaching a group tonight?" was the question thrown at us on our return to MADCC at the beginning of the 2012 canoeing season. My sister Dawn and I looked at each other knowing we were being thrown in at the deep end but faced with this new challenge we agreed. We were given a fresh group of beginners and off we went and that was how it all started.

Roughly 3 months later I'm stood on the sandy beach at Brereton Lake watching that same group undertake their 1 star assessment; their first paddle sport award. There was a great sense of pride when they all passed mixed with a feeling of relief that what Dawn and I had been doing over the past 12 weeks in terms of coaching had worked.

Now it was our turn for assessment, the Level One Coaching Course. 4 days of intense lectures, training and practice to begin our journey on the coaching ladder. The group we took the course with comprised of 3 and 4 Star white water paddlers, leaders from outdoor centres or people who had paddled for over 40 years. If we're honest we both felt the pressure from the group of seemingly more experienced paddlers and slightly overwhelmed by the amount of information given to us in the presentations.

We entered Day 2 of the course with some trepidation but we needn't have worried. A canal environment greeted us as our water to coach on and instantly our confidence went through the roof. The term 'Home Advantage' couldn't have been more appropriate as we approached the sessions we had to teach with ease like we would normally do at MADCC. Moving canal barges, low flying ducks, tight spaces and floating debris is all part of the fun and didn't bother us. By the end of the day we felt more at ease with the course and shown the more experienced paddlers that we were more than a match for them. However the next weekend we faced the final assessment and teaching something we were less comfortable at...open boat canoe skills.

What's brilliant about this club is that everyone is so willing to help you with extra practice, advice or just friendly words of wisdom. We came down to Brereton for a last minute pep talk and almost everyone had ideas, suggestions and tips that we could use. All the infamous MADCC coaching tactics came out, the peg game (pegs front and back of the kayaks), the double tap noise for teaching pry's in opens and DIY milk bottle buoys. You'll be pleased to know we used them all (hence the title of this article).

Day 3 and 4 was at Asbury Mere Lake and involved us delivering more coaching sessions that we had prepared for homework. By now we had got used to the course leaders, the group and the standard to which we needed to coach to. Using a mixture of lectures, games and coached sessions with feedback we finished the last 2 days and eventually got the good news we longed for...we'd passed!!!

We have to say a massive thank you for all the support of everyone at the club whilst we were doing this course, we couldn't have done it without you all. We're now looking forward to the 2013 season and a fresh batch of beginners and recruits to introduce to the world of kayaking and canoeing.

The September Picnic Paddle

Bill Fox

A mixed group of about 20 paddlers – younger and older, parents and children – set off from the club's store for the gentle paddle to Shore's Clough, at Hurdsfield. The group spread out as the more experienced edged ahead of the newer paddlers. It was a busy morning with many barges on the move, so there were several pauses while they passed. The wildlife was busy; ducks and geese on the water; flocks of tits in the trees and hedges; the hedges laden with rosehips; a wren singing loudly.

Arriving at Shore's Clough, it was time for lunch and then the games. Paul organised us into two teams for an interesting and rather unruly game of Rounders, with Liam's team said to win over Bill's team, but maybe it depended on who was counting the scores!

Chris produced a tug-of-war rope, so the teams set-to with Liam's team again just winning by 2 pulls to 1. Then it was time to leave Chris to try to undo the knots in the tug-of-war rope and for the rest of us to re-embark. Fewer barges now, but a pleasant, leisurely and sociable paddle back.

Thanks to Chris for organising the event, and thanks to everyone who came and joined in.

Mersey Descent Canoe Race. 14 October 2012

Chris Cleaver

The race was blessed by rain in the days beforehand and a frost and sun on the day. This meant it was good to paddle and good to watch. The river was running fast but not so high as to make Northenden Weir a portage, so we were expecting the 1 hour barrier to be broken.

The weather attracted 32 paddlers for the race and 40 paddlers for the accompanying mini tour, from as far as Lincoln and Worcester. The latter is significant. The race had previously attracted local heroes, but this time a stranger rode into town. Well, not a total stranger. Stuart

West came to Cheshire in midsummer 2011 and smashed the record for the Cheshire Ring Race solo K1.

Now he and Dave Pedlar were attacking the Descent K2 record. And they succeeded, knocking off over 6 minutes from the old record. Afterwards Stuart said "*Great race, really enjoyed it and will be recommending it to friends. I'm now intrigued to see what it is like at more normal water levels, maybe next year.*"

There were also records broken in the K1, WW Racer and Touring Canoe classes.

We will be running the race and tour again in October 2013, visit www.madcc.co.uk for details nearer the time.

The 9.2 mile section of the river used for the race has one sloping weir and a dozen rubble weirs, this is part of the 18 mile Mersey Canoe Trail which is open every day. Details can be found on the web.

Thanks to the competitors and everyone who helped. The hospitality of Burnage Rugby Club at the start and Trafford Metrovick Rugby Club at the end was very welcome.

The detailed results are as follows.

		Club	Time
K2	Racing double Kayak		
1st	Stuart West & David Pedlar	Worcester	53m26s New record
2nd	Maggie Dilai & Jenny Illidge	Runcorn	59m06s
3rd	Richard Millar & Laurence Garton	Nottingham KC	59m15s
4 th	Adrian Fisher & Ned Price	Macclesfield	61m 42s
5 th	Gary Carter & Steve Gardner	Lincoln	62m 11s

K1	Racing single kayak		
1 st	Jamie Mayers	Runcorn	58m 25s New record
2 nd	Jonathan O'Grady	Runcorn	61m 19s
3 rd	Rod Steele	Macclesfield	61m 40s
4 th	Alastair Randall	Liverpool	66m 37s
5 th	Archie Miles	Lincoln	68m 23s
6 th	John McCarrol		95m 03s
7 th	Sam Woolley (J)	Manchester	114m 44s
8 th	Nicholas Woolley	Manchester	115m 00s

WWR White water racing kayak

1 st	Michael Fitzsimons	Mercia	62m 48s New record
2 nd	Richard Moss	Manchester	69m 04s
3 rd	Simon Gelder	Chester	74m 14s
4 th	Jane Millar	Nottingham KC	84m 48s
5 th	Colin James	Liverpool	86m 10s

Touring open canoe

1 st	Colin Smith	Chester	77m 03s New record
2 nd	Stewart Stobbs		90m 59s
3 rd	Sean, Robbie & Joseph Jesson	Manchester	91m 17s
4 th	Simon Nixon & Peter Rushworth	Runcorn	96m 19s
5 th	Joanna Sweet & Matthew Hailwood	Bolton	106m 01s
6 th	Gareth Smith	Bolton	113m 58s

The wrong trousers

Adrian Fisher.

As many of you know, Neil and I had another crack at the Devises Westminster 125 mile canoe race this Easter. We have built a good knowledge of the race and have had successful campaigns in the past. This year we thought we had everything right. Using Neil's ergo during the winter and traveling to Chester when the canal was frozen.

Our plan was to finish the major training with the Weaver descent when we checked out our race day set up. I had purchased a set of Reads bottoms and knew they were wrong as soon as we had paddled a few meters. They grip the seat and don't allow any movement so by the end of the Weaver descent I had back problems. We were otherwise quite happy having won the race, having had a div 2 paddler work hard to catch and need a rest on our wake.

The race itself had extra excitement because of Steve Redgrave's entry; we met the great man and paddled alongside him for an hour or so. I started with a niggling back pain from the Weaver but was not too concerned, Neil went through a bad patch in the first few miles but we settled down if going a bit slower than we had planned. After twenty miles I picked the boat up at a portage and had a shooting pain down my back, had a stretch and got back in. This back pain which was the other side to my niggle gradually got worse and was particularly painful when portaging, Neil was carrying the boat for some portages with me hobbling along behind.

We were with Sir Steve on the run in to Reading which is where I advised him on the futility of running. We lost contact with him when he stopped to change into night clothing, as a celebrity probably best not to change at Reading where snap shots would be taken. We got changed and got back in the boat, I remember saying to our support crew "I am not going to be able to finish". I think I had set a goal of getting to Reading to cope with my back pain so was psychological broke when we got back in the boat. Neil was on top form and tried to keep me going. On the water we were still smooth and making good time. Every portage was agony for me and I called it a day at Mosley Lock after 61 miles. It just was not worth taking the pain for another 12 hours.

After the race Neil suggested I see a sports physio with the quip "you can spend your 35 quid now or later". So of I went to Gail at Handforth Physio and she quickly diagnosed muscle not skeletal damage and told me not to get in a boat for six weeks. This I found very difficult and did not get back to training properly till July and avoided K2 paddling. I was allowed to cycle so managed to stay fit but unfortunately I had to pull out of the next two races at Chester and Runcorn. Always check your trousers before a big event...

Liffey Descent 2012

Andrew Millest

It was all planned. My daughter Sarah was going to paddle racing K1 and I was going to take the safer option and use a white water racer, Caroline was coming to watch. Then, the Monday before the race Sarah was diagnosed with pneumonia and banned from all exercise.

A quick rethink was needed. John Broadhead agreed to paddle racing K2 with me and entries were swiftly rearranged by Allen from Adventure Travel. We arrived on Friday, collected our number bibs, enjoyed the free pasta meal, then retreated to the hotel to drink Guinness, pore over YouTube videos, and read the route guide to plan how to tackle each of the 13 weirs.

On race day on Saturday, the river was already running high before the main force of the dam release arrived. Predictably, I got the line wrong at Straffan, the first weir, but the boat was undamaged and we were soon back en route. Everything else went to plan until Wren's Nest, a monster V-weir; again we got a poor line and went straight into the stopper. I enjoyed recirculating for a while before finally getting hold of the boat and being dragged out by the divers. At Palmerston, another monster V-weir, we dithered briefly at the top and once again went into the stopper; this time it was John who spent time in the green room, finally emerging on the opposite bank 100m downstream from me and the K2. After that we had no further problems and a fast run down to the finish was helped by the very high river level. There are some photos of us on the club website and more of all of the different classes on Flickr (www.flickr.com/irishmarathoncanoeing)

The excellent free food at the finish was very welcome. Despite the sunshine, spending 2.5 hours soaking wet in racing kit had left us pretty chilly. However, our spirits were considerably raised by winning the bronze medal in the veterans K2 class. Not bad for a scratch crew who hadn't paddled together since the Conwy ascent!

The Liffey is a great, great race. This is the 4th time I've done it in the past 5 years and I've enjoyed each one (despite snapping Adrian's K2 in half one year...). It is absolutely wicked fun in a K2; the general purpose skills you learn at the canal and on moving water trips are vital and of course you need to be confident in a K2 – all this can be learned at club sessions. Hope to see a bigger club turnout at future races. John and I are already thinking that if we actually trained we might get a silver or a gold medal next year.

A Spanish Race Day

Adrian Fisher

I have long dreamed of competing in the Sella Descent Race held on the Green Costa, on the first Saturday in August. It is a classic race with an entry of around 1000 boats and the centre part of a local festival. There are a series of races up the coast for K1 K2 and K4. I wanted to race K2 and Andrew's daughter Sarah agreed to pull an old man down the 17km course.





The race has a fantastic party atmosphere and is held on a beautiful clean river. Less than grade 1 water yet challenging to get a K2 down when competing for space, it is easy to get sideways and either bent round a rock or T-boned by other competitors, as was a paddler from Falcon Canoe club, his K1 was cut into three pieces by 2 K2s.

The logistics need a bit of thinking about, Jenny and I were holidaying in Spain about 8 hours from the race so took the long ferry to Santander with the boat and Sarah flew in on cheap flights so the cost was not bad. Falcon Canoe Club are thinking of taking a trailer load of boats next year and charging £100 each. We stayed at a cheap campsite and the entry fee is only £9.00 per seat. Entry via the BCU. I am going again and may have some roof space.

We paddled the race course the on the Friday which was a useful exercise although there is a water release the day of the race which gives a bit more water and opens up some options.

On race day we expected problems parking so arrived early to find reserved parking for cars with boats. It is hard to describe Arriodas on the morning of the race except it is nothing like I have experienced before. We drove past the Music festival on the way and they had bang bang music going with at least 1000 people dancing in a field. In Arriodas there was music and food stands, the equivalent of Spanish Morris Dancers, people in all sorts of costume, you really have to be there.

Simon and Alison Dark from BOA canoe club had briefed us about the start and we had a plan from the day before. Have a look at this link <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTeHcFukKSI> . They have a few speeches, welcome the overseas competitors with viva New Zealand, Viva England etc. then we all sing some songs which end with Viva Asturias and the paddles are released, we all run grab our boats and away we go. Sarah picked a fantastic line and kept us out of trouble finding water deep enough to float the boat. There is a lot of catching boats and hooking/spinning going on. Sarah had already told me this is a waste of time and a much better thing to do is slow down and encourage the boat in front to speed up. There is not a lot of English spoken and GO did not work, we found Allez allez (French) was much more effective. We had one swim where I got nervous about my boat although Sarah had everything under control. At another rapid Sarah had set us up with a good line when a K2 landed from nowhere on the foredeck pushing us off line. I felt an alarming bulge in the boat under my knees and decided to jump out.



The Start

We were catching boats all the way from our swim and found it one of the most enjoyable races we have done. Not many races end next to a fresh sardine barbecue, very nice. Back in the day Bollington Canoe club used to go on mass as a group holiday. If anybody wants to go next year I have already booked my ferry and support drive so let me know as I could take a boat or two.

The Little Wheels Weekend

Quentin Blagg

An article especially for the many members who enjoy bike riding as well as canoeing: Fun at the Brompton Folding Bike World Championships, September 2012

This was my second visit to the BFBWC. I went last year to cheer on a friend from London who was riding. It was a great day, so good that I planned a full weekend in 2012 taking Dot and Emma our granddaughter. Premier Inn had some good deals going and I picked up a nice 2 night price at a Lodge about 5 miles away in Bladon. We collected Emma from school in Bramhall, and set off down to the venue, Blenheim Palace just outside Oxford. This is a truly wonderful place, set in 2000 acres of Capability Brown landscaped gardens, a World Heritage site and of course the birthplace of Winston Churchill. The owners, the 11th Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, open up the Palace grounds to the Cycling World, just once a year, and the weekend is very, very popular. We had our bikes with us, and Emma was dying to ride round the circuit on her own, having just ditched her stabilisers. Before all that, let me tell you about the format of the weekend.

On the **Saturday**, there is the following

40K off road Sportive	Normal off road bikes
20 Km Time Trial	Normal bikes
Bike Polo	Open to anyone.

Palace grounds / roads open to the Public. No cars allowed.

Sunday

60/ 100 mile Sportives	Normal bikes
Brompton Marathon	Brompton bikes only 26.2 miles
Pink Ribbon event	Charity event, any bike
Brompton World Champs	Brompton bikes only. Highlight of the we
Brompton Sprint	“
Family events	



Palace grounds open to the Public as above

Entry is by ticket only, I think it cost me £30. In addition to all the events, there is a full tented display area with dozens of Manufacturers, full Catering, loads of kid's stuff, games, etc. etc. The Palace itself is open, as are all the grounds. This is a Mecca for bikies.

Ok, I hope you have the idea of what's on. We spent Saturday in Oxford, a great day out, with Dot doing the Morse trail, while me and Emma played in the Parks. Back at base, there was a Carvery Pub next door, and after a meal, Emma joined all the other kids in the play area. She was having such a great time, we allowed her to stay up until 10.00, a nice change from her normal 19.30. A full English breakfast next day set us up nicely, and off to the Palace we all trooped. (Palace/ trooped, got it? Come on catch up.) The dual carriage way from Oxford to Blenheim has bike paths running on both sides; these were heaving with riders, many of them family units with trailers and kids on little bikes, their legs twiddling as they tried to keep up. It made you feel good to be a bikie. There are usually about 10000 people go to the event, so there is obviously a bit of a wait to get in. No problem, it was a lovely sunny day and hey, bikies are nice people, so sit back and take it easy. First up was the kids events, and Emma entered her first bike race. She was up against it, a skinny little six years old girl against the might of boys up to 9! Not surprisingly she trailed in last, and burst into tears 'I was last, I never want to ride my bike again'. The smart Commissaire had the answer ' Yes, but you were the first 6 year old. Here's your prize' - her first medal of the day. Isn't it amazing how quickly tears turn to laughter? Next up was the Granddad's race, with your author really up for it. Need to get to that first corner in the lead, and so it proved, with this old codger leading the pack round the tight grass circuit. Coming into the home straight, my sprint for glory did for me, and I ended up tangled in the ropes marking the course . Again the floods of tears, (Emma, not me), 'my Granddad was winning and then he crashed, can he have another go?' Fantastic. There were races for disabled kids, big ones, little ones, everyone was catered for. Next was a go on the mini Velodrome, complete with banked corners, and then a go on the BMX course. Great fun and my little pride and joy had to be persuaded off to allow other kids



have a go.

All this effort proved a bit draining, so soon it was time for a picnic and a pint. I managed to grab some me time, and wandered round the display area, dribbling at the Team bikes and grabbing stuff for Emma's goodie bag. Eventually it was time for the main event of the weekend, the Brompton World Championships. The Competitors were graded, with the fast men going off together first. Cycling Weekly correspondent Michael Hutchinson has won this event for the last 4 years, and he did it again, covering the 2 lap course about 30 seconds ahead of the field. I forgot to mention, all competitors in this event have to wear a suit and tie, with the ladies wearing a female equivalent. Some riders really go for it, with top hat and tails, carrying a tray of drinks etc etc. All great fun, and added to by the Le Mans start, where the bike are 50 yards away with riders having to sprint to get to the bike, then reassemble it before riding off. Fortunately it only takes a few seconds to do this, one of the reasons why the Brompton is the Rolls Royce of folding bikes. This event attracts riders from all over the

world, with former professionals coming over from the Continent, it really is that



popular.

We watched the racing for about an hour, and one of the guys handing out the finishers medals, promised Emma a medal, after she told him about her own exploits. Good man, he came over as the tail enders were coming in and presented it to her, she was over the moon. As it was still early afternoon, we wandered over to where the Sprint event was taking place, where riders rode a 100 meter flying start event, most of them having just finished the previous event. This was the last race of the weekend, and then the roads in the Palace grounds are opened to the public (no traffic allowed). Soon the roads were heaving with family riders, and we dashed off to get our own bikes ready. This was Emma's first ride on the roads since ditching her stabilisers, and she shot off, eager to mix it with all the other kids. It's a hilly circuit, and soon she was huffing and puffing (along with her Grandma), and needed pushing uphill. No problem, but going down was worse, and I had to hang onto her for dear life as she gave it legs on the descents. At one point on the circuit, I heard 'Hey Blaggy', it was Jon Adshead who runs Bicycle Smithy in Hazel Grove, an old friend, and down for a family camping weekend in the Palace grounds. The full lap took us about an hour with various rest stops, and then, yippee, more me time and an opportunity to get a couple of fast laps in. Fantastic.

That was just about it, with only the Prizewinners Ceremony left. The main event winners all got a top of the range Brompton bike, and there were various other awards, Veterans etc. Emma's new best mate spotted us and donated her another different medal, hey she was one happy little girl. A great weekend and a fabulous day out. All the details will be on the Palace website, you can camp there, so it won't cost a fortune. I really fancy having a go at that World Championship event in 2013, anyone got a Brompton folding bike I can borrow?