

BVCC Newsletter December 2009

Welcome...

... to the December 2009 edition of the BVCC newsletter. So far 2009 has been as successful, if not more so, than 2008. The club continues to grow; we have seen a good number of new members this year, and our events, particularly weekend trips, are very well attended.

For those of you who don't already know me, I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new chair of BVCC. I joined the club in April 2008 with my husband (then boyfriend!), Chris, and we haven't looked back since – we have thoroughly enjoyed our time in the club to date, whether on the lido, at Mytchett during the winter or out on the rivers at the weekend. We are both enjoying having the opportunity to help with the running of the club, as coaches and, in my case, also serving on the committee.

I look forward to continued growth and success in 2010. I am also particularly keen to see more girls and women out on the water, and I will be looking at ways of encouraging female participation.

Going forwards we plan to issue a newsletter every six months, with the next probably in May 2010.



If any of you have comments on the newsletter or suggestions for future editions, then please let me know (chairman@bvcc.org.uk).

Finally, I would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and best wishes (and happy paddling!) for 2010.

Lindsay Heeley



Trip reports

Club members have taken part in a wide range of trips, training courses and other events this year. Brief summaries of three of these follow.



Whitewater trip to Scotland, April 2009



In Easter this year a group of 14 club members (15 including one dog!) braved the long drive up Scotland for a week of whitewater paddling. We based ourselves just outside Fort William, which meant that we had a good selection of rivers, catering for a range of abilities, within driving distance.

We were very lucky with the weather – not much rain, and plenty of blue skies and sunshine. The downside of that, though, was that water levels in the rivers were lower than normal. However, despite that, we still had some brilliant kayaking (and canoeing, in some cases!), including rivers such as the Garry, Spean and Arkaig. The scenery was fantastic and, with the fine weather, we were treated to some unusually clear views of Ben Nevis.

On a couple of days we met up with one the families from the club who were also on holiday in the area. On one of those days (our “rest day”!) we went for a flat water paddle on Loch Morar. The views were beautiful, helped by glorious sunshine all day. We stopped for lunch on a tiny little island in the loch, before the return paddle back the same way.



For the final paddle of the week we picked the Etive, a true Scottish classic. We concentrated on a couple of small sections, to give the group the opportunity to try kayaking some “drops”. The first of these was Triple Falls, a series of three waterfalls of between eight and ten foot each. But that was just the warm up – we then moved on to the infamous Right Angle Falls, a 20 foot drop which eight of us successfully paddled. It actually needed surprisingly little in the way of technical paddling skills, but that was more than made up for by the requirement to conquer the nerves at the top. However, all those that paddled it agreed that the feeling of achievement was second-to-none!



All in all it was a fantastic week that we all thoroughly enjoyed and I think it's fair to say that for most of us our paddling improved no end during the holiday. Thanks go to Tom Brindley for organising it.

Open canoe 4 star training, North Wales, October 2009

The requirement for all the new 4 star awards is two days of formal training. Dave Cook, Richard Bustin and myself joined 4 other paddlers on one Kayakjacko's courses in N Wales in October. Ed was there for the final parts of his assessment and Simon was helping Jacko and Hila.



We were going to paddle a new piece of water to all of us, Lake Vyrnwy

which is about 30 miles west of Shrewsbury. Lake Vyrnwy is a manmade lake created in the 1880's for supplying water to Liverpool, 70 miles away. At the eastern end of the lake is rugged stone dam, which we drove across to get to our meeting point at the café. We were first to arrive on the bright but frosty Saturday morning, the others soon turned up and Jacko outline the plan for the weekend whilst some had their second breakfast. The plan for the weekend was Saturday on the lake, an overnight camp on the lakeshore and Sunday running the river flowing out of the lake.

The morning session on the lake started with lying down in our boats and listening to what we could hear, bird song, the lapping water, distant voices and traffic were some of the sounds. Some of the group said that this was the best bit of the weekend! Paddle strokes and leadership skills and styles were reviewed / discussed as we paddled around the lake. The afternoon session involved making rafts with two open boats and building sailing rigs. The shoreline was searched for suitable length of timber to join two boats together. I teamed up with Trevor a paddler from the south coast and we fortunately found a natural piece of 3 by 3 inch planned timber ideal for the job. I dug out my bag of bits of cord / rope and within no time our two boats were securely lashed together with a suitable gap between the two.

Our next task was to build a sailing rig using poling poles as an 'A' frame and a tarp as a sail. Poling poles are in our case two aluminium poles which can be jointed to form one 3.3m pole. They are usually used when standing up in your boat to move you and your boat up river. More cord and rope was used and soon we had a sail hosted over our two boats. We compared sailing rigs and the advantages and disadvantages of each other's alas there was no wind so no sailing. We were now told that in case the wind got up or in case of an emergency it is important that you can take down the sail and rig quickly. The sail could

easily be reefed (making the sail smaller) but we were not the quickest getting the rig down even when we cut some of the knots.

Jacko had arranged for a woodsman to give us some wild camping skills before it got dark and also suggested after dinner we go for a night paddle on the lake. Back on shore tents and tarps were erected and preparations for dinner made. Ed had kindly offered to cook dinner for Dave, Richard and myself so how could we say no. Dinner was barbecued chicken with peaches as desert. Dan our woodsman showed us and let us try lighting a fire with 9V battery and wire wool, a knife / flint and birch bark or cotton wool soaked with Vaseline. He also went through his collection of knives and hand saws and finished off showing us his hammock and tarp which he was to sleep in that night.



It was now dark so off we set in two groups navigating around the lake, we were fortunate that we had three good reference points in the dark, the hotel across the lake, the flood lit water extraction tower and our fire which Dan kept alight whilst we were off paddling. We used map, compass and timing to find our way on the water, with no clear visual reference it is often difficult to

determine how fast you are going so you rely more on your other senses and the feel of your paddling going through the water. Good fun so next time you are on a safe bit of water try paddling with your eyes shut for a few seconds. Back on dry land with the boats tied up refreshments were taken, marsh mallows cooked on the open fire and stories told before retiring to our sleeping bags.

The mist was lying over the lake when we woke on Sunday morning, it lifted as the sun came around whilst we ate breakfast. Our quartet took porridge for breakfast, the adventurous ones having the chocolate custard variety. We packed the tents, loaded boats on cars and then dropped them off below the dam. The river was Basingstoke canal width and flowing but not too fast, we were told it was mostly grade 1 and 2. We set off down river in two groups practicing river leading skills and the principal of CLAP (**C**ommunication with your group - which may be by hand signals, **L**ine of sight – making sure you can see everyone, **A**voidance of any dangers such as fallen – trees and **P**osition – where is the best place for you as group leader).

We also practiced poling and lining our boats up river. Lining is where the boat is pulled up or down river using long lines either attached to the underneath of the boat or to its ends.

Further down the river we lost sight of the water as it dropped over a rapid, an advantage with open boats over kayaks is that you can easily stand up and get a better view of what is ahead of you. This we did but decided we could not see enough and would need to get out and inspect the rapid. The water was flowing over rocks and around an island. From our side of the bank we could see a channel, which we could paddle, and where we could place safety to rescue the paddler should things go wrong. At the end of the rapid there was a tree across the river. The conclusion was that we would not run it due to safety and the significant risk of the boat being damaged so we carried our boats around it.



Our CLAP skills were put into practice later on when we came across barbed wire strung across the river in 3 places, we were fortunate the river level was not high and the light was still good so we were able to spot and work our way around the wire.

By the time we had got back to the cars we were short of time and sadly did not have time to go through the deep water rescues and getting wet stuff. A great weekend and an area we will have to paddle again and congratulation to Ed who passed his 4 star.

Bob Hamilton

Remote first aid training, September 2009

Twelve club members took part in a two day "remote first aid" training course in September. This was aimed at teaching the key principles of first aid assuming a remote environment, where medical help could be some time away and environmental factors such as the weather and terrain also need to be dealt with. The course was hugely informative and surprisingly enjoyable. It covered topics such as CPR, dealing with bleeding and breaks, hypothermia and much more. There were plenty of opportunities for us to practice the skills that we were taught, particularly on the final afternoon when we had some mock incidents to deal with, including a car hitting a lamppost and the four people in the process of climbing it falling off from various heights, and a crazy game of basketball.

Coaching and courses

We currently have 21 BCU coaches within the club, from Level 1 to Level 3. We have run a range of courses during 2009, together with a number of other courses via external providers. We are currently working on our plans for courses next year, and hope to provide more information soon.

Polo

Blackwater A: After inconsistent results during the summer tournaments (12th Place at the London International, 2nd Place at the Welsh Open) Blackwater A started their first National League Division 3 tournament of the season with a more positive outcome than last year. Our first game was a shock to the system and demonstrates that we need to be training harder with the pace pushing our fitness levels, however a 1:1 draw when time was called was not a bad result. The following 2 games resulted in a loss against Nomad C, with our Cap'n changing tactic a little late, and a draw against Bere Forest B. The Meridian game showed some excitement with Blackwater A taking the lead by half time. A few errors and inconsistent referees signals allowed the opposition to pull a few goals back, unfortunately the ref's signal also resulted in a yellow card for our goalie after some choice words. With 4 players we were unable to maintain the lead and another draw at full time with both teams having scored 5 goals.

Our final game of the night was against Aberfan B. It was the usual style of both teams scoring 1 for 1 but as with last season Blackwater took the win by one goal within the last minute. Our current placing is third overall, however the competition is very close with none of the teams having a significant lead.

Blackwater Development: This team has been created to develop talent within the club and is made up of paddlers not playing in the national leagues along with individuals from A & B teams. Our first tournament in Division 2 of the South West Invitational saw Matt Barton, PJ Barton, Matt Williams, James Lawrence, Ben Lawrence, Glenn Carlton & Paul Rose set off bright and early for a 9am start at the Olympic sized pool in Street, Somerset.

The tournament provided some mixed competition with some clearly newly developed teams amongst seasoned paddlers. Our first game against Bath Uni A saw us playing a 5-out tactic and winning comfortably with 7-1 score at time. The following games were a little more fraught with some teams taking the lead over us, all were finished with an equal score line, however the most notable game being against Bristol Pitbulls who were 3-0 up at half time. Blackwater pressed hard in the second half putting 3 successive goals away and taking advantage of some fast breaks, at one point we had only 4 players on the pitch after a yellow card was awarded for illegal substitution but still kept pressure on. Our final game was another win and puts us in the top half of the table which means we will now face some fierce competition in the rest of the league.

Blackwater B: These guys have yet to play their first tournament of the season but based on performance at training are tipped to do well in their first National League Div 4 tournament.

Supporters at tournaments always welcome!

Blackwater Youth: We're busy organising tournaments for the youth players outside of the paddlesport events that have been booked. Please also look out for youth specific training sessions to be announced over the coming weeks, we have momentum with these players for the first time in years and I don't want to squander this opportunity to develop some real talent from within the club.

Please contact youthpolo@BVCC.org.uk for further details.

Training: We've a training tournament in Luton on the 21st November, teams to be mixed from the entire squad. We continue to train at Alton pool on Wednesday evenings from 7.30 -10.00pm. Paddlers of all abilities welcome.

Matt Williams

Paddlepower

Jerry Rogers

No doubt most of you are aware that Jerry Rogers has decided to step down from organising and assisting the paddlepower sessions. He has been heavily involved in the club since it was founded in 1986 and has served on all the main positions on the committee. More recently he has also put a lot of time and effort into organising the youth section and all the paddlepower sessions. The club will miss him, but we will do our best to continue his good work.

BVCC Youth section

It has been great to see that to see that we have a large youth section of the club which is growing and were still paddling on the Lido during the winter out numbering the Adults despite the cold and

the colour of the water! I hope to get the youth committee working this year so watch the web site and emails. Your support is needed to make this a success. A great thanks to the various parents and carers who have helped over the summer and winter club nights and paddle power events supporting the youngsters and coaches. It is very much appreciated. Over the winter we will be running water confidence sessions at RAF Odiham, the normal club night programme at Mytchett and the Regional Paddle Power events, plus a few others.

Paddle Power Series 2009-2010

Triathlon – 12th September

A fun time was had by all at Reading on the River Thames with George finishing 3rd in the under 10 year old class.



Wilderness of Beale Park – Open Canoe Event – Sunday 4th October

The team entered several challenges in open canoe events, a sprint, rescue the balls, cross stream challenge (Ollie mistaking which white buoy to navigate round), poling (Jack & Ollie's canoe surfing up the beach while Ella and Chantel nearly wiped everybody out when paddling with the poles. The team came in first at the quiz on Canadian boat and paddles with some very interesting answers and this was despite one of the team walking on a very expensive wooden paddle £120 of the judge!

Poling



Team getting wet as usual



White waters of Newbury Mill stream – Wavehopper Challenge – Sunday 15th November

On Sunday 15th November Elliott, Jack, Tom and Ollie entered the Wavehopper challenge of paddling down the epic mill stream in the centre of Newbury. The weather was a nice sunny day despite the previous day's monsoon and there was a flow. Despite a nervous practice on the Wednesday night the team all had two runs down the Mill stream and down the Kennet and Avon with their coach Ed running alongside the slippery bank and through the high street and towpath. Some good times were made against the racing clubs. Plus they all got a national ranking in Div B so look out for 2012.

Ollie



Elliott



Dragon boat racing



Future events planned

...Fun Games, Polo, Dragon Boat Racing...

Caption competition

Send your suggestions for a caption for the photo below by 31st December 2009 to youth@bvcc.org.uk. There will be a prize for the winner (entries from the junior section only please!), so get your thinking caps on!



Damian (Ed) Edwards

Forthcoming events

Hopefully by now you will have all have seen the new trip calendar, which takes us through to April 2010. Some of the planned events and trips are covered below. To see the full version, please visit the Trips page on the club website (<http://www.bvcc.org.uk/page/trips.html>) or alternatively the club forum (www.bvcc.org.uk/forum - under BVCC/General chat, news and announcements).

Aldershot lido and Mytchett club nights

We have now finished at Aldershot lido for the winter and are meeting on a Wednesday evening at Basingstoke Canal Centre at Mytchett, where we will be until the end of March. We will then have a few weeks of paddling on the Basingstoke Canal before the lido reopens in May.

During the winter session we are planning a slight change of format from previous years:

- On the last Wednesday of each month (January to March), we will not be meeting at Mytchett and instead we will meet at Alton swimming pool. The polo team already hire the pool on a Wednesday night for their training sessions, but we plan to use the diving pool or the training pool, leaving the main pool for polo training. These indoor sessions will provide a good opportunity to practice skills such as rescues, support strokes and rolling in a safe and warm environment. The sessions will run from 8.30pm to 10.00pm and will be split into two parts.
- On the second Wednesday of each month (December to March), we will run an activity session at Mytchett aimed at all club members, both adults and juniors.
- On the first and third Wednesdays the sessions will be aimed at adults and will cover topics such as first aid, rescues, trip planning and so on.

Some of the topics planned for the sessions at the Basingstoke Canal Centre are first aid, rescues, building shelters and more!

In addition, as an alternative to the lido / Mytchett, the polo team welcomes anyone who would like to train with them at Alton on a Wednesday night.

Please note that there will be no club night on either Wednesday 23 or 30 December.

RAF Odiham pool sessions

During the winter we will also be running a number of indoor pool sessions at RAF Odiham on the following dates: 16 January 2010, 13 February 2010, 27 March 2010 and 24 April 2010. These will run from 6pm to 8pm and will be split into three parts as follows:

- 6.00pm – 6.40pm Junior paddlepower session
- 6.40pm – 7.20pm Adult instructed session
- 7.20pm – 8.00pm Adult non-instructed session

The cost will be £4 per session and you are welcome to come to more than one session, but priority for each session will be given to those in the appropriate category.

Weekend trips

During the winter we will also be running a number of whitewater weekend trips aimed at a range of abilities, including one in January to North Wales where we plan to run a 3 star whitewater course. Please refer to the trip calendar for details of the dates. We will also be running some flat water day trips which are aimed at both juniors and adults, the first one being a post-Christmas paddle on 3 January on the Basingstoke Canal – a good chance to burn off some of those mince pies! In addition for the juniors there are several paddlepower events running in conjunction with other local clubs (see the trip calendar or email youth@bvcc.org.uk for more information).

Courses

We plan to run a BCU 1 star (13 Feb) and two BCU 2 star courses (16/17 Jan and 27/28 March) during the winter. These courses have been organised to coincide with the RAF Odiham pool sessions, and are structured so that the majority of the training is on the Basingstoke Canal at Mytchett during the daytime, followed by followed by the indoor pool session in the evening to cover the parts of the courses that involve getting wet – capsizes, rescues etc. A river trip will also be included where this is required for part of the assessment. For more information please email courses@bvcc.org.uk.

Club Christmas meal and awards

The Christmas meal and awards evening was held on 16 December at Caffe Piccolo in Farnham. A fun evening was had by all, and well done to those who won awards!

Club notices

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of a few bits and pieces:

- Aldershot lido changing rooms: sadly one of our members had a wallet stolen from the mens changing rooms recently. We therefore recommend that you avoid leaving valuables in the changing rooms, as the club cannot be held responsible for anything that goes missing.
- Our “web monkey” is working on a new-look website and we hope that this will go live in the next couple of months, so watch this space!
- The club forum has now been running for just over a year and has proved a very successful means of keeping members up-to-date with club events and news. It is also useful for exchanging ideas with other club members, asking questions, organising lifts for weekend events, and generally keeping up-to-date with the latest information, particularly in advance of weekend events.
- Club clothing: we are in the process of organising a new supplier of club clothing, as our current supplier is no longer making clothing. We are also taking this opportunity to design a new club logo!

Contacts

Details of club contacts are below. We are excited to have some new committee members this year, as well as some new committee positions.

Chair	Lindsay Heeley	chairman@bvcc.org.uk
Vice chair	Simon Edwards	info@bvcc.org.uk
Secretary	Ian Morris	secretary@bvcc.org.uk
Treasurer	Damian (Ed) Edwards	treasurer@bvcc.org.uk
Head coach	Tom Brindley	coaching@bvcc.org.uk
Coaching officer	Bob Hamilton	coaching@bvcc.org.uk
Youth officer	Damian Edwards	youth@bvcc.org.uk
Polo	Matt Williams	polo@bvcc.org.uk
Youth polo	Alan Blyth	youthpolo@bvcc.org.uk
Courses	Graham Snook	courses@bvcc.org.uk
Events	Mark Lovegrove	info@bvcc.org.uk
Website	Mike Hamilton	webmaster@bvcc.org.uk

Paddlesafe

Be safe



Are you being heard?
Is something worrying you?
Are you keeping it to yourself?
Need someone to listen?



Contact us in confidence

Your Club Welfare Officer:

Damien (Ed) Edwards

Telephone: 07715 749636

e-mail: edwardsdamian@hotmail.com



BCU CHILD PROTECTION

24 Hour Child Protection Contact Number Mobile: 0777 570 7364

(For use by professionals and people wishing to report incidents outside of office hours)

e-mail: childprotection@bcu.org.uk

BCU Child Protection, Vulnerable Adults and Harassment Lead Officer –

Mike Devlin Tel: 0845 370 9514

Postal Address: Child Protection, British Canoe Union, 18 Market Place, Bingham, Nottingham, NG13 8AP

For more information on our child protection policy please visit www.bcu.org.uk

NSPCC Child protection Helpline: 0800 0800 5000

Childline 0800 111 (a free 24 hour helpline for children in distress or in danger)