

## BVCC Trip report:

### **Tryweryn, North Wales, October 08.**

The river's website had stated there might be no dam release over the weekend, rendering the Tryweryn to an unpaddable trickle, yet not even this could stop a team of intrepid paddlers making the long pilgrimage to North Wales. The accommodation for most was an isolated bunkhouse with full board provision, with a few extras in a local hostel in Bala.

The gamble paid off- due to excess water in the dam the river was in steady flow, and, what's more, we had the river to ourselves on the Saturday. The group split into two groups: beginners and improvers. Those of us in the beginners spent all day on a small reach of calmer water at the upper end of the river. Coach Tom, with the support of Bob & Mike, led a full course on the basics of white water paddling, to allow us to build up confidence in our abilities rather than being thrown down an intimidating stretch of water! We started on the bank using simulation exercises to visualise the importance of "edge", the lean of the boat on the water, and the positioning of the paddle blade and body weight. When on the water these ideas came together, albeit slowly, to ferry glide across the moving water.

After a brief pause for lunch (the lovely cafe being shut) we went back out and took the new found skills to a more rapidly flowing section of water. It was now even more crucial to lean the correct way- if you didn't, the boat would tip over and a swim would ensue, as a few of us found out! We finished the day learning some white water rescue techniques, both being rescued and being the rescuer. The day finished on a real high and we went back to the bunkhouse in high spirits, where we were all treated to a well deserved home cooked three course meal.

By Sunday morning word had got out that the Tryweryn was flowing so we were sharing the river with almost every paddler in North Wales! This newfound weight of traffic didn't dampen spirits. The groups once again split up, and those of us in the beginners group learnt the art of breaking into and out of flowing water. Although we focussed on a small stretch of water, Tom's excellent coaching and patience allowed us all to improve rapidly. By lunch time, we had all achieved a huge amount and felt our abilities as novice white water paddlers had improved.

Thanks to Tom for his excellent coaching, and to Bob & Mike for their support & thanks to the club for organising such a great trip.