

The Promenade



An occasional digest of news, advertisement and gossip February 2008

Editorial

Unfortunately this issue doesn't have many pictures – but it does have lots of information about white-water trips, pool sessions and our summer training programme. Don't forget to let event organisers know as soon as possible if you want to take part in anything, before all the places are gone. Happy paddling!

Steve

White Water Trips

There are still a few white water trips between now and the end of March. Where we go and what we do will depend on water levels as well as who wants to come. So if you're interested in any trips, whether you're a newcomer or a seasoned expert, please check the dates in the events list and let Steve know if you'd like to join him!

We'll be arranging some family flat-water trips as soon as the weather gets a bit warmer – watch this space!

The Committee

Chair, Coaching & Development	Steve Rayner	01874 623399
Secretary	Kathy Hosie	01874 625184
Treasurer	Peter Cloke	01874 636161
Events	Tim Bailey	01874 610265
Pool	Ian Penn	07718 936413
Social	Phil Luffman	01874 611453
Membership	Liam Hosie	01874 625184
Publicity		
Equipment	Lee Stephens	01874 610578
Welfare	Chris Rayner	01874 623399

STOP PRESS

We are running 4 **SELF-RESCUE TRAINING SESSIONS** on Wednesday evenings at **Riverside Pool, Bronllys**, starting on 27th February. This is a great opportunity to improve or learn **Support Strokes** and **Rescues** and to **Learn to Roll** in a kayak.

Brecon Leisure Centre sessions will continue once a month on Saturdays (at an earlier time), but will now include activities such as **Polo** or **Slalom** as well as some coaching. There will consequently be less 'free play time', which we hope will make better use of these sessions.

See the 'Twisting in the Pool' section overleaf for details.

The Coaches

Name	Qualifications	Able to teach and assess
Tim Bailey	BCU Trainee Level 3 Kayak Coach, BCU Level 2 Canoe Coach, 4* Canoe	1-2*
Mick Burke	UK Level 1 Coaching Certificate	Paddlesport Start
Peter Cloke	BCU Trainee Level 2 Kayak Coach	Paddlesport Start
Steve Jolliffe	BCU Level 2 Kayak Coach, 4* Inland Kayak, 3* Canoe	1-2*
Nigel Midgley	BCU Level 4 Inland Kayak Coach	1-2*, 3* white water kayak
Steve Rayner	BCU Level 3 Inland Kayak Coach, 4* Sea Kayak, BCU Level 3 Canoe Coach	1-3* (canoe & white water kayak)
Lee Stephens	BCU Trainee Level 2 Kayak Coach, 2* canoe	Paddlesport Start

Twisting in the Pool

The next pool session at Brecon is February 23rd starting at 5.15pm for an hour. The cost is £6 as previously, if you want a place please let Ian Penn know as soon as possible.

Due to a reduction in services at Brecon leisure centre and a general unwillingness to accommodate our pool session, we have decided to look for another pool for training. We have campaigned, with other leisure centre users, over many weeks to keep the leisure centre open to its current time table, but we as a club have now been told that the only time we can be accommodated is 5pm on a Saturday. This campaign will go on and our plan is to continue with our once-a-month pool session at Brecon leisure centre. If you are unhappy, as I am, with the reduction in services, please sign the petition that Ian Penn will be circulating.

However, we have also now set up several Wednesday evening sessions at Riverside, a privately-owned and family-run caravan and camping park at Bronllys. This has a small pool which is ideally suited to formal training sessions. It also has a bar/restaurant, which on Wednesday has a curry night, with curry and a pint for a fiver! The ideal way to round off your paddle! Unfortunately, Riverside is slightly more expensive and really only suited to taking 6 boats at a time, hence sessions at Riverside will be more expensive than at Brecon.

We will be running at Riverside during February and March a **Self-Rescue Course** covering support strokes, rescues and rolling. This will be open only to competent kayakers of round two star standard. We're aiming to provide a high ratio of coaches to paddlers and the cost will be £10 per week – you can come for one, two, three or all four weeks. Dates are February 27th, March 5th, 12th and 19th. All sessions will start at 7pm. Please book places with Ian Penn.

Summer Training

We are hoping to provide the following courses this year. PLEASE LET STEVE KNOW ASAP if you'd like to take part, so we can finalise our plans.

Developers' Kayak and Canoe Course

Wednesday evenings, 9th April-21st May.

This is intended to lead to the new two-star award (for over-16s) or the new Paddlepower Discover award (for young people). The course will cover both kayaking and canoeing, but will be tailored for individual participants who are already competent in one but not both types of boat. The course will be suitable to anyone who has 1* (or the old Paddlepower One), who has the old 2* in either kayak or canoe (but not both), or who has some experience paddling kayaks and/or canoes but has no formal qualifications. The course will be quite demanding and is best suited to those aged 11 years or over. Participants should be prepared to attend the full 7 weeks of the course, which will take place at Brecon Promenade and probably some other locations. There will be a charge for the course (as well as usual boat hire fees).

Summer Training Weekend

Friday 13th-Sunday 15th June

This weekend, based in a bunkhouse at Biblins near Monmouth, will be organised by North Avon Canoe Club and is expected to cover the new 1* and 2* awards as well as training for the new 3* white water kayak award and training and assessment for the new 3* canoe award.

Canoe Safety Training

Wednesday evenings from 4th June

This will lead to the Canoe Safety Test (and Junior Canoe Safety Test) award. It covers a variety of safety and rescue topics and techniques. Participants need to have the old or new 2* award.

Beginners' Kayak and Canoe Courses

We may be able to offer beginners' courses during the summer term, leading to the new one-star or Paddlepower Passport awards. This will depend on how much demand there is for beginners' courses and on how smoothly the developers' and safety courses go!

Wednesday Evening Paddling

At the same time as running courses this summer, we hope to be able to offer casual paddling on Wednesday evenings for those who do not need any coaching (i.e. not beginners) but who want to get out on the water with an experienced leader. This will be confirmed in the next newsletter.

Senni Statistics

13th January 2008, by Steve Rayner

Four paddlers travelled **seven kilometres** on the Afon Senni from Heol Senni to Pontsenni (Sennybridge). **Three kayakers** (Steve J, Pete and Steph) attempted to follow a single **sixteen-foot-long** open canoe (me) down a **twelve-foot wide** river. Pete discovered that this was not such a good idea during my **two broaches** across the river – stuck between trees on either side – especially the first time, when this led to **Pete's one swim!** The **two grade-three falls** on the Senni passed without mishap. But then we carried on for **eight-and-a-half more kilometres** on the Usk to Aberbran, when **two of the three grade-three falls** on this section claimed Steph and led to her **two swims** (sorry, Steph...). We arrived at Aberbran exhausted after **five hours'** paddling and ready for the roast dinners we hoped were awaiting us at home!

The final score: 3-2 to the river.

Aiming for the Stars!

19-20th January 2008, by Steve Rayner

I spent a chilly weekend in January undergoing training towards the 5* canoe leadership award on a course run by

Glasbury House Outdoor Education Centre. Saturday was spent on Ponsticill reservoir (thanks to the kind Welsh Water employee who decided he would let us paddle, despite us not having permission in advance – oops!). Here we brushed-up on our personal skills, sailed off down the lake (why does the wind always drop when I get my sail out!), and cooked soup under a tarpaulin before learning how to rescue an unconscious floating victim into a canoe. This led to the most hilarious moment of the weekend when my partner, who was trying to lift me (playing dead) into his boat, catapulted himself straight over me instead, landing head-first into the water! Unfortunately this meant we were both wet through and frozen stiff for the last exercise of the day: paddling around the reservoir in the dark with only light-sticks and a compass to guide us!



Sunday was spent on the Usk, from Sennybridge to Aberbran (again!). The water was considerably higher than it had been on the club trip the week before, and we spent a lot of time considering how to lead groups of open canoes safely over grade 3 rapids. Once again, the highlight of the day involved total immersion, when we had to throw ourselves out of our boats and into a fast-flowing rapid, so we could demonstrate that we could rescue our boats and ourselves to the bank without any assistance. The whole process took several hundred yards of rapids to complete, by which time we were once again wet through and freezing cold!

After completing the training for the 5* award, candidates have to complete at least 30 days' paddling on open water (in winds and waves!) and grade 3 rivers, some of

which should be on extended expeditions. The instructors suggested that I spend as much time on lakes and expeditions as I could – as well as practising leading white water canoe trips – so you can guess what sort of trips might be coming up for the club in the next couple of years!!

All in all, I had a fantastic weekend and can assure you all that, even when you've already done lots of training and got lots of 'stars', there's still more to be done and plenty to learn!

Afon Tywi

3rd February 2008, by Chris Rayner

When: Sunday 3rd February 2008

Where: Afon Tywi/River Towy, north of Llandovery

What: 10 mile white water paddle

Who: Paul Cripps and Mick Burke in kayaks, Chris Rayner and Ian Penn in tandem canoe and Steve Rayner, solo canoe and river leader.

Grade: Grade 2 with three Grade 3 rapids.

Weather: Overcast and cold. Very grey skies.

The most important question: **Why?** Having spent the last 6 years paddling in hand splints and finally having an op for Carpel Tunnel Syndrome on my right hand last April I hadn't yet contemplated returning to the canoe. I jumped into one at the regatta but soon regretted that with an aching left hand afterwards.

So there I was listening to Steve chat to Ian in the school yard, when I suddenly heard, 'I'll paddle if Chris joins me...' from Ian. Without thinking, I rashly agreed.

Once all parties had gathered in Brecon and Ian had finished serving breakfast at his B & B, we headed to Llandovery and then veered north up the Tywi Valley. We dropped a car at Dolauhirion Bridge, our egress point.

The last Grade 3 drop in the journey was just above the bridge and we were able to check it out. Having an innate fear of

drowning and liaisons with large hard rocks I wasn't too impressed by the one narrow chute through the huge boulders, which was no wider than an open canoe (OK kayakers – it is well known that canoes are not meant to paddle white water, owing to the large hole in their cockpit – but Steve insists they are!). Strangely enough, Ian and the other men saw it as quite a challenge. Mental note to myself: remember to portage or get out **BEFORE** running this rapid.

We headed further north to find a handy get in spot. A bit tricky as all nice launch points were covered with Llandovery Angling Association's numerous 'No Canoeing' signs. It's a great shame that we cannot work together with the anglers as we really do no harm and can respect their needs.

We finally found a suitable spot to launch. The river wasn't particularly high but there was a reasonable flow. We paddled the first few miles, with Steve giving us a few reminders about strokes and tandem techniques. Whether this was before we broad-sided a large overhanging branch or not I can't quite remember but we had enough skill to get ourselves out of that mess. With a choice of limbo-ing it or paddling our way out, I pulled us along the branch into mid-stream. I am sure Ian did some fancy steering at the stern too.

The first Grade 3 drop approached at Penrhyn Gorge. We got out and had a good look at it. Nice chute on river left, splitting either side of a large, but smooth (important detail) boulder. If we took the wrong line there was a chance of hitting the gorge wall opposite as the river did a sharp dog-leg at the base of the drop. My natural instinct is to watch everyone else, but Ian was up for it and there was no portage around it. The kayaks went first and Mick did a lovely brace and stayed dry. It was Mick's first white water trip in a kayak and he did superbly. Steve had sensibly run it first and set up safety cover. So we lined ourselves up, perfect line according to all onlookers, but somehow we both leaned at the wrong

time in the wrong direction at the wrong place. SPLASH, GURGLE, *****. Hello boulder...hello water...hello large smooth boulder...hello plunge pool. Goodbye boat, Ian, paddles and dry clothes. I am glad I hadn't bothered to brush my hair that morning!

Steve got a throw line to Ian and the kayakers rescued boat and paddles. Thanks guys. I meanwhile swam to the edge opposite Steve and clung on until he could get me a line and pull me across river to reunite us. This swim was colder and somehow wetter than the first!

Safe and sound and back in our boat, we paddled on through beautiful gorges with great rock formations, eddies and gnarly old trees clinging to the banks.

Ian and I got into our swing and gradually warmed up. There were quite a lot of rapids along the way and some tricky rock formations to negotiate around, as well as the odd tree branch or trunk! The water was quite choppy in places and we shipped quite a bit of water. Ian did a grand job scooping it out. In other places it was quite shallow and our combined weight (no rude comments please!) meant we couldn't go where everyone else went – even though we tried. We had to get out mid-stream and push off several times. The wind was also a problem at times and we had to paddle hard to stay on course. Steve found this even harder to do solo.

Nearing the end of the paddle we were aware that the last Grade 3 was ahead and that I had decided not to risk another swim. However, we had edged ahead of the others and were nearing some gentle rapids when we both realised that the Grade 3 drop was straight ahead of us, camouflaged by rushes and small rocks. Now, after the event, I checked with Steve what made Grade 3, Grade 3. Apparently it's a rapid that requires manoeuvring whilst on it. Well Ian and I did some VERY FAST and thankfully accurate manoeuvring and slipped down the VERY NARROW chute

with perfect style and grace. Once we had got over the relief and self-congratulation, we realised that we had unintentionally broken a few Golden Rules of Paddling. Firstly – never ever enter a rapid unless you can see where it finishes and, secondly, don't paddle faster than your River Leader, who then is unable to help you with safety cover should you require it (and who will also shout loudly at you afterwards – editor's note)!



So – a beautiful river with lots to offer. No regrets in getting back in a boat, although as I am about to have a second hand op I may need to wait a while before repeating it. Thanks to Steve for organising it, Ian for persuading me to go and Mick and Paul for rescuing the boat and paddles!

When: Monday 4th February in the morning

Where: School yard

Who: Steve, Ian & Chris

What: Comparing the bruises that appeared over night and bits of our bodies which now ache or refuse to work properly.

Why: Because we love canoeing and kayaking!!

Slalom Paddling Opportunity

Nigel Midgley is a local coach with extensive slalom paddling and coaching experience. He is planning to start some slalom coaching in our region with a view to preparing paddlers for competitions. Anyone who fancies an introduction to slalom is welcome; there are no age limitations, but enthusiasm is essential! Contact Steve Rayner to find out more.

Bringing a Guest?

Non-members are welcome to join in Club events, so please feel free to bring guests. However, guests or prospective members will be asked to sign registration forms (and parental consent forms for under-18s). Once they have taken part in two Club events they will be asked to join and pay membership fees if they wish to continue.

The Kit Store

You are welcome to use your own boats or hire them from the Club at £4 ('per seat') for an evening or £8 for a day. *Please remember to book boats in advance with event organisers so you're not disappointed on the day.*

All Club paddlers should bring:

- To the pool: swimming costume and T-shirt
- On spring, summer & autumn trips and training sessions: comfortable clothes with spare warm layer, windproof/waterproof jacket, close-fitting shoes (e.g. wetsuit boots or daps), cold drink, snacks and packed lunch, personal 1st aid kit and medication, sun-hat and sun-cream
- On winter and white-water trips: comfortable warm layers, spare warm layer plus warm hat and gloves, sleeveless wetsuit and canoeing cagoule (or dry-cag and dry-trousers), wetsuit boots, hot drink, snacks and packed lunch, personal 1st aid kit and medication, survival bag, throw-line (on white-water)

Please feel free to consult one of the Club's coaches before buying any kit, as we may be able to help save you money by making sure you buy what you really need!

Club Polo & T Shirts for Sale

We have some blue polo shirts with the Club's logo embroidered on the front and T-shirts with the logo printed on the back.

Polo shirts are £14 each and T-shirts £10 each. Please see us at events or contact Ian Penn if you'd like one or more!

Classified Advertisements

For Sale: 16ft Coleman open canoe (with paddles), suitable for tandem paddling on flat water. Anyone interested can view the boat at any time. Price in the region of £150. Peter Rowlands, 01874 622705.

Kayak for sale: Dagger Dynamo, suitable for a youngster. 2.24m long. As new, hardly used, £200. Contact 01497 821 329

Canoe and Kayak Coaching

From beginners to white-water. One-off sessions, courses or trips. BCU 1-3*, Canoeing Safety Test. Individuals or groups. Weekdays preferred. Commercial rates. Contact Steve Rayner 01874 623399 or steve.rayner@brynbolgoed.co.uk

Promenade Distribution

The Promenade is available to download from www.breconcanoeclub.org.uk/newsletters. Paid-up members also receive one hard-copy per family. If you have received a hard-copy but would prefer to receive only electronic notification in future (saving us the cost of postage), please e-mail the editor.

Brecon Canoe Club Events List updated February 2008

New events are red. Pool sessions are Blue.

The number of places on events will be limited by availability of boats, equipment and coaches. Please book early to avoid disappointment! All events are subject to change due to weather, water conditions or other circumstances beyond the Club's control.

Contact event organisers for information & booking.

(e-mail addresses are firstname.surname@breconcanoecub.org.uk).

Date & Time	Event	Venue	Organiser
Sun 17 Feb	White water trip where we go will depend on water levels and who wants to come	Somewhere near Brecon	Steve Rayner 01874 623399
Wed 20 Feb 7-8pm	Coaches self-rescue training session in preparation for the self-rescue course	Riverside Caravan Park, Bronllys	Ian Penn 07718 936413
Sat 23 Feb 5.15-6.15	Brecon Pool Kayaking coaching and polo	Leisure Centre	Ian Penn 07718 936413
Wed 27 Feb 7-8pm	Riverside Pool Kayak Self-Rescue Course supports, rescues & rolling (week 1)	Riverside Caravan Park, Bronllys	Ian Penn 07718 936413
Wed 5 Mar 7-8pm	Riverside Pool Self-Rescue Course (wk 2)	Riverside, Bronllys	Ian Penn 07718 936413
Sat 8 Mar	White water trip where we go will depend on water levels and who wants to come	Somewhere near Brecon	Steve Rayner 01874 623399
Wed 12 Mar 7-8pm	Riverside Pool Self-Rescue Course (wk 3)	Riverside, Bronllys	Ian Penn 07718 936413
Sat 15 Mar 5.15-6.15	Brecon Pool Kayaking coaching & slalom	Brecon Leisure Centre	Ian Penn 07718 936413
Wed 19 Mar 7-8pm	Riverside Pool Self-Rescue Course (wk 4)	Riverside, Bronllys	Ian Penn 07718 936413
Sun 30 Mar	White water trip where we go will depend on water levels and who wants to come	Somewhere near Brecon	Steve Rayner 01874 623399
Wed 9 Apr 6.30pm	River Training Developers kayak & canoe course (week 1). Or come and paddle.	Brecon Promenade	Steve Rayner 01874 623399
Wed 16 Apr 6.30pm	River Training Developers kayak & canoe course (week 2). Or come and paddle.	Brecon Promenade	Steve Rayner 01874 623399
Wed 23 Apr 6.30pm	River Training Developers kayak & canoe course (week 3). Or come and paddle.	Brecon Promenade	Steve Rayner 01874 623399
Sat 26 Apr 5.15-6.15	Brecon Pool Kayaking coaching & polo	Brecon Leisure Centre	Ian Penn 07718 936413
Wed 30 Apr 6.30pm	River Training Developers kayak & canoe course (week 4). Or come and paddle.	Brecon Promenade	Steve Rayner 01874 623399
Wed 7 May 6.30pm	River Training Developers kayak & canoe course (week 5). Or come and paddle.	Brecon Promenade	Steve Rayner 01874 623399
Wed 14 May 6.30pm	River Training Developers kayak & canoe course (week 6). Or come and paddle.	Brecon Promenade	Steve Rayner 01874 623399
Sat 17 May 5.15-6.15	Brecon Pool Kayaking coaching & slalom	Brecon Leisure Centre	Ian Penn 07718 936413
Wed 21 May 6.30pm	River Training Developers kayak & canoe course (week 7). Or come and paddle.	Brecon Promenade	Steve Rayner 01874 623399
Fri 13-Sun 15 Jun	Summer Training Weekend kayak & canoe training 1-3*. Bunkhouse accommodation.	Biblins, River Wye	Steve Rayner 01874 623399
Sat 28 Jun 5.15-6.15	Brecon Pool Kayaking coaching & polo	Brecon Leisure Centre	Ian Penn 07718 936413
Sat 12 Jul 5.15-6.15	Brecon Pool Kayaking coaching & slalom	Brecon Leisure Centre	Ian Penn 07718 936413
Sun 7 Sep	3rd Annual Regatta family fun paddling, competitions and barbecue	Glasbury	Steve Rayner 01874 623399
Sat 27 Sep 5.15-6.15	Brecon Pool Kayaking coaching and polo	Leisure Centre	Ian Penn 07718 936413
Fri 14-Sun 16 Nov	White Water Training Weekend	Canal Barn, Brecon	Steve Rayner