

Cumbria Canoeists Notes from the meeting held on 16th September 2004 at Thirlmere.

Apologies: Rob Stalker, Alistair Yates.

Present: N Timmins, Matt Ellis, Roger Ward, Pete Knowles, Peter Midwood, Nick Mortimer, Mark Davies, Jill Singleton, John Crosbie, Mike Tinion, Dorine Botterill, Craig Henderson, Susan Simpson, Janice Weatherill, Barry Howell, Jim Wilson.

Roger Ward opened the meeting and almost immediately it was interrupted by a leaking roof! Last meeting's notes need amending as Mike Sunderland says that the line across the Rawthey does not belong to the Equine Centre and they know nothing about it. Notes were then approved - proposed by John Crosbie and seconded by Pete Knowles.

RCO Report, Matt Ellis: RCO is attending the English Coaching Committee next Sunday 19/9/04 and will report at next meeting.

RCO had a number of responses for the coach up date day - (Nigel to ensure that all Cumbria coaches get an application form)

Lara Tipper has been appointed as the LTPD officer (Long Term Paddler Development) Discipline groups being set up. RCO has been asked to sit on Open Canoe group. Feels it would be good if we could get someone from Cumbria on the kayak group.

1st October 2004 James Raffan is speaking at Rheged.

CCP course approval now does not go through RCO. This makes it much easier for CCP's to arrange a course as all they need do is ring Amanda in the Nottingham office and request a course number.

CDO report Nigel Timmins: Sad news and Good news. The sad news is that CDO has to report the death of Eric Totty. He, I am sure will be well remembered by those in Cumbria. CDO has taken the liberty of putting in a small obituary CDO written for the NW region newsletter - *Eric Totty. It is with regret that I have to report the death of Eric. He had been unwell for the last few years so it comes as no great surprise, but is still a great loss.*

He will be remembered mainly for devising and running the Leven test during the 60s to the 80s. Though a small race in distance, it became very popular with huge numbers of paddlers turning up. He established a superb handicap system dependant on water level, so that one could compare the times of different runs at different times of the year, despite the different water levels. You also received a small badge in the form of a dipper, - bronze for anything over seven minutes thirty and silver for under seven minutes (if I remember rightly?). Only the winner of the series won a gold. However there must be many small bronze and silver dippers hidden in peoples drawers or sitting on mantelshelves!!

He was also an active paddler and important member of Lakeland Canoe Club and I remember him paddling down the Eden when he was in his late 80's - I only hope I can still do that when I am 80!!?

He had also paddled all over the world having been on the first British descent of the Colorado - a superb and strong character and a great loss to the canoeing world, he will be remembered fondly by many people.

The good news is that after considerable difficulty the region BCU grant has been resolved - basically we used to get £500 from the NE region, now however as we are a full region in our own right we have had the full grant of £1200 allocated to Cumbria. Only £1000 has been transferred to our accounts as this is normal BCU policy. The remaining £200 is available if we can show how all the money is being spent. It will be with held for contingencies however if we do not need it. So we are £500 pa better off. However it has thrown up a problem in that the Nottingham office/accountants want us to pay for the insurance on our canoe trailer. This is £105 and it seems

reasonable that we of course do this. CDO suggests we do it for 1 or 2 years more and then on paper at least write the trailer and boats off and no longer pay the insurance. We have had good use out of the boats so far.

Rural Regeneration Cumbria is supporting Outdoor activities and have grants available up to £50,000. However any claimant can only claim 35% of the total costs. However if a club is looking to buy or improve facilities it is worth contacting them.

Coach Update day is the 28th November 2004 (see above) Help is needed and if you feel you could run a small session it would be gratefully received.

Cumbria Coach Development Fund. CDO was asked at last meeting to present a proposal that would speed the process up. Proposed that CDO approve coaching grants of up to £50 so long as people meet the requirements i.e. live in Cumbria and are supported by their club. (letter needed) If level 5 this would be £75 and they would have to agree to help out on the coach update days - at least twice. Meeting felt this was OK so long as it was approved by CDO and one other committee member (probably RCO) proposed by Mike S and seconded by John C. A limit should be put on it however of £500 pa though it can be brought back to meeting and more money asked for. Again M S proposed and seconded by Mark D.

Request that this be re advertised to clubs. to be Actioned by N Timmins.

Ullswater race successful with some 42 competitors from as far away as Macclesfield. Despite costs of some £85 (OB gave their premises and rescue boat cover for nothing - thanks particularly to them for this) we still managed to make approx £60 (can't remember what I sent to treasurer but this will be clear in the accounts?)

This is an important benefit so remember, the more people that enter the more the region makes. Please ensure you support this event next year please - and thanks to those who did support it - look forward to seeing you next year !! (says Race Organiser)

By the way Ian Tordoff from Chester CC won the sea boat class in a new prototype boat (a missile). He covered the 7 miles around Norfolk Island in a staggering 48 minutes!! Faster than either of the K2's!!

Forth coming Events 2004

Saturday 18th Sept 2004 Sea Quest race at Fleetwood (see report at the end)

Oct 1st 2004 James Raffan talk

Oct 2nd 2004 Youthfest Nottingham

Oct 30/31st 2004 Scottish Canoe Exhibition.

Nov 6/7th 2004 Tyne tour with junior Wavehopper event on the Saturday.

Nov 28th 2004 Cumbria Coach update day at OB Ullswater.

Dec 5th 2004 NW Coach update day at the Burrs centre.

Clubs

Dallam - unfortunately the club has now folded all the assets are being transferred to Dallam Community College.

Carlisle - very busy will soon be moving in to the pool for the winter - Thursday evenings. Saturday mornings still at the Sands site with club days on local rivers etc. An intro sea paddling was well attended recently and the Cumbria Canoeists trailer is being used for a come and try it session on Derwent Water on the 9th October 2004.

West Cumbria. Summer trip was organised down the Wye. A very useful series of junior sessions are being run on the lake with the pool starting October.

Eden Valley. Mike Sunderland suggested a restart for this club. Mike would be willing to coordinate the start up though could not afford the time to get heavily involved. Any interested people should contact Mike Sunderland or Nigel Timmins. Some discussion around trying to get Penrith pool but at present this is proving impossible. Matt Ellis to try again. Carlisle CC would not object to the starting of a club as they have more than enough members and losing a few to Eden valley would not be a problem. A public meeting to perhaps start off the club and to sound out interest may well be announced. Matt Ellis suggested the use of OB during the summer as a meeting spot.

Access.

Jim Wilson reported problems on the R **Eden**. A fisherman was given considerable verbal abuse by a young paddler. This has caused quite an incident and Jim is trying to sort it out. It is however serious and may affect the access arrangement. We may get abuse from fishermen but it does not mean we can be equally abusive. I suppose the old adage of treat people as you would wish to be treated.

River Derwent agreement is at a draft stage and should be implemented very soon. Details will be put on the web site www.Cumbriacanoeists.org.uk. The fishermen are certainly aware of this agreement now, see below. Some comments were raised about people paddling on Workington weir who will not respect any agreement - a discussion ensued. However there is no doubt that the EA and Castle fisheries do not want us paddling on **Workington** weir in the future and will do everything to stop us. But they are prepared to work around this agreement. Without it we will simply lose all paddling on the Derwent (including the weir) so we must all try to make this work. Signs are going to be crucial (2 days after this meeting 2 girls were caught by fishermen on the river and were thrown off - rightly so, given it is the height of the fishing season!! And were told by the fishermen they were paddling outside the agreement - they of course knew nothing of it) This clearly highlights the need for signs to be erected so that no one can claim they were unaware of the agreement. John Crosbie felt that if anyone was then caught flouting the agreement he for one would support prosecution of that person(s). There was some agreement of this at the meeting. Cumbria canoeists will be contributing to helping to put signs up, and a figure of £500 was suggested.

RAO Report, Mark Davies:

60 requests for information or other contacts since last meeting in May 2004. Lots of these have been with regards to using lakes, and most seem to be getting RAO's contact details from the web. Seems to be a great way of sharing information and we should be looking at ways of developing / promoting CC's website.

River Reports:

LUNE: New contact email address for Andy Clifford riverlune@ignetics.co.uk

BRATHAY: No reported incidents since last meeting, but are presuming it's been paddled over the last few weeks with all this water. The land ownership dispute is still in the hands of the solicitors and RAO awaiting news from Friends of the Lake District.

WINDERMERE: Will the imposed speed limit on Windermere mean more boats appearing on the un-policed lakes in 2005? An issue we may want to look at before 2005 to try to lobby the water-skiers and jet skiers to not do this and potentially put paddlers lives at risk?

If the speed limit is imposed (and there is nothing to suggest otherwise), would a canoe trail on Windermere / enhanced promotion of canoeing on Windermere be in order? Do we need to think about the implications?

ULLSWATER: Heritage lottery fund has been approved for a canoe trail on Ullswater. Eden Rivers Trust is administering this, having worked with Nigel. Time scale unknown, but could be used as a model for other lakes.

EDEN: Lazonby steps will be completed by mid October 2004 (river levels permitted). Money has been donated by a number of sources and there may be a publicised opening of steps. Volunteers to have their names put down as people to contact if light maintenance work needs doing.

RAO asks, Jim, when people book can they be asked to report any damage / obstructions to...? We should organise a procedure for dealing with this. Any thoughts...?

One canoe club / angler incident - Jim dealing with

IRTHING: RAO hasn't heard anything recently since putting request on ukriversguidebook site. Will see how this season goes

KENT: Reasonable amount of hassle for a number of paddlers already this season, including one "assault" involving rocks being thrown & police being involved. RAO in the process of attempting to get dialogue with anglers / landowners through the EA to have a go at sorting something out.

CRAKE: Agreement being broken in recent spate conditions. The agreement is based around nesting restrictions as much as fishing needs so does not have a spate clause.

We have very little agreed access to water. Please do your utmost to support access agreements and promote them to other paddlers, and educate about their importance as necessary. RAO always willing to speak to people / reply to emails.

LOWER DERWENT: John Crosbie worked very hard to get this up and running. Currently there is no agreement, and landowners are very opposed to people paddling the river without one.

OTHER LOCAL STUFF

Eden & Esk CAMS (Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy) will be up and running again in November. The other areas in Cumbria will have their own CAMS as follows:

Derwent & West Cumbria - 2005

Duddon, Leven, Crake, and Kent - 2007

If people are interested in getting involved in these give RAO a shout and RAO will put the relevant people at the EA in contact with you. RAO not sure we have much physical effect on abstraction, but they seem to be a great way of networking with people from different arenas interested in water usage.

Stile at Armathwaite

Any volunteers to make up a working party (4?) to put in a stile at the egress on the Eden? Not got a date yet but would be in November / December 2004. Should only take a day.

NATIONAL ACCESS STUFF

Still awaiting response from Alun Michael, Minister for Rural Affairs & Local Environmental Quality with regards the feasibility study on improving access for canoeing by voluntary agreement. However the BCU has published a statement:

"Comprehensive, of high quality and a fair representation of the difficult and complex situation that exists exclusively in England and Wales"

"We consider it is clearly established that negotiated access agreements do not tackle the root cause of the problem, and do not offer a realistic solution to the large scale problems of access to and along water for water-based sport and recreation in England and Wales"

"Disappointed that the new report outlines that negotiations 'might be appropriate as an alternative to a statutory right of access to all waters as proposed by the British Canoe Union'"

"Further expenditure, representing nearly £12,000 per kilometre will be needed. This is clearly not sustainable when applied to the 65,000 kilometres of rivers still to be addressed in England and Wales."

"This money could be better spent on promoting and delivering legislation to remove the legal barrier unique to England and Wales"

"We do not consider that the proposals offer a solution to the problem that goes anywhere near meeting canoeing's needs and we now feel free to actively pursue alternative solutions including the promotion of necessary new legislation"

Alun Michael has, however written to Local Access Forums (originally set up to sort out CroW act stuff) to suggest that they should broaden their remit to look at access to open air recreational issues generally, and specifically including access to water on behalf of canoeists.

Not really sure what all this means but it could be that a) he has washed his hands of the whole thing and sloped it off onto some other poor soul, or that it's no longer just paddlers that will be trying to improve access to water... watch this space if you can cope with the excitement.

Notes from NT re access

Ullswater Trail is moving ahead slowly. The intention is to have a basic leaflet out early next year and a much more detailed one in a couple of years time. Money coming from the EA and Eden Rivers Trust for this.

River Kent, Mint Sprint - RAO has said since the meeting, someone has volunteered to act as Local info officer and a meeting has also been brokered between the EA and local fishing clubs. Watch this space - but don't hold your breath!!!

AOB

Pete Knowles flagged up that Dave Manby is coming up to Rheged to speak about paddling down Everest and K2 on the 30th October 2004 - tickets are £10 - contact Rheged 01768 860000

Next meeting We will try to book a pool so that Pete Knowles can run a short session on the teaching of rolling before the meeting.

Date and time etc to be advertised separately but likely to be January 18th 2005.

Report on the Sea Quest race held on September 18th 2004 (by Nigel Timmins).

NT: I don't get to many weekends to paddle for myself, so when the LCO/RCO meeting cancelled last Saturday September 18th I went off to try out the Seaquest race at Fleetwood run by the Outdoor Adventure Group.

What a great race. It starts on the sea front in Fleetwood and a short paddle brings you to the entrance to the river Wyre which you then run up with the tide before turning and coming back with the out going tide. On the way you have to visit 10 checkpoints.

It is run over 22km which seemed very daunting, but I need not have worried as the tide was running well - at least 5 knots at the entrance to the estuary. It almost seemed a shame to have to head to the shore to pick up a marker. Most people were in sea boats, which was just as well as it was fairly rough with a strong westerly of force 5 to 6. However an open boat with 5 people in it completed the course, though they did take a swim trying to get through the shore break at the start - amazing and a superb achievement.

Plastic sea boats are preferable as you have to land to clip some 5 of the markers and I felt for those competitors in nice glass boats running them up the stony/rocky beaches. As the tide whisks you off up to the top of the course the scenery is very pleasant with just one chemical works spoiling the view. At just over half way you pull in to a slipway to clip a marker and much to my surprise found water, tea, coffee, and chocolate biscuits on offer (there was even a pub which I believe some competitors visited!!) A very civilised touch - and it got better as there was a free BBQ after the event.

A superb event that should definitely be better supported by Cumbrian paddlers. So come on you lot -- stir yourselves next year - and when you get your new diary, - go and pencil in September the 17th 2005 (the date I think for next years race). See you there!!

Nigel Timmins