

## Youth White Water Trip on the River Barle March 22 -23 2008

Easter weekend saw a fabulous turnout for the club's first Youth White Water trip. For Wendy, Katie, Jonathan, Harry and Alex this was to be their first trip on a real river with real rapids (and very real weather): as it was for their parents. On the Saturday we split into 4 groups. The canoe corps featured Freddie, Jonny, Michael and Michael led by Brian and Anne. The youth corps comprised Sam, Rowan, Ben, Nick and Andrew led by Nigel on the Saturday and then Paul. The novice corps were very well supported by Harry, Hazel and Alex, led by Keith and Merry. Mike led a (very!) mixed ability adult group of Paul, Mary, Dave and Rose. Sunday saw some small changes with the 2 lans joining Keith and Merry. A couple of different perspectives follow.....



This was our first trip on white water so as you may guess we had some concerns as what to take and what to expect. The group had a meeting this helped as we had no idea who would be going we found out Dave Bevan was going as he was my girls coach last year I felt a lot happier. After making sure the girls had the right clothing for the trip off we went. We stayed in a youth hostel the weather forecast was for cold weather this it was. So Saturday arrived and there was no going back. We took the boats to the put in point, at Marsh Bridge and made sure the boats were set for the girls and I. The girls went in with Keith and Merry Harry, Hazel and Alex. I went in the Paul, Dave, Mary and Mike. A big thank you to all that helped as I went in a few time's. The weather was cold we had rain, sleet, sun and a good wind to go with it. I gave in after the Salmon Steps and went on in the car to Exbridge to see the other's finish.

Rose



The Barle trip was really fun and we stayed in a youth hostel right next to a church. The hostel had four floors and was quite near the town centre. We all went to bed around 10:30 - 11:00, Saturday was fun but was ice cold. On Sunday we all thought it was going to be colder than Saturday so we all put extra layers on, but the weather turned out to be really sunny and hot. When some of us woke up around 6:30 - 7:00 the whole of the grass and all the boats were covered in snow. After breakfast the snow had gone and the sun had come out so we were able to paddle for

the day. When we got to Marsh Bridge and got all the boats off the car the adults took their cars back to the youth hostel and my mum brought them back to us. But while they were taking the cars it started raining really hard and then turned to hail. The weather throughout the day stayed sunny which meant we were able to do our trip in the warmth.

We were split into two groups, Ian, Katie, Hazel, Alex, Keith, Harry and me were in one group and my dad, Jonny, Merry, Alex were in the other group and small Harry didn't do the trip. My group started going before the others did so we managed to be back at the youth

hostel before they did which meant that we could have our lunch. We waited there half an hour before they met us. They didn't have enough time to eat but some got out before the rest of the journey. Me, Merry, Keith, Alex and Harry continued the rest of the journey which meant the others managed to eat their lunch. When we got close to the salmon steps me and Alex got out but Harry, Merry and Keith went over them. When me and Alex got back in we continued with the Journey. It took us another hour to get to Ex Bridge where we all got out. When we got back to the hostel we got dressed and then started packing up our things and cleaning up the hostel. By five o'clock we all had our things in the cars and then the Hostel was inspected and then by ten past five we all got to go home. This was the best and the most fun trip I have ever been on especially being given an Easter egg for Sunday.  
*Wendy Fox*

It was great to see the enthusiasm from some, and the overcoming of fear from others. This was a real river and we certainly had some real weather. This was a big step up for some. Top marks to:  
Rose (how many swims?) for her grit and determination  
Jonathan for being the only other novice to make it past Dulverton on Saturday  
Harry (T) for being the only one to do the top falls with me twice  
Katie for her enthusiasm despite the cold



The lads for joining in the fun despite a few reservations.  
Alex (T) for keeping on going after swimming both days  
And most especially Wendy and Alex for enthusiastically completing the route to Exbridge on Sunday, very ably supported by Master Mudd  
I must also say that there were excellent teams in the kitchen both evenings. Top marks to all involved.

Going forward I hope that most of you will be enjoying Cardington at the beginning of May. If you are worried that it might be a bit tame after your recent experiences, take advantage of the opportunity to polish your ferry glides, break ins and break outs. Ask for support and you will progress very quickly. You may also be able to join the paddlesport challenge trip to the Nene that weekend if you want to work with some more challenging water.

So once again, thanks for a great weekend. I hope that we can do the same again and get even more new faces into whitewater paddling. On a final note, last I heard Sam was doing fine with just bad bruising to his hand. Big thanks to Mike and Liz for taking him off to A&E whilst we got sorted out at the Centre.

*Merry*