

Adventures at the English Canoe Symposium November '08

On the 14th November a B3C contingent headed up the M6 to the Lakeside YMCA on the shores of Lake Windermere.

Debbie and Steve joined the usual suspects, Denis and Mike, Lee , Anne and Brian for a weekend's real canoeing with around 270 other enthusiasts - and yes, pointy boats were well represented by David Train and his sons. Michael gave an excellent account of himself in one of the Train delta C1's.



Masterclasses were also held in poling with Harry Rock visiting from the USA showing Lee and Brian that you can "stand tall with a long stick - yeah!", although I must confess I was responsible for knocking a couple of people in when we attempted poling up a G2 rapid on the Brathay. Mike joined one of the many whitewater trips on the Leven, while Debbie - you've guessed - paddled off in a Bellboat up the lake on a Teashop expedition. In the bar, we got chatting to a bunch of guys from Cork, so guess where we may be going next summer? And that was just Saturday.



On Sunday Anne joined us from Leeds and we got stuck in to deepwater strokework with Biscuit - no, he would not tell us how he got the name - but I trusted him enough to buy his spare paddle. Lee and Steve joined an all day intermediate whitewater trip on the Lune. I gather that Lee got a bit too enthusiastic over edging on one section - look out Richard - you may yet be losing the King Neptune Award! Anne and Myself also got thoroughly wet in the afternoon on a deep water rescue workshop. Mike went sailing (canoe sailing, of course), and Debbie did the "Efficient forwards (Minimum effort to maximum tea shopping)" session. While we were waiting for Lee to return from the Lune with Denis' Landie I bought an ex-demo Mad River Legend for the Club, having spent most of the day trying out several alternatives.

As usual, there was a wonderful, relaxed atmosphere at this Symposium - I even got my Coaching update signed off. The organisation was really professional. Top coaches from all over the country - and some from a bit beyond - came as volunteers to to share their real enthusiasm and to soak up the genuine sense of camaraderie. More pictures on the Song of the Paddle site <http://www.songofthepaddle.co.uk/forum/showthread.php?t=126> Next Year it's Glenmore Lodge, in the Scottish Highlands - and the rail fare is looking very tempting.....

Brian Biffin.