

# The BAD News

January 2005



**Alan at the Nene, December 2004**

## Chairperson's report

Hi folks,

By the time you read this, we'll be well into 2005, and hopefully, my New Year's Resolution of never to eat another Doner kebab will still be in tact.

My year as chairperson is drawing to a close, and as I'm in a reflective mood I apologise now if I bore you. I'm feeling really positive by the Sunday evening sessions at the pool. At the end of November I counted 22 boats on the water. In the past we have tried to limit boats on the water, so that there's more space, but it looks like people prefer to sacrifice space for time on the water. Having the facility of the pool is a mixed blessing. It has attracted people to the club because it offers a warm, clean, safe environment to practice in, it's local and has a bar on site. On the down side, it costs the club over £100 per week and the limitations on it's size means that we can not grow into a truly big club. Each week we lose money. Finances will always be a concern. At the AGM in March we'll be discussing ways the club can limit it's financial vulnerability. That unfortunately means paying more!

We now have a smaller membership than 10 years ago, but the membership is showing regular commitment and promise. Complementing this is a still enthusiastic country membership, who give much needed support.

Over the last year I've become aware of my own limitations. I know the areas I want to improve on:-

Safety on the river. I've never done a course.  
Training and learning to instruct so that I don't pass on bad habits.

The only way to achieve this is to go on some courses, and I'll be dragging as many of you along with me as I can. My vision for next year, whether chairperson or not is to get as many people who want to progress their whitewater skills, to do a whitewater safety course and work towards the BCU star tests. Not necessarily do the tests, just cover the syllabus. I want us to become more organized and focused on learning skills.

I'd like to thank the committee who have worked hard this year, and also to these others who have supported the club:-

Winchester Canoe Club for letting us use Cardington twice.  
Rod Hales for printing the newsletters.  
Trailer drivers, Paul Clark, Roy Taylor, Pete and Helen Nash, and Steph Marshall  
The farmer who let us use his barn for the highly successful barn dance.  
Bri, Ros W, Mike Jones for lending kit out to new members so they didn't freeze.  
Bri, Noel, Michelle, Andy S who supported us publicizing the club on Letchworth Day.  
Everyone who has contributed to the newsletter.  
Colin and Patrick Tomkins and others for setting up the goals and running the polo sessions.

Cheers, and Happy Paddling in 2005!  
Andy B

### Financial Report for the 2004/05 year so far (5 Jan 05)

As we are more than three quarters of the way through this BDCC year I have written this short piece to let you all know how we stand financially.

So far we have fifty five members of whom seven are country or student members. It is pleasing to see many new faces amongst the membership. As I have said before, fifty five is about ten short of where we were last year at this time. On the plus side the average weekly pool attendance is slightly up on last year, especially in the last three months. After a slow start following the closure of the pool in April, the pool fees collected during October/November/December averaged £66.75. The average for the year to date is just under £56.00. To put this in context the pool costs approx £104.00 per week to hire!

The account balance on paper looks pretty healthy at the moment. However, it is slightly misleading as we are expecting a bill for seven months of pool hire in the very near future. i.e. from September 2004 to March 2005. Once this bill is paid the accounts will be slightly down on last year. Although I haven't worked out the exact figure, come the end of the year in March we could well be heading for a small loss.

So far I have received money for twelve Dinner & Dance tickets. Although I'm sure that many more will sell, it is worth reiterating that as a small part of the money goes to club funds, the more tickets we sell the more the club benefits. Rather than solely relying on club members to raise club funds it is a good opportunity for non-members (i.e. family and friends) to directly contribute to the club. Non-members and their families are more than welcome to attend. (Especially if they are eligible young ladies ;-)

With regard to other fund-raising schemes, although a great success socially, the Barn Dance held in July only just broke even. The ticket price will have to be slightly higher next time. Following on from rugby shirts and T shirts there will shortly be BDCC mugs to purchase. (and no I don't mean Colin!)

Finally, a point for your consideration before the AGM in March. I am proposing to retain the annual membership fees at the present levels but to raise the weekly pool fees by 50 pence for members and £1.00 for non members. I understand from people who have been members for much longer than me that pool fees have not risen for approximately seven years. As the cost of the pool has more than doubled in this time I think it is time for the pool fees to rise.

Happy canoeing

Rob the Glorified Bus Driver

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### Newsletter editor's report 2005

Hi – just a quick word to say thanks to all those who've contributed by writing canoeing related articles or making random submissions (particularly Andy B, Fee & Bri, Mike J, Colin, Steve B, who generally supply articles without prompting). Anything is welcome, and please don't wait to be asked to write up a trip – if we get more than 1 report for the same trip it doesn't matter as they are all works of fiction! Lately I have been particularly short of photos – they don't have to be that spectacular, any photos showing members of the club enjoying / swimming on anything from local paddles or grade V are welcome!

Also – Noel has been working hard on updating the website (I'm not sure if the changes are online yet so they may not be obvious). Please supply Noel with any useful information as he provides the format but it isn't up to him to provide all the content. If you think that a description – say of polo or slalom – is missing or completely dated, then feel free to email him the text for a replacement. I'm sure any other constructive comments will be welcomed. All the committee can update the calendar on the website so email us if you want something added or corrected.

Cheers, Ros W

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### Forthcoming Events:

Polo:           **Sat 15<sup>th</sup> Jan**  
Men's Div 4 SE  
Erith  
See Steve Bratton

River:           **Sat/Sun/Mon 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> Jan**  
River Dart  
Grade III  
See Rob Carter

Polo:           **Sat 29<sup>th</sup> Jan**  
Ladies Div 2 South  
Luton

### February

Polo:           **Sat 19<sup>th</sup> Feb**  
Ladies Div 2 S.E.  
Luton

River:           **11 – 13 Feb**           Gareth's trip to Wales

Social:           **Sat 26<sup>th</sup> Feb**  
**Dinner Dance + Awards**  
**Blakemore Thistle Hotel**  
**Little Wymondley**  
**Tickets now available**  
**See Steph Marshall**

## Verdon Gorge 2005 – by Andy B

I'm currently trying to organize a trip to the Verdon Gorge in the south of France. At present I'm being held up by a lack of response from the campsite down there.

### Dates?

I want to book the campsite from Sat 30<sup>th</sup> July – Sat 6<sup>th</sup> August.

### Ferries

At the moment a car + 4 passengers costs £90. The earlier you sort your car and passengers out, the cheaper it will be.

### Driving

Calais to Castellane is 680mile. The AA reckon it will take 10 hours of driving. Me and Martin drove down to Briancon in one day. We set off early, 5am, took regular breaks and didn't get too tired. Summer will be hot. A car with air-con will be much more comfortable. For details of the route, checkout the AA website [www.theaa.com](http://www.theaa.com)

### Campsite?

The campsite that interests me the most is the 3\* site near Castellane. Chalets are available as well as mobile homes and pitches for normal tents. If we can't get booked places there should be plenty of campsites in the area. It's a bit risky but this is a popular area and should be well catered for. My primary aim is to get French Claire to send an email and see if that gets a better response.

[www.homair-vacances.com/2004/international/ukindex.html](http://www.homair-vacances.com/2004/international/ukindex.html)

[www.guideweb.com/provence/camping/aremus/indexa.html](http://www.guideweb.com/provence/camping/aremus/indexa.html)

Pitching a tent costs 7 Euros per person per night based on a car and 3 in a tent.

Chalets sleeping six costs 650 Euros per week.

### Who's invited ?

Anyone. It's my aim to make this a trip with something for everyone. Even those with babies. For those who are up to it, there is paddling the Ubaye gorge and/or Verdon Gorge, a long committing grade IV paddle. There are also opportunities to try rafting/canyoning/mountaining biking etc

See [www.aboard-rafting.com](http://www.aboard-rafting.com)

### Deposits

I want to have a good idea of who's coming along by the end of April, but remember the earlier you book the ferry, the cheaper it will be.

£25 required to book your place.

## **BADCAN Slenningford expedition**

**(October 2004 – the weekend when it rained!)**

After deciding to have a go at canoeing I'd found the Baldock And District Canoe Club by searching the net and that had been a success, so I just thought I'd check out Slenningford and the river Ure before I set off on my first BADCAN weekend away. The available info included details of the mill and river, but worryingly also dire warnings about the Killer Weir that apparently was star of a 999 TV program when a paddler escaped with his life only when he had the presence of mind to dump his buoyancy aid and sink to get out of the stopper. Others however, despite attempted helicopter rescues etc. had not been so fortunate (or resourceful?).

Still, Andy had told me that this was an appropriate beginners trip and so I duly turned up at the RV where he introduced me to Paul with the car, and to the club boat he had selected for me. The boat turned out to be called RPM which I took as an omen and was immediately speculating about which axis it might rotate in the hands of a novice paddler, and how quickly it might do it. We were dead on time so far and Andy informed us that "We'll just stop in to pick up Noel, and then it's three and a half hours to Slenningford". After repeated hammering on his door had woken up Noel (and his neighbours), we had a few minutes whilst he decided which parts of his morning routine he could safely miss out to save time and thereby subdue our impatience to get going. Paul filled in the time by showing Andy and I the front of his car that had just been pulled out after a shunt. "I thought your accident was over six months ago?" said Andy. "Oh no, that was the previous one". Thoughts of an early mutiny and a return home crossed my mind however it was a bit late to go back to bed, and I had nothing else planned for the weekend.

After extending our journey with only one short cut we turned down the roadway to Slenningford Mill only just outside the specified 3 ½ hours travel time, and winding the car window down we could hear the river from about 200m away, and certainly well before we could see it. Not the beginner's river I'd expected, but due to the recent rains a roaring raging torrent.

We met the rest of our group in the mill yard and set off to walk the course, downriver first where it was no tamer: "There's a weir under there somewhere" and "Where those tree tops are sticking up there are usually islands". A fair bit of shouting from upriver announced the passing of an Up Side Down canoe being chased by a paddler trying to recover it. A few seconds later another paddler followed trying to recover a swimmer from the maelstrom. No one seemed concerned for the safety of the swimmer, or interested in the outcome, but for the second time today I'm contemplating mutiny or at least having a dry day.

Upriver the Killer Weir was not a disappointment, no sign of any concrete, just an evil wave with a formidable stopper across the whole width and a secondary wave and stopper across the centre third. Just immediately downriver the KW trap was completed by a bunch of trees sticking up ("normally an island") and with the water rushing through looking like a sort of paddler slicer.

The river seemed a little tamer at West Tanfield where we viewed it from the bridge: but not a whole lot. I spotted a dead cow floating down toward us, but as it came closer under the bridge I

couldn't even fool Noel into believing that it wasn't a branch with some black plastic wrapped around.

Plan B involved driving up to Mickley to paddle a higher and tamer section down to the dead cow bridge. Looking at the river at the put in, the downside still seemed to me to be on the high side for a three times in a boat novice paddler (and anyhow I'd figured out that some of the cars were going to end up at the pub) so I chickened out and decided to join Noel and have a wet inside, dry outside sort of day. However seeing another member of our group struggling to put on a dry suit back to front made me wonder whether I'd made the right decision!

Noel and I rolled out of the pub onto the bridge just as a group of paddlers come into sight, mid river and paddling steadily down. We proceeded to our task of taking photos only to find as they passed under the bridge that they weren't our group at all. Mistaken identity was my fault of course. Great things digital cameras though: erase, erase, erase.

Our group appeared about ten minutes later and we repeated the photo exercise as they approached. About 100m upriver from the bridge one paddler for no apparent reason had an Out of Boat Experience, and we were able to watch the experienced paddlers effect a rescue before the group landed at the little slip below the bridge.

Andy, Mark, and Paul had decided to run the gauntlet of the lower river and the rest of us saw them off before retreating to the pub. On reaching the KW Paul decided to run it, and survived, but only briefly because as he manoeuvred to wait for the other two to portage he was pulled back in and forced to bail out. He got ejected from the stoppers and swam past the cheese slicer. Andy ran down the bank and threw his rescue line, but had forgotten to undo the top and it landed just six feet from his feet. Mark meanwhile chased the boat all the way down and past the mill before finally getting it ashore. Paul washed up somewhere unassisted. Apparently they then did the whole section again, but without the KW and OBE bit.

Everyone got to the pub eventually.

We drove up to Spenymoor where we were to lodge with Mark and Linda who were to prove great hosts, and more importantly seemed to have unlimited hot water for showers. On returning from a lively meal at the local curry house Andy produced some educational games he'd had the foresight to bring along. It was about two in the morning before everyone was thoroughly educated and ready to turn in.

Sunday morning revealed corpses strewn randomly around what looked more like the Somme than a suburban home. On an early mission to collect newspapers and bananas, I discovered that Spenymoor main street has the same house numbers down both sides (number 31 for instance on both sides). Apparently the house numbers used to correspond to the miner's pit tally numbers, one shift to each side of the street, but it must give the postman a few problems. Unlike the Somme however, and with the exception of the girls, one by one the corpses groaned, came alive, and devoured the bacon butties and coffee produced by our hosts. Thanks again Mark and Linda.

We eventually got the girls on the road soon after midday, and heading into Durham city centre I made the mistake of pointing out to Paul a team of female mud wrestlers (could perhaps have been very dirty rugby players) whereupon we narrowly avoided re-compacting the front of the car with accident number 3<sup>(see footnote)</sup>. The river looked fine at the city centre put in, there were in any case a bunch of school age kids just setting off, so doing the chicken and pub thing a second time was out of the question. There were in any case no Refreshment Opportunities in sight.

Paddling down the river today was largely uneventful with the beginners amongst us practicing various ferry manoeuvres, rescues, and strokes. I'm completely out of sync with everyone as usual and still trying to get to grips with the difference between breaking in and breaking out. Stopped on a grassy bank for a break we spotted a flock of nine herons flying in not so close company, swooping and diving over the trees of the opposite bank. Everyone agreed that they'd never seen more than two together before, and so we watched their random manoeuvres until they were out of sight, rather like watching a Chinook helicopter expecting at any moment to witness some devastation. As we approached the take out point at the ruined abbey suddenly there was the same swimmer as yesterday having the same OBE, but there was no drama as a slick recovery was made of swimmer and accessories. Practice makes perfect?

The long drive back featured Andy keeping Paul awake by regaling him with gory paramedic stories, and Paul sending Andy to sleep by regaling him with dirty Land-Rover stories. Noel and I keeping a points score in the back.

The record shows that we used 0.9 litre less diesel on the return journey than on the outward. It's downhill on the way back from Yorkshire...

By Charles

Paddlers were: Charles, Andy B, Noel, Paul Stephens, Mark Taylor, Richard Mann, Pauline Alles, Roz B, French Claire, Mark & Lynda, Nigel C

*[Editors Note : Those who've known Paul a bit longer than Charles has might consider that it was accident N+3 that was narrowly avoided, where N is some not particularly small number.]*

## Tyne Tour

Canoeing is always an excellent excuse for skiving off work, and with the Slenningford trip having seen near flood conditions 2 weeks earlier, a few of us took Friday 5th November off and headed up the A1 to Slenningford. Charles had bought a brand new boat earlier in the week, which as he said was very orange, so there was no way we were going to lose Andy's car. Departing at a civilised hour, stopping at a Little Thief on route, we still arrived at Slenningford with plenty of daylight - always useful if you expect to be spotting empty boats heading down the bottom rapid.... As we arrived it became clear that the Baldock fleet had been enlarged, with Richard and Ross both proudly trying out Ebay bargains.

Slenningford had dropped to 'sensible' levels so there was plenty of boat rescuing practise to be had, as people got stuck into surfing waves and discovering how little volume their new boats had. Ross, Hannah, Richard and Charles all took swims, and I was left as the only one with a dry head after Andy let his concentration lapse and I'm sure Gareth at least had a roll.

After a few hours we headed up the A1 to Hexham, though a wrong turn out of Slenningford meant a trip back south to Ripon for most of us, whilst Andy realised he had a headstart and so stopped off in a pub. Once we got to Hexham we attempted to locate the cottage which Ross and Hannah had booked, conveniently 4 miles out of Hexham. A multimap / postcode issue meant it wasn't actually 4 miles out of Hexham but 14, and 2 miles from the nearest village, Wark, but it was very nice and cosy when we got there, and the shower was excellent. We met Andy (who was behind us after his pub stop) back in Wark where he and Charles had found another pub, then relocated to the pub in the village which had been recommended for food, which was very friendly and provided the much needed grub. The amount of swimming which had gone on during the day was obvious overnight as I slept in the lounge (being the 7th person in a 6 person cottage) trying to ignore the dripping sound from the wet kit hanging from beams dripping onto laminate floor..... I made a note to sleep over the far side of the room the following night.

Saturday morning saw us conveniently located for the getin for the upper stretch of the Tyne tour on the North Tyne, which is in Wark, but 14 miles from the ticket sellers in Hexham. Fortunately Mark Kelley was driving up from Durham so he stopped off to get tickets, and both he and Gerald met us at Wark, along with minibus loads of university freshers trips, with frazzled leaders attempting to organise people who didn't know what a Dancer or Corsica was (if you don't consider yourself lucky not to ever have used cr\*p uni canoeing kit) to stand next to their boat / check their spraydeck fitted / etc. All this organisation also involved a lot of tripping through the dog mess on the grass (the makeshift carpark was a rugby club) which unfortunately got kicked onto Richard's boat. But since he was doing the shuttle we kicked it off again and pretended it hadn't happened.

We did the full stretch of the North Tyne down to Hexham - about 12 miles of paddling, mostly grade 2 / flat but with beautiful scenery, and not as packed as I'd feared it might be. Our early start probably helped. The Warden gorge playwave was busy as usual but I got a quick surf. Once in Hexham we decided that all 8 going back to the cottage wasn't practical, as it was at least a half hour's drive each way, and there was only one shower, so the minimum number required to sort the shuttle went back. We also had the slight technical hitch that Andy B had put his immobiliser in another car for safe / dry keeping, but that other car was Richard's which we'd all agreed was the one shuttling back up to the top, so whilst Andy could get into his car - parked in the big carpark some way from the getout instead of the small carpark near the getout where you could load boats - he couldn't move it. So whilst the shuttling was going on we mooched around

the trade stalls and I managed to buy a new helmet, BA and paddle - all rather urgently required purchases, as I hadn't been near a canoeing shop since the Tyne tour last year.

We headed into town for food, finding an Italian restaurant which looked packed but had plenty of seating for large groups of canoeists round the back (how can students afford to eat out????). We then headed onto Andy's recommended pub, "The Heart of England" (see pub guide in a previous newsletter), except for Ross and Hannah, who made excuses about being newly-weds (18 months ago).... The pub was full of more student canoeists, plus locals, but Andy said they weren't true northern women as "they've got knickers on". On this occasion, no-one managed to make the acquaintance of any locals. When we got back I failed to relocate my sleeping bag further from the drips as Gerald had the spot the other side of the living room floor, but as there'd been a bit less swimming the lounge wasn't quite as damp, or maybe I was just sufficiently tired to sleep through the drips.

Sunday morning start with excellent cooked breakfast (and no we didn't go out to find a cafe) followed by what must be a Baldock record - an 8:45am departure! (Andy had to be back in Hertfordshire by 5 to go to the Pyrenees.) We headed to the Barrasford get-in, with Hannah expertly herding away the sheep who clearly weren't expecting any canoeists before 10am. Whilst waiting for the shuttle we watched an open-boater attempt the grade 4 rapid there - which is short but rocky with pinning potential and head-smashing-on-rocks potential (though less so for an open boater who doesn't capsize all the way over). On his third attempt he actually stayed in his boat. We met another kayaker at the getin who was looking for a group to hook up with and paddled with us; he said that someone had broken a boat there after getting pinned the previous day. Not to be deterred (or maybe he just didn't hear) Ross followed myself and Andy down the grade 4, and investigated the underwater rocks but miraculously didn't find any. We continued on to Hexham relatively speedily due to Andy needing to get home, but not without a bit of wave surfing. Ross had an excellent surf in Warden gorge.

Back at Hexham we surveyed the mess of the campsite used by all the student scum (one portaloos had fallen over and was to be avoided, the other wasn't exactly clean.....), loaded up, bought a quick bite from the cafe, and headed home, getting back to Hitchin around 6pm. (Andy had sprinted ahead after the last of the rapids - there is a long flat slog to the getout - and so got back by 5.)

By Ros W

Cheers to Andy for organising the trip, and to Ross and Hannah for booking the cottage, and to multimap for screwing up.

Paddlers were: Andy B, Ross & Hannah, Charles, Gareth, Richard, Ros W, Mark Kelley, Gerald. Rain was pretty much nonexistent (the North Tyne is dam release and the tour guarantees a release)

Failing to attend to due expenses associated with broken down car - the Taylor family. Hopefully they'll make it next year!

## Mens polo comp - saturday 21st November, Luton

I headed over to Luton to watch the men's comp with a rash vest and swimming costume in my bag just in case.... should have picked up a full set of kit as Steve B was injured so they were without a sub. Fortunately we had enough spare kit (partly due to Kirsty having borrow demo boats and paddles) so I was able to sit on the sub line and get a bit of play.

It made a difference from ladies polo - faster and more violent. Unfortunately from the sub line I couldn't see the play that well and have a hopeless memory for what happened in which match, but the final results were 2 draws and 2 losses - not as good as the first comp of the season but they were missing Steve. Joe had a bit of a confrontation with a member of an opposition team who seemed to think he'd pushed him unfairly and grabbed Joe's face guard, cutting his lip slightly in the process. Both Joe and the opposition team member got yellow cards, Joe's for language [at this point I'd recommend that players read the rule books so that they know what cards mean! a yellow is a sending off for 2 minutes].

I got a chance to practise my reffing by failing a reffing assessment - they are nothing like as easy as Curly made out on the course. But I got some useful advice, and told (yet again) that I don't spot enough fouls..... at this rate I'm not sure I'm going to improve enough to pass before my theory qualification runs out in June!

The next Open tournament is on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> March and the next ladies' tournament is on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> January, both in Luton 5-9pm. I can recommend watching if you've never seen polo played properly (in a proper shaped pool rather than North Herts leisure centre!). Luton is only 20 minutes away, even if you get lost in the one way system!

		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	GF	GA	GD	Pts
A	St Albans E	14	4	5	5	21	29	-8	27
H	Nomad	9	6	2	1	28	10	18	23
J	ULU	8	6	1	1	22	6	16	21
C	Meridian Y	10	5	1	4	28	13	15	21
E	Letchworth	9	5	2	2	18	10	8	21
G	Castle Pink Dreamers	8	3	4	1	13	6	7	18
D	St Albans F	9	3	1	5	14	21	-7	16
B	Martlett Cougars B	9	2	0	7	7	21	-14	13
F	Braintree C	10	1	1	8	7	37	-30	13
K	Meridian D	4	1	1	2	5	10	-5	7

By Ros W

## Lonely Hearts Column Update

Our Posing Bus Driver is being trained up to be a Chief Bus Driver. Wot this seems to involve is being on call a lot rather than actually working [not that this appears to have given him much time for writing newsletter articles....]. The change in role sounds pretty complicated – a bit like learning to brush your teeth holding your toothbrush in the opposite hand to usual apparently!

If he manages to stay put in Stansted he'll be even richer, but he may get posted somewhere else.

Maybe somewhere nice like Rome, so we can all go and visit. Though I don't know if they have Speed-dating there, and the competition from Italian hunks might be a bit fierce.

Or maybe Luton.

[On a serious note, we may need a new treasurer – volunteers please!]



**It's all work work work when you Drive Buses for a living....**



**Who moved the footrests ?!?! And I'd like some Werners please, the feather on these blades isn't quite right and is hindering my flatwater cartwheeling!**

### **Xmas Walk**

Thanks to all those who came along to do the inaugural Christmas walk, including my friend Claire, from work, whom I forgot to tell we were doing a walk and turned up in heels. With baby's and little ones sitting comfy in slings we set off on our little saunter. The first pub was passed after just 200m. Why? Thankfully for Claire, the 2-3 mile route missed out boggy bits, and her boots escaped relatively unscathed. After a mile or so, sadly, we came across a dead owl. Andy and Nicola explained what happens to dead animals to little William and Sophie. Just as well the horse and donkey in the next field were behaving themselves. Eventually we came to Charlton, the source of the river Hiz, the setting of the pub, a roaring log fire and some real ale. Just a little way back home now to some mulled wine and home-made mince pies that weren't bad if I may say so myself. Cheers. Must do it again next year.

Andy B

## Canoe club Quiz

After previous years in which all-female teams have strolled to victory, this year it was the blokes' turn for revenge with a convincing victory by 'Norfolk and Good' (whatever that means) also known as Rob Carter, Andy Barras, Paul Stephens and Pete Nash. They managed to combine knowledge of (respectively) posh arty things and airports; medicine; chemistry; and places I went on holiday last year, which proved to be the winning ticket.

Results as follows:

Norfolk & Good	Rob, Andy, Paul, Pete	84 points
Norfolk Noggins(?)	Steph, Steph's brother + everyone she knows	76 1/2 points
Team 3	Colin, Carmel, Aileen, Patrick	76 points
Team 4	Brian, Fee, Lucy, Ade, Mrs Ade	69 points

For those of you not present, here are a few of the questions to have a go at:

1. Who was convicted and executed for the 1995 Oklahoma bomb?
2. Which Member of the G8 group of countries has the lowest population?
3. Which Shakespearean character asks 'Is this a dagger I see before me?'
4. What word has Nike copyrighted to describe their tick logo?
5. How is the medical term 'hallitosis' more commonly known?
6. "Blue-point", "Seal-point" and "Chocolate-point" are types of what?
7. In what three sports could you be regular or goofy?
8. By what name is the A406 better known?
9. Name 2 sports in which you could be given a "penalty stroke".
10. If you flew to Ajaccio, which island would you expect to land on?

If you scored 10/10 then you were either at the quiz or definitely should have been.

Mike J

## Pyrenees, November 2004



Hi, I hope you like the seasonal photo. For the chav-spotters amongst you, namely Gareth, my trousers aren't tucked into my socks-they're elasticated to stop the snow going up my legs. Honest!

The monster motor behind me had taken me. Matt, Ian and Claire all the way to the French Pyrenees, and now to the top of a valley in heavy snow. What better place to build your first snowman in 25 years. Snow is a lot of fun and should be made compulsory. The only place we could find to go boat sledging was the main road up the valley. Health and Safety meant all activities were limited to snowball fights with ex-squaddie Ian coming out on top.

The only problem with snow is that no water gets into the rivers, so on our five days of scouting rivers we didn't paddle any upper sections. What we did find were some cracking lower sections, especially a slalom site and play wave on the Pau. One section had a river feature that, with practice, would allow three of us to pull off synchronised tail-squirts. We practised, but as Claire said, "That looked c\*\*%\*!"

We were using the infamous Pyrenees Whitewater guide book – the one described as being 'pants' when it was written, and only got worse when translated. Matt and Ian now agree.

Our free accommodation was 'work still in progress'. By day 2 we had hot water. By day 5 the laminate flooring was going down. On day 4, Ian found the oven door was only propped on, and likewise the heating elements that were now at 200°C. It was Claims-Direct heaven. Our visit was supposed to spur the workmen on, but at times we were a hindrance – cue Matt who left a skylight open on one rainy day. Whooops.

Only one trip ended as a near epic. Having paddled just 1km from a power station outflow, I was keen to go on and paddle the grade II section.. We hadn't planned this but the others agreed so Clare was to drive down, meet us at various points (unknown) and pick us up when we'd had enough. A simple plan but basically flawed. The road, unbeknown to me was to become a dual carriageway, fenced off from the countryside for 9 miles. We had less about an hour and a half of daylight left. Just as Matt was running through different survival strategies, Claire, in the monster motor worked her way onto a farm, crossed some fields, and got to the river bank.

To paddle the Pyrenees at it's best you need to be in the snow-melt season as some of the rivers around Lourdes need a serious amount of water. Still, I enjoyed it, so thanks to Matt, Ian and Claire for inviting me along.

Andy B

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### Puzzle page

I couldn't think of anything to write about canoeing (*Editor's note – you haven't actually been canoeing for ages so how could you write about it?*) so here are some puzzles to try in what is probably increasing order of difficulty. The first one is fairly easy but may take a little while. The last one is definitely hard. The second one was given as maths homework to a 12 year old – who says education standards are dropping?! There is no "clever" wording and none of them are trick questions.

1. You have 9 apparently identical balls but one is a little heavier than all the others. The only measuring equipment you have is a weighing scales in the form of a balance with pans on each end. Find which is the heavy ball in just two weighings.
2. A banana farmer has harvested three thousand bananas but has a problem. The nearest market is one thousand miles away and his only method of transport is a donkey which will take a maximum of one thousand bananas at a time. Also, the donkey insists on eating one banana per mile travelled (regardless of how laden he is). Can you devise a way to get more than 500 bananas to market? If so, try for 600.

3. A harder version of question one, above. This time you have ten balls and three weighings are allowed but, crucially, this time you do not know whether the odd one out is lighter or heavier. Lynn tells me I spent a day of our holiday in a comatose state solving this one but it could just have been a hangover.

4. I'll be impressed if anyone can do this one. I certainly can't!

There are two mathematicians – let's call them Simon and Peter. They meet and have a chat as follows:

**Simon:** "I know the sum  $S$  of two integers greater than 1, but not their product."

**Peter:** "I, on the other hand, know the product  $P$  of the two numbers, but not their sum."

**Simon:** "I believe you, because you cannot calculate  $S$  from  $P$ , no matter what value  $P$  may have."

**Peter:** "In that case, now I know  $S$ ."

**Simon:** "How nice, in that case now I also know  $P$ ."

**Peter:** "And moreover,  $S$  has the smallest value that is possible, given our conversation." What are the values of  $P$  and  $S$ ?

Contributed by Mike J

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### Nene trip, December 2004

Amazingly, we all got up early (despite the Nashs having had a party the night before), got on the water early before it got crowded.... What is happening to the club????

Top tip – you can print off the form to apply for a user card at the Nene from the web, so fill it in before you go, rather than standing in the breezy corridor by the office when you book in.



Gareth surfs a wave



Rob poses, with no real danger of getting his hair wet



Gareth is a bit more daring



The lesser-spotted-right-way-up-in-control-on-the-same-bit-of-river-as-the-rest-of-the-group-Charles