



Bradford on Avon Canoe Club October 2014.

September, last Nottingham of the season:-

The National Junior Sprint Championships in Nottingham were on the first weekend of September, nicely coinciding with returning to school. There were just two juniors racing – Connor's first sprint regatta, Ed's second and my first experience of Nottingham. We were rather lucky with the weather as I had been assured that Nottingham is always windy / rainy / both however, it was dry all weekend (except for the hour when we were fighting to get the tent up!) and sunny on the Sunday. It was certainly an experience, made all the more entertaining by the commentator who drew everyone's attention to every swimmer during the regatta. The boys' first race was the U14s 1000m K4 where they were in a team with Joe Keevan from WYC and Alfie Barnicoat from Oxford Falcon. We went to pick up the boat nice and early on Derek's advice and it was just as well that we did because it took nearly half an hour to sort out the foot plate at the front of the boat (Ed was at the front) and the boys had only 10 minutes on the water before their race which was all a bit panicky. Considering they had only just met each other they did well, coming 6th in the straight final. Ed and Connor then raced in the U14s K2 1000m. They paddled really well together and looked confident on the water coming 5th in their heat but didn't put in a fast enough time to make the finals. They then raced U14s K1 200m - which was an experience to say the least. They'd been having a great time trying out the ergos at the course and were getting up to some impressive stroke rates but doing it sitting on an ergo and doing it in the race were two different things altogether. Ed missed out on Final C by half a second but improved his previous time by 2 seconds. Connor found it a learning experience and decided a lighter boat was in order! We then retired to the campsite (not bad for those of you who haven't been) and – in the rain (I'm being allowed some dramatic licence here, it was drizzling) – fought to get the tent up. At this point I was missing the Escott army who had previously put my tent up in about 10 minutes flat. Nevertheless we managed it eventually, even though I looked like I'd been at the gym for about 2 hours and my hair was something else all together. Curly hair and humidity isn't such a good combination. We had a dodgy meal out (anywhere called 'The Lady Bay' is destined not to be a gastro pub is it) followed by a very good night's sleep. Sunday was just one race – U14s 500m K1 and it was the boys' favourite distance of the regatta. There were five heats, Ed made Final C and came 6th in his heat. Connor put in a good effort and is looking forward to returning next season. Both the boys had a swim over the weekend – Ed getting out of his boat; Connor decided to jump in when taking his boat out of the water, which was interesting given the unappealing algae covering the water (and the huge dead fish just a few meters away!). In between races we had a walk over to the white water course, which looked, quite frankly, absolutely terrifying (the boys thought it looked like fun).

It was a long and tiring weekend but one that the boys thoroughly enjoyed. Derek asked if I was going to give sprint a go. I'm sure those of you who know me will know the answer that I gave! Janice told me about their weekends at Nottingham with Ed and Ali: most of these stories included girls and tents. I guess I have that all to come! So – the boys are planning to train hard and put in an even better performance next season but well done to them – they are braver than me!

Alison Nightingale.

6th September Club paddle, Melksham to Bradford this turned out to be more of safari than a paddle and a bit of an epic one at that, taking two hours twenty mins. The water level being really low was expected, but the amount of blockages in the river was not. Most of the time was spent battling through weed beds and fallen trees making the going really tough and a new experience for most of the group. Still all character building stuff and a good laugh at times especially Harry and George taking an early bath at Staverton. Thanks to Mike for organising the trip, next time Mike we will check to see if the river is clear.

14th September Pangbourne Hasler marathon, again a small but keen group from the club made the trip to this lovely part of the Thames. On a warm but breezy day there was a large turnout from all the big clubs making for some excellent racing. In division 7 Harry had a very good race to finish 1st and was promoted to Div 6 not far behind was Ed also promoted to Div 6. Also paddling in div 7 were Joe and George having a good strong races in a very big field of over thirty boats. Alison paddling up a division in 8, (just to test herself) had a good race but did not enjoy the tricky head wind on the way back downstream. Another big turnout in Div 4 K1, 29 boats making the start line a bit hectic, three club paddlers in this division, John finishing 6th, Alistair 10th and Bo 23rd.

Sunday 28th September Reading K4 Race.

Alison and George took Harry, Joe, Ed and Connor to compete in this annual event on the Thames at Reading. It's been a very good month for paddling weather wise and Sunday was perfect conditions again, the boys had a very good race and finished 3rd in their class a good result and good fun. If you have not tried K4 racing you should put this one in your calendar for next year, it's a good event. Thanks to Alison and George for taking the boys.



Club Ironman Nigel Unwin again finished the season of Quadrathlon racing with a very good result in the Bude event, finishing 2nd on the day and I believe took the seasons trophy for the vet50 category. For those not familiar with the event it consists of Swim,Bike,kayak and then Run. Visit <http://www.britishquadrathlon.org.uk/> for full reports.

Well September has been exceptional weather wise and I hope you have all made the most of it and been on the river as much as possible. It's good to see our river wanderers John and John still out and about and I am sure they would be happy with the company if anyone would like to join them on one of their trips.

Upcoming Events.

5th October Elmbridge Hasler(2015).

12th October Hasler Finals Richmond.

19th October Fowey Hasler (2015).