

1ST SANDLEHEATH SEA SCOUT GROUP



WATERLINES

Apr 2005

Spring Edition

Two Sandleheath Cubs receive their high Awards

The Sandleheath Cubs shown have received the highest awards possible in the Cub Section. Joseph Lidden, 11, and Eliot Haugh, almost 11, have received the new Chief Silver Award indicating their progress towards the Chief Scout Gold Award. They are thus ready to move up into the Scout Section.



Well done

Congratulations also go to Richard Savage, who has just qualified as an RYA Sailing Instructor.

The Stour Descent

'Ready', 'Steady' and 'Go'

And we were off. The very start of our 15-mile Stour Descent. An annual canoe race from the bridge at Sturminster Mill at Sturminster Newton to Bryantston School in Blandford, where a cup of warm soup and a sausage roll awaited us.

Us being James Hall and myself in our fibreglass double canoe, paddling down a very slow sluggish and shallow river as it meandered across the valley. It had not rained in over a week meaning that the river was lower than normal and was therefore more difficult.

The descent was quite simple and as we were briefed by the race marshals before the race, that there were very few obstacles to overcome, in fact to be specific only 4 obstacles, 3 weirs [everyone else thinks that there are only 2 weirs, did you take the scenic route? - Ed] and a water measuring station, due to the low water levels we were advised to 'portage' two (this is to get our of the canoe and walk around them) but for one weir and the measuring station we were told it would be deep enough to shoot.

After paddling for about 20 minutes we hit the first obstacle, but this was one of the weirs too shallow for us to go over, we portaged it. Lumbering over land with our very heavy canoe before jumping in again for the next leg two miles long. The next obstacle was the water measuring station and bridge at Hamoon. The Bridge was lined with supporters cheering on the canoeists. The drop of the measuring station was usually only a foot but as the water was so slow the drop was much higher; about 3 feet higher with an interesting standing wave-no time to think however as whoosh we were through it without any hesitation, myself earning a mouth and lap full of icy cold water as I was sitting at the front.

Another leg, now this one longer 2 miles now until the next bridge. This bridge was also full of waving supporters but baffling to us, all waving and pointing the same way. All indicating the left side of the

river, so quickly altering our course thinking that there might be some hidden obstacle on the right hand side we paddled hard to the left, but not hard enough as we had found the hidden obstacle, the river bed, and with a crunch we were planted firmly on it. So for the next 10 minutes we scrambled, heaved, pushed pulled and generally fought our way off the shallow river to a deeper channel. But to our dismay of having been held up in one place for 10 minutes we were rewarded with several other canoes doing exactly the same!

This next stretch was the longest yet, a full 5 miles to the next weir, one which we had to portage. This portage also happened to be the trickiest, as we first had to stop parallel to a steep slippery concrete bank, have ropes thrown down to us, we then had to haul ourselves and canoe up to the top of the bank. After this physical feat we then had to run carrying our canoe over a thistle laden stretch of grass to then slip and slide down a sharp embankment to finally place the canoe back in the river with James and myself desperately trying to get back into the canoe without capsizing, not much to ask for of two very cold canoeists after they had already canoed a fair distance. This was now our final leg and the river was starting to pan out a bit getting wider with longer and more sluggish meanders.

This Sunday is the only day in the year that the Stour can be canoed yet all the local angling clubs are still insisting on holding a fishing competition on the same day, only deciding to hold it a few weeks before, so more obstacles to over come we had to dodge round fishing lines, weights, floats and much disgruntled fishermen.

The final stretch seemed to be getting longer and longer as we were both digging into reserves to keep us going on our route and both noticed that we had to correct our course more and more frequently as fatigue started to set in.

Finally we turned one land bend and saw the banner we had been waiting for, that magic 'Finish' sign meaning the end of our descent. We exited our canoe but soon realised that although we were finished we still had to get our double canoe over two football pitches to where the cars were parked.

After carrying the canoe, our now truly physically exhausted bodies could now have a warm shower and get into some warm clothes with soup and sausage roll to look forward to. The award ceremony took place immediately afterwards where we came 2nd in our class, finding out our time of 2 hours 52 minutes 14 seconds.

However, this canoe race wasn't solely for our entertainment or to see how fast we could do it in. Before the race I had been raising sponsorship from everyone who would help towards my Habitat for Humanity charity trip to Kenya, where a team of 11 local people are spending two weeks in August building two homes for homeless and improvised families.

I would like to thank firstly Ros White and David Chadwick who very generously gave up a Sunday to canoe the race with us and transport the canoes and generally support us all the way. Also James Hall, who gallantly stood in at the last moment to help me with the double canoe, especially not knowing what he had let himself in for and I doubt he will ever volunteer again also everyone who kindly sponsored me.

Josh Cleall



Stock photo from Graham Bland

(Actually a photo of Explorer Scouts on the Dart in February, but I don't have an article from that trip and I don't have any photos of the Stour Descent and, well, it's all canoeing)

A.G.M.

Don't forget the A.G.M. & Hog Roast to be held on Saturday May 21st.

Explorers

This term we have had trips out bowling at Strikers in Salisbury, ski-bobbing in Christchurch, and swimming at Sandy Balls. We have met up with Burley Scouts for wide games in the forest, the first at Moyles Court and the second at Abbotswell, and we have met at the hut in between times, every Monday night, for rifle shooting, cooking, indoors and out, and various games and activities. Thank you to Andy Brooks for all his hard work, and thank you to the Explorers for turning up every week and having fun!

Sue Chase - Explorer Leader

Phillips, Dave Coatham, Paul Murphy, John Hinton, Ross Macildowie, Paul Toynton, Peter Cleall, Anne Ringrose, Richard Savage, Kevin Osborne, Stephen White, James Bennett, Jane Esmond, Brad Osman, Sue Chase & Hampshire Scout Caving Club.

Ros White - Group Scout Leader



A team preparing to leave one of the checkpoints

S.A.L.L.I.E.

The annual S.A.L.L.I.E. (Scout And Leader Lightless Incident Exercise) was held at Burley Scout Hut on Saturday 12th March. As always Sandleheath were well represented, and did well at the event. We had 4 Scout teams (Bryn, Amelia, Becky, Isobel and Robert in team S1, Matthew, Liam, Henry, Alex and Peter in team S2, Jamie, Jacob, Ben, Joseph, Sam and Jack in S3 and Ellie C., James, Rebecca O., Charlotte Osman, Will and Fin in team S4) and 1 Explorer team (A2, comprising of Josh, Tim, Ellie S., Michael and David W.).

Adult/Explorer Results

Place	Team	Total
1	A2 - Sandleheath	840
2	A1 - Barton	723
3	A3 - Barton	534

Scout Results

Place	Team	Total
1	S1 - Sandleheath	496
2	S5 - Fordingbridge	412
3	S4 - Sandleheath	406
4	S2 - Sandleheath	372
5	S3 - Sandleheath	333

Many thanks to all those who helped run the enter, supervising teams & manning the bases: Murray

A.G.M. Waterlines

The next edition of Waterlines will be the A.G.M. Edition, which must be produced in time for the A.G.M on May 21st. This means all annual reports must be with me at the beginning of May (Sunday, May 1st at the latest). This is very soon, so get writing now! I am out of the country in mid-May so there'll be no trying to sneak late articles in this time!

Stephen White - Waterlines Editor

Scout Camp

Summer camp this year will be held at a Hill Fort (Maesbury Castle) in the Mendip Hills. It will run from Saturday 23rd July to Thursday 28th July (Scouts) or Saturday 30th July (Explorers).



1st Sandleheath Sea Scout Group

Useful Phone Numbers & Addresses

Page not available online.

Waterlines, Apr 2005

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