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### **02/07/07 The Rivers Sprint and Kent - In Summer!**

After cancelling my Scout camp due to the weather and therefore finding that I would be at a loose end on Sunday I made a few calls to see who would be around for a paddle. Knowing most people would be battling the elements in Anglesey but not wanting to go that far without knowing what was happening a small group of us choose the Lakes. The drive up seemed mad. Who goes



river paddling in the Lakes in the summer. Anyway, our first choice river, the Sprint appeared to be flowing well. The guide book said over 0.6 on gauge and under 2.0 would make for a good paddle. The gauge was on 6 (we think) so there is well enough water.

We got on the river just above Garnet bridge (just below the s bends). The first drop through the bridge was easier than it looked and a great way to start the river. The current was swift and soon we came to a dark mini gorge type area. Memories of a trip many many years ago reminded me that this was the start of the interesting bits. A quick dive out the boats and scout reviewed a 10 metre long, 3 metre high narrow constriction. The water was a seething mass of white and there where some diagonal waves to upset the unwary. All in all though the route looked straight forward. A simple rescue point set up and the first of the party approached the drop. Unfortunately, those earlier mentioned diagonals got the better of them they where quickly unwater. Not being wide enough to roll in I anticated a swim but to my astonishment, and in the big hole at the end of the slot the said person rolled up. The rest of the party shot the slot with ease and we were soon off down the river. The next rapid of note was more of a bob sleigh ride but with a must make final squeeze between a large boulder. The river sped along after this over a few easy rapids and past a couple of broken weirs - one of which led a member of the party to try a radical back deck roll. Not so impressive in a creek boat! A tree fallen in the river was the next obstacle and the only part of the river we had to make a portage. The last rapid of note was Sprint Mill falls which due to the amount of water had some evil

looking stoppers on the approach and a tricky move to make half way down. We all therefore choose the chicken line over the rocky slab pour over and then carried on to the end of the river. All in all a brilliant run and without any rain!

Having just one car with us, the shuttle involved me cycling back to the top which was knackered as the road rose way above the river. Anyway, some might say the exercise will do me good. Once the car picked up and the shuttle completed and boats loaded it was still early. We decided we still had time to do a quick blast of the last few rapids on the Kent.

We thought it best to scout out the drops on the river before paddling to check the lines and look for obstructions. Lots of rain recently could have meant trees in the river. The river was higher than any of us had every paddled it but all looked runnable. For those who



know the Kent, the L shaped weir was looking particularly nasty, but a sneak line on the far downstream end made it perfectly paddleable. A quick change into our gear, during which the heavens opened and we got absolutely battered, we wandered onto the river bank - well actually hacked our way through the undergrowth to find a suitable place to get on! The first rapid was great fun however I think the consequence of the wrong line didn't look too pleasant! almost immediately we arrived at the L shaped Weir

and a few hurried strokes ensured we made the safe chicken run. At river level the flow over the main drop looked particularly evil! The river was racing along and without a blink of an eye we approached the final rapid and last drop. Following reasonable close behind each other the first boat shot the drop in front of me and vanished! Problem is, I was too far gone to turn around and just as I was about to land in the hole, the first boat appeared some 10 metres downstream. The hole was massive but not retentive and I too spent a long time under, popping up some metres away from the fall. Quiet impressive for a large creek boat! And that was it, a 5 minute blast of the Kent. An uneventful drive home and evening spent in front of the telly. A great day. [Greg McCusker](#)