

Autumn 2000

After the excitement of the summer there was a great air of anticipation as the autumn tides drew closer. But the end of September, regular as clockwork, saw large amounts of rainfall prior to the new moon springs. The crew was blessed though and Sabrinha produced one of her finest displays. By the end of October the rains were still pounding and the country was beginning to suffer the effects of too much rain!!! But the search benefitted a couple...

Tranny Traveller was around capturing some great footage and again has kindly contributed a few stills to show it as it was...

Tuesday 26th to Saturday 30th, September

Usually an excellent time for bores with springs following just after the equinox, but with the perigee occurring several days prior to syzygy, the tides were smaller than usual. Rain was heavy the week before the tides were due and the flow in the river was above average.

Tuesday pm the crew met up for the Wizard's birthday and a last evening surf of the year at Boats. But while Wizard and Drop-Down waited on the bank for Toes to get his suit on (late as usual!), they caught a glimpse of a small ripple crawling up the sand bank. Yep Sabrinha had arrived and she was not looking to inspiring. Probably more amusing was when Tranny Traveller came running up the bank, clutching his tripod, asking if the others could see it yet, even though they had been watching the mighty ripple for a while!! So off to the Vic for a few, while The Silver Surfer and Buff were twiddling their thumbs at the White Hart wondering where the hell everyone was!! (Sorry guys!)

Wednesday am, Buffalo went alone to Boats and The Silver Surfer sat in the lower channel. Buff banked a small shoulder that carried him right to the far bank where the Wizard was watching. A long long paddle back. Silver had mere ripples that washed over his back! With Toes comitted by work (for once!?) Buff got the opportunity to score the shoulder at Mud Banks where he and Silver scored a wave peaking close to five foot and working up the bank with a glassy 3 foot shoulder. They were both pretty stoked and Buff worked some hawaiian-style magic.

Thursday morning Silver Surfer, Standfast and Toes paddled down from Jaqs Reef with more fresh flowing in the river making the paddle quick. The Wizard meanwhile had taken his magic carpet further down for a bit of pioneering. It took him several paddle catch ups to finally get into a wave with enough power but as Sabrinha rolled up the straight Wizard found some face and put in a few nifty manouveres as he carved across a dyeing section to connect to Boats where the others were waiting. Enough time for

a quick chat on the wave as to where to go next and it was backing off over the rapids. Standfast hung on into the bowl for an extra few hundred yards.



The consensus was to check out Mud Banks which, as it turned out had shaped up fairly nicely with a shallow ledge even though the fresh levels were high. Drop Down joined the other four and Hands turned up in his motor boat. This was one of the more impressive waves we have seen in the main river. Down stream the wave broke right across as a big wall of white water. A couple of jet skiers rode it but kindly backed off when they saw us. The wave peaked on the bank at a solid five foot with a large thumping section and a lovely shoulder. Standfast was up in a flash, and thrown almost as quick. The others were more cautious riding the soup with care. The Hands had used his boat to snag the shoulder but for once was fairly sociable with Toes who kept edging closer, followed by Drop Down, to feel that smooth face. The Silver Surfer went for the superman style for much of the trip rather than tackle the turbulence of the soup while the Wizard's carpet locked in bankside. The wave backed off as it headed round the bend with the shoulder tapering off towards the bank. Great fun and plenty of push in the wave though and everyone stoked for more (and Toes with a big grin on his face in the bank that no one could understand!!)



Friday am, and while Standfast was tied up by work, Drop Down, Wizard and Silver Surfer headed for Boats. The fresh had finally dropped slightly and with the tide peaking the night before a good show by Sabrinha was expected. But with a steady flow still all three of them did a *drop down* and could only watch as a solid peak broke just upriver from them! Toes meanwhile, having seen some glassy footage at Leicester Square the previous night headed out for a quiet clean shoulder. Last minute he was joined by Buffalo charged up for some styling. The wave broke further down river but they hung on the banks to avoid the flow and watch where the shoulder went. Picking up a fast 3-4 foot shoulder the moves came out for the camera. A bit of bargey ensued on the shoulder and within seconds of catching the wave they both slipped off the edge from some indecisive surfing! It was a long paddle back to the square!



On up to the Mud Banks where the crew joined together and shared their rather disastrous experiences downstream! No Hands this time and the wave was a similar size to the previous day with a cleaner shoulder. Toes bagged the shoulder for a few cutback collisions with Buff who was hot on his tail again. Around the bend, as the wave pulled into the bank, all five squeezed into a tiny space and began pulling each other along. The Silver Surfer was first to drift off the back of the wave, only to drop back in on

Drop Down and Wizard's inside - a spectacular switch manouvere!! He was so surprised he came straight off his board taking out the Wizard at the same time. Drop Down hung in the longest riding further than ever before for the stretch of river. Here are a few moments from Mud Banks...



Saturday morning the tides were dropping but Silver Surfer and Toes decided to check it out. The fresh levels also had dropped and the rapids were flowing fast below Jaqs'. What a surprise not only to find a canoeist down there but he was confidently (well!?) instructing a posse from London who had also showed up!! It's great to see people coming up to try the bore, but Boats is not a safe place to try for the first time, and with a couple of girl's on boogie boards the locals were ready for disaster! As it turned out,

everyone made it out of the water safely. The wave was powerful, breaking at four foot, but very lumpy as it hit some huge counter swells in the rapids. Toes negotiated the crowds to pick up the shoulder which was pretty fast and got a few big turns going with Silver Surfer on his inside. No one went very far.

The two snuck on to Mud Banks where the river looked like a mirror. Not a trace of breeze on the surface. The wave was not much smaller than last two days and it was sheer glass. They both rode it up past Drop Down's point from the previous day, and Silver Surfer even managed his trick again to sneak outside Toes for a bit of face around the bend (better watch this one guys!!). The ride was a numbing experience, sheer perfection for over half a mile. Both surfers were mute for several hours in shock recovering from the experience.

Friday 27th And Saturday 28th October

Small tides this month with the moon switch taking place. On the full moons the river was high so no one checked it, but on the last good new moon springs of the year, Toes and Wizard both sussed out what Sabrinha had to offer. Drop Down was down and out with a flu virus, Silver Surfer was car less in Bristol (thanks to some nasty car thieves at Porthcawl!), Standfast was in Barnie, and Funky was at a wedding.

Friday am, Toes headed to Leicester Square with Tranny Traveller. The wind was howling cross off shore force five and the fresh flow was high and fast. Evenso the wave looked alright down river so Toes headed in and paddled down. The wave broke against the sandbank and all Toes could do was sit watch it and the canoeists go past, turn around and paddle back to the Square! At Mud Banks the slab was still shapped well and not too deep. The wave was a lot smaller than the previous month and choppy in the slightly sheltered winds. On his first turn, Toes did his famous lose speed trick and lost the rail! And that was that, two-nill to Sabrinha!

Meanwhile, the Wizard rode a decent wave at E-Land where the bed appeared to be changing and the wave was taking on a new form. But before he and boatman, Dunc, could go any further, their fuelline broke, and that, was that!

Saturday am, and the wind was calm. Probably the only reason Toes got out of bed with a stingin hangover! He and Tranny raced down to the upper channel, just in time. Toes picked up a tiny foot of white water caught in the shallows and soon came off. Undetterred he paddled on after the wave and got back into it as it began to pick up speed and wall up over the crossing. With a three foot face in mid channel Toes banked left, but had to negotiate a single canoeist outside him. So as the canoeist was busy performing a floater on the soup, Toes nipped round the front of him quickly and had a crisp, clean shoulder right up to the Square where he kicked out of the wave, and headed back down the country tracks to be picked up by Tranny Traveller.

By the time they reached Jaws, the wind was howling across the river. Wizard and Hands turned up in

their boats. (Wizard had scored E-Land again and a great wave on the Banks) Jaws thumped down at a wind-choppy four foot. Not the best wave but a fun ride. Toes hopped in Wizard's boat and they raced off upriver after Sabrinha, leaving Tranny man wondering what on earth he should do next. After driving to Over and back, he went home! Not much upriver, as the high fresh was causing too much counter current and the bore was backing off. Wizard and Toes scored a shoulder tight to bank in No-Man's Land and Toes got trounced by a tree. Wizard paddled like the wind to pick up Cloudbreak which didn't run very far. Dunc decided it would be far more fun to drive very fast through the tide nearly losing Toes out the side in the process!

As the winds increased and the heavens broke, they decided to call it a day, and headed on home.

The rain certainly hasn't stopped since the last tide and the river is now at its highest levels upstream of Glos since 1947!! There is probably gonna be more rising to come. So although there are a couple of nipper tides on the november full moon, it is unlikely anything surfable will occur. Hopefully if the waters run out and we get a dry spell, there should a rideable tide on 13th December. C U all there!

Courtesy Tom Wright, Copyright 2000 boreriders.com