

3 months on a Tropical Island!

(P4R's latest trip to Sri Lanka)

Whilst out in Sri Lanka on Paddle4Relief duty, Tim Tanton, Founder of the North Devon based charity managed to take some well earned time out and snag a few gems at Main Point,



Arugam Bay! Not forgetting a few fun waves further up the coast at Pottuvil Point.

Potti Point (Photo courtesy of Aiya Surf photography)

Main Point (Photograph courtesy of Dan Meallem)

Arugam Bay has one of the best right hand point breaks in the Indian Ocean. It's already renowned for its class waves from July to September and it's 27c degree water. But don't be fooled, you'll find waves nearly all year round, with April to June offering a quiet line-up, and with the sea temperature not changing, it's boardies o'clock! Yeah, there'll be monsoon rains from December to February and an increase in the mosquito population, combined with a greater risk of snakes taking shelter in your room as well, but there are quality waves to be had throughout the year, and plenty to see when the waves are not forthcoming! Or you can hit the other coast and score plenty of left hand point breaks. Many of which are rarely surfed – it's just a matter of heading out for a nose around!

For those seeking a tad more adventure, there are plenty of breaks both north and south of ABay. Either grab your self a Tuk Tuk or see local surfer Saman @ Surf n Sun, who will take you on a surf safari in his Land-rover! Check out Freedom Cabanas, Samantha Restaurant, Thaththas Tea Shop, Lahirus Place, Surf n Sun, Rocco's Hotel, Nina's Cabanas, The Green Room, and Tissa and his Tuk Tuk



Tissa's Tuk Tuk



Thaththa's Tea Shop

..... But the main purpose of the trip was to continue with the work that has seen Paddle4Relief grow as an extremely effective charity.

For three months Tim worked religiously with local surfer Krishantha Ariyasena, Paddle4Reliefs Arugam Bay Project Manager. Twenty-one year old Krish has been P4R's man on the ground for two years now, having taken over from his older brother Thusantha. Krish was wary about surfing on Main Point following a lucky escape in August last year. Krish had been drilled into the shallow sandy bottom at Pottuvil Point and been carried from the surf with a suspected broken neck. Fortunately for Krish he suffered severe soft tissue damage, spent a couple days in hospital and was released with a neck brace to wear. He no longer does hand stands on his 9' longboard but he is back having fun, sharing waves and dropping in on



Tim on his 9' 5" Gulf Stream Yellow Log.



Party Wave

Krishantha

Tim was joined by Chris Martin of Braunton and Leah Reynolds of Bideford. Chris was keen to sample the tropical islands waves whilst Leah was focused on the task in hand!



Bike Mechanic



Chris receiving first aid!

In Leah's case that was getting involved in Activity Groups with the local children and helping out with providing local schools with valuable resources. In all, Leah and Tim managed to organise and distribute enough exercise books, pens, pencils, educational games, puzzles, toys and reading books to ten schools. Six of the schools are part of a programme of resource



rotation set up by Basheer, a local Post Office Manager, who set up the local Cultural Development Community Programme.

Leah and Anousa (Pre School Teacher)



Face Painting

On the manual labour front; three water pipelines, two well projects, one family's roof, another's electrics, a kitchen and a toilet block and waste tank were completed on this trip. Tim and Krish are helped by local craftsmen and labourers to complete the projects, and by paying salaries, it enable those workers to feed their families.



Senulabdeen Roof



KarunaRathna Water pipeline

P4R continued to provide medicines and a first aid service to the community, as both Leah and Tim are qualified nurses.

On the environmental front, P4R worked with the local surfers from the Arugam Bay Surf Club (which P4R helped to establish), in making and erecting Beach Litter signs and working with the areas Special Task Force (Sri Lanka's elite military group) in carrying out a massive



beach clean.



Beach Clean - The local STF and surfers

Arugam Bay Surfers – Krish, Siril & Pranith

Now that the war is over, the local area has become a popular destination for many of Sri Lanka's population. This has seen an increase in surf rescues by the local surfers. It's become clear there is a need for a Surf Life Saving team. The STF are providing life saving cover at the weekends from five of their group who are qualified life savers, but they need equipment. P4R and Arugam Bay Surf Club have provided them with a surfboard, a 7ft gun! Not ideal but a start. P4R is looking for donations of old longboards or surf rescue boards along with first aid kits and pocket face masks to sea freight out to Sri Lanka, and a qualified Surf Life Saving Instructor to head out to Sri Lanka and train up the local surfers.



STF personnel in their life guard roles.



Young Imalka

One of those young surfers is 11 year old Imalka. He is the youngest surfer in the village. He has predominately taught himself to surf through sheer determination and is full of enthusiasm. Once shy but full of mischief, he has grown from a poor swimmer in 2008 to a capable surfer in 2009.

Keep an eye on Tim and the Paddle4Relief crew at www.paddle4relief.co.uk, and what they are achieving for those less fortunate than ourselves. Help and support always welcome.

All photographs are the property of Paddle4Relief and Aiya Surf Photography.