

*American*

# WHITEWATER



AMERICA'S OLDEST WHITEWATER MAGAZINE

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Photo by J. Sup: See Letters to the Editor

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
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Cover Photo: River Running, Czechoslovakian style. River Tizera:  
Photo by J. Sup.

# Letters To The Editor

Dear Marge:

I regret that my first letter to you in more than a year has to be negative, but such is the case, unfortunately.

My complaint has to do with the current issue of **American Whitewater**, which arrived in today's mail.

The cover says it is the July/August issue; page 3 says it is the May/June issue; either way it has been published unacceptably late.

Thus many of the advertisements therein, such as the promotional piece for the Eastern Freestyle Championships, are irrelevant and outdated.

Two of the articles in this issue appeared originally in my own newsletter, **The Whitewater Paddler**; this includes "Don't Overdo it" and "Colorado River (Gore Canyon)".

Along with these two articles which were taken from my newsletter, without my permission and without any authorization and without even mentioning where they had originated, the cartoon on page 21 was also taken from my newsletter.

Furthermore, another article, "Meet Me At The Gorge," appeared in the newsletter of another prominent whitewater club.

On page 10, one paddler was incorrectly identified as being involved with the Asheville YMCA. He is not.

And I have read at least three other items in the "current" issue of **American Whitewater** in various other publications.

I first joined AWA way back in 1964 and '65, and I believe the organization has an important role to play. But if AWA can't send out its magazine on time — and can't publish original material — and is being forced to utilize articles from other publications — then something is woefully amiss.

Having expressed my opinion, I do not want to send you personally my best wishes and tell you that I hope we can get together again before too long to do some enjoyable paddling. That beautiful

surfing wave on hidden Snowbird Creek is still there! Sincerely yours,

Chuck Hines

Asheville, NC

Editor, **The Whitewater Paddler**

Dear Chuck,

'Twas nice to hear from you...even if you do have complaints. To answer them:

The cover says July/August, but you missed the fine print underneath: Newstand Date — September. Mine arrived in the mail on the same date as your letter, September 27. Unfortunately, the only economically feasible way of shipping the Journal is via bulk mail rates, and it does take longer than first class.

The promotional material on the Eastern Freestyle Championships: An advertisement of the event did appear in the May/June issue in time to alert members. The survey and the large display as was taken directly from artwork and literature created for the event, and according to those responsible for it, was not even ready ■ a few days before. As the Journal is sent to the printer at least a month before arriving on your doorstep, there was no way possible to include this in a previous issue. As to being out-of-date, the deadline for the return of the survey was October 15. I hope you returned yours; everyone of them will count in the effort to save this river. Any additional promotion and attention that is attracted by this publicity, even after the fact, may help the cause.

As to utilizing articles from other newsletters: You, I and perhaps a few dozen or so other people around the country are privileged indeed to have access to a wealth of paddling info, by virtue of our positions within our own clubs as newsletter editor. Many of these newsletters are exchanged between the paddling clubs, and when an editor wants to "take" an article to reprint in his own newsletter, no one has ever seemed to complain about the fact. Our own GRADIENT has even been known to feature articles from other clubs on occasion. I do agree with you that credit should be given where credit is due,

however, and will alert Dave to that fact in the future. To be copied is one of the greatest compliments that can be given, and every time a GRADIENT article is reprinted elsewhere, I get quite a kick out of it. In fact, I had planned on reprinting the "Don't Overdo It" article in our December issue, and Jon Wilson's cartoons always appear first in our newsletter! Perhaps if you would think of it as "sharing", it might feel better.

If something is woefully amiss, as you suggest, perhaps then, it's time for AWA members to get more involved: run for the Board, send articles in to the Journal take a stand on river conservation issues, share their knowledge, in other words... contribute. Any volunteer organization is only as good as its members want it to be, and AWA is still an all volunteer organization, one of which I've been happy to be associated with for quite a few years, also.

Having expressed my opinions in return, let me know when the Snowbird is up, and I'll meet you on the wave.

Yours truly,  
Marge

**P.S.** To all AWA members: The time for an election is obviously here. Please drop me a note saying you'd like to get involved or know someone who would. Candidates are currently being sought for the Board of Directors election. A few lines stating who you are, some ideas you'd like to see promoted and why, can get you involved, too. Try it, you might like it.

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Editor:

I am outraged that AWA prints substantially inaccurate information concerning river accidents and rescue techniques. I realize the material has been adapted from bookform which you are not responsible for, however, when considering articles concerning such serious issues, i.e. possible life or death, I resent the AWA furthering untruths so

lightly. Most people don't know enough about these subjects to sort out truth from falacy. In certain instances it would be better to say nothing at all.

In particular, I am referring to the section on CPR, pgs 25 & 26 in the MAY/JUNE 1985 issue. Basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation is rarely sufficient for patient survival, (Even if performed flawlessly) without the addition of advanced life support, i.e. monitoring, lifeline, drugs, and defibrillation. Basic CPR is only keeping 25-35% of the normal **Carotid** artery flow circulating. Your patient's survival and recovery depend on prompt, accurate assessment of the situation and a prompt attempt to get your patient further help. Either getting him out or bringing a more qualified crew in. CPR is taught to be done only one way-correctly. To infer that transporting a patient will jeopardize the quality of CPR is inaccurate. If taught correctly, then the rescuer will know how to move the patient while performing CPR-accurately.

The number two statement that is horribly inaccurate is contained in the last paragraph in the CPR section, pg. 26, concerning Mammilian Diving Reflex. Regardless of the victims age and clarity of the water, and regardless of the submersion time, I will always make the effort to give the victim the benefit of the doubt -Wouldn't you??!!

The possibility of the MDR reaction to submersion does need to be considered. If it has occurred, the heart is still beating, albeit slowly, but it is. To start performing CPR "as soon as possible" as the article states is very misleading and literally Life Threatening to a victim! If he wasn't dead when a rescuer got to him, the victims chances are slim with "help" like that.

Afrustrating as it can be, sometimes in the field there is not much we can do for a victim except to deliver the patient to the only people and facilities that might be able to help.

Here's to safe boating —  
Kate J. Myers, EMT  
Carbondale Ambulance Crew  
P.O. 1103  
Carbondale, CO. 81623

*Letters*

Dear Editor:

I would like to answer to your call for from time to time to write some about the life on the whitewater in distant countries from you — in the middle of Europe.

In this Springtime it was realized first "The Week of Krkonose Rivers". Information about it is interesting ( I think ) maybe also for boaters over the ocean. Only very brief.

The week was organized for 40 peoples. From one mountain village, there was a hostel. We went every day with the bus with trailer full of boats on the near rivers and creeks. There we selected the most interesting parts of the whitewater. In the Krkonose mountains rise many rivers — they are the most beautiful and difficult rivers in Czechoslovakia. These rivers have the water only cfsone month of the year. With us were also the boaters from GDR and West Germany. It was cold and the snow didn't melt and it was little water. But with help the water from dams, we went on the good terrains. On the nine rivers and creeks of a piece 150 kilometers on the parts class I-V, some of its are interesting perhaps for boaters from the USA. The best information about rivers give some photographs which I send and also the small map.

At the year 1986 in April will be the second "Week of Krkonose rivers" and already now it is a big interest. If the some of boaters from U.S. will be by chance in Europe and will want to go on the good whitewater, it is possible, if in time he will write on the next address. Of course the travel of boats over the ocean is a big problem and so we can reserve basic whitewater equipment — boats, paddles, sprayskirts, helmets, life jackets, etc.

Sorry, my English is very wrong, if you will print my letter in your magazine, please correct many my mistakes.

Thanks and Greetings,

Homea Fup

Homea Sup

J. Sup

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CSSR - EUROPE

# RIVER RESCUE PROJECT NOTES

Tremendous strides are being made every day in AWA's fights to save rivers. On the Black River near Watertown, NY, AWA has finalized a precedent setting agreement to provide recreational releases and a river corridor protection plan. A major testimony preparation effort for the upcoming FERC hearings is underway to combat the other two dam proposals nearby. On the Moose, AWA's persistent legal and political activities have convinced FERC to require a corridor wide recreational plan. AWA's requests for project consolidation, a precedent setting demand, has, however, yet to receive sufficient consideration. AWA presses on in its quest for proper protection.

The National Park Service has just notified AWA that interest in river protection in New York on both private and governmental bases has convinced them to begin a river inventory and assessment effort like the one they did in Maine which resulted in the protection of most of Maine's primo whitewater. The first report for NYS should be out in April of 1986, just in time for Cannon Fodder in the gubernatorial contest that fall. In addition, NYS Wild and Scenic river system regulation promulgation is also in its final stages.

Finally, on the Congressional scene, AWA has been working closely with David Conrad of Friends of the Earth and others to push House bill #44 (Shelby Bill) featuring amendments by Dingell (MI) and Miller (CA) which will remove the PURPA benefits granted to new damson our rivers. Thanks to PURPA and other federal tax incentives, US utilities are paying more for electricity generated by these dams than they can sell it to industrial customers. River users are the losers with this deal because whitewater is the currency we are spending for the luxury of a small degree of national energy independence.

Depending on the space this can fit into,

some of you may be interested in the nature of agreement struck with Glen Park Associates on the Black River.

The plan provides for 1.9 million kilowatt hours worth of water releases for whitewater sports each year. In addition, it provides for the shut down of a special small turbine adjacent to the waterfall for twenty minutes each hour during an releases activity. Although this releases program appears quite substantial, it only represents a very small percentage of the total generating capacity of this facility. As such, however, it will provide in the first years whitewater releases on every weekend day from the middle of May to the Middle of October. In addition, several week days each week will also see whitewater releases.

In addition to this base year release pattern, the agreement provides for a ratchet to augment this releases bank as use of the river grows. After river use tops 10,000 user days (it is at 5,000 user days per year now) the ratchet will kick in, providing 120 kilowatt hours worth of water for each new user day. When the total uses reaches 30,000 to 40,000 user days, the water releases plan will provide whitewater releases every day of the summer during daylight hours, based on the formula associated with the agreement.

Doing all this work has left AWA's treasury nearly empty. We are now barely able to pay our printing bills for the Journal. At this rate, we will be forced to stop this project, just as it began to bear such sweet fruit. If you care about having whitewater available to yourselves and your kids, please help AWA stay afloat and win a river for you. Send a donation, which is of course tax deductible, made out to the AWA River Rescue Project, c/o Claire Besalman, 6301 Hillcrest Pl., Alexandria, VA. 22312.

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# The Fluvial News

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What's Flowing in  
The Boating Community

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## YES! IT'S TRUE: THERE WILL BE A THIRD NATIONAL PADDLING FILM FESTIVAL!!

The Bluegrass Wildwater Association of Lexington, Kentucky and Menasha Ridge Press announce the event of the Winter Paddling Season (?!); the Third National Paddling Film Festival.

The film festival will be held Saturday, March 1st, 1986, with an informal advance welcoming party February 28th. Friday evening will be a chance to say hello, help set up, and watch some spectacular professional quality videos at the Festival site. Showings will be all day Saturday with awards and a party Saturday night.

The Festival will again be held at the Health Science Learning Center at the University of Kentucky in Lexington. It will be a great way to end the Winter "Blahs" and get started thinking about whitewater, the kind that runs down hill as opposed to the kind that just sits there.

To make this the best Film Festival yet, we need your help. Start preparing your entry now. Take your camera along this summer on your paddling trips. You'll have those long winter evenings to put it all together. Entry categories include: Safety/Instructional, Recreational/Scenic, Hare, Humor, Racing and any Club sponsored or related entry. Amateur Super 8, 8mm, video, and slide presentations are eligible. There is no entry fee this year so don't hesitate!

For additional information on entries or attending the festival please write to the Bluegrass Wildwater Association, P.O. Box 4231, Lexington, Kentucky 40505.

See you at the movies!!

## Africa's Best Game On River Float Trip

ANGELS CAMP, CA—Picture yourself in a boat on the river—floating through East Africa's largest and least explored wildlife park, Tanzania's Selous Game Reserve. Only 18,000 square miles of savannah, forest and desert are home to more than a million animals, including the world's largest elephant population. Sobek Expeditions, which has been running river-rafting trips to Africa for a full dozen years, has refined their offerings in Tanzania to include a special two-week float down the Rufiji River, through the heart of the Selous wilderness. The Selous River Safari has departures this winter in December, 1984, and in January 1985.

The Selous River Safari begins in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, via air flights from the U.S. via Zurich on Swissair (air fare not included). Following a welcoming dinner and hotel accommodations, passengers board the Tanz-Zam Railroad for a two-day trip to the river on the historic train which links Tanzania with Zambia. Overnights along the way are at wildlife lodges in Mikumi Park and Msolwa. The river portion of the package begins at the base of the beautiful Shiguri Falls, and continues downstream for 9 days through one of nature's most intense concentrations of wildlife.

While much of the trip is a float through quiet waters, with populations of antelope, buffalo, zebra, and elephant along the river's banks, extra excitement is added by the river's course through Steigler's Gorge. This dramatic narrowing of the river between 100-meter cliffs laced by cascading streams, produces



rapids which are easily managed by the experienced professional whitewater guides of Sobek, and the passengers themselves who choose to ride in guided paddleboats. The trip ends at the Rufigi River Camp on the shores of Lake Tagalala, with a day of motoring through the palm swamps of the lake where crocodile, storks and African fish eagles are in abundance. The return to Dar-es-Salaam takes a full day, and a farewell dinner and hotel overnight end the program.

The Selous region was the subject of Peter Matthiessen's 1981 book *Sand Rivers*, and although it has long been acknowledged as a prime game viewing area, commercial packages within the park are rare. Sobek's *Selous River Safari* can be combined with a 12-day Mt. Kilimanjaro Climb for a complete 27-day Tanzania Experience, with departures on December 6, 1984, and January 3, 1985. Selous Safaris alone begin December 15 and January 12; cost are \$2430 for the Safari, \$1480 for Mt. Kilimanjaro and \$3350 for the package. For more information, write SOBEK, Angels Camp, CA 95222.

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## China Approves Yangtze Expedition

Following two years of negotiations with the People's Republic of China, Ken Warren Outdoors, Inc., has received official approval to launch an expedition to explore the Upper Yangtze River in southwestern China.

The expedition is scheduled to leave the United States on August 14, 1985, and enter the river, the world's deepest and third largest, at its source on September 3. The Yangtze begins in the Tanggula Mountains on the Qinghai Tibetan Plateau in western China.

According to expedition leader Ken Warren, the Upper Yangtze is uncharted and remains "the last great exploration left in the world."

The expedition will include a four-man professional camera crew that will

record the 2,000 mile river adventure on 16mm sound film for international distribution.

"The film," says Warren, an NWRA member, "is intended to capture both the geography and culture of a region which has never been visited by westerners." First film rights of the expedition have been purchased by the National Geographic Society.

The 14-member team will include two Chinese athletes, part of a group of four Chinese who will train in Oregon for 16 weeks of river training. They arrived in Portland in early April.

A Chinese road support crew, which will be responsible for resupplying the river expedition during its 45-day trip from the mountains to the city of Yibin, will be led by Warren's wife, Jan, and his daughter, Cheryl.

In addition to the Yangtze expedition, Warren's agreement with the government-run China Sports Service includes the establishment of the sport of whitewater rafting in China.

Warren says official approval of the agreement came from the Chinese government on October 25, 1984, but at the request of Chinese authorities, release of the news was withheld until now, pending a simultaneous announcement in China.

The Yangtze River expedition will fly first to Hong Kong and then travel by train to Canton, China. From Canton, the team will fly to the town of Golmud, then travel by jeep and truck to Tuotuoheyuan and establish a base camp.

From there, the river team will trek through the mountains with ponies and yaks to the source of the Yangtze, and begin its first 195 mile downstream, in inflatable kayaks on September 3.

Arriving back at its base camp, the river expedition will switch from kayaks to 18-foot inflatable rafts before continuing its historic journey. Some 1,800 miles later, the expedition will end at Yibin, where the river becomes navigable by motorized craft.

From its source to Yibin, the Yangtze drops from an altitude of 18,500 to 797 feet. Warren says his river team expects to cover a minimum of 50 miles a day.

More than 120 American companies

have sponsored the expedition with donations of outdoor equipment, clothing, food, camera gear and medical supplies.

The Chinese athletes received their initial training in the sport of whitewater rafting with short trips on the Upper Clackamas and Deschutes Rivers. Their first extended major trip will be on the remote Owyhee River. Arcturus Film Company of New York, producers of the Yangtze River project, will film the Owyhee trip. The trip will also be covered by USA Today.

The expedition still needs financial help and we are asking you to be a part of this historical event by sending your contribution to the 1985 Sino-USA Upper Yangtze Expedition.

**Editor's Note:** Sun Runner Executive Richard De Chart says the expedition has been hassled and stymied by the Chinese again, and the expedition has been postponed for a second time.

## American Rivers Conservation Council

Recently I joined some students along the popular Stanislaus River of California. This whitewater river winds through a quiet canyon in the forests and steep grassland of the Sierra. We found not beauty but destruction. Water had built up behind the New Melones Dam. The free-flowing Stanislaus—known for its magical side canyons and Indian Caves — was gone forever. We watched this unique river drown behind and unnecessary hydro-electric dam. 186 miles of the magnificent Glen Canyon of the Colorado River were destroyed by an unwise dam several years ago. But the destruction we've witnessed so far is nothing compared to what could happen to our rivers in the next few years. As a result of legislation passed several years ago, small-scale hydro-electric projects have suddenly become very lucrative. Between 1980 and 1983, over 4500 applications were filed by

private developers and utilities for hydro permits. That's 40 times the number filed in the previous 4 years. This trend could result in the destruction of every free-flowing river left in the country. The ARCC is working to change this situation.

Hydropower deserves a prominent place in the spectrum of renewable energy sources. What must be corrected is the process by which hydro applications are analyzed and granted by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Reporting neither to the Congress nor to the President, FERC usually sides with the hydroelectric industry, often giving little consideration to environmental and other harmful impacts of these projects. During the past 50 years, FERC has denied only one application on environmental grounds! Private dams and small hydropower development threaten dozens of rivers across the country: the Deschutes in Oregon, the Penobscott in Maine, the Merced in California, the Gauley in W. Virginia, and many, many others.

I am asking you to help ARCC stop the licensing of hundreds of river-destroying dams. With the aid of like-minded congressmen, ARCC is sponsoring legislation which will put a crimp in FERC's licensing powers by allowing states to help decide which of their rivers should be developed and which should be protected.

ARCC had a powerful impact when it helped save the New River in North Carolina, the Chattooga, the Rio Grande, the Tuolumne, and dozens of other streams. Knowing the legislative and administrative process, ARCC pushes hard, using the national Wild and Scenic Rivers Act as its principal tool, works constantly behind the scenes to have protection extended to new rivers, and assists local conservation efforts. In 1984 ARCC played a key role in the designation of 5 new wild and scenic rivers and 3 new "study" rivers; assisted the State of Connecticut in instituting a new river commission law; and worked closely with citizen groups in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Oregon, California, and New Hampshire to mobilize support for river conserva-

tion. Stewart Udall, Secretary of Interior under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson says, "The American Rivers Conservation Council has been the major, effective voice for preserving America's rivers. ARCC has worked for a sound and equitable national policy for the use of our water resources."

With your help, ARCC can fight back. Your tax deductible contribution will be well spent. If you send \$20.00 or more, you will automatically be enrolled as a member with the following benefits: a quarterly newspaper, river trip schedules, discounts on river books, reduced rates on ARCC river trips, periodic Action Alert Bulletins telling how you can get involved to help save rivers. Please join to stop the ruthless destruction of our remaining, wild rivers. If you donate \$60 or more, we'll send you National Geographic's 200 page book, America's Wild and Scenic Rivers, beautifully illustrated with many full-color photographs. Contact ARCC, 322 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002 (200-547-6900). Sincerely, David R. Brower (Note: Brower, in addition to his work for ARCC, is a founder of Friends of the Earth and the League of Conservation Voters. His letters was excerpted.)

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## SQUIRT BOATING

On Sunday, March 31, Jessie Wittemore introduced the Ocoee River and twelve kayakers to a new whitewater experience, "squirting". We were attending a clinic sponsored by Go With The Flow and by Perception.

Jessie taught by paddling the river with us, stopping along the way to "hammer" squirts and to do bow pivots and other unnatural acts. As we tried and rolled, Jessie gave us pointers and told us the story of squirting.

Jessie learned to squirt three years ago on the Cheat River in West Virginia. Kayaking every day, summer and winter, out of boredom he began experimenting with radical moves. One day, after months of trial and error, he happened



to catch an upstream edge leaving an eddy, his stern sank, and Eureka, his bow squirted out of the water. This led Jessie to redesign the kayak and redefine the sport.

On Sunday, Jessie paddled a Perception Sabre and a kayak of his own design, the "Aramis Charger". His boat was long and shaped like a javelin, with perfectly flat decks, very little rocker, and so little volume that in flat water fifty percent of the deck is under water. The Perception Sabre is also a low volume boat, with a flat rear deck, but with more volume in the bow to prevent the bow from sinking while running down river. In the right hands the Sabre will perform all the moves that Jessie's squirt boat will, and being plastic, the Sabre is much more durable. The design differences make the Sabre more forgiving than Jessie's boats, although the Sabre was still challenging enough to cause several of us to swim for the first time this year.

A squirt boat can perform a number of moves that were unknown before its design. Some of these are:

"Squirt"—sinking the stern by catching the upstream seam of the kayak as the boat enters the current from an eddy. To counter the force of the current tilting the boat upstream, a reverse sweep with a paddle feathered down is made to pry the boat downstream. The sweep is

begun with the paddle extended out and the torso twisted back and carried through with a twist of the body. If you are doing the move right, after the first day you will feel like a bus ran over your stomach.

"Bow Pivot"—sinking the bow and spinning the kayak with the stern straight up in the air. This is initiated by peraling while surfing down a wave, and then taking a cross bow stroke on the upstream side and catching the upstream edge to further sink the bow. The trick is to do all this while leaning downstream to avoid rolling.

"Splatting"—climbing the upstream face of a rock in a kayak. This move is initiated with a squirt.

"Blasting"—pointing the bow upstream and surfing the face of waves. Pearling is avoid by sinking the stern with a series of reverse sweeps.

Jessie Wittemore himself reminds me of Clark Kent. Off the river he wears glasses and is quiet and mild-mannered. On the river he wears a Darth Vader helmet, is faster than a speeding bullet and can leap tall buildings in his kayak. What I like most about Jessie is his enthusiasm for the sport—you can hear him yelling "Neato Mosquito", over the rapids, his bow in the air, running class three rapids.

With all the wisdom that comes from three times in a Sabre, I pass the following along to those interested. You are a candidate for a Sabre if the following applies:

1. You're bored with the rivers you are paddling. As Jessie says, "In a squirt boat there are class five moves on a class two river.
2. You have a bomb-proof roll or you want to develop one. The clinic should have been advertised as rolling practice. I rolled more times Sunday than I did all last summer.
3. You can't stand watching somebody else do something exciting and not try it yourself.

This summer there will be two kinds of kayakers, conventional and squirt. On the positive side, it will spread out the boats on the heavily trafficked rivers; squirt boats will be playing in different spots than conventional boats. On the

other hand, it will cost some of us the price of a new boat, but that won't hurt Go With the Flow or Perception.

Jere Wood

## THE ECOLOGISTS NICHE

### Wildlife Profiles

The common loon (scientific name: *Gavia immer*) is a goose-sized, heavy, long bodied water bird. It has a thick pointed bill and, in summer, a black head and neck with a white collar, and black back with white spots. The common loon is the state bird of Minnesota. If you have visited northern Minnesota or Wisconsin, chances are you have seen and heard this handsome bird. The call of the common loon is hard to describe, but easy to recognize. It has been described as a maniacal laugh, a mournful yodel, wild howls, wails, and other such things. Use whatever adjectives you wish to describe its call, but you will probably always remember it.

Technically, the common loon is a member of the Order Gaviiformes, Family Gaviidae. Other members include the yellow-billed loon, the arctic loon, and the red-throated loon. These other loons nest in the northern tundra regions of North America. The red-throated loon migrates through Minnesota, the others do not.

Loons are specially adapted for swimming and diving. Loons have been caught in nets up to 200 feet deep. Truly expert divers. Strong legs, placed at the rear of the body, give extra leverage to the webbed feet. The position of the legs makes for powerful swimming, but inefficient walking. Loons travel on land with difficulty; they don't walk well, but rather push themselves along on their breast. Loons come ashore only to breed and nest, so walking is not too essential for them.

Loons nest as close to water as possible. The nest is often continuously wet. Adults add vegetation to the nest as incubation progresses, producing a mass of vegetation that may be two feet

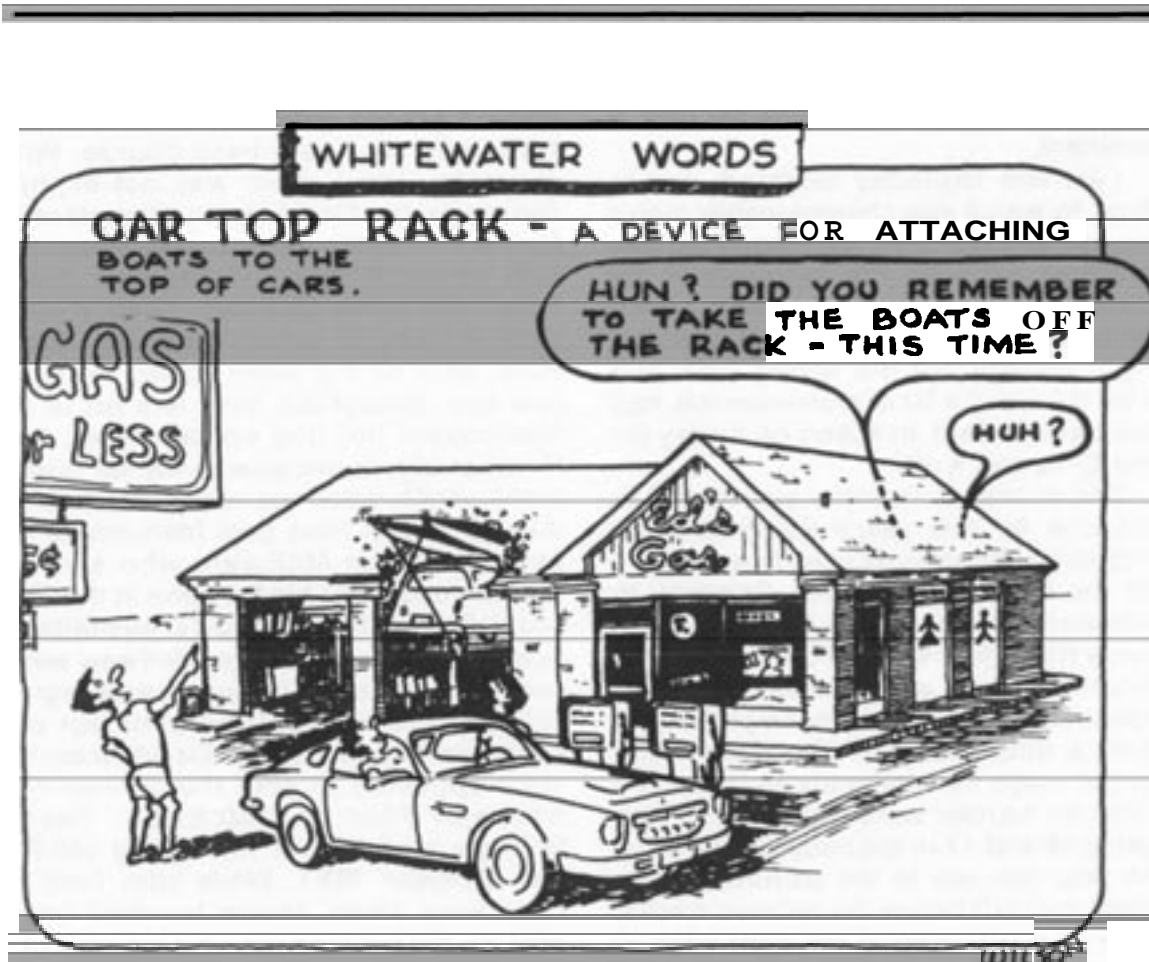
across or bigger. Two eggs are usually laid, though one egg is common as well. Rarely three eggs will be laid. Eggs are oval, slightly glossy, greenish or brownish olive, usually with brown or black spots or blotches. Unless frightened by an intruder, one bird attends the eggs at all times. Incubation is done by both parents, though mostly by the female. When disturbed, the bird will slip off the nest and dive, surfacing several yards away. It is important not to disturb birds while they are nesting. Prolonged distractions may result in the death of the eggs and the failure of the nest. Always observe nesting birds from a respectful distance, then you can enjoy watching the chicks grow all summer long. Small chicks may be hard to spot. If you have trouble, look at the back of one of the parents. Often the chick will be hitching a ride, nestled safely between the wings of mom or dad.

The principal food of loons is fish, but they will also consume shellfish, frogs, aquatic insects, and some vegetation. Loons have been known to get caught on fish hooks. Be careful of your casts when fishing near loons.

Loons are excellent swimmers and divers, but they can be run to exhaustion if disturbed too heavily or if chased. Chasing loons is just not acceptable behavior, and should be discouraged when observed.

The loon is a beautiful part of the northland. To many of us they are one of the symbols of the quiet and peace of the wilderness. If we all use care and respect when observing loons, we can help ensure that we will be able to hear the call of the loon over our waters for years to come.

John Nosek, Conservation, Minnesota Canoe Assoc.



## A FEW NOTES ON THE NATIONALS

This year the decked boat nationals were held in the Southeast, on the Nantahala, giving a rare opportunity for people in this part of the country to see the nation's best in action, including some of our world's best C-1 paddlers. The Nantahala is perhaps a little too easy to set up a really challenging course; the Ocoee offers more possibilities. However, even in summer it is difficult to get guaranteed water releases for five days in a row, and keeping rafts and non-racers off the course would be almost impossible on the Ocoee in summer. These considerations must have led to selection of the Nantahala. The Nantahala Outdoor Center staff were heavily involved in running the race, especially Sherry Spurlin, and of course there were a number of ACA folks from the Dixie Division and elsewhere who put in a lot of effort. The races were run in the morning, Monday through Friday, the second week in July, and were so well run that each day's events were over before raft and non-racing paddler traffic could become a problem.

I arrived Thursday morning, just in time to watch the championship men's kayaks and the C-2s, but I didn't get any pictures because the batteries in my camera were dead. I found some batteries in Bryson City which were the right voltage but the wrong size, and with the aid of a bit of aluminum foil, had the camera back in action on Friday for the C-1s and K-1W.

The course bore many similarities to the one for this year's Southeasterns, including the vicious upstream gate 10 by the head of the island. One way to compare courses is to look at times: Andy Kluge had won the C-1 event at the Southeasterns with a time of 173.53 seconds. At the Nationals, he placed 5th with a time of 196.2. The main thing which made the Nationals course just a little bit harder were the downstream gates 16 and 17 in the midst of the Falls. As you can see in the pictures, taken from river left below the railroad tracks, gate 16 was placed at the right edge of

the upper hole, while gate 17 was placed right over the hump at the lip of the final drop, where we recreational paddlers end up after skirting the left edge of the upper hole. To enter gate 16, paddlers were essentially using the sneak route which downriver open boat racers used to miss the worst of the lower hole. Then to get over leftward to gate 17, nationals slalom contenders had to get dangerously into the backwash of the upper hole. The upper hole just loves to grab edgy boats and keep them for a while, so even after having a week to study and practice the course, some pretty good paddlers were getting munched there. The course below the falls was fairly open and favored sheer speed, so the time spread between the championship K-1s and C-1s was perhaps a little wider than usual.

The Nationals were held shortly after the World Championships in Augsburg, West Germany, and there may have been some no-shows amongst the best U.S. paddlers who preferred to hang around Europe rather than contest the Nationals on a very easy course. For example, Jon Luginbill was not at the Nationals, but David Hearn, who placed first in C-1 in the Worlds, was there, as well as world-class C-1 paddlers Kent Ford and Jamie McEwan. Their styles were a study of subtle contrasts. Kent Ford, who off the water seems to be a low-key, thoughtful sort, is a bit of a flamboyant hot dog on the water; he threw in one or two bow-in-the-air pivot turns which were not really necessary and may even have cost fractions of a second. Jamie McEwan, who won a bronze medal in a big fat Hahn in the '72 Munich/Augsburg Olympics, was rather opposite to Ford in style; McEwan was very smooth and efficient, seemingly reluctant to risk getting bent out of shape on any maneuver. David Hearn's style appeared to split the difference between Ford and McEwan. They finished 1-2-3: Hearn 187.4, Ford 188.9, and McEwan 189.1. While both Ford's runs were clean, Hearn touched one pole on his winning run, but his time of

182.4 was still over 5 seconds faster than Ford's best time. Jed Prentice and Andy Kluge, the only other C-1 paddlers with times under 200 seconds, were 5th and 6th. Atlanta Whitewater Club officer Mike Larimer placed a creditable 11th; Mike, I have a photo of you rolling below the Falls if you want to see it. Eleven year old Adam Clauson, who was 4th at the Southeasterns in June, ran the Falls gates well and had times in the 220's, but 55 penalty points dropped him from a potential 10th or so down to 23rd, just ahead of Davey Hearn's little brother Bill. To me the most impressive paddler was Pennsylvania boat builder John Sweet, who had won the masters division of C-1 earlier in the week, actually posting a better score than the winner of K-1 masters. Sweet looks to be in his 50's, and has developed the most incredibly smooth, efficient style, wasting not one ounce of energy in humping the boat or flailing at the water. Also, he wears noseclips, so now I don't feel quite so foolish for needing to use them myself..

K-1W was real close also, with Cathy Hearn 1st with 195.5, Yuri Kusuda second with 196, and Elizabeth Hayman 3rd with 206.3. By then I was out of film; too bad, because for me the most amazing demonstration of paddling skill was watching Hearn, Ford and McEwan in the C-1 team race. A team race is timed from when the first boat leaves the start to when the third boat crosses the finish. As I understand it, there are one or two particular gates on the course which the three boats must negotiate within a 15 second interval. Otherwise, they can be as far apart as they like. McEwan, Ford and Hearn ran in such tight formation that they could have been connected bow to stern with 6 foot bungee cords without being seriously inconvenienced. They posted a time of 204.8 with 10 penalty points. The K-1 team event was won by Brown, Kipnis and U'Ren in 192.2 seconds with 10 penalty points; they must have been flying in close formation as well.

Hearn and Grabow won the C-2 event, in 213.9 seconds with 5 penalty points, ahead of Haller/Kluge and the Shipleys. The biggest entry was of course in K-1,

with 49 racers. The medals went to Doughty, Gordon and U'ren, with clean runs of 169.6, 172.7 and 173.2. Atlanta luminary Steve Thomas posted a creditable clean run of 195.9 to take 7th. Those kayaks are fast, but that windmill action still looks like dog paddling to me. I'd rather photograph C-1s racing anytime.

Sorry, you wildwater freaks; I was unable to get a copy of the downriver results. The week ended Friday afternoon with the awards ceremonies and the "Citizen's Race," an event sponsored by Perception to give ordinary paddlers a chance to race. A special course was set up from the NOC raft lading on river left, under the bridge, and finishing opposite the pavilion. There were no reverse gates, and touching poles did not matter. The only object was to negotiate all the gates in order as fast as possible. Just to keep us citizens humble, each boat class began with one of the World class racers posting a fast time for comparison. But there were some real ringers amongst the citizens; in C-2, for example, the winning time was a smidge faster than that set by Ford and his partner in the pace boat. In C-1 I finished at the back of the pack, several places behind GCA members Bettina George and Alan Simons. But it was fun.

—Gary DeBacher

## HELP!

AWA is involved in 5 FERC Proceedings to save the Moose and Black Rivers. Legal work and not working costs \$! Help us help you by sending a check to:

### **AWA Save Rivers Project**

c/o AWA Treasurer  
6301 Hillcrest Place  
Alexandria, VA 22312.

Remember AWA donations are tax deductible.



Boxcar Rapids on the Deschutes

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# GETTING ON AMERICA'S RIVERS PART II

by *Al Ainsworth*

STATE	RIVER	PERMITTED	SEASON
Idaho	Lochas  U.S. Forest Service Lochsa Ranger District Clearwater National Forest Kooskia, Idaho 83539 208-926-4275	No	mid-May to July
Idaho	Payette  BLM Boise District 3948 Devel. Ave. Boise, Idaho 83705 208-334-1582	No	late May to mid June
Idaho	Salmon, Lower  Rt. 3, Box 181 Cottonwood, Idaho 83522 208-962-3245	No	Summer
Idaho	Salmon, Main  U.S. Forest Service North Folk Ranger District Salmon National Forest North, Idaho 83466 208-865-2383	Yes, Apply Dec. 1 to Jan. 31	June 20 to Sept. 7
Idaho	Salmon, Middle Fork  U.S. Forest Service Middle Fork Ranger District Challis National Forest Challis, Idaho 83226 208-879-4321	Yes, Apply Dec. 1 to Jan. 31	June 1 to Sept. 3



Idaho	Salmon, South Fork U.S. Forest Service Krassel Ranger District Payette National Forest McCall, Idaho 83638 208-634-2255	No	Summer
Idaho	Selway	Yes, Apply Dec. 1 to January 31	May 15 to Aug. 1
	U.S. Forest Service West Fork Ranger District Bitterroot National Forest Darby, Montana 59829 406-821-3269		
Montana	Flathead	No	Spring, Summer, Fall
	U.S. Forest Service Hungry Horse Ranger Station Flathead National Forest Hungry Horse. Montana 59919 406-387-5243		
Montana	Missouri, Upper	Yes, Dec. 1 to Jan. 31	Mid-May to Mid- Sept.
	River Manager BLM Airport Road Lewiston. Montana 59457 406-538-7461		
New Mexico	San Francisco	No	Spring
	U.S. Forest Service Glenwood Ranger District Gila National Forest P.O. Box 8 Glenwood. N.M. 88039 505-539-2481		
New Mexico	Rio Grande, Upper	Yes, Apply Dec. 1 to Jan. 31	May 1 to August 31
	BLM Taos Resource Area P.O. Box 1045 Taos, NM 87571 505-758-8851		
Oregon	Deschutes	No, user fee	All Year
	District Manger BLM P.O. Box 550 Prineville. Oregon 97754 503-447-4115		
Oregon	Grande Ronde	No	Spring, early Summer
	U.S. Forest Service Walla-Walla Ranger District Umatilla National Forest 1415 West Rose Avenue Walla-Walla, Washington 99362 509-525-5500 ext. 475		
Oregon	Snake, Hells Canyon	Yes, Call Jan. 10 or later	May 15 to Sept. 15
	U.S. Forest Service Hells Canyon NRA Wallowa/Whitman National Forest 3620-B Snake River Avenue Lewiston, Idaho 83501 208-743-3648		
Texas	Rio Grande, Big Bend	Backcountry use permit	November through March
	Superintendent Big Bed National Park Texas79834 915-477-2251		
Utah	Colorado, Cataract Canyon	Yes, Apply Dec. 15	Spring, Summer, Fall

Superintendent  
Canyonlands National Park  
446 south Main  
Moab, Utah 84532  
801-259-7164

Utah	Colorado, Westwater Canyon	Yes, <del>apply</del> at least two months prior	All Year
	<p>BLM Grand Res. Area P.O. Box M Moab, Utah 84532 801-259-6111 ext 200</p>		
Utah	Green, Desolation Canyon	Yes, <del>Apply</del> Jan. 1 to March 1	All Year
	<p>BLM Area Manager P.O. Drawer AB Price, Utah 85401 801-637-4584</p>		
Utah	Green, Labyrinth Canyon	No	Spring, Summer, Fall
	<p>BLM Area Manager San Rafael Resource Area P.O. Drawer AB Price, Utah 84501 801-637-4584</p>		
Utah	San Juan	Yes, <del>apply</del> all year	Spring, early Summer
	<p>BLM San Juan Resource Area P.O. Box 7 Monticello, Utah 84535 801-587-2201</p>		
Washington	Methow	No	Spring, early Summer
	<p>Okanogan National Forest 1240 S. 2nd Okanogan, Washington 98840 509-422-2704</p>		
Washington	Wenatchee	NO	<del>May</del> through July
	<p>U.S. Forest Service Leavenworth Ranger District Wenatchee National Forest 600 Sherbourne Leavenworth Washington 98826 509-782-1413</p>		
Wyoming	Powder, Middle Fork	No	Spring, early Summer
	<p>BLM P.O. Box 670 Buffalo, Wyoming 82834 307-684-5586</p>		
Wyoming	Shoshoe, North Fork	No	Summer
	<p>U.S. Forest Service Wapiti Ranger District Shoshone National Forest P.O. Box 2140 Cody, Wyoming 82414 307-587-3291</p>		
Wyoming	Sweetwater	No	Spring, early Summer
	<p>BLM 1300 3rd St. P.O. Box 670 Rawlins, Wyoming 82301 307-324-7171</p>		



Charlie Walbridge paddling "Big Nasty" on the Cheat River, W.V.A.

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## AWA Interview with Charlie Walbridge

by Dave *McCourtney*

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### **What do you think about the river classification controversies?**

My feeling is that the problem with river classification in this country is not the system, but the interpretation of it. People are underrating rivers in areas with a lot of difficult whitewater, and overrating it in places with only milder runs. The refusal of the Western contingent to utilize the Grade VI classification has led to some nasty grade V's and considerable downward pressure on the ratings. The Eastern habit of calling hard rapids with obvious penalties class VI adds to the confusion.

We don't need new systems, as this will cause added problems of interpretation between the systems. We need consistency. We need to have people start calling the far out Western runs Class VI. Regardless of how many run it, the danger remains. I hope eventually to bring together a national conference on river classification, and am currently looking for funding.

### **What got you started in paddling?**

My first whitewater experience was in 1962 at summer camp. I shot the "notorious" Walkers Falls on the Saco with Dan Guthridge, a kid half my size who was the best paddler in camp. Scared me half to death! A few years later I dragged a group down to Walkers Falls in Kayaks assuring them it would have some good playing. I was surprised to find a class I drop with none of the huge boulders and tight passages I remembered.

During my teen years I was a serious hiker and camp counsellor in the White Mountains. I thought that canoeing was a poor substitute for backpacking, as most of what we did was flatwater which offered little challenge. This changed when at College, when I roomed with Marty Pickands, an avid paddler with considerable experience on Maine rivers. The hiking in central Pa. is pretty crummy, and once spring Football practice was over it was easy for him to lure me out to Penns Creek, an unusually attractive Class II about an hour away. Despite Marty's "experience", we were really pretty ignorant. Our flotilla included a cheap K-Mart raft, a two-man Klepper folding Kayak, and a 20 foot Grumman "freighter" canoe. Since I had canoed before and Marty wanted to take the kayak, I got the stern of the boat with a complete novice. We had no PFDs or anything like that, but aside from an incident where one of our guys flipped the foldboat into a downed tree and lost his camera, there were no mishaps. Although I was pretty scared a lot of the time, I loved the scenery and being on the water. I guess you can say I was hooked.

After a season of running a number of the Class II rivers in Central Pa., we happened to go up to the Loyalsock at World's End State Park during the race weekend. We had just finished running this stretch of river in open boats, which was the hardest thing we'd done to date. The kayaks sure looked exciting, and I was looking for way to run more difficult water. I had bought one of the Whitewater Programs at the race. I wrote a letter to the Penn State Outing Club, and John Sweet invited us up to their pool sessions. I was by now the proud owner of a Klepper "Trabant" model kayak, and myself and several friends were teaching ourselves to roll from John Urban's Whitewater Handbook. When we got up to State College, I met Tom Irwin, Rick Rigg, and Norman Holcombe, who along with Sweet were probably the best C-Boaters in the country at the time. They informed me that I was really "too big" for kayak, and that it was a "ladies' boat" anyway. I was uncomfortable in the sitting position, so I made the switch. Because of my canoeing experience, I was immediately more comfortable and knew I had found "the right boat" for me.

After buying a "modified Czech" C-1 from John Berry, I began pestering the Penn State people to show me their techniques. As racing seemed the fastest way to develop skills and meet people, I started showing up around the circuit. Our Outing Club group began exploring rivers farther afield. I well remember my first exposure to the Yough with Penn State. We were the only ones not in wildwater boats, as they were training for a race a few weeks hence. We took two runs that day, grabbing a bite to eat in the car during the shuttle. The next day we ran the Casselman and the Laurel Hill creeks at high flows. It was quite a weekend, and I wanted more.

### **How did you start Wildwater Designs?**

After college I took a teaching job in Washington. It wasn't too wonderful—working with seventh graders, but it was a great town to paddle out of. I got exposed to the Gauley, Tygart, Blackwater, and Upper Yough that year. The "Upper" was quite an experience; I ran at 3' with Dave Demaree on a cold spring day and freaked out. "Charlie's Choice" marks the spot where I called it quits. I got back some weeks later and made the run at a saner level.

During this time it was a real hassle to get equipment for whitewater paddling. Most gear was home-made, and most clubs had an informal network of materials sources which took a lot of time to "scope out". Then you had to chase all over town to get the materials, and find someone to teach you how to use them. I was sure that



**C-1 paddler Charlie Watbridge at Swimmer's Rapid, Yough R.**

if someone could pull together all the materials and instruction needed to make this stuff, they could make a decent living and get more time off to paddle. I spent a lot of time designing the various kits which formed the bulk of my business during the early 70's. Of course, the interest in those kits has really died down; we're selling fewer HiFloat and Sprayskirt Kits than we used to despite a mailing list five or six times the size of the one I had eight years ago.

The HiFloat PFD came about from a desire to add more flotation to a paddler's life jacket without effecting mobility. This was, of course, before Coast Guard approval extended to what are now called "type III" PFD's. I gradually continued to add foam until I got close to the 30 pounds of buoyancy recommended by the late Walt Blackadar in his landmark AWA Journal article on "big water" boating. I tested my theory on the Gauley; I was battling about .300 in Pillow Rock Rapid, which was always an exciting swim! For big people especially, extra buoyancy makes quite a difference when swimming big rapids.

#### **What's it like running an outfitting business?**

Whitewater outfitting is pretty much like any other retail or wholesale business. You have your customers; you watch your stock. We do wholesaling on the Rescue Bag and Bonnie Hot Pogie so we have accounts receivable as well as payables. The margins in this business are not as high as other retailing endeavors, so you really have to pinch pennies. But I enjoy my customers and I have good people working for me. We don't play corporate games here; we just do the best job we can. It's very satisfying, particularly giving newcomers the information they need to get involved with the sport.

One thing which is frustrating to anyone trying to make a living in the whitewater business is the "backyard operator". They claim that outfitters like myself are "ripping off" the paddling public, and sell goods cheap, often below their real cost. These people use their business losses to shelter income, driving full-service stores

(with their full service overheads) out of the market. Then they start to realize the amount of work that goes into running a business. Once their shop folds, the damage is done.

Regular outdoor shops won't carry the goods paddlers need, or offer the intelligent advice they require. I can tell you that when I started in the business I underpriced my goods like any other novice businessman. But once I saw how much work and commitment was involved, I adopted the industry standards. It hurts me to lose business to a non-profit amateur, but I'll be around long after they get tired of it!

### **Why did you begin working for the American Canoe Association?**

At the Unadilla Slalom, a class II race in upstate New York, I saw an accident in which the victim died from a foot entrapment. The safety honchos who were present at the time saw it as a "freak accident" and didn't seem to want to investigate or publicize this tragedy. I wanted to know what was happening; it was the first death that I had heard of involving an experienced paddler wearing all the appropriate safety gear. Fatal accidents are real attention grabbers; I felt that the sport could learn a good deal from publicizing these incidents and would lose a lot from shoving them under a rug. The accident was published in the AWA Journal, describing foot entrapment in whitewater for the first time. It turned out that there were a number of foot entrapments that year. I feel that publication of these fatalities resulted in the cautions now given to beginners about standing up in rapids.

At this time I was working on bring the Rescue Bag out of the Navy archives into the paddling mainstream, so I wrote a number of safety articles for CANOE magazine. Pete Sonderegger was a great editor and was much more interested than the current publishers in putting this information before the public. So when Chuck Tummonds was looking for a Safety Chairman for ACA, he asked me. He also helped me develop a philosophy which would allow me to stand up for paddling safety without restricting the freedom of experienced boaters to push the limits of the



Charlie racing his C-1 on the Savage River.

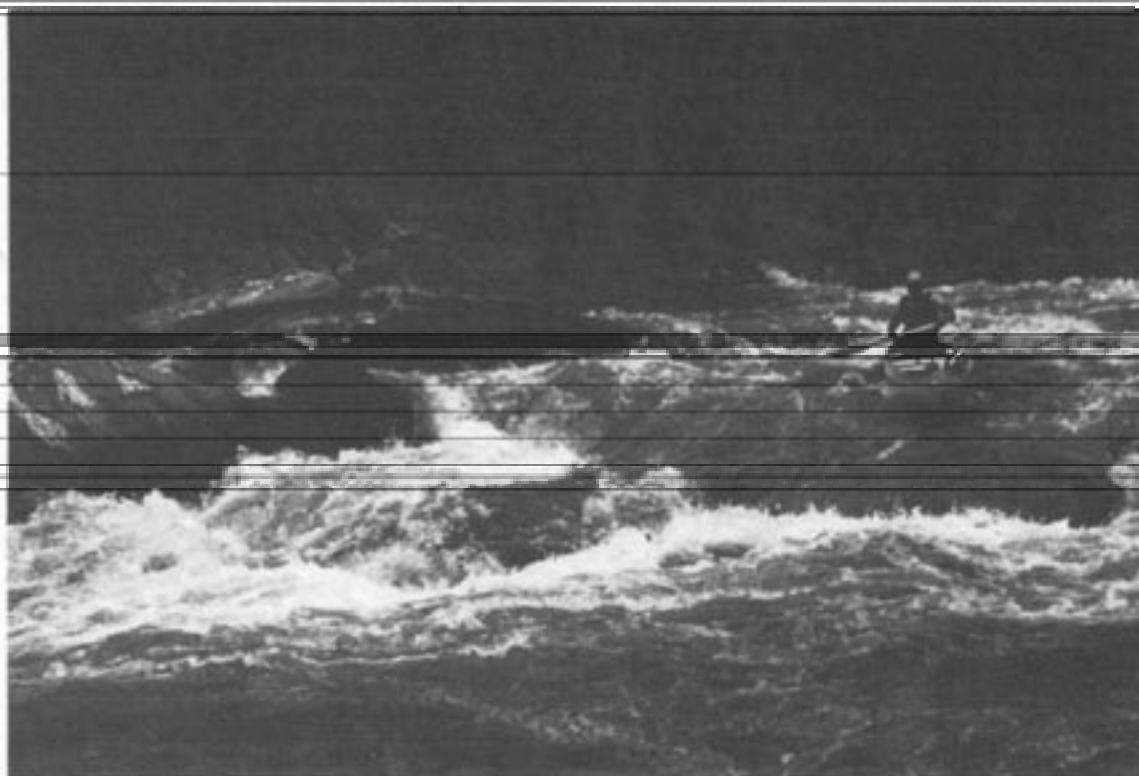
sport. Along with O.K. Goodwin, we got behind the concept of "Education, not Regulation" line which is now widely accepted by government agencies throughout the country. It may seem pretty obvious now, but in the liberal, regulation happy 70's it was a pretty radical idea. I was fortunate to have the help of these experienced people when I started; left to my own devices I certainly would have made more mistakes.

#### **What do you try to do when investigating an accident?**

To begin with, rely on other people to send information to me. But when I hear of a fatality involving an experienced paddler, I try to find out as much information as I can. Eventually I talk with a survivor. Having lost a friend on the river some years ago, I know about the feelings of guilt and fear that such an event leaves behind. I try to get the facts straight, normally sending a draft of the report to any eyewitness. I'm not into assessing blame; just putting the facts before the paddling community in a non-judgemental way. If there are problems with litigation, I generally withhold publication unless the affected parties give permission. I am not a forensic investigator, and would hate to have my errors appear to haunt me in court.

#### **What differences do you see between the Eastern and Western boating communities?**

Whitewater paddling has been going on in the East on an organized level since the early 1950's. We have the benefit of a number of outstanding people like Dick Bridge, Randy Carter, and Ray Eaton who made initial contacts with government agencies and emphasized working within the system in a politically sophisticated way. Western paddlers have been slow to organize effectively, and shrill, confrontational "cowboys" grab headlines but not much else. I have seen in the last few years considerable evidence that this approach is changing, and that Western paddlers are learning how to make the system work for them. Its a welcome change for someone who enjoys Western rivers as much as I do.



Canoeing on "Jawbone"

A major problem in the West has been the quota system on rivers, which has led to battles between outfitters and paddlers. In the East, we have been fortunate in sharing the rivers with a group of outfitters who came up from our ranks. We accept high levels of use as the price of free access, and thus have no need to harass our professional colleagues. They, in turn, have so far been respectful of our needs. We both need the other's numbers, energy, and political or economic clout to save our remaining free flowing rivers. There is no doubt in my mind that the recent fights on the Gauley and Ocoee would have been lost without our mutual cooperation and support. We may joke about "raft pollution" and "an infestation of river turkeys", but without the help of the members of the Eastern Professional River Outfitters there would be a lot more trouble in River City.

With increasing population growth in the West, the delightful low use levels of today will be hard to maintain in the coming years. The price of uncrowded rivers is permits, bureaucracy, and hostility with our most important allies in the preservation of rivers; the commercial outfitter. While I enjoy an empty river as much as anyone, I cannot justify it if it means that the river will lack the political clout it needs for survival. And I feel that the effect of the permit system is to set river people quarreling among ourselves rather than directing our energies at the source of the problem: unrealistically low quotas enforced by a government bureaucracy.

Not everyone would agree with my ideas of hardening campsites and staggering launches on popular "wilderness" runs to accommodate the number we need to increase our political muscle. But with rare exceptions, (notably the unfair ratios currently being enforced in the Grand Canyon) the problem is the regulation and not the outfitter. Paddlers must either accept bureaucratic oversight as a way to keep use artificially low on popular runs or support efforts to raise use levels. Threatening an outfitter's business operations creates ill-feeling and divisiveness which a small sport like ours cannot afford.

### **How has whitewater sport changed?**

A lot of things have improved since I started boating in the late 60's. There are a lot more people on the rivers. Equipment is better and more readily available. Skills have improved substantially until rivers once considered on the "cutting edge" are now routinely run. As Upper Yough trip once required considerable planning to get a strong party together, now you can show up on almost any weekday and find a number of strong paddlers to run with. It's a delight to have so many potential paddling companions around; I typically drive out to the river of my choice and paddle with whoever is there. It's so much easier to get quality gear and good instruction that a new paddler can learn more in a year than we did in three! And of course there's always something new and interesting going on. The growth in skills by the Western paddlers and the opening up of new runs is an exciting development, as is the "squirting" acrobatics now being popularized in the East. I can't do a lot of this stuff, but I love to watch and hear about it.

What I do miss is the sense that most of us had years ago of being forerunners, of opening up a developing sport. There was intense camaraderie and interest in whitewater which is not always shared by newcomers, and it was very exciting intellectually to be exposed to the sport's pioneers. We were pretty focused back then; less partying and more river running. Now that phase of the sport's growth is over, and we have to deal with people who didn't learn human interactive skills along with paddling skills, and who have boated class IV water without learning respect for the river. It will never be quite the same. Also, our increased numbers have caused problems in some areas which have to be solved. This is a challenge, but also a nuisance to volunteers who would rather be out paddling.

### **What role should AWA take in the 1980's?**

The AWA is being hurt by small size and growing lack of influence in the sport. It's the same problems that the ACA has, accentuated by a small membership and far-



flung organizational structure. As a small volunteer organization, it lacks professional staff and the numbers needed to have the influence which it deserves. People like Pete Skinner spend too much time on office functions and mechanics, less expanding the organization. In addition, all of the national organizations are hurting because of moves away from the club structure. Where once this structure was the only way to meet other paddlers, many now boat in small groups with no affiliation at all. As a result, there is no one way to communicate with boaters in the way that the JOURNAL did in the 60's.

It seems crazy to me that we have a number of small "paddling organizations" with little clout all maintaining their little offices staffed with volunteers who waste precious energies on redundant membership functions which steal time and energy away from the real task of increasing participation in organized paddling. I was disappointed when AWA chose to continue using their far-flung volunteers to do their day-to-day business rather than shrink functions with the ACA the way ARCC has done. We need to develop the sophistication of the Sierra Club and NRA to keep our precious river resources open, and this means a paid staff with the time to make and maintain lobbying and public relations contacts. In today's world volunteers with families and 9-5 jobs, while important, cannot do much more than hold the line. We must grow, and to do this we need to stand together, pool our resources, and work with intelligence and vigor. The present structure, held together by the heroic efforts of a few volunteers, will not make it.

#### **What are your goals for the future?**

Business-wise, I hope to find the resources to open a retail store. I want to continue the River Safety Symposiums, which expose government agencies to basic whitewater skills and give them contacts within organized paddling. The lines of communication between paddlers and government must be cultivated before they are needed. When a confrontation emerges, it is easier to sort out problems if you've worked with the key people in your paddling area over the years. There will be another Accident Report Book from the River Safety Task Force coming out this spring. I hope eventually to spend more time on conservation and management issues, which I have become involved in through my safety work.

#### **Should rivers have a safety patrol, like the National Ski Patrol?**

Some heavily used rivers can benefit from a "courtesy patrol" which educates the newcomers and performs rescues. The rescue function has a lot of sex appeal, but the education function is the one which will make a difference in the long run. Sometimes this is done by a local club, other times by a state agency or other management group with law enforcement powers. Because river access is essentially free, I can't see the development of the system of "perks" which makes the National Ski Patrol idea work.

#### **What is your idea of an "ultimate fantasy river trip"?**

There's so much to see in the U.S. and Canada that I can't get really excited about international travel. The super hair-ball runs now being done are a bit too intense for my tastes! I really like what I've seen of California rivers, and I hope to find more time to get back there and explore them at sane water levels with groups who don't mind waiting for me to lug my old C-1 around a lot of "runnable" drops. The Middle Fork of the Feather was a great "Fantasy" run, even though I was pretty scared most of the time.

#### **How would you like to change the "Macho Mentality" of river runners?**

In some ways the "macho mentality" is already changing. Women are becoming more confident and aggressive on the water, and are breaking the stereotype of the "balls and muscles" boaters. As more and more people become knowledgeable, they will realize that intelligence and skill will always triumph over balls and muscle. Of course there are always going to be "Macho types" running rivers. The sport is



Photo by Joe Cole

Raft guiding for N.O.C. 7' Foot Falls, Walbridge in rear.

becoming heterogenous and reflective of many of society's problems. However, I find that women are more readily accepted in paddling than in other male dominated sports, which suits me perfectly.

The biggest danger, particularly for older paddlers, is to let your "macho image" determine what rivers or rapids to run. Most people find a "tipping point" at which the sport ceases to be fun; for me that is somewhere at the low end of Class V, but if it's at the low end of Class IV or even Class II that's perfectly O.K. Being on the water and feeling good about it is what really matters. The "image" isn't worth taking silly risks; however, I'd wager that very few of us can truly claim that we have never been seduced by such concerns. I've gotten so that my ego doesn't control my actions, and it has led to a mellower, more enjoyable approach to river running.

**What do you see as the greatest safety problem in whitewater sport?**

First off, I'd like to say that I feel that river running at levels of grade IV and below is no more dangerous than downhill skiing for the skilled user. Most of my time as ACA Safety Chairman is taken up educating government officials to the idea that trained paddlers pose little safety problem, and to devise ways of educating the typical victim of whitewater accidents, the inexperienced member of the General Public.

I have two concerns. The first is with the fast learner. Paddlers of my "generation" spent a lot of time in easy whitewater paddling open canoes without flotation. We had plenty of time to develop our river sense, and lots of experience with simple rescues. Now you have people getting into some pretty stout stuff without very much time on the water. The same thing happened in mountaineering, with many of the "rock jocks" lacking much experience in the broader skills of mountaineering. We have to get across the idea that there is more to paddling than raw skill.

An associated problem is that of the young paddler "on the make". I'm glad that when I was young and foolish you could make a name for yourself on Class IV water! Some of the stuff being run now is truly nasty, and with this exposure comes a real penalty. When I was pushing the limits we often thought we were going to die if we made a mistake, but it never happened because the river were more forgiving than we realized. This generation will not be so lucky! With the number of people driven to run the hard V's and VI's, there will be fatalities if the people let their ego and not their mind make the decision what they can and cannot be run. Basic to my philosophy is the concept that experts must be permitted to make their own decisions as to the feasibility of a rapid or run. But as the risks escalate and governments sense of humor about such feats changes, I can only say "Lets be careful out there."

**Editor's Note:** Charlie Walbridge helped develop the AWA safety code. He has been an outstanding member of AWA.

## *Book Reviews*

ANGELS CAMP, CA—The magic and mysteries of the world's rivers have long exercised a dramatic attraction over the thoughts and deeds of humanity. David Livingstone, Mungo Park, Lewis and Clark and many others have made river exploration synonymous with discovery over the past centuries. Yet since the advent of inflatable rafts, running the world's rivers has become ever more popular, and possible; and the adventures of Sobek Expeditions on previously unrun rivers on five continents

rank with the intrepid journeys of the past. Now the prestigious Sierra Club Books has announced publication of RIVERGODS: Exploring the World's Great Wild Rivers, written by Richard Bangs and Christian Kallen of the California-based Sobek Expeditions.

Whitewater adventure, exploration history, exotic landscapes, unusual wildlife and hidden cultures all come alive in the pages of this large-format, full-color book. Among its ten chapters are accounts of first-ever Sobek explor-

EXPLORING THE WORLD'S GREAT WILD RIVERS

# Rivergods



ations down the Tatshenshini in Alaska, the Omo in Ethiopia, the Watut in Papua New Guinea, the Euphrates and Conruh in Turkey, the Indus in Pakistan, and the Bio-Bio in Chile, as well as adventures on the Zambezi in Zambia, the Apurimac in Peru, the Colorado through the Grand Canyon and the country's newest Wild and Scenic river, the Tuolumne in the California Sierra. An introduction and appendix discuss the larger issues of river conservation and other wild rivers around the world, from the Yangtze in China to the New in West Virginia.

Richard Bangs, 35, is the founder and president of Sobek Expeditions. His adventures have taken him from the depths of the Grand Canyon to the Himalayan gorges of India and Pakistan, including over 30 "first descents" down wild rivers. He is the author of over 100 published travel articles, and many of his photographs are among the 205 which illustrate RIVERGODS. Co-author Christian Kallen, also 35, is the editor of Sobek's highly acclaimed *The Adventure Book*, and a founding editor of *Adventure Travel* magazine. Both authors continue to run rivers, and reside in Angels Camp, California, close to the rivers of the Sierra.

With over 200 color photographs, in

an attractive display-format presentation, Sierra Club Books' new *RIVERGODS* will be available in finer bookstores in October, 1985, for \$37.50/hardcover. As popular author Tom Robbins has said of RIVERGODS: "The king of all the rivergods has sent his two daughters, Beauty and Adventure, to dance between the covers of this book."

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## ABOUT RICHARD BANGS AND CHRISTIAN KALLEN AUTHORS OF RIVERGODS

Mild of manner and erudite of speech, RICHARD BANGS does not look like a wild-eyed adventurer who has rafted whitewater torrents all over the world; nor does he look like a brash businessman who has merged fantasy and reality to pioneer the burgeoning adventure-travel industry. Yet, since Bangs and a motley crew of rafting enthusiasts made a first descent of the Omo River in Ethiopia in 1973, he has built Sobek Expeditions into a multi-million-dollar outfitter of adventure trips, and the only company anywhere specializing in world wide river trips.

"It all began, for me, in high school at a meeting of the Canoe Cruisers Association," Bangs today. "I (had) joined up at the urging of my old Scout leader and was immediately hooked." A film of the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon cast its further spell, and Bangs single-mindedly determined to join the exalted ranks of Grand Canyon boatmen. During summers off from earning a sociology degree at Northwestern University, Bangs did just that, guiding passengers down the classic rapids of the Colorado River for Hatch River Expeditions.

Still not satisfied that he had experienced the ultimate in whitewater adventure, Bangs and a childhood friend impetuously decided to tackle a river that had never been run; the Omo, in Ethiopia. For sponsors, they enticed the venerable Smithsonian Institution's Department of Entomology, Haile Selassie University, a magazine, a raft company, and a life-jacket manufacturer. The trip was the

fulfillment of everything Bangs had dreamed: fantastic wildlife, thrilling whitewater, exotic native peoples, and incomparable scenery. Sobek Expeditions — named for the ancient Egyptian crocodile god — was born, and for four years the Omo River was the only trip in their catalog.

Today Sobek guides upwards of 30,000 paying passengers down the rivers in Africa, Asia, South and Central America, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, the Middle East, and North America. Among the alluring river trips offered by Sobek are nearly 30 on rivers pioneered by Bangs, including the Zambezi, the Rio Bio-Bio in Chile, the Watut in Papua New Guinea, the Euphrates and Soruh in Turkey, and the Indus in Pakistan. Richard Bangs has been called the pioneer of adventure travel, and Sobek is riding the crest of this exploding segment of the travel industry.

Bangs led a 1982 first raft descent of the Zambezi River below Victoria Falls, which was filmed by ABC-TV for "American Sportsman." A 1983 expedition on the Waghi River in Papua New Guinea was filmed by the BBC for its "River Journey's" series, to be aired for the first time on American public television in fall of 1985. Article by and about Bangs have run in **Sports Illustrated, Travel and Leisure, Geo, Newsweek, Outside, and The New York Times**, among dozens of other publications. Future plans include a first descent of the Upper Ganges with Sir Edmund and Peter Hillary in 1986, explorations in Madagascar, and a first descent of the Yangtze in China, as well as numerous film projects.

When not traveling, Bangs lives in Angels Camp, California, near the classic whitewater rivers of the Sierra Nev., where Sobek is headquartered.

A native of Pasadena, California, CHRISTIAN KALLEN began river-rafting in the mid-1970's. "When I went to California to raft the Stanislaus in 1977... I was sure I was at the very farthest reaches of river excitement," he writes. After working for three years as a river guide in Washington State, Kallen landed work with the Sobek Expeditions, where he is now publications director and editor of Sobek's **Adventure**

**Book** series, the annual catalog of adventure travel opportunities available world-wide. Kallen was also a founding editor of **Adventure Travel Magazine**, and author of **The Northwest Adventure Guide**.

Kallen is a graduate of the University of California at Santa Cruz, with a degree in Anthropology. He lives in Angels Camp with his wife and new son.

## AGAINST STRAIGHT LINES

by Robert Perkins

Atlantic-Little-Brown, Boston ©1983

5½x8½", hardbound, 190 pages, \$15.95

Alone in Labrador: five weeks of portaging, paddling, painting and introspection. The river in question is the Korok in the far north of Labrador. And although the trip is down the river, and some details of the river are given, the book is really not about the river at all. During the course of the rivertrip author Perkins really journeys inside himself, revealing aspects of his personality that most people would never disclose. Both of these journeys have moments of beauty and brutality.

Perkins is an experienced wilderness paddler and has published short accounts of some previous trips in nationally known magazines. But he is certainly not your everyday canoeist: his organization of the trip, his soloing, and the pink flamingo he planted outside the tent each night all reinforces this inevitable conclusion. To complete an expedition of this difficulty with a talented crew would be an achievement, and is even more one because he accomplished it alone. In places Perkins has painted vivid word-pictures of the Labrador terrain and the river itself. The harshness of the far north comes through but not the physical discomfort associated with travel there, and I feel this to be a strength of this book. Though the writing style is unlikely to win many commendations from college English departments, it is nonetheless a very readable volume and one which I found strangely compelling and fascinating. Put it on your list of books to read during the coming winter. I think you'll like it.

by Tom McCloud

# FIVE DAYS ON THE DOLORES: RAFTING THE UPPER CANYONS

by Martha Tabor



The beautiful canyons of the Dolores River

It's 9pm on Friday, May 20, 1983, the day before my first raft trip ever. And it's likely to be the last year that this river, Colorado's Dolores, will be runnable as a free-flowing river. Using headlights from his school bus, Tom Klema, our outfitter, his two boatmen, one of their wives, and I are all blowing up three large rubber rafts. We're to leave tomorrow morning and have come today to the most upriver Dolores put-in, near Cahone, in southwestern Colorado.

On May 20 the Dolores is a free-flowing 230-mile river running from the San Juan Mountains to its confluence with the Colorado River in Utah. This river is the fourth largest tributary of the Colorado.

Eight miles upstream is the partially-constructed McPhee Dam.

Before the Bureau of Reclamation began building the dam, the river was runnable another 19 miles upriver from where we prepare for our trip. But with the help of good weather in the fall of 1983, the contractor completed the dam. The Bureau of Reclamation will begin filling the reservoir behind it in the spring of 1984. Much work remains to be done on other parts of the water delivery system of which McPhee Dam is only one part.

But on May 20 all of this is still to come. I'm stunned by the size of our boats and the amount of gear. Lots of other outfitters are here, too, on this Friday night—all ready to put on the river the next morning. I have visions of us gunnel to gunnel tomorrow, floating down the river as one big beer drinking party. (I needn't have worried—the next day

we all spread out on the river in short order. There's plenty of river for everybody.)

Our first morning is clear and sunny. Ten of us, four women and six men, head down river **together**—two passengers and one boatman on each of the three rafts. One kayaker is also along. Everyone but myself is from either Cortez or Durango, Colorado, where Tom bases his river-running business. We will all run the Dolores Canyon for the first two days; then just four of us will continue on down through Slick Rock Canyon. In all, we will spend five days on a 120-mile stretch of river.

We have warm clear days and cool nights—perfect weather. The river is carrying a lot of water from last winter's heavy snowpack. (Later in the summer you will be able to walk across the same river.) On the big rafts, with the boatman doing all of the work for us, we sit comfortably and watch the scenery go past. I feel like exotic royalty being propelled along.

That scenery soon becomes spectacular—Ponderosa Pines along the river, cliffs rising up high now on both sides of us, patches of snow far up on the sides of the hills. The bright green of new leaves, a tracing of purple-red along the river line where the branches of some low bushes form a band of color, the red-brown and grey-white of the rock walls, and the deep blue of the Colorado sky are all stunning. I especially love the red-browns of the sandstone that is all around us. We bounce easily through our rapids.

Late in the afternoon of that first day we stop on the right side of the river and scramble a couple of hundred feet straight up the steep river bank to the site of some old Anasazi ruins—storage bins,

according to Tom, for the grain these ancient people grew on the mesa above the cliff.

Tom commented, "There is more geologic history exposed here in these canyons than any place else in this part of the country except for the Grand Canyon." Indeed, the Dolores cuts its way through two hundred million years of stone in these canyons. The red Wingate formations, often streaked black with "desert varnish"—manganese oxide which percolates to the surface of the rock—is the dominant formation. Desert varnish often forms magnificent abstract painting on the red rock surface. Occasionally the river exposes Chinle shale and above the Wingate are the Kayenta, white Navajo, and Dakota sandstones.

This area of Colorado was heavily settled during the 9th century AD and, in places along the Dolores River, the sandstone has been undercut enough to supply these locations for Anasazi granary and broad surfaced for their rock art—petroglyphs of animals and, in one spot, a map of the river drawn a thousand years ago. I find these signs of ancient habitation enormously moving.

After climbing back down from these ruins, we float down the river a bit and make camp. The nights here are uniformly cold and very clear and the sky is filled with stars. Days are bathing-suit warm.

The next morning, Sunday, we run Snaggletooth Rapid—the big one for this trip—without mishap. In the afternoon our party separates at the Bell Park area near Bell Park Canyon, a big grassy campsite just above Three Mile Rapids.

I climb up the canyon side as high as I can go and am rewarded with miles of stunning views up and down the river and across to a large



Fast Action in Snaggle Tooth Rapid, Dolores River

butte on the opposite side. We share the big grassy camp area below me with two other parties, but we hardly notice their presence, we've all got so much space here.

The side canyons along the Dolores which come in near several of our campsites provide wonderful hikes and secret places to explore. Because they are so hidden, a turn in the rock wall will bring all sorts of surprises: beautiful rock pools, a deer's antlers weathered white, moss growing out of water seeps, and rock paintings, formed by mineral seepage, that are powerful abstract designs.

Our third day out takes us through more rapids, and the canyon walls drop away leaving us in open areas, amid farms and near roads which frequently parallel and cross the river. We're between Dolores and Slick Rock Canyons.

I've always loved places' names and the 15-minute US Geological Survey quadrangle for Slick Rock is a rich source of imaginative names. Coming out of Dolores Canyon into Disappointment Valley we drop down to the general store at Slick Rock. Then we float past a few

houses comprising Poverty Flats, and pass the Veta Mad Mine on our right as we move into Big Gypsum Valley. Dozens of mines with interesting names are spread through these hills: Rim Rock, Bachelor, Babe Ruth, Diane, April, Big Bull, Teapot Dome, Fawn Springs #5, Rim Rock Blues.

After a few hours of this flat open country, the red canyon walls rise up again and we enter Slick Rock Canyon. The next full day is an uninterrupted float past high rock walls to Spring Canyon, where two side canyons meet the Dolores. Though the Dolores itself is very muddy and very cold, here we find sun-warmed pools to provide us with bathtubs.

Our final day we visit more Indian petroglyphs and stop to see the river coming and going around Muleshoe Bend. we laze on down to the town of Bedrock, again to a general store, where we take out after five days on the river. We talk with "The Outlaw," a local landowner who watches over the cars of river-runners and collects a dollar a head for use of his property.

The Coalition for Water Project





Snaggle Tooth Rapid, Delores River, Colorado

Review, its coordinator Ed Osann and others have tried unsuccessfully to get Congress to strike funds for McPhee Dam and the Dolores project from the annual appropriations bill for the Bureau of Reclamation. In June 1983 that amendment was defeated in the House of Representatives (257-140). There is only one hope now for some turnaround: money for other construction projects tied in with the dam will have to come from Colorado residents, especially in Cortez, where local water bills will increase sharply.

The Outlaw will lose his business if the river becomes runnable no more. All of us will lose access to this spectacular piece of western wilderness. This would be a sad development. It's a stunning area.

The long-term effects of the dam on river running are still uncertain. Jeanne Englert, a local activist in Durango, commented that the completion of the dam had been "an

enormous blow to all of us who love the river." But she went on to note that "the real damage won't come from the dam but from the costs of the water delivery system. The dam could regulate the flow of the river and guarantee a season every year—it can still be runnable although not wild and free as it was."

People interested in local efforts to fight the completion of this project should contact Steve Williams at Escalante Area Taxpayers (EAT), PO Box 986, Dolores, CO 81323.

Tom Klema himself is guardedly hopeful that something can be worked out with the Bureau of Reclamation for recreational water releases from McPhee Dam, although he notes that "the future is unclear because recreational use of rivers is not a high priority with them." A good heavy snowpack this winter will make another spring river running season likely.

—Courtesy of ARCC



Padding in the jungle of Mexico

**Editor's Note:** This story was originally published by The Blue Grass Wildwater Association.

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The limestone towered some 1000 ft. over our heads. The horizon line looked terminal as I approached the large drop. The canyon of the Jatate had swallowed US.

In 1981 ABC's *The American Sportsman* presented the first descent of the Jatate River. After watching the program I was ready to go, at least mentally. It would be three years before I would be ready for the Jatate. All the reasons for going are right. The climate is warm and dry when it is wet and cold in Kentucky. land transport seemed easy as I looked at the map of Mexico.

During the six months prior to the departure, I obtained maps from the Mexican Government, and contracted Cully Erdman of Slick Rock Kayaks to set up the logistics, purchase food, and set up the shuttle. Cully was on the first

descent and was excited about returning to the Jatate.

At my end, the paddlers were gathered and volunteers were sought to drive to Mexico. Ed Puterbaugh and Charles Andre agreed to drive a support vehicle with seven boats and equipment to the put in near San Cristobal. In September I wrote the Mexican Consul in St. Louis Mo. inquiring if there would be any problem entering Mexico with kayaks. Within one month I received a reply stating "no problem, be sure to have your vehicle registration with you." A colorful brochure accompanied the letter geared for tourists heading to Acapulco.

As the departure date of February 10th neared we bade Ed and Charles a fond farewell as they headed to "Amigo Country". Three days later I received a call from Ed in Brownsville. They were stuck at the border because they were carrying more boats than people. The Migracion Officials allow only one boat per person crossing the border. Whether ten man raft or one person kayak it

doesn't matter. I suggested they try various points to cross the border. At each attempt they were thwarted by the Federales. At each station there was another reason why they would not let them in Mexico. Four days after the first call Ed and Charles were able to enter Mexico with the reluctant help of the US Consul in Matamoros, and the persistence of our local congressman.

Cully had arrived some two weeks ahead with ten boats (he used a different border crossing), set up the shuttle, and laid out the ground work for the trip. It was during this time he found out there were some political changes along the Frontiera with Guatemala and it would not be safe to carryout our planned itinerary of decending the Jatate and ascending the Santo Domingo to a local roadhead.

Due to the political repression in Guatemala some 100,000 people have fled to Mexico where they are housed in refugee camps close to the border. The highest concentration of refugees is along the Santo Domingo River near our takout. To avoid this, Cully mapped out an alternative route from the mouth of the Jatate down the Rio Lacuntun paddling 100 miles to a take out near the confluence of the Usumacinta River deep in the Central American Jungle.

Traveling 3000 miles to the state of Chiapas nineteen tired travelers rendezvoused at the Tuxtla Airport. After gathering our gear we boarded a charter bus for the day and one half trip to the river. Once the group was seated Cully told us of the refugee problem in the area and of his plan to avoid the situation. I was shocked to think these people would try to interfere with our trip. As he explained the situation I suddenly came to grips with the politics of Central America. He stated that traveling down the Lacuntun would have some risk as there were three camps along the southern bank on our route. Before the bus left the airport we all agreed to continue. "We came to boat not to vote" I said. In retrospect, I think we would have continued no matter what the circumstances. That evening we camped outside the mountain city of San Cristobal.

We shopped for Mayan handicrafts and tasted the local offering of beans and tortillas.

In the morning we packed our boats with care as every pound could slow our boats crossing the eddy above the "big drop". With the fog lifting, the group set out for our jungle put in on the Rio Santa Cruz. The bus was loaded with 16 boats atop including four C-1's. Inside the bus anxious boaters talked of past runs, each more difficult than imaginable, quietly thinking about the refugees, and conjuring up scenarios about our involvement. Around noon we arrived at a small town called Ocosingo, where the pavement ended. The warm Superior Beer was the only drink that would cut the dust for the next six hour drive to the roads end. In route to the put in we passed a local cowboy on horseback who was taken aback by our presence and gave chase to the bus. He rode along beside us falling off the horse at regular intervals and quickly remounting. "That's what too much Mezcal will do for you" Don said. He provided the entertainment for the afternoon.

Late in the evening we arrived at the small stream named Rio Santa Cruz. Looking at the shallow Rio Santa Cruz I removed all but the barest of essentials from my boat. Our trip was self supporting for the first six days so these boats would be somewhat awkward dodging the large boulders. From our put in to the Jatate it was a three mile paddle. The Santa Cruz is very small and technical with a volume of only 200-300 cfs water. I lugged my sixty five pound boat to the river and tested its maneuverability at the first rapid. The Santa Cruz begins with a Class IV rapid. Conceeding that plastic boats hold up pretty well against rock abrasion I wallowed over the drop scraping, flipping and rock bashing, all to no surprise. Beyond the drop we entered a small canyon almost overgrown by the dense Jungle. The canyon walls lifted majestically some 100 meters high with only a few boat lengths between them. The mosses grew tena-

continued in the November-December issue.

**BUYER'S GUIDE**



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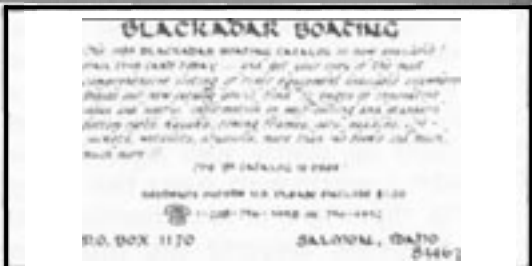
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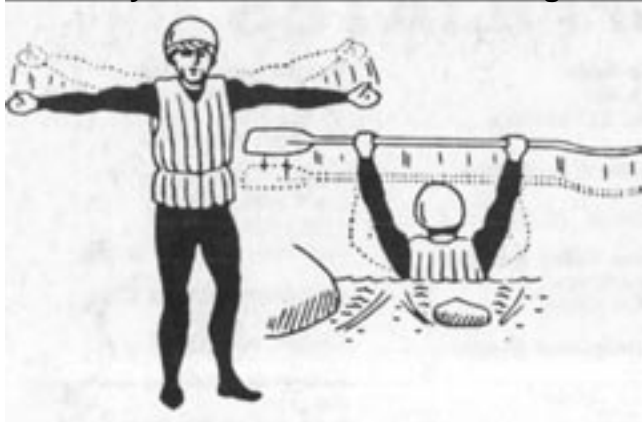
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