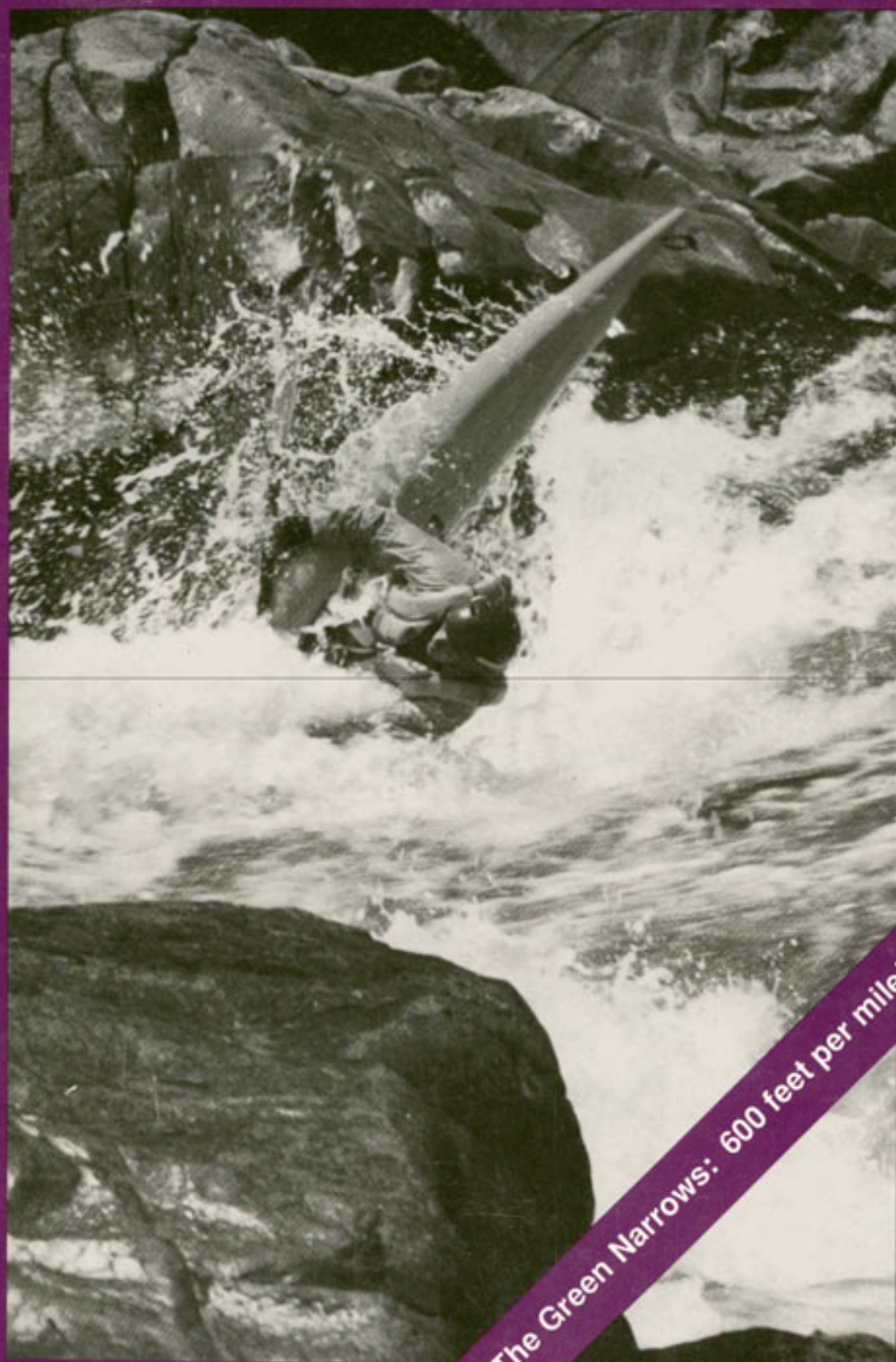


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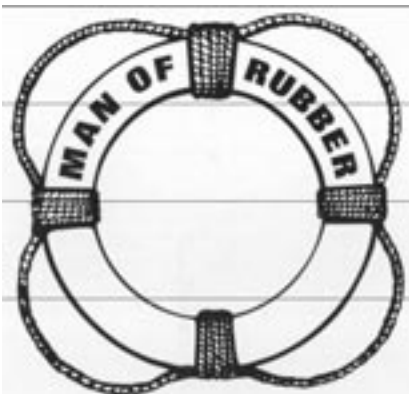
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by Forrest Callaway and Chris Koll

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FORUM

Don't be serious



I've been sweating over this damn word processor the better part of three weeks now, kicking out this damn Gauley Festival issue. The blasted thing too damn thick to read--I figure most folks will take one look at this issue and promptly employ it to even out the short leg of a coffee table.

Most paddlers freak at the sight of any publication thicker than a comic book--unless maybe it has a fold-out. I know I do.

It's just that the AWA is getting so damn serious these days. Membership has grown over 100% over the past four years, we have a professional executive director, our river protection programs are receiving substantial monetary grants, our volunteer staff now spans the country and we're effecting positive results in our efforts to save valuable whitewater resources.

Hell, American Whitewater is even being sold over the counter at outdoor retailers all over the country. Just like a real magazine.

This is all much too much for me to handle.

After I get this issue in the can, I'm heading for West Virginia. It's Gauley Season.

Granted, once I'm down in Summersville, the other AWA directors will connive to make me help out at the Gauley Festival. But they know from experience not to assign me any task that can't be performed with a beer in hand.

After all this work--I intend to have some serious fun. And I'm inviting all the paddlers to join me in being silly for an evening.

Incidentally, if some of you do manage to actually read this issue, you'll notice I've included several articles concerning cutting-edge whitewater.

I would be remiss if I didn't note that these articles are for the vicarious enjoyment of most of our membership. Don't fool yourself--probably less than 10% of the whitewater community possess legitimate class V skills. Be honest in assessing your ability before challenging rivers described in this issue.

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PURPOSE

The American Whitewater Affiliation (AWA) is a national organization with a membership of over 1300 whitewater boating enthusiasts and more than 50 local canoe club affiliates. The AWA was organized in 1961 to protect and enhance the recreational enjoyment of whitewater sports in America.

EDUCATION: Through publication of a bi-monthly journal, the AWA provides information and education about whitewater rivers, boating safety, technique, and equipment.

CONSERVATION: AWA maintains a national inventory of whitewater rivers, monitors potential threats to whitewater river resources through its "River Watch" system, publishes information on river conservation, works with government agencies to protect and preserve free-flowing whitewater rivers, and provides technical advice to local groups regarding river management and river conservation. AWA also gives annual awards to individuals to recognize exceptional contributions to river conservation and an annual "hydromania" award to recognize the proposed hydroelectric power project which would be most destructive of whitewater.

EVENTS: AWA organizes sporting events, contests and festivals to raise funds for river conservation. Since 1986, AWA has been the principal sponsor of the annual Gauley River Festival in Summersville, West Virginia, the largest gathering of whitewater boaters in the nation, other than at international racing events.

SAFETY: AWA promotes paddling safety, publishes reports on whitewater accidents, and maintains both a uniform national ranking system for whitewater rivers (the International Scale of Whitewater Difficulty) and the internationally recognized AWA Safety Code.

ORGANIZATION AND PURPOSES: AWA was incorporated under Missouri non-profit corporation laws in 1961 and maintains its principal mailing address at PO Box 85, Phoenicia, NY 12464. AWA has been granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. The charter includes the following purposes: encourage the exploration, enjoyment, and preservation of American recreational waterways or man-powered craft; protect the wilderness character of waterways through conservation of water, forests, parks, wildlife, and related resources; promote appreciation for the recreational value of wilderness cruising and of white-water sports.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF: Except for membership services and the Executive Director position, all AWA operations, including publication of the bi-monthly magazine, are handled by volunteers.

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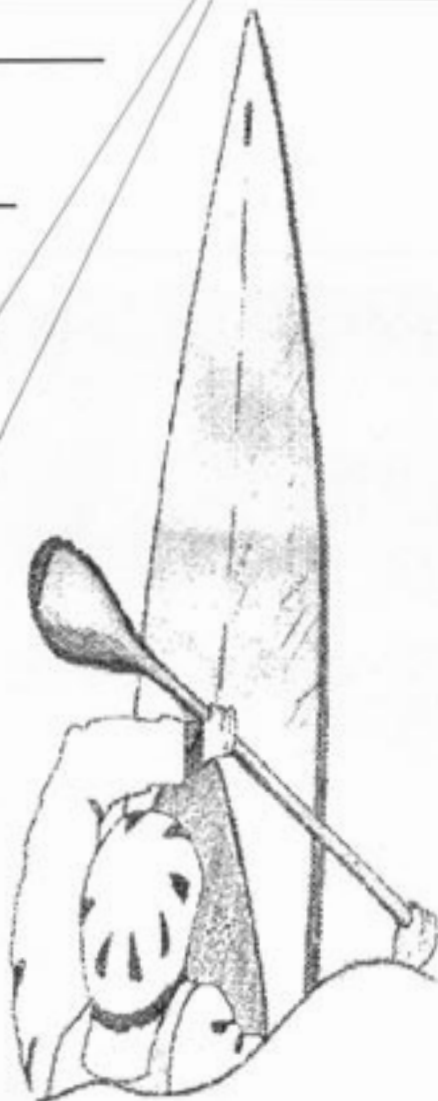
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LETTERS

Whitewater Hell

Dear AWA,

I have distressing news; I have been transferred to whitewater Hell, Tampa, Florida. My only contact with the real world is through my paddling buddy Norman who keeps me abreast of current happenings and exciting adventures. I've found myself staring at Fun Forever and issues of AWA for hours at a time. I have gone as far as to squirt in a small pond, however the murky black water that swallowed my paddle with each stroke was home to large reptiles that are definitely not indigenous to the Southeastern rivers that I'm used to. I ended up in the deep end of our pool making sure my bow screw was still intact.

It's been 37 days since I have been on water that moves on its own and is not treated with chlorine (I'm not positive, the Ocoee may have that in it too, but I would sure love to be there now!)

Please renew my membership for another year, it helps me with my withdrawals. I would like to share this with your readers. One should think twice when another offers an irresistible business opportunity. Money can't buy the beauty and thrill of whitewater. I would also like to say hello to my orphaned ProJets and 'Meanie resting too peacefully in Georgia.

Whitewaterlessly yours,
Frank W. Lawson

(editor's response: Gosh, here's more bad news for you, Frank: our Southeastern correspondent Woody Callaway informs me that after 90 days residence in Florida, an individual is officially designated a "Flathead" and must first apply for a visa before re-entering the Appalachians. For God's sake, man, get back to the real world before you end up a golfer.)

More on recycling

Dear Chris,

I was reading through your May/June issue and the "recycle this magazine" letter caught my eye. Over the past

couple of years we've re-evaluated our paper usage throughout our companies. From the paper we use in our copy machines, to stationary, to workbooks, to hang-tags, to brochures, to our catalogs--the question being, can we print on recycled stock and still maintain the quality that we desire and have become known for?

Well, the answer is no; we can't maintain the same print quality that is obtainable on virgin paper stock. Nevertheless, we've chosen to make the move to recycled stock in all these cases and more. Our first catalogs on recycled stock will be coming out this Fall. They won't be the same glossy catalogs that we're known for. The color and clarity will probably suffer a little, but after seeing the actual resources saved by going this route it really wasn't a decision at all. In one year we'll save 3,500,000 kilowatt hours of energy, 6,000,000 gallons of water, and 14,500 trees. By choosing recycled over virgin paper, we also keep 1,560 cubic yards of solid waste out of landfills and 52,000 pounds of polluting effluent out of the air. Granted, converting the printing of American Whitewater over to recycled stock might not reap the same volume of resource savings, but every little bit helps.

If you folks would like to contact us for leads on suppliers and vendors who've helped us out in this effort, let us know. It's been an education and it continues to be one--we'd be happy to share what we've learned.

Sincerely,
Yvon Chouinard
Patagonia, Inc.

(editor's response: Our readers have issued a mandate: use recycled paper. This is the second issue to be printed on more environmentally sensible materials--as is all AWA stationary and miscellaneous paper supplies. I don't think our readers will notice any drop-off in quality--American Whitewater is only semi-professional, anyway. But the one thing I just hate about recycled paper is the way it attracts more typographical errors, misspellings and poor grammar in general. I know our readers will now be more tolerant of these miscues knowing they are serving the purpose of conservation.)

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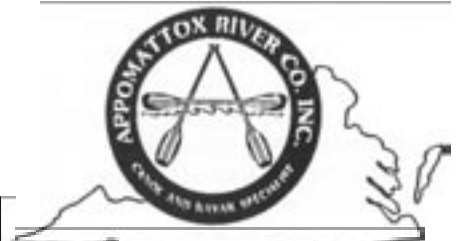


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LETTERS

Closed borders?

Dear Chris,

To most Eastern paddlers, the thought of a trip to Oregon is almost as remote as one to China or Chile. The one big difference being, however, that with a good set of wheels; a few high-limit credit cards; two weeks vacation and a friendly native guide to welcome and assist us, we can envision the possibility, "Some day." So, we keep on dreaming. If the rest of Oregon and the Northwest has it Thom Powell's way, though, we might as well stop dreaming because the Northwest would be off limits to anyone not willing to make a lifelong commitment to preserving the rivers of that area.

I would like to thank Thom for being so involved in the preservation of the rivers of the Northwest. People who live in a particular area are and should be the "first line of defense" for preservation of their particular rivers. As with any cause, there will always be those heroes like Thom on the front line, backed up by an army of like-minded support people. I

would like to recommend that Thom reconsiders his revoking Jim and Gracie Goddard's invitation and instead welcome visitors to his domain. Because as my Daddy taught me (as most Daddies have taught their kids), "You can catch a whole lot more flies with honey than you can with vinegar."

When I initially picked up my March/April issue of American Whitewater, I was pleased to see an article by Jim and Gracie about some rivers in the Northwest. (More material for my "some day" dream) Although AWA is a national organization and the Journal unquestionably the best forum available to inform fellow paddlers of the delights and plights of rivers all over the country, the amount of information we get on rivers west of the Continental Divide is sparse and more often than not written by an Easterner or transplanted Easterner.

I don't propose to make the gap between the East and the West any greater. On the contrary, I would like to see preservation efforts in all parts of the country meld into one mutually beneficial union. Although I don't pretend to understand the intricate workings that go on in Washington, D.C., I am aware that there is a great deal more "horse-trading" going on there now than there ever was when the manure was mostly on the streets.

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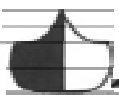
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LETTERS

If the national paddling community is kept abreast of situations in all parts of the country and informed by those in the "the first lines of defense" whom to write to--letter writing can be a very effective tool. The old "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours" policy is no more alive anywhere in the world than in D.C. **abd** as we know, most whitewater issues, although limited by geographical definition, are national by nature.

I would suggest that rather than making any particular part of our country off limits to others, that we take our lead from paddlers from Japan and France who, rather than saying "stay out of our country", have written to AWA to solicit help in preserving some of their precious whitewater runs. (See May/June 1990--"Leave La Loire Alone"; also Nov/Dec 1989--"Boaters Defend Last Japanese Whitewater")

Before labeling everyone who ever dreamed about a "some-day" whitewater paddling vacation in Oregon as "hedonistic whitewater fun-hounds" that "just wanna boat", consider the fact that the next visitor might like it there; move there; and turn out to be the next Pope Barrow, Mac Thornton or Peter Skinner (Sorry activists, I couldn't name you all). At the very least, there welcome visitors from other parts of the country would be much more apt to write a letter when asked to do so than unwelcomed ones would.

Even though we can't and won't all be leaders, there is strength in numbers.

Sincerely,
 Carl J. Erb
 Monroeville, PA

Unfair to rafts

Dear Chris,

The following is in response to the article on river access by Ric Alesch in the May/June 1990 issue of American Whitewater.

We commend Ric on his article concerning the importance of activism in regards to river access. We agree that efforts to ensure river access have not been given the attention they deserve, particularly in the West and in Colorado where water resources are controlled by lawyers and the old-boy network. We agree that the fact that agencies, river

LETTERS

outfitters, and fishing concerns are each organizing their efforts demands that private boaters do likewise. However, we are concerned with the example the Colorado White Water Association (CWWA) has provided regarding promoting private boater access in its home state.

CWWA is primarily responsible for restrictions on private rafters on the Numbers stretch of the Arkansas River in Colorado. The private boating community (rafters, kayakers and canoers) cannot afford to be separate. The voice of the private boaters must be unified and loud. In Colorado, the private boating community has been divided as a result of the efforts of a few elitist boaters that believe noncommercial access to the river should be decided on a basis of the type of boat one owns.

Segregation of the private boating community's access to rivers is bad for boating. The establishment of a priority of one boater over another supports an elitism that serves no purpose other than to create animosity between boaters. We are a single boating community. The case on the Numbers sets a dangerous precedent for future river manage-

ment plans not only in Colorado but around the country. The next management plan may exclude rafters, but it may exclude canoers, kayakers or all private boaters.

We understand CWWA's desire to preserve a section of the river so that they may enjoy the solitude and quality of the river experience without perceived infringement. This desire is part of the reason we all develop our boating skills so that these experiences are within our reach. The Numbers is without question one of the premiere kayak runs in Colorado but at the same time it is one of the premiere rafting runs as well.

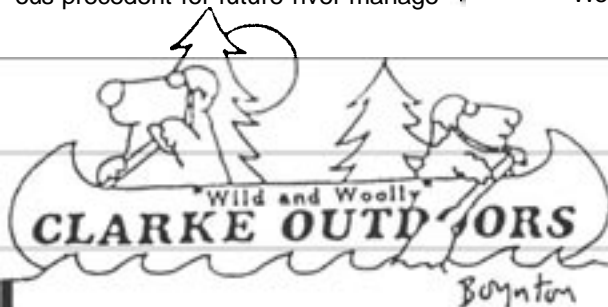
CWWA President Bill Baker has claimed that the arrangement in the Numbers was a compromise in exchange for the boat ramps, toilet facilities and other developed improvements from which "rafters" benefit. No such improvements have been developed for the private rafting community but rather in response to extensive commercial use of the river. The claim that boating safety is compromised by concurrent raft and kayak use is unfounded. In fact, each boater provides support to the other.

We are opposed to any divi-

sions within the private boating community. If there is truly safety or crowding problems in having both rafts and kayaks on the river, than an equal if separate access would be the only acceptable option. CWWA has sought priority for nonrafters to the detriment of the entire boating community. Again, we are opposed to any split whatsoever.

With AWA's current efforts to expand their activities into the West and to provide an intelligent and representative voice for private boaters, AWA and its affiliates should avoid and discourage an elitism or separatism among the rafting, kayaking and canoeing communities. If we are a divided community, each group of boaters will lose local battles to other private boaters and the private boating community in general will lose to outfitters, water development, or other interests.

Sincerely,
Larry Stuhl
President, High Country River Rafters
Golden, CO
Ken Ramsey
President, Rocky Mountain Canoe Club
Broomfield, CO



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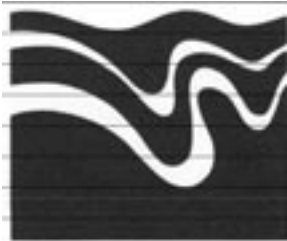


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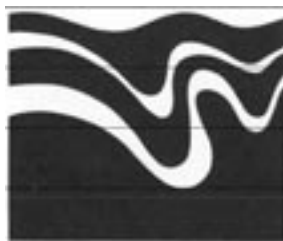


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Jeff Snyder blasting
a hole on the Cheat
River, West Virginia.
Photo: Kevin O'Brien

Countdown for survival

AWA's "Top 40" River Issues for 1990



by POPE BARROW

1. Kennebec, Penobscot, and Dead Rivers; Maine

Issue: flows for whitewater after relicensing
Current Status: John Porterfield is working with Central Maine Power, with help from the National Park Service River Watch Program, to improve whitewater flows when projects on these rivers are relicensed.
Contact: John Porterfield, AWA (207-825-3566)

2. Rapid River; Maine

Issue: flows for whitewater
Current status: Central Maine Power has plans to install hydropower in the existing unlicensed dam on the Rapid. The company is willing to negotiate flow levels with whitewater boaters. In recent years flows have been slightly too low for optimum whitewater and releases have been unpredictable.
Contact: John Porterfield, AWA (207-825-3566)

3. Merrimack River, New Hampshire

Issue: Possible wild and scenic designation.
Current Status: A bill has already passed the Senate and is now

pending in the U.S. House of Representatives to study 22 miles of the Merrimack River for possible inclusion in the wild and scenic rivers system.

Contact: Kevin Coyle, American Rivers (202-547-6900)

4. Pemigewasset River, New Hampshire

Issue: Hydro relicensing; possible wild and scenic designation.
Current Status: Bills are pending in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate to study 30 miles of the Pemigewasset River for possible inclusion in the wild and scenic rivers system. AWA is working on the relicensing.
Contact: John Porterfield, AWA (207-825-3566)

5. Deerfield River, Massachusetts

Issue: Relicensing of existing hydropower dam.
Current Status: whitewater groups, aided by American Rivers, are seeking improved flows and possibly the removal of one of the many dams on the No. 5 section of this popular whitewater run. Since the power company has not been cooperative so far, this may be one of the most contentious and bitter relicensing fights in the nation.
Contact: Bill Hildreth, AWA (617-383-2785)

CONSERVE

6. Little River, Massachusetts.

Issue: Limited access and poor flow information.

Current Status: AWA regional coordinator E.J. McCarthy continues to press the Town of Springfield to permit private boaters to use Springfield Water Dept. property to gain access to this little-known but fabulous class III-IV run in Massachusetts (just east of the Farmington). he is also working to gain better releases from the unlicensed Cobble Mt. hydro facility.
Contact: E.J. McCarthy, AWA (RR 380-A, W. Cornwall, Ct. 06796)

7. Black River, New York.

Issue: Hydropower development at the Brownville site.

Current status: The power developer has filed proposed amendments to the license application in an effort to revive the long-dormant project. AWA has responded asking FERC to dismiss the license application. Senator Moynihan has expressed interest in Federal legislation to ban hydropower development at this location.

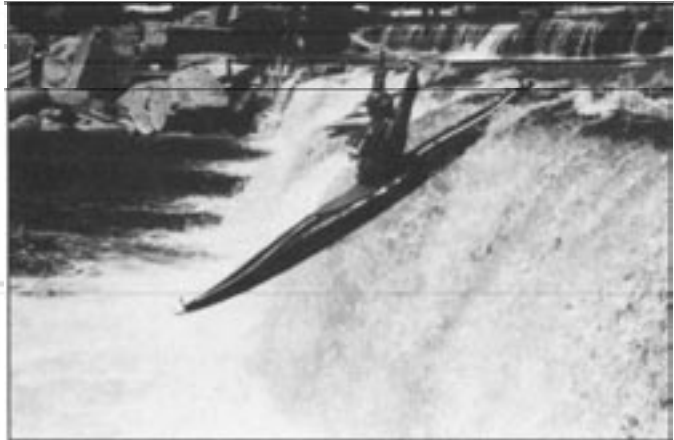
Contact: Ron Smith, ARO (315-788-1311) or Pete Skinner, AWA (518-674-5519)

8. Sacandaga River, New York

Issue: Access to the river.

Current Status: The Niagara Mohawk Power Company (NI-AMO) continues to exclude private boaters (but not commercial outfitters) from this popular run. Whitewater boaters are trying to bring the company around through negotiations.

Contact: Carol Liebfarth AWA/ACA 518-279-3989



Glen Park Falls, New York's Black River Gorge

9. Salmon River (Pulaski), New York

Issue: Access and improved releases from unlicensed power project.

Current Status: Whitewater boaters are negotiation with the owner of an old unlicensed hydropower project to gain access and recreational releases for the whitewater section downstream.

Contact: Jerry Hergrave, AWA 716-663-3888

10. Beaver River, New York

Issue: Relicensing of power project above whitewater run.

Currentstatus: Negotiations are underway between the power

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Beaver River--a prototype for relicensing in New York.

company and whitewater boaters to insure access to the river and improved recreational releases.

Contact: Pete Skinner, AWA 518-585-7580

11. Raquette River, New York

Issue: Relicensing of power project above whitewater run.

Current status: Negotiations are underway between the power company and whitewater boaters to insure access to the river and improved recreational releases.

Contact: Pete Skinner, AWA 518-585-7580

12. Mongaup River, New York

Issue: Unlicensed hydropower without recreational benefits

Current Status: Boaters have been excluded from using the whitewater of the Mongaup by the present owner of this old unlicensed power project, Orange and Rockland Utilities. An independent developer want to take over the project and provide better recreational benefits. The fight will probably take place in Congress where Orange and Rockland is leading the charge for a new law allowing old unlicensed hydro developers to keep their monopoly without getting a license and improving their projects.

Contact: Ken Fishman, KCCNY (212-228-5753)

13. Schuylkill River, Pennsylvania

Issue: Possible hydropower development


Current Status: Tom McAndrew has filed legal papers for AWA protesting the project on behalf of AWA and other boating organizations and is also developing political opposition. After his numerous local TV appearances on this issue, Tom is now AWA's foremost Media Star.

Contact: Tom McAndrew, AWA (215-487-0298)

14. Upper Youghiogheny River, Maryland

Issue: Mismanagement by State agencies and damage to scenery. Also Relicensing at FERC.

Current Status: AWA has protested increased commercial rafting at low water levels during 2-hour releases and objected to State proposal to charge fees to run the river and require boat stickers on noncommercial boats. Messy timbering and




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CONSERVE

fires continue unabated on private property on river right below BackenderRapid. Relicensing is still in progress. AWA is asking for 3-hour (or longer) releases with more advance notice.

Contact: Pope Barrow, AWA (202-546-3766) or Barry Tuscano, AWA

15. Savage River, Maryland

Issue: Hydropower development at Savage River Dam

Current Status: AWA and ACA have persuaded local Congresswoman, Beverly Byron, to push for Federal legislation banning hydropower development anywhere on the whitewater run or at the dam upstream. An amendment is now pending in the House of Representatives. AWA is also attempting to negotiation with the Corps of Engineers for better whitewater releases.

Contact: Mac Thornton/Pope Barrow, AWA (202-543-4923)

16. Monongahela National Forest Rivers, West Virginia

Issue: Possible Wild and Scenic designation for 12 rivers in the Monongahela National Forest, including several primo whitewater runs (such as the Blackwater, Cranberry, and Shavers Fork)

Current Status: A coalition of 21 groups has been formed by AWA to push for wild and scenic designation. The Forest Service will complete the first phase of its study this fall. AWA recently received a \$40,000 grant (see article in this issue) to fund a grass roots project to build support for designation.

Contact: Mac Thornton, AWA/ACA/CCA (202-543-4923)

17. Gauley River, West Virginia

Issue: Degradation of landscape due to private road building in the National Recreation Area. AWA and American Rivers are asking Congress for \$2,000,000 to buy lands within the NRA. Congressman Nick Rahall is pushing hard for the money. Also possible hydropower development at two locations may cause problems. One proposal would use release from Summersville Dam for generation and the other would build a new dam upstream near Webster Springs to divert water from the Gauley into the Elk. AWA and American Rivers are fighting both projects.

Contact: Anita Adams, AWA (304-384-9209)

18. James River, Virginia

Issue: Possible hydropower development

Current Status: The city of Richmond is still pursuing hydro-power development at a site on the James River in Richmond which would damage the whitewater run. AWA and local canoe clubs are protesting the project. The National Park Service is proposing an urban waterfront project for the area which may be incompatible with the hydro development.

Contact: Charles Ware, AWA (804-231-0118)

19. Russell Fork, Virginia/Kentucky

Issue: Releases from whitewater

Current status: Negotiations between fishery interests and the Army Corps of Engineers regarding Russell Fork releases may lead to less whitewater-- or none at all. AWA is trying to work out a compromise with the fishery people. Meanwhile hydro-power developers are planning to install a power project at Flannigan Dam; AWA and EPRO have intervened at FERC to oppose anything which would make whitewater less available.

Please turn to page 68

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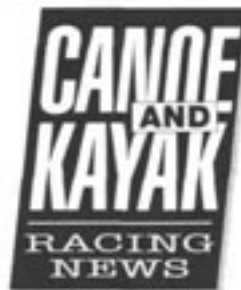
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Rahall pushes funding for Gauley corridor land acquisition

If there was ever any doubt about it, Congressman Nick Rahall (D-WV) has earned the title of "Mr. Whitewater" in Congress.

To the delight of everyone in the whitewater community, Rahall and ace staffer Jim Zoia got the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee to add \$2,000,000 to the federal budget for land acquisition in the Gauley River canyon. Incredibly, they also got \$1,700,000 added to acquire privately-held mining rights threatening the headwaters of the Gauley in the Cherry

and Cranberry basins.

Those familiar with Capitol Hill politics are flabbergasted at Rahall's success. Traditionally, the House adds nothing for West Virginia public works-type projects, since Senator Robert Byrd puts in lots of projects for West Virginia. However, it was (and still is) uncertain whether Byrd is supporting an appropriation for the Gauley.

So Rahall and Zoia went to work. They cajoled. They got angry. They begged and bargained. They finally got what they were after: a total of \$3,700,000 is



Congressman Nick Rahall

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in the House appropriation for expenditures from the Land and Conservation fund for the Gauley watershed. This fund is derived from royalty fees paid to the federal government, mostly from oil and gas producers; the fund does not use general tax revenues.

If the appropriation survives in the House, Byrd is likely to let it through the Senate since it is of benefit to West Virginia. However, letters to Senator Byrd from West Virginians remain critical. If you live in, have friends or relatives in, or can use a West Virginia address, please write Senator Byrd a short letter asking support for this appropriation. Address: United States Senate, Washington, D.C., 20510.

TPL acquires Gauley River land

For over 17 years, the Trust for Public Lands (TPL) has been acquiring critical recreational and biotic lands in the Eastern United States, mostly for eventual resale to the U.S. government. Recently, TPL has been taking a leading role in obtaining rights to lands in the Gauley corridor, pending Congress appropriating the funds to purchase the property.

The Gauley was made a National Recreation Area in 1988, but at present, about 99% of the lands in the NRA remain in private hands. They are not friendly hands. Logging pressures remain, and mineral rights holders are free at any time to develop their properties. Worse yet, some insensitive

commercial rafting outfitters have constructed roads into the depths of the Gauley canyon.

Enter TPL. The National Park Service land acquisition process can be painfully slow. TPL is able to step in quickly by either buying the land outright, acquiring options, or by having property donated to provide temporary protection

for the land until it can be resold to the government. Once the land is sold, TPL uses the proceeds to continue buying land.

To date, TPL's Chrisanne Worthington has acquired rights to about 1,700 acres (\$1,000,000 worth) of land in the Gauley NRA, and she is making progress on acquiring rights to much more.

Klamath bill moves on

A House subcommittee cleared a bill to designate as wild and scenic Oregon's Klamath River.

The subcommittee on National Parks didn't actually address the bill, HR 4728, because a point-of-

order prevented it. But subcommittee chairman Bruce Vento said on his own hook he hopes to persuade the House Interior Committee to consider the bill when Congress returns to work in September.



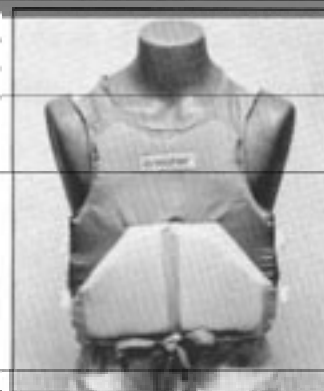
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A. HURKINSON - 88

AWA program to protect WV rivers selected to receive \$40,000 grant

Outdoor Industry Conservation Alliance funds West Virginia Rivers Coalition

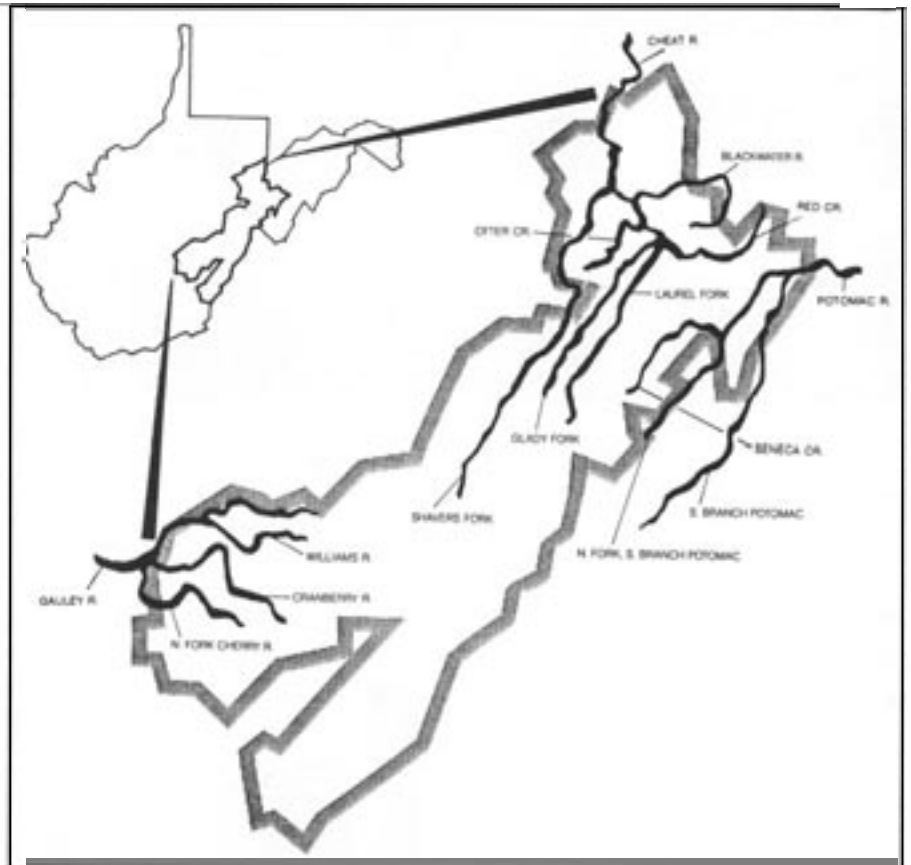
AWA has been awarded a \$40,000 cash grant for a grass roots campaign to gain permanent protection for 12 superlative whitewater rivers in West Virginia. The generous grant was made by the Outdoor Industry Conservation Alliance to further the goals of the West Virginia Rivers Coalition, an organization formed and sponsored by the AWA.

"Our West Virginia efforts have been handled by volunteers in their spare time, mostly from out-of-state," said Coalition Chairman Mac Thornton, "but now we can hire a professional to tackle these issues on a full-time basis from Elkins or Morgantown, WV."

In 1989, Thornton and AWA Conservation Chairman Pope Barrow lead the formation of a Coalition of 21 conservation organizations, with the goal of Federal Wild and Scenic designation of twelve rivers in the rugged Alleghenies of eastern West Virginia. Included are paddling gems like the Blackwater, Shavers Fork, South Branch Potomac and the Cranberry. For the most part, these rivers are wilderness in character and are on public lands in the Monongahela National Forest, however, they face a gauntlet of threats such as timber harvesting and flood control structures.

The Coalition, now known as the West Virginia Rivers Coalition, got the early support of Congressman Nick Rahall (D-WV) and Forest Service Chief Dale Robertson. However, the local National Forest personnel have been less than totally cooperative. Also, in-state opposition has started to surface. It became apparent that a localized, grass roots political effort is necessary, managed by a full-time Executive Director for the Coalition.

The Outdoor Industry Conservation Alliance grant makes that grass roots campaign a reality, even though the Coalition will have to raise at least an



The Monongahela National Forest shelters a collection of the finest whitewater rivers in the eastern United States. The ambitious plans of the West Virginia Rivers Coalition would seek permanent protection for these outstanding whitewater runs.

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The High Falls of the Cheat--a runnable drop on the remote Shavers Fork.

additional \$10,000, hopefully from Coalition members.

The Coalition is interviewing West Virginians for the Executive Director position, which will probably pay \$20,000

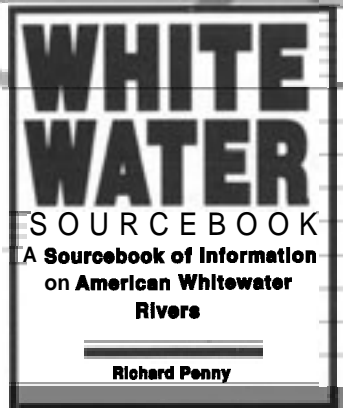
per year plus expenses. The Executive Director will closely monitor the Forest Service studies of the 12 rivers, personally contact local landowners, solicit local political support, solidify and expand the

membership of the Coalition, and identify and open a dialogue with potential opponents. Persons who are West Virginia natives or long-time residents are eligible--contact Mac Thomton at (202)543-4923 at once.

The Coalition hopes to have legislation introduced with the support of the National Forest Service by early 1992 to designate the 12 rivers as Wild and Scenic.

Conservation Alliance **Supporting grass-roots conservation**

Founded in early 1989, the Outdoor Industry Conservation Alliance has already had a major impact on the wilderness conservation movement. The \$40,000 grant recently made to the AWA for the West Virginia Rivers Coalition is one of ten grants for grass roots, political action campaigns throughout the United



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BRIEFS

States since the creation of the Alliance, The grants have amounted to an astounding \$283,532, a scale of funding without precedent for citizen groups attempting to safeguard wilderness areas with muscle-powered recreational opportunities.

"Participation in outdoor recreation is growing, as are pressures on our wildlands and rivers. The work of the organizations we fund is an important and positive way to protect the recreational resources upon which our industry depends," said Wally Smith, Alliance President and President of Recreation Equipment Inc. (REI), the well-known Seattle-based equipment co-op.

Starting with four members with an annual \$10,000 membership fee, the Alliance has grown to 22 members, including publishers, manufacturers, dealers and dealer representatives. The first grant in the organizations's history went to a critical whitewater organization: Idaho's Friends of the Payette. Other grants in the first year included the Appalachian Trail Conference, the Utah Wilderness Coalition and the Greater Yellowstone Coalition.



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In 1990, the Alliance has funded three organizations other than AWA's West Virginia Rivers Coalition--California's Friends of the River for work on the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon, The Friends of the Shawangunks in New York State, and the Natural Resources

Council of Maine.

The Alliance is administered by REI, and those interested in applying for a grant should contact the Alliance, c/o REI Public Affairs, PO Box 88126, Seattle, WA 98138, (206)395-5957.



Risa Callaway blasts hole during squirt competition at Ocoee Rodeo.

Changes emerge during 1990 rodeo season

Most of this year's freestyle and squirt competitions have happened. Once again, there were lots of skilled boaters out showing their stuff. Once again, whitewater manufacturers and local area merchants showed strong support for events such as Animas River Days, Bob's Hole and the Ocoee Rodeo.

Yet, there *are* signs of change that are worth noting in the rodeo world. Attendance and enthusiasm for annual events is often a function of 1) water level (e.g., it is hard to get psyched when low water makes that big ol' hot surfing hole into a weenie wave!), and 2) the organizing strength of the sponsor(s) in a given year.

Examples: The American River Festival/Chili Bar Rodeo suffered from a fourth year of drought and a schedule conflict with the Bob's Hole Rodeo. The Wenatchee Rodeo was not held at all this

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year, with the primary organizer, Frank Meyer, due to the demands of his business.

On a positive note, the Ocoee Rodeo was tremendously 'assisted' by flooding rains in February, which caused the river (normal flow: 1400 cfs) to peak at nearly 50,000 cfs. Temporary road and access damage have been fixed, and Hell's Hole rapid became a fantastic place for both boaters and spectators.

This year, new contests have been added to the annual whitewater freestyle calendar, and several new events were instituted at others. Here's a summary of what's been observed:

•More Eastern Action: The Southwest Virginia Whitewater Rodeo, with its guaranteed release on the New River, saw a much stronger field of competition than in its previous two years. The S-Turn "Squirt 'til it Hurts" Slalom And Rodeo judged squirt moves 1) between slalom gates, 2) surfing the famous Rocky Island waves, and 3) at an eddy line on the fabulous big-water Potomac.

Finally, the next upcoming event

will be the "Dust Bowl" Rodeo in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Yes, Tulsa, and it will be a great contest at some killer surf spots on the Arkansas.

•More Integration of Classes: Montana's Blackfoot Rodeo has successfully combined the open boat 'downriver' race with their 'whitewater' race, traditionally a deckedboat event. The Ocoee Rodeo had a recordsetting thirteen open boats enter the freestyle competition. OC enders and hand paddling were impressive!

•More Women: Female numbers are still not overwhelming, but getting better. The Payette saw fields of 15 big boats and five squirt boats, respectively, in the K1W classes. Not to be ignored is the level at which women are competing: Kathy Bolyn was narrowly beaten out of first overall at the rodeo on the New River, and her K1W first place score at the Ocoee would have tied her for first place with Tomde Cuir, the men's expert winners

Paddle-less movements: More competitors are tossing away those wooden and fiberglass 'crutches' on their way to 360's and mystery moves alike.

How to get MONEY

(For your favorite river)

By POPE BARROW

Everyone seems to need more money. Uncle Sam is totally broke. Your local Savings and Loan is probably bankrupt. Lately it looks like Donald Trump could use some more money. After all, Marla Maples is not the kind of girl you can take out to McDonalds for dinner.

Even river conservationists almost always need at least a few greenbacks to get anything significant done. It costs money to fight hydropower projects. It costs money to lobby Congress. It costs money to print brochures. It costs money to buy stamps and make phone calls. When AWA is feuding with a Federal agency like FERC, it costs money to get expert help from lawyers, engineers, economists and other high-priced pointy-

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BRIEFS

headed intellectuals. Even the AWA Journal costs quite a few shekels to publish (especially now that our conservation-minded editor has caved into to public pressure and switched to recycled paper).

Where does all this money come from? AWA struggles hard to raise money from the Gauley Festival, the Ocoee Rodeo and other events. We learned the hard way that continuous fund raising is needed to underwrite our river conservation programs, even though we are working mostly with highly motivated volunteers.

Don't get me wrong...volunteers can perform amazing feats in river conservation. Without volunteers, AWA would be nowhere on any of its projects. But almost every volunteer project requires some cash...to get something printed, to get expert technical analysis, or to send a critical volunteer activist to the State capitol or to Washington, D.C.

In AWA's case, when money from the Gauley Festival ran out, the Patagonia Company and Recreational Equipment, Inc. (R.E.I.) have always come to the rescue. These companies are run by some of the most public spirited busi-

ness people in America. In recent years they have underwritten numerous critical projects for AWA as well as for many other river conservation groups. R.E.I. funded the Nationwide Whitewater Inventory Project and the River Watch project. Patagonia got AWA's nationwide relicensing efforts off the ground. Recently, the Conservation Alliance (which includes both R.E.I and Patagonia) upped the ante by giving AWA \$40,000 to get a serious campaign started to save West Virginia's national forest rivers. (See the article on this project elsewhere in this issue.)

As a national organization with a strong track record in river conservation, AWA has usually been able to turn up a benefactor when things got desperate, but, until recently, small local groups- for example, Friends of the Little River in Alabama, or the Knik Canoers and Kayakers in Alaska- had no where to turn when they needed a financial shot in the arm.

Now the money problem for small groups has been solved, at least for some kinds of projects. As they have so many times in the past, the management

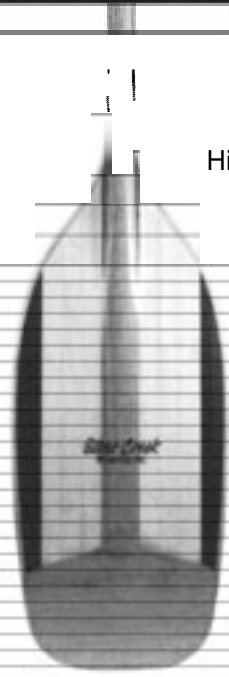
team at R.E.I. identified the problem and quickly went about solving it. Two years ago they set up a fund, administered by a committee of river experts, to help small river conservation groups and canoe clubs get grants for grass roots river conservation work. Already R.E.I.'s gifts are making a huge difference. Dozens of small grants have gone out all over the country.

For 1990 R.E.I. is making a total of \$55,000 available for these grants. The idea is to give a lot of small grants to a lot of different groups around the country to help them get things moving at the local level. Most of the money goes out in the form of gifts in the \$200 to \$1,000 range.

The R.E.I. seed grants are not big killer sums of money. So why is everyone so excited about them?

These may be small gifts by some standards, but they are a tremendously important and useful kind of money. This is because the grants are specifically earmarked for political advocacy at the grass roots level. This is unlike the money conservation groups are sometimes given by foundations and other

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benefactors. Grass roots political action is off-limits to most big philanthropic organizations. Many funding sources, especially businesses and big companies usually avoid political controversy and direct political action like the plague. Almost no one but R.E.I makes money available to small groups for this kind of vital and controversial work.

How can you get in on the bonanza? It's easy. R.E.I. has set up a committee to review grant applications. If your canoe club or river conservation group is working on a river protection project and needs money for some part of your project, just write to the committee briefly explaining the project and what the money will be used for. If the need is there, it's a good bet that a check will soon be in the mail.

Here's how it works. The review committee is named the National Rivers Coalition. You can write to them care of Suzi Wilkins at American Rivers, 801 Pennsylvania Ave, SE, Suite 303, Wash, D.C. 20003. The committee will read your letter and make a recommendation to R.E.I. The committee meets every 3

months. (Committee members are river conservation experts from American Rivers, American Whitewater, ACA, the Wilderness Society, Audobon Society, the Sierra Club and the National Wildlife Federation).

Your application can be brief, a page or two, in no special format, with a proposed budget. There are a few simple ground rules to keep in mind. The money cannot be used to pay salaries. It can be used for things like printing, mailing, travel, and other types of grass roots political work. Your project should be designed to add a river to the Federal wild and scenic rivers system (ultimately), to improve river management of a protected river, to improve a State river program, to promote passage of State, Federal, or local river conservation laws, or to protect natural and recreational resources at projects in hydropower licensing or relicensing process.

If you want more information about the R.E.I. grants or if you need help with an application call, Suzi Wilkins at 202-547-6900 or Pope Barrow at 202-546-3766

Directory available

The National Park Service has completed an 111-page directory of organizations involved in managing and protecting American rivers. More than 1,000 groups are listed in the 1990 River Conservation Directory, which is designed to "help river conservationists build networks, share ideas and track down information," according to Chris Brown, chief of the NPS technical assistance branch. The directory, document #02400501058-1, may be obtained for \$6 from: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402-9325.

Big fine for Falls

The tenuous relationship between paddlers and management of Ohio Pyle State Park continues to sour as the fine for illegal runs over Ohio Pyle Falls was raised to \$2,500.



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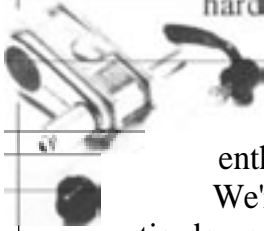
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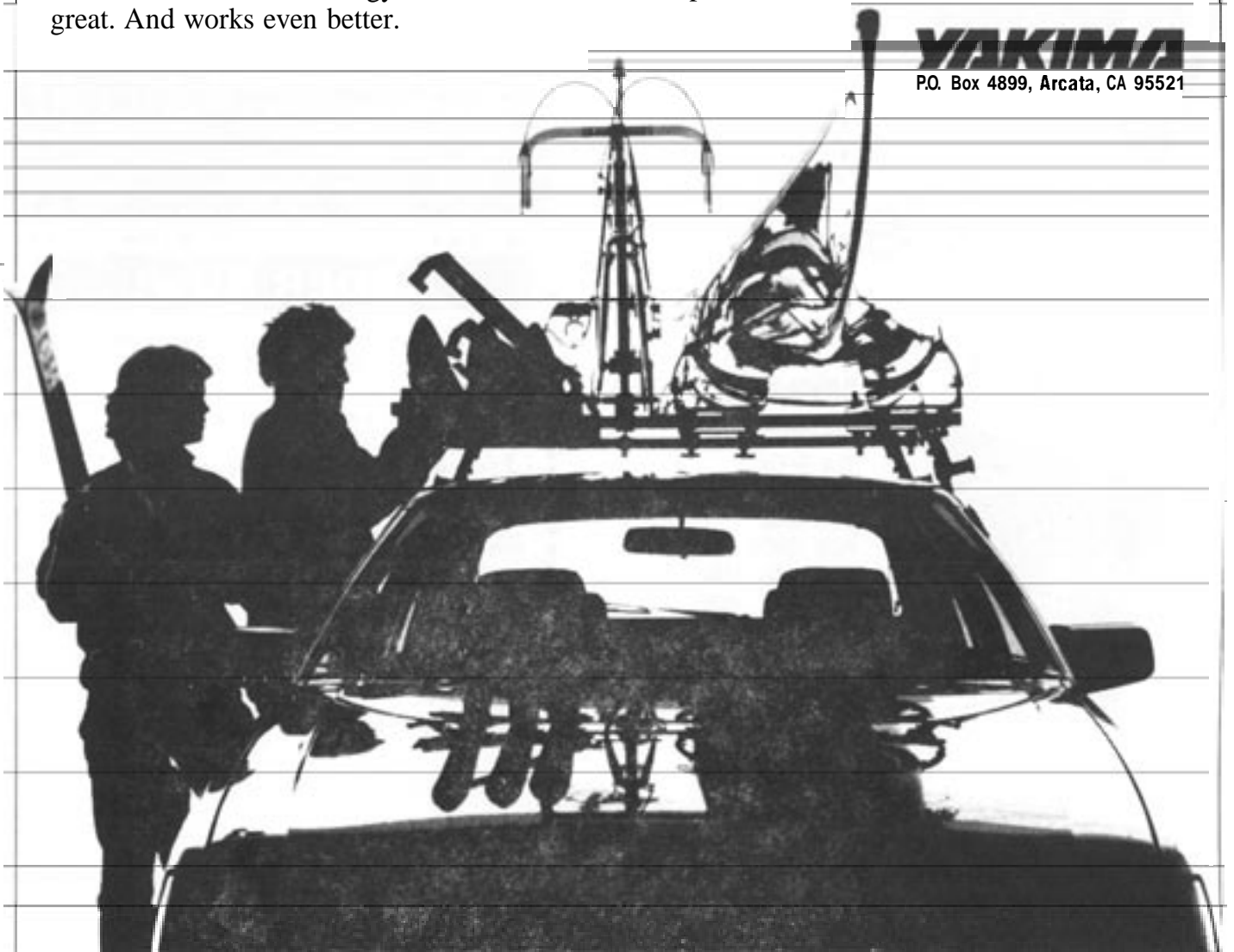
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Running a river by the book is not always a good idea

By JOHN KINCH

I have always valued both volumes of William Nealy's Whitewater Home Companion river guidebooks. And I stress that what happened to me and Jim Rose in the New River Gorge is not Nealy's fault. He wasn't there that day. Even if he was, the difficulty of printing a river on paper combined with the hazards of using the print to run the river would remain unchanged.

I had little experience kayaking the New River Gorge. I was guided down it the first time in late August 1989 by two capable paddlers I met there from Oak Ridge. Although the Fayette Station gauge registered the high water level of six feet, I had no difficulty paddling the New that time.

Two weeks later in September, I returned with Jim Rose to introduce him to this magnificent river. We drove down there together from Michigan on a Thursday night and got up Friday to make our run. Because it was a weekday in September, we were the only kayakers we saw there. Even rafters were scarce.

A little risky, perhaps? Well, on the safety side of the ledger, the river had dropped more than five feet since last I saw it, and the sunny weather provided clear visibility. So, the paddling should have been easier than before, and we would have no trouble seeing where we were going. I figured that what my two-week-old memory of the river failed to provide, Nealy's Volume II description of the New River Gorge would fill in. I tried to memorize the key features of the largest rapids appearing in his six-page sketch.

On page 88 and 89, "Lower Keeney" and "Turtle Rock" rapids are described and drawn in great detail. No other big rapids are identified between them—in fact, nothing is shown between them except a curving arrow growing out of the bottom edge of page 88 pointing to a stretch of river below mile 11. However, the arrow disappears off the bottom of the page without comment.

In reality, the maps contained in

Nealy's books are reproduced from his full-sized river posters and doesn't translate as clearly in the smaller medium. The arrow that drops off the bottom of page 88 is picked up at the top of page 90 and subsequently leads to a vivid description of "Double Z" rapid. Herein Nealy calls it, "definitely the nastiest swim in the Gorge." Yet, back on page 88 and 89, I am unaware that "Double Z" drawn on page 90, is actually part of the river section shown on the two previous pages. So, I am convinced that "Turtle Rock" rapid is the next major drop after "Lower Keeney."

Guidebooks are meant to assist paddlers in forming river-running judgments—not to replace the decision-making process. Of course..guidebooks are more helpful when the paddler is looking at the right page.

Now, on the river, Jim and I are sluiced successfully through "Lower Keeney" and unwittingly approach "Double Z." It doesn't look at all like the "Turtle Rock" rapid I recall from two weeks before, but there is some evidence that persuades me that it is. At this level at least (8 inches on the gauge), the rapid before us starts with a rock formation that looks exactly like the head and shoulders of a turtle. Furthermore, the river is five feet lower than it was before, so why should it look the same? Last, I believe I have read Nealy's book correctly, and I think we must be at the top of "Turtle Rock" rapid.

Nealy's instructions for making the run are very clear. Start right and ferry far left to avoid "Greyhound Bus Stopper" hole at the bottom of this rapid. No problem. Except we are actually running this route on "Double Z" instead of "Turtle Rock."

Starting right is easy going, but rough water meets us when we ferry left. Alternating downstream currents and muscular eddies whipsaw our boats throughout the ferry. Finally we catch a

SAFETY

strong downstream current on river left and go with it. It is then that we see the giant rock looming in front of us. It looks to me like the upper mandible of a whale, mouth open to feed on krill. The current carrying our boats pours into the "mouth" of this beast. Soon all air space between rock and water is squeezed to null and void. I'm first. The rock folds me over under the water, and my boat lodges against the rock's underside.

I have an expensive Harmony paddle with graphite blades. I promised myself sometime ago that I would never drop this costly tool as long as I'm holding it on or in the water. So what happens when me boat lodges under the rock?

After releasing my paddle, I jerk myself out of the boat's cockpit with both hands. Simultaneously, the boat and I begin floating downstream again and flush out from under the rock. Relieved, I grab my boat and look upstream for Jim, who should be bearing down on me in his boat to make a quick rescue. Jim is nowhere in sight.

Abruptly, Jim's boat pops up solo from beneath the rock, and Jim squirts

out immediately in its wake. We self-rescue in a lucky, nearby eddy, and I'm pleased to find my paddle tucked between me and my boat. We drag ourselves on shore and look for "Greyhound Bus Stopper" hole. It's nowhere to be seen. Could it be that this powerful hydraulic disappears when the New River is under one foot on the gauge?

We dummy the water out of our

**"Just a bibliographical error,"
I reply in a conciliatory manner.
Yet we knew that on
another day such a mistake
could have taken our lives
and not just our pride.**

boats, catch our breath, and continue down river. At the start of the next major rapid, another rock appears in the exact shape of the head and shoulders of a turtle.

This rapid looks very much the same as I recall "Turtle Rock" rapid looking two weeks ago. We follow the same paddling route that we used on our disastrous descent of the previous rapid.

This time it works perfectly, and we reach the bottom of the drop with plenty of paddling room between us and "Greyhound Bus Stopper" hole that now shows up on our right.

Any remaining doubt that "Double Z" comes between "Lower Keeney" and "Turtle Rock" rapids on this river is cleared up at the end of the trip when access to the car gives us the opportunity to read Nealy's description and map with renewed interest.

Jim asks me, 'How could you let something like that happen? We might have gotten killed.'

"Just a bibliographical error," I reply in a conciliatory manner.

Yet, we knew that on another day such a mistake could have taken our lives and not just our pride. We were lucky to be in low water this time. Reading a book is one thing, but reading a river means that you are author and editor of your own event. As Nealy warns on page 89, "No map or guidebook should be used as a substitute for scouting unfamiliar rapids."



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Three whitewater fatalities rock Colorado

The Colorado whitewater community was rocked by a series of fatalities during the early-summer boating season.

Although an average snow-pack was reported in the Rockies, a stretch of extremely hot weather resulted in rap-

idly-rising water levels in many Colorado streams and may have contributed to drownings in three separate incidents.

In the first accident, a boater perished after his boat broached while he was attempting to run through a pair of culverts on the Crystal River. Guidebooks

for the area do not recommend attempting the route.

The second incident occurred on Clear Creek, a class V stream running through the suburbs of Denver. In this situation, the kayaker was wearing a velcro seat belt to help him stay in his boat. It is unclear whether this unusual precaution contributed to the death.

Seat belts in kayaks are often used by paraplegic boaters who are unable to use their legs to brace inside the craft. However, the difficulty of escaping a pinned kayak makes using a seat belt a questionable practice.

The final fatality occurred on a section of the Arkansas River immediately below the Numbers. Reportedly, two brothers--both intermediate boaters--were kayaking together when one brother experienced difficulty. The second brother perished while going to his assistance.

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PADDLES FOR THE 803

Death on Selway "Ladle" claims another victim

By **DAVID SMALLWOOD**

The Selway River, one of the nation's most beautiful and demanding whitewater rivers and one of the most sought after private river permits, has

claimed another life.

The Moose Creek section of the Selway (known as the Moose Juice) has claimed two raft rowers and one paddle rafter, one each year since 1988.

The May 30, 1990 death occurred at a reading of 5.6 feet taken at the put-in near Paradise Campground.

All three deaths occurred at Ladle Rapid—a drop unlike any other on the river. The rapid is shaped exactly like an old-fashioned ladle with the "round" section at the beginning of the rapid

tapering down to a narrower "handle" at the downstream end.

Scouting this rapid is difficult due to the distance from the scouting trail to the rapid which is just about a quarter mile wide at its beginning. While there is no "pool" above Ladle, there is enough calm water to make it to the right bank to scout.

The extraordinary width of the river at the entrance makes it easy to miss your line and drop into the huge hole just to the right of the center tongue. All of the rafting fatalities were thrown from their rafts after entering the huge hole at the top right of the rapid.

What is the common factor in these deaths? Although all three victims were wearing wetsuits and PFDs, none were wearing helmets. In all three cases, the river was at its highest level for the year. All three were members of groups or trip leaders holding private permits.

Not wearing helmets and high water levels are without question factors which contribute to river deaths. However, I would hate to think that the private permit system is becoming a factor by exposing inexperienced



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Veterans of the Narrows have devised an enlightened new rating system. A river's difficulty is evaluated by the number of times a paddler needs to urinate while scouting. Using this methodology, the Green qualifies as a...

Two-Gallon River



The Gorilla

By FORREST CALLAWAY and CHRIS KOLL

Every morning at 6 a.m., an employee of the Duke Power Company drives up to the dam on the Green River that impounds Summit Lake up near Saluda, North Carolina.

The dam formerly supplied water for hydro-electric generation, but since the flume leading downstream to the Tuxedo Power Station rotted away, Duke Power has released water back into the river eight hours a day for whitewater recreation.

The gate-keeper's early morning labor isn't terribly complicated. The dam is small as dams go—maybe 90 feet high and ninety feet across. Water is spilled from three plastic pipes fitted with three manually operated gate valves. The gate-keeper simply twists the valves and chains them open.

Each pipe spills 100 cfs of water back into the river. Through the spring and when lake levels allow, 300 cfs of blue-green water tumbles downstream toward a delightful class II stretch of whitewater extensively used by novice boaters, rafters and tubers with Duke Power's

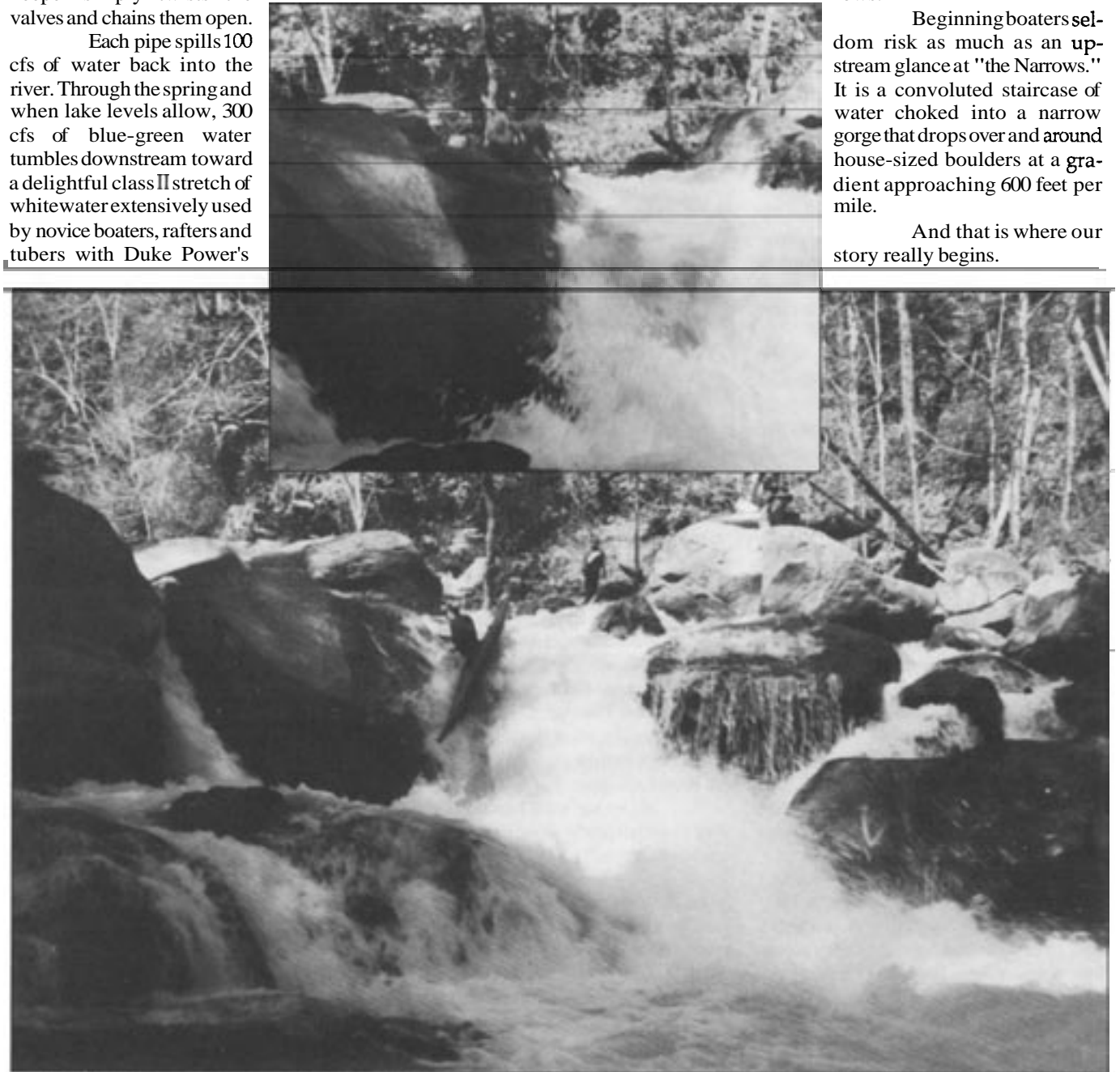
blessings.

Even during the summer months when the level of Summit Lake naturally diminishes, by husbanding water behind the reservoir, Duke Power is still able to send 200 cfs down the river for eight hours a day. Consequently, the Green is the second most paddled section of river in North Carolina—ranking only behind the Nantahala.

Of course, beginning boaters looking to practice their ferry or attempt a few rolls don't arrive at the Green promptly at six. After the gate-keeper cranks open the valves, the water of the Green first needs to careen down a distinctly inhospitable seven-mile section of riverbed known locally as "the Narrows."

Beginning boaters seldom risk as much as an upstream glance at "the Narrows." It is a convoluted staircase of water choked into a narrow gorge that drops over and around house-sized boulders at a gradient approaching 600 feet per mile.

And that is where our story really begins.



Two runs through Sunshine

There are uncomfortable yet undeniable parallels between whitewater and narcotic drugs. No sooner than a paddler masters his first class II riffle than he's looking for a wilder high--searching for a class III fix.

Even when a boater never feels secure advancing past class III or IV water--he seeks the vicarious thrill of class V and VI rapids--living on the edge while enduring whitewater tales of terror recounted around campfires, sitting through endless slide shows or staring glassy-eyed at videos of horrible descents in the Andies or Himalayas.

Call it juvenile or macho breast-beating. But the attraction of conquering what is perceived as dangerous whitewater--hair boating--remains an integral part of the psyche of the sport.

The problem is--every year the envelope of what is considered the "ultimate run" is pushed out a little further.

Ten years ago in the East, the Upper Yough was commonly considered the definition of the expert's proving ground. Although dam releases made the Upper runnable every weekday, fewer than a 100 paddlers a year tested its class V, 120-foot per mile rapids.

During the ensuing decade, the Upper lost its exclusivity as more and more boaters flailed down its technical drops. And with familiarity came contempt. The title of the Eastern expert's test run was passed to the Russell Fork--another class V river with a dependable release schedule in the autumn.

And now, even though only a handful of the best of Eastern boaters regularly best the Russell Fork--the rumors of still another signature hair-boat stream circulate around the campsites and take-outs of the Eastern whitewater circuit: the Narrows of the Green.

As a responsible whitewater magazine, perhaps this article should be prefaced by paraphrasing the Surgeon General's warning: 'Boating the Green River Narrows can be hazardous to your health.'

The problem with reporting newly discovered "on-the-edge" whitewater runs is the possibility that boaters with an exaggerated opinion of their ability will put on where they don't belong.

Part of the problem is the necessity of the whitewater rating system to jam a wide range of expert-level whitewater into the two top classes. Boaters who manage to navigate the Upper Yough

(easy class V) find themselves trashed on the Russell (hard class V). Similarly, paddlers need to recognize that the Green is a significant step above the Russell.

In an effort to help boaters relate to the inherent risks of the Green, veterans of the Narrows have devised an enlightened new rating system.

A river's difficulty is evaluated by the number of times a paddler needs to urinate while scouting.

Using this methodology, the Green Narrows qualifies as a two-gallon run.

roadbed into the shape of a pretzel--well, that road would instantly declared unsafe at any speed.

What does that tell you about the Green River Narrows?

Prior to the mid 1980s, the Green Narrows were paddled infrequently and most of the drops were portaged.

Drought ruled the Southeast through much of the past decade and then two years of construction work at the dam kept the river dry. The dam work ended in 1988 and the Narrows



The Flume

Six hundred feet a mile. Just how steep is 600 feet per mile, anyway? What does that kind of extreme gradient look like? Worked out in terms of percent--that's a descent of over 11%

When a highway drops at more than 7% (a mere 400 feet per mile), all hell breaks loose. The state DOT places flashing warning lights at the top of the grade and a huge yellow sign imploring truckers to reduce gear.

Even so, man has not found a way to consistently stay in control while descending gradients of that pitch. Every week or so, a truck loses its brakes, careens downhill with hideous speed, fails to negotiate a curve, flops on its side and strews its load across the shoulder. Not a pretty sight.

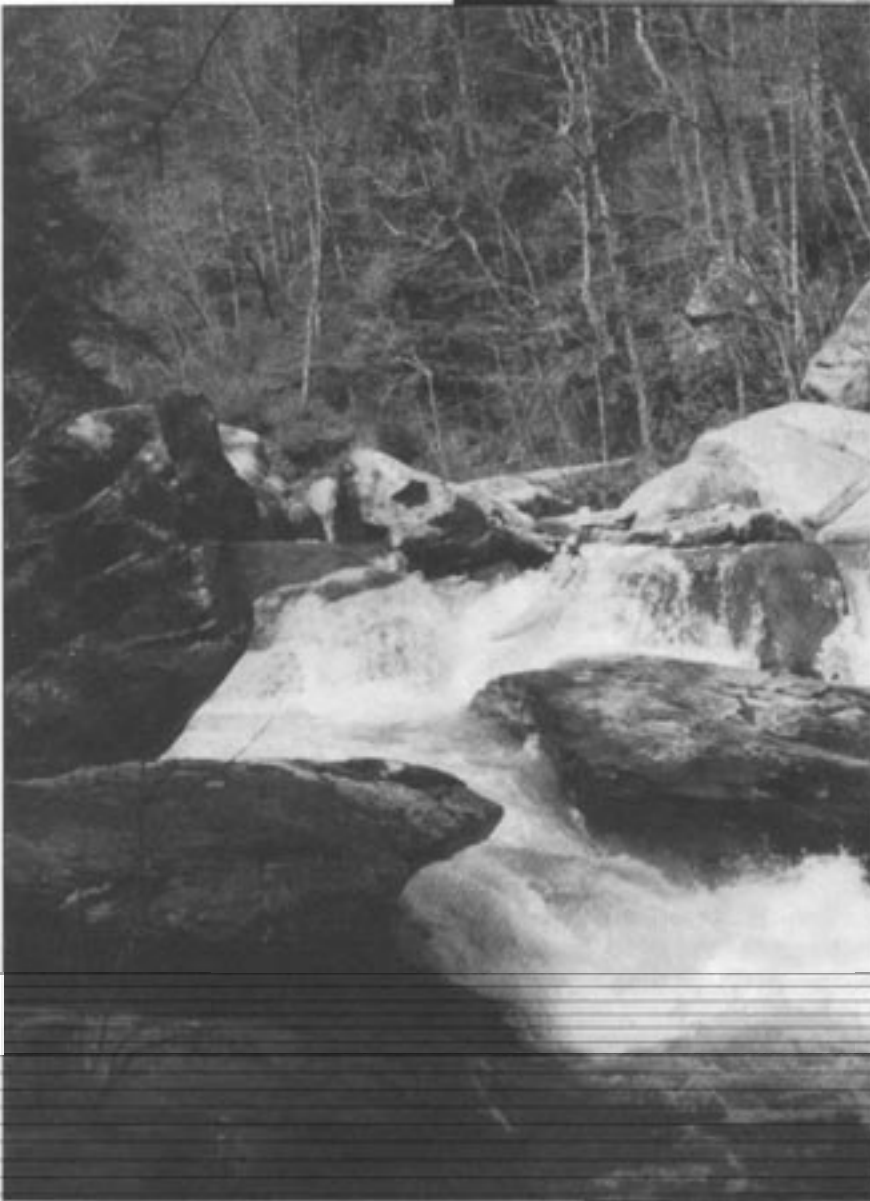
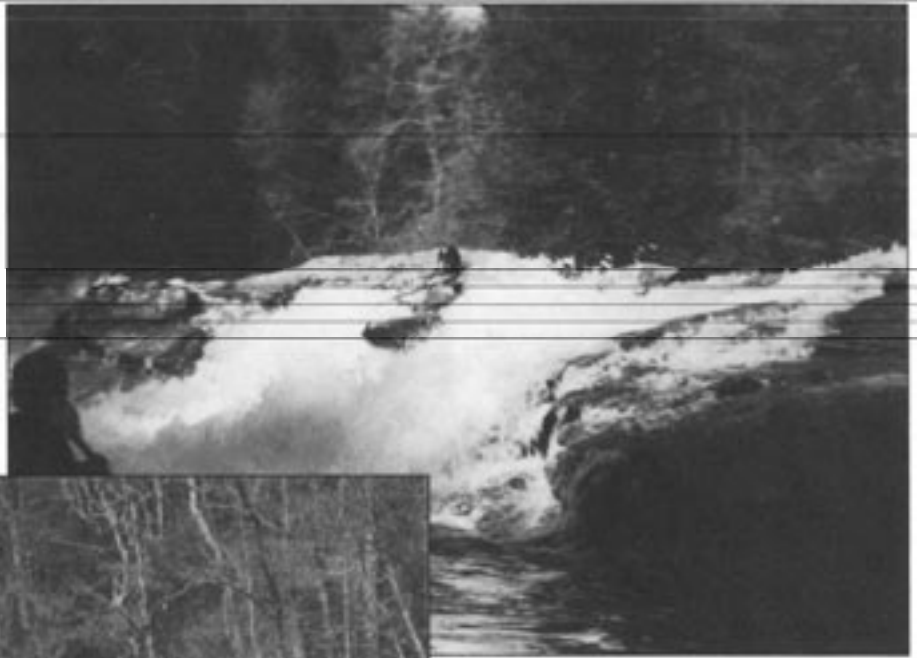
Now, if you tacked on an additional 3% or 4% to the steepest road you have ever coasted down, liberally sprinkled the pavement with rocks, logs and other sundry obstructions, then twisted the

were ready to be rediscovered, but for nearly a year it was impossible to gain release information on any given day. Access was limited to the locals (mainly staffers from the Nantahala Outdoor Center) who could call Duke Power at 8 a.m. and be at the put-in by 10.

In recent years, Duke Power became increasingly cooperative in providing release information, and some of the best hair-boaters from across the East have made the pilgrimage to test the Narrows, although at this writing, a total of less than 50 boaters have made the descent.

There are 12 major drops, aptly termed "the Dirty Dozen", in the Narrows section. As the Narrows became a dependable source of whitewater recreation, expert paddlers gradually chipped away at the Dirty Dozen until all of the drops have been run--but not by more than seven of the region's most daring paddlers.

"A Freudian might nod knowingly--then draw certain conclusions about hair-boaters. And Hell, he might be right..."



...running a drop like the Gorilla can be better than sex."

The put-in to the Narrows is at the Tuxedo Power Plant—a typical small generation facility on the left bank of the river. Paddlers slide into the water—usually in fat, plastic boats—and immediately plunge into action as the river abruptly plummets over a 10-foot boof.

The next three miles are a delightful warm-up of class II-III water with an occasional IV as the narrow stream threads between overhanging trees and lush banks covered with mountain laurel.

Under normal circumstances, three miles of intermediate rapids would be filled with jocular talk and horse-play. But with the guts of the Narrows looming just downstream, every move becomes deliberate. Laughter is forced. The overwhelming sense of suspense forces the paddler to deposit the first couple quarts of the two-gallon run.

The tension peaks as the 1-26 bridge swings into view. The entrance to the Narrows is just a mile downstream. And once it starts, for the next 3/4 mile, the river will seem to drop off the face of the world...

The name of the opening rapid is Frankenstein. If a paddler could easily scout the drop—which he can't, because large boulders obscure the view, this is what he would see:

From a tiny eddy perched at the top right, an apparent line leads to the left across a jet of water directly into a narrow slot between two large boulders. The slot abruptly ends in a three foot drop where the monstrous portion of Frankenstein begins.

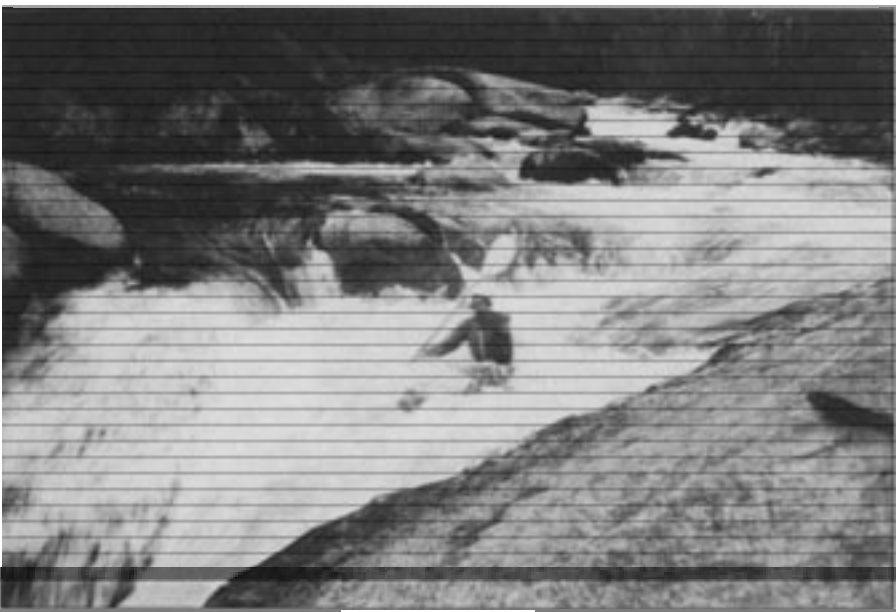
Emerging from the slot, the line takes a 90-degree turn back to the right, but here the issue becomes confused. A small pyramid rock splits the current, but where to go—left or right?

The left side drops four feet directly towards an undercut rock—not exactly a reassuring route. But the right option leads to "the jail house": a cave with a vertical log jam in the middle. Although paddlers have unintentionally entered the cave and washed through unscathed, the bottom of Frankenstein underscores the serious nature of the Green: there are no clear choices of safe lines through its rapids—just routes of less peril.

After running Frankenstein, the paddler enters a quarter mile of steep, continuous water before approaching Boof or Consequences. This starts the "must



Frankenstein



Hammer Factor

scout" rapids of the Dirty Dozen, although scrambling over the large boulders and through thick patches of poison ivy remains a challenge in itself.

The entrance to Boof or Consequences is a slot approximately three feet in width filled with roisterous water that races for 20 feet. Exiting the slot, the paddler is faced with a hump of water created by a partially submerged rock. Boofing off the right side of the hump, the boater drops eight feet directly into another tight slot followed by a quick turn to the left and another four-foot drop into a small pool.

The paddler has little opportu-

nity to collect himself. The Squeeze, Zwink Backend and Chief quickly follow. Failure to hit the right line in any of the rapids results in dire consequences. Chief is a prime example. The correct procedure is to line up on river left, pick up good speed and boof into an eddy in the center of the river. Then you power through the eddy and slam into a three-foot wide slot that drops eight feet into an eddy.

What happens if an unfortunate paddler fails to make the slot? He'll probably run backwards over the wrong side of Chief onto a pinning rock. And even if he avoids the pinning rock, the current leads into an undercut rock that

in turn feeds a cave.

Wait a second. What's this article about, anyway? None of this nonsense sounds like fun.

You're right. Hair-boating is seldom fun. At least not while you're in the middle of a run.

Great days on the Green can be the most exciting experience a paddler can encounter when conditions are perfect--when everyone in the group makes intelligent decisions whether to run or portage particular drops, clipping off as many of the Dirty Dozen as they feel comfortable with.

But bad days on the Green are not only a nightmare to the paddler suffering through a poor performance but can be a heart-stopping experience for the rest of the group. Watching a friend struggle through a dangerous rapid can unravel anyone's nerves. And when the karma of a group starts to sour--problems seem to snowball.

The condition that separates hair-runs from "normal" whitewater is that failure to make a certain move is not an option. To miss a required boof, fail to catch a crucial eddy or blow a critical line could easily result in injury to the paddler or other members of the party who have to effect a rescue.

In that situation, even the most experienced paddlers can experience the agony of self-doubt. Scouting a rapid is difficult when your limbs are made of lead. Lunch breaks are disastrous when fighting back waves of nausea. No--a day filled with anxiety can hardly be considered a pleasant day on the water.

So--what kind of boater is ready to paddle the Green? What constitutes a "hair-boater?"

First, there's the obvious requirement of an unusual amount of skill and experience. Their ability to evaluate the "doability" of a particular drop is based on years of navigating similar water.

Secondly, a hair-boater is distinguished by a single-minded attitude. Once he elects to run a certain line, he becomes almost serene--confident in his ability to put his boat precisely where he intends. It is a singular lack of imagination that mortal paddlers would label brain-dead.

And finally, hair-boaters are supreme scramblers. When their best-laid plans go awry, hair-boaters react like a "right-stuff" test pilot of an experimental aircraft. The jet has just

entered a death spiral, but the pilot calmly attempts possible solution after possible solution until the plane either pulls up or augers in.

Similarly, a hair-boater seldom panics when the going gets weird, but exhibits an uncanny ability to improvise under conditions that would paralyze normal boaters.

To be perfectly honest, few whitewater paddlers possess the qualifications of a hair-boater. In fact, few whitewater paddlers care if they ever gain those qualifications. After all, class V-VI water is scary--and it's no fun being terrified.

But if that description fails to adequately summarize the exclusivity of the hair-boater's world, a glimpse at the next rapid would convince you that the Green best be left to paddlers who are redefining the world navigability.

Although flume repairs are scheduled for completion in 1991, Duke Power plans to continue to recognize the heavy downstream whitewater use.

According to Mary Katherine Scarborough of Duke Power Corporate Communications, the plant will be used as a peak power plant--not always on line.

Even during times when power is produced, Duke plans to hold onto water for weekend recreational releases. The Green appears to have a secure future as one of the nation's premier high-performance whitewater runs.

Gorilla has been run, but many paddlers elect to use the relatively easy portage trail. The reasons are obvious:

The entrance to Gorilla starts with an 8-foot boof move into a small two-boat eddy. Just below the entire river dumps through a wild three-foot wide slot that ends immediately above "the Gorilla"--a 20-plus-foot falls.

After spilling over the Gorilla, the Green surges into an eight-foot wide slot also known as "the Flume." Stretching for 90 feet, the Flume funnels water at break-neck speed before careening over a slide that drops 15 feet into a hole that is backed up by a hole protruding from the river left bank.

Just past the hole, fortunate paddlers will catch an eddy on the right.

Miss the eddy and a boater will run another 15-foot slide into another hole that is backed with another rock.

Looking up from the bottom of Gorilla, a paddler views approximately 70 feet of vertical--all technical, fast, pushy and meaty. And while the anticipation before the drop can be intense--almost painful--the release at the bottom is intensely satisfying.

A Freudian might nod knowingly at that description--then draw certain conclusions about hair-boaters. And Hell, he might be right: running a drop like the Gorilla can be better than sex.

But then, the same might be said about Green Scream Machine, Rapid Transit, Nutcracker and Sunshine--four more tough class V drops within the Narrows before the river slacks off to mere class IV boogie water for the final three miles.

Once the Narrows have been successfully navigated, the mood of boaters paddling the Green perceptibly lightens. But one named drop remains to be run--the Hammer Factor--just 1/4 mile from the takeout.

At the Hammer Factor, the river narrows to just 10 feet then drops 10 vertical feet against the river left bank. Paddlers disappear into the powerful hole at the bottom that pushes beneath an undercut rock before making a 90-degree turn to the left and swooshing the mat out. Even large-volume boats like Dancers and Corsicas will perform mystery moves--disappearing for up to five seconds before reappearing downstream.

A few minutes later, the Green rounds an island and the takeout for the Narrows section appears. The takeout for the Narrows and put-in for the easier downstream section (a one-pint run) are the same. Novice paddlers heading out for an afternoon of easy play at the class II Big and Little Corkies might pass physically and mentally drained boaters, dragging their kayaks to the parking lot.

Jeez--could that be fun?

No, it's hair-boating. And right now, the Green River Narrows is the stream that defines the term.

OVERFLOW CREEK

Snapshots of a classic Georgia class V descent reveal the attraction and peril of hairboating.

By DUDLEY BASS



In the pages of North Carolina Canoeing, Bob Sehlinger and Don Otey write "If Section IV of the Chattooga bores you, try Overflow Creek." They declared it was for "boaters with...a little insanity." That was the predicament the four of us found ourselves in one sunny warm afternoon: were we really all that bored with Section IV? Heck, after all, the Chattooga was at a romping 2.8' on the gauge. In the end we figured we were indeed bored with Section IV and probably not quite all there in the head, either. We mainly wanted relief from the crowds congregating along Section III that day for the recent International Peace Rally. As much as we enjoyed partying with the Soviets and Costa Ricans, when it came down to the water, we were seekers of solitude. So off into the wilderness of North Georgia's **Chattahoochee** National Forest we went.

Though one zigzags back and forth along the Georgia-South Carolina border to get there, Overflow Creeks lies entirely in Rabun County, Georgia. It flows through the mountains into the West Fork of the Chattooga River, which in turn runs into Section I, a mythical hair run which is illegal to boat. Lower overflow is supposed to be a beautiful, mellow run for beginner paddlers, but the Upper section drops 158 feet per mile for four miles through narrow, boulder-choked gorges with steep, lovely walls. Rhododendrons thicket the banks like iron octopi.

It took almost an hour and a half to drive there from the NOC Chattooga Outpost and set up shuttle. We rumbled up Three Forks (FSR-86B), a rough dirt road, and finally, we saw it. Overflow gushed from a large culvert beneath a bend in the road to plunge over an ugly waterfall. The creek dropped about 15 feet onto an enormous boulder jutting from dense jungle on the left.

"Is that it?" the three of us who had never seen Overflow before asked. "Wow!" Do people run that? Gosh, I've heard all kinds of horror stories about Overflow, but, man, does the whole **goddamn** creek look like that?"

"Naw, most folks put in below that drop, but the rest of it's pretty steep, too" replied the one who had only run Overflow once before.

I was surprised how calm I was unloading my boat and dressing for the trip. I remembered how terrified I'd been on my first steep creek descents last spring and wondered how long I could keep fear at bay this time. It won't be long, I chuckled. Hell, I like a good adrenalin buzz anyway. And this time, unlike an earlier adventure down **Slick-rock Creek**, I carried my camera. It was my intention to take a lot of pictures. I imagined myself bobbing peacefully in an eddy shooting glorious waterfall dramas. Little was I to know that by the end of the trip I was ready to throw that damn camera away.

We snaked down a steep but short trail and slid off into a large eddy. It was Wednesday, March 21, 1990. The sun was warm, but the water was icy. I looked about for water moccasins, half expecting

them to drop out of the jungle and wrap around my neck, but it was too early in the year for venomous reptiles. The water level was low, but there was still plenty to paddle. Minimum water levels for Overflow is 2.5 on the Chattooga gauge, with **3.0** a maximum for open boaters. Being my first time down Overflow, I did not know whether to sigh with relief that the water was not pushy or groan with misery at all the bare rocks to broach on. It was 2:45 PM.

Jeff Nelson and I were the only ones from NOC. Jeff had run the creek once before and was the most experienced steep creeker in the party. Peter Heller, formerly of NOC and now a writer for Outside based in Boulder, Colorado, and **Landis**



Arnold, a Prijon representative, also from Boulder, constituted the rest of the group. We all paddled kayaks: Jeff loved his Jeti, **Landis** loved his T-Canyon even more, and Peter switched seats just so he could paddle his Invader. I felt just fine in my **AQ**.

Overflow is a classic hair run. So many stories have been told about it by so few people I wanted to find out for myself. I've been pushing my limits, and thought myself up to the challenge. I knew when I put on it would probably be the hardest thing I've ever paddled, even harder than the Cascades of the Upper Nantahala, or so I've heard. I knew people were occasionally killed or injured attempting such descents. John Dolbeare, a friend of mine at NOC, died last year on the Lower Meadow. Feeling nervous, I had to question my motives. Even though steepcreekin' is fun, it definitely is not playing. I enjoy the physical and mental challenge of boating on the edge for sustained periods of time, feeling myself become one with the river, one with nature. There is some strange undefinable spiritual joy in reverting back to sheer animal instinct, as if shedding layers of civilized thought brings one closer to deity. Perhaps the degeneration back into animal is superior to the phony and dangerous fragility of man separating himself from nature. I mumbled my prayers to the River Gods

I imagined myself bobbing peacefully in an eddy shooting glorious waterfall dramas. Little was I to know that by the end of the trip I was ready to throw the damn camera away.

and turned downstream toward the first horizon.

Before we knew it we were bombing down steep, technical class 3 rapids. Nature upped the ante as we caromed down nasty, twisting class 4 falls ferrying from one eddy to the next. The sun was out, the sky a gorgeous deep blue ribbon above giant slabs of stone. We blasted down the creek, laughing and joking among ourselves yet with a strong reverence for what were on. The river went around a bend and then dropped into a dark, quarter-mile long class 5 chasm. I pivoted around rocks and hammered down one rolling drop after another between immense rock walls rising up into the overhanging gloom. Maybe this was Twilight, but we weren't familiar with the names. Feeling like I'd been bouncing on a roller coaster, I duffed into an eddy with the others and whooped. I felt good. In control. Though while in the middle of the run I was thinking, "Damn, I can't take no pictures in this kinda shit!"

The river scraped through a class 3 and then vanished to the left. We eddied out. Seven-car Pile-up we think, though we weren't sure. "Things start to get hard now," Jeff warned. Overflow dropped about 20 feet off broken ledges into a boiling horseshoe hydraulic edged by an undercut bank. Our first runnable class 6. There was an obvious high water route sliding off the far right, but it was too low and rocky today. We walked.

We bombed down the river a little bit more and came to another 5/6 drop, a jagged double drop through three bad holes onto a barely submerged rockpile. Even the sneak route looked wicked. We looked long and hard. Maybe this was Gravity, or was it Swiss Cheese? We weren't certain. We were eager to run it, but it just did not look possible. As we scouted, a beautiful rainbow formed in the mist tossed up by the falls. A sign for good luck? We threw a log in. It dropped gracefully over the falls, then pinned vertically at the bottom. The log jerked and typewritten around in a circle while still erect, then broke into pieces. We walked again.

Finally after more 3/4 rapids, we came to the lip of another waterfall. We didn't mind getting out of our boats to scout, but we were getting tired of walking. We looked again. The river plunged 30 feet down a big V-shaped funnel pocked with exploding humps of water into a deep, clean pool. Class 5. We ran it. I didn't even flip. Peter, however, nearly blew out his shoulder was he airbraced through one of those exploding humps of water. It didn't bother him then, but the next day he claimed his shoulder was so sore it tortured him to pull on his shirt. Landsin was gonzo crazy. He couldn't believe he ran that thing. Whoopin' and grinnin'. Jeff just sat in his Jeti all cool and mellow and smiled. Well, I just couldn't sit still. I had to get in some whoopin' and grinnin', too. We heard this drop was called "Singless," as in you lose your voice going over the falls, but later discovered it was really named "Singlee" or "Singley" in honor of the first person to run it. Shucks, I sort of liked the first

explanation better.

We then entered the rapids of what we thought was probably Swiss Cheese, a long class 4/5 pitch through many offset drops and tight chutes. The canyon walls narrowed in on us as I paddled over the first drop. Elated after running the big falls, I made a mistake. Not having enough speed, I dropped off a weird slide that threw me into a pinning rock. I should have gone right, but got thrown left into a chute. My boat wedged and stopped. The bank was undercut just enough so that my boat suddenly rolled upside down. I got slammed on rocks in shallow water and tried fiercely to roll. Every time I set up the paddle got ripped out of one hand or the other. Goddamn it, I'm gonna roll! So I hung in there and started bashing over drops and running out of air. What was it Charlie Walbridge has written recently on boaters hanging in so long they pinned and died? I bailed out fast. Saw horizon lines ahead. Stroked for shore like a madman. Didn't even attempt to hold on to my gear and float feet first. I powered up the bank and was scrambling back upstream with a swollen elbow and a big bruise on my ass.

The others had saved my boat. Somewhat embarrassed, I hooked up my breakdown paddle and joined them in an eddy. Directly below was the crux of the rapids. All the water funnelled through a nasty slot split by a wedge-shaped rock covered by an inch or two of water. The slot-funnel was also a 5-foot falls. "Someone once pinned in there and broke his boat," Jeff told us matter-of-factly. "So run right over the top of the rock and jump it." All four of us obeyed and had clean lines. I found my paddle, then Peter discovered his ankles were throbbing. Apparently he'd bruised them when he pited in one of the upper drops of Swiss Cheese.

Below us lurked the Marginal Monster, a class 6 nightmare. Overflow Creek blasted over two big drops, each one into a horrible hole. Then the water poured over a third drop with most of it sluicing down a lethally undercut chute that could barely be sneaked. A few more drops followed before the creek dumped into a large eddy. Most people walk it, though it has been run successfully. Jeff had tried during his first trip down Overflow, and had gotten stuck in the top hole and swam. It was a horrendous swim, but he emerged unscathed. That was enough. He was walking the Monster today, and we followed.

Before one could portage the Monster, however, we first had to run the class 4 entrance rapids into an eddy on river left. Called Igor, it consisted of eddy hopping through a complex maze with an enormous, house-sized boulder at the end in the middle of the current. The rock was badly undercut and connected to shore by a jumble of boulder sieves on the right. Jeff, who was leading, somehow found himself shoved toward the undercut rock. I saw him struggling to backpaddle before he disappeared from view. I yelled to Peter. We eddied out and grabbed rescue gear. Peter and I

climbed up a face of mossy rock and scrambled up a steep bank clustered with rhododendrons. Fell from rotten wood as Peter lunged ahead. I tried to race, but found myself crawling on hands and knees. Stumbling and cursing, I popped back down to the water to behold a frightening sight.

Jeff was sucked into the boulder sieve up to the cockpit. **Landsin** and Peter were both leaning over the **rockpile** from above gripping Jeff by the shoulders of his lifejacket. Jeff had let go of his paddle and was bracing himself against the narrow tunnel with his head bent back beneath the rock. **Landsin** and Peter looked very tired and scared while Jeff wobbled there on the edge of death cracking jokes. It was an incredible view. If **Landsin** had not reached him in time, Jeff most certainly would have been pulled underwater into the undercut sieve and jammed without being able to wet-exit. Even if he had managed to swim through, it would have spat him directly into the Marginal Monster. I was ashamed to admit it, but my first instinct was to take a picture.

It would have been a fantastic picture! I imagined **Landsin's** and **Peter's** gripping faces, **Jeff's** contorted body, colorful paddling clothes against raw rock, all plastered on the pages of magazines and newspapers. My Nikon was fastened to my PFD. For a nanosecond I wavered, but I didn't have any time. A man's life **was at stake**, and I was scared. I inched into the water around a steep boulder to grab Jeff's stern **grabloop** bobbing out of the water. The sieve started sucking me in and the water got too deep. I glued myself to the rock and reached out as far as I could reach. "Hurry!" **Landsin** hissed while Jeff mumbled funny stories. Peter appeared about to lose his balance any minute. I couldn't reach Jeff. Wishing for a rescue hook, I gripped a carabiner with a prussic attached and extended my arm. I could barely reach Jeff. After what seemed like hours, I managed to biner into Jeff's bobbing boat and pull him out. I gave him a hug while the son-of-a-bitch smiled.

John Dolbeare's ghost came back to haunt us from the Lower Meadow. The authors of North Georgia Canoeing did warn us that "at least one highly skilled boater nearly lost his life on the creek recently." What goes on in the mind of rescuer and victim? **It all** seems a flashing blur of action, instinct, and rapid-fire thinking. Everything goes into a numbing overdrive of gut-wrenching fear, yet we were ecstatic and self-congratulatory over the successful rescue. My friends and I were elated, but we were really just lucky. Matters like what **type of** boat Jeff paddled come into play. If he had been in a creek squirt boat, like **Whitney Shields** was in when he was killed on the Lower Meadow ten days after Dolbeare, Jeff might have joined them. A radical low-volume boat like a Screamin' Meanie could possibly have been sucked down deep underwater, but Jeff's Jeti, being a big-volume spud, floated up through the sieve currents, enabling a speedy rescue. A paddlehook would have aided an even

quicker rescue.

After the near-miss in Igor and a difficult portage around the Marginal Monster, we paddled on through more continuous class 3-4+ rapids. This time Jeff was using **Landsin's** break down, the second time such paddles were used today. It was getting late, and we were exhausted. I hadn't had anything to eat all day save a few cookies for lunch,



and the other three were tired from staying up late the night before chugging vodka. When we arrived at the last class 5, a minefield of rocks and holes called Pinball, we elected to portage around sheer exhaustion. We normally would have run it, but by this time we were too tired to feel gonzo. Then **Landsin** spied Jeff's paddle in an eddy halfway down Pinball and elected to run. He had a clean line all the way down and saved the paddle. We waited for him at the bottom, then cast off together into the waning light. The sun was out of view and the temperature dropping. All four of us shivered from time to time and conversation gradually died out as we concentrated on getting down the river.

There were more continuous class 3 rapids and a few more challenging class 4 drops. We were water zombies. Numb and tired, we struggled to maintain attention. I caught myself paddling sloppily into an eddy near an undercut and berated myself. Tired and cold, I reminded myself this was no place to screw up. Overflow Creek is in an incredibly remote gorge, hours away from any hospital. At long last the river mellowed out, and there was the bridge signalling the take-out. It was 6:30. Gonzo fever returned for one last dance as we **yahooped** our way up the last steep, rhododendron-covered bank to the van. We sobered down as thoughts turned back to the near-misses of the day. Of the four of us, only **Landsin** emerged unharmed. I stared over into the darkening gorge, wondering why I was paddling such stuff, why I was pushing myself so close to the edge. **What was** the point? It was beyond beauty. The beautiful nightmares of Overflow had seduced me with its awesome power, and I vowed to return. Maybe to take more pictures.

I vowed to return. Maybe to take more pictures.

PIG-BOATER?

TECHNO-WEENIE?



Rivalries surface

as squirt boats submerge

By PETER COGAN

It's like a disc. I was in the water, but I had no momentum, and I was always tipping over. And I was always bracing -- you can't sit in it upright

--First Timer in a Squirt Boat

One day just changed the layout of my paddling season. I couldn't believe I was relaxed about getting stern squirted in Class V water. It was no big deal. By the end of the day I was comfortable.

--First Timer in a Squirt Boat

The two weekend releases on the West River in Jamaica, Vermont are usually a circus, occasionally a horror show, and often a good time. The crafts include the latest low volume squirt boats with wild, custom graphics, the standard roto-molded plastic boats, canoes of all types, and the true daredevils of our rivers: tubers. Or as Nealy said, natu-

ral selection still at work.

The first wave is a beauty, and we surf it for hours. I was on it, paddling a low volume Screamin' Meanie, when a red, plastic "spud" boat plopped onto the wave from above, the paddler ignoring the five or so others waiting in line in each eddy on the sides of the wave. I paddled into the eddy, unwilling to be "spudded," wondering if this wasn't another case of plastic vs. glass, surface vs. squirt, roto-molded vs. radical.

Regardless of his intentions, it was typical of a New England (and national?) problem: the peaceful coexistence of plastic and glass boats. While certainly not on par with the emergence of Eastern Europe as a global issue, it affects a core group of serious river runners, and demands attention. These are the observations of a New England kayaker, watching the battles from nearby eddies, and occasionally becoming involved in a skirmish or two.

As kayaking has undergone a mini-explosion in New England, the community of paddlers have divided: plastic vs. glassboaters. While the racing community has always been a part of New England paddling, a new group -- the squirt boaters, paddling custom fiberglass and kevlar boats -- have appeared within the last few years, and tensions have surfaced.

Essentially, it's as if new crafts suddenly invaded the waters, taking over surfing waves and holes, their practitioners often wearing clothing whose colors are more often seen at an up-scale ski resort, and speaking a new language. Truly, these boats were being paddled by aliens.

Squirt boaters talked about "splating" in orgasmic tones. "Mystery moves" and "rocket moves" were discussed in intricate detail, with the word "subsurface" often being used. "5 over 6" "boofing"....the list went on.

The boats themselves added to the mystery. Simple but bold roto-molded colors were out. Pinstripes were gone. Instead, multicolored crafts, some with near day-glo detail, appeared. Some had splatter patterns on the bottom, others splatter patterns on top. Jackson Pollack would have had a field day. Grab loops in pink, designsetched on the stem deck...it was chaos.

And finally, of course, the boats paddled, well, differently. Some seemed to be under water most of the time. Others could slide into holes and surf them as if they were waves. A squirt boat would enter an eddy in at least three different ways: the standard sweep and Dufek stroke; a lean forward and sweep stroke so that the paddler entered bow first like a corkscrew entering a bottle of wine; a reverse sweep with the squirtist hitting the eddy on his back, and the bow doing a pirouette. The view from the eddy: bizarre.

And what happened next is known to all New England paddlers: the plastic boaters and the squirt or low volume

boaters went their separate ways. Stereotypes emerged. Plastic boaters were "novices." They got in the way. They sat on the eddy lines. If you saw one, it was no big deal, because they'd be blown downstream fast anyway. Squirt boaters, on the other hand, were "hip." They were on the cutting edge of kayaking. But they thought they owned the eddies. Their razoredged bows and sterns came dangerously close. But to them, the more radical, the louder, the wilder — the better.

Not so, of course. Like Eastern Europe, the issue is considerably more complex.

Plastic boaters aren't turkeys, and glass boaters aren't the hottest of the hot. My friend Bob, an excellent (plastic) boater with a glass race boat, offers a balanced perspective. He sees the issue as composite boats versus plastic boats, as opposed to squirt vs. plastic. Sure, the glass boats can do more: they are lighter and more maneuverable. In addition, while plastic boats tend to either get "blown out" or "entered out" on big-

ger, steeper waves, the glass boats can ride steeper waves by digging in the tail, and thus surf at a shallower angle. In plastic, he says, "you give up 10-20 degrees." Finally, composite boats offer a better fit, and thus faster response.

Nevertheless, he sees distinct advantages, and a clear market, to a plastic boat which he paddles when not racing. Plastic is obviously an intelligent choice for beginners, given its durability. It's easier to learn the basic skills in a boat that is as stable as kayaks can get. In addition, you don't have to repair a plastic boat. Well, almost never. Finally, their greater volume makes edging and hole playing easier.

The issue of "attitude" on the river is subtler. His theory is that squirters tend to be boaters who have paddled longer than most, and have a sense of community from the proverbial "old days":

These are folks who have been in the sport longer, long enough to remember when it was a pretty tight boating community. The sport started small.



Crowded eddies with boaters waiting to play: the problem is compounded by divergent paddling styles.

Three to four years ago it exploded, and since these guys started earlier, they've moved onto different boats. They have a new tight community. They have set themselves apart to be different from the rest of the crowd.

Bob also sees the squirt boats as a "new twist" to kayaking. 'You run a river a lot, and you eventually want more

excitement. As you get more comfortable on the same river, you keep striving for bigger water, more challenges." Squirt boats thus become a "new frontier" for kayaking.

Maybe. I see it as a deeper issue, involving the unique **psyche** of New England. A combination of the work ethic and the Puritan attitude that lingers

in us all. John Calvin, the quintessential New Englander, would have loved paddling in this area. Cold, rainy March days with little hope of salvation or sun. Near frozen fingers and toes, compounded by 35 degree water. A seemingly whimsical season, offering no guarantees of water, but only steady prayer to the Gods -- the rain Gods.

Which of these boaters would you buy a used kayak from?



Which of these boaters would you buy a used kayak from?

Which of these boaters would you prefer to drive your shuttle?

Which of these boaters would allow to date your sister?

Which of these boaters would you ask to run safety for you?

Stereotypes are prevalent in our society. It seems to be an unavoidable human failing for one group to look down on another.

Boaters are no exception. In the East, it seems to be a common attitude among low-volume glass boaters that paddlers in plastic **craft** are bumbling

geeks.

Conversely, plastic boaters often regard their low-volume brethren as mindless show-offs who have forgotten the original purpose of whitewater boating—running a river.

In reality, the low-volume glass boats do require a higher degree of skill to handle in difficult water. And like a finely-tuned sports car—a squirt boat can offer a **higher** degree of performance when paddled by an expert.

However, it is a matter of fact that there are plenty of squirt boats out there that are paddled by individuals with inadequate skills. And the resulting

mayhem creates problems for surface and squirt boaters alike.

And there are plenty of surface boaters on the river, who for reasons of comfort, durability or economics, prefer their old stand-bys. Still, they can make their Dancer do everything but stand up and sing.

These new stereotypes are crazy. The boat doesn't make the paddler.

And, oh, yeah--the answer to those opening four questions: none of them.

They all look like typical **white-water scum**.--*chris koll*



And Calvin would have paddled plastic. Plastic boats take work to move. They are limited in their range: they paddle on the surface only. They can "surf," "play," and "ender." They come in sedate blues and reds, banana yellow, simple black and whites. Perfect for the Puritan Paddler.

Squirt boats, on the other hand, are radical. A squirt-boating Puritan is a contradiction in terms. "Splatter" graphics, for example, upset the entire surface boat reality. Each boat is an individual statement, while each type takes the paddler further and further away from the old, simple days Surface Reality. What God-fearing New Englander, for example, would ever be seen in a Screamin' Meanie? That's the devil's work, man. What staid New Englander would be caught doing a mystery move? It sounds illegal. No. Better off to play it safe, stay within the confines of Surface Reality, avoid the complexities, irregularities and metaphysical wanderings of the crafty squirt boats. Who knows where they will bring you?

Squirt boats are anathema to the New England work ethic. Because of their design and weight, you don't need to work as hard. Surfing a wave is the clearest example; you can use the tail and your body weight to move the boat, rather than pushing on the paddler. In other words, you work less, and play more. Heresy! Heresy! Calvin would say.

Finally, Fear, a constant in the Calvinist religion, is mitigated with squirt boats. Just watch what happens when two boaters - squirt and plastic - go through one large hole.

It doesn't matter really. The issue is Fun on the River, and fun can be had by

all. Of course, mixed groups remain a problem. Different boats can surf different waves. Different boaters play different spots -- surface boaters would be bored silly in the same eddy a squirt boater could play all day in. Some want to ender, while some want to splay. Some want to blast holes, some want to side surf. These are difficult choices -- regional, national, international.

Certainly, however, some initial guidelines can be tentatively suggested for the sake of interspatial harmony.

For Those in Plastic

•When you see five squirt boaters in an eddy, avoid the urge to see them as bowling pins. Rather than crash into them, chest-high, enter the eddy gracefully, perhaps saying "So, uh, you guys from around here?"

•Try to be friendly. Instead of "is there really a boat underneath you" or "are you a paraplegic?" try "Gee, that's an interesting design. Let me get to the side of this eddy, away from the eddy line."

•When approaching a play-spot from upstream, look for a holding pattern in the eddy. There usually is one.

•Speak the same language. Talk about rivers, politics, Conrad's "Heart of Darkness." Avoid references to new steps in the roto-molding process, durability issues, and the merits of Harmony paddles. Don't call a squirt boater a "squirthead," a "techno-weenie," or especially a "podimasochist."

•Enjoy and respect the river. Kayakers are still kayakers, regardless of

what they are paddling.

For Those in Glass

•When entering an eddy filled with plastic boats, play it cool. Don't do a ninja -- arrive more or less on the surface, bow generally in the water. Avoid asking stupid questions like "Can you blast this hole" or "where's the squeeze in this eddyline?"

•Don't be contentious. Saying "I used to paddle plastic in the early eighties" or "did you pack a cooler in that boat" is not appropriate. Calling a surface boater a "river turkey," a "spud boater," or a "pig boater" is definitely out.

Communicate. Talk in the language of rivers, not of boats. Say "you really should have hit that eddy higher" instead of "gee, you maxxed out your charc into the squeeze way too early, dude." Those listening to subsurface communications, complete with subsurface jargon, might want to put you subsurface.

•Share with your plastic buddies. Two minutes on a wave is long enough, even if you don't need your paddle.

•Enjoy and respect the river. Kayakers are still kayakers, regardless of what they are paddling.

Editor's Note: Peter Cogan learned to paddle in a Perception Quest, and then used a Mirage, followed by a Dancer. He now paddles - not squirts - a New Wave Vampire and a Screamin' Meanie. He is the President of the Kayak and Canoe Club of Boston and hails from Vermont.

"You've got a friend"



"Right" and "Left" are only paddle commands
when a former cold warrior finds himself
trapped in a raft pitching
through Bull Sluice
with five Russian
madmen.



By JOE GREINER

There! Right over there! That's the last eddy to take out if we want to scout Bull Sluice."

"Nyet!! Ve go! Da?!!!"

"DA!!!!" said the crew.

All but one, that is. We hurtled past the eddy of last resort as I silently said a string of curse words, despair words, and a prayer...in that order. I briefly considered abandoning ship but we were already in the **approach rapid**. My Soviets were going to run the "Bull" at 2.8 without even a glance! I couldn't help them much. **They spoke** almost no English and I spoke even less Russian. Six paddles dug in as we looked down the gut at a large pillow on the horizon. About two hundred people lined the two sides of the rapid. As our six person raft hurtled towards the edge, I could hear the noise of crowd **anticipation** rise as we got closer to the drop.

My father became an engineer in 1942 and spent WW II working in the Brooklyn Naval Yard. His project...the Norden bombsight...the target...Germany and Japan. His effort from behind the lines helped the USA achieve the technological superiority that helped win that war.

In 1945, I came along. Thirty years later, I was employed by a German company. Seven years after that, I was employed by a Japanese company.

The first-born son employed by people that the father had helped to bomb.

And now, at the age of 45, I was in a raft with 5 Soviets helping to literally carry the Russian flag on **American** soil: I, who had **served during** Nam, to help stem the "red tide" was riding in a "red raft" towards the edge of the "Bull".

I had heard about Nantahala '90 in 1989. Almost as soon as the American teams returned from the 1989 Chuya Rally in Siberia in the Soviet Union, the word was out. The Russians are coming! The world is coming!

Several forces were at work to make this happen. River running in the Soviet Union is very much a homemade operation. Since it is relatively easier to make homemade tubes that float, than to make kayaks or canoes, the Soviets tend to paddle rafts and catarafts. Soviets have been gathering on the banks of the

Chuya River in Siberia of the USSR in the spring since about 1979. Here they would compare gear and engage in rafting competition.

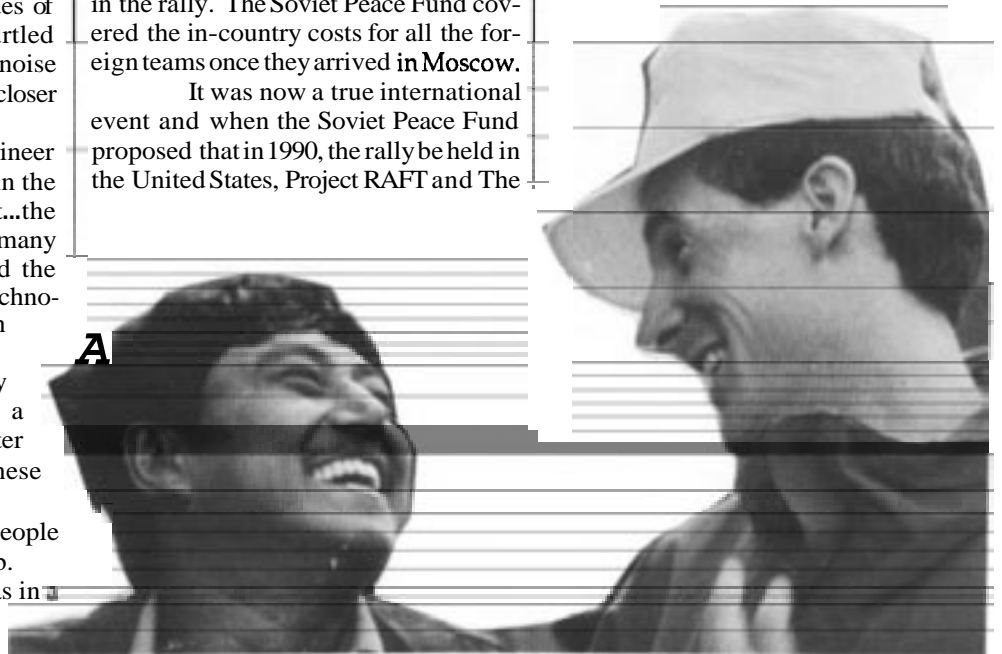
Project RAFT (Russians And Americans For Teamwork) was started in 1986 by two Californians, Jib Ellison and Mike Grant "to further the mutual understanding and cooperation between nations...by providing a model of teamwork for survival." Through joint Soviet-American whitewater rafting trips, Project RAFT has brought hundreds of Americans and Soviets together.

In 1988, Project RAFT was invited to send a team to the Chuya Rally. That led, in 1989, to seven American teams and fifteen teams from other parts of the world being invited to participate in the rally. The Soviet Peace Fund covered the in-country costs for all the foreign teams once they arrived in **Moscow**.

It was now a true international event and when the Soviet Peace Fund proposed that in 1990, the rally be held in the United States, Project RAFT and The

of March 18 to 25. Eventually forty-one teams from seventeen nations were there. Twelve American and twelve Soviet teams made up the bulk of the teams. There were also teams from Nepal, India, New Zealand, Costa Rica (two), Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Guatemala, Canada (two) and others.

Like any birth, this one had its gestation period. Funding was somewhat slow and then major sponsorships came from Extrasport, General Motors, and the Lyndhurst Foundation. Chums, Perception, and Jack Daniels were among the event sponsors. About one hundred other groups, individuals, and organizations donated time, materials, and money.



Nantahala Outdoor Center eagerly accepted the sponsorship and Nantahala '90 was conceived. The statement of purpose is simple and direct. "There is no more effective means of developing teamwork and trust than literally putting people in the same boat where they must work together to negotiate a demanding whitewater river; and there is no more effective way of developing compassion, friendship, and ultimately, the world peace we all long for, than to involve people in a large sporting event at a remote site."

The remote site was Wesser, North Carolina. The sporting event was Nantahala '90, **six days** of rafting, **kayaking**, and triathlon events during the week

Time rolled on and the child started to take shape, nurtured by its volunteers and its parents.

Some births are easy. This one wasn't. As the teams gathered in Atlanta on Friday, storm clouds were dumping about 4 inches of rain over the Nantahala watershed. The river rose alarmingly high and eventually overflowed into the parking lots. Slalom gates that had been hung in anticipation of the visitors were washed away. As the water receded, the NOC looked like a river delta. Crews were hurriedly gathered to shovel muck and lay gravel. The local quarry opened on Sunday to help provide rock and gravel. The teams were advised to stay **an extra** night in Atlanta. The roads were

Strapped on the tubes of a cataraft like a C-1, paddlers are able to achieve a high degree of maneuverability with the inflatable.



treacherous and the campsites at Tsali were just beginning to dry out.

Finally, Sunday saw the teams arrive and set up camp. The parade in Bryson City was held. The opening ceremonies were held at Swain County Park and the teams ate the first of many meals of North Carolina barbecue.

Nantahala '90 had survived childbirth. I arrived to volunteer that same night.

I had read about the purpose of the event and felt that giving one week to this cause was worth it. Many others felt the same and most of the volunteers were set to work to repair and prepare the slalom course on Monday. This was to be a practice day.

Then, I met Lev. And the seeds were sown for my date with the "Bull".

Lev and I go back a long way. He is originally from the USSR but now lives and works in Philadelphia. He was at Nantahala '90 to be an interpreter.

There were three events on the schedule that called for a kayaker. It seems that several of the teams came from areas where kayaking was almost unknown because of lack of boats or skills or both. Several teams wanted to add a kayaker. Would I be interested?? Would I??? Do rivers flow downhill??? The next thing I knew, I was being introduced to six stal-

wart fellows from the city of Perm, USSR. Perm is very near the somewhat arbitrary Asian/European border. They called themselves Team Eurasia. We shook hands. I was accepted. I would paddle kayak in the two kayak slalom events and in the river rescue event. I felt bad about letting down the volunteers, but when I wasn't competing, I still could help out.

On Monday evening, a meeting of the competition committee reaffirmed that there may only be six members on a team. It was all right if teams wanted to change rosters to add skills. It was even in keeping with the intention of the event to become an international team by adding American kayakers to foreign teams. But, there could only be six competitors per team.

When I heard that, I thought that it would be most unfair of me to take someone's place who had come ten time zones to participate. Later that evening, I found Lev and Team Eurasia. I thanked them for their invitation but said that I couldn't take anyone's place and that I would just help out as a volunteer which was what I came to do in the first place.

After that was translated, one of the team members in back started to point wildly at himself and say in Russian

"Me!! Me!! Me!!!". After some confusion, I found out that they had really only brought five competitors. The sixth person was to be a videographer and photographer. He did not want any part of the rafting events. If I would be in the raft for all the six person raft events, paddle kayak for them, then could I be their sixth competitor? Do rivers run downhill??

That night, I worried. I was no better than middle-of-the-pack as a competitive kayaker. What if I was on a team of raft studs that was going to be in contention? Athletes say that representing one's country really gives you an extra shot of "juice". I was going to be representing someone else's country. (This is one weird feeling.) I couldn't let them down.

But, not to fear, they were also middle-of-the-pack, as they showed in the four person raft slalom and the two person cataraft slalom. My middle finish in the first kayak slalom relaxed all of us. At the end of three events and the first day, it was obvious, they were not studly and neither was I. We were going to be able to compete and have fun and not be under any pressure from each other to finish high.

That night, David Bolling from Friends Of The River led a program that

ended with each of the team captains walking to the microphone and telling us a little about a river or rivers that meant something special to that team. They had been asked to bring a flask of water from their river(s).

After the talk, the flask was emptied into a large silver tureen. The Nantahala, the Chattooga, the Chuya, the Penobscot, the Deerfield, the Volga, the Pacuare, the Shotover, the Ganges, the Trisuli, the Grand Canyon, the Rogue, the American, and the Stanislaus all mingled in the bowl. The team captains drew out a bit of that water to take it back with them. Once mingled, the water was

We handed in our map to be scored and paddled off to have fun at the "Bull". I had been told that everyone had been briefed about the rapid. I assumed that my teammates would stop and look at it. When we paddled by the last eddy, I could hear that long, drawn out oooooo sound.

Chattooooooga!!! I could hear that bass. Chattooooooga!!! I could hear the "Bull". It was no longer musical.

I was now a living (at least for now) embodiment of the Nantahala '90 statement of purpose. I was in the same boat with five, grinning, possibly crazed Soviets negotiating a demanding white-water rapid. I yelled in fear.

They took it for excitement and yelled

back. We plunged over the lip, hit the tongue right down route #1, and punched through the bottom



inseparable. We were not quite so mingled....yet.

We broke into teams and departed for camp.

Chattooga. The name has a musical quality to it. Draw out the ooooo sound, add a little bass, and it becomes threatening. Chattooooooga!! On the second day of the event, we went to the Chattooga for orienteering in six person rafts. Given a map, a compass, a pin, and six checkpoints to locate, we started out at seven minute intervals from the Fall Creek put-in. While this was billed as a competition, you couldn't prove it by the attitude of some of the rafts. Some team members were seen napping as the rest of the team scoured the woods after the checkpoints. The course ended just above Bull Sluice. The paddling and the river had been musical, so far.

hole. We could hear the approving roar of the crowd over the roar of the rapid. I don't know about "developing compassion, friendship, and ultimately world peace". I do know that we developed an elevated heart rate, temporarily dilated pupils, and a raft full of water.

We checked to be sure we had everybody, paddled to shore, dumped the raft, and shook hands. "Hmmm. Maybe this idea is working after all."

Then came the hand signals. The number two. Fingers walking. Pointing upstream. Idiomatic grins. Pointing at me. "Oh No!! I think they want to walk back upstream and do it a second time.....with me!!" Well, if I could serve two years in Uncle Sam's Marine Corps, then I guess that I could do this for peace.

Just then, another raft hit the hole too slowly and stuck fast. At first, all

six paddlers were enjoying the ride. Then, the raft did not respond to any of the escape tries. Then, there were four. Then, there were three. Ropes were thrown. Too many ropes. Then there were two. One of them was tangled in a rope. Then just him. He was struggling to get a rope from around his neck. He succeeded just before, he too flushed out of the raft. Now, there was just the raft. Fortunately, someone had attached a line to a D-ring and it was trailing off downstream. Two other rafts had to get on the line and paddle downstream before the raft was freed.

Did that stop Team Eurasia?? Only long enough to look at the fun! Up and over the rocks we went, into the water, and down we came a second time.

No problem.

Wait. Three fingers. Walking motions. Pointing at me. To my knowledge, no other team did it more than once. We went up and did it again to make our total three. Troika. Friendship.

It was starting to get through to me what was happening and what I had become a part of. One of teams was from United Germany. There were members from BOTH East and West Germany in the same raft. I wondered when the last time there was a United Germany team in international competition.

Many of the teams were really a polyglot of nationalities. Many of teams were of mixed sex. Three of teams were all-women including the internationally composed all-women Amazonskis. This was a team that participated in the 1989 Chuya rally

and the Russian men gave them that name last year.

The mingling of the waters from the night before gave way to the mingling of the teams tonight.

The place was South East Expeditions, near the Chattooga. The food was the ever present barbecue and beans. The music was pure Appalachian provided by David Holt. Even if you don't know English...try not singing to Mountain Dew...try not tapping your foot to Ole Joe Clark. David played several mountain instruments (including himself, when he did quite a hambone solo) and everybody got dancing and singing to Rocky Top. One of my team later wanted to find Rocky Top on a Tennessee map. It took some doing, but I explained that Rocky Top was more a state of mind than an exact location.



Author Joe Greiner competes for Russian team during kayak portion of Nantahala '90 Rally.

David wanted to take a break. We wouldn't let him. He finally had to do an encore before he could take his break. As quickly as he left the stage, audience members took up the instruments. The banjo was now being played with a Moscovian accent.

Animals, as part of their natural defenses, maintain a physical zone.

You can approach an animal only so closely and then it will move off. So it is with us. This night, the physical zones between us, regardless of how big or how small, broke down. People were touching and hugging, swaying in unison to Russian tunes that we had no idea what the words were.

Russians, in turn, were hopping around to Appalachian bluegrass. But that physical space, or comfort zone, that we all possess had been shattered for at least that evening. There was a closeness, a camaraderie, a warmth in the air that made me think this could be the spring-time season for peace.

At least in this corner of the world. About the same time I had that thought, I looked at my watch and realized that it was March 22. Only two days before the calendar had marked the end of winter and the beginning of spring. I couldn't believe that this was just a coincidence.

I was struck tonight by the total indifference to the results of today's competition. I never heard one team ask another how many checkpoints they found

or how fast they found them. Instead I heard: "How did your team do in Bull Sluice? Did you see the raft that got caught in the hole at the bottom? Weren't you the team that flipped? Is everyone on your team OK?".

All this week, we were transported in fifteen-passenger vans, two teams to a van. The organizers deliberately paired American teams with Russian teams. It was an hour and a half ride back from the Chattooga to the camp-

ground.

Appalachian bluegrass, Moscovian banjos, concern for each other, indifference to results, long rides together. The mingling had begun in earnest.

I ran through some interesting feelings today. Today was my first day in the raft with my team. I was in a raft with five Russians (Communists).

I am old enough to remember the McCarthy hearings. Communist was a BAD thing to be. I didn't know why. I just learned that it was. When you learn something so early in life, it is hard to unlearn. The Russians have long been the "enemy" in the wintry cold war. Now, here I was trusting my health and safety to five people whom I could only communicate with through gestures. And yet, it worked. We were a team. We helped each other.

Indeed, we were in one small world together, being carried along in time on the current that is the Chattooga, working together, finding the checkpoints, traveling on, crossing the finish line.

The next day was triathlon day. The first team member rode a seven mile UPHILL bike ride. Our second member retraced five of those miles in a downhill run to the Nantahala put-in where he tagged the raft and then the remaining four of us paddled the eight mile leg on the Nantahala. That night, the mingling continued. Fontana Village had all the competitors over for (surprise) barbecue and beans. Then, we all learned western-



The river rescue event--In which all the members of the crew were forced to swim--proved one of the Rally's top spectator favorites.

styles square dancing. Do-si-do is the same in Russian and English but there was an interpreter for many of the calls. It was becoming harder and harder to separate the teams into national categories.

Friday came. Usually a good day. The end of the week. Pack the vehicle. Head for the mountains. Set up camp. A day of anticipation.

Rivers to run in the morning. Anticipation WAS in the air. Today was the river rescue event. In a two hour span, there would be a GUARANTEED two hundred swimmers below Nantahala Falls. This was a blood-thirsty crowd's fondest dream. And every competitor's dreaded nightmare. All but one from

each team would swim today. The air temperature 50 degrees. The water temperature, much colder than that.

A raft with three paddlers and paddles would start well above Nantahala Falls and negotiate gate number one. Only after the raft had cleared gate one could a swimmer start from an island and swim to the raft.

The raft had to pick up the swimmer and then negotiate gate number two with all four people. Gate two was just above Nantahala Falls. Once through gate two and the Falls, the raft had to be deliberately flipped and swum through gate three. Only after passing through gate three could a rope thrower throw one or two ropes to help the raft and its passengers to shore. All this time, a kayaker was also on the course. He started 15 seconds behind the raft, ran gate one, had to perform an eskimo roll between gate one and two, run gate two and then also flip, wet exit, and swim through gate three before being rescued or self-rescuing. The time started when the raft was started and ended when both boats were binned to a tree on shore, all six members of the team were holding a pole with all three raft paddles and the kayak paddle. Penalties were assessed for touching gates, missing gates, failing to roll, failure to get the swimmer off the island, losing paddles, etc. Pandemonium. Some of the best



A week of rain prior to the competition guaranteed juicy water levels for rafters.

boaters in the world were going to swim. It didn't make any difference how many first descents or medals that Eric Magnesson, Rafael Gallo, Eric Nies, Gordon Brand, John Kennedy, Sue Norman, Kathy Bolin, or Tom DeCuir had. They were going to swim!!

And swim we did. The crowd could not get enough. Each team had only one run. Strategy was plotted in advance. Some kayakers threw their paddle into an eddy, some kayakers raced to get ahead of the raft, some tried to stash their paddles on the bottom of the overturned raft, some rope throwers tossed only one rope, some threw two, some tried for self rescues. The starters held the next team until the previous team had cleared the course. Just about the time that the exatement of the one rescue was wearing off, here came five new victims.

Looking back, I think that this event, more than any other brought the teams together. Nothing builds a bond as quickly as knowing that you all swam the same rapid.

That night was a quiet one. We had been through four days and had two more to go.

The final two days of competition had been scheduled for the Ocoee, but the previous week's flood had taken care of that. With the Ocoee closed to us,

the second set of slalom races was held on the Nantahala.

The race committee set up a giant slalom of about one-half mile from above Nantahala Falls to just below the bridge for the kayakers. The six person rafts and the two person cataracts ran the same course except the course was extended through the notorious Wesser Falls. At normal water levels (3.25), this rapid can be dangerous. But at the elevated water levels we

had (about 3.75), a nice tongue opens on the right side of the rapid and it is easy to stay away from the dangerous, sharp rocks on the left. A gate was hung at the top of Wesser Falls, not to make it difficult, but more to show the teams where to enter the rapid. (A wise move by the competition committee, well applauded by all the teams.) The spectators were treated to 80 runs of Wesser Falls, 40 by the rafts and 40 by the cataracts.

The final event was at the Noli-chucky on Sunday, a six person down-river race. The level was about three feet on the staff gauge. To minimize the impact on recreational boaters and also to help teams unfamiliar with the river, the race committee started us at 30 second intervals. In twenty minutes, a string of 40 rafts was unleashed upon the river. This way, you could always see some rafts in front of you. We were doing



Rafters negotiate slalom gate on Wesser Falls section on Nantahala.

quite well until Quarter Mile Rapid.

At this level, a safe, fast, straight line opens up down the right side of the rapid. It is a little hard to read it for a first time boater, so the committee stationed a sentry on a strategic rock. Not only did this sentry wave and point us to the correct entrance point, but he had taken some extra raft paddles and laid out a giant arrow on the face of the rock, pointing right. But, our captain, seeing faster water down the middle ignored the signals. (Maybe he had gotten too cocky after our runs at the "Bull".) We barreled down the middle, hit a rock, spun hard and slammed into a kayaker sitting in an eddy. One of our team fell out. We pushed off. Our team member jumped back in. The kayaker was now pinned bow and stern, head up in a mild current. We left him. We headed straight for an infamous hole known as "Hungry Jack". We hit the hole and filled com-

pletely up with water but we did make it through. Now, heavy and totally out of control, we could not make the right hand turn above the copper-colored rock and slid off to the left and towards a slot known as "The Death Slot". Luckily, there was enough water that we slid through, losing another crew member. He swam back to the raft and climbed in just as we cleared the bottom ledge in Quarter Mile. I found the sentry after the race. He remembered us quite well. The kayaker eventually freed himself.

Ours was clearly the worst run of the day, so every else had a safe time.

We loaded up one last time for a long ride back to the Nantahala Outdoor Center for the closing ceremonies.

The Jack Daniels Bluegrass Band provided the music. The Jack Daniels Champion Pig Cookers provided you-know-what. The competitors provided the energy. The week's results were

announced. New Zealand finished in third place, the amazing, all-women Amazonskis were second, and a Soviet team from Gorky won for the second year in a row. Even though Gorky finished in

the top three in only one event, they never finished out of the top ten all week long and their consistency won the overall title for them.

Flags flew and waved and at one point, I found myself draped in the Hammer and Sickie. So did others. Joe McCarthy didn't just turn over in his grave. He was spinning like a top.

Cards were exchanged, good byes were said. The evening wound down with the announcement that Costa Rica in concert with project RAFT will host the next games in September, 1991. Rafael Gallo accepted the honor on behalf of his country and said "Compared to the Soviet Union and the United States, Costa Rica is a small country. But it has a big heart. We hope you all can come and participate in 1991 in WARM water."

The Soviet all-women's team had shared a bus all week with an all-women's US team. They closed the event by singing a bilingual version of Carole King's song:

'You just call out my name and you know where ever I am
I'll come running to see you again.

Winter, spring, summer, or fall, all you have to do is call

And I'll be there. You've got a friend."

History teaches us that technology and large engines of destruction will prevail in most armed conflicts. Nantahala '90 showed me that peace can be won one smile, one handshake, one hug, one friendship at a time.

'You've got a friend."

As river runners, we have all surfed that one big, exhilarating wave.

We get on, feeling the power beneath and around us, balancing those powers with our own bodies and skill, adding some of our own power, staying in concert with the forces around us. The organizers, the volunteers, the spectators, the participants, we all jumped aboard Nantahala '90. We felt its power. We added something of our own. It's over now. We're in the eddy. Just like river surfing, I can still feel some of the wave even though I'm in the eddy. I'm high. I'm content.

'You've got a friend."

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CONSERVE--back pages

Contact: Joe Greiner, AWA (919-834-4172) and Mac Thornton (202-543-4923)

20. Green River, North Carolina

Issue: Continue releases on weekends.
Current Status: Risa Callaway is asking Duke Power to continue with the release pattern currently in effect even after the aged power plant is rebuilt.
Contact: Risa Callaway, AWA (704-750-9134)

21. Little River, Alabama

Issue: Possible designation as a new National Park or Wild and Scenic River.
Current Status: Prospects look good. AWA Regional Coordinator, Ken Burst is working on a brochure. The Parks Service is now studying the area. REI made a \$1,000 grant to Friends of the Little River to help out.
Contact: Ken Burst, AWA/Friends of the Little River (205-977-5063)

22. Ontonagon, Manistee, Paint, and Brule Rivers; Michigan

Issue: Possible wild and scenic designation (also hydroelectric relicensing at the Ontonagon)
Current status: Legislation to designate these whitewater rivers as well as several other rivers in Michigan in a single omnibus bill pending in both the House and Senate since early 1990. is stalled although the Forest Service supports designation. Private landowners near some rivers have been stirred up by Charles Chushman of the National Inholders Association to fight the bills. Meanwhile AWA and American Rivers are pushing the Upper Peninsula Power Company's to comply with Federal law in relicensing the Bond Falls Project
Contact Matt Huntington, American Rivers 202-547-6900)

23. Pine River, Wisconsin

Issue: Hydroelectric relicensing
Current status: Boaters and river conservations are trying to improve the recreational opportunities at the Pine River in the FERC relicensing process. Dam removal is an option at this point.
Contact: Bill Beverly, Sierra Club (414-962-2294)

24. Clear Creek, Colorado

Issue: New dam under consideration.
Current Status: The Colorado Water Resources Agency is studying a new water supply dam which would affect this popular whitewater run just northwest of

Denver.

Contact Ric Alesch, AWA (303-985-8620)

25. South Platte River, Colorado

Issue: Possible construction of Two Forks Dam
Current Status: EPA has vetoed the original project, but the Denver Water Board is now pushing a one-half size Two Forks Project.
Contact: Ric Alesch, AWA (303-985-8620)

26. Arkansas River, Colorado

Issue: Possible dam, possible river allocation changes
Current Status: Although the whitewater run is now under State management, nothing in the plan prevents dam construction. Meanwhile, there are rumblings that the new management plan may come unglued and that private-commercial allocations will be revised, just 1 year after finalizing the plan.
Contact: Ric Alesch, AWA (303-985-8620)

27. Clarks Fork, Wyoming

Issue: Possible wild, scenic designation.
Current Status: Bills are pending in both the House and Senate to designate the 20.5 miles of the Clarks Fork (a trib of the Yellowstone) as a national wild and scenic river, but both are hung up over water rights issues.
Contact: Kevin Coyle, American Rivers (202-547-6900)

28. Rio Chama, New Mexico

Issue: Effect of new management plan on private boaters
Current Status: Ric Alesch has submitted extensive comments to Santa Fe National Forest regarding the new management plan to improve its effect on private boaters. Major issues are over-regulation of private boaters and fairness in the use allocations between private and commercial users.
Contact: Ric Alesch, AWA (303-985-8620)

29. Colorado River (Westwater Canyon), Utah

Issue: Possible wild, scenic designation
Current status: U.S. Senate bill S. 1719, introduced by Senator Garn and Senator Hatch, both of Utah would designate this famous river segment as a national wild and scenic river. The river is already within a wilderness area, but conservationists would like to see it in the national wild and scenic rivers system anyway since it is such a prestigious river area. Upstream water rights issues in Colo-

rado may derail the bill.

Contact: Kevin Coyle, American Rivers (202-547-6900)

30. Colorado River, Arizona

Issue: Damage to the environment downstream of Glen Canyon Dam
Current Status: AWA has joined with numerous other river groups and environmental organizations to back legislation requiring that management of flows from Glen Canyon Dam be changed to reduce environmental damage downstream in the Grand Canyon. Bills are pending in both the U.S. House (H.R.4498) and Senate (S.2807)
Contact: Kevin Coyle, American Rivers (202-547-6900)

31. Bruneau-Jarbridge and Owyhee Rivers, Idaho & Oregon

Issue: A proposed 1,500,000 acre Air Force bombing range would close down part of the area and bomb hell out the environment.
Current Status: Numerous national and local groups are opposing the Air Force plans, but the outcome is still uncertain.
Contact: Wendy Wilson, Northern Rockies River Project (208-343-7481)

32. Boise River (North and Middle Forks), Idaho

Issue: Possible Twin Springs Hydro development.
Current Status: Idaho Water Resources Board added these rivers to its interim protected rivers system to study the possibility of State protection from dams, but no Federal protection is currently being sought.
Contact: Wendy Wilson, Northern Rockies River Project (208-343-7481)

33. Payette River, Idaho

Issue: Possible hydropower development, GEM project.
Current Status: Financial backers have changed from the potato magnate to an out-of-State company and the project design is changing too, but the project--in another form--is still on the table and would dewater 17 miles of the most challenging whitewater in the world. Wendy Wilson and a coalition of many Idaho groups is fighting the project at the State level.
Contact: Wendy Wilson, Northern Rockies River Project (208-343-7481)

34. Elwha River, Washington

Issue: Removal of existing hydro dams

Current Status: Numerous environmental groups are asking that 2 existing hydro-power dams on this fabulous whitewater river be removed. If successful, this would set an exciting national precedent which might be followed elsewhere.
Contact: Carol Volk, AWA (206-876-6780)

35. Icicle Creek, Washington
Issue: Subdivisions, new roads, and other scenic degradation
Current Status: River Network, headquartered in Oregon, has formed the Icicle Canyon Coalition to support U.S. Forest Service purchase of threatened private lands in Icicle Creek Canyon, and is purchasing several large blocs of land itself.
Contact: Phil Wallin, River Network (503-241-3506)

36. Klamath River, Oregon
Issue: Possible hydropower development (Salt Caves Project)
Current Status: FERC wants to issue a license for a diversion and tunnel without a new dam, the City of Klamath Falls continues to push ahead, numerous environmental groups plan to fight the

project on all fronts. Wild and Scenic status is still a possibility.
Contact: Bob Doppelt, Oregon Rivers Council

37. McCloud River, California
Issue: Possible national wild and scenic status
Current Status: The U.S. Forest Service is recommending 24 miles of the upper river for wild and scenic status, but leaving out 23 miles of the lower McCloud to allow for logging and hydro development. River conservation groups are outraged and asking for inclusion of the entire 47.6 miles from Curtis Meadows to Shasta Reservoir.
Contact: F.O.R. (916-442-3155)

38. American River, California
Issue: Possible construction of Auburn Dam
Current Status: The Auburn Dam proposal is still alive, but conservationists are backing an alternative river-based national recreation area (like West Virginia's Gauley River NRA). A BLM report is due out soon (fall of 1990). Construction of a multi-purpose Auburn Dam would

destroy 48 miles of the North and Middle Forks of the American as well as divert water from the Lower American.
Contact: Bea Cooley, American River Coalition (916-448-1045)

39. Merced River, California
Issue: Possible wild and scenic protection for Lower Merced
Current Status: Bills are in progress in both the U.S. House and Senate to designate 8 miles of the Lower Merced as Wild and Scenic. This would be in addition to the existing 71 miles on the main stem and 43 miles on the South Fork added last Congress.
Contact: F.O.R. (916-442-3155)

40. Sixmile River, Alaska
Issue: Damage due to placer and dredge mining for gold. Possible land development for housing.
Current Status: Jack Hession and the Knik Canoe and Kayak Club are working to halt the damage and to try for wild and scenic protection. REI made a \$500 grant to help out.
Contact: Jack Hession, AWA/Sierra Club (907-276-4048)

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END NOTES

By GARY CARLSON

I saw the first sign in the form of a spray-painted message in foot-high crude letters on the back of an Ohio-plate outhouse:

"JESSE LIVES!"

During the ensuing month, reports of subsequent sightings came to my attention:

While sharing the bottom of a bottle around a campfire beside a North Carolina river, a besotted paddler belched once and confided to me: "Yeah, I paddled with the dude just a little while ago. He did a righteous mystery move...and then he never came up."

A friend from Canada wrote me an incredulous letter: "We were scouting a major drop on the fifth day of a self-contained, first-descent of a river falling off the Laurentian Shield when out of nowhere this solitary C-boater rounded the bend and cruises straight through the rapid. At the bottom of the drop he twirled his paddle once and disappeared out of sight."

And finally, a Sobek guide, just back from the Zambezi, called me collect to relate the following incident:

"A couple of us were hanging round the falls (Victoria Falls, of course) drinking Simba beer when we noticed an object plummet over the edge. At first we figured it was a log--or maybe a croc that was swept too far downstream--but then we saw a C-boater paddle out of the foam pile at the bottom. Who is this guy, anyway?"

Well, the Sobek guide can be excused for not knowing--about Jesse. He's been in darkest Africa for nearly a year--and most raft guides don't read newspapers, anyway. But every other paddler in the western hemisphere has heard about the legend of Jesse--white-water's version of John Henry.

Everytime I buy groceries, I read that Elvis and JFK are still alive--so why not Jesse?

Plunging over a 180-foot waterfall doesn't necessarily have to be fatal. Daredevils in barrels do it all the time. A young girl once swam the falls--and survived. Maybe Jesse saw a special line



or certain seam. In any event, if he didn't make it...where's the body?

Doesn't seem a little mysterious that his boat and paddle flushed free after just half an hour--but never a sign of Jesse? What could have happened?

A group of paddlers from Pittsburgh speculated that the force of the pounding water actually atomized the molecules of Jesse's body--spreading the essence of Jesse's spirit through free-flowing water everywhere.

Now, that's a pleasant thought--but it sounds a little flaky to me. Next thing you know, those people will shave their heads, don saffron robes and sell vials of "Jesse water" at airports.

Another theory attributes Jesse's survival to the high level of dioxins found in the Niagara River. The toxic chemicals preserved Jesse in a state of suspended animation until he revived--a little worse for wear. He'll next appear in the Japanese horror movie: "The C-Boater that Ate Buffalo."

And still another explanation claims that Jesse was recycled in the hole at the base of the Falls for three days. But on the third day he rose from the hole, walked across the water to shore, and set forth to enlighten the world on the virtues of C-boating.

Disciples of this sect now exclusively paddle C-boats and abstain from drugs, sex and alcohol. I suspect this group will not receive much support from the whitewater community.

Regardless how Jesse escaped the awesome hydraulic at the base of the Falls, reports of his presence are spreading across the nation: he was seen drying polypro at California laundromat...scamming trip beer from

an outfitter on the Colorado...riding Miller's shuttle out of the Big Sandy...ogling the French-Canadian women on the Ottawa.

Jerry Glanville even left him tickets for the opening Falcons game.

The truth of the matter is, whitewater boating has never had a myth to call its own. There are so many bizarre paddlers who have attempted so many ridiculously insane stunts that we've never had a single person stand head-and-shoulders above the crowd.

To qualify as a legend, a paddler would need to be a certified looney or a boater with a vision not readily apparent to the rest of the whitewater community now or in the next 100 years. Which criteria motivated Jesse's audacious act...who cares?

As for myself, I've got my own theories regarding Jesse's disappearance.

Anyone familiar with folklore of the Falls knows the legend of the "Maid of the Mist." To appease certain spirits--the story goes--native Indians sacrificed their most beautiful virgin by sending her over the Falls in a canoe.

The legend was captured on canvas by an early American painter. I can't recall his name, but I vividly remember his work: the maiden standing in the bow of the open canoe poised at the brink of the Falls, clothed in white buckskin, her raven hair strewn by the wind, foam licking over the prow of the boat.

But the most striking feature of the painting was the expression on the maiden's face. She appeared utterly calm--completely devoid of fear--like she knew something that none of the rest of us (except for Jesse) will ever share.

I like to think, if the maiden had a paddle--she would have been twirling it.

And I also like to think that wherever Jesse surfaced, he found the maiden, preserved and nurtured by the spray and waiting for a little company.

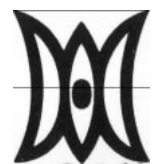
By Gary Carlson, a legend in his own mind, but who has never had a maiden wait for him.



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to
the
river...
drop
me
in
the
water...

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