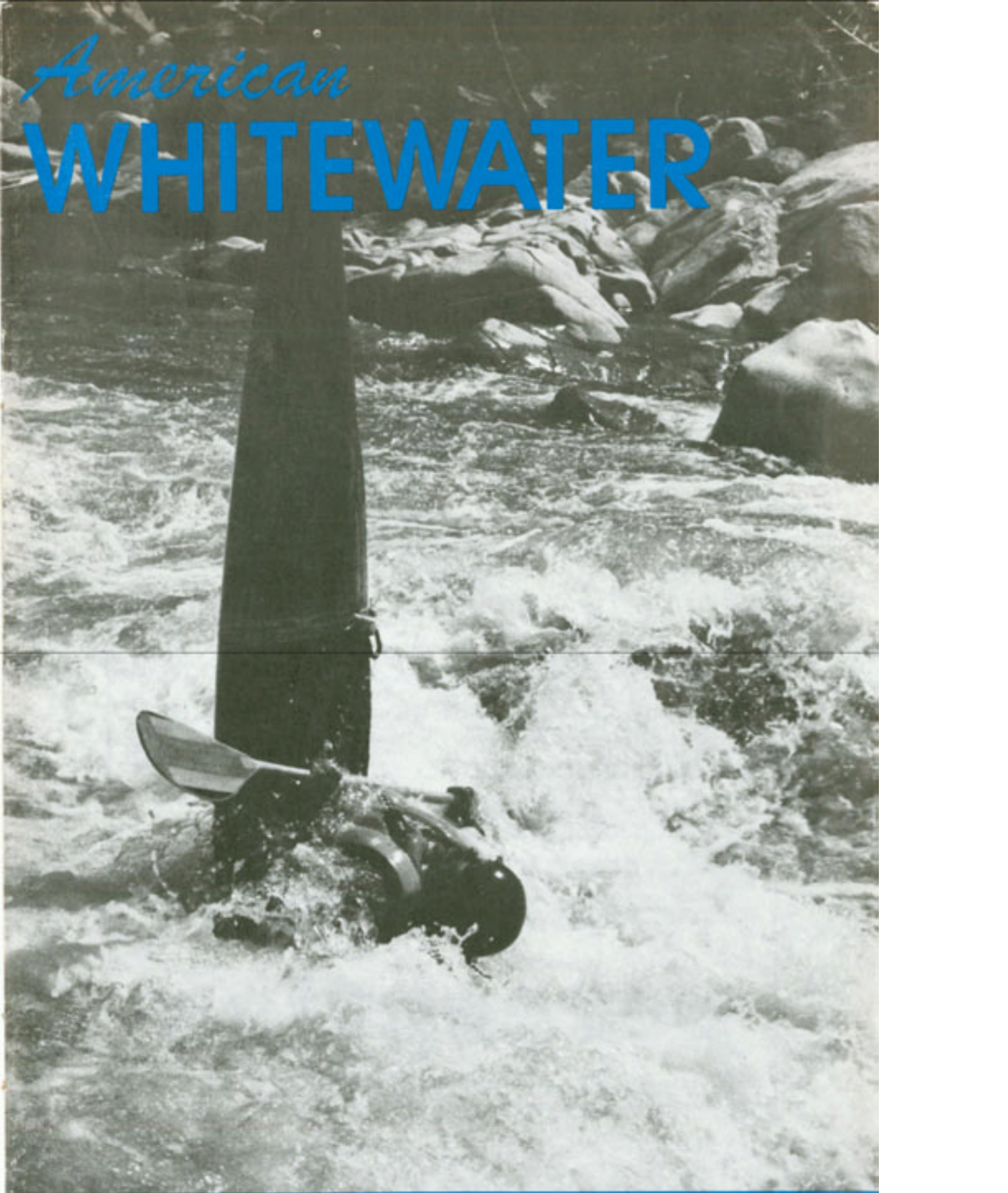


*American*

# WHITEWATER



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Vol. XXIX No. 6



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Herman Smith surfs at Entrance Rapid on the St. Francis River. Ted Andres photo.

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 AWA is published six times yearly. Single copies \$1.50 ea. Surplus back copies and other AWA Products are available from AWA, 146 N. Brockway, Palatine, IL 60067.  
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Cover Photo: Tom Montgomery pops one the hard way at Double Drop on the St. Francis River. Photo by Jack Hurley.

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# The Fluvial News

What's Flowing in  
The Boating Community

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## Dear Readers:

Another year is about to wind down. The American Whitewater directors would like to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

We hope you have been enjoying your copies of American Whitewater and will renew your subscription. The board of directors and myself envision the journal to be like the American Alpine Journal, a journal where quality expeditions and travels take place and are presented to the readers, in a sophisticated manner. We know our readership is beyond the how to stage, in fact I consider this readership on the adventures edge.

I will also try to blend a mix of racing news, new river exploration, pushing the limits, and plain ole downhome stories to keep ya coming back for more. We always encourage first time writers that have a good story or adventure to tell. We don't even mind if you sell out to OUTSIDE MAGAZINE first, just as long as you provide us with an inside paddlers viewpoint.

A lot of informational guide books are out this year, along with fantastic video movies. I hope you will fill the stockings with paddling books and keep the river running fantasies alive. Afterall, doesn't the new paddling season taste sweeter after a few months of layaway.

Much congratulations to Pete Skinner for not selling out to OUTSIDE on his fine story about lady paddlers and Cameron O'Connor. Yours truly also has a story about inflatables running slalom courses, a first in North America. All in all quite a unique issue. Hope you like.

Sincerely,

Dave McCourtney

## THE TUOLUMNE WINS

President Reagan did the easy part, Friends of the River, the Tuolumne River Preservation Trust and conservationists around the country are celebrating the California inclusion of the Tuolumne in the National Wild and Scenic Act. Thanks for all your help. We Won Another One!

---

## AWA ANNOUNCES AVAILABILITY OF FERC INTERVENTION FORMATS

AWA now proudly announces the availability of prepared motions for intervention in hydropower project proceedings before the Federal Energy Resources Commission (FERC). These papers describe the nature of AWA as a not-for-profit organization whose purpose, among other things, is to protect and enhance rivers for river sports.

We have different carefully crafted motion formats for:

1. Normal intervention in both minor and major projects
2. Intervention out of time (if you missed the deadline)
3. Reopening a proceeding after the license was issued
4. License Article reconsideration

The formats feature a wealth of basic information about the sport in general, whitewater paddlers as a group and about AWA members. This information helps demonstrate that your interest group through affiliation with AWA deserves intervenor status in the proceeding of your choice. As time goes on, other forms may become available too.

These formats are available on IBM Compatible Displaywriter (Textpack 2, upward) eight (8) inch disks or soon on five (5) inch PC compatible disks as well (depending on demand). The forms are also available in hard copy as well. The prices for these forms depend on the medium for transmittal, but will not exceed \$20.

These forms, however, are not complete filled out. The receiver must insert the necessary information specific to the project they have in mind. Likewise the intervenor must recognize whether certain arguments are appropriate or not to his/her project situation. All the basic information, however, is presented. Keep in mind, however, that once you are accepted by FERC as an intervenor, all the followup motion practice, presentation of evidence, etc. will be your responsibility.

Anyone interested should send a request to Peter Skinner, Box 272, Snyder Rd, West Sand Lake, NY 12196.

AWA is happy to authorize through him intervention in any hydroproject on behalf of the organization as long as the group interested has a modicum of resources to invest in such an effort. We are anxious to play a more assertive role in river protection.

---

### **AWA MAKES EFFORTS TO INTERVENE IN MOOSE & BLACK RIVER PROJECTS BEFORE FERC**

In a move designed to protect the interests of paddlers on two premier New York State rivers, AWA has sought intervention in Federal Energy Resources Commission proceedings associated with three major hydroprojects. Real participation in hydropower plant decisions requires that organizations like AWA or individuals for that matter officially intervene before the federal agency who grants licenses to such projects. Groups are not taken seriously by facility developers if such efforts are not made. Likewise, negotiated recreational arrangements made before the announcement of the application may never make it into the final license.

In the case of the Black River, two major projects threaten to flood or dry up the paddling on this important northern New York State River. The segment of the Black in controversy is from Watertown to Brownville, a five mile stretch of Class II - Class V rapids. Featuring both waterfalls and numerous big water play spots, this segment has seen an explosion in paddler use in the last two years as water quality has improved significantly and police interference ceased. Rafting on this stretch has also grown tremendously.

Use of the river has grown for other reasons as well. This segment of the Black is exciting all summer and fall and is directly accessible off Interstate 81 outside Watertown. Big waterwaves and holes abound and the vertical walled canyon adds spectacular scenery to the run. The very friendly Ron Smith of Adirondack River Outfitters, Inc. welcomes private paddlers to use his facilities in downtown Watertown. Although Spring flows may be a bit much for intermediate paddlers, the 3000 cfs or less flows in throughout the Summer make for wonderful weekends in the sun.

The Glen Park Project, located halfway down the run will dry up about a mile of the best rapids on the run. The original project developer, Niagara Mohawk Power Corp. concluded that the river was too swift for paddling and concluded that the river was too swift for paddling and concluded "For public safety and plant security purposes, unauthorized individuals will be excluded....(and the site) will be fenced..." Water from the river will be diverted into a riverside canal and put through turbines which will discharge below the "Cruncher" hole paddlers play in endlessly.

The Brownville Project is a dam proposed for a site one mile below the tailrace of the Glen Park Project. This dam will create an impoundment which will flood the remaining play spots below the famed "Poop Chute" drop on the edge of an old crib work dam below the "Cruncher." Even if the Glen Park Project is stopped or changed to facili-

tate paddling, the **Brownville Project** will eliminate another good chunk of rapids. In addition, its architects created a design which at high water will create a hydraulic jump at its base which will trap paddlers who venture onward down the river. Access at both projects will be essentially unavailable during and after construction.

As discussed elsewhere in this issue, AWA has intervened in the FERC proceeding #4349 regarding the Moose River Hydroelectric Power Project located at and below the Ager's Falls site. Although a precedent setting arrangement was struck between the Moose River Coalition and Long Lake Energy Corp., the site developers, AWA has intervened to assure itself that the final license properly implements the plan and that construction activities will have minimal impact on the river corridor.

Finally, discussions are underway with Georgia Pacific Corporation who has sought a FERC license to redevelop two existing power plants below the proposed tailrace of the Ager's Falls project. Efforts here have focussed on paddler access, releases and scenic enhancement. Anyone interested in learning more about these actions should contact AWA NYS Conservation Director, Ms. Karla Matzke at 20 Besch Ave., Albany, NY 12210, 518-465-0569.

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## ANOTHER FIRST ON THE MOOSE

by Pete Skinner

Paddling the "bottom" Moose from Fowlersville to Shibley Road for the first time has always been a significant experience for whitewater paddlers. It separates the women from the girls, men from the boys. The descent of its falls gives new perspectives to whitewater paddlers who get vertical over and over in its three miles of froth.

It is fitting then, that an agreement recently hammered out by a coalition of paddlers and environmentalists formed to protect it set a similar precedent setting standard for paddling protection.

The fight was joined in 1982 when Long Lake Energy Corp. released its preliminary engineering plans for the Ager's Falls project. This project planned to remove water from one mile of this magnificent fallway to generate 15 kw of electricity. Five spectacular drops would have been lost to paddling and the scenic corridor desecrated by the original design. Swinging into action, a coalition of concerned paddlers and others began a strong effort to obtain proper recreational releases and scenic protection.

Many letters and meetings later, success was achieved. The massive head works were reduced to an innocuous, adjustable and runnable weir atop Ager's Falls. Much of the penstocks will be placed underground. A minimum of terrestrial disturbance will be occasioned by construction. Whitewater access, a riverside trail and camping facilities will be provided.

Most startling, however, was the agreement to shut off the generators twenty days each year to permit paddling. Ten of these will be scheduled ahead of time and ten will be provided on a request basis given three days warning. Perhaps most amazing is that Long Lake's FERC application features kayaks on its cover!

Much of the credit belongs to Karla Matzke and Mike Pesavento who spearheaded the drive to recruit membership and research the original Long Lake proposals. Environmental attorney and paddler, Doug Ward, donated his time to facilitating compromise and perspective.

An entrenched and intractable developer would not, however, have responded as did Long Lake. The chief officers of Long Lake, Paul Elston and Don Hamer, are committed environmentalists. Paul, for instance, served in high level posts in both the New York State and United States environmental agencies. Their recognition of the unique nature and great value of the Moose's recreational potential played an important role in the development of this plan.

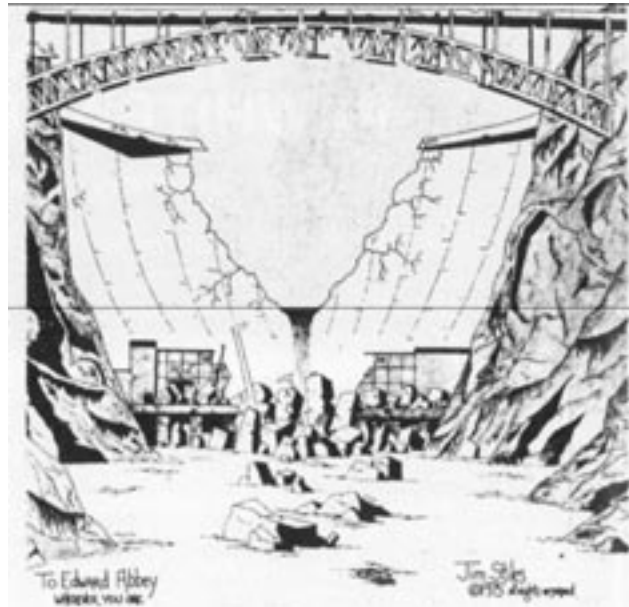
The plan does more than assure availability of recreation on this magnificent stretch of river. It puts FERC and other small hydro developers on notice

that whitewater paddlers are a force with which to be reckoned. It shows some designs and operating regimes of small hydro can be consistent with the whitewater sports.

Hammering out this arrangement was not without bitter sweet sentiments. Twenty days per year is not 365. A trickle usually won't replace a torrent. Recognition, however, must be given to the limited consideration governmental agencies, especially FERC affords the whitewater sport. Likewise, the Moose's challenges limit the spectrum of users to experts whose numbers although growing are still small compared to, say, skiers or deer hunters. Instead of people power, however, the Coalition exercised aggressive compromise to achieve what may be a first - a FERC license whose terms authorize releases and design elements specifically for paddling.

Much work remains to be done such as monitoring construction, arranging release dates and communication formats. Downstream, Georgia Pacific must be convinced to adopt a consistent plan for their Kosterville and Shibley Road facilities. This should, however, not be impossible given the upstream arrangements now in place for the Agar's Falls Project. Finally, FERC will have to be convinced of the overall efficacy of this arrangement.

Armed with a success like the Moose, paddlers should sally forth and confront the many headed Hydra of small hydro developers without fear of failure.



**WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS:**

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—Ed.

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# HIGH ANXIETY IN WHITewater BOATING

Courtesy of Michael Larimer

Fear is an inescapable part of whitewater boating. The human body is not adapted to living in water, especially whitewater, and any activity which takes place on it will involve a certain amount of fear. On a recent beginner kayak clinic, I was for the umpteenth time an interested observer of how different degrees of fear motivate whitewater boaters. I am concerned with this because part of an instructor's job is to help students deal with fear. The success of a clinic can hinge upon his ability to do this.

The first step in dealing with the fear of whitewater boating is to identify it. Ask a boater what he or she is afraid of, and you will get many answers. Fear of flipping, swimming, hitting the face on rocks, entrapment and drowning will all be mentioned. Most of these fears boil down to fear of the unknown or fear of dying.

There are different degrees of fear in whitewater boaters. I have experienced them all at one time or another. A low level of fear will stimulate or "psyche" the boater. At the top of a difficult rapid or river, the boater's pulse will quicken, the adrenaline will start to flow and the concentration will sharpen. Loud and rapid conversation, a lot of laughter, and quick, hurried movements are all signals of what we call a "psyched-up" state of behavior. Such a state can be very valuable for successful negotiation of a difficult stretch of whitewater and is usually a very positive state of mind.

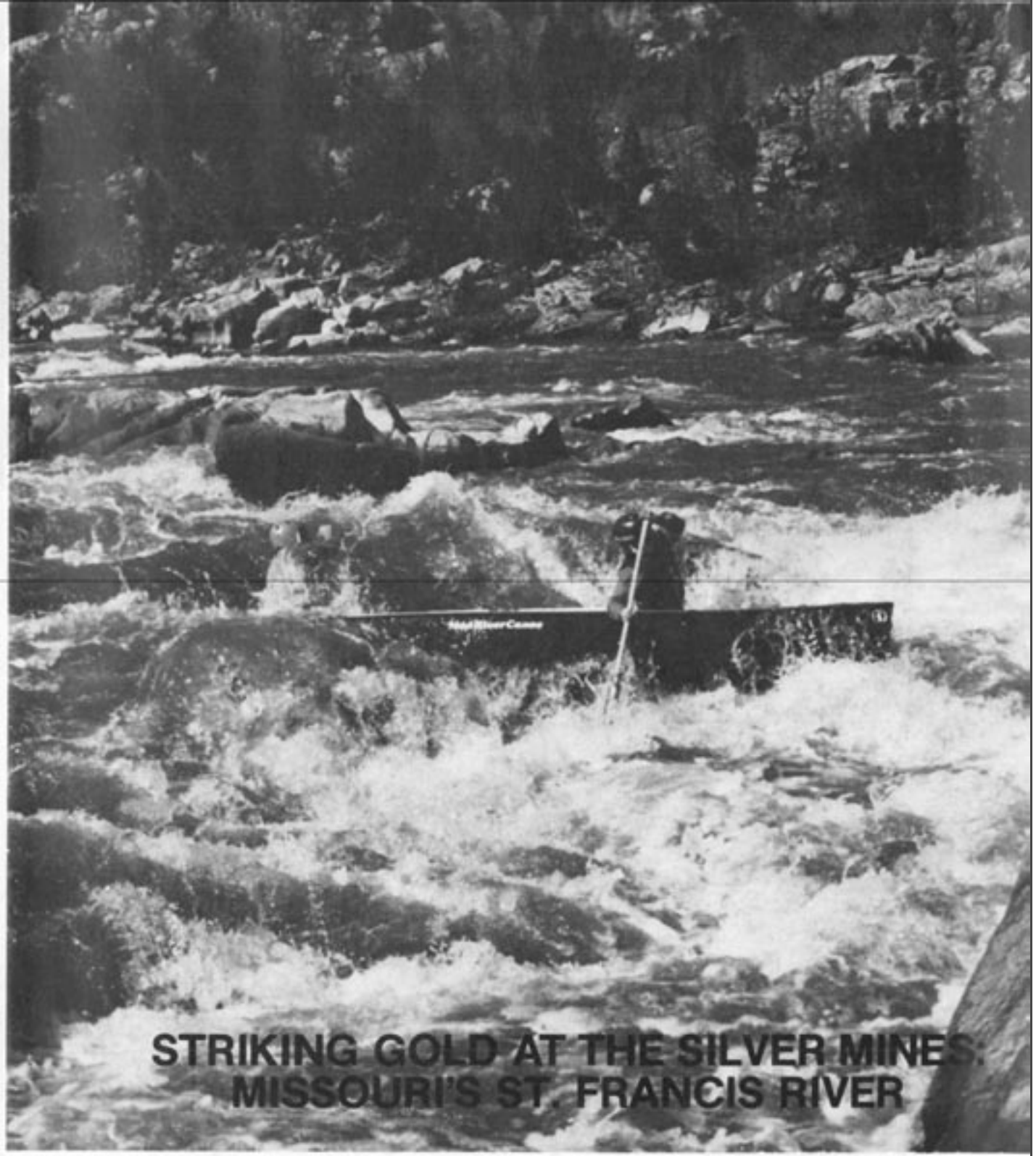
A higher level of fear will result in a very high pulse rate, almost a pounding of the heart, narrow concentration on the matter at hand, and a surge of adrenaline. There will usually be loud, staccato laughter punctuated by silence. This state of mind can be positive or negative, depending upon the situation.

The intense concentration on the water and the surge of adrenaline will motivate the boater to super-human physical efforts in bracing, rolling or stroking, but the ability of the boater to think clearly suffers. As long as nothing unexpected happens, he will be successful. However, if clear and quick thinking become necessary, he can get into trouble.

The highest level of fear is complete panic or "freaking out," the body's instinctive survival reaction to the mind's signal of extreme danger. Complete panic can be an extremely dangerous situation for a paddler if it happens at a dangerous point on the river. The body will react much the same way it does during hypothermia. Blood will be withdrawn from the extremities, including the brain, and channeled into the body core. This results in the inability to think clearly—or at all—and loss of strength and motor coordination in limbs. This condition is signaled by long periods of silence and lack of body movement, which may be interrupted by pleas for help or self-deprecation, and may take place at the top of Nantahala Falls or Lava Falls, depending on the boater. It should be recognized by members of the party as a very dangerous situation which should be avoided at all costs by walking a rapid or not running a river.

All boaters will have to face high levels of fear within themselves at one time or another. Let's hope our reaction is to improve our paddling so that complete panic and heart pounding are reduced to getting "psyched up." Skill, conditioning and experience will do this. Refining stroke technique, learning the eskimo roll, increasing the level of fitness, and paddling as many different rivers as possible will help reduce fear of the unknown and fear of dying, and will make all of us better paddlers as a result.





# STRIKING GOLD AT THE SILVER MINES: MISSOURI'S ST. FRANCIS RIVER

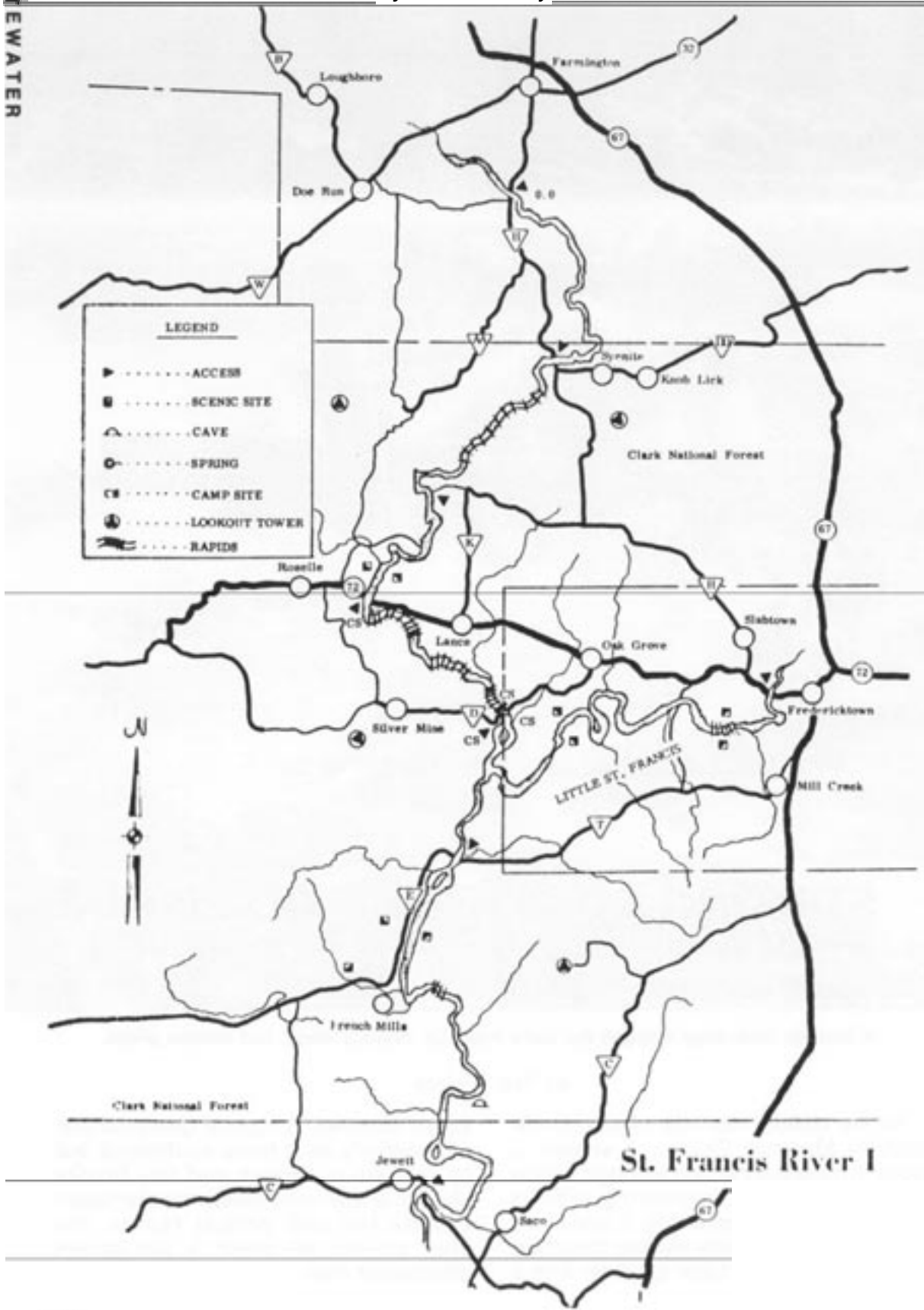
A tandem team slips through the Cat's Paw - St. Francis River. Ted Andres photo.

by Ted Andres

In the rolling foothills of the south-eastern Missouri Ozark stream born. It meanders at first through willow thickets, often disappearing around sharp bends. Occasionally it branches into a profusion of tiny rivulets that soon weave themselves back together into a single channel. It rapidly gains volume and velocity as it flows southward, fed by numerous springs and tiny brooks along the way until somewhere between Murphy Hill and Wildcat Hollow, the little stream becomes a full-grown whitewater river.

# Map from "Missouri Ozark Waterways"

by Oz Hawksley



The young river pauses briefly as it passes beneath a bridge. It then begins to alternately plunge over small ledges and frolic through narrow channels, occasionally slackening and becoming a calm, sedate pool. As it rounds a bend above the section known as the Shut-Ins, the river begins to make its most spectacular descent. Dashing through boulder gardens and pouring over raw ledges, it runs through a rugged gorge where pine and cedar trees jut from the granite overlooks that loom above the river.

To many people the above scenario may sound like a whitewater fantasy. If so, it is doubtful that they are familiar with Missouri's St. Francis River. Located approximately 80 miles south of St. Louis, the St. Francis carves a miniature Grand Canyon through the rugged granite of Madison County, Missouri. The sheer cliffs and unique geology of the area contrast sharply with the mellow swells and sandbanked rivers of the western Missouri Ozarks.

The most popular whitewater section of the St. Francis begins at the U.S. Route 72 bridge between Ironton and Fredericktown, Missouri. A well maintained put-in, complete with railroad-tie steps, has replaced the dreaded "old put-in". At the old put-in, entry into the river was accomplished by making a long slide down a steep mud bank into the water. This type of put-in (usually accompanied by vertical pinning in the mud on the river's bottom) is known locally as an "Arkansas ender". The new put-in is a vast improvement over the old one.

From the put-in, the river proceeds to wind through technical boulder gardens, drop over ledges and course through willow jungles for the next six miles. This section, known locally as the Shut-Ins\* section, ends at the Highway D bridge in the Silver Mines Recreation Area. The history of the Silver Mines area includes the saga of an unsuccessful mining operation and the unfortunate men who tried to grub their fortunes from the stubborn earth.

The St. Francis River is located within easy driving distance from most major

population centers in the Midwest and the Great Plains. Besides whitewater, the surrounding area has plenty to offer for hikers, campers, rock climbers, fishermen and history or geology buffs. Further, consider that three other whitewater runs exist within 20 miles. These range from a short, easy, class I-II section to a demonic mile of class V-VI froth. This section has been scouted by expert paddlers who chose not to attempt it. It would be possible only during periods of very rapid runoff, if then. It is not recommended at any time!

The most popular whitewater alternative to the St. Francis itself in the vicinity is a surprising little stream called Marble Creek. The Marble Creek run is possible only during high water periods and consists of two and a half miles of class II-III water with five rapids. The rapids are, in order: the Dam, the Rollercoaster, Upper and Lower Dead Dog and Scarface (aptly named for a strategically misplaced strand of barbed wire on river-right).

**\* Shut-ins is a term used in the Ozarks to designate a rocky gorge.**

While the attractive features of this unique corner of Missouri are many and varied, the star of the show remains the St. Francis River. At lower levels the St. Francis is a playfully technical little stream with plenty of class II-III action. At low levels the water is clear and has the distinctly greenish hue characteristic of Ozark rivers. At very high levels it becomes a rampaging, coffee-colored torrent that crashes against huge boulders and explodes into long series' of enormous waves and powerful hydraulics. The sight of the St. Francis as it thunders through the Shut-ins at flood stage is an image that will remain in one's memory forever.

From the serene pool at the put-in, the first three quarters of a mile of the run is an alternating series of pools and narrow riffles leading to Entrance Rapids. Entrance is a series of broken ledges that provide the paddler with ample opportunity to practice technical maneuvering. At medium levels there is a

playful surfing hole near the bottom, on river-right. At very high levels this hole should be avoided, and the rapids run to the left through a nice series of three to five foot waves.

Another pool follows Entrance, this one ending at a double ledge known as Kittens Crossing. At medium levels a large, friendly eddy and a delightful little hole await the paddler below the second ledge. Don't spend all day here as the best is yet to come.

Another pool and a bend to the left lead the paddler down the yellow brick road to the Land of Oz\*. A twisting sluice of water with a couple of abrupt eddies, Land of Oz is ideally suited for dynamic eddy turns and peel-outs. At nearly any level, two of the best surfing waves on the river are found back-to-back, about half way down this rapid. At very high levels there is a nasty hole at bottom left that should be avoided.

Following Land of Oz, the paddler floats through another mile or so of pools and small riffles before rounding the bend at the head of the section known locally as The Tiemann Shut-Ins.\*\* The Shut-Ins begin at a modern, ranch-style home, occupied until recently by Elmer Tiemann. The gradient of the river increases to about 40 feet/mile for the next mile. The top of the Shut-Ins is a long, technical run through a boulder garden. Possibilities for eddy-hopping are practically limitless. The boulder garden ends abruptly at a jumble of rocks known as Big Drop. At most levels this drop should be run from river-right. Below the drop there are big eddies on both sides of the river and a powerful chute of fast water that is an excellent spot to practice peel-outs and ferries. At very high levels, Big Drop should be run down the middle, through a long series of five to seven foot waves. Remember: the inviting eddies on both sides of the river are the backwaters of particularly vicious holes, holes that are definitely capable of keeping boats and/or bodies.

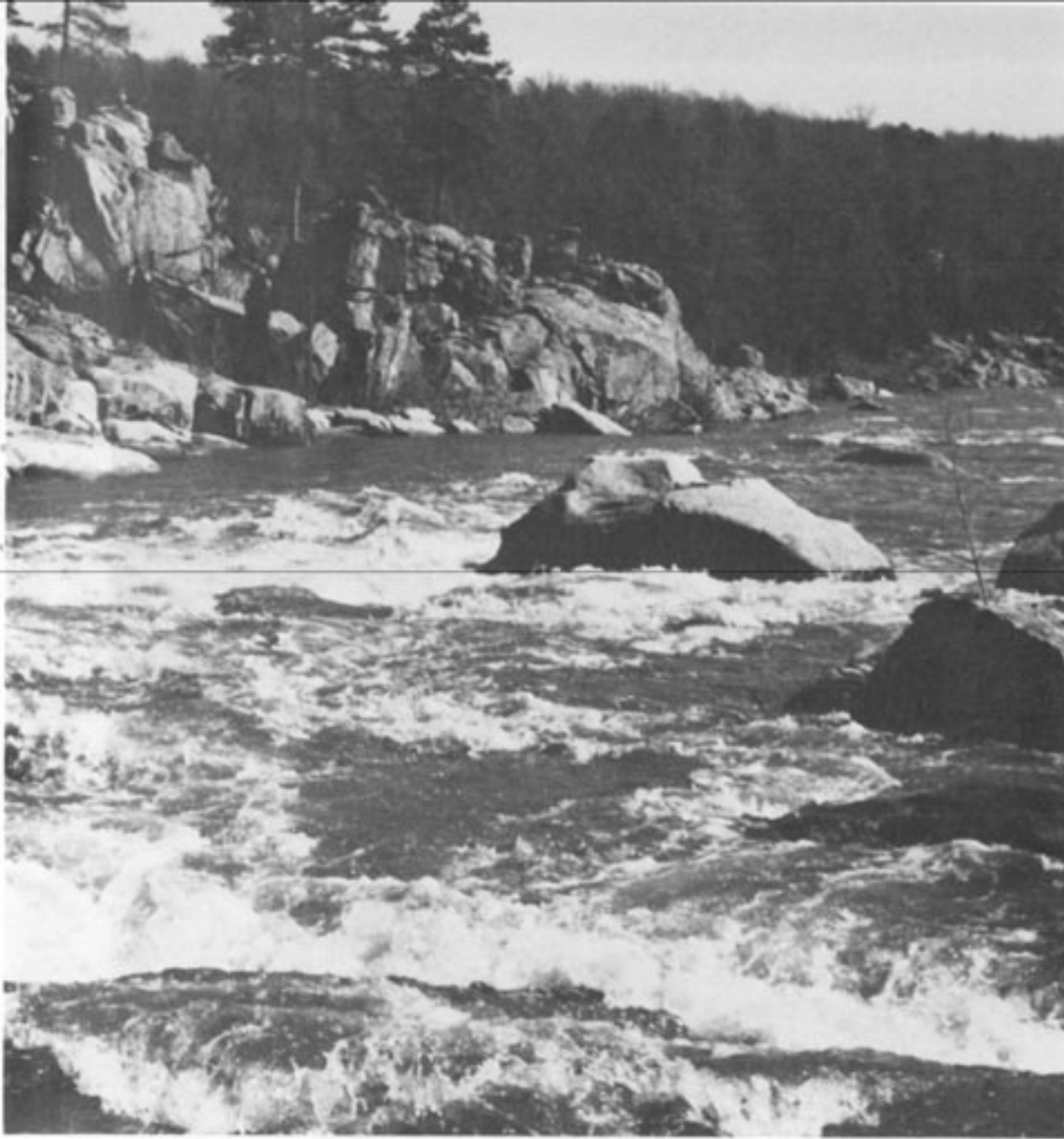
Another boulder garden separates Big Drop from the Cat's Paw. At nearly any level this is the most challenging rapid on the river. The Cat's Paw is aptly named for the rocks at the bottom of the



**Pete Shaw negotiates the Cat**

main drop. At low levels these rocks can be seen to extend outward in the shape of an enormous paw. The rocky talons of the Cat's Paw have clawed many good boats and boaters. At low-medium levels the best route is to the right of an enormous, angular boulder. This drop is clogged with jagged rocks and churning with tricky crosscurrents. Even paddlers familiar with the St. Francis often scout this one from the right bank. At very high levels there are several nasty holes in the Cat's Paw, and it should be scouted thoroughly from the shore!

The pace slackens a bit after the Cat's Paw, giving the paddler a chance to



Paw at a moderately high water level - St. Francis River. Ted Andres Photo.

catch his breath before Double Drop. This rapid consists of two ledges with a huge jumble of boulders on one bank and a sheer granite wall on the other. At this point the river is constricted to roughly half its width. The second drop terminates in a hole that is, at most levels, one of the most superlative ender spots anywhere. At very high levels there is a churning, river-wide hydraulic at the bottom of Double Drop. There is no really clean routethrough this boiling cauldron of whitewater.

Don't wear yourself out playing at Double Drop because four more good

rapids remain. The first of these is **Rickety-Rack**, which begins as a twisting, **willow-clogged** S-turn and ends in a hydraulic wave that is a nice play spot at medium levels. At higher levels this wave is capable of slapping the paddler right out of his booties. A quick succession of short pools and riffles leads to Turkey Creek picnic area on the left bank. This is a possible take-out, and one that is recommended at very high levels. Immediately after passing Turkey Creek one encounters a rapid known as the Willow Jungle. This is actually a paddler's choice of two rapids because



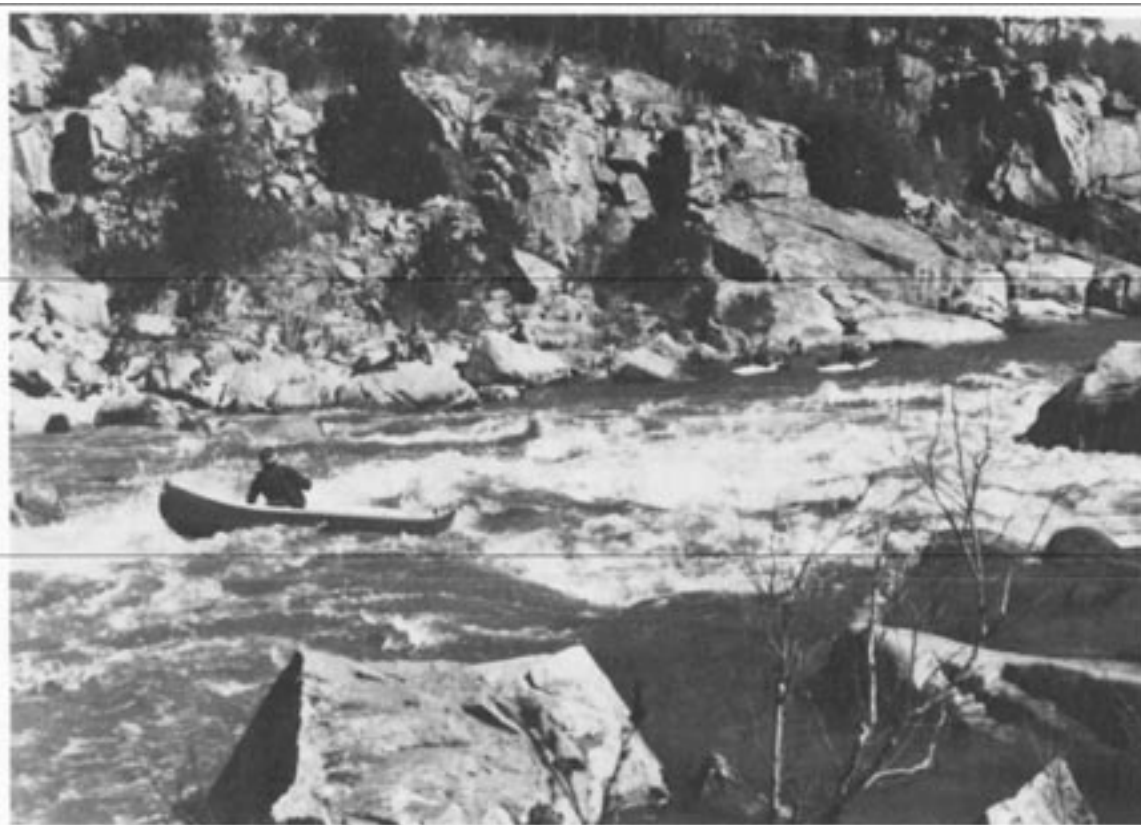
Kent gets off a good ender at Double Drop on the St. Francis River. Jack Hurley Photo.

the river divides briefly around a small island. The right side is wider and less hazardous once entry is made through the dreaded willow jungle. A couple of good play spots exist on this side. At medium levels the left side is one of the trickiest rapids on the river. A narrow channel of water snakes sinuously through a rock-choked, willow-lined course for about 100 yards before re-joining the main channel.

Another pool follows the willows, this one backed up by the Silver Mines Dam. (The dam was constructed in 1879 by the Einstein Silver Mining Company as part of a monumental mining effort that yielded a scant three thousand ounces of silver). At low-medium levels the breach in the left side of the dam is runnable. When water is running over the low water bridge at Highway D (the takeout) do yourself, the U.S. Forest Service and everybody who uses the river a favor and don't attempt it! At any level this is a good place to do some scouting.

After the dam, the river runs through another rock garden, this one known as the Silver Mines Shut-Ins. This half-mile stretch of river provides lots of eddy-hopping and baby hole surfing. As the river rounds a bend to the right the low water bridge on Highway D will come into view. (At high water levels the bridge will be under water but the road is easily visible).

The Highway D bridge and the Silver Mines area are the hub of paddling activities on the St. Francis. The bridge serves as both a takeout and a gauge. Actually there are two gauges at the bridge: the low water gauge reads in inches or tenths of feet and is located on the downstream side of the bridge. At approximately 40 inches on this gauge, the water is flowing over the top of the bridge. The second gauge measures, in feet, how high the water is above the bridge\*. Several well-maintained, Forest Service hiking trails, picnic areas and campgrounds surround the takeout. A short distance from the bridge is the



Don Hanselman in the Cat's Paw - St. Francis River. Ted Andres Photo.

Silver Mines resort and general store where lodging and supplies are available.

A perfect day of paddling is not considered complete until the proper evening ritual has been observed. Weary but satisfied paddlers gather around crackling fires to recount the events and excitement of the day. The river gurgles patiently in the valley as hair-raising tales circulate around the fires. Whippoorwills cry hauntingly from the dusky evening forest as roaring flames fade to embers. Stars appear in the heavens, winking with the promise of another perfect day.

*\* Respectfully named for Oz Hawksley, noted conservationist and eminent authority on the rivers of Missouri. Mr. Hawksley is the author of Missouri Ozark Waterways.*

*\*\* Elmer Tiemann is thought of by many to be the patron saint of the St. Francis River. In 1981 Mr. Tiemann sold his land on the north bank of the shut-ins to the Missouri Department of Conservation despite reportedly being offered a much higher figure by real estate developers.*

## NOTES ON THE ST. FRANCIS RIVER

- The St. Francis has a tremendously fickle nature. This river has been known to rise or fall eight feet in 24 hours. Information on water levels should be obtained no more than one or two days before a planned paddling trip.
- Reliable information on water and weather conditions can usually be obtained through Bushwacker Ltd. in Springfield, Illinois (217) 787-7692, Backwoods Inc. in St. Louis, Missouri (314) 726-0656, or from the Silver Mines resort near the takeout (314) 783-6715.
- In general, skill levels required to run the St. Francis at various water levels are:
  - Low water (6" to 20): Class II-III
  - Medium water (20" to bridge): Class II-IV
  - High water (bridge to 2% feet over) Class III-IV (6)
  - Very High water (2% feet over bridge and up): Class III-V (6)
 These levels are accurate according to predominately eastern standards.
- At no level is the St. Francis a beginners run. At low levels many boats have been lost or irreparably damaged by being pinned on the numerous rocks. At levels greater than 2½ feet over the D bridge, the Tiemann Shut-Ins should be scouted thoroughly before attempting a run. Access is at Mill Stream Gardens State Forest.
- An excellent map of the Fredericktown District of the Mark Twain National Forest, covering the area around the St. Francis is available from the U.S. Forest Service office in Fredericktown:
  - USFS
  - Route 2, Box 175
  - Fredericktown, Missouri 63645
 There is currently no charge for this map, but send a self-addressed, stamped return envelope.
- Another excellent map of the river itself, this one oriented to paddling is available for \$5.00 through:
  - Liquid Pleasure Press, Inc.
  - 6633 San Bonita Ave.
  - St. Louis, Missouri 63105
- Oz Hawksley's book "Missouri Ozark Waterways" is an in-depth reference to the rivers of Missouri and is available from:
  - Outdoor Library
  - Missouri Department of Conservation
  - P.O. Box 180
  - Jefferson City, Missouri 65102



# SURF KAYAKING ALONG THE OREGON COAST

WHITEWATER



Photo by Peggy Gaines

## **In memory of John Linscott by Curt Peterson, Rick Starr, and Dale Mosby**

Riding ocean waves in a kayak, surf shoe, or surf ski is a thrilling form of white water boating which requires knowledge of ocean conditions, strong swimming skills, and suitable equipment. Rugged headlands, expansive beaches, and direct exposure to north Pacific ocean swells make the Oregon Coast one of the most spectacular surfing areas in North America. However, these same factors can produce hazardous ocean conditions that are both subtle and unique to the Pacific Northwest. The following sections outline some safety tips for kayak surfing along the Oregon Coast. In addition to reading these sections, we strongly suggest that boaters unfamiliar with the ocean, initially arrange trips with experienced wave riders.

### **WAVES: The Source . . .**

Irregular ocean seas formed out at sea by storm winds are transformed into smooth ocean swells as they travel away from the storm center. Swells approach-

ing shore typically begin to shoal in water depths one and one-quarter times the swell height as measured from crest to trough. Steep beaches result in steep plunging breakers, while gently inclined beaches promote spilling breakers with wave crests that gradually tumble down the wave face. Swell size, wind conditions, and tidal height, also control wave shape, and these conditions can vary dramatically within a couple of hours. Small spilling breakers in the two to four foot height range are ideal for beginning surf kayakers. Plunging breakers in the six to eight foot height range can rip paddles from boaters hands and pop spray skirts, forcing even the most skilled boater to swim for shore. Since larger waves break in deeper water, they also break further from shore, leading surfers to greatly underestimate their size. For this reason, it is prudent to start surfing close to shore, and then to gradually move out to the larger surf as true wave size is confirmed. Such an approach also ensures that surfers will observe infrequent sets of very large waves called 'clean-up sets,' before committing themselves to a thorough cleaning!



**A rare clear day on the Oregon coast. Photo by Peggy Gaines.**

#### **BEACHES, REEFS, AND POINTS: The Breaks . . .**

In their search for waves, surfers usually concentrate their efforts on beaches with offshore sand bars, reefs, or points, including both headlands and harbor jetties. These features cause swells to refract, or bend toward shore, and produce waves that break right or left along the shore giving surfers longer rides. However, these features also create a variety of nearshore currents which are intensified during conditions of large surf. The least hazardous 'current' is the undertow, which is not really a current at all, but just the backwash of a wave surge on a steep beach face. The backwash dissipates its force a few yards seaward of the beach face, and is of little concern to the experienced swimmer. By contrast, true nearshore currents can attain sustained flow velocities of several knots, twice the speed of a swimmer, and these currents can extend across the width of the surf zone, half a mile off shore, during conditions of large surf. Nearshore currents are generated by shoaling waves which push water inshore of the breaker zone.

Escaping water flows parallel to shore in longshore currents, and then heads back out to sea in rip currents, through gaps between offshore sand bars or reefs. Particularly strong rip currents occur alongside headlands and jetties as these seaward projections effectively divert longshore currents out to sea.

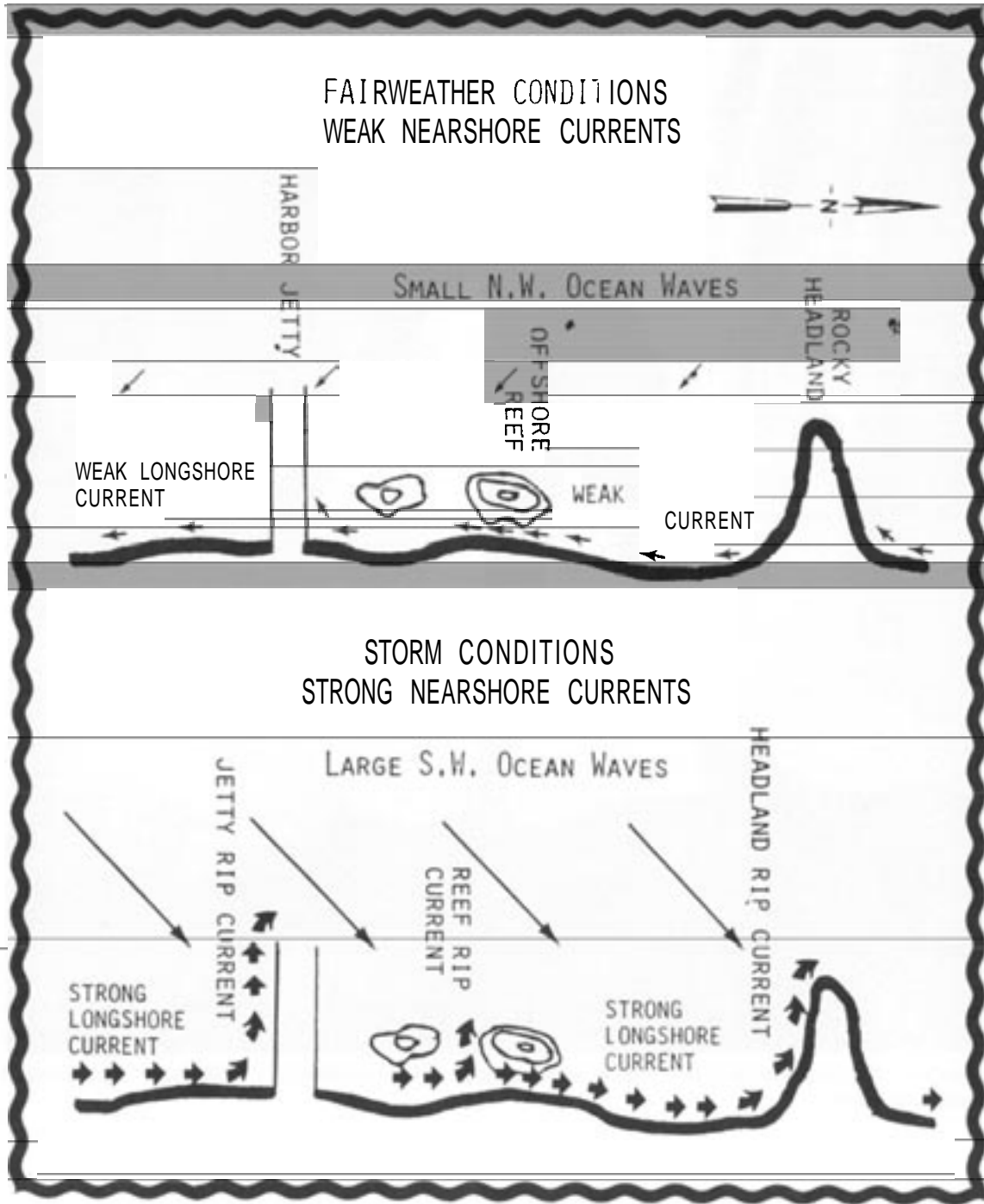
Nearshore currents cover broad areas and can be difficult to recognize in the turbulent surf zone. Rip currents heading out to sea can sometimes be identified by choppy surface water, turbid zones, or streaks of sea foam. Surfers and swimmers in the surf zone should keep an eye on fixed points on shore to establish whether or not they are drifting in a nearshore current. To get out of a nearshore current, a person could swim or paddle perpendicular to the direction of current flow. In large surf, it might take twenty minutes or longer to swim out of a rip current and then into shore. In extreme cases where an open water rescue by other boaters is not possible, a tiring or chilled swimmer should leave the boat and head for shore. Waves and wind will eventually push the boat ashore.

PADDLING OUT AND DROPPING IN:  
The Etiquette . . .

In an effort to avoid collisions in congested surf zones, surfers should paddle out to the breaker zone, off to the side of where other surfers are catching and riding waves. In addition, the surfer who is closest to the breaking part of the wave, while riding the wave face, has the right-of-way. Other surfers trying to catch the wave should back off to avoid

dropping in on the surfer who is already in position. Finally, something should be said about wave-sharing. Unlike the favorite play wave on the local river run, there isn't a well-ordered line up of boaters waiting to catch waves out in the surf zone, so all boaters must make a conscious effort to share waves and to avoid catching waves that might propel them into other surfers.

Good waves, Mates!



# Cherchez Les Femmes des Rivieres



Cameron O'Connor in her first place multi-media slide presentation: Whitewater Kayaking in India and Chile.



**Cameron, cliff jumping into Callahan Creek, British Columbia.**

In the last two or three years, the complexion of river rats has changed. Insinuated among the "iron men in plastic boats" are a growing number of provocative women with brass ovaries. Whitewater cruising, the traditional enclave of macho men, is being happily invaded by a determined group of paddlers who can be viewed as superlative athletes, sex objects, good friends, competent rescuers, and a welcome source of inspiration and emotional diversity.

Not to denigrate the many women paddlers of the past. Old timers will never forget the exploits of Donna Berglund and others who were among the sport's pioneers. Now, however, the

age of women's sports, as heroically demonstrated by the exciting performances of women Olympians in 1984 has truly arrived . . . even on the rivers.

Based on interviews and letters, AWA will be profiling one such feminine leader each issue. Their commitment, experience, views, and chemistry will inevitably influence the growth and directions of expansion of our favorite avocation. The plethora of bachelor paddlers should be overjoyed. We think you will find these ladies extraordinarily interesting and a pleasure to know about prior to finding them occupying your favorite hole or catching an ender where you never found one. It's about time!

# Cameron O'Connor

## *Paddler Fmncaise Extmordinaire*

by Peter Skinner

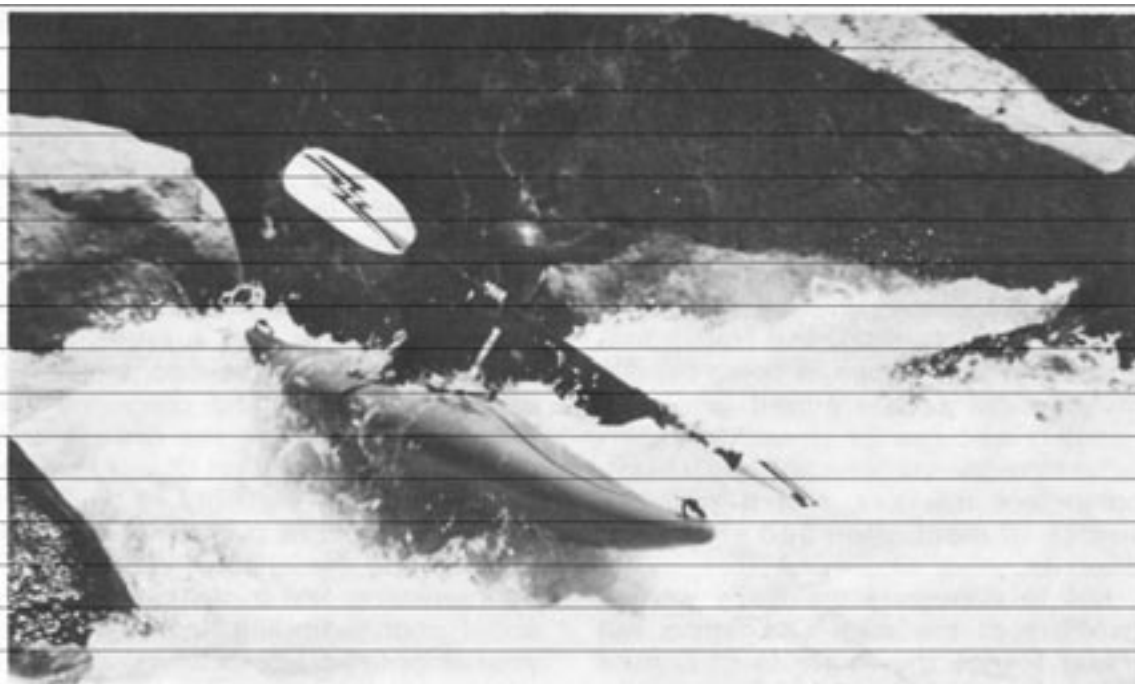
"*Ou est ma femme?*" Bernard must have wondered more than once of his ex-wife, Cameron O'Connor, now well known in whitewater paddling circles "a meteor streaking across the firmament of kayaking!" Idyllic as it may seem, married life in Paris for her was just not *sympatique*. Although a well heeled translation and interpreter, Cameron could not find the degree of growth and excitement for her latent tendencies toward adventure.

Although originally raised in America's soft underbelly, the suburbs of New York City, Cameron chose to flee from her *peid-6-terre Parisienne* to the Pacific Northwest where paddling changed from a hobby to an addiction or "affliction" as she describes it. Such sedentary pleasures as classical piano, French cooking and literature gave way to her pursuit of rivers. Other sports such as skiing, tennis, horses and mountaineering likewise fell by the wayside.

Although San Francisco is her home now, Cameron's parents still call Chappaqua their home. While growing up, her father pursued the vagaries of the NY Stock Exchange and that little white ball on the golf links. Her mother focused attention on nurturing and educating two sons and her rebellious and competitive daughter.

After prep school, Cameron sought and received her BA from the counter culture Evergreen State College and obtained a masters from Middlebury in French Literature.

The call of the wild was just too alluring for this thoroughly civilized buzz bomb. After brief exposures to whitewater in New England and on the Nahanni River in NW Territories and her 4 year sojourn in Paris, Cameron plunged into kayaking in 1981 with a vengeance. The Washington Kayak Club in Seattle helped expose her to good paddlers and exciting rivers. With a



Paddling California's famous Class V Cherry Creek.

minimum of skill, a maximum of bravado and a hearty *joie de vivre*, Cameron took to whitewater like an ouzel. In a mere two months, she progressed to Class IV runs.

But it was two of the sport's male leaders, Don Banducci and Rick Fernold who gave Cameron the inspiration and guidance she needed to leap from Class IV rivers to freestyle kayaking and big hole playing. Class V rivers and more exciting drops soon followed.

Such a meteoric rise in paddling, however, was not to be devoid of danger. Two years later, a communication failure atop the Wall Drop in Tumwater Canyon at 12,000 cfs committed Ms. O'Connor to running a thoroughly hellacious route. "Catapulted" almost out of her boat in a "series of monster holes", she managed to hang on by a toe hole in the cockpit. Although her struggle to reenter the upside down boat was successful, her full-boat roll attempts failed to right the craft permanently in remaining half-mile of rapids.

Exhausted by her heroic efforts, Cameron decided to conserve her energy, hang upside down for a second and wait for calmer water for a final roll attempt. "The next think I remember was waking

to the sound of an ambulance" she recalls.

Seems that the last roll never materialized. Floating upside down in the final pool, Cameron was found, still clutching her paddle. Now that's commitment . . .

Needless to say, this close call caused tongues to wag and questions to be asked. Regardless, her single minded focus on excellence characterizes the demands she puts on herself - a dimension and depth about which a few, if any, male paddlers can boast.

It is not surprising then that Cameron complains of limited access to what she calls "*Le club des hommes*". No doubt, fragile male egos might find her skills and commitment threatening. Although she has enjoyed paddling in whitewater's "fast and wet lane" during the past couple of years with the best of both genders, she decided in 1983 to organize the first women's kayaking expedition to South America. Although the paucity of female paddlers available for the expedition eventually led to the involvement of a few good men (to run shuttles only, of course), the trip resulted in a first descent of the Rio Puelo and a heavy dose of extraordinary paddling and cultural exchange.



1st descent Rio Puelo, in Chile.

In her first three years of paddling, Cameron has excelled not only on Class V runs, but also on the whitewater rodeo circuit. In 1983, she won 3 rodeos and in one other, beat her earlier mentor, Don Banducci, at his own game. She even organized one rodeo in the Seattle area to help develop what she feels is a "great promotion for the sport."

Cameron has not stopped with paddling achievements. Welding high tech musical and dissolve systems with a superb collection of Himalayan and South American slides won her first prize at this year's Paddler's Film Festival in Tennessee. It is a testament to her commitment to excellence that she finds both the time and the sensitivity to develop a slide show so evocative.



Cameron doing a pop-up. Photo by Joel Rodgers.

Do les hornmes have a place in this lady's life? We think so, but the form is a bit hazy. "River romances" are all she'll say about that part of her existence. Rumor has it, however, that a quiet soul in the Bay Area has managed to slow her breakneck pace a bit lately. She found it hard in the beginning to find the close companionship she knew in mountaineering. But above all, she likes intelligent men who "give good back rubs!" Where's that Nivea, damn it?

Emotions aside, Cameron has clearly risen to the challenges of whitewater as few women or men for that matter have before her. She credits her control of river fear to inner confidence, a kind of "positive visualization". Admitting a trace of fear in big water after the Tumwater affair, Cameron chases such big water runs in "small doses" and with a bit of trepidation. We might question her admission, however, upon learning of her nearly complete run of the Payette's North Fork at 1700 cfs and exoratory runs in British Columbia and Chile.

Although she admits a "certain satisfaction" from often being the only woman on the river, Cameron has offered instruction and encouragement to women to enter and excel in whitewater. She strongly recommends "formal" instruction.

Few paddlers are as immersed in paddling as she. Promotions, guiding, instruction and now retailing in a new whitewater store in San Fransisco are among her vocational pursuits.

So you wonder, what's this thoroughly civilized and attractive woman doing eating at Burger King, running seemingly crazy drops and dripping river water from every pore? She says the answers are easy: "Kayaks get you where you want to go - where there are no foot prints to be found." She heeds that call of the unknown - the roar of whitewater.



OREGON'S INFLATABLE SLALOM RACE



**Article & Photography  
by Dave McCourtney**

What began as a small event in 1983 has blossomed into a much larger event in 1984. The Upper Clackamas inflatable slalom race has more than doubled its number of contestants and tripled its spectators.

Northwest boaters should put May 5, 1985, on the calendar because Russ Snively, founder of the Upper Clackamas Race, has plans for another great event next year. The Upper Clackamas inflatable slalom race is also the only one of its kind in the nation.

"We had 45 boats last year and jumped up to 94 boats this year. The good weather brought an additional 36 entries, and there were 900 spectators," says Snively.

The competition was divided into four categories. Inflatable kayaks launched

at 10:00 a.m., followed by rafts up to 14 feet at 11:00 a.m. Rafts 14 feet and over began racing at 1:30 p.m., and paddle crews hit the water at 3:00 p.m. Pontoon rafts were allowed to enter as exhibitors only, but next year's race will feature a special class for pontoon and modified rafts.

Kurt Jonasson of the Northwest Rafter's Association called the course "tough but fair." The three-mile course included four Class III rapids, and Carter's Falls was made especially difficult because boaters were required to navigate four gates in large standing waves.

The tight gates brought out the best in the rowers. To pass through a gate without penalty, the rower was required to avoid hitting the gate with his head, torso, and boat. If either the boat or oarsman touched a slalom pole, a 30-second penalty was imposed. Touching both poles called for a 45-second

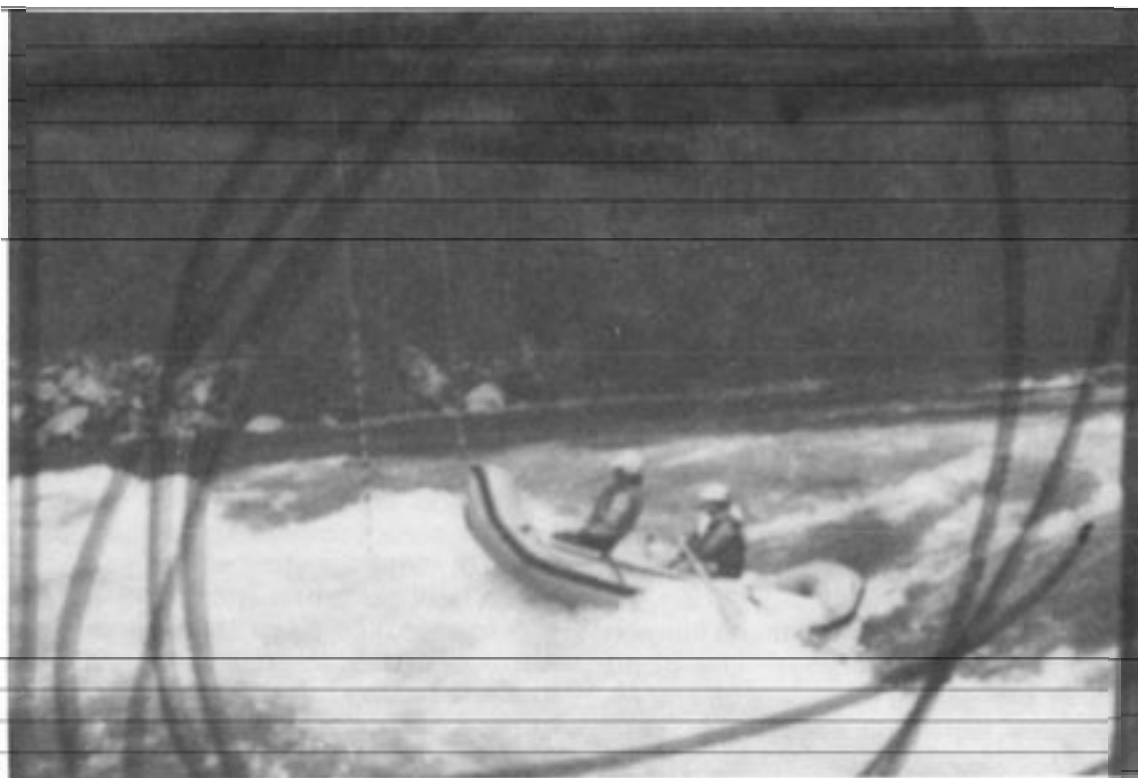
penalty. Boaters who missed a reverse gate were penalized 90 seconds. Failing to stop at the mandatory safety check point netted the offending boater a three-minute penalty.



**Inflatable kayak entry.**



**Russ Snively - course originator.**



**The majority of contestants were rafters running gates for the 1st time.**

The penalty average was a surprisingly high four minutes. Paddle boats pushed the average up due to their inability to maneuver delicately in rapids and pass through tight gates. Most penalties were charged to competitors who failed to scout the gates before the race began and subsequently lined up improperly to run the gate.

One competitor said, "I didn't know where all the gates were, but I tried my best. I came out to have a good time and enjoy myself."

The immense difficulty of setting up a raft slalom course may explain why many slalom races across the country have a division for inflatable kayaks but not rafts.

While credit is due the stickmen and women who helped organize the race, the contestants were still the main event.

The winners were: Inflatable kayaks: Glen Carlson, 19 minutes, 15 seconds,

one minute penalty. Rafts up to 14 feet. Craig Canham, 18 minutes, 31 seconds, 30 seconds penalty. Rafts 14 feet and over: Richard Karecki, 21 minutes, 10 seconds, one minute penalty.

Russ Snively says the race is here to stay. Next year Snively will attempt to attract national sponsors and limit the race to 150 boats. Boaters who want to compete in this one-of-a-kind contest next year should get their entry forms in early.

Contact the AWA editor for next year details or Oregon River Rats, 2359 NW Glisan, Portland, OR 97210.



Lady paddle rafters were the only female contestants.



Pontoon raft makes for excellent maneuvering and no bailing!

# 1984 AMERICAN BRALDU RIVER — BIAFO SPIRES KARAKORAM EXPEDITION

Dear Friends and Sponsors:

Our expedition is now back home after seven weeks in Pakistan, and was successful in all respects. We climbed our peak, kayaked our river, ran parts of the river at three different water levels, ran four more rivers, trekked from Baltistan to Hunza, shot more than twelve thousand photographs, and came back a week early, below budget, and with our only casualty Jack Tackle's case of malaria.

Though a major article written by Galen Rowell for the National Geographic Magazine is expected, it will not appear for six months or more, and this report will try to provide some immediate follow-up for those with a special interest in our trip.

With our final purchasing and packing completed in Seattle, the team (minus Jack Tackle and Gray Thompson, who came a week later) rendezvoused in New York. The American Alpine Club's New York Section hosted a benefit slide show and a quick dash through the AAC clubhouse gathered up some last minute sponsorship money from Phillips Petroleum and well wishes from a number of Board members, as well as hors d'oeuvres. We flew from JFK on May 4, with three thousand pounds of baggage (two thousand of that gratis, courtesy of PIA), stopping in Frankfurt briefly, where personal well wishes (and a case of beer) were presented to us by Wayne Jordan of Flying Tigers. Wayne's help in air freighting our six kayaks from South Carolina to Islamabad saved us about \$21,000. Arriving in Islamabad/Rawalpindi fairly well rested (thanks to modern pharmacology utilized during the flight), we were met by the teeming poverty, unfamiliar smells, 103° heat and hallucinatory traffic typical of Asian cities. Because John Mueller of Adventure Pakistan/Walji's Travel and his staff facilitated all our arrangements, the necessary shopping, the briefings with Tali Muhammad and Muneeruddin of

the Ministry of Tourism, and a myriad of other hurdles were accomplished in only three days. In keeping with expeditionary traditions of the past, we were hosted at a U.S. Embassy party on the eve of our arrival. We were quickly made to feel welcome in Pakistan by Americans and Pakistanis alike, a feeling which was reinforced during the entire trip.

In Rawalpindi we outfitted our three Dancer and two Mirage kayaks (donated by Perception, Inc.), the third Mirage going unused because John Markel was at the last minute unable to come. Bo and Kathy, guided by our cook Sanjer Beg (a cheerful Tajik from Passo) and our logistics coordinator Asseraf Aman (first Pakistani to climb K2) spent hours in the bazaars and increased our total weight of gear plus food to 6000 pounds, which we sent in advance by Bedford truck to Skardu.

Our Liaison Officer, Lieutenant Harnid Javed Khawaja, was the first-ever L.O. from the Pakistani Navy, and was on leave from his normal duties commanding an underwater demolition team. With excellent, even idiomatic American English and climbing experience on Rakaposhi, he was a tremendous asset to the expedition. Taking upon himself the work of hiring and managing the porters, translating for hours with local officials and at daily sick call held for porters and villagers, carrying loads, sharing our tents and food and tolerating our foibles, he was the best L.O. Galen had met in four Karakoram expeditions.

We were also fortunately joined by Pervez Khan, Pakistani Air Force and free-lance photographer. A friend of Galen's, his Karakoram experience went back several decades and essentially provided us with another (unofficial) liaison officer.

Though we avoided the days and days of waiting typical of attemptstofly to the

Northern Areas, our two-day van ride was grueling. Our driver was arrested for running an oncoming Army paratroop major's jeep off the road while trying to pass a tractor; we had multiple flats, delays to clear landslides and to dynamite boulders off the road, frequent pit stops for those with gastrointestinal afflictions, and nerve-wracking hours grinding along a one-land road cut into cliffs high above the raging Indus River. Several members rode on the roof rack to stay cooler, ameliorate car-sickness, and be able to jump off if we went over the (guard rail-less) edge. Others just took Valium, took pictures of Nanga Parbat, or both.

Two days in Skardu completed our shopping and load packing. We then jeeped 47 miles up the Shigar Valley to Dasso, our gear sent ahead on trailers towed by Massey-Ferguson farm tractors. In addition to our three Pakistani members (Asseraf guiding us just to the end of the road) we now numbered eighty-four, including our 73 Balti porters and eight Americans.

The success of our attempt to run the Braldu, we knew, depended completely on our arriving before temperatures rose and water volume increased abruptly sometime in May. We drove ourselves close to exhaustion from our arrival in Pakistan, almost frantically rushing to get to the river. Eight days after arriving in Pakistan, after having hiked the initial day's stage up from Dasso, we put in at a flow of about one thousand cubic feet per second. The winter had been a dry one, and recent weather was cool and overcast. At this water level, the river was technically very demanding, and the rapids were complex mazes of steep, twisting, blind drops through large, jumbled boulders. But there were defined drops with pools separating them, and though the gradient averaged sixty feet per mile (and was as high as ninety) it was possible to stop, scout, and (on nine occasions) portage. The carries came to less than half a mile out of about fifty overall, or about one-half percent; a far cry from what had confronted the ill-fated 1978 British team led by Dr. Mike Jones. Making the mistake

of attempting the Braldu at peak flow in August, Jones was swept away and drowned saving the life of a teammate, and was never seen again, though fragments of his boat - and a month later his helmet and a shoe - were eventually recovered. Mick Hopkinson, the strongest member of the 1978 team, had estimated to me that no more than five percent of the Braldu was runnable, and had been vehemently negative about our chances.

With Balti porters eager and willing (for fifty rupees a day, about four dollars) to carry our kayaks upstream (or alternately, our gear and clothes downstream), we could hike with light loads and paddle empty boats. With a trail (albeit rough) along the river and (for its lower half) villages spaced a walking stage apart, we could run the river in a novel but necessary way: from the bottom up. Our most severe test would come in the Chokpo-Chongo Gorge, the fifth of six walking stages from the river's origin to its end. To be sure of completing this notorious section at low water, we planned to run the lower river below Askole first, then trek upstream again to run the upper half. We were thus obligated to walk twice as far (one hundred miles in all), but we also reduced as best we could the risk of being unable to run the river, either the upper half being too shallow above the inflow from the Biafo Glacier, or the constricted lower half being too violent. The plan would also permit Galen to photograph us from the bank, getting far more and better shots than we could ever hope to get from river level.

The plan worked perfectly, to my considerable personal satisfaction and great relief as its originator and promoter. The kayakers (Kathy Blau, Rob Lesser, Bob McDougall, Bo Shelby and myself) ran first of all the lowest of the six stages (Chokpo to Dasso). Then, stages four and five (Askole to Chongo and the crux, Chongo to Chokpo) with Galen pounding the trail to keep up with us, at times being forced to climb and descend hundreds of feet of elevation

Continued on page 34

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# Book Reviews

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## **RIVER RUNNERS' RECIPES**

**by Patricia Chambers**

Pacific Search Press, Seattle, Washington  
(1984) 6×9" 130 pages, *paperbound*  
\$6.95

A book filled with scrumptious recipes just made for us River Running Folks, WOW, that sounds like a terrific idea. Oh, sure, there is the granola bar and coke school of paddlers, but most of us appreciate a warm, tasty meal at the end of a day of paddling. Consequently, the title of this book makes it very appealing.

After the first 35 pages in which menu planning, packaging, storing and transporting perishables, sanitation, setting up camp, etc. are discussed, the remaining 90 pages are devoted to laying out a variety of recipes that author Patricia Chambers has found applicable to use on her many rafting trips down big western rivers.

Now when one has a raft to transport large, heavy pieces of equipment, coolers full of ice, steel cans full of food, and copious quantities of charcoal briquettes there is no reason to be modest in what one eats, and this pretty well explains the uses you will find for this book. The recipes frequently call for a large variety of ingredients, often perishable items, often canned items and then cooks them in a Dutch oven. If that is your paddling style, then the recipes may serve you well, but there is very little the day tripper, kayaker or wilderness canoeist will find useful in River Runners Recipes.

The format of the book is to give each recipe a catchy river name, such as

Susquehanna Biscuits, which looks to me a lot like the recipe off the Bisquick box, and follow that with a brief line or two about that river before listing the ingredients needed and then the instructions for preparation. Perhaps I am being peevish, but I found myself offended that some recipe was given the name of one of MY rivers, yet had no connection whatsoever to that river. For example, instead of Cheat River Cold Cuts, (what do cold cuts have to do uniquely with the Cheat?), why not the recipe for buckwheat pancakes from the Kingwood Inn?

The recipes presented in River Runners Recipes often do sound delicious and I will undoubtedly try several of them on the kitchen range this winter, where baking is no problem and the canned foods and perishables are as close as the refrigerator door. For anyone in love with Dutch Oven cooking this is also a good book, since many of the recipes are adapted to that style of cooking.

River Runners Recipes does not present the types of foods that I find useful for the style of paddling that I do, but for many river runners it will be useful. If you have raft support and can haul a load which includes the kitchen sink then this book may be just what you are looking for to spice up your riverside cuisine.

by Tom McCloud

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# Book Reviews

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## CANOEING WILD RIVERS

by **Cliff Jacobson**

ICS Books, Inc., Merrillville, IN 46410 (1984)  
 5 7/8" x 8 1/2" b&w photos, drawings, diagrams  
 \$14.95

Canoeing Wild Rivers is the second of author Cliff Jacobson's treatises on this subject, the previous title being Wilderness Canoeing and Camping in 1977, which I read and rather enjoyed. In scanning through the chapter titles of this new volume there were similarities: navigation, the canoe, paddles, food, portaging, rescue, repair. Reading the new book, line by line, I found some interesting new material and additional topics covered, but also found some rehash and recycled material, much of which had earlier been published in one of the national magazines (such as CANOE) to which Mr. Jacobson frequently contributes. An example of this is the section on constructing a spray cover for a canoe which, if you have not previously seen it, may make the book worth its purchase price for this chapter alone. He has included brief excerpts on various topics by 'authorities', and also recounts some memorable canoeing achievements of recent years, trips on the Burnside, Dubawnt and Nahanni for example, all of which have previously been published in longer form elsewhere.

Jacobson's style of writing is casual, chatty, folksy and easily readable, but perhaps a bit too 'Field and Stream-ish' for some tastes. To his credit he does not shun from offering his personal opinions on best gear, etc., and always includes the name and address of the company which manufactures the equipment. Within the text are included many draw-

ings, most of which do not catch the eye or add information to the story. And then there are the many b&w photographs reproduced in postage stamp size and in all cases far less appealing than the few quality color photos in the opening pages. In fact, many are seen twice: as color and later as poor b&w reproductions or drawings of the same scene. A single good print would have been preferable. There are a few typos and typesetting errors which are easy to overlook, as well as a "review of tandem and solo strokes" which is best overlooked. Really now, Cliff, do you want to send someone off down the Nahanni with a copy of your book and a description of a low brace?

There are many useful tips on how to plan, organize and outfit a wilderness trip. Most of this information is good and should be adopted by the novice wilderness traveler. Indeed, if he follows the directions in this book religiously he will probably live to paddle another day. But there is a great deal left out too: many obvious questions remain unanswered for the beginner to wilderness river tripping. Why not mention the running of wilderness rivers in closed boats? At least list the pros and cons. Where is the Salens sling and other tricks to help the portaging go more easily? How about a discussion on costs and ways to minimize them. And why continue to cling to the Duluth pack, a medieval instrument of torture that, like thumb screws and flogging, should be banned now that better packs have been devised? There are other omissions transcending just differences in 'style'.

# Book Reviews

My expectations had been peaked for an 'advanced' wilderness canoeing book built upon and exceeding Jacobson's first, jammed full of those useful tips that only experience yields, but, sorrowfully, did not find it. I can suggest *Canoeing Wild Rivers* only to those who have never been on a wilderness river trip before: you may find it to be of some use.

by Tom McCloud



Middle Fork of American - Tunnel Chute.

## ***California Whitewater*** **A GUIDE TO THE RIVERS**

By Jim Cassady and Fryar Calhoun

Here is a new guide book that rafters, kayakers, canoeists, and other river

lovers will find indispensable. **California White Water** reflects the fast-changing state of the art in this young sport. The book features 45 of California's best runs, from the Kern in the southern Sierra to the Smith in the northwestern corner of the state. In addition to popular rivers like the Tuolumne, American, Russian, Klamath, and Trinity—all highlighted in this book—there are lesser-known runs like Stony Creek, Rancheria Creek, and the Kaweah and Scott Rivers. The book includes whitewater stretches for every boater, ranging from easy Class II floats suitable for open canoes (at low water) to extremely challenging Class V rivers that only teams of experts should attempt.

For each run the authors provide an essay; a full-page map; a mile-by-mile guide to rapids, campsites, and points of interest in an easy-to-read format; and useful information like difficulty, runnable levels, flow, season, water quality, scenery and solitude, special hazards, emergency telephone numbers, and directions to and from the river area. In addition to the featured runs, there are briefer notes on a number of other California rivers. An index in the back offers boaters a handy way to scan the state's white water menu.

Sprinkled through the text are first-person adventure stories and black-and-white photos. The book also includes sixteen pages of dramatic color photos as well as short, thoughtful chapters on geology, plant life, fishing, water politics, and legal problems of river running.

Look for **California White Water** at your local river equipment dealer or bookstore. The book may also be ordered from Friends of the River, Fort Mason Center, Building C, San Francisco, CA 94123; or directly from the authors, Cassady & Calhoun, PO Box 5372, Richmond, CA 94805; phone (415) 232-0822 or (415) 540-0800.



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Continued from page 29

where rock buttresses closed in on the river. We made use of the log bridges still in place from winter and criss-crossed from bank to bank. With just a dozen porters, a select group kept on after we had gotten all the loads to Askole, we had no organizational problems at all, our devoted group charging headlong down the trail to keep up or waiting patiently while we scouted. There was no hint of the resentment and distrust toward outsiders which expeditions to Baltistan had encountered just ten years ago. Our rugged, cheerful group was as proud of us for our (to them) astounding feat of kayaking the Braldu as we were pleased with their helping set up our tents, their carrying the awkward (up to thirteen-foot-long) boats, and their solicitousness about our welfare. Rather than supply clothing and food as had been usual in the past, we simply negotiated extra payment and they used their own rubber shoes and brought their own food, mainly atta, ghee and salt for chappattis, and sweet milky tea.

The most spectacular kayaking photographs may be those Galen took dangling on a rope down inside the famed Narrows of the Braldu. Cut deep down through sculpted granite, the entire river flows through a rock cleft almost narrow enough to jump across. Running one at a time, we even stopped in eerie swirling cave-like eddies sixty feet below the surface before emerging into daylight again.

Spending time in the villages of the Braldu Valley, we were able to visit with villagers in their homes, and learn the (oral) history of the area's settlement (over the Hispar La from Nagar in Hunza, some four hundred years before). We tried to understand both the archaic Tibetan roots of the Balti tongue and the current Shiite Moslem influence of the Ayatollah Khomeini, whose baleful visage adorned the carved planks of the tiny mosque in Askole. Our willingness to provide free medical care for villagers (all of our left-over medical supplies being donated to the hospital at Skardu) and the presence of our two female expedition members, Kathy Blau and Barbara Rowell, as well as Galen's

renown in the region, all contributed to the warm reception we received and our thorough introduction to village life.

The completion by the kayakers of the river section below Askole coincided with the arrival of Jack Tackle and Gray Thompson, who were eager to climb. The paddlers headed up the river with ten porters, past Payu to the Baltoro Glacier's spout at 11,224' where the Braldu emerges from a black hole in the ice. Altitude, exertion and heat combined to force Rob Lesser to recover for a day from dehydration but permitted the others to hike on the lower Baltoro Glacier. I was, however, feeling urgently compelled to complete the run of the Braldu quickly and reach Base Camp to join the climbers. So my two trusty porters, Hussein Shah and Abdul Khaliq, shouldered loads at seven a.m. on May 24 and headed down from Payu at the same time as I headed up, a third porter carrying my orange Dancer, the last mile to the highest put-in. Solo, I then turned around and paddled the Braldu for twenty-five miles that day to Askole, rendezvousing with Hussein and Abdul once at Bardumal halfway down what was a triple stage for them and a seven-hour marathon for me. In places shallow and braided, in others very steep and rocky, the Braldu at one point essentially disappeared underneath huge boulders, compelling another portage.

The others followed the next day, taking two days to Askole and feeling the increasingly pushy character of the river as temperatures climbed to the hundred-degree mark and water levels rose. Rob Lesser and Bob McDougall on reaching Askole continued downstream, running (this time at a marginal and very exciting 3500 cfs) the entire lower Braldu again. Where we had initially spent long periods scouting especially complex rapids, Rob and Bob ran on sight and after what was for them the trip's high point, returned to the U.S. Because on our low water run, technical difficulty reached V+, there doesn't seem much doubt that the Braldu by any definition can be considered a "Class VI" river. Though we avoided innumerable potential and dangerous pins, the

rocky streambed took its toll in the form of two broken paddle blades (for Rob) and once an entire paddle jerked out of Bob's hands (though he proceeded to demonstrate his virtuosity by hands—rolling up and then reaching shore). Tough, plastic boats were a major key to our success, ~~foto~~ molded or cross-linked polyethylene plastic from Phillips Chemical (who generously underwrote part of the expedition to the tune of three thousand dollars).

The same hot weather which began to render the Braldu unrunnable simultaneously made our climbing objectives possible. On May 29 after sitting out a storm, the climbers began to move. Base camp had been situated on the east side of the Biafo Glacier a few miles up from the Baintha Glacier, at 13,500 feet. Galen, along with Rob Milne, Jack Tackle, and Gray Thompson, located the same strikingly steep and dramatically beautiful red granite tower he had photographed during his 1980 winter Karakoram ski traverse, and which he had selected as our prime objective from those photographs. Rising directly from the glacier, its base at 14,000 feet and summit at 17,650 feet, the spire had never previously been climbed or even attempted, though later we were to learn from our veteran sirdar, siiikara (hunter) Haji Ali, the peak was called "Lukpilla" (possibly a name from Eric Shipton's personal life) "Brakk" (Balti for rock tower).

Though I assisted carrying loads to the base, five climbers would have been too many, so I wished the other four well and began instructing an apt (and very fit) Balti porter, Ghulam Mahdi, in technical rock climbing on boulders near Base.

In four days of perfect weather the team climbed and descended (by the same route) thirty-four rock pitches up to 5.10 in difficulty, alternately leading and hauling in teams of two. Because they wore light rock shoes, the entire route was done free except for two points of aid on the overhanging summit block. Even short sections of snow and ice didn't negate the advantage of smooth soled shoes, especially because the rock in places was so compact that in boots, to aid blank sections would have been horribly laborious. Abandoning gear on the way up to save weight during their headlong summit push and recovering it on the descent, they wore T-shirts at almost 18,000 feet and all proclaimed the summit view the most breathtaking ever. Because the climb was done early in the Karakoram season (summit reached June 2) objective danger was high as late winter snow and ice melted, releasing a barrage of falling rock. Rob Milne, an Eiger veteran, thought the Nordwand had felt safer and slept in his helmet. The only damage sustained was Galen's bashing his finger with a piton hammer, and the only time lost was to quickly tape that up.

In the meantime, Bo and Kathy arrived at Base. Bo, Ghulam and myself attempted a route on the 19,000 foot peak behind camp, but the discovery of a huge, threatening cornice high up forced a retreat from 15,600 feet.

by Andrew Embick, M.D.  
 expedition leader  
 August 16, 1984

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The conclusion will be in the next issue.

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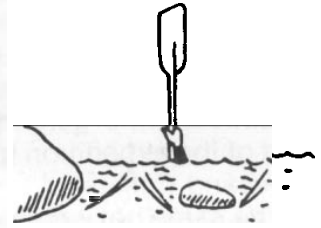
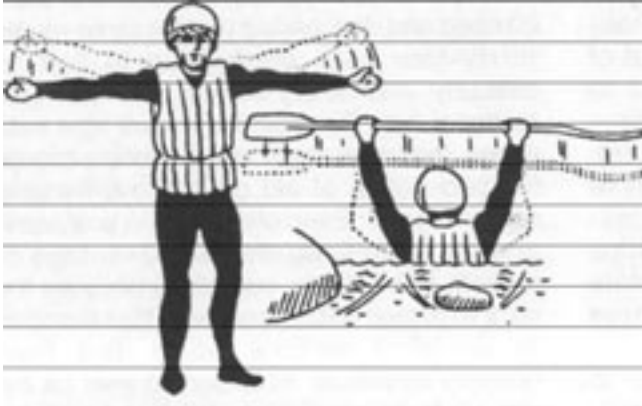
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