

# american whitewater

November/December 1997



**Chile's Volcanic  
Whitewater** page 38

**Gore Race** ▶ page 61



0 1041-7447 087085 112



**We've got the  
technical merit covered.  
You supply the  
artistic impression.**

**G**o ahead,<sup>™</sup>  
get creative.  
Now you've  
got the  
Whiplash<sup>™</sup>  
and Whip-It<sup>™</sup>:  
two new  
playboats  
with planing  
hulls and  
performance  
rails, to fit  
any body.  
Ingenious?  
Undoubtedly.  
Artistic?  
That's up  
to you.

Team member,  
Shane Benedict.  
Photo by:  
Christopher Smith



111 kayaker way  
easley, s.c. 29642  
1-800-262-0268  
[http://www.  
kayaker.com](http://www.kayaker.com)

# american whitewater

Journal of the American Whitewater

Volume XXXVII, No.6

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Letters .....  | 6  |
| Forum .....  | 4  |
| ▼ Perspectives on the Edge<br>by Bob Gedekoh                         |    |
| Briefs .....   | 88 |
| ▼ Upper <b>Yough</b> Race  |    |
| ▼ Canoeing for Kids  |    |
| ▼ <b>KidsKorner</b>  |    |
| River Voices .....   | 75 |
| ▼ Hole <b>Jousting</b>   |    |
| ▼ <b>Makin'</b> the Move   |    |
| ▼ Stuck in a Hole  |    |
| ▼ Canoeing the River by Train  |    |
| Conservation .....   | 13 |
| ▼ Director's Cut   |    |
| ▼ <b>AW's</b> Distinguished Friends of Whitewater                    |    |
| Safety .....   | 66 |
| ▼ Benchmark <b>Rapids/US</b> Standard Rated Rapids<br>by Lee Belknap |    |
| ▼ Incident Management<br>by Robert Molyneaux                         |    |
| Access .....   | 19 |
| ▼ Whitewater Boating is a Crime in Yellowstone                       |    |
| ▼ Access Updates   |    |
| Humor .....  | 95 |
| ▼ <b>Acid Rock</b><br>by Dr. Surf                                    |    |
| ▼ Deep Trouble<br>by Jonathan Katz                                   |    |
| Events .....   | 22 |
| ▼ AWA Events <b>Central/Gauley</b> Fest Report                       |    |
| ▼ Membership Mania   |    |
| ▼ Report from the Ottawa <b>Worlds</b>                               |    |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Rio Triful-Triful</b>  |
| by Scott Hardina <span style="float:right">38</span>                |
| <b>The Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone</b>                           |
| by Earl Alderson <span style="float:right">42</span>                |
| <b>A Circus on the Selway</b>                                       |
| by Gary Baker <span style="float:right">48</span>                   |
| <b>Where Credit is Due!<br/>America's Best...<br/>Dana Chladek!</b> |
| by John Weld <span style="float:right">51</span>                    |
| <b>Sherlock!<br/>What's that duck?</b>                              |
| by April Holladay <span style="float:right">57</span>               |

Cover: Photo by Todd Patrick  
Charlie Macarthur, having a great run before performing a  
Wavehopper splat in the middle of Kirshbaums's Rapid



Printed on Recycled Paper

Publication Title: American Whitewater  
Issue Date: November / December 1997  
Statement of Frequency: Published bi-monthly  
Authorized Organization's Name and Address:  
American Whitewater  
P.O. Box 636  
Margretville, NY 12455

## Perspectives on the Edge

### Where do hair boaters go when... and if... they grow old?

Once during an interview intended for this magazine I posed this question to a well known western hair boater who had a rapidly receding hairline. That was the end of that conversation. I was lucky to get away in one piece!

But since no fewer than five expert American boaters died this year paddling class V+ whitewater I think the subject of longevity and hair boating bears consideration. Particularly by the current crop of young hair or, as they now like to refer to themselves, "extreme" boaters. It might help them keep things in perspective.

There is no doubt that old hair boaters go somewhere. They definitely disappear. Consider the extreme boating scene as it stands today. There are lots of steep creekers in their twenties and there are quite a few in their thirties. But there aren't very many forty year olds still paddling the really tough stuff. And fifty year old hair boaters are scarcer than hens' teeth. So, where do they go?

Well, I've been kayaking for a little over twenty years, never really on the edge, but



close enough to see it. And as a consequence of my involvement with American Whitewater I've followed the "careers" of several "generations" of hair boaters. I've seen them come and I've seen them go. Hair boaters are like mosquitoes. You could swat them all today, but you'll have just as many more tomorrow. The rivers are full of larvae; the supply is inexhaustible.

I suppose if you really want to know why boaters stop running hair, you need to ask why they start running it at all. No doubt a few paddlers gravitate toward extreme boating because they want to make a name for themselves. They want to "star" in extreme videos and have their pictures splashed across the covers of magazines like this one. Of course these folks are ultimately in for a disappointment. You can be the very best hair-boater in the world, but you will only be

a big fish in a very small pond. Face it, ninety nine percent of the ESPN viewers in this country don't know what hair boating is and don't care. Besides, there is always some young pup ready to run a higher falls or steeper creek.

Yes, I can remember who some of the "famous" hair boaters were twenty and fifteen and ten and five years ago. But can you? Probably not.

But I really don't think the desire for fame (or notoriety) is the most important factor driving boaters to tackle extremewhitewater. I think it is adrenaline addiction. Most extreme boaters are danger junkies. How often have you heard them talk about the rush... and the release.... of running Class V+ whitewater? Or say that paddling dangerous whitewater triggers an almost overwhelming sensory experience?

Unfortunately a few die of their addiction. They push the limits further and further, running rivers at higher and higher levels and creeks with ever increasing gradients. Always looking for a little bigger thrill. Then one day they find an undercut or siphon they can't dodge or hydraulic they can't escape. This used to be an infrequent occurrence. But as more boaters challenge dangerous whitewater, and as hair boaters push the limits of navigability, deaths on extreme whitewater have increased at a disturbing rate.

## EDITORIAL DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed in the features and editorials of American Whitewater are those of the individual authors. They do not necessarily represent those of the Directors of the American Whitewater or the editors of this publication.

On occasion American Whitewater publishes official organizational policy statements drafted and approved by the Board of Directors. These policy statements will be clearly identified.

## Staff

Editor: Bob Gedekoh, Box 228, R.D.#4, Elizabeth, Pa. 15037

Emeritus Editor: Chris Koll

Contributing Editors: John Weld, Pope Barrow, Ambrose Tuscano

Art direction/Graphic design/Production: John K. Victor, Mary Hoffelt

Contributing writers: Carla Garrison, Jonathan Katz, Ed Ditto, Lee Belknap, Joe Greiner, Mark White, Bruce Farrenkopf, Nathan Lewis, Brik Miller, John Foss, Paul Tefft, Howard Davidson

Production Assistant: Richard and Teresa Augustin

Advertising Director: Phyllis Horowitz, Box 636, Margaretville, New York 12455 (914) 586-2355

Safety Editor: Charlie Walbridge, 230 Penllyn Pike, Blue Bell, PA 19422; Phone 215-646-0157; fax 215-643-0668; email 73514.1714@compuserve.com.

Conservation and Access Editors: Rich Bowers, Rich Hoffman, John Gangemi, 1430 Fenwick Lane, Silver Spring, MD, 20910 Phone (301) 589-9453 Fax (301) 589-6121, email: 72732.401@compuserve.com, 76435.731@compuserve.com

Missing Copies and Address Changes: Contact Phyllis Horowitz

American Whitewater is printed by SPENCER WALKER PRESS, INC., Newark OH. All rights reserved.

Fortunately most hair boaters don't die on the river. They simply outlive their obsession. After all, hair boating is not much different than riding a bicycle down a steep hill without holding on to the handlebars. "Look, Maw! No hands!!!" Kids test and prove themselves by recklessly confronting fear. Lots of fifteen year olds are hooked on adrenaline. But not many forty year olds are. Maybe it's a fall in their hormone levels. Or maybe it's just "growing up."

As many hair boaters grow older they find other (more meaningful?) ways to amuse and distinguish themselves. Their priorities change. They get real jobs, wives or husbands and, finally, kids. The horizon line at Gorilla looks a lot different when you've got two or three munchkins and a mortgage to feed. These "maturing" extreme boaters start to ask themselves questions like "What is really more important? Paddling a plastic tub to the Mann's Creek takeout, or being there when my youngest child graduates from college?"

Granted, there are a few "older" hair boaters who have continued to paddle on the edge, successfully juggling their boating, families and careers. But they are the exception and not the rule. And there are more than a few who have sacrificed their marriages and careers to pursue extreme boating.

Brushes with death and serious injuries lead some extreme boaters to reexamine their priorities. Perhaps nothing has a more sobering effect than watching helplessly while another boater dies on the river. And when that boater is a friend...

A few days in an ICU can also be a real eye opener. So can having your teeth knocked out or enduring your second or third shoulder reconstruction. You start looking forward to reaching the take-out, not because there is beer in the car, but because there is Advil. Some extreme boaters are forced to slow down when they discover their strength and reflexes aren't what they used to be.

The bottom line is, for one reason or another, most hair boaters back away from the edge sooner or later. Some stop boating altogether. These folks maintain that if they can't paddle Class V+, they don't want to paddle at all. They can't enjoy "easy" class IV+ water; it doesn't thrill them anymore. Others say they would like to continue boating on less menacing water. But they find it difficult to deal with the peer pressure to paddle the extreme stuff.

But most former hair boaters don't give up boating entirely. You may not see them on the Narrows of the Green or in the Crystal Gorge, but they still tackle the Gauley or the Ark. Some redefine their interest in whitewater; they take up rodeo or downriver racing. Others undertake expeditionary trips to out of the way places or find pleasure in teaching youngsters to boat. A few even become dedicated AWA volunteers, spending

hours setting up festivals and working on river conservation and access issues.

Some even slow down enough to enjoy the scenery. Yes, it really is possible to have fun without fear!

My point in all of this is not that it is wrong to push the limits of the sport. Far from it. After all, if everyone quit running hair this magazine might get a little boring.

But I do get concerned when I see young hair boaters becoming so obsessed with extreme boating that they lose track of more important things... like their personal development, their relationships with other people and their careers.

I get worried when I get photos and videos of extreme boaters attempting absurdly dangerous stunts that seem to require more luck and bravado than skill. I can't help thinking that these people need to be reminded that death and paralysis last a lot longer than whitewater fame and glory.

And when I see groups of inexperienced boaters who have no knowledge of river rescue techniques getting slammed on class V

steep creeks, I cringe.

And when I hear about hair boaters attempting to run class V+ rivers at higher and higher levels, to see how far they can go.. I can't help wondering what the end point will be.

There is no denying that extreme boating can be exhilarating. Or that during the past few years hair boaters have accomplished some amazing things. But, in face of the alarming escalation in fatalities and near misses, the time has come for extreme paddlers to seriously reexamine their motives, priorities and commitments. Then, those who choose to continue to push the limits need to do so as safely and responsibly as possible.

Bob Gedekoh

## We provide everything but water for the western boater..

...and for the eastern boater, too. Call or write  
for your copy of our 96-page color catalog. We ship  
everywhere, and we're ready to provide  
for your boating needs.

We are whitewater raft specialists,  
but we're also paddlers, and we carry the best names  
in the business.

(Check out our website: [www.casout.com](http://www.casout.com))



# Cascade

O U T F I T T E R S

P.O. Box 209, Springfield, OR 97477 • 1-800-223-RAFT (7238) .

## Fightin' Words

Dear Bob:

I just wanted to write and let you guys know about a little problem we're having down here in the Northwest Georgia / North-east Alabama area. Out of nowhere it seems that foreign paddlers are trying to rename a section of our local run. The Little River Canyon has been a well known white water run for over twenty years, and during that time the section from 35 Bridge to the area below Pinball has been called the "Suicide" section. It may be a melodramatic name, but it is our melodramatic name.

Now it seems that in a recent Monte Smith guide book to Southeastern White Water, he comments that "this section was formerly called the Suicide section, but lately paddlers seem to have taken to calling it the "Avalanche" section." (See Page 288). Of course this was the first any of us had heard of this outrage.

At the Suicide section put-in I asked about twenty locals, a mix of boaters from Huntsville, Birmingham, Gadsden and Rome, if they had ever heard anyone call it the "Avalanche" section. They all looked at me like I was crazy. It is hard to understand why people take it upon themselves to attempt to rename a popular and well-known run. Maybe they didn't realize the respect due to the pioneers of this river who somehow arrived at a name they thought suitable to this particular section. Maybe they are just young MTV extreme sports guys up from Atlanta thinking they were getting a first descent of the "Avalanche" section in 1995. Maybe they are just sneaky river renamers attempting to pull off a silent coup on the local boaters by telling a guide book author that it is now called the "Avalanche" section. Whatever the reason, this type of activity needs to be nipped in the bud before someone gets hurt. Gangsta Rappers have exchanged gunfire over less...

Thanks,  
Bill Thornton

P.S. If they're so hot to rename something, may I suggest renaming Section III of the Chattooga the "Dick's Creek Ledge" section...

## Fact or Fiction?

Dear Editor,

Of the articles published in American Whitewater, I have always found the fictional pieces to be the most entertaining, and must tell you how much I enjoyed your two most recent efforts by my old friends Bill Masters and Corran Addison.

In Mr. Masters' case, I would caution your readers that even though historical fiction is en vogue; and, as in any good mythology, this piece contains enough wisps of actual events to create a facade of credibility; it should probably have included a bold disclaimer lest some poor paddler think that it is truthful.

As for Mr Addison's slightly self-serving error ridden statements, they have been so debunked in other forums that there is little need for a rehash of his gross errors and exaggerations. Even so you might want to reassure your readers that while Corran's credibility may vaporize in the light of examination, linear polyethylene does not dissolve in the water of our rivers.

Yours kindly,

Steve Scarborough

Editor's note: Steve Scarborough is an executive at Dagger.

## Dagger's History Retold

Dear AWA,

I found the interview with Bill Masters to be interesting and informative. However, I do not agree with some of the details about the history of New World and Dagger paddlers. In 1972 I started Dagger Paddles with Drew Hunter in Bellwood, Pennsylvania. I worked in the evenings building paddles in a pattern making shop. Drew and I headed to Kernville, California in early 1973 to train for the 1973 Whitewater World Championships. We took 30 of the original 64 Dagger paddles to Kernville and sold paddles to local boaters wherever we traveled. In the summer of 73 we ran out of money and put Dagger on hold. In the spring of 1974 I was eager to make more paddles because every time I was on a river boaters wanted to try my sticks. They were begging me to make paddles. So I moved to central PA and started Wood-Lyte. With no experience in business or managing a manufacturing process, Wood-Lyte went bankrupt in late 1975. While the business failed, the paddles had been refined and improved to the point that I felt that I had a solid, high performance product. The only option was to relocate, start up a new shop

**Whitewater Dancer II**  
This video has it all! Underwater rolls, the 89 Worlds, Rodeos, Hot wave and hole surfing, Class V wipe-outs, Tunes by world famous fiddlemaster PAPPA JOHN CREACH! HI-FI stereo 55 Min.

**The Grand Canyon**  
Get into the GRAND CANYON. See the big drops and an innertube run of Lava Falls, with some really wild tunes. HI-FI stereo 43 Min.

**The Upper Yough, Gauley, Big Sandy, and The Russell Fork**  
See all of the big gnarly drops on these 4 great rivers all on one tape! HI-FI stereo 43 Min.

**How to Modify a Sabre**  
All you need to turn a Sabre into The hottest plastic play boat in the world! With action footage and truly outrageous tunes HI-FI stereo 49 Min. (Applies to most plastic boats!)

To get your copy, in VHS, send a check or money order for \$19.95 each, plus \$4.00 shipping and handling to:  
**SURF DOG PRODUCTIONS**  
1808 Old Meadow Rd., McLean, VA 22102  
(703) 734-8995

# Test the Best!

## In North America

# Prijon

## Kayaks

Rockit  
New for '97!



### Northeast

#### Baert Marine

Danvers, MA 508-774-7752

Canoe Center/Hart Enterprises  
Byron, NY 716-546-7546

Collinsville Canoe Store  
Collinsville, CT 203-693-6977

Goose Hammock Shop  
Orleans, MA 508-256-5630

Jersey Paddler  
Rocky Hill, CT 860-464-5566

New England Small Craft  
Manchester-by-the-Sea, MA  
508-946-6116

Northern Outfitters  
New York Mills, NY 518-768-2600

Small Boat Shop  
New Canaan, CT 203-664-6223

The Kayak Centre  
Wickford, RI 401-295-4403

Zoar Outdoor  
Charlestown, MA 413-359-8666

### Mid-Atlantic

Appomattox River Co.  
Farmville, VA 804-382-6646

Blue Ridge Outfitters  
Harpers Ferry, WV 304-725-3444

Country Ski and Sports  
Montoursville, PA 717-566-1716

Mountain State Kayak  
Fayetteville, WV 304-874-3100

Nature Outfitters  
Milford, OH 615-246-8665

Precision Rafting  
Friedensville, MD 301-746-6230

Schuykill Outfitters  
Bryn Mawr, PA 610-525-3060

Staarkmoon Canoes  
Delta, PA 717-456-7720

### Southeast

Atlantic Coast Sea Kayak  
Pompano Beach, FL 954-781-0075

Beacon Sports Center  
Ellijay, GA 706-276-5600

Bilbe Beach Club  
Titusville, FL 321-255-1516

David Allison/Island Adventures  
Os. Simons, GA 770-634-6076

Earth Traverse Outfitters  
Knoxville, TN 423-523-0699

Inland River Marine  
Vero Beach, FL 407-569-6757

Nantahala Outdoor Center  
Bryson City, NC 324-455-2175

Pro Canoe and Kayak  
Greensboro, NC 319-294-3098

Pro Canoe and Kayak  
Raleigh, NC 919-872-6909

Ship's Store  
Wilmington, NC 319-256-4445

The Bike Butler  
Antioch, TN 615-751-2247

### Midwest

Brule River Canoe Rental  
Brule, WI 715-372-4365

Canoe Sport Outfitters  
Indianola, IA 319-961-6117

Chicagoland Canoe Base  
Chicago, IL 312-777-1489

Kayaking Adventures  
Kowleys Bay, WI 414-864-6651

Laake & Joys  
Milwaukee, WI 414-271-7666

Offshore Marine  
Chicago/Vernon Hills, IL 647-362-4660

P.L. Aach Outfitters  
Stillwater, MN 612-430-2286

Rutahaga  
Madison, WI 608-225-1300

The Outfitter  
Harbor Springs, MI 616-626-2627

### South Central

Hammer Head Water Sports  
Dallas, TX 972-453-8005

Southwest Paddle Sports  
Kingswood, TX 757-263-3474

### Rocky Mountain

Alpenglow Mountain Sports  
Golden, CO 303-277-0133

Backdoor Sports  
Steamboat, CO 970-879-6249

Canyon Voyages  
Moab, UT 801-258-4121

Colorado Kayak Supply  
Buena Vista, CO 719-326-2422

Confluence Kayaks  
Denver, CO 303-433-3676

Four Corners River Sports  
Durango, CO 970-259-3685

Kinetic Accessories  
Orem, UT 801-274-6747

Kensleovous River Sports  
Jackson, WY 307-735-2475

Rocky Mountain Adventures  
Ft. Collins, CO 970-485-4006

Slate Sports  
Salt Lake City, UT 801-486-9424

Sports Recycler  
Edwards, CO 970-926-3867

Summit Canyon Mountaineering  
Glenwood Spgs, CO 970-945-6994

The Paddle Shop  
Boulder, CO 303-786-8799

Three Rivers Paddle Shop  
Almont, CO 970-641-1303

Wasatch PaddleSports  
Ogden, UT 801-300-0862

Wasatch Touring  
Salt Lake City, UT 801-360-9361

### West Coast

California Canoe and Kayak  
Oakland, CA 510-885-7633

California Canoe and Kayak  
Princeton, CA 415-728-1633

California Canoe and Kayak  
Sacramento, CA 916-361-6636

Kayak Connection  
Santa Cruz, CA 408-479-1121

North Country Canoe and Kayak  
Rudding, CA 916-244-1503

Sierra Nevada Adventure Co.  
Sonoma, CA 209-532-5621

Western Mountaineering  
San Jose, CA 408-854-7011

Xstreamline Sports  
Wilmington, CA 310-516-1372

### Northwest

Alder Creek Kayak Supply  
Portland, OR 503-255-0464

Canoe Rack  
Missoula, MT 406-549-8800

Cascade Outdoor Center  
Hood River, OR 541-387-3627

First Water Sea Kayaking  
Key, WA 206-843-1571

Idaho River Sport  
Boise, ID 208-336-4544

River Runner Supply  
Eugene, OR 503-543-6666

Stillwater Kayaking  
Billings, MT 406-248-6987

Whitewater Warehouse  
Covallis, OR 503-756-2150

### Canada

Aqua Plain Air  
Blainville, PQ 514-433-1234

Cloudberry Adventures  
Whitehorse, YT 403-666-7700

Cool Moose and Stuff  
Galt, NB 606-800-2627

Kayaku Inc.  
Montreal, PQ 514-981-2062

Lake Country Canoe and Kayak  
Oyama, BC 604-548-3604

Mountain Equipment Coop  
Vancouver, BC 604-872-7656

Mountain Equipment Coop  
Calgary, AB 403-269-2420

Mountain Sports Co.  
Edmonton, AB 403-433-9733

Northwest Aquatics  
Smithers, BC 604-847-5676

Toronto's Canoe and Kayak  
Superstore  
Etobicoke, ON 416-255-4034

Paddling is believing. So, don't just take our word for it. Experience for yourself the range of innovative designs, the quality of construction, the HTP advantage, and the safety features found in every Prijon kayak. Whitewater, flatwater or ocean; it's your choice. Visit the Prijon "Test The Best" Center nearest you today.

For free product information, call 303-444-2336

Wildwasser Sport USA, Inc. PO Box 4617, Boulder, CO 80306 website <http://www.wildnet.com/>

and not repeat the mistakes from...Wood Lyte. The name New World evolved from the concept of a product that was equal to or better than the wood paddles that were being imported from Europe - the Old World.

Bill Masters, Steve Scarborough and Don Hamilton became my partners in the New World Paddles. At the new shop in Easley, S.C. I focused on further refinements and improvement. In addition to fiber glassing the blade surfaces, I had discovered West System Epoxy. The next innovation was the inlaid dynel sleeve on canoe paddles. Adding these composite materials tripled the performance life of wood paddles.

For the first six months, I lived in a small room in the paddle shop. Steve Scarborough would escape from the corporate world of Southern Bell and drag me off to the Chattooga for some R & R on the river. Don Hamilton would often stop by on a work break from the cotton mill across the street. Don would also spend several evenings every week helping to finish the paddles. Occasionally Don, Bill and I would go out for serious product testing on the local creeks. Bill was rapidly expanding and diversifying his own operation to the point where he could not devote much time or effort to managing New World Paddles. At that time the focus was on high end, handcrafted paddles that were custom tailored to the individual paddler. The business was breaking even but not showing any real profits. A reasonable solution was to create a lower priced line of paddles that could be produced more quickly. I suggested using the Dagger label to create a new product identity for these production paddles. I called Drew Hunter in Colorado and he agreed to let us use the label.

Dagger continued to grow. We soon had a small network of retailers including High Country in Atlanta and NOC. As the demand increased, it was necessary to get someone else in the shop to step up production. Brandy Lesan was brought in and within 6 months he was a solid hands-on craftsman in the shop. New World paddles were in high demand as the waiting list and the price tags continued to increase. Dagger was seeing steady growth but was barely sustaining Brandy and me as the principal employees of the company. The constant stress of living on the screaming edge of poverty forced my wife to leave for a more secure lifestyle. There were no profits to share with the partners. In the end, Brandy and I bought Bill and Don's shares of the company. It was agreed that I would take the New World label and Brandy and Steve would retain the Dagger line.

The story of Dagger paddles from there on would have to be based on Steve and Brandy's collective experiences. Since then I have been a mercenary raft guide, paddle maker on the Cheat, Upper Yough, Lower Yough, Gauley, with a string of gypsy workshops in Appalachian sheds. But that's another story. To this day, New World remains

my premier line of custom wood paddles. The waiting list is 8-12 months. I am now a recovering raft guide and I spend most of my time hand carving laminated wood paddles for paddlers who enjoy using my products.

Keep strokin',  
Keith Backlund  
Backlund Paddles  
26115 Clarksburg Rd.  
Clarksburg, MD 20871  
E-mail: BacklundPaddles@JUNO.com

## Whoops!

Dear Editor,

I hope you will print an apology to Kelly Fisher, author of *A Paddler's Guide to the Ocoee River*. He is a he, not a "her" as mentioned in paragraph three and insinuated in paragraph five. The photograph on the back cover clearly shows this to be true.

Additionally, my copy of his book mentions "destination boating" not "designation boating." I also enjoyed the book and the Screw Up Factors.

I do like the magazine and hope this was a rare instance of error.

Thank You,  
Doug Porterfield  
Gaithersburg, MD.

P.S. Yes, I am the Doug Porterfield that took the photograph on the back cover.

*Editor's note: Life was sure a lot simpler when men had names like Tom and Dick and women had names like Jane and Sally. Our apologies to Kelly Fisher, whose guidebook to the Ocoee has been warmly received.*

## Where Credit Is Due

Dear Bob,

In the last issue of *American Whitewater*, you ran my article "A Paddler's Guide to River Runs" without author attribution. I'd appreciate a correction in the next issue stating I was the author. No doubt the author of the final piece in the issue would like his name included as well - this piece was also unattributed. After all, if you don't get paid, the only benefit is seeing your name with your work. Thanks in advance for rectifying this.

Bryan MacKay  
Baltimore, Md.

*Editor's reply: Several bylines were inadvertently omitted in the July/August is-*

*sue. They included Bryan MacKay's, Bill Hay's (who contributed the "End Notes") and Marrea Matthews (who wrote the review of the Guidebook to the Ocoee). Sorry!*

## Hang'Em High Revisited

Dear AWA Editor

I too would normally endorse the "Hang em High philosophy for boat rustlin'", but I saw several different perspectives as I witnessed and reported an apparent boat theft on Tennessee's Ocoee river on August 16th.

While I was soaking up the sun at Flipper in overturned RPM went floating by with no accompanying paddler. At that time it was unclear if there was a paddler still in the boat. It was clear that none of the 20-30 boaters in the eddy (typical Ocoee Saturday in August) were making any move to retrieve it. A companion and I peeled out in hot pursuit and caught up with the boat a quarter mile downstream at Goforth Creek.

Three other boaters drifting in the calm water encircled the stray just before we arrived. Fortunately, the boat was empty. We jokingly talked about "salvage rights", but I soon concluded the three strangers were not kidding. Outnumbered, I backed off. They apparently put one of their boats on a vehicle at Goforth Creek and paddled the RPM out.

The next day I reported the incident to the Ranger at the put-in and received a surprising reply. He said he had concluded that kayakakers have unlimited disposable income. He had 3 unclaimed kayaks at the office and more paddles than the Nantahala Outdoor Center. There had been no thefts reported the day before and there was no interest in my observations.

There were numerous errors made here - not just by the thieves. So, I fall back on the basic proactive principles. Paddle in groups of 3 or more, so two can rescue the swimmer and the gear of the third. And, I'm investing in a locking system for cartop storage. Finally, does anyone know where I can buy that exploding dye that they put in the bank's money bags??

Hope this follow-up to the "Hang 'em High" letter is useful. Great Mag - I love the new color cover!

Ed Boyer  
Portage, Michigan



# Guidelines for Contributors

Please read this carefully before sending us your articles and photos! This is a volunteer publication, please cooperate and help us out. Do not send us your material without a release - signed by all authors and photographers (attached)!!!

The editorial staff of American Whitewater carefully reviews all material submitted for publication. We are particularly interested in receiving full length feature articles, conservation and club news, special event announcements, articles pertaining to whitewater safety and short, humorous pieces.

Articles should fit our established format; that is, they should be stylistically patterned to fit into our Features, AW Briefs, River Voices, Conservation Currents, Safety Lines, Humor or End Notes sections. Exceptional photographs and whitewater cartoons are also welcomed.

If possible articles should be submitted on a 3" computer cassette. (WordPerfect preferred - others accepted.) Please do not alter the margins or spacing parameters; use the standard default settings. Send a printed copy of the article as well.

Those without access to a word processor may submit their articles typed. Please double space.

Photos may be submitted as slides, black or white prints or color prints. Keep your originals and send us duplicates if possible; we can not guarantee the safe return of your pictures. If you want us to return your pictures, include a self addressed stamped

envelope with your submission. Because we publish in black and white, photos with a lot of contrast work best.

American Whitewater Feature articles should relate to some aspect of whitewater boating. Please do not submit articles pertaining to sea kayaking or flatwater. The best features have a definite slant... or theme. They are not merely chronological recountings of river trips.

Open the story with an eye catching lead, perhaps by telling an interesting anecdote. Dialogue should be used to heighten the reader's interest. Don't just tell us about the river... tell us about the people on the river... develop them as characters. Feature articles should not be written in the style of a local club newsletter.

If you are writing about a commonly paddled river, your story should be told from a unique perspective. Articles about difficult, infrequently paddled or exotic rivers are given special consideration. But we are also interested in well written, unusual articles pertaining to class III and IV rivers as well. Feature stories do not have to be about a specific river. Articles about paddling techniques, the river environment and river personalities are also accepted. Pieces that incorporate humor are especially welcome. Open boating and rafting stories are welcome.

Don't be afraid to let your personality shine through and don't be afraid to poke a little fun at yourself... and your paddling partners.

Profanity should be used only when it is

absolutely necessary to effectively tell a story; it is not our intent to offend our more sensitive members and readers.

Please check all facts carefully, particularly those regarding individuals, government agencies and corporations involved in river access and environmental matters. You are legally responsible for the accuracy of such material. Make sure names are spelled correctly and river gradients and distances are correctly calculated.

Articles will be edited at the discretion of the editors to fit our format, length and style. Expect to see changes in your article. If you don't want us to edit your article, don't send it to us. Because of our deadlines you will not be able to review the editorial changes we make prior to publication.

American Whitewater is non-profit; the editors and contributors to American Whitewater are not reimbursed. On rare occasions, by prearrangement, professional writers receive a small honorarium when they submit stories at our request. Generally, our contributors do not expect payment, since most are members of AW, which is a volunteer conservation and safety organization.

## Release For Publication

- I hereby release my work (literary, graphic or photographic) for publication in **American Whitewater** magazine.
- I understand that my work may be edited or cropped at the editors' discretion.
- I understand that I will not be paid for my work.
- I accept responsibility for the accuracy of the information included in my submission. I have not libeled or slandered any individual, corporation or agency in this work.
- I understand that all or some of my work may be reprinted at some future date in an American Whitewater publication.
- I promise that this material has not been and will not soon be published by another magazine or publication and the rights to this material are clear and unrestricted.
- I understand that once this material is printed in American Whitewater it may be reprinted or reproduced in other publications if I wish, providing I notify them that it has already appeared in American Whitewater.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

This release must be signed by all the contributing author(s), photographer(s) and graphic artist(s).

Send your material to Bob Gedekoh, R.D.#4, Box 228, Elizabeth, PA. 15037. Please use regular first class postage.... Not certified mail.

# Directors

Ric Alesch  
14262 West Warren Place  
Lakewood, CO 80228  
73624.2333@compuserve.com

Landis Arnold  
P.O. Box 4617  
Boulder, CO 80306  
landis@wildnet.com

Pope Barrow  
136 13th Street SE  
Washington, DC 20003  
72702.1552@compuserve.com

Lee Belknap  
1308 Maryland Avenue  
Glen Ellen, VA 23060  
76513.2466@compuserve.com

Risa Shimoda Callaway  
216 Inverness Way  
Easley, SC 29642  
risa@kayaker.com

Tom Christopher  
931 Union Street Rear  
Leominster, MA 01453

Brooke Drury  
8224 14th Avenue NE  
Seattle, WA 98115  
brooked@mountaineers.org

Chuck Estes  
114 Bay Path Drive  
Oak Ridge, TN 37830-7801

David Fallside  
1700 49th Street  
Sacramento, CA 95819  
fallside@rahul.net

Bob Gedeko  
Box 228, RD 4  
Elizabeth, PA 15037

Bob Glanville  
66 Deer Run  
Glenwood, NY 14069  
104121.567@compuserve.com

Joe Greiner  
7316 Chicora Court  
Raleigh, NC 27615

Barry Grimes  
124 Hilltop Drive  
Richmond, KY 40475  
bagriml@pop.uky.edu

Jay Kenney  
181 Franklin Street  
Denver, CO 80218  
jaykk@aol.com

Chris Koll  
352 Cameco Circle  
Liverpool, NY 13090-2732  
ckoll1234@aol.com

Sue Langfitt  
Stanton Langfitt  
Advertising  
1733 SW Myrtle Street  
Portland, OR 97201  
76675.2233@compuserve.com

Kevin Mendik  
135 Nathan Lane  
Carlisle, MA 01741

Richard Penny  
2499 Los Altos Avenue  
Clovis, CA 93611  
rpenny@ix.netcom.com

Joe Pulliam  
P.O. Box 1500  
Harriman, TN 37748  
72002.305@compuserve.com

Ken Ransford  
1775 Sherman, Suite 2000  
Denver, CO 80218  
ransford@csn.net

Susan Scheufele  
2121 Ocean Street Ext.  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
susansQeng.sun.com

Jim Scott  
3715 Jocelyn Street NW  
Washington, DC 20015  
jscott@amfor.org

Pete Skinner  
2 Snyder Road  
West Sand Lake, NY 12196  
skinnp@rpi.edu

Ron Stewart  
P.O. Box 1337  
Chattanooga, TN 37401  
ron\_stewart@baylor.chattanooga.net

Paul Tefft  
P.O. Box 4784  
Aspen, CO 81611  
enviro@rof.net

Mac Thornton  
6467 Wishbone Terrace  
Cabin John, MD 20818  
72634.316@compuserve.com

Barry Tuscano  
RD 1, Box 32  
Bolivar, PA 15923  
tmr@westol.com

Charlie Walbridge  
230 Penllyn Pike  
Penllyn, PA 19422  
73514.1714@compuserve.com

Susan Wilson  
52 Albemarle Place #16  
Asheville, NC 28801  
76017.3534@compuserve.com

## AW STAFF

Rich Bowers, Executive Director  
1430 Fenwick Lane  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
(301) 589-9453  
72732.401@compuserve.com

Rich Hoffman, Access Program  
Director  
1430 Fenwick Lane  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
13011 589-9453  
awa@compuserve.com

John Gangemi, Conservation  
Program Director  
482 Electric Ave.  
Bigfork MT  
(406) 837-3155  
jgangemi@digisys.net

Phyllis B. Horowitz, Administrative  
Director  
P.O. Box 636  
Margaretville, NY 12455  
(914) 586-2355  
74663.2104@compuserve.com

Jayne Abbot, Events Manager  
450 Iw Hill Road  
Weaverville, NC 28787  
(704) 645-5299  
jhabbot@aol.com

## AW OFFICERS

President: Ric Alesch  
Vice President: Pope Barrow  
Secretary: Bob Glanville  
Treasurer: Jim Scott



AWA Home Page-  
<http://www.awa.org/>

Lee Borfiglia running Sheppard's Falls, Wind River, WY. Dave Slosser photo.

WHERE THERE'S THUNDER...

THERE'S

LIGHTNING

Full line of  
whitewater and  
touring paddles

Lightweight  
High performance  
Custom Paddles

LIGHTNING  
PADDLES INC.

22800 So. Unger Rd.  
Colton, OR 97017  
503.824.2938

lightning@canby.com  
www.paddles.com

Dealers Inquiries Welcomed

## Where's Rosie???

Dear Editor:

About fifteen years ago, when I first dared to paddle West Virginia's Big Sandy, there was a spritely older woman who was the sole living resident of the ghost town of Rockville (the put-in). Everyone called her Rockville Rosie... she was quite popular with the regular boating crowd. Rosie lived year round in a tiny fiberboard house not far from the Sandy. Her house did not have a phone, electricity or running water, so making it through the winters had to be really tough. She had been living there "forever" according to my friends and we would still see her in Rockville three or four year ago. Rosie always made the trip across the rickety bridge to greet kayakers and she was quite the philosopher. I found her views on the "sacred state of matrimony" to be particularly useful in my own life.

But now Rosie is gone. Does anyone know where she is? Since she disappeared from Rockville running the Sandy has not been the same. She is sorely missed.

Puzzled and worried,

Richard James  
Lobur, PA

Editor's reply: Rosie lives!!! According to AWA supersleuth Linda Bidwell Rosie relocated south from Preston to Upshur county for health reasons. But she still likes to hear from her old friends. So why don't you, and all of your kayaking buddies, send a Christmas card to Rosie at the following address: R.M. Arbygasse, 346 S. Florida St., Buckhannon, West Virginia 26201.

## "Material" Differences

Dear AWA Editor, It was with amusement that I read "Choose your Weapon" by Corran Addison. In attempting to explain the differences in boat materials he made some claims that are so far removed from the truth that I feel compelled to correct them for the benefit of the AWA readership. Corran's claim that Kevlar has an elongation "of about 30%" is way off base. According to Dupont's (maker of kevlar) technical literature the elongation is 2.4%-3.6%, depending on the type of yarn used. Furthermore he states that "most polyester resins have about 12% elongation". As a composite boatbuilder for the past 14 years I wish this was true so I could use cheaper polyester resins. Polyester resins have elongation of between 1%-5%, vinylesters 5%-12%, and epoxies 5%-15%.

Now that I have straightened this mess out let's talk about material properties. Elongation, while important, is not the most critical factor in what makes a boat tough.

Elongation as defined in composite terms is "the fractional increase in length of a material stressed in tension". When expressed as a percentage, this is the percentage of the original length. A higher elongation doesn't equal better. A piece of rubber can have an elongation of 400%! In fairness to Corran he is correct in stating "that to provide the ultimate in weight, performance and impact resistance, the fibers and fiber weave must be carefully matched with the resins". There are many other factors other than elongation that make for the optimum combination of materials that I won't go into such as tensile strength, flexural modulus, and compressive strength. I use all of these in determining the best laminates for the U. S. Canoe & Kayak Team athletes.

Andy Bridge  
Composites/R & D Manager  
DAGGER  
Harriman, TN

## C-1 Alternatives

Dear Editor,

I can't hold back any more. All these letters crying about the vacuum left in our souls by the absence of new plastic C-1's out there - it's almost enough to make you hurl! I for one, can't blame the industry for not wanting to invest in a sure-to-lose, limited C-1 market.

Dagger should certainly be applauded for its brave move to introduce the Atom, which, by the way, makes a very fine C-1. I tried for years to convince every company imaginable to render my C-1 designs from glass into plastic with no luck whatsoever because anyone that crunched the numbers could see that the economics of such an adventure sucked. Now, Dagger has stuck its neck out to give us a fine new boat (which, I might add,

strongly resembles my Viper C-1 design complete with many improvements) and C-boat-ers are still complaining!

I agree it would be nice to have more than one new plastic C-1 to choose from. But jeez, give the industry a break. Lately, they've come up with several, new K-1 designs per company each and every year like clockwork. And, these boats aren't dogs by any means. Furthermore, many make real fine C-1's!

So far, I've converted and tested Perception's Pirouette and Whip-it; Prijon's Hurricane and Rockit; New Wave's Cruise Control; Dagger's Outburst, Freetail LT, and the RPM; Wave Sport's Frankenstein and Pyranah's Acro 270. I'm looking forward to testing Wave Sport's Godzilla and Necky's Jive soon. The Whip-It, Rockit, and Cruise Control are a few of my favorites. The Godzilla looks and feels real promising, but I haven't gotten it into moving water yet.

I am not the only one doing this! Norwood Scott, Heidi Domeisen, Davey Smallwood, a guy named Wright from Vermont, and Ryan Mitchell are just a few I can mention off the top of my head that are happy K-1 to C-1 conversion paddlers.

The message here? Quit your whining, try an Atom (which I personally like as a big water boat) then, try a wide, deep, short K-1 (fortricks and great surfs). Just get out there and do it. As a true blue C-ler, you must know we've always had to "make" it happen for ourselves, back in the old days and even now. The only difference is that now it's easier to make it happen because we have more choices of more boats to convert.

Best Regards,  
John Frachella AWA Regional  
Coordinator  
Bangor, Maine



Dennis Huntley surfing Jaws on the Nolichucky in the Dagger Atom.

# Purpose

## American Whitewater

**Our mission is to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely.**

The American Whitewater (AW) is a national organization with a membership consisting of thousands of individual whitewater boating enthusiasts, and more than 100 local paddling club affiliates.

**CONSERVATION:** AW maintains a complete national inventory of whitewater rivers, monitors threats to those rivers, publishes information on river conservation, provides technical advice to local groups, works with government agencies and other river users, and-- when necessary-- takes legal action to prevent river abuse.

**RIVER ACCESS:** To assure public access to whitewater rivers pursuant to the guidelines published in its official Access Policy, AW arranges for river access through private lands by negotiation or purchase, seeks to protect the right of public passage on all rivers and streams navigable by kayak or canoe, resists unjustified restrictions on government managed whitewater rivers and works with government agencies and other river users to achieve these goals.

**EDUCATION:** Through publication of the bi-monthly magazine, and by other means, American Whitewater, (AW) provides information and education about whitewater rivers, boating safety, technique and equipment.

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

**EVENTS:** AW organizes sporting events, contests and festivals to raise funds for river conservation, including the Ocoee Whitewater Rodeo in Tennessee, the Gauley River Festival in West Virginia (the largest gathering of whitewater boaters in the nation), the Arkansas River Festival in Colorado, the Kennebec Festival in Maine and the Deerfield Festival in Massachusetts.

AW was incorporated under Missouri non-profit corporation laws in 1961 and maintains its principal mailing address at 1430 Fenwick Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (301) 589-9453. AW is tax exempt under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

*Water always finds its way.*



*Follow it and find yours.*

*spirit of kayaking*

**ESKIMO**

FROM WILDWATER SPORT

P.O. Box 4617 • Boulder, CO 80306  
Phone: (303) 444-2336 • Fax: (303) 444-2375  
<http://www.wildnet.com/>

Call for  
our catalog  
now!

Just thinking about kayaking makes Heidi take off!

Photos: Michl Memminger

## Director's Cut

By Rich Bowers, Executive Director

In the September/October Journal, American Whitewater promised to throw a party at the Gauley Festival to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. And what a party it was!

Great rivers to run, typical, autumn-Gauley weather, deals on boats and paddling gear, and an out-of-this-world fireworks display produced by American Whitewater Director Barry Tuscano made this a spectacular birthday celebration.

The weather was typical Gauley Festival, meaning that it rained like crazy all day Saturday — then the skies opened up even more with the Festival Gate. While Saturday's weather didn't dampen spirits on the river, it certainly made the festival more interesting.

But what "makes" a party is the people who show up. Around 8:00 p.m., just when the rain and wind abated, a record number of about 3,000 boaters rolled in to help support American Whitewater's river programs and to hang and have a great time in West Virginia. This was an incredible thing to see, and all of us here at American Whitewater really appreciate our friends and members turning out. This proved to be the biggest Festival ever, in attendance, in booth displays and for membership. Between rain drops and howling winds we were able to sign up some 250 new members in just a few hours. Thanks for joining



Rich Bowers "works" the crowd with Chris Spelius at Outdoor Retailer Show

and thanks for coming out.

In addition to being a fantastic party, the Gauley Festival is also one of American Whitewater's bi-annual board meetings. Several issues were decided at this meeting which will be of interest to our membership.

First was the unanimous decision of the Directors not to renew our contract with the World Kayak Federation (WKF). This was an idea which just never panned out - for anyone involved. In the future, while Journal readers will continue to see coverage of WKF events (just as you would with anything whitewater-related), there is no longer any contract or agreement between American Whitewater and the WKF. If any American Whitewater member signed up for memberships in both groups, and is having trouble receiving the Journal, please call our New York office at (914) 586-2355. We promise to straighten this out for you right away.

Second was a continuing discussion of American Whitewater's role in extreme paddling. This discussion began

at the August meeting held in Salt Lake City, and we expect it will continue for many months and Journals to come (see this edition's Forum). As a very quick overview, American Whitewater aims to continue to represent the sport in all of its different aspects. This includes races, rodeos, festivals and all skill levels, including extreme. It also includes presenting all issues linked with the sport, such as conservation, access, liability, responsibility and safety. I personally do not believe we can exemplify whitewater by ignoring the extreme end of it - just as we cannot ignore beginning or intermediate paddling issues.

Our goal is to make paddling safer across the board. Look for American Whitewater to increase our emphasis on safety programs in the next year. This includes expanding our budget and publishing a white paper on river safety (similar to our access policy), and expanding our Journal coverage on this subject. We're starting in this Journal by introducing a new rating system for judging the difficulty of rapids. Please look this over; we

need your input and would appreciate calls or letters with your opinion! In future publications you can expect to see a continued effort to provide more articles on less difficult, Class II and III rivers (but we need stories and photos to publish - please help).

American Whitewater will continue to report on this country's wildest and most beautiful rivers. Often, enjoying these rivers demands total commitment and difficult paddling. And sometimes even training, conditioning and instruction cannot offset the inherent risk of the outdoors. Attaining the skills needed to run rivers, and accepting the responsibility of doing so, is an integral part of whitewater - and American Whitewater's mission.

As usual, we don't expect to answer these questions by ourselves - we will be driven by each of you out there on our rivers. Please give us your thoughts and perspective on enjoyment, safety, responsibility and risk — all part of what we do.

# Tallulah and Nisqually Releases

by Rich Bowers



As I write this, it is ten days past the October 1<sup>st</sup> opening of the registration process — and still three weeks before the first scheduled release for Georgia's impressive Tallulah Gorge. A few days ago, Kent Wigington (American Whitewater Regional Coordinator) and I met with Bill Tanner, Supervisor for Tallulah Falls State Park, and spent an afternoon helping with construction of the trail from the canyon rim to the put-in at the foot of Hurricane Falls.

As boaters are aware, this trail needs to be completed in order for boaters to reach the river. While construction is moving along, and the Park has been running double-shifts for several weeks, the trail is still several hundred feet from the river. Building this trail is hard work, and if you stop by the Park, please take the time to stop by and tell the staff there how much you appreciate their efforts.

While Bill was optimistic on completing the stairs and trail, the decision will not be made until October 15<sup>th</sup>. So look for an article in the next Journal to hear the final verdict and how the three weekends of releases went off.

Boater interest in Tallulah was huge! On the first day of registration (October 1<sup>st</sup>), the town of Tallulah Falls reportedly received more mail than ever in a one day period. As expected, all three November releases were quickly filled by applications postmarked by the deadline. About 300 applications arrived in all (at five people per permit, only about 20 of these would be selected). To be sure everyone had

Trail construction at Tallulah Gorge

**DeRiemer Adventure Kayaking**

It's what we **do** and we **do** it well.

For 16 years kayakers of all skill levels have enjoyed our teaching and guiding. Come along and experience the fun of your adventure.

Phil & Mary

honduras  
800.255.5784

ecuador  
800.585.2925

otter bar  
rogue river  
middle fork of the salmon  
daily instruction  
916.295.0830  
76671.2714@Compuserve.com

Photo • VILJA BECKER

the feel of  
**WOOD**

the weight of  
**CARBON**

the durability of  
**Silver Cre**

**CANOE & KAYAK PADDLES**  
677 Silvermine Road • Bryson City • NC • (704) 488-9542 • [silvercrk@dnet.net](mailto:silvercrk@dnet.net)



Kent Wigington working on boater access to Tallulah Gorge



a fair chance, all applications were collected by postmark and then picked by random drawing on October 6".

Also as expected, there were a few kinks in our first application system. For releases in April, we will improve the system and will provide more time to submit applications. This will let those living further away, or with a slower postal service get on the river.

Boaters wishing to get a chance for a spring permit can send in their applications between now and April. A final deadline will be selected and announced in the coming months, and then all applica-

tions received prior to this set date will be available for the drawing.

For those of you lucky enough to win a permit - have a great time! And remember, this is our chance to win some friendship and credibility with the local residents (and to get more permit slots in the future?). Be aware of your actions, spend your money locally, and if you get the chance, tell anyone you see how great it is to have water back in Tallulah Gorge. NOTE: There are lots of speed traps in this area. Watch your speed; while we want to support the local economy, no one wants tickets or the hassle that goes with them.



*Whitewater Kayaking in Chib  
It's the trip of a lifetime!*

**Expediciones Chile** trips are more than just paddling challenging rivers. They're an extraordinary experience. **Imagine the best day of paddling you've ever had**, greeted at the end of the day by an ox cart shuttle capped with a relaxing sauna and massage. Our trips have gained an international reputation—the best-of-the-best.

Please contact us for more information.

**Expediciones Chile**

333 Earl's Road, Bryson City, NC 28713  
Compuserve 71774,756  
Fax 7041488-9082  
Phone 5001488-9082

**We are Whitewater!**



**River Rescue**

**W**——

Geared toward Intermediate to advanced boaters, we follow the ACA River Rescue curriculum and teach both rescue techniques and safe river running practices

May 17-18 July 17-18  
September 13-14

**Rodeo Clinks**

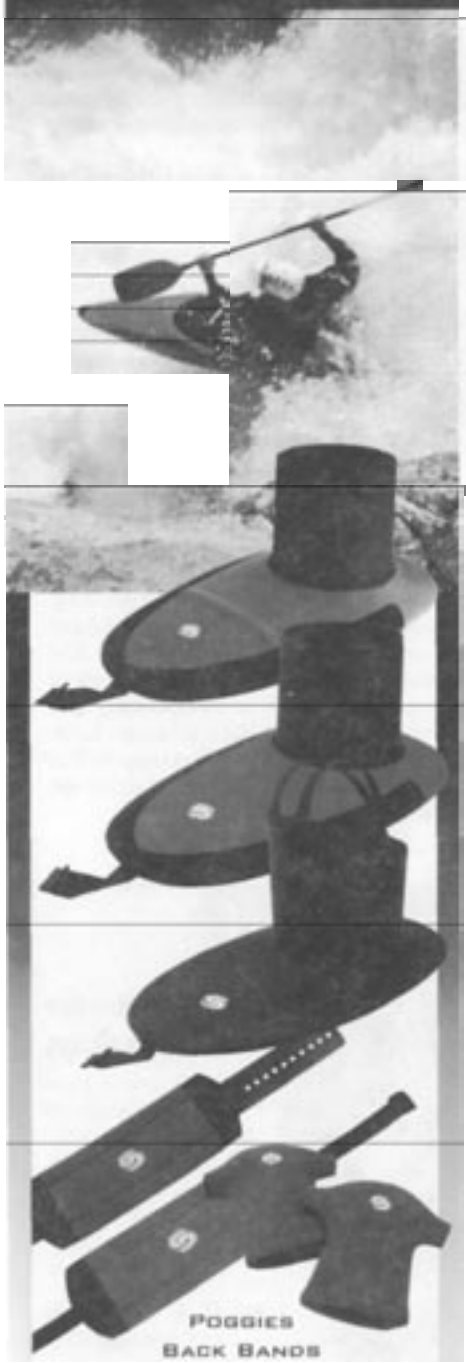
Our women's play clinic features Roxanne Howard and Susan Wilson. Our open clinic features rodeo champ Chris Spelius.

Women's Rodeo Clinic - August 16-17

Spelius Rodeo Clinic - October 4-5

800 532-7483

Charlemont, Massachusetts



POGGIES  
BACK BANDS  
SLALOM BIB SPRAY SKIRTS  
WHITE WATER SPRAY SKIRTS  
WHITE WATER SPRAY SKIRTS  
WITH IMPLSION BAR

# American Whitewater's Distinguished Friends of Whitewater Awards

At the September 20<sup>th</sup> Gauley Festival, American Whitewater announced the first ever recipients of the organization's "Distinguished Friends of Whitewater Awards." Begun in honor of the 40th Anniversary, these awards are given with appreciation and in recognition for extraordinary support of conservation and access for America's wildest rivers, and for assistance to American Whitewater.

American Whitewater owes its success to volunteers, and to a few key people who have helped the organization out over its 40 year history. The "Distinguished Friends of Whitewater" award is planned to accomplish the following:

- Thank those who have been involved with rivers and American Whitewater
- Document the history of river conservation and recreation
- Draw attention to both whitewater issues and volunteer efforts

Here is a listing of the awardees:

- Yvon Chouinard, Patagonia Inc.

The Distinguished Friends of Whitewater Awards was originally conceived to thank Yvon for his financial support. This support came when American Whitewater needed it the most and has continued over the years.



Rich Bowers American Whitewater Executive Director presents award to Perception CEO, Bill Masters

- Bill Masters, President and CEO of Perception Inc.

Bill earned this award for both his individual and for Perception's continued support of American Whitewater. This year Perception was a supporter of the National Organization of Whitewater Rodeos, donated an events trailer to our organization, and most recently established a college fund for the family of Rich Weiss.

- Jim Compton, Title Compton Foundation

Jim is a long time boater and friend of rivers. Through the Compton Foundation, he has supported numerous river organizations for years, and last year the

Compton Foundation awarded American Whitewater with a grant to conserve and restore whitewater rivers throughout California.

- Jim & Iris Sindelar (Founders)

Jim served as President of American Whitewater (then the AWA) during the early 1970's and Iris served for years as the volunteer editor of the Journal. Among their many notable accomplishments was attracting the talents of Pete Skinner to the organization.

- Pope Barrow

Throughout his years of service with American Whitewater, Pope has always been a driving force behind the organizations growth. In addition to holding the positions of Vice President and past Conservation Board Director, Pope is the fa-



left to right Pete Skinner, Chris Koll, and Pope Barrow, distinguished Friends of Whitewater



ther of American Whitewater's Access Program and the true spirit behind our Conservation efforts.

Pete Skinner

Through his considerable drive and determination, Pete kept American Whitewater alive during its darkest days of organizational growth. Whether acting as Executive Director, current Chair of the Conservation Committee, or as the catalyst for American Whitewater's Hydropower Program, Pete has long provided the vision for this organization.

Davey Hearn

In addition to being an Olympic Medalist and a role model for up-and-coming boaters, Davey is receiving this award for his role as a river access spokesman and for his work with American Whitewater's Access Program. Davey has assisted this organization both with funding this program and pushing the legal rights of boaters on rivers.

Chris Koll

Chris receives this award for being American Whitewater's Journal Editor Emeritus. Anyone who reads the Journal is aware of Chris' contributions to the "best semi-professional" magazine around. Today, Chris continues to serve on our Publications Committee and has been instrumental in the continuing growth of our Events Program.

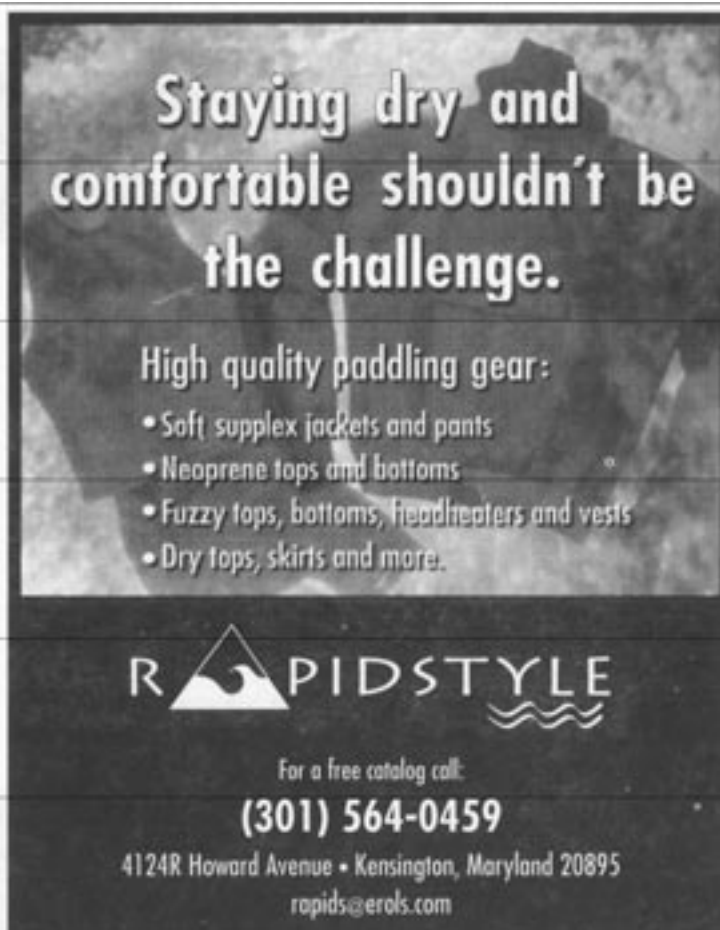
Besides the actual award, the Distinguished Friends of Whitewater recognition includes a lifetime membership with American Whitewater.

## Alaska Whitewater Threatened by Hydropower

Senator Frank Murkowski (AK) is pushing a bill (S. 439) that would transfer authority of hydropower projects 5 megawatts or smaller from the federal to the state level. Currently, these hydropower projects fall under the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) jurisdiction. The bill sets a precedent for other states to request similar authority.

The bill passed the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1997. Senator Dale Bumpers (AR) amended Murkowski's bill in an effort to make it more palatable to the democrats. However, Bumpers' amendment falls short of insuring the safeguards necessary to protect the environment. The amendment, in part, requires the state of Alaska to demonstrate its ability to regulate hydropower in a manner equivalent to FERC's current regulations, a condition Alaska state agencies have publicly admitted is not obtainable due to dwindling state budgets.

The bill could be introduced to the full Senate floor at any time. Encourage your Senator to oppose S. 439.



Staying dry and comfortable shouldn't be the challenge.

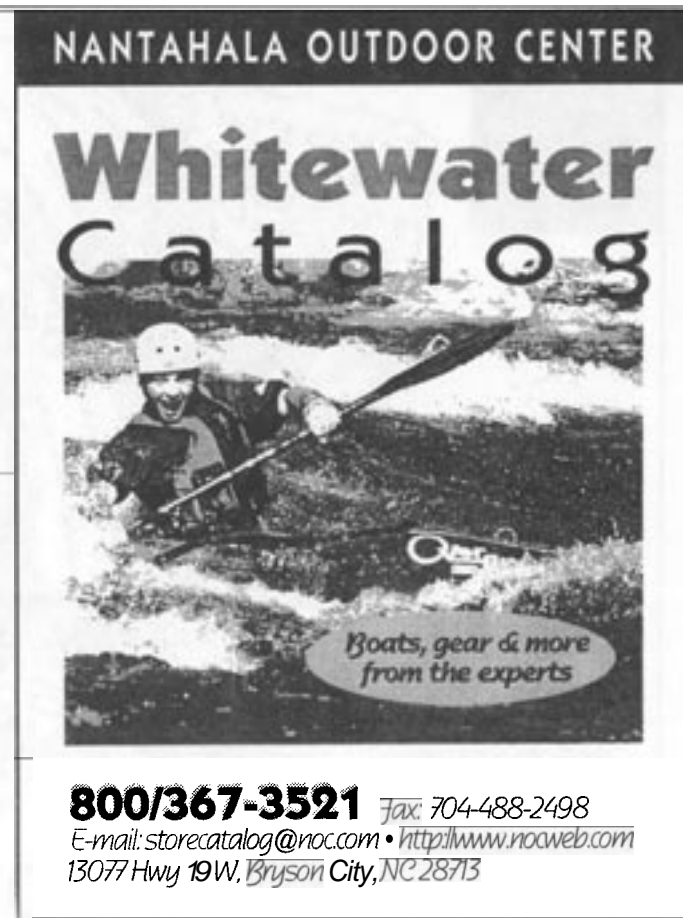
High quality paddling gear:

- Soft supplex jackets and pants
- Neoprene tops and bottoms
- Fuzzy tops, bottoms, fleeced tees and vests
- Dry tops, skirts and more.

**RAPIDSTYLE**

For a free catalog call:  
**(301) 564-0459**

4124R Howard Avenue • Kensington, Maryland 20895  
rapids@erols.com



NANTAHALA OUTDOOR CENTER

# Whitewater Catalog

Boats, gear & more from the experts

**800/367-3521** Fax: 704-488-2498  
E-mail: storecatalog@noc.com • <http://www.nocweb.com>  
13077 Hwy 19W, Bryson City, NC 28713

# the adventures of JOHNY UTAH

river stories from a different point of view

**WINNER**  
'97 NATIONAL  
PADDLING FILM  
FESTIVAL



A WaterWorks/Bonesteel Production

Probe into the psyches of boaters you might consider abnormal. Spend an hour looking at chaotic life from water level.

This one hour action/documentary explores "why" we do what we do.

ASK FOR IT AT YOUR LOCAL OUTDOOR RETAILER... OR CALL NOC MAILORDER AT 800-367-3521

IF YOU RUN, RUN CLEAN...  
IF YOU WALK, WALK TALL...  
...AND IF YOU'RE BOATING TO IMPRESS SOMEONE, GET OFF THE RIVER

*-johnny utah*

# essential



Riven:  
Rio Congrejal,  
Linville Gorge,

Rio Papaloteca,  
Middle Creek,  
North Johnstone,  
Green, Chattooga,  
Rio Hamuya,  
Overflow Creek,  
Nantahala...

**t**his is a thick, meaty video you can sink your paddle blades into. It's not fluff. It's not hype. An hour of cutting edge instruction, fantastic footage (shot in the U.S., Honduras and Australia) and cool original music. Tom DeCuir (of Grace Under Pressure) an NOC instructor,

teams with film director/musician/artsy guy Paul Bonesteel in a video that takes you from the foundation of solid boating skills: balance, navigation and timing, and flows into **boofing drops, linking moves and river strategy.** If you've never been far away, this will take you **OUT THERE.**

a new WaterWorks video production

To order by phone: call NOC Mailorder at 1-800-367-3521  
To order by mail: please send check for \$37.95 (covers postage) to WaterWorks, PO Box 190, Toppton, NC 28781

# boat control

## Announcement of Staff Job at American Whitewater

**Position Title:** Director,  
River Access Program

**Category:** Full Time

**Location:** Silver Spring, MD  
(Executive Office)

**Responsibilities:** Primary: Direct program to improve access to whitewater rivers nationwide. Fulfill goals for river access in the 5 year strategic plan. Work involves locating and securing river access locations [THROUGH NEGOTIATION, LAND AGREEMENTS AND TRANSFERS]; tracking and influencing legislation and policy that affects river access; [MONITORING AND DEVELOPING REVISION OF RIVER MANAGEMENT PLANS;] advocating for stronger rights of passage on rivers that flow past private land (the "navigability" issue); and fundraising to support these activities. Secondary: Assist with all aspects of American Whitewater's activities, including conservation program, events and festivals, [RIVER SAFETY] and administrative needs.

**Qualifications:** Minimum of a Bachelors degree and 2 years experience in natural resource policy, preferably water-related. Background in law, real estate, and fund raising highly desirable. Candidate must be a self-starter with demonstrated ability to work independently. Must have strong writing and communication skills and be comfortable with word processing software and electronic communications. Familiarity with rivers and the sport is necessary.

**Salary:** Commensurate with qualifications.

**Benefits:** Stipend for health insurance. 403B retirement plan.

**To Apply:** Deadline: December 15. Applications will be reviewed in early 1998. No phone calls please. Send cover letter, resume, writing sample and references to:

Rich Bowers, Executive Director  
1430 Fenwick Lane Silver Spring, MD 20910

## Whitewater Boating is a Crime in Yellowstone National Park

by Davison Collins

If you've ever toured Yellowstone National Park you've surely noticed its natural wonders: geysers, wildlife, mountains, forests, and rivers. Yes, rivers. If you're a whitewater boater it's hard to ignore them, especially because you cannot experience the beauty of the Park from a river. It is illegal to boat on any moving water in our first National Park (the lakes of Yellowstone are, however, open to boaters), except for a short class I section of the Lewis River Channel connecting Lewis Lake and Shoshone Lake. Yet the two stroke engines of snowmobiles and power boats go virtually unregulated. How did a rule like this come to alienate boaters and why does it still exist?

On May 30, 1950, due to increased depletion of the fishery resources, a park regulation officially closed all rivers and streams in Yellowstone to boating in order to relieve pressure on the fisheries. (Presumably, many anglers were fishing from boats and able to gain access to places where bank anglers could not get to.) Whitewater boaters are now suffering the consequences of a restriction that was established to control anglers; as a result, boating is viewed as a "non-traditional use." If the purpose of the 1950 regulation was to protect the fishery, why not simply outlaw fishing from boats on rivers? After all, it's not fish that whitewater boaters are looking to catch, only eddies and waves.

More recently, due to pressure primarily from kayakers, a Park study was completed to re-evaluate the ban on whitewater boating in Yellowstone. **Boating on Yellowstone's Rivers: An Analysis and Assessment** (hereafter referred to as the **Assessment**) recommended continuing the restriction on river boating in the Park. It was recommended

Davison Collins is a graduate of the Colorado College who wrote an honors thesis in Anthropology on the rock art of the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. A former All American swimmer, Davison has been a river ranger for three years for the Middle Fork Ranger District of the USDA Forest Service on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River (ID) and a volunteer ranger for the Globe Ranger District on Arizona's Salt River. American Whitewater will have their proposal (entitled "A Proposal to Open Select Rivers & Streams within Yellowstone National Park for Whitewater Recreation") finalized by the end of the year. If you would like a copy, please contact us at (301) 589-9453 or check upcoming issues and web site for updates at <[www.awa.org](http://www.awa.org)>. American Whitewater does not endorse r illegaluns down rivers in Yellowstone.

by Chief Ranger, Dan Sholly and approved by former Park Superintendent, Robert Barbee on May 18, 1988. The official recommendation states that, "Due to the high level of potential impact that river boating has on the biophysical environment of Yellowstone National Park, the **No Boating/No Action** alternative is recommended." The other alternative was to allow "Boating on Selected Rivers."

The Assessment establishes a "River Analysis Decision Matrix," which identifies 18 major river sections considered desirable to float by Park officials. It then states "nine key facets of the Park environment" which would be affected by boating on Yellowstone's rivers. Three high level factors, three medium level factors, and three low level factors are mentioned based on Yellowstone's Organic Act, Yellowstone's legislation and NPS Management Policies. The high level factors are threatened and endangered species, significant geothermal features, and historical and archaeological sites. The medium level factors are birds and wildlife, fish, and conflicts with other park users. The low level factors are vegetation, sanitation and safety hazards. Finally, based on the nine key fac-

ets, the Assessment ranks the 18 river sections with an impact score to show which rivers should be opened first if the "Boating on selected Rivers" alternative was chosen.

To some extent, the Assessment forsakes the fundamental philosophy behind Yellowstone National Park, as a place "dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and the enjoyment of the people" on March 1, 1872. The standard for use in our national parks which was established by the National Park Service Organic Act in 1916 implies that as long as a use does not damage the resource, the National Park Service should allow that activity. While the Assessment speculates about the potential impacts from boating, it does not recognize the similarities between kayaking and other low impact, non-motorized uses that are currently allowed, and it analyzes boating impacts from the perspective of unlimited use, failing to consider the mitigating effects of management tools to control use. In the final analysis, the current ban on whitewater boating is discriminatory, arbitrary, and capricious. And as discussed below, the punishment for breaking this rule has hardly

been commensurate with the "crime."

American Whitewater is working on gaining access to the rivers in Yellowstone. In June of 1995, they met with Park Superintendent, Michael V. Finley and his staff to discuss the issue. Their approach has been, "to work with the Park, recognize that they have legitimate concerns," according to AW access director Rich Hoffman. He described the Park's reaction as "mixed." Following Finley's suggestion after the 1995 meeting to put together a proposal for whitewater use in the Park, Hoffman, Regional Coordinator Triel Culver and Conservation Director John Gangemi gathered public input and created a draft proposal. They are now in the process of finalizing the proposal which will be submitted to the Park this year. When asked about his realistic projection of the future of whitewater boating in Yellowstone, Hoffman replied, "I'm optimistic. I think our arguments are strong, our logic is compelling, and the facts are clear cut enough that there will be some future limited use of whitewater boating in the Park."

Safety is an issue that has been raised by Park officials in opposition to whitewater kayaking in Yellowstone and may have played an important role in shaping the history of whitewater restriction in the Park. Jackson, Wyoming local and pioneer hairboater Joe Larrow tells a story of a time when Park officials used to look the other way when they saw kayakers in the Black Canyon of the Yellowstone River (which contains some of the most spectacular whitewater in the Park). Larrow first paddled the Black Canyon in the summer of 1979. When asked whether he was concerned with getting caught then, he said, "No, at that time I think there was a \$25 fine...we weren't worried about it. We floated by Park people half-way down." However, he describes what he believes was the turning point of this laissez-faire policy—the day he got busted on July 4, 1981. "Unbeknownst to us, Cully Erdman, Rob Lesser and other individuals were in front of us

and Erdman blew his shoulder out at the suspension bridge rapid and chose to get flown out which was surprising because the trail is right there to the road. It's about a mile and a half to two miles to the highway. So when the helicopter was in the middle of picking him up, it saw us floating down the river and alerted the Park people... There were a lot of rangers waiting to arrest us when we got to the take-out" (in Gardiner, MT).

Clearly, when whitewater kayaking is allowed in the Park, a system needs to be established whereby the Park is not held responsible for rescue and whereby boaters take responsibility for compensating the Park if their assistance is needed. As far as the Park's liability is concerned, the law is well-settled that the Federal government is immunized from such claims. Assumption of Risk waivers signed by boaters could also increase the government's immunity to lawsuits. Great Falls National Park (MDNA) and the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument are examples of National Parks where class V-VI boating is allowed.

Times have changed, however. Park officials no longer look the other way and the punishment for kayaking can be severe. The maximum punishment for someone caught whitewater kayaking in the Park is a \$500 fine, six months in prison, seizure of any equipment used, and a ban from the Park. The violation is classified as a "Petty Offense" under 36 in the Code of Federal Regulations. Ultimately, however, it is up to the Magistrate to decide what punishment is handed down within these maximum boundaries.

Local Jackson hairboater, Olaf Koehler has been caught twice by Park officials poaching the Black Canyon of the Yellowstone River. The first time was in 1989. He and the others with him were flagged down by a ranger waving his gun on horseback. They were arrested immediately and forced to carry their boats and gear three to four miles uphill to the road. They were then taken to the compound in



**DESIGNED PERFORMANCE**

## Performance You Can measure With The Seat of Your Pants

It's tough to quantify the performance of a boat. You can't gauge it with numbers and graphs. It's the feeling of control and maneuverability you have when you're on the river. It's something you just know.

AIRE inflatables give you that gut-level satisfaction. Our boats are designed to serve up high performance that puts a smile on your face and offer bomb-proof durability to keep you smiling for years to come.

**SEND FOR YOUR  
FREE CATALOG**



P.O. Box 342-010 • Boise, ID 83703  
Phone 208 344 1586 • Fax 800 701 AIRE

**TEN YEAR WARRANTY**



We know our boats are the toughest on the water and we back it up.

**MODULAR AIRCELL SYSTEM**



Works like an inner tube in a tire for maximum durability and fast repair.

Gardiner where Koehler recounts, "They proceeded to put our boats in jail without any water." Koehler and cohorts went to court a week later where they were reunited with their kayaks. The Magistrate "put the fear of God in us," Koehler recalls. They were each fined \$250 with \$150 suspended on a two-year probational basis. The second time he was caught in 1995 the punishment was more severe. Koehler and others with him (first time offenders) were each fined \$500 and banned from the Park for three years.

Catching Koehler and the gang was not so easy the second time around, however. They managed to make it to Gardiner - evading about 30 Park rangers and Gardiner sheriffs - where they crouched behind a bush and waited for nightfall. Unfortunately for them, they were nabbed from behind in the twilight at gun point by the Gardiner sheriff. Koehler recalls the events after he was apprehended: "They tore the guts out of our kayaks to check for radio transmitters. Because we evaded them on several occasions, they thought maybe we were picking up their radio signals....We were face down in cactus. [The sheriff] had pulled his gun on us and we were just laying there spread eagle in the prickly pear. He thought we were hardened criminals at that point."

When asked how he feels about the ban on kayaking in Yellowstone, Koehler replied, "It's a self-serving issue for fisherman actually, not to have to deal with kayakers on the river. Fisherman have way more impact than kayakers and as far as the wildlife is concerned. I have yet to scare anything there. I don't think that wildlife [disturbance] is an issue there. The big issue there is fishermen that don't want to deal with the kayakers. Stephen Kohl, the magistrate, is also an avid flyfisherman." When asked how he felt about the punishment, he said, "For me it isn't even worth an attempt to try and get away with it again because it would be so costly or I might even have to go to prison...The river there (Black Canyon of the Yellowstone) is self-

regulating so I don't think anyone else has to do it."

In regards to the punishment for kayaking in the Park and why he recommended the ban, Chief Ranger Dan Sholly had this to say: "We are not the enemy....We're trying to balance many uses in the Park and there's no way we're going to please all constituency groups or all individuals. That's why we went through the process of the [Assessment], to try to see, was there a way? It was felt at that point that it wasn't reasonable... If you needed to boat you could do it outside the Park." When asked if he foresees any change in the current policy, he replied, "I don't foresee anything on the horizon in the next year or so. We have a different Superintendent [Michael V. Finley] now and he's indicated that he's satisfied with the plan as we have it at this point." Sholly also indicated that if the ban was reevaluated, he would "fight very hard for limited use."

Sue Consolo Murphy, Resource Manager at the Park for the past 15 years was one of the biologists on the interdisciplinary research team who produced the Assessment. When asked what she thought was the primary reason for the ban, she stated that the total ban alternative was "based on the combination of the analysis and the public response." She also said, "We did not get a lot public comment at the time, but as I recall, about 95% or more of the public comments that we got in response to the issue and the press releases... were to continue the restriction." She said that most of the comments were concerned with "the question of potential conflict with other user groups, not just fisherman." She described it as an "aesthetic issue," saying that, "We also had a number of comments from persons who had done a lot of river use in other National Parks and they expressed concern about the visual impact and the crowding that occurred...." Many letters, she said, expressed that there are all ready enough National Parks allowing whitewater boating and that Yellowstone provides a different experience for people viewing, walking and/or

Falling Down Productions presents

**Monster Drops**  
*Cartwheels*  
**Big Wrecks**  
*Spittwheels*  
**First Descents**  
*Rock 360's*  
**Gnarly Rapids**  
*Loops*  
**Rail Grabs**

Order this Evolutionary Revolutionary Video!  
 Send \$24.95 + \$4.00 S/H to:  
 FDP PO Box 242 Lansing, WV 25862  
 Dealer Inquiries Welcome! 800-529-25661

More Vertical Per Minute With One Outrageous Soundtrack!  
 37 Minutes

*When it comes to paddling...  
 Come to the leader*

**Kayak School ~ Customized instruction for all levels of experience - beginner to advanced... Call for our Kayak School Brochure**

*West Virginia's #1 Paddling Shop*

CKS Salamander Perception North Face  
 Sidewinder Kokotat Man of Rubber  
 Rapidstyle New Wave Aquaterra Wave Sport

**Demo Boats Available**

**North American River Runners, Inc.**  
**800-950-2585**  
 PO Box 81 Hico, WV 25854  
 Rt 60, 114 mile west of US 19

fishing along the river corridors. In regards to the question of why higher impact activities like snowmobiling and power boating are allowed and whitewater kayaking is not, Consolo Murphy said, "It isn't necessarily an issue of this use versus that one which is arguably more or less damaging....It wasn't about opening up kayaking and closing something else." When asked what her projection was for the possibility of change in the current restriction, Consolo Murphy said she was "not the best person to ask that question." She did comment, however, on the "lack of demand to open up the Park to whitewater boaters, saying that "We have small numbers of folks who periodically ask that question, but it has not, to be honest, been the issue that attracts the most concern from either user groups or resource interests in the Park." Sholly made similar comments concerning the insignificance of the issue for most people. Unfortunately, Park Superintendent Finley was unavailable for an interview.

Because Yellowstone Park cannot provide convincing evidence differentiating its circumstances from other National Parks that allow and successfully manage whitewater boating - Grand Canyon National Park, Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Grand Teton, etc... - and because the ban was originally established to prevent overfishing, the ban is arbitrary. Because there is nothing in the **Management Policies** or the National Park Service Organic Act that directly or indirectly makes a strong argument against whitewater boating - in fact, they indirectly support it - the ban is capricious. Finally, because other visitor uses are allowed, some of which are much higher impact than whitewater boating and require more money to manage like snowmobiling and motorized boating, the ban is unfair.

|  |
|--|
| <b>Green Summer</b><br>20minutes<br>\$21.95            |
| <b>Southern Fried Creekin'</b><br>45minutes<br>\$26.95 |
| <b>Plunge!</b><br>45minutes<br>\$26.95                 |
| <b>Vertical Addiction</b><br>45minutes<br>\$26.95      |

Gentry Video Productions

Announces the release of *Creekin' USA!* It's 90 minutes of hardcore paddling action as GVP takes you to eight regions around the United States to paddle over 30 creeks and rivers with the local experts. Features runs in Maine, Alaska, West Virginia, the Southeast, Colorado, Yellowstone Area, the Northwest, and California. Only \$29.95 plus \$3.00 shipping. Gentry Video Productions, 646 Deer Creek Trail, Hoschton, GA 30548. (706) 654-2725. [gentvid@mindspring.com](mailto:gentvid@mindspring.com) New Web site: <http://www.mindspring.com/~gentvid/index.html>

Park officials and whitewater enthusiasts can work together to open some form of allowable boating on our first National Park's rivers. Limited use on designated rivers - i.e. the Black Canyon of the Yellowstone River in the fall - would be a good first step. If you feel strongly about this issue, let the Park know your concerns. Write a letter or start a petition and mail it to Michael V. Finley, Superintendent, Yellowstone National Park, PO Box 168, Wyoming, 82190.

## Colorado River Management Plan Update

by Rich Hoffman, Access Director

In September, Grand Canyon National Park (GCNP) held public meetings in Portland, Salt Lake City and Phoenix to solicit input for the revision of the Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP). The CRMP directs how the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon—the ultimate multi-day whitewater river trip in the U.S.—is to be managed.

Please add your name to the mailing list (and you may still be able to submit your initial comments) by writing to: Grand Canyon National Park, Science Center, Attn. Linda Jalbert, P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023.

This process is critical so that we can identify key issues early in the process—issues like access/allocation of user days, fees, and wilderness and resource protection—and develop a management plan that is fair and equitable to all members of the public.

The timeline for the revision of the CRMP is approximately 2 years:

- Jan. 1998: Summary of issues and suggested solutions prepared and distributed.
- Jan. 1999: Draft plan and environmental assessment distributed for public comment.
- April 1999: Public involvement workshops to discuss draft plan.
- Jan. 2000: Release of final draft plan.

The following are the initial thoughts of American Whitewater, distilled from the sentiments of our Directors, volunteers and constituency. Please let us know what you think of these and any changes you would like to suggest for the future!

### I. Brief History

The management of the Colorado River has been controversial since close to the dawn of time. This section will provide a brief synopsis of how this resource has been managed over the years with respect to river recreation.

#### A. Access

River use in the West began to rise dramatically in the early 1970's. In the year 1972, 16,432 people floated through the Grand Canyon, more than the total number of people who floated the Canyon during the entire period from 1950 through 1970. Rightfully recognizing the need to set limits on the amount of people who float the Canyon, the Park Service set a ceiling on use in 1972, using the "historical precedent" for the basis of the allocation. This "historical precedent" was frozen in time and gave commercial outfitters 92% of the allocation, with the remaining 8% for non-commercial trips. (Considering the fact that non-commercial boaters take longer trips, the split in terms of the number of people was even more skewed, with only 3% of the people who traveled the Canyon being non-commercial.)

Many members of the boating public did not think that this was a fair system, and the NPS was sued at least twice in the 1970's questioning the fairness of this rationing system. Most notable was a case called Wilderness Public Rights Fund v. Kleppe which ruled that while the NPS has the authority to set use limits, and that while a split allocation system is not inherently unfair, use limits must be "fairly done pursuant to appropriate standards." The Court used the fact that the NPS was adjusting the allocation (to the present 70-30) after conducting a study to justify the allocation as evidence that this allocation was not "arbitrary."

Today, in 1997, we are operating under the 1977 allocation of 70-30 commercial-non-commercial. No adjustments have been made to reflect changing demand. Thus, the situation where non-commercial users must wait up to 10 years while commercial can gain access to a trip in a given year. A strong argument can be made that the current allocation is indeed arbitrary.

## B. Fees

As discussed before in the past three issues of American Whitewater, GCNP announced dramatic changes in the fees for non-commercial boaters in January. The new fees are a combination of the Fee Demonstration Program, a component of the 1996 Appropriations Act, and the Cost Recovery Program, a program designed to recover the costs of managing a "special use." These new fee programs have increased the cost of an average non-commercial trip through the Grand Canyon from \$131 to \$1600.

Since these fees were instituted, several groups including American Whitewater, the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association, Grand Canyon River Guides and National Park and Conservation Association have been very involved with this issue, and helped to schedule a public meeting in March. One result of that meeting was small changes in the fee program (such as a reduction in fees for small trips and a reinstatement of the one year grace period for renewing your space on the wait list), which, while a positive first step, does not address the primary problems with the new fee program.

## C. Wilderness and Resource Impacts

Rightly recognizing the need and desire of the majority of river runners to eliminate motors on the river, the NPS attempted to reduce motor use during the 1979 revision of the CRMP. This reduction was compensated by increasing the allocation of the outfitters who operated motor rigs. However, Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) became involved and prevented the NPS from reducing motor rigs. Unfortunately, the commercial outfitters maintained their increased allocation.

# II. American Whitewater's Thoughts on Key Issues and Solutions

(Following are AW's initial thoughts. Please let us know what you think of these and express your ideas at the meeting! Please also recognize that our we can increase our effectiveness by presenting concordant goals and ideas.)

## A Fundamental Concepts

First of all, boaters should agree on some fundamental concepts that pervade every issue and solution.

1. Management of the Colorado River must provide for the long-term preservation of the river resource and assure that this outstand-

ing wilderness area will not be further deteriorated. In short, all decisions must be fully accountable to the generations of future Americans.

2. Management decisions must be developed with input and approval from an informed public.

## B. Access

### 1. General Thoughts:

a. Use ceilings are a necessary management tool to preserve the river resource.

b. The distribution of these limited access opportunities must be equitable to all members of the public.

### 2. Problem

a. There is a huge discrepancy in hassles and wait between members of the public who wish to guide themselves (non-commercial boaters) and those who do not (commercial guests). On average, non-commercial boaters must wait 10 years to receive a permit, while commercial clients can go down the river within any given year. The statistic that is cited most frequently for allocation (a 70%-30% split between commercial and non-commercial respectively) is subject to scrutiny considering that commercial guides are not counted in the user day allocation, commercial outfitters often exchange clients once or twice in the trip, and that non-commercial boaters tend to take longer trips resulting in a much lower number of bodies that float the canyon/year are counted.

### 3. Solution

Any management system must have the following characteristics:

-it must reflect demand

-it must be flexible, so that access distribution can adjust

Explanation: Rigid quotas for separate groups can become increasingly unfair over time unless they are periodically updated to adjust to changes in demand levels among the different user groups. This is especially true if the original quotas were inequitable. One obvious need is an objective way to measure demand. The waiting list for non-commercial boaters does not take into account the amount of people deterred from even applying, or who go commercial rather than wait, deal with substantial bureaucracy and pay large fees. Measuring demand must also recognize that non-commercial boaters jump through a lot of hoops to get on the river, while commercial clients are solicited through marketing and advertisements.

Other key characteristics of a fair system are:

-it can't be manipulated by users and outfitters

-it is simple for the applicant and efficient for the river manager

-it should not undermine the financial viability of commercial outfitters, nor should it guarantee that they will make a profit.

Explanation: The present system guarantees a certain amount of user days to each outfitter, despite the actual desires of the public. The mandate of the NPS is not to guarantee business to an outfitter, but to look after the broader public interest. While commercial outfitters provide an important service, their presence should not restrict the rights of other members of the public to access the river. The current management plan guarantees that the customers of commercial outfitters will automatically receive access to the river, while denying equal access to non-commercial boaters.

As we state in our access policy, we advocate experimenting with new methods to reduce disparities in river access opportunities. A "common pool" system — where all members of the public (commercial and non-commercial alike) wait in the same line — was recently established for the Deschutes River in Oregon by the BLM and this should be carefully evaluated by the NPS. An additional advantage of

# Happy Birthday American Whitewater!

**1957-1997  
Forty Years of  
Conserving and  
Restoring  
America's  
Whitewater  
Rivers**

**Join Today to Celebrate and Help Us Make a Difference**

For forty years now American Whitewater has been first in whitewater conservation, access, safety, recreation and events. We work tirelessly to promote whitewater sports and protect and restore whitewater rivers nationwide. You can be a part of the action too. By joining American Whitewater, support our efforts and stay on top of the latest whitewater news our bimonthly journal, American Whitewater. Let's work together towards the next millenium!



## American Whitewater Member Benefits

- Subscription to American Whitewater
- American Whitewater bumper sticker
- American Whitewater Safety Code
- Special 40th Birthday Bonus --  
American Whitewater Safety Flash Cards

Access  Conservation  Safety  Fun  Peace of Mind

### American Whitewater Annual Membership

- Junior (under 2) (\$15.00) .....
- Individual (\$25.00) (Canadian \$30, Foreign \$35) .....
- Family/Household (\$35.00) (Canadian \$40, Foreign \$45) .....
- Ender Club (\$100.00) (Bonus Gift - T-Shirt, Specify M,L,XL) .....
- Retendos (\$250.00) (Bonus Gift - Embroidered KAVU Cap)..
- Club Affiliation (\$50.00) .....
- Contribution to Whitewater Defense Fund .....
- Total Enclosed (US \$ Only) .....

Your Contribution is tax deductible.

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I would be interested in working as an AW volunteer.

**Remember - tomorrow your favorite river could be in jeopardy. A donation of any amount to the AW Whitewater Defense Project goes a long way toward keeping our whitewater rivers wild and free!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Club: \_\_\_\_\_

Method of payment:  Check  MasterCard  Visa

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

You may Fax credit card orders to: (914) 586-3050

**Detach and mail to: AWA, P.O. Box 636, Margaretville, NY 12455**



A C C C C S S  
this system is that it may provide smaller outfitters a more level playing field with which to compete with larger outfitters, by allowing members of the public to choose an outfitter based on better services and trips and lower prices, rather than solely based on whether the outfitter has available trip space. Another idea that should be evaluated is privatizing the waiting list to reduce overhead and preventing abuse.

## C. Fees

### 1. General Thoughts

- Fees must be instituted with public input.
- Fees must be comparable to fees charged to other users.
- Fees must be structured fairly so that the fee is commensurate to the services received at the time the fee is paid.
- Collecting agency must identify the services or activities that the fees will support.

### 2. Problem.

As discussed above in the above **Background/History** section, we have several concerns with the new fee program that was announced in January:

- 1) The process by which the fees were established. There was no opportunity for public participation prior to the implementation of these fees.
- 2) The combination of two separate fee authorities for the same activity, creating a level of fees that is inconsistent with fees charged to comparable uses.
- 3) The structure of the Cost Recovery Program that requires non-commercial boaters to pay \$350 to stand in a 10 year line.
- 4) The classification of non-commercial river running as a "special park use."

### 3. Solution

Remove non-commercial river running as a special park use. Total amount of fees charged to a particular user does not substantially exceed operational costs and must be consistent with comparable uses (certainly boating down the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon is not the only situation where demand exceeds supply). Greatly reduce the fees to stand in line so that fees are

commensurate with the services received. Calculate operational costs to be consistent with standard used at other units of the NPS. All **projects/operations** to be funded through fees must be identified and have the support of the taxpayer. A public involvement process must be established that allows the taxpayer to make real suggestions and changes to the fee program.

## D. Wilderness and Resource Impacts

### 1. General Thoughts

Floating down the Grand Canyon is an experience in solitude and tranquility. Noise from motors should be eliminated.

### 2. Problem

Noise from aircraft overflights and other motors is not consistent with managing the area as a wilderness. The loud buzzing of planes is very detrimental to anyone else who desires solitude in Grand Canyon. Personal Water Craft (PWC) are infiltrating the Canyon from downstream at Lake Mead.

### 3. Solution

Reduce motor use. The backcountry of Grand Canyon should be managed as a primitive wilderness. Be true to the Wilderness Act which emphasizes non-motorized use and enunciates the minimum tool concept. Recognize the multitude of opportunities to ride a motor rig vs. the few places that afford the chance to be away from motors.

---

Please contact American Whitewater's Rich Hoffman for additional information at (301) 589-9453, email: <<awa@compuserve.com>>, and check out our web site for updates: <<www.awa.org>>. Also, if you haven't heard about them already, there is a group that is focused specifically on the issue of management of the Grand Canyon from the private boater perspective. To find out more information or to join, contact them at: Grand Canyon Private Boater Association, PO Box 2133, Flagstaff, AZ 86003-2133, email: gcpba@flagstaff.az.us, president: Tom Martin, membership: \$20/year.

---

# Access Updates

## 1. West Fork Chattooga and Navigability

In early September, Earl Lovell and Scotty Fain closed the West Fork of the Chattooga River to all floaters. The West Fork, a national Wild and Scenic River managed by the U.S. Forest Service flows through a 230 acres parcel of land that was recently purchased for \$1.5 million by the two men, presumably for resort development. Despite the decades of use on this public waterway, a sign strung above the river ominously stated: "Absolutely No Trespassing. Survivors will be prosecuted." American Whitewater made several calls to Forest Service attorneys in Georgia to remedy this situation. To date, a tentative settlement has restored the public right of floating this stretch and the Forest Service has posted signs warning the public to not make contact with private land.

Michael Terry, an attorney in Atlanta with strong roots to the Chattooga River (father Claude Terry is one of the pioneers of whitewater recreation in the Southeast) stated in the Spartanburg, S.C. Herald-Journal: "The landowners have serious legal problems with Georgia and federal law. This clearly meets the definition of

what is a navigable river under federal law." Many thanks to the efforts of local activist Buzz Williams (Chattooga Watershed Coalition), local outfitters, the Southern Environmental Law Center, and the Forest Service to reach this agreement.

This situation highlights the continuing problem in many states of illegitimate restrictions on public passage down rivers. In the past several years, American Whitewater has been involved with litigation, legislation and efforts in several states that influences the right of the public to recreate on streams, such as New York, Colorado, Virginia, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and other rivers in Georgia.

## 2. Oregon Navigability Update

The 1997 Oregon Legislative session ended without much action on the navigability issue. Thankfully, SB 1140, a Senate Bill sponsored by Senator Ted Ferrioli (R-John Day) and written by the farm bureau prior to the session, failed to pass. This bad bill would have quitclaimed State ownership of the beds and banks of many of Oregon's public waterways. In other words, it would have restricted access by ceding the beds and banks of Oregon rivers to the adjacent landowner; boaters would not have been able to scout and portage

along rivers that would likely be considered navigable under federal law. Many thanks to the Association of Northwest Steelheaders for leading the charge of the coalition of river users.

### 3. Cispus River, Washington

On September 25, 1997, FERC denied the application by the Lewis County PUD # 1 to amend their license so that they would not be required to acquire 128 acres of land within their project boundary (Cowlitz Falls Project No. 2833). Citing Sections 4(e) and 10(a)(1) of the Federal Power Act which require FERC to give equal consideration to developmental and environmental values, the Commission ruled that Lewis County PUD needed to follow its plan to provide recreational opportunities and mitigate its impacts. American Whitewater hopes that FERC will also deny the PUD's license amendment application for a boating take out to the lower Cispus. Through this amendment, the PUD is attempting to abandon its contract to provide for a take out at the beginning of the reservoir. The decision on this action should take place in the near future.

### 4. James River through Richmond, Virginia

In September, the City of Richmond solicited bids that would have granted an outfitter exclusive control over instruction and perhaps public river access. Fortunately, the request for bids was terminated after a public meeting in which boaters expressed their concerns. In a letter to city officials and staff, American Whitewater discussed the need to present a clear evaluation of the problem or issue that needs to be resolved; an analysis of management alternatives to solve the problem; an analysis of the consequences of each of these alternatives; and a process that is conducted with full public participation and input.

### 5. Cosumnes River, California

American Whitewater's efforts to provide a public access site on the Cosumnes River is stalled due to the opposition of local landowners. The Cosumnes is the only undammed river in the Sierras and flows between the watersheds of the American and Mokelumne Rivers near Sacramento. The Cosumnes is conveniently broken up into two 10 mile sections by the Latrobe Road bridge. The upper stretch is more difficult class IV-V and the lower is a good intermediate run (class III) with a portage. Unfortunately, conflicts with

landowners have created access problems since the 1960's. One problem was the historic use of the Latrobe bridge area by "undesirable" members of the public who created traffic, litter and crime problems. For the past two years, American Whitewater has been working with the BLM to acquire a prime piece of land by the bridge to provide for public access. Unfortunately, the BLM's proposal was met with vociferous opposition by the local landowners. It appears that their concerns are not so much with the kayakers but with other members of the public who will trespass on the land and create problems. AW will try to work with these folks to see if we can reach a solution that addresses their concerns while providing for a much needed river access site. If you have any suggestions, please contact AW's access program at (301) 589-9453, email: awa@compuserve.com.

### 6. South Fork American, CA.

In October, the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors decided on a key component of the River Management Update for the South Fork of the American River. The decision revolved around what issues will be studied in depth for the more comprehensive Environmental Impact Report (EIR) required under state law. The public input lasted for about four hours during which approximately 20 people spoke. The two most popular issues that were discussed were the consultant's proposed daily fees for private boaters and for campgrounds on the South Fork. The large majority of speakers advocated for the alternative developed by the River Management Advisory Committee (RMAC), instead of the alternatives developed by either the consultant or the Planning Commission (which had voted previously for fees). At the end of the public comments, the board passed a motion to use the RMAC alternative as the preferred alternative for the EIR studies, and that the do-nothing and Planning Commission alternatives be the study alternatives. Things look hopeful for the next phase of the RMP. Much thanks to the dedicated efforts of Regional Coordinator Mike Fentress who has devoted his time and energy to this issue.

### 7. Illinois River, Oregon

In September, American Whitewater submitted comments to the Forest Service with respect to a proposed permit system for the Illinois River. Our comments commended the Forest Service for considering a freedom of choice system but voiced our concerns over the decision to limit boaters while not addressing many of the larger environmental impacts that have caused the Illinois to be put on American Rivers' most threatened and endangered rivers list for 3 years, citing rapidly declining salmon population and water quality. We also advocated for a flexible system that accounts for the fluctuations in river level that can greatly change the nature of the run.

## Navigability Research Project

*For the past several years, American Whitewater has been researching and collecting the law that affects the public right to travel down rivers. As listed in our strategic plan, our goal is to assemble all of the laws that affect the right of downstream passage by the year 2000. Having a library of these laws will enable us to better serve our members who frequently have questions on this issue, and will help to clarify the confusion and potential conflict that exists among boaters, landowners*

*and law enforcement personnel. As the law on this issue varies from state to state, assembling this library will be a large task.*

*If you are an attorney or know of an attorney in your state that may be able to assist us with this effort, please contact Rich Hoffman at (301) 589-9453, email: <awa@compuserve.com>. Specifically, we are trying to address the following issues:*

*1. The rights of the public to float down rivers, the bed and banks of which are pri-*

*vately owned. As stated in a recent law review article (6 ALR4th 1030), "such ownership is normally the consequence of the stream's being 'navigable' in the 'federal' sense, because, instead of having passed into state ownership (as did the beds of 'navigable' waters within their boundaries), the beds thereof passed by virtue of federal patents and incidents of riparian ownership into private hands."*

*2. The range of public uses allowed in the river cor-*

*ridor (i.e. does the public have the right to make incidental contact with stream bed and/or banks up to the high water mark? Scout and portage around dangerous obstructions? Fish?).*

*3. The legal basis for these rights (statute, common law and/or constitution), the criteria or test used to determine "navigability," and the role of public trust doctrine.*

*Any help would be greatly appreciated!*

## 8. Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

At press time, the conference committee on Capitol Hill deciding the fate of LWCF has made a disappointing decision to appropriate only \$700 million to be used over a four year period and inserted language that it could be used for operations and maintenance. The original authorizing legislation set the fund at \$900 million annually (taken from off-shore oil drilling) to be spent on land acquisition.

### Blackwater Canyon

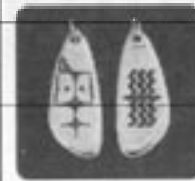
Boater access to the Blackwater is in jeopardy. An anonymous letter by those claiming to have spiked trees in the Blackwater Canyon prompted Allegheny Wood Products (AWP) to deny all access on their 3000 acres. AWP property encompasses the Blackwater from the center line of the rail trail to the south rim of the canyon up to the boundary with Blackwater Falls State Park and extending up the North Fork of the Blackwater. As a result, paddling access is denied on the Blackwater unless you paddle the upper Blackwater from the State Park or run the North Fork. The confluence cannot be accessed from the rail trail.

In an attempt to rectify the situation, American Whitewater met separately with AWP and the Monongahela National Forest Supervisor (MNF) in September. After being made aware of the access issue, both parties agreed to work toward a temporary solution allowing paddlers access from the rail trail. At present, access has not been granted but we are optimistic that a solution can be found based on our talks with both parties.

For the long term, AWP and MNF are currently negotiating a land exchange that would pass the north side of the canyon from the rail trail to the highwater mark on the south of the river into public ownership. This land exchange would be a great benefit for paddlers and the greater recreational community.

American Whitewater encourages paddlers not to cross onto AWP lands until the access issue is resolved. Trespass violations may exacerbate the situation. Look for updates on the web page under the Hot News button ([www.awa.org](http://www.awa.org)) as well as the journal and posting signs at the parking area on the North Fork.

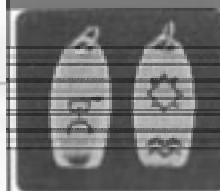
### Gifts for River Runners



#### KAYAKER'S AMULET

Sterling kayaking paddle blade depicting Pacific Northwest Indian designs. (Tlingit basket and Kwakiutl canoe paddle decoration a 6 photographed by Edward Sheriff Curtis circa 1914)

sterling silver \$34



#### PADDLER'S AMULET

Sterling paddle blade depicting sun and water designs inspired by symbols often illustrated on birch bark canoes. Paddler figure is an authentic Hawaiian petroglyph.

sterling silver \$34



#### "PADDLER" EARRINGS

This paddler figure is an authentic Hawaiian petroglyph that symbolizes the exuberance shared by watersport enthusiasts around the world.

sterling silver \$34

To order using a VISA or MC credit card call:

**1-800-808-9787**

or send check/money order to:

**MOUNTAIN ANGELS TRADING Co.**

**P.O. Box 4225**

**KETCHUM, ID 83340**

(ADD \$4 ONTO THE TOTAL COST FOR POSTAGE AND HANDLING)

Ask for free Product Catalog offering a "River Canyon" Bolero key chain, St. Bernard medals and other quality jewelry items made by Idaho river guide/bolero smith JC Caccia

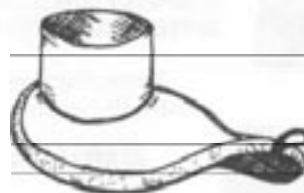


OUR ENTIRE LINE OF WHITE WATER  
GEAR DEMONSTRATES OUR  
COMMITMENT TO QUALITY  
AND INNOVATION!!

"Gear for paddlers who can't afford to  
worry about their equipment"

P.O. Box 70  
276 Maple Street  
Friendsville, MD 21531

Tel: (301) 746-5389



• Mountain Surf's Dur-0-Ring Kevlar Composite Sprayskirt. It's highly abrasion resistant knit Kevlar laminate over the cockpit rim and articulated deck gives this sprayskirt unmatched durability and performance.

Made with pride in Friendsville, MD

### TOOLS FOR TEACHING

## RETENDO!



Award  
Winning!



**"Best Instructional Video"**

Waterwalker Film Festival (Canada)  
National Paddling Film Festival (USA)

*The Art of Precision Playpaddling*

Send **\$29.95** for each tape,  
plus **\$4.00 S & H.**

Performance Video & Instruction, Inc.  
550 Riverbend, Durango CO 81301  
(970) 258-1381 Fax: (970) 258-1488

# Events Central

by Jayne H. Abbot

## American Whitewater/NOWR Event Manager

### Gauley Festival '97

What happens when you bring together thousands of boaters from around the country with one thought crossing their minds all summer, rain, rain, rain, where is the rain? It should come as no surprise that, yep, it sure does rain - every year of Gauley Festival! All those powerful minds can sure conjure up some storm...it was a real deluge this year!

It was beautiful the days leading up to the festival, a definite bad omen for experienced festival organizers. Come Saturday morning, the clouds rolled in and it was raining off and on by 11:00am. At 5:00 when the gates of the festival opened, the gates of the sky

poured down upon us, the winds whipped up and the sky turned an ominous shade of orange. For the next three hours, die-hard festival junkies ran from tent to tent hiding from the rain and digging up the best bargains of the evening as the storm took charge of our environment. One excited person was heard running by the booths shouting, "batten down the hatches, it's blowing in now!" We looked up the valley and saw huge rain clouds and high winds heading towards us. All held tight through the extreme of the storm except the tent covering the band...it came crashing down leaving our band exposed and in danger. They quickly packed up thousands of dollars worth of equipment and sped into the night. Too bad... the storm blew through and by 8:00pm the air was calm and the rain dissipating. Paddlers came crawling out of damp tents and cars to enjoy one of the best festivals ever...even without great tunes!

The lack of a speaker system, missing along with our band, was a challenge for American Whitewater volunteers as we had much to announce; lifetime achievement awards, the kickoff of the membership mania contest, the fire works display in celebration of American Whitewater's 40th anniversary (it was great!), announcing the close of the silent auction and the lucky winners of our raffle. Woody Callaway of Perception saved the evening by supplying a small P.A. system for us to use for announcements. Not as loud as the real thing but it did the trick. Thanks Woody!

In the end, the festival was the bigger and better than ever. We signed up 276 new members through our "6-month free membership special". Camping was completely sold out (there literally was no room to put up even one more tent!). We sold out of booth space, sold more entry tickets, more raffle tickets...and we raised more money than ever for American Whitewater river conservation and access programs. SEE YOU NEXT YEAR SAME PLACE ON SEPTEMBER 26 AND REMEMBER...IT ONLY GETS BETTER!

Thank you to our exhibitors and silent auction donors for helping to make this event a success!

#### MARKETPLACE EXHIBITORS:

|                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| AIRE                      | Chilli Heads                 |
| Airtight Inflatables      | Clarke Outdoors              |
| American Whitewater       | Cool Ridge Company           |
| John Anderson, Architect  | Custom Inflatables           |
| Appalachian Wildwater     | Dagger                       |
| Appomattox River Company  | Eddy River Shop              |
| Back Country Ski & Sports | Edge of the World Outfitters |
| Blackwater Coalition      | Endless River Adventures     |
| Blue Ridge Outdoors       | Extrasport                   |
| Boof Gear                 | Flood Zone                   |
| Canoeing for Kids         | Friends of the Blackwater    |
| Cascade Helmets           | G.H. Enterprises             |
| Central PA Kayak School   | Grateful Heads               |





**MARKETPLACE EXHIBITORS cont. :**

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Harmony Batiks                         | Possum Point Productions       |
| Joe Holt Videos                        | Pothole Paddles                |
| Impex International                    | Prijon                         |
| Babs Isak                              | Rapidstyle                     |
| KAVU                                   | Ridge Rider Mountain Bikes     |
| Laurel Ridge Cabins                    | Riot Kayaks                    |
| L'Eau Vive                             | Riversport                     |
| Lotus Designs                          | Savage Designs                 |
| Mad River Canoes                       | Shred Ready                    |
| Mohawk Canoes                          | Silver Creek                   |
| Mountain Surf                          | Starrk-Moon                    |
| Mountain State                         | Summit Kayaks                  |
| Nantahala Outdoor Center               | Terrapin Station               |
| National Park Service- New River Gorge | Teva                           |
| Necky Kayaks                           | Waterline                      |
| New Wave Kayaks                        | Watershed                      |
| Noah International                     | Wave Sports                    |
| North American River Runners           | Whitewater Photography         |
| Open Air Wear                          | Wild Scape                     |
| Orosi                                  | Wilderness Medical Associates  |
| Patagonia                              | West Virginia Rivers Coalition |
| Perception                             | Wing Inflatables               |

**SPONSORS/SILENT AUCTION DONORS:**

- |                            |                               |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| AIRE                       | Nantahala Outdoor Center      |
| Airtight Inflatables       | New Wave Kayaks               |
| Back Country Ski & Sports  | New Wave Waterworks           |
| Beechwood Print & Graphics | Noah International            |
| Blue Ice Clothing          | Norse                         |
| Blue Ridge Outdoors        | North American River Runners  |
| Boof Gear                  | Northwest River Supplies      |
| Canoe Magazine             | Open Air Wear                 |
| Cascade Helmets            | Orosi                         |
| Central PA Kayak School    | OS Systems                    |
| Chilli Heads               | Patagonia                     |
| Chums                      | Perception                    |
| Clarke Outdoors            | Performance Videos            |
| Colorado Kayak Supply      | Possum Point Productions      |
| Cool Ridge Company         | Pothole Paddles               |
| Custom Inflatables         | Prijon                        |
| Dagger                     | Ramsey Outdoor                |
| Endless River Adventures   | Rapidstyle                    |
| Extrasport                 | Ridge Rider Mountain Bikes    |
| Four Corners River Sports  | Riversport                    |
| G.H. Enterprises           | Salamander                    |
| Grateful Heads             | Savage Designs                |
| Harmony Batiks             | Shred Ready                   |
| Impex International        | Sidewinder                    |
| Jack's Plastic Welding     | Silver Creek                  |
| Joe Holt Videos            | Skykomish Boatworks           |
| Kokatat                    | Starrk-Moon                   |
| Laurel Ridge Cabins        | Surfins                       |
| Lightning Paddles          | Take It Outside               |
| Lotus Designs              | Teva                          |
| Mad River Canoes           | Watershed                     |
| Menasha Ridge Press        | Wave Sports                   |
| Mohawk Canoes              | White Tree Pottery            |
| Mountain Gear              | Wild Scape                    |
| Mountain Surf              | Wilderness Medical Associates |
| Mountain State             | Woody Paddles                 |



## Other American Whitewater Events

July and August were busy for American Whitewater volunteers putting on a host of events ranging from "Gauley style" festivals to huge demo days to exciting downriver races on Gore Canyon and the Upper Yough. Check out Paul Tefft's article for details on the '97 Gore Canyon race.

The 3rd annual Deerfield Festival held on August 2 in New England on the Deerfield River was a resounding success. A lack of rain (umm, maybe New Englanders just weren't wishing for rain in August A now that's surprising!) brought out a larger crowd than ever as our busy volunteers put together an awesome barbecue for the hungry masses which promptly sold out. The band was excellent, silent auction a great success and we had more booth vendors than ever. And best of all was the rousing cheer that was heard as we all celebrated securing recreational releases on this great river for years to come!

When Chris Koll, longtime American Whitewater director and river advocate, decided to foster a new event in his home state, he wanted the event to be different and to focus on increasing American Whitewater exposure and membership. His ideas came to fruition in the form of the first annual Black River Festival in Watertown, New York on July 26-27. The two days were filled with boat demos from every major manufacturer and, for American Whitewater members, we offered free guided trips through the beautiful Black River gorge and rodeo/playboat clinics given by experts in the industry. If you were not a member, we were ready to sign you up. Next years event will be held on July 25-26 so mark your calendars now for this one of a kind experience!

The Upper Yough race was held on August 24 in Friendsville, MD and it should come as no surprise that Roger Zbel won for the 16th time in 17 years of running this race. His only loss came the year he outpaddled the water release and Jim Snyder, who actually started later in the race than Roger, ended up with a faster time. Roger learned his lesson and now times his run so that he doesn't outrun the H2O! Congratulations Roger on another fine win.

Added to American Whitewater's event schedule this year was the Sacandaga Festival (upstate New York on August 23), the brain-storm of Pete Skinner, a founding member/director of American Whitewater. The Sacandagawas developed around the concept of bringing local kids and families to this wonderful whitewater resource in their backyards. Despite a steady rain throughout the day (attendees must have been thinking rain...), people came out to see what whitewater is about and had a great time. Next years event will be even more spectacular so be sure to be there next August.

# NOWR Events

The NOWR (National Organization of Whitewater Rodeos) circuit cruised along smoothly this summer with the fall events happening as I write this article. Result highlights from the expert classes for events that have passed are listed below. For results at your fingertips, check out our web sites at [HYPERLINK http://www.awa.org](http://www.awa.org) [www.nowr.org](http://www.nowr.org) and [www.nowr.org](http://www.nowr.org).

## Headwaters Championship/FIBARK - June 13-15

| Men's K-1 Expert  | Women's K-1 Expert   | Junior K-1 Expert  |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Dam Drevo      | 1. Erica Mitchell    | 1. Ryan Felt       |
| 2. Nikko Chasing  | 2. Brenda Ernst      | 2. Ben Coleman     |
| 3. Eric Southwick | 3. Saskia Van-Mourik | 3. Charlie Beavers |

## West Coast Team Trials - July 11-13

| Men's K-1 Expert                  | Women's K-1 Expert           | Junior K-1 Expert           |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Pablo Perez                    | 1. Deb Ruehle                | 1. Nathan LeBreque          |
| 2. Eric Jackson                   | 2. Susan Wilson              | 2. Brad Ludden              |
| 3. Chuck Kern                     | 3. Erica Mitchell            | 3. Macy Burnham (alternate) |
| 4. Gabe Newton                    | 4. Katie Nietert (alternate) |                             |
| 5. Richard Oldenquist (alternate) |                              |                             |

\*This is the second half of the US Team chosen to compete in the Ottawa Canada World Championships. See article on World Championships in this issue for information on the event and results.

## Derby Creek Days - July 26 - 27

| Men's K-1 Expert  | Women's K-1 Expert |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Eric Southwick | 1. Jodee Dixon     |
| 2. Tracy Clapp    | 2. Erica Mitchell  |
| 3. Ted Keyes      | 3. Jamie Simon     |

## Kootenay Whitewater Festival n August 1 -4

| Men's K-1 Expert   | Women's K-1 Expert   |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Eric Southwick  | 1. Jodee Dixon       |
| 2. Rob Cartwright  | 2. Saskia Van-Mourik |
| 3. Jordie Mekensie | 3. Erica Mitchell    |

## Ottawa River Rodeo - August 29-31

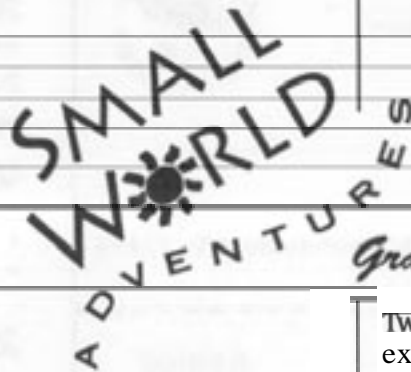
| Men's K-1 Expert | Women's K-1 Expert | Men's C-1 Expert   |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Marc Lyle     | 1. Jodee Dixon     | 1. Paul Robertson  |
| 2. B.J. Johnson  | 2. Nikki Kelly     | 2. Chris McDermott |
| 3. Ken Mutton    | 3. Katie Nietert   | 3. Shane Benediet  |



*American Whitewater's*

# Membership Mania Contest

40<sup>th</sup> anniversary



### Grand Prizes:

Two separate all expenses paid trips to Ecuador, donated by Larry Vermeeren and Small World Adventures. Trips include airfare to Ecuador, lodging, food, guides and transportation in Ecuador.



Photography: Tim Brown



### Four 1st Prizes:

Your choice of one of four whitewater boats donated by Perception, Dagger, Prijon, and Savage Designs:



### 100's of

### Runner-up Prizes:

Everyone who signs up two or more new members will receive a whitewater poster courtesy of photographer Chris Smith.



## HOW TO WIN

Current members can use the registration forms on the reverse side to sign up friends as **NEW MEMBERS** of American Whitewater. The two people who sign up the most new members **will** be grand prize winners. Membership costs **\$25** annually and includes one year's subscription to the *American Whitewater Journal*. New memberships must be received by **September 14, 1998**. Winners **will** be announced at the Gauley Festival 1998!

\* For complete contest rules, contact American Whitewater's executive office at **(301) 589-9453**.



# SUPPORT AMERICAN WHITEWATER... SIGN UP YOUR FRIENDS

• ENTER AMERICAN WHITEWATER'S MEMBERSHIP MANIA •

• WIN PRIZES... NEW KAYAKS, POSTERS & MORE •

New Member Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Annual  
Membership  
only  
**\$25**



**Remember to fill in your name in order to be eligible for prizes!**

I have enclosed a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ payable to American Whitewater.

Bill my:  Visa  MasterCard Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Send registrations with payment to: American Whitewater • P.O. Box 636 • Margaretville, NY 12455

----- Cut ✂ Here -----

New Member Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Annual  
Membership  
only  
**\$25**



**Remember to fill in your name in order to be eligible for prizes!**

I have enclosed a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ payable to American Whitewater.

Bill my:  Visa  MasterCard Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Send registrations with payment to: American Whitewater • P.O. Box 636 • Margaretville, NY 12455

----- Cut ✂ Here -----

New Member Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Annual  
Membership  
only  
**\$25**



**Remember to fill in your name in order to be eligible for prizes!**

I have enclosed a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ payable to American Whitewater.

Bill my:  Visa  MasterCard Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Send registrations with payment to: American Whitewater • P.O. Box 636 • Margaretville, NY 12455

GRAND PRIZES... TWO WHITEWATER TRIPS TO ECUADOR



# It's a Small World After All

Win  
A  
Free  
Trip!



by Paul Tefft

In case you haven't heard, American Whitewater's 40th Anniversary Membership Mania contest is underway. If you haven't started signing up new American Whitewater members using the special membership registration forms which can be found in the Journal, it's not too late. The contest runs until Gauley Festival 1998 (registration forms must be received by September 14, 1998) so you still have plenty of time to enter the contest by signing up your non-American Whitewater paddling friends.

This contest gives you an opportunity to help strengthen your organization and win great prizes in the process. In addition to new kayaks, two grand prizes will be awarded to the top membership maniacs. These fantastic prizes are all expenses paid trips to Ecuador with Larry Vermeeren and Allen Hadley of Small World Adventures. Winners will have their choice of a number of exotic explorations from Small World Adventure's diverse 1998-99 trip itineraries. Small World Adventures offers a variety of paddling trips for novices through experts to kayaking's newest hot spot...Ecuador.

I was contemplating adding Ecuador to my paddlesports itinerary after hearing about the adventures of a group of Colorado kayaking bro's trip to this South American paddling paradise. Reading Larry Vermeeren's

Small World Adventure brochure was the clincher. "Ecuador is a land of dramatic landscapes, both geographically and historically. In an area about the size of the state of Colorado, Ecuador supports ecosystems so diverse that a traveler can go from a snow capped volcano rising to 20,000 feet one day to the Amazon basin the next. Pacific beaches, the Andean Mountains, and the legendary Galapagos Islands all await you."

OK Larry, the geography sounds awesome but what about the whitewater? Small World Adventure's literature continues. "In the heart of Ecuador's most spectacular terrain are the clear waters of steep upper-Andean streams and the thundering rapids of big volume Amazonian tributaries. Although inaccessible to most travelers, these are our playgrounds. Our trips are designed to offer kayakers of all levels the unique opportunity to experience fantastic whitewater in one of the most interesting regions on earth."

Some of Small World Adventures' beginner and novice oriented trips are called **Tropical Tune Ups**. These trips are custom tailored for the neophyte who wants kick start his or her paddling career in an unbelievably beautiful setting. Allen Hadley states, "the setting for these paddling adventures is perfect." He continues, "we kayak the warm tropical rivers of the Oriente (Amazonian Rain

Forest) while staying in a luxurious jungle lodge. This location provides us with easy access to the nearby rivers as well as the chance to explore the rain forest with a local Quechua guide."

Well I'm already sold on signing up new members and winning a free trip to Ecuador but as a American Whitewater board member I'm ineligible for the contest. This leaves all these great prizes for you to win! Just in case you need a little more motivation to participate in American Whitewater's 40th Anniversary Membership Mania contest, the below quoted Small World Adventure trip description and sample itinerary should get your paddling juices flowing.

"Ecuador Kayaking-Expert. Kayak the steep, boulder filled creeks and rivers of the eastern slope of the Andes during these 9 & 11 day adventures. We will be paddling some of our old favorites as well as possibly some new runs. These rivers flow through tropical rainforests towards the Amazon basin and

are some of the most exciting and challenging in the country.

You will travel by van, stay in local hotels each night and eat most of your meals in restaurants, which gives you the opportunity to experience the friendly Ecuadorian culture.

This trip is nonstop action for experienced paddlers who want to figure out their own routes in rapids and who have paddled a large variety of rivers. The rivers we will boat will be of varying difficulty and volume, from creeks to jungle canyons. This allows us to experience a variety of Ecuador's geography, culture, and natural resources, as well as great whitewater. "

"SAMPLE ITINERARY: Day 1 - Fly to Quito, the colonial capital, where we'll be waiting at the airport when you arrive. Day 2 - After breakfast and an orientation we drive over a thirteen thousand foot Andean pass to our lodge, outfit our boats and go kayaking, the put in is only five minutes away! Day 3 - 8 - Continue to boat the best variety of expert rivers in the Alto Selva (high jungle) and the Amazon Basin. While this trip is devoted to paddling, we take some time to enjoy the local culture and amazing scenery. We return to Quito the evening of day eight in time for a farewell banquet."

Wow a banquet and all...sure sounds great to me! And all you need to do to win is sign up your friends to the country's premier river conservation organization, American Whitewater. Winning your ticket to Ecuador is simple, just pry this magazine and your paddle out of your hands for long enough to pick up some scissors and cut out the special member registration forms. If you need more forms you can photocopy the page or call American Whitewater's executive office at (301) 589-9453.

Support your sport and American Whitewater. Sign up your friends. Let the new members know that all American Whitewater members get an American Whitewater sticker, a subscription to American Whitewater's Journal and American Whitewater Safety Cards. You can make a difference...and win a trip to Ecuador. Remember, it's a small world after all.

For more information on Small World Adventures

**please call: 1-800-58kayak**



# Ruckus at

# the Rodeo

## Report from the Ottawa World's

by John Weld

It's Sunday, September 7th, the morning of the Men's Finals at the Rodeo Worlds. While most of the world's top rodeo boaters are at the venue location, McKoy's Rapid on the Ottawa River in Ontario, I'm sitting down to have breakfast with Corran Addison 10 miles away. It's not that Addison, a South African who was a silver medalist at the '95 Rodeo Worlds and is arguably one of the world's best play boaters, is planning to show up casually late to the competition. He's not showing up at all! In fact, his Rodeo Worlds was over after the first few seconds of his first preliminary run on Friday.

Things started to turn sour for Addison a few days before the event when the rules were changed to the disadvantage of his new boat design. Addison decided at that point to make a statement. So when it came time for Corran's run on Friday, he got into his boat and, held up a sign that said "I PROTEST. It's wrong to change the rules two days before the worlds!" and got out.

If you've heard of Corran Addison before, you're probably rolling your eyes. His reputation as the "Bad Boy" of whitewater paddling is ubiquitous—especially among people who have never met him. So many people on the bank of the river felt this protest was Corran just being Corran. Accordingly, the Rodeo Worlds went on as planned. But Addison, perhaps in an unintentional way, was making an important point about whitewater rodeo. One of the main reasons why rodeo paddling is hard to judge (besides its subjective nature) is that rodeo is growing so fast. So many boat companies are pouring money into play boat development that by the time a set of rules are made, the boat designs are already two steps ahead. It's hard to guess what's driving this growth—the image, the competition, the boat manufacturers, the average boat consumer—but it's safe to say, like it or not, rodeo boating is going to be here for a long time. And it's

going to change the face of the sport.

In order to understand Addison's protest, and, in turn, understand what's driving the changes in current boat design, it's essential to know the rules of rodeo competition. Like many people I own a short boat. But before I went to the Ottawa to watch the competition, I had no idea what the rules of rodeo were. In essence it's a three-part competition that (at least in the case of the Ottawa) takes three days. There are two preliminary events, "hole-riding", and "freestyle." The top competitors, based on their performance in these two preliminaries, move on to a "hole-riding final." Four classes compete in this format: men's and women's K-1, C-1, and open canoe. (There is a separate squirt boat event, that participates in an "eddy line" and a hole-riding preliminary. The squirt event culminates in a two part eddy line and hole riding final.)

The freestyle event is included to make sure that the competitors are up to a certain skill level. Because athletes must choose one boat for the entire competition, the inclusion of freestyle ostensibly insures that boat designs are not too hole-riding specific. For instance on the Ottawa the freestyle event mandated paddling down through McKoy's rapid while catching mandatory eddies on either side of the river. It featured a bitch of a ferry at the top of the rapid. Points were assigned for catching the designated eddies. Extra moves performed during the process were rewarded with additional points.

"Freestyle", however, is in the preliminaries only, and, even then, is only worth 35% of the prelim score. As a result, the freestyle event seems like nothing more than an obstacle. Good surfing boats are by their nature short and very slow. No one would choose a boat to increase their performance in the freestyle that would in any way compromise their surfing ability.

There is no denying that the focus of rodeo is the hole riding. It's what everyone comes to see, it's what the competitors come to do, it's what's driving the sport. There's a hole riding event in the prelims (the other 65% of the prelim score) and the final consists solely of a hole ride. Actually, there are a number of aspects of hole riding that reflect the "philosophy of play boating." The Ottawa, facilitates this with two holes, one on each side of the river, and one wave a bit downstream. Each competitor has about one minute to go out into the hole(s) or wave or both, and go nuts. Five judges on the bank access points based on the variety, number, and quality of moves executed during that minute.

Currently, the judges recognize a canon of about 20 moves that merit points during a surf. The criteria for each of these moves and an accompanying point value is set down by the International Rodeo Committee (IRC). The IRC, while official sounding, is just a collection of athletes from the last World Championships. These point worthy moves

range from the mundane, like a "front surf" on a smooth wave (worth 1 point) to the slightly more interesting "McTwist" in a hole (worth 2 points) or "Cartwheel" (3 points per end). At the top end of the point scale are the "Trophy Moves." These represent a high degree of difficulty, and a high risk of falling out of the hole. Moves like doing a 360 degree pirouette and landing back in the hole are worth 8 points. It seems simple enough; not unlike ice skating or gymnastics. But when you start to look at the particulars of judging this event, you realize that it's no picnic.

Take, for instance, the McTwist vs. the Cartwheel. The McTwist is a move defined as a "vertical end in the hole or foam pile, between 20 and 70 degrees and 110 to 160 degrees," whereas a Cartwheel is a "vertical end in the hole or foam pile between 70 to 110 degrees." Obviously, there's going to be some disagreement over whether a particular competitor's boat was 69 or 71 degrees during a vertical move. Couple this with the necessity to add a score for style and variety, and you've got a sport that's tough to score.

Another problem at the recent Worlds was improvements in boat design during the past eight months. The IRC, understanding that changes are inevitable in this young sport, decides on a new set of rules annually. As of February of this year, a 360 degree flat spin on a green wave was considered a trophy move and worth 8 points. This was because at that time there were no boats available that could execute that move easily. A competitor in an RPM would have to be a real badass to pull off such a move and not fall off the wave. By this September, however, a number of companies had designed boats with flat hulls and hard chines. Not only could they 360 on a totally green wave, they could actually slide sideways down the face! Hence a flat 360 became a lot less difficult.

So two weeks before the Worlds competitors started to speculate that there was no reason to go into the hole at all. An athlete in the right boat could simply go out onto the wave and flat spin his way to victory. The race organizers, including Marc Scriver, the Chairman of the event's Organizing Committee, realized that something needed to be done. "We were really worried that there would be no variety in the event," Marc told me, "and that people would go right out to the wave and do flat spins." A solution to the problem was decided upon in an ad hoc meeting that included the IRC and the athletes a week before the competition. The answer was relatively simple: Reduce the value of a 360 degree flat spin to two points.

Enter Corran Addison. His boat company, Riot, had just designed a flat spinning machine called "The Glide", and he felt that this change was uncalled for. "We [the Riot Team] showed up," Corran wrote in a recent internet posting, "with our new prototype kayak, the Glide, that we developed around the new rodeo rules, and proceeded to rip like no one else. In fact, it was quite obvious to

the other competitors that we would not only most likely win the event, but the possibility of taking all three spots was a probability."

After the last minute rule change Corran not only withdrew from the event, he claims to have left the sport entirely. Corran's group of supporters cited several other incidents that suggested what they termed a weak governing body, including "unfair" voting practices within the IRC and a C-1 squirt paddler who was disqualified for unique boat design problems.

Clearly rodeo athletes seem to be a bit polarized in terms of the look and feel of the sport. There's the "rodeo is all about surfing holes" side, and, on the other end; the "future of the sport lies with the incorporation of more wave surfing" side. Addison is clearly part of the latter. His boat designs reflect that. It's apparent even in the way he describes paddling — his hands were constantly swooping imaginary moves down waves as we talked. In Corran's view it's time to leave the hole. "There are a group of people who have perfected the cartwheel", he told me, "and it's getting old."

Addison's detractors obviously felt differently. Pablo Perez, a rodeo paddler sponsored by Dagger, had this to say while we watched the competition on Sunday. "It's not a wave surfing competition. If Corran wants to surf waves, he should go to the ocean... All of the countries agreed on the changes but Corran, and that should make some kind of sense to him." One of the women competitors had this to say about the style of the event: "It's always been about hole riding, never about wave surfing." Some of the participants were even more to the point.

Clay Wright, who qualified for the final in Men's kayak, and won the squirt competition, had this to say. "The rules were changed back from Corran's "6pt. flat spin on green wave" because all the competitors and country reps agreed it was too easy in a flat boat. Vertigos and 3-D's spun rings around the Glide — faster and with less skill, and their paddlers agreed that they could, but did not want, to win the rodeo by spinning on a wave. It would have ruined the rodeo as a skill-based or spectator event."

On Friday, Corran held up his sign to a mix of boos and cheers, and the rodeo went on.

The Ottawa is a gigantic black river that winds around islands and down through channels. It's hard to tell you're even on a river at all until the water pools up and sucks over a horizon line. When a river of that size necks down to a rapid, it quickly becomes a surfing paradise. And rodeo, if there was any question before, suddenly makes perfect sense. Gigantic, powerful glassy waves and huge holes make you feel like you're in a paddling video while you surf, complete with theme music playing in your head. Each rapid ends in a lake-like pool. The rafting companies that work that river have a ski resort ambi-

ence, and the reason is obvious. Business is great; the Ottawa is the perfect recreational river.

Getting to the competition required monitoring on a giant raft to an island next to McKoy's. From there, a trail led down through the island to the bottom of the rapid. On Friday and Saturday during the preliminaries, spectators had to crowd along the steep bank next to the trail and peer through trees to watch competitors struggle through the freestyle event. But at the bottom of the island the trail opened up to a large, rocky beach. The beach was right next to the two holes and waves that made up the hole-riding event. Across the rapid from the beach was a judge's stand and PA system.

The atmosphere at the site was decidedly cool. A mix of techno, rap and bass-laden alternative music played continuously, giving the otherwise peaceful riverside a nightclub like feel. Forget that this event was not hosted by MTV — the "extreme" image was in full-force. If yellow sunglasses are a barometer for hipness, this event had any NRA shoot-out beat hands down. And, the bigger the yellow sunglasses, the better. One of the announcers had yellow glasses so big it looked like he was about to go skydiving. If that were not enough, there were the dreadlocks. Adding to the hipness of it all was a cadre of Japanese paddlers milling around in a perfectly orchestrated extreme look. It wasn't the "I enjoy backpacking, camping and paddling" group I'm used to seeing, but rather the "I paddle, snowboard, and skate" crowd.

The three day competition was laid back, if not a trifle disorganized. With over 200 competitors, there were boats all over the river. Some of the paddlers had bibs on, others looked like they might be competing later on, and then more still looked like they had no business being anywhere near a rodeo. Every so often a commercial raft would come floating by. Part of my problem was that I was used to the strict protocol surrounding slalom races, where deadly serious athletes are completely removed from the spectators and the mere thought of an unscheduled boater on the course would lead to mayhem among the officials.

After a while, however, the atmosphere of the event became downright pleasant. Competitors were on the bank with the spectators, talking and just hanging out. The general karma was that, with or without problems with judging, everyone was pretty much there to have fun. Kara (my wife), who is on the slalom team, couldn't believe it. She noticed that competitors would be joking around with each other right up to their time, then hop in to the hole to compete, then paddle back over to the bank to finish what they were saying. I actually saw participants cheering for each other.

The general mood was contagious. While the music was playing, while I watched people bounce around in the hole and then fall downstream to the steep wave to carve

back and forth, I became overwhelmed with the desire to get in a boat. It looked like so much fun I almost couldn't stand to watch it. At that point I was ready to sell everything I own to go play on rivers. I could buy a mobile home, get two or three pairs of yellow sunglasses, some good tapes, and everything would be just fine. Kara could get a pair of yellow sunglasses, too. It wasn't just the surfing that did it either. It was—for lack of a better word—the whole scene. Rodeo could allow me to finally be what I've always wanted to be. A surf bum.

On Sunday the heat was on. Men's and Women's Hole Riding. The water had come up a bit and both holes on either side of the river were suitable for retentive, multiple ender-like maneuvers. The hole on river left was bigger, yielding more dynamic surfs, while the hole on the right provided a more controlled, conservative routine. People seemed to discount the wave downstream in face of the "flat-spin" rule change.

As the competitors started their first runs it became clear that this event was going to be about cartwheels. U.S. paddler Marc Lyle (he was introduced on the PA as the "King of Cartwheels") said before his run that the winner was going to be "the one who got into the best one minute groove." While I watched, I realized what he meant. Most of the pad-

dlers headed for the "more conservative" right hole and started cartwheeling right off the bat. If their balance and momentum were just right they might cartwheel for a minute solid. Less talented competitors would side surf back and forth for a few seconds, get pulled into a front blast, knock off a cartwheel or two, and then fall off the hole. As the finals went on and the seeded athletes got better, the breaks between runs of cartwheels got shorter and shorter. The winner of the event, Canadian Ken Whiting, pulled off **33** cartwheels in one minute.

The cartwheel, at least for right now, is a strangely compelling move to watch. It's become the holy grail for recreational boaters all over the country. It seems to have usurped all other mundane river running skills, like eddy turns, rolling, and the notion that paddling is actually about going anywhere. There is talk of another rules change soon, perhaps to a series of compulsory moves to ensure variety. But at the same time I realized at the Ottawa that the success of the rodeo has to do more with image than with the quality of judging. The sport, lopsided rules or not, is doing what slalom competition could never do—creating a style of boating that is almost hypnotically attractive to cruisers of all skill levels. The competition is almost an afterthought.

The increasing popularity and influence of rodeo has not gone down well with many paddlers from the old school. They argue that slalom racing fostered "solid, well-mannered, traditional boating skills." While rodeo is turning paddlers into a bunch of "overly-aggressive, under-skilled skate punks." It's not just the skills that are changing, these traditional boaters argue, it's the whole personality of the sport. And flamboyant, controversial, image-driven paddlers like Corran and Eric Jackson are poised to be the leaders of the new movement.

Clay Wright said it best in an internet posting: "We do need to work on the scoring system. All left handed cartwheels should not win a World Rodeo. We will figure it out, but until we do, we should paddle the **best we can** with the system we have." And the system is being pushed ahead just fine by increasing boat sales. Whether rodeo will become so successful it will completely dominate the sport, or so specialized that it will eventually bifurcate from cruising (much like slalom did 20 years ago), or fizzle out like squirt boating, has yet to be seen. But for now, rodeo is hot. And growing pains like the rules controversy only seem to add to its appeal.

## Ottawa World Rodeo Championship Results

### K-1 Men

1. Ken Whiting/Canada
2. Eric Jackson/USA
3. Den Mutton/New Zealand
4. Marc Lyle/USA
5. O. Feuillette/France
6. BJ Johnson/USA
7. F. Schmidt/Norway
8. Clay Wright/USA
9. Brandon Knapp/USA
10. Bernd Sommer/Germany
11. Shane Benedict/USA

### C-1 Open Canoe

1. Paul Robertson/Great Britain
2. Allen Braswell/USA
3. Adam Boyd/USA
4. Chris McDermott/Canada
5. Cedric Courbis/France
6. Pete Orton/Great Britain
7. Roland Davau/France
8. Shane Benedict/USA
9. Ian Holmes/Canada

### K-1 Women

1. Nicole Zaharko/Canada
2. Jamie Simon/USA
3. S. Van Der Roos/Netherlands
4. Amy Wiley/USA
5. Louise Wigmore/Germany
6. E.Ni Challarain/Ireland
7. Brenda Ernst/USA
8. Nikki Kelly/New Zealand
9. Heather Lamson/Canada
10. Susan Wilson/USA
11. Deb Ruehle/USA

### Squirt Men

1. Mark Scriver/Canada
2. Ian Holmes/Canada
3. Lyle Dickieson/Canada
4. Tyler Elm/Canada
5. Ghyslaine Rioux/Canada
6. Paul Danks/Canada
7. Lars Klotzbach/Germany
8. Robert Sommer/Germany

### K-1 Junior

1. Javid Grubbs/USA
2. Gavin Murdoch/Canada
3. Brad Ludden/USA
4. Rusty Sage/USA
5. Nathan LaBrecque/USA
6. Aiden Lynch/Ireland

1. Clay Wright/USA
2. Andy Whiting/Great Britain
3. Eric Zitzow/USA
4. Scott Sullivan/USA
5. Bob Campbell/Great Britain
6. Paul Harwood/Canada
7. Tracy Clapp/USA
8. Syuuichi Limura/Japan
9. Chris Taudevin/Great Britain
10. Bob Butler/Canada
11. Brad Sutton/Canada

# o!, ah! Noah

- integrally rotomolded kayaks & canoes



**Fresh 120" - 2.5 x 3 Energized SQ line:**

**StratoQuatic** - mid-sized, versatile, forgiving, playful & enduring.

**Stratique** - low volume with extra sharp stern.

**SQ Plus** - upsized excitement  
(not shown... like other Noah boats, available also as canoe).



(for '98) **100" - 3 x 4 Energy continuum**

**Excalibur, Cyborg** - 8'4". mid-sized play-mates approaching SQ speed.

**Innuendo** - for more than meltdown extremes.

**Ballistic** - Jeti heir for "hair" & creeks - instructional and interactive.

"*Shorter is better*": declared Noah's Vladimir while introducing the 10' rotomolded Jeti into a world of 12' plus kayaks. The majority laughed ... but before long it was all Noah. Only flames of persecution in North Carolina gave the competition a chance to capture market footing.

With fire-sharpened focus, Noah innovated seven league boats "marketeers" are helpless to follow. While intentionally giving up the bull's eye of being "largest kayak producer", Noah shares more than ever the dawn of greater performance and true quality with paddlers of like vision & values.

*Get it*, if you qualify, with Bio-Dynamic boost (and pre-order discount).

Do *it* with **Noah - fair enough, yet much more than meets the eye.**

*Love it* and update when worn out for 1/2 price to embrace the horizon.

-the excitement that lasts

8475 Dockery, Blairsville, Georgia 30512, Tel/fax (706) 745-4499 (-6056) uaiQstc.net

Winter: Cimicka 133129, Prague 8, Czech Rep. Tel. 420(2) 42 48 03 Fax 46 10 07 radil@mbox.vol.cz

# ▲ RIO TRUFUL-TRUFUL: CHILE'S VOLCANIC WHITEWATER

▲ by Scott Harding ▲

Jack Gray gets buried in the backwash at the bottom of the top cascade.



Photo by Chris Bassett

Someone had let loose a swarm of butterflies in my stomach. And in Jack's, too, judging by the look on his face. I expected his mouth to open and see one fly out. I kept mine shut just in case. We were sitting in an eddy above a quarter kilometer of continuous Class V+ whitewater, bounded by a large stairstep cascade at the top and a raging waterfall at the bottom. What lay in between would be named and feared on any more commonly paddled river. But on this out of the way river, the Rio Truful-Truful, the intermediate drops represented a brief reprieve from the adrenaline rush of the top cascade and an all too short build-up for the second and much larger falls. The snap of sprayskirts pierced the incoherent white noise of the drops below.

"Who goes first?" I asked.

Silence. No volunteers.

"OK. Whoever runs the cascade first, runs the waterfall second," Jack so fairly proposed. Foolishly and without thought I agreed. Foolish for me because I was on the bank side of the eddy. Jack peeled out before I could think to rescind. And it was the waterfall, the Salto del Truful-Truful, that we were more worried about. For me, the fear factor of a waterfall that appears on national road maps automatically exceeds that of nameless drops, regardless of all other factors.



The Rio Triful-Triful is located in south-central Chile, a land of volcanoes and steep mountains south of the recently impounded Rio Bio-Bio. Chile has a large and impressively well-run system of national parks. One of these, Conguillio National Park, protects the headwaters and the upper portion of the Triful-Triful. Conguillio is the Mapuche Indian word for pine nuts, and there is an abundant crop of these from the numerous *auricaria* trees. Resembling the silhouette of an open umbrella, these trees are often over a thousand years old and are the dominant species in the park's virgin forests.

Just as it is impossible to separate any river from its natural surroundings - the flora, fauna, geography, and geology, it is impossible to describe the Triful-Triful without addressing its geologic setting. Before the water rages over the Salto del Triful-Triful, it begins as snowmelt on the barren Sierra Nevada range or on the densely forested slopes surrounding the three lakes in the park. Almost all of the river's water spends time in these lakes before whitewater enthusiasts see it flow through the river channel. Each lake has formed where lava flows from the adjacent 3000+ meter high Volcan Uaima have blocked the stream channel. The porous nature of the lava dams allows water to escape from one lake to another beneath the ground before finally erupting out into the river channel. The youngest of the three lakes, Lago Captrén, is just over 35 years old and contains a forest's worth of drowned trees along its bottom. The young age of the lake is a testament to the recent activity of Volcan Uaima. It had last come to life just months before our visit, and its orange glow at night let us know that the next eruption is just a matter of time. Let's hope it doesn't dam the whitewater run!

Downstream from the lakes, the water flows out of the lush forest and across a dark brown lava plain similar in appearance to the Snake River Plain of the western US, but with a volcano perched on one side and a forested mountain range on the other. Here the gorge is so vertical and neatly incised into the andesite lava that a hiker might stumble over the edge before discovering the existence of the river. The river cuts downward through the strata to reveal a thick layer of ancient volcanic ash. The soft ash has easily given way to the erosive force of the water, revealing a bank of alternating chocolate and pastel colors. Drawn to the spectacular colors and ease of access (through a small tributary), we prepared put in.

Two separate groups of paddlers — Chris Bassett, Scott Jernigan, and myself and Jack Gray, Brad Brock, and Tex Brittan merged into one larger group to reap the benefits of easier shuttles, larger meals, and increased fun. At some time or another, all of us worked for the same whitewater outfitter in Western North Carolina. This resulted in a tight knit group and the kind of group cohesion essential to paddling difficult and unknown whitewater.

"Too bad Scott's not here," Chris said as he pulled on his skirt. Most people mistake Chris and Scott for twin brothers. Or Jesus. Unfortunately, Scott had been injured just days before in an odd kayak collision at Cydops, a rapid in the Nireco Canyon of the Bio-Bio (above the notorious new Pangué reservoir). Unable to paddle, but also unable to stay away from flowing water, he cast fly and line into the pool at the base of the Salto. Surreptitiously, we all were coveting any trout he might reel in.

"Let's go!" Brad exclaimed as he slid off a log and into the water.

Chris Bassett surfing a wave that is almost as blue as his coat.



A short, bumpy trip down a small stream and we were at the river. Pulling out into the main current, we quickly floated into the colorful, river gorge. The ash layers were so perfectly horizontal and continuous that we could gauge our vertical drop from the height of a distinctive layer above the water. It was Mother Nature's river gate — built long before man conceived the kayak.

Chris, Brad, Tex, Jack, and I took turns moving from eddy to eddy, racing one another to the next boof rock. The first couple kilometers provided a rollicking warm up as the river made its way through the entire thickness of the colored ash beds. When not frothy white, the river was deep blue of such clarity that the entire river bottom could be seen. But the Triful-Triful packs a deceptively powerful punch. Larger, rockier drops followed once the river began to flow over harder basalt lava. Volcan Llaima, a conical beast of a volcano, towered over the river, spewing steam and sulfurous smoke more than 2000 meters into the air.

Strong eddy lines and fast, steep waves provided excellent and abundant play opportunities. Smiles abounded as we took turns surfing holes, waves, and doing screw-ups on the powerful eddy lines. I love rivers that make me grin and giggle!

Chris, Tex, and Brad had pulled out above the waterfall marking the upstream boundary of the Class V drops. We all had seen the Salto earlier in the day while setting shuttle but had not looked at it too closely. Chris, Tex, and Brad had their route in mind and were headed toward our truck with boats in hand. Certainly an acceptable line, even for skillful creek boaters. But Jack and I

felt the urge to finish the last quarter kilometer of the run. The river, pouring over the edge of a lava flow, drops more in these 250 meters than it does in the preceding 5 kilometers, approaching a gradient of 75 m/km (400 ft/mile).

German paddler extraordinaire Arnd Shaefflein claimed first descent of the Salto del Triful-Triful just one year earlier. He had put in just above the lip of the Salto and made a picture-perfect run. The high— probably the reason he did— eddy and drops leading to the Salto. in at a slightly lower water appeared feasible. the first to run no stretch above it. run but also the pioneering a new section of whitewater. Jack and I walked

I didn't like Jack's choice of pronoun when asking the question. Just thinking of tumbling in that hole made me dizzy.

"Count to five and bail. It's no use trying to surf out with that much water pounding on you." Let's call this Contingency Plan A.

As if the seven meter plunge coupled with the raging volume of water and the large hole at the bottom didn't give us enough to fear, there were the strange rock things. A set of three ominous and ornate rock cairns sat high above the waterfall on the river right bank. They made the hair on the back of my neck stick up. Their arrangement and unique shapes suggested that they had meaning beyond simple

ornamentation. But what?

Gently bobbing in place on the inside of the eddy up top, I watched Jack cruise downstream toward the top cascade. He hit the launch pad in the perfect spot and then disappeared from sight. My attention quickly focused on the faces of friends on the bank. Looks of apprehension were broken by smiles and I knew that Jack had cleaned the first drop. Moments later the "clear" signal came, not as a raised paddle, but as the great, enthusiastic yell of a crowd of boaters that wanted to see more.

Charged with energy I pulled away from the bank and paddled toward the launch pad. The cascade is a double-drop that requires a straight off launch into a small pool, then a hard right turn, followed by a left turn to launch over the second part of the drop and through the backwash. I hit the launch pad a little too far left and with too much right angle. Diving deeply into the highly aerated pool, I managed not only to capsize and smack bottom, but also to right myself before surfacing. The aerated water made my submarine Eskimo roll a snap. With no leeway to miss a stroke, I accelerated and launched over the second half of the drop and met Jack in an eddy below.

"Wow, that was great, Jack! How was your line?" I asked. He was all smiles.

A partial view of the lead-in to the Salto del Triful-Triful. The upper cascade is just upstream of the photo.



Photo by Chris Bassett.





Scott Harding launching over the lip of Salto del Truful-Truful.

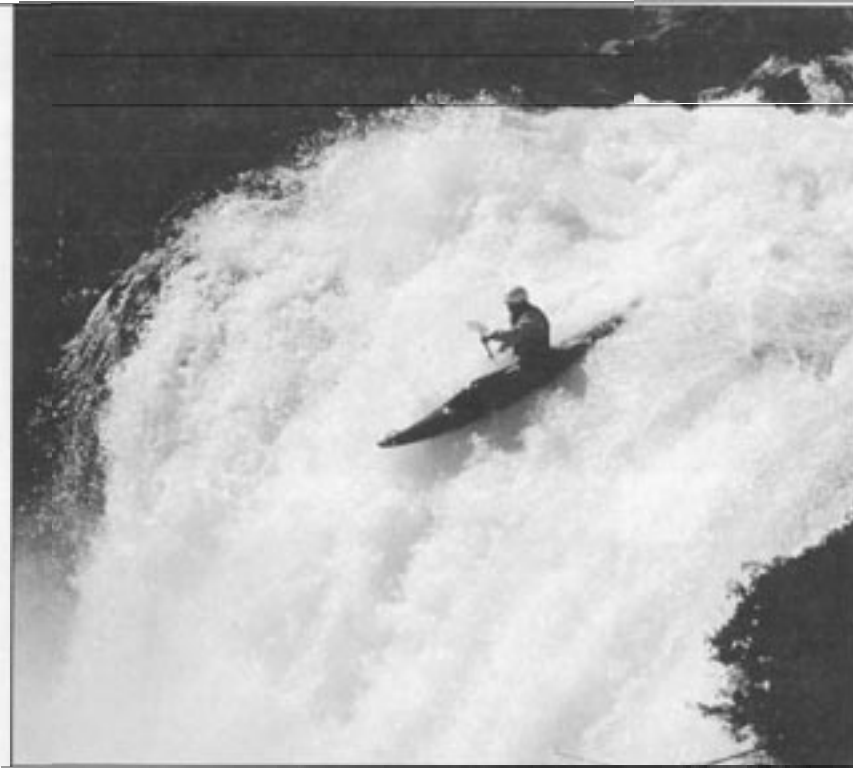


Photo by Chris Bassett

"I had a good run. That's bigger than it looked. I'm glad you're going first over the Salto."

Sticking to our hastily made agreement, I was the first to head out of the eddy and into the section of intermediate drops. Though these are continuous, they can be divided into four, based on the placement of major eddies. After accomplishing more or less clean runs of the more difficult entrance drop, Jack and I focused primarily on setting ourselves up for a good approach to the Salto while keeping our spacing so that we wouldn't end up doing a synchronized run.

After a brief detention in an unintended eddy, I found myself driving toward the final eddy above the Salto — the same boiling eddy where Arnd Shaefflein began his run a year earlier. A bad move here could result in flushing over the falls. I decided to pass close to the river left bank and a boof high into the eddy. Crossing the eddy line was like crossing into a time warp. I spent more time in the eddy than I had anticipated. Probably just one second longer but my sense of time was skewed. I didn't really want to spend much time peering over the lip of the drop. Only one more move and the run would be done! I pulled out of the eddy and headed over the Salto. A large converging seam split the current. I needed to be on the far side of the seam. The low volume stem of my boat made me especially wary of the power of the seam. Backendering over waterfalls is not in my repertoire.

Air! Seven meters of flight cushioned by a foamy impact. But something was keeping me from surfacing. Before I knew it, I found my self contemplating Contingency Plan A.

"One, two,....," I was stuck deep in the hole and wasn't flushing out. "...Three...[oh s\$@t, oh s\$@t]..." Then, more quickly, "...Four, five!" I yanked the grab loop on my skirt. The river made sure I got out of my boat quickly. A fast shove took me to the depths of the pool. This was followed by a slow, peaceful ride back to the surface. Round-trip: 20 seconds.

Those 20 seconds must have seemed even longer for Jack, who was delayed in the time warp eddy above the Salto while I flushed out. He cleaned the drop and made it look easy.

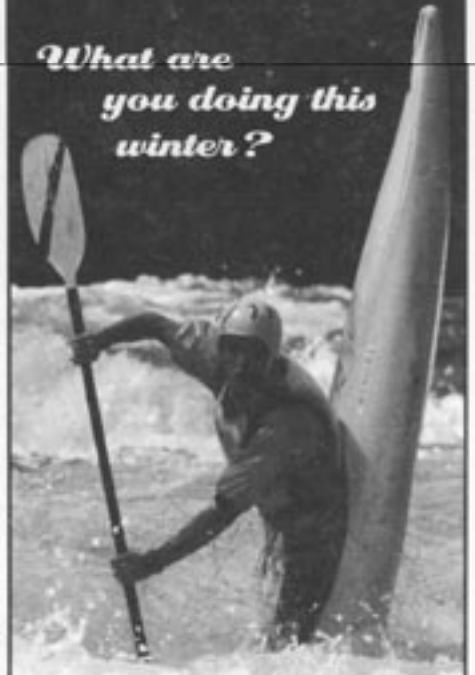
Upon surfacing from the my trip to the deep, the first things I saw were the mysterious rock cairns above the drop. In my oxygen-deprived state, I could finally understand them. Whoever built them knows the power of the charc.

Editor's Note: Writer Scott Harding is a geologist currently working in Alaska. He has been paddling, sometimes professionally, for ten years. Photographer Chris Bassett is the "river ranger" profiled in our March/April 1997 issue.

# Kayak Ecuador

*The secret is out: magnificent whitewater in one of the world's most interesting regions. We've opened the door to the rivers and creeks of the Andes and Amazon with our one week, beginner through expert, lodge-based kayaking trips. Our river experience, local knowledge, and kayak selection will turn your vacation into a magical paddling adventure.*

*What are you doing this winter?*



**SMALL WORLD ADVENTURES**

**1-800-58KAYAK**

1-800-585-2925

PO Box 262 • Howard, CO 81233



Earl Alderson at the last drop of Charlie's swim.

Photo by Aurelio Monti



# THE CLARKS FORK of the YELLOWSTONE

**A Class V+ Western Classic Revisited**

**"Charlie's Epic":**

*Gregg could not believe what he was seeing. Charlie had just paddled past the last eddy above a portage that can only be described as mandatory. Gregg watched as Charlie paddled over the drop and into a diagonal hole that slammed him over and surfed him toward a massive granite boulder. The last thing Gregg could see was Charlie, still in his boat, disappearing under the rock!*

*If he washed through the undercut, could he survive the massive waterfall down stream? As Gregg jumped from his boat he wondered if he would ever be able to find Charlie's body. The river dropped hundreds of feet over and under massive boulders! What could Charlie be thinking? He had paddled the Clarks Fork many times. He should have recognized this spot.*

After a long drive, I am looking forward to seeing my good friends Gregg Goodyear and Aurele Montagne. As soon as I see Gregg he tells me that we are leaving for the Box Canyon of the Clarks Fork. I try to finagle a rest day before we take off, but Gregg maintains that

every day we wait the water is dropping. The Clarks Fork has an optimum water level, ranging between 1000 to 2500 cfs. Gregg had been on the river the week before at 2000 cfs and he wanted to make sure it didn't drop too much before we got there.

We slept just outside Cooke City, Montana. I got super charged that morning at the bike shop/espresso stand. Cooke City is a classic western town that has yet to suffer the commercial blight that has robbed so many small towns of their true character.

The Box section of the Clarks Fork is one of the premier wilderness runs in the US. It flows from the Beartooth Mountains of Montana into northwestern Wyoming, eventually flowing back into Montana. We started paddling where Wyoming's Chief Joseph Highway crosses the river. The first miles of the river were a perfect class IV warm up. Then we eddied on river right and climbed through rock ledges to a plateau, where

we started to traverse.

The portages on the Clarks Fork are notoriously nasty. There are at least five, each requiring lots of strength and endurance. At one point we climbed down so we could see what we were portaging. The river lies in a perfectly walled inaccessible canyon tumbling around and under boulders. At one point it goes completely sub terrainian. Seeing this from the top I understood why it took the first decent party several days to do the run. They must have scouted for hours, with the fear of a no portage nightmare around every bend.

When we returned to the river Aurele told me to enjoy the next few miles of flat water. Below this section the river is not

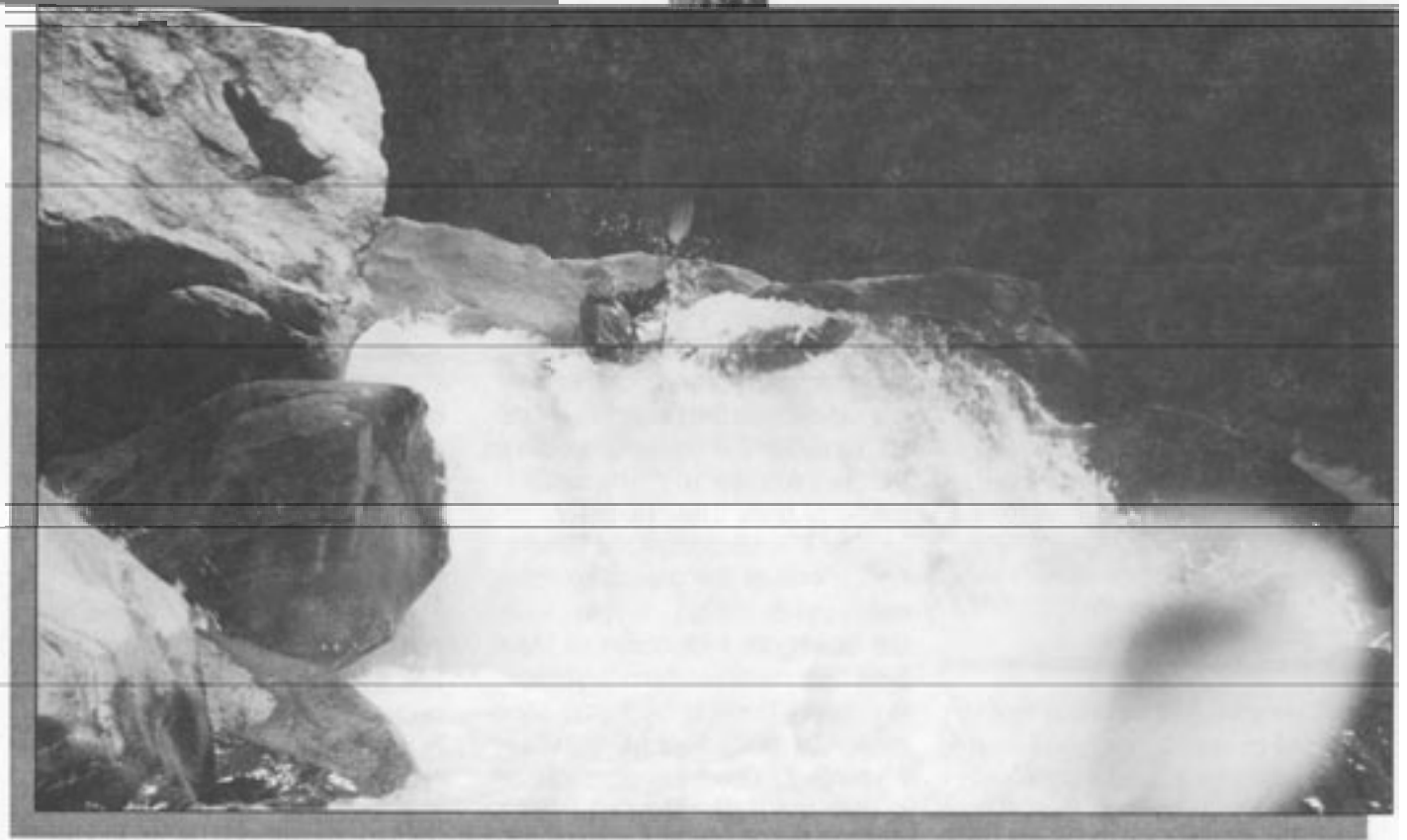
so relaxing. We floated along enjoying the sun. Gregg and Aurele caught and released trout. When I asked why they are letting our dinner go, they laughed and said the fishing only gets better.

The river picks up with more



Gregg Goodyear downstream of "Leap of Faith."

Photo by Aurele Montagne



Aurele Montagne at the Boof at "Deliberation Corner."

Photo by Gregg Goodyear

great whitewater. The scenery is wonderful, beautiful forest framed with granite walls that tower thousands of feet above. It reminded me why paddling has consumed so much of my life. The feeling of flowing with such a powerful river in a pristine, breath taking environment was the dream of my youth. My euphoric state was interrupted when Cregg eddied out on river left at the next portage.

After portaging for a while we ottered into a small pool in the middle of some chaos, ferry, and finished the portage on river right. Then we started paddling drops that will stick in my mind forever. "Deep Six Falls" is perfectly named. Most of the river is channeled into a slot on river right that funnels into a solid column of water that drops 15 feet. The approach is protected by a strong recirculating eddy. It demands precision paddling to avoid it's vacuum. A backwards run could

send you off the narrow column of water and onto the rock ledge that extends from the right bank. Once past the eddy your goal is to hold onto your paddle and your breath!

I was happy to be below this drop. I'm not sure how long I was under, but I had rear ended beneath the surface. When Cregg dropped over the falls, he was under so long that I feared he might be pinned. When he finally surfaced he seemed giddy. Must have been Nitrogen Narcosis.

The next drop that I will not soon forget was "Balls To The Wall". When we scouted "BTTW" I surmised that the "move" was to go through a narrow slot and boof right to avoid the pile of undercut rocks. I am not sure if it was in the entrance, or if it was as I flipped going through the slot, that I realized that

"BTTW" was much steeper and more complex than I thought. When I rolled up I was farther left

than I had planned. I planted the paddle and cranked hard to get right.

I was not sure where I was in the rapid. I did know I was in the water speeding toward the undercuts, and that I had to make that boat move right. After what seemed like an eternity the boat lifted onto a boil of water, allowing me to get enough momentum to miss an encounter of the unthinkable kind with the undercut boulders. BTTW is a wild drop; long, complex, and steep!

With more exciting rapids and the third monster portage behind us, we decided to find a home for the night. My friends were right about the fishing. We feasted on trout, and enjoyed a long, hard sleep.

During breakfast I asked what the biggest rapid of the day would be. Without hesitation both Cregg and Aurele simultaneously said "Deliberation Corner". Cregg and I both hate to



Earl Aderson at "Deep Six Falls."

Photo by Gregg Goodyear

scout. I asked him if we would need to get out and take a look. He thought for a moment and then started drawing in the sand.

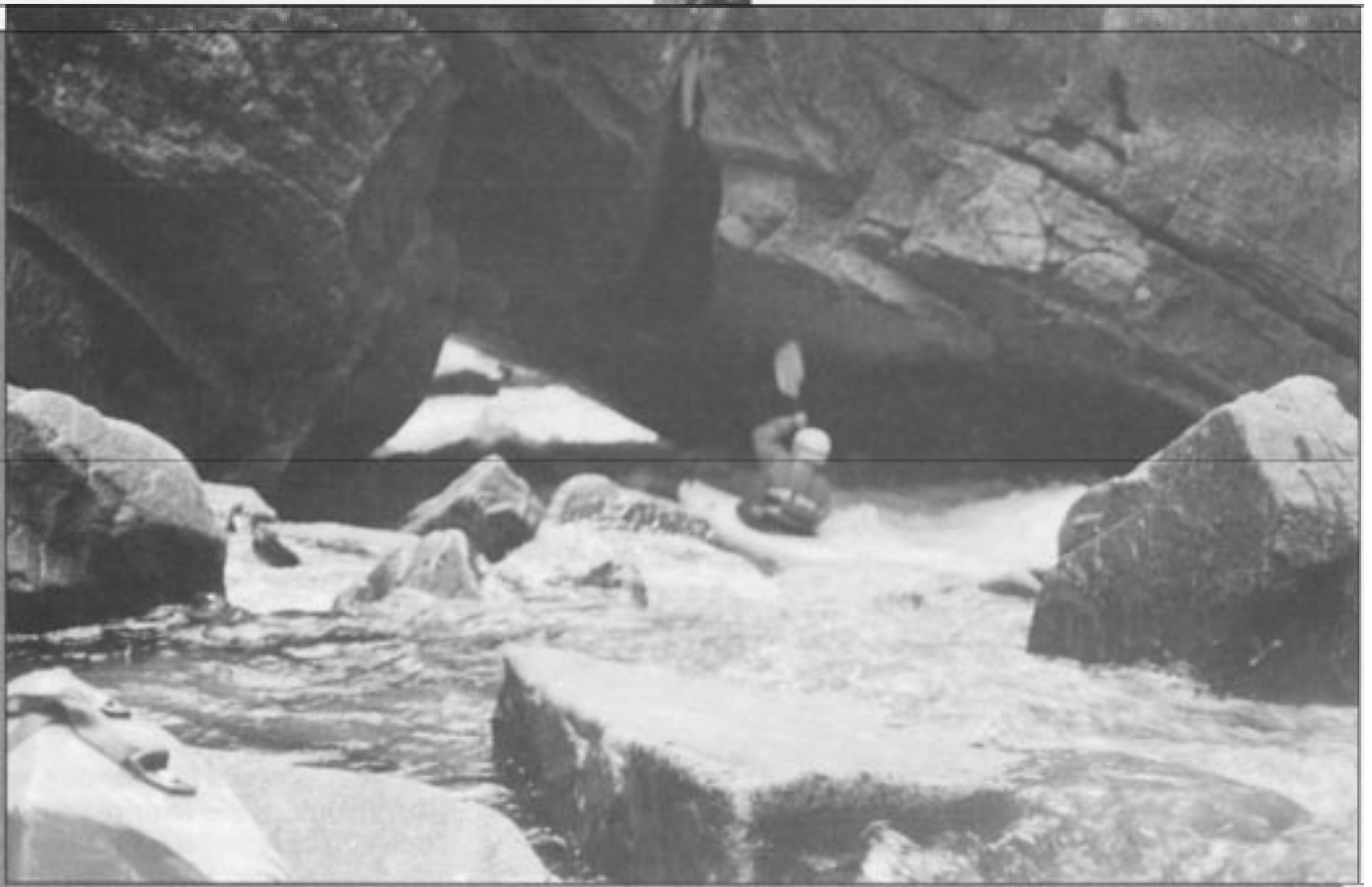
He said we didn't need to scout, but that I should know what was down stream in case I missed one of the eddies. His detailed description gave me no real clue of what was down stream. But it did inspire me to paddle my best.

It wasn't long until we arrived at the top of "Deliberation Corner". We dropped over two big ledges and eddied out on the right. I asked if this is the boof left, eddy right spot. Cregg smiled and replied, "Not yet". After a few more drops we were in a small eddy on the brink of a big blind drop. Just a couple of feet upstream of the lip of the falls was a ledge hole with a boulder on the left. The move was to drive between the hole and the lip of the falls, boofing into aerated water.

If I was not able to catch the eddy on the right after the boof, I was told to head for the middle slot down stream. Looking down stream all I could see was boulders and canyon walls. As Cregg dropped out of sight, I told myself there is no way I am going to miss this move. Once in the eddy Cregg showed me where people put in portaging the top of deliberation. To portage below that point could take weeks.

The lower part of the rapid has been the source of some big action stories; swims, lost gear, and hikes from hell to get out of the canyon. I was happy to be at the bottom of the rapid and not part of Deliberation Corner notoriety.

More great rapids and it was time to get out of the boat again. It is impossible to miss this portage. The eddy to catch lies just below a boulder that caps the entire river. It is like paddling through a cave. This portage is the shortest of the big five.



Earl Alderson going through the cave.

Photo by Gregg Goodyear

The rapid below is called "Leap Of Faith". It is an intimidating blind drop that is impossible to scout without an epic hike and climb.

Aurele wanted to try a new line that he spotted on his last trip. The original route was down a slide that often ended with the boater being slammed against the canyon wall. Aurele's idea was to boof left off a drop towards the center of the river. Aurele went first.

Leap Of Faith was so vertical that it was impossible to get a paddle signal or see Aurele at the bottom. It turned out to be a 15 foot drop into a pool. On my right was massive "gnar gnar" (Norwegian for big nasty rapid). To my left was a knife edged slide. A slide off the left side would result in a hard impact on the canyon wall!

It is not long before we are out of our boats again for portage number five. This is the spot where "Charlie's Epic" took place, on a previous trip. Cregg relived the incident. The last thing he saw from his boat was Charlie's yellow helmet washing under the boulder. He jumped from his boat and climbed through the boulders in disbelief that Charlie could have paddled past the eddy.

The water that flows from under the boulder falls over a drop that is nearly fifty feet. The rapid below is a massive pile of boulders, with as much water flowing under them as is around or over them. The river is split by a boulder the size of a house. The left side flows under rocks and the right is a twenty foot falls. Down stream of this is a quarter mile of steep, but runnable boulder

garden.

Cregg thought for sure Charlie must be dead. But after a few moments he spotted Charlie's boat in an eddy at the top of the twenty foot falls. Seconds later he saw some movement on the boulder that splits the twenty foot falls and the boulder sieve. It was Charlie!

At that instant Charlie's boat washed over the falls. Charlie climbed down the back of the boulder and jumped back into the river, swimming the class IV+ boulder garden down stream with his boat! Cregg can hardly believe Charlie was alive, much less jumping back into the river!

By the time Cregg reached Charlie, they both had time to chill out. Charlie was not sure why he missed the eddy. He was un hurt; not even a scratch! Charlie's boat had not survived

the swim. It had been broken in half. In this part of the canyon, the walls are vertical. It would be the perfect place for Yosemite style big wall climbing. However, trying to hike out would be nearly impossible.

But Charlie must be one of the luckiest people on earth. On a previous trip Gregg and Charlie had spotted a kayak full of gear at this portage. They thought it might have belonged to a group of paddlers from Colorado that had gotten in over their heads. They had stashed it up above the high water line, with no thought of ever getting it out of the canyon. Little did they know it would save Charlie's butt. Gregg and Charlie retrieved the boat, cut the broken boat into small chunks and paddled it and themselves to the take out.

As I looked at the monster rapid I marveled that a human could have washed through it and survived. It is the wildest swim I have ever heard of.

We ran the falls at the bottom of the portage. It seemed trivial in comparison to what Charlie swam up stream. As Gregg peeled out from the micro eddy, he was almost washed over a drop into undercut boulders on the river left. With an impressive ferry of desperation he made the move to the right. After watching Gregg probe the move, I did not lose an inch as I peeled out.

just below this Sunshine Creek freefalls hundreds of feet into the Clarks Fork. The canyon opens up and the rapids seem casual. I leaned back knowing that I would forever cherish the memory of paddling the Clarks Fork, with its severely technical rapids, demanding portages and breath taking scenery.

**AFTER-KAYAK APPAREL**

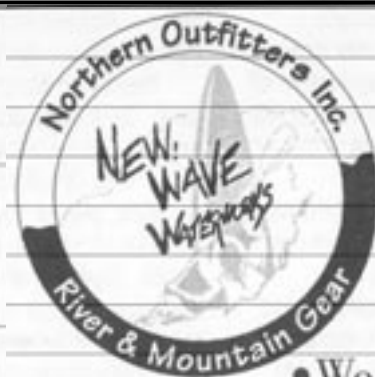
# Boof Gear

The Outdoor Changing Room that features:

- Warm, high-quality fleece
- Large, outside & inside pockets
- Dual scarf & hood design
- Variety of solid colors & prints

Order Your Boof Gear Today:  
Boof Gear 9224 Darrow Rd, Ste. W-311  
Twinsburg, Ohio 44087  
Ph. (330)405-1996 Fax (330)405-1997

**Change your Boof, not in the Buff !"**



Your source for  
Sprayskirts and a  
whole lot more!

• We ship direct! •

Mountain Surf  
Prijon  
Perception  
Dagger  
Lotus  
Lightning  
Kokatat  
Stohlquist  
Extrasport



<http://www.borg.com/~newwave/index.html>  
newwave@borg.com  
1-800-249-4112 • 1-315-768-1568  
587 Main Street • New York Mills, NY 13417



# A Circus On The Selway A Selway Story

by Gary Barker

**N**orth Idaho's Selway River is on the cusp of the dryer southern drainage's such as the Salmon, with the wetter climate of the Clearwater to the north. It is the northernmost river to harbor rattlesnakes and the southernmost to harbor the infamous North Idaho no-see-um. Neither, unfortunately, is on the endangered species list.

That said, the Selway is a wonderful, remote, big water run. Dissecting the huge Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, the river rumbles fifty miles through pine and fir forests with little sign of civilization. An occasional foot bridge or log cabin are the only signs of human activity. Naturally occurring, ecologically necessary forest fires leave more apparent evidence of their passing.

The Selway permit system was designed to keep the experience pristine. Where other rivers might have multiple launches allowed on a given day, the Selway has only one.

This system also makes getting a permit the equivalent of winning the lottery. When Joe Biby called to invite me on his 1996 trip, I was ecstatic. An end of May Selway trip with raft support can be the highlight of any kayaker's year.

Greg Nelson, an expert oarsman and professional hunting guide, would meet me in Kalispell, Montana. We would meet Joe and fellow kayaker Nathan Wilcox in Missoula.

Joe had done an excellent job with the trip details, including the intricate shuttle. We met our drivers in Missoula and headed south to Darby, then west over the Bitterroot Divide into Selway. A long drive, but sure to be worth it. North Idaho rivers were running big and pushy.

At the White Cap Creek launch site it was raining. Not an afternoon shower or a thunder storm, but that foggy, gray socked in Idaho drizzle. Not discouraged at all, we joyfully loaded up the raft and started suiting up.

Joe suddenly slapped his head into his hands and groaned "Oh \_\_\_\_\_!". Not the "Oh \_\_\_\_\_, the mosquitoes are out!", or the "Oh \_\_\_\_\_, the dog messed on my drytop!". More like "Oh \_\_\_\_\_, the HIV test is positive!", or "Oh \_\_\_\_\_, you'll have to amputate my foot!". Or, "Oh \_\_\_\_\_, I left my bag of kayaking gear on the sidewalk in Missoula!".

We haggled around for a while, devising a makeshift helmet, life jacket, spare paddle, etc. The spray skirt was proving quite problematic.

It finally became apparent that the only solution was to drive four hours back to Missoula. Or to leave Joe behind. Joe suggested this himself, but whined something about how

he had been looking forward to this trip all year. Also, he had the permit.

Nathan and I rode out with the shuttle to run the Selway above the permit area, a wonderful diversion that took about an hour. That left us with only seven hours to sit in the rain, enjoying the no-see-ums.

Someone once said that infinity was like the number of monkeys with typewriters that it would take before you finally found one that could recreate the entire work of Shakespeare.

But I didn't truly understand infinity until I encountered no-see-ums. You can go on grinding them into your skin and scalp forever, with no effect on their numbers.

Because they are invisible, science can only theorize that they are part of the annoying, blood sucking fly family. Another school of thought holds that they were bred down in size (like miniature dachshunds or toy poodles) from grizzly bears.

There is a successful remedy, however. Deet. 100% pure deet. Deet is as close to being nuclear as any chemical known to man, except Plutonium. It brings an iridescent glow to the skin. This spooks the no-see-ums.

First, put on your dry suit and booties. Next, take the industrial size bottle of deet. Don't follow the directions on the bottle. Dump it on your head, so that it runs down your neck and face. Smear it on thick, especially in the eye sockets, on the lips, and between the cheeks and gums. Pour it into your ears, then shake like a dog to remove the excess.

Next, put on your helmet. Crawl into your sleeping bag. Head first. Duct tape the entry and zipper from the inside.

At long last the shuttle came rattling down the road. We hastily set off to get some miles behind us before dark.

About ten miles down we set up camp among the largest Ponderosa Pines I have ever seen. Large and dense enough that the ground beneath was actually dry. Greg and Joe showed off their cooking skills with a delicious grilled chicken meal with cheese cake dessert. Things were looking up.

The next day after a tasty breakfast we headed down river. Our intent was to get past the gnarly section below Moose Creek that contains five back to back, serious drops. The largest is Ladle, followed by Little Niagara, Puzzle, No Slouch, and Miranda Jane.

We scouted Ladle from river right. It looked like a small, violent ocean. Greg chose a line down the far right for the raft that involved punching a few small holes, but avoided the monsters in the middle. Joe and Nathan picked a line down



the extreme left that was class II "as long as you are on line." I was to take the hero line down the center.

Greg had a good run in the raft and nailed the eddy on the right at the bottom of the rapid. I ran down the center, gracefully dancing and weaving between huge pourovers, like an expert slalom racer. Except I was upside down.

I rolled and joined Greg in the eddy to watch Joe and Nathan make their run down river left. They began just a few boat lengths apart and were just getting going when Joe disappeared. Nathan eddied out at the bottom left to wait for Joe, who had tangled with a big hole.

Joe is a great paddler with a bomb proof roll. I had never seen him swim. Push the edge long enough, though, and some hole will eventually beat the crap out of you, like a fly in the toilet.

**NOTE TO JOE: We all SWIM now and then, no big deal. Few, on the other hand, have the humiliating misfortune to have their SWIM published for review by their peers.**

Knowing Joe, I'm certain it took a terrible pounding to get him out of his boat. (I, however, saw but one feeble roll attempt.)

Nathan was in perfect rescue position and had Joe in an instant. Greg and I cheered as they went round and round in the eddy. Round and round and round\_. Something was wrong.

The eddy had vertical walls with no place to deposit a swimmer. Worse, the eddy line would not allow an exit back

stream. He couldn't be more than a half mile or so ahead. I paddled as fast as I could, sure that I would spot him around the next bend. Little Niagara and the rapids that followed would be a horrible swim at this level. "Hang on buddy.", I thought.

On and on I pushed, with no sight of anything nylon or plastic. "Where the hell is he?", I worried. I finally pulled over, exhausted and disheartened.

Soon, the raft joined me and we continued on, mile after mile. No paddle, boat, floatbag; nothing.

We pulled over at the top of Wolf Creek Rapid to discuss our options. If Nathan had been chasing Joe's boat, he wouldn't have gone over the horizon line at Wolf Creek without scouting. That left the other disturbing possibility. He had been swimming and didn't get out.

We made camp and attempted to come up with a plan of action. Nothing made sense. Two boats, two paddles, one swimmer and all that other stuff, all washed down the river without a trace.

We sat in the rain, staring at the Selway, scratching our collective head. I had never been on a trip when a boater was lost, and I didn't like the feeling.

Resignation to the situation settled in like the cool, gray drizzle.

I don't know if Joe saw Nathan first, or vice-versa, but they both yelled at the same time. Nathan was paddling round the

## We helplessly circled the eddy, unable to escape.

into the river. I saw Joe lose his grip on Nathan's grab loop, and I jetted across the river to help.

As Joe washed out of the eddy he caught my grab loop and away we went. Over ledges, through holes, down to the next eddy. When I last saw the exhausted Nathan, he was upside down, trying to roll. Things were getting out of hand.

The next eddy was no better than the first. We helplessly circled the eddy, unable to escape. Joe had a death grip on my rear grab loop, and was becoming a handful. Joe is truly athletic, over six feet, 3% body fat, lean, mean, muscular frame, heavy boned, a boat anchor kind of guy.

My arms burned. We were in trouble. I had to do something with Joe, and soon. Greg was still watching intently from across the river, so a paddle stab to the face was out of the question.

Greg to the rescue. In an upstream attainment move that would have made Chris Spelius grin, Greg joined us in the eddy and scooped Joe into the raft. Adrenaline can be a wonderful thing.

"I'm going after Nathan!", I yelled, and blasted off down

bend. Joe ran out into the waist deep eddy, where they embraced like long lost brothers.

As it turned out, Nathan had rolled in the upper eddy, and gotten Joe's boat. A rock ledge jutting out above the river had kept him from seeing the rescue below, and also hid him from our view. By the time he climbed the ledge to get a peek, all he saw was myself and the raft charging down stream, presumably still after Joe. He was sure the worst had happened, and was determined to at least get Joe's boat.

Alone on a class IV river that he didn't know, Nathan eventually parted company with the extra kayak. He headed down river, afraid of what he would find, but needing to know.

A joyous reunion ensued. We drank far too much Drambuie and rehashed the day's events, over and over.

The next morning, Joe and Nathan hiked upstream to look for the missing kayak while Greg and I broke camp. They were back in five minutes. The boat was eddied out just above our camp!

The sun came out, the no-see-ums retreated to their dens, and our little world was back together again.

# Slalom Back in Olympics

Excerpted from *The Winning Blade*, USKCT.

Slalom canoe/kayak is back on the Olympic program for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. The final approval came on Monday, Sept. 1 by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) executive board at their meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland.

"We are thrilled slalom will be returning to the Olympic Games," said United States Canoe and Kayak Team Executive Director Terry Kent. "I am especially pleased for all the athletes whose Olympic hopes were dashed last year when slalom was taken off the program. I am glad they will have the chance to realize their Olympic dream."

Whitewater Slalom was on the original bid package Sydney put together to attract the 2000 Olympics. However, at a joint IOC/SOCOG Executive Board Meeting held in Cancun, Mexico on November 15, 1996, official voted to drop slalom, SOCOG offi-

cial based their decision on the high cost to construct a whitewater facility, one they feared would have little use once the Olympic Games were over.

The Sydney slalom course at Penrith Lakes was originally estimated to cost \$12 million dollars. Sydney-based engineering company Pacific Power International put in a guaranteed bid to construct the course at no more than \$6 million dollars. Penrith City Council and the ICF will each contribute \$1.5 million dollars toward the project, and the New South Wales Government will provide the remaining \$3 million dollars.

Construction is expected to take 11 months, with the new 300 meter long slalom course opening to the public in December 1998.

Penrith City will manage, operate and maintain the facility after the Olympic Games

have concluded. Whitewater slalom made its third Olympic appearance at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, Ga. The sport made its debut in the 1972 Munich Olympic Games but did not return to the competition program until the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games.

The U.S. has claimed medals each time slalom has been on the Olympic program. In 1972, C-1 paddler Jamie McEwan claimed the country's first-ever slalom medal by winning the bronze. The 1992 Barcelona Olympics were golden for the U.S. as Joe Jacobi and Scott Strausbaugh took the gold medal in men's double canoe. Dana Chladek claimed the bronze medal in women's kayak at the same Olympic Games. The return of the Olympics to the USA in Atlanta in 1996 also marked the return of Chladek, who this time won the silver medal.

## 1997 Slalom National Championship Results

### C-1 final Result

1) David Hearn, 324.28, 2) Adam Boyd, 338.26, 3) Joseph Jacobi, 341.00, 4) Matt Taylor, 349.58, 5) Dan Menten, 377.36, 6) Austin Crane, 384.63, 7) Lecky Haller, 385.71, 8) Lee Sanders, 388.54, 9) Kevin Michelson, 406.88, 10) Brendan Moore, 411.50

### K-1W Final Results

1) Kara Weld, 351.22, 2) Rebecca Bennett, 351.78, 3) Renata Altman, 359.18, 4) Cathy Hearn, 365.11, 5) Megan Stalheim, 381.56, 6) Jennifer Hearn, 417.15, 7) Aleta Miller, 431.24, 8) Hannah Larsen, 435.40, 9) Amy Dingle, 461.99, 10) Anna Jorgensen, 467.54

### C-2 Final Results

1) Lecky Haller/Matt Taylor, 346.40, 2) Horace Holden/Wayne Dickert, 354.16, 3) Luke Moore/Fred Coriell, 386.03, 4) Samuel Davis/Lee Sanders, 415.52, 5) Justin Aguirre/Morgan Ford, 443.32

### K-1 Final Results

1) Scott Shipley, 281.88, 2) Eric Giddens, 298.17, 3) Nick Kimmet, 304.15, 4) Jason Beakes, 310.39, 5) Brett Heyl, 310.66, 6) Scott Parsons, 313.14, 7) Joshua Russell, 332.10, 8) Louis Geltman, 337.08, 9) David Jacobson, 337.92, 10) Christopher Rush, 344.76, 11) Scott Simpson, 346.59, 12) Abel Hastings, 349.71, 13) Dan Menten, 350.38, 14) Kyle Marinello, 354.45, 15) Sebastian Zimmer, 356.06

### C-2 Mixed Final Results

1) Cathy Hearn/Lecky Haller, 393.53, 2) Megan Stalheim/Luke Moore, 444.16, 3) Aleta Miller/Wayne Dickert, 444.56, 4) Carolyn Abritton/Mark Poindexter, 453.37, 5) Kara Weld/Fred Coriell, 503.30

# Where Credit is Due! America's Best...Dana Chladek!?!?

by JohnWeld, Contributing Editor

I'm going to make a bold statement about slalom paddler Dana Chladek. Dana Chladek is the Most Successful U.S. Slalom Paddler Ever. Male or female. Here are some credentials to back that claim up: Silver medalist at the '89 and '91 Worlds. '88 World Cup champion, Bronze medal at the '92 Olympics and a Silver (actually tied for Gold) medal at the '96 Olympics. Some people may argue that C-ler Jon Luginbill is the obvious candidate for this title, but I have three words for them: Two Olympic Medals.

The problem is that you probably don't know who Dana Chladek is. Her name is often lost behind those of more media savvy paddlers like Davey and Cathy Hearn and Scott Shipley. But the fact remains that over the past decade, Dana has constantly and quietly proven herself to be America's Best.

Why so many people are not quite sure who Chladek is a puzzle to me. Many people do recognize her as the owner of Rapidstyle paddling gear and as "some kind of a slalom racer," but, at the same time, paddlers are often surprised to hear that the U.S. even won a medal in slalom at the Atlanta Games. Is it because she has never been involved in any kind of product endorsement (besides her own)? Or that she never signed on with any paddling team, like Team Perception or Team Dagger? Or simply that she's a woman in what some people regard as a man's sport? She retired from slalom after the '96 Games, at the peak of her

career, so many of the questions that surround her anonymity may just remain unanswered.

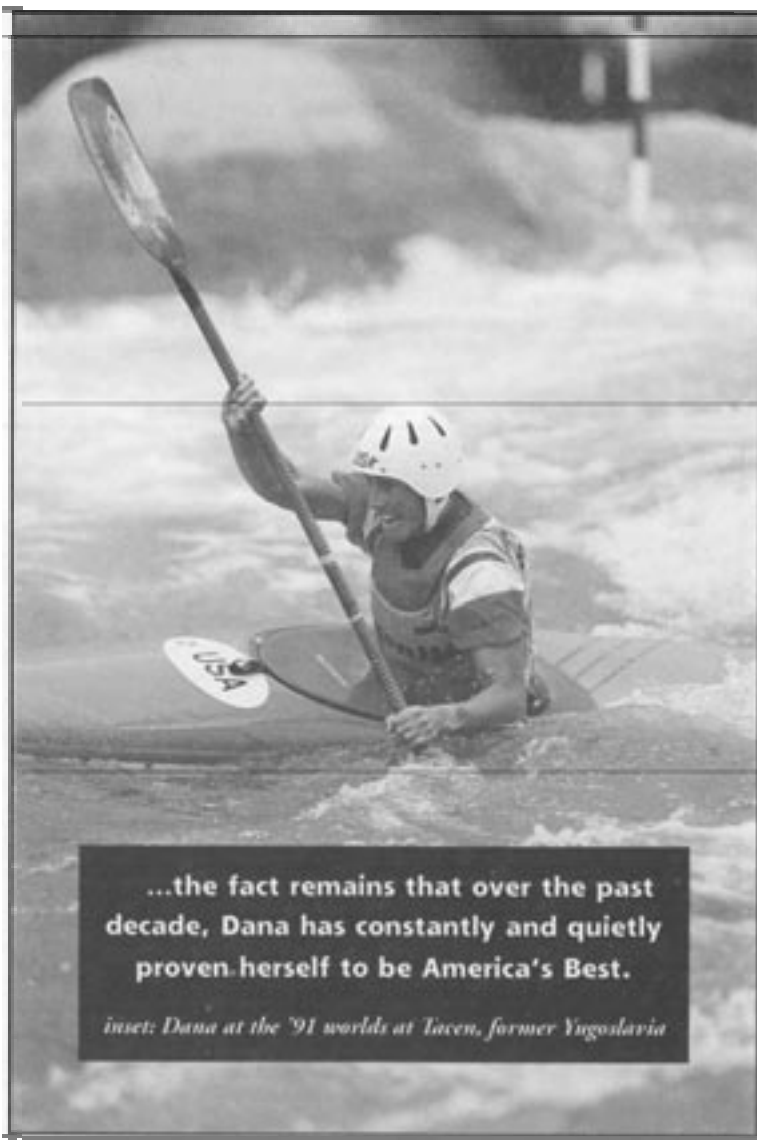
One guess is that marketing Chladek would be problematic. Instead of an Amazonian Uber Woman destroying competition

Gabby Reece-style with a Mountain Dew-esque scream, she's an intellectual over-achiever who is distinctly un-image conscious and wins races by feeding off of her own nervousness. This, of course, is on top of the fact that she doesn't seem to be at all interested in marketing herself to begin with. Chladek is all about results, not about the attention that surrounds them. When the T.V. cameras come, Chladek's usually somewhere else. And when the sponsors ask, she's usually not interested.

So, to the paddling world at large, please meet Dana Chladek. 32 years old, retired slalom racer, President of Rapidstyle. Cute enough to elicit disappointment from most guys when they find out she's mamed, intelligent enough to intimidate the rest. She came to the U.S. with her parents when she was five from Czechoslovakia. After living in Texas for a while they moved to Michigan. Her parents, both chemists, now own Great River Outfitters. She speaks Czech (her first language), French (she studied French Literature at Dartmouth) and English. Her first slalom race? On the Clinton River...

**You competed in your first race on the Clinton River when you were 14. Was it something that you were immediately attracted to?**

I guess at that time racing was just part of learning to paddle. You paddled, and then you went to races. I think I liked racing better because there were a lot of





4 Dana, 3 years old!

**So, basically, when you got out of college, training for slalom was your full time occupation.**

Right.

**And you have been training full-time since then. That's ten years.**

Right. Well, 1995 was a bad year, because of an injury. Silvan [Poberji, who has been the U.S. Team Coach since 1993] had me training harder than I had ever trained before. Then on April 1st I was closing a car door and something felt weird in my shoulder. And it got worse and worse. The fibers in my bursa had grown into a growth that they had to cut out. It had grown because I had been abusing my shoulder for ten years, but it had grown without hurting.

**So you were out of paddling for a year or so...**

From April 1st until December 28th. I paddled some in that time, but no real work outs. My surgery was on October 10th.

**To get back to the training questions, you trained for ten years. For the non-racers out there, what is daily life like while you are training?**

It was not as monotonous as it may

people around and racing didn't seem as scary as running a river. I was really terrified of running rivers. I remember a trip down the Tygart River where someone mentioned undercut rocks. I was crying as we paddled down. I remember thinking every time I swam I would die. Every rock was undercut.

Dana's mother: We did the Youghiogheny River, and Dana swam every rapid. Other people on the river were looking at us like we were child beaters.

**At what point did you start to take racing seriously?**

It wasn't any one point, it just sort of developed. When I got to college I trained harder than I trained in high school. And when I got out of college, I trained even harder still. Actually, I started training in Seattle because I really wanted to live out West. But I quickly realized that it was not the best place to train. You need a big community to train with. You can't do it by yourself. So I graduated in '86 and I moved to D.C. in the fall of '87, after spending 5 or 6 months in Seattle.

**What was the first year that you made the Team?**

1983 was my first World Championships in Merano [Italy—You need to be on the Team to go to the World Championships]. That was my first year in college.

**You moved to D.C. in '87, and then you won the World Cup in 1988. Do you**

**think that being in D.C. had a lot to do with that?**

Actually no. What had a lot to do with that was that the year before I spent the winter in Costa Rica. Then I went to Chilliwack (British Columbia) and trained with the French Team. Myriam was there [Myriam Fox-Jerusalami, a French Paddler who was, at the time, the world's best woman's slalom paddler], and I sometimes had times—maybe every five runs—that were as fast as hers. And then I spent that whole spring in Bourg [France]. That was what did it. That year, I trained really, really well.

▼ Training in Prague with Marcla Kostolova, 1984





▲ 1996 Olympics

sound, because I moved around a lot. I spend a lot of time in France, for instance. But um.. Sometimes it can be monotonous, because even when you're traveling and you're in a foreign country, all you do is paddle, and then sit around. But mostly it's fun. Basi-

and I get a lot more nervous. The worst was '92 [at the Barcelona Olympics]. My parents came to the Olympic Village and I started crying. The big difference is that I learned how to handle that and use it to my advantage. I think that I'm only a fairly decent technical paddler, and I know that I haven't trained as hard as some people.

**What are the big differences between the men's and women's slalom teams?**

There just aren't enough good women. Women tend to be more scared of whitewater, and I just don't know why. You see it on the Upper Yough, you see it on the Upper Blackwater...I mean how many women do you see on the Upper Blackwater? But racing is not a very scary thing. You're not doing first descents and there's not going to be a tree in the water when you go around the bend. That's maybe why I gravitated to racing, because it's incredibly safe.

**You must look back on the past ten years as generally a positive experience...I've always felt that, for elite athletes, there's a real gamble in betting your financial security later in life against the zeitgeist of being one of the best in the world right now.**

Yeah... You have to go back and say "Yeah, I remember the two weeks I spent training in Bourg, and I'd get up in the morning and get a fresh baguette, and then go do an awesome workout on a class IV course." But I would not have felt that the '96 Olympics was a positive experience had I not gotten a medal. I would have been in the corner crying after the race. And, as it is, I'm still feeling negative about it because I didn't get first. *continues, next page*

**And you would train for what, ten months a year?**

Yeah. I always took at least a month off in the fall.

**Now, at the end of a decade of training, you are the most decorated woman American slalomist, and certainly one of the top women paddlers in the world.**

Well, Cathy [Heam—a fellow teammate], won a gold medal in the '79 worlds, and I never won a gold in the worlds.

**What makes you so good?**

I'm sure it's a combination of things. But the one thing that makes me different than a lot of other people is that I can perform when I'm nervous. I see it all the time. The worse I feel—I mean feeling like I'm going to throw up and I'm crying—the better I do.

**You have no explanation for that?**

None. I don't believe in mental training. I think it's hereditary and I got lucky. I also think that I put a lot more pressure on myself than other people. I'll go to races and watch my teammates race and, whether they're doing poorly or not, they're having fun. I never had fun. I think that what happens is that I put a huge amount of pressure on myself

cally, it entails paddling once at 8 or 9:00 A.M. and then paddling again at 3 or 4:00 P.M. in the afternoon. There is nothing more fun than training twice a day.

**And your life revolved around worrying about those two workouts.**

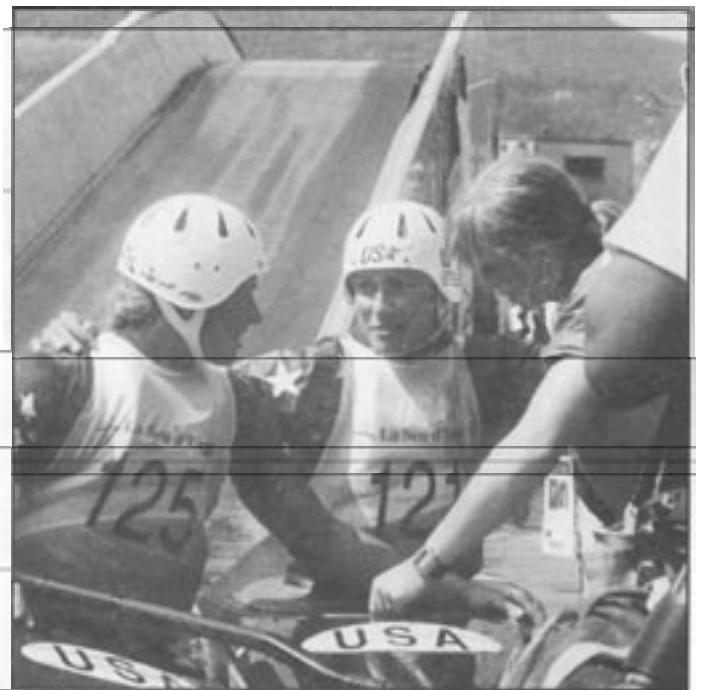
Yeah. You're like "Oh my God, I went to sleep an hour later." When you're training twice a day, you blame a bad result on not getting enough sleep. You think that if you sleep for one hour less you will have this terrible workout. The other thing is that in any other job if you miss a day, you can always make it up. But in paddling that day is gone. So you're always worried about missing a work out, or 100 mile per hour winds, or being sick, because you always think that your competition doesn't have that. It's horribly self-centered I guess. It's anal.

**Do you think that selfish people make better athletes?**

No, I don't think that it's selfish; I think that it's self-centered. You just have to be anal about things like that. I don't think that's selfish.

Dana's mother: We did the Youghiohony River, and Dana swam every rapid. Other people on the river were looking at us like we were child beaters.

▼ Cathy Heam, Maylon Hanold, and Dana in Spain during '92 Olympics





*A Clinto River, age 14*

**How did it feel to race in front of 15,000 people at the Ocoee Olympics?**

Oh, it was awesome. Just the noise. Coming out of gate 23 when I knew that I had a good run, it was awesome.

**In general, how was the '96 Olympic experience?**

It was different than '92. In '92 I was coming in with two silver medals from the Worlds, and I was feeling like I was a favorite for a medal. In '96 everyone treated me like a total loser because I had had

surgery and hadn't really paddled much that year. I mean I *knew* I wasn't a total loser... I had paddled well in the trials and I was paddling well the month before the race. But everyone *thought* I was a total loser. And I was treated that way. When the T.V. came, they filmed Davey, Cathy and Scott [Shipley]. No one ever interviewed me.

**It's unfortunate, because I have heard more than one reporter mistakenly say that the U.S. didn't win any Whitewater medals in the '96 Olympics. Does that**

**bother you?**

**Yeah.** I hate being called Cathy Hearn because it happens all the time. I remember autographing some lady's shirt after the Olympics—and this has happened literally 50 times—and my friend says to her "You know she won a medal in the Olympics." And then the lady says, "Oh! You're Cathy Hearn!". Everyone thought from the T.V. coverage that Cathy Hearn won the medal [she was 7th]. The coverage focused on Cathy and Davey. Davey was the reigning world champion coming into the Olympics, and the T.V. did a brother-sister story.

Now the news is that there may not be any slalom in 2000 Sydney Games. It may be a while before we see 15,000 people gathering for a whitewater event again...slalom races may start to look like they did 20 years ago. (*Editor's note: Since this interview Slalom has been reinstated for Sydney.*) All of this growth happened gradually for those of us who have been around for a while, like Davey and Cathy and me. But now, all these kids are saying "Oh my God, without the Olympics, this sport is going to die," and that's bulls!@#. It's going to be fine. And you know what, for some people, it may even be healthier. They may be forced to get a job, and they may have a more realistic view of themselves, as not being very important.

**Just briefly, what do you think that the chances are of the sport making it to the 2000 games?**

I'd say like 50-50. You might want to ask

▼ *Waussau, 1979. age 16*



Silvan, but I think the chances are quite good. A reduced number of athletes, but it will happen.

**So lets talk about Rapidstyle, your paddling gear company.**

I started in 1988 with a shorty paddling jacket. I made three of them and Nantahala said "We'll buy them, you just have to sell them to us cheaper than you sell to your friends." That was my first lesson in how stores work. Duh!

**It's obviously getting a lot bigger. Rapidstyle is a very recognizable name in the paddling world. Is this something you see yourself doing indefinitely?**

Yeah. I mean one of the reasons that I stopped racing is that I didn't want to do Rapidstyle half way anymore. I was doing Rapidstyle the way that some people train— like three times a week or something. You can't run a business that way. Since I quit racing, we're up 40%.

**And besides Rapidstyle, you're expecting a kid. Any names picked out?**

Tristan if it's a boy, Natasha if it's a girl.

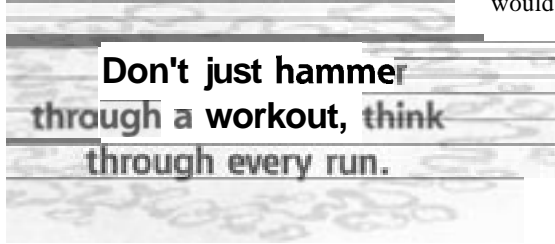
**So on the awards stand at the '96 Olym-**

**pics, you were standing there knowing it was your last race.**

I was tired of the scene. I mean I really loved every day of it, and everything on the Cocee was so much fun, but...

**You felt closure at that point in your career.**

Yeah.



**You mention you were tired of "the scene"?**

Well, I feel like we had less of a team after '92. That was the year that Jon Luginbill and Bill Endicott (the Team coach before Silvan) left the sport. We lost a lot of our leadership. It was different after that. We no longer had people that wanted to hang gates.. Bill would just call you and get you to hang gates at Offit Island (a training spot on the Potomac). It sucked, it was a pain in the ass, it would rain, but it was a team thing. After Jon and

Bill left, it was gone.

**Maybe some of this loss of a team spirit was brought on by the attention the sport got during the Olympics.**

People...really wanted that attention, and they started to make an effort to grab it for themselves. If you had a T.V. camera at one part of the course during a workout, people would train *right there* for the camera. And the reason they did that was they knew they needed that to land a sponsorship. You're seen on T.V. by one guy, and maybe that's all it takes.

**What does sponsorship involve? I know that you were sponsored by AT&T for a while...**

I have no idea what a typical sponsorship is. Mine with AT&T was really good because they didn't expect anything. They spent 8 hours putting makeup on me for one photo shoot and that was it.

**What advice do you have for people starting out, particularly women?**

You have to really enjoy training, even going out by yourself. Don't just hammer through a workout, think through every run. Every work out, you have to enjoy the

Introducing... The **Stiletto** Inflatable Kayak



*Inflatable Kayaking has been taken to a new level!! The **Stiletto** is downright hydrodynamically proper & criminally fun - coming soon to a drop near you!*

**WaterShed River Sports**

11145 - 120<sup>th</sup> Ave NE • Kirkland WA 98033

**(206) 828-4075**

**Dealer Inquiries Invited**

process. You do one run, and you think about doing a certain gate a little bit better, and you focus on that. You don't focus on how fast your overall time was, but rather focus on each run and each move. I enjoy figuring out what feels good and what feels fast.

So many young people think they're going to do really well right off the bat. And then someone will say to you "Oh the women did so sh\$@ty at that race." As a woman paddler, you're going to hear that all the time. "They all had 50's and they suck." I hear this all of the time, and I'm sick of it.

First of all, there aren't so many of us, so you won't have ten women who do every move clean-you might only have three. But the top women are just as good as the top men. Don't get the feeling that you are going to get good and make the team in two years, because you've heard that the women all suck. Train as hard as you can, and give it until you're 22 or 23 before you make any decisions.

▼ Awardsstand at the Atlanta Games



# Stick to wet rock

"90% of all river accidents happen out of the boat - on slippery rocks. Five Ten soles are the best prevention I've ever found. I've used them for years."

-Jack Nelson  
Owner, Cascade Outfitters

**Resole your:**

- Aquasocks
- Neoprene booties
- Sandals
- any other footwear you use in the water

with **Five Ten AquaStealth®**, the only rubber formulated specifically for traction under water.

Five Ten is known worldwide for our Stealth® rock climbing rubber with its exceptionally sticky grip. Climbers have trusted their lives to Stealth for years. Now you can get the same secure grip on wet or submerged rock.

Call (800) 796-4222 for the professional resoler nearest you or to order a do-it-yourself kit.



## Complete your whitewater library with an AW publication



### AW Nationwide Whitewater Inventory

*Edited by Pope Barrow, \$15 book/\$7 disk (\$2.90 postage)*

- \*Revised listing of every whitewater river nationwide
- \*River maps for all U.S. rivers
- \*Includes mileage, access points, ratings

### The Rivers of Chile

*By Lars Holbek, \$5 (\$1 postage)*

- \*A guide to more than 20 Chilean rivers

### Rivers at Risk—The Concerned Citizens Guide to Hydropower

*By John D. Escheverria, Pope Barrow and Richard Roos-Collins; cloth \$29.95/paper \$17.95 (\$2.90 postage)*

- A study of whitewater's most serious threat
- AW Safety Codes**  
1-99 \$.25; 100-199 \$.20; over 200 \$.15
- The original criteria of boating safety


Send payment to AW , P.O. Box 636, Margaretville, NY 12455



# Sherlock!

## What's that duck?

April Holladay



"What are they?" Dick nods at many duck-like birds swimming, diving, and calling to one other. My husband and I are paddling our green 16-foot canoe in southern New Mexico on Elephant Butte Lake, a manmade reservoir on the Rio Grande. It's January and we're on a major migratory path. We're still surprised at the numbers of these birds. Their feathers drift and bob around us. The birds wrap us in friendly peace but at a set distance. One comes a little closer, then dives, vanishing before we get a good look. I reach for the binoculars and focus on the nearest pair: long white necks, swivelling like periscopes, hunting. Dark bodies. Big birds, much bigger than a robin, about the size of a crow. Dick eases us closer. Hmmm. Ducks?

Turning to the comparison page of my bird book, I glance over duck silhouettes. "Necks too long for ducks," I mutter, "maybe loons." I flip to the loon pages. Unh, uh. Loons don't hang out in New Mexico according to the range map. Aha! More silhouettes on the loon page show the long-necked grebe. A couple of pages over I find the Western Grebe. *Winters in some inland areas, often in large flocks*, the book says. That checks. I peer up at the birds again. Oh, oh! Dick paddles too close. Our pair struggles to take off. They race across the water, wings beating fiercely, then settle back onto the water. Now I'm sure. The book pictures grebes taking off the same way.

"They're grebes!" I shout.


"What's a grebe?" Dick replies.

"Never heard of it."

"They're '...swimming and diving birds, smaller than loons.. Flight is weak and hurried; [they] taxi [to take-off]..." I read aloud.

We paddlers watch water, sky, and land. A ruffle on the water may signal shoals or a submerged rock. Fast building clouds and rising wind warn us, "Head for shore!" We're always scanning the sky and see many birds. Why not learn who they are and how they make a living? It's detective work—fun.

Bird watching is easier than sherlocking. You need only a quiet paddle and a good field guide, such as, *A Guide to Field Identification, Birds of North America* by Golden Press.



It's well organized for quick finds. With a habitat clue, you can flip to the right part of the guide and find your bird.

Detectives have their methods and likewise, we birders have our techniques: Decide the bird's habitat, compare silhouettes, check ranges, scrutinize the bird to make final identification. Let's run my Elephant-Butte bird through the procedure.

- *Decide the bird's habitat and guess the family it belongs to.* I know my bird is a water bird and surmise (wrongly) it's a duck. So I turn to ducks in the guide.

- *Compare your bird's silhouette with its tentative family.* The guide provides comparison plates: ducks, hawks, gulls, sparrows. I flick to duck silhouettes. No duck resembles my friend so I study similar-shape birds. The

look-alike loon is a likely match.

- *Check the range map.* The loon winters along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts—a far piece from Elephant Butte, New Mexico. But later I learn from Jim Karo, expert birder and photographer, to suspect the range map. "Range information may not mean too much," he cautions. He tells me bird watchers have, in fact, photographed loons in New Mexico on a lake near Carlsbad. Elsewhere the field guide states, however, loons are silent in the winter. Whereas my birds talk with each other. Conclusion: It's no



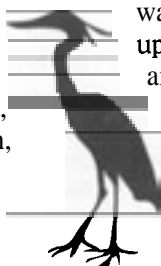
## What's that duck?



loon. But I spy the grebe as an impostor on the loon-page lineup. Very promising...

- *Scrutinize your bird for final ID.* How big is it? What color? Check its bill, tail, and distinctive motions, such as, tail wagging. My bird has a long, white neck. So do Western Grebes and, in the wintertime, Horned and Eared Grebes. But I can tentatively eliminate Horned Grebes since they winter on salt water and the Great Lakes, not here. My bird has a dark body. Another check for Western, Eared and the Horned Grebes. Hunting and diving. Check. Takes off like a grebe. Check. Bigger than a sparrow and a robin, about the size of a crow (common and useful comparison standards since almost everyone knows the size of sparrows, robins, and crows). Western Grebes are eighteen inches long—bigger than an 8-inch robin, about the size of a 17-inch crow. Check. Both the Eared and Horned Grebes, however, are only about nine inches so I drop them from consideration. That leaves the Western Grebe. Case closed.

Elementary, my dear Watson. And it is. Except for one thing... I can't resist browsing in *The Birder's Handbook*. Birders, I learn, recently split the Western Grebe into two species—Western and Clark. Both species have dark face feathers that look like caps. The cap covers the eyes of the Western Grebe but *not* the eyes of the Clark. Amazing. Birds that seem to differ only by face color cannot mate! That's the definition of species--cannot interbreed. I read farther. The birds' mating calls prevent interbreeding. The Western has a double note and the Clark Grebe has a single note. Did those birds Dick and I saw on Elephant Butte, have caps covering eyes? Another investigation, perchance. I look over my book at Dick, reading nearby, and announce, "My dear Watson, we must get rather close this time..."



Bird sleuthing needs only a quiet paddle and a field guide. Photo by April Holladay.

## Tools:

Birders need a tool or two to spot birds and record their sightings. Get a pair of prism binoculars six to eight magnification power, with objective lens thirty-five to 50 millimeters (\$95 and up). Jim Karo owns five or six pairs. Starting out, when you're not sure how deeply you want to get into this bird business, pick a 7x35 costing about a hundred dollars. That should get you a reasonably good pair. Bushnell, Pentax, Nikon, Zeiss, and Leica: all good brands, though Leica is expensive. Jim recommends Zeiss—the best lens maker in the world.

Consider buying water resistant or waterproof binoculars (\$195 and up)<sup>1</sup> to protect against water dips and fogging. Jim remembers walking along a Costa Rica trail in pelting rain. "I was up to my knees in water. The trail was

slick and tangled with tree roots. Suddenly I tripped, couldn't catch my balance, and fell headlong into the water. My arms caught me, holding my face just out. My binoculars, dangling around my neck, swung forward. Splash! But—they were waterproof."

Record your observations in a small notebook designed for birders (\$10 at bird stores). Then, if you can't solve the identification problem on the spot, you can use your notes to check references later.

<sup>1</sup> Binocular order and information telephone: 1-800-538-0775, West Marine Catalog.

# A 6-bird lineup. Can you spot them?



All Photos on this page by Jim Karo

I bet you can. Please send your sightings (and adventures) to me in care of **american whitewater** or send me E-mail over the Internet at gwsj88b@prodigy.com. I'd like to write up your escapades to share with other paddlers. And now, see if you can match the bird descriptions given below with the figures as practice before your next trip. Answers are at the end of the article. All quotes and page numbers reference the Golden Guide.

- **Mallard Duck.** This widely ranging bird... is common in ponds and fresh water marshes. Male is told by its green head, white neck band, and rusty breast. Female is a mottled brown. Both have a blue speculum, broadly bordered in front and back with white...Voice, a loud quack... Length (L) 16" Wingspan (W) 36", p. 46.

- **Great Blue Heron.** This largest North American heron is common on fresh as well as salt water. Head is largely white, underparts are dark...When hunting, Great Blue Heron walks slowly through shallows or stands with head hunched on shoulders Alarm call...is a series of about 4 hoarse squawks...L 38, W 70", p. 94.

- **Killdeer.** Very common in fields and pastures, often far from water. Adult Killdeer has two neck bands...Repeats its name as a call...L 8", p.114.

- **Snowy Egret.** Common, mostly in fresh- and salt-water marshes, but sometimes in ponds and rice fields. Plumage snow white, bill thin and black, with bare yellow skin at the base. Legs black, feet bright yellow in adult; legs and feet mostly pale green in immature. L 20", W 38", p.94.

- **American Avocet.** Rather common, breeding on the shores of marshes and lakes. Legs and neck are long and thin; the needle-like bill curves upward, strongly so on the female. In flight the black bar on the white inner wing is an excellent field mark. The legs are blue-gray. Call, a loud *wheet*. L 15", p. 110.

- **Western Grebe.** Locally abundant...Winters along the Pacific Coast and in some inland areas, often in large flocks. A large black and white grebe with a long, straight neck. The bill is much longer, yellow, and more needle-like than other grebes...L 18" W 40", p.192.



**1** Our Elephant-Butte-Lake neighbors.



**2** Their searching bills sweep back and forth like scythes.



**3** Dabbles in shallow water skimming food from the surface or upending for a tidbit.



**4** Can gobble down 2 foot alligators



**5** Delicate plumes—prized in ladies hats and, in 1903, selling for twice their weight in gold—almost brought species to extinction.



**6** Feigns injury near its nest to distract intruders.

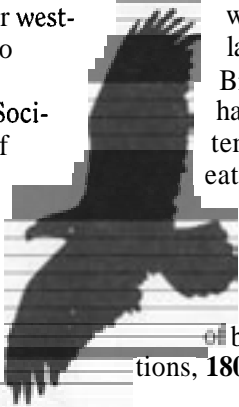
# What's that duck?

## Suggested References

- Robbins, Chandler S., Bruun, Bertel, and Zim, Herbert S.: A Guide to Field Identification, Birds of North America, Golden Press, New York, 1983. A general well-organized guide.
- Peterson, Roger, Tory: A Field Guide to Western Birds, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1961. Good for western birds. Also A Field Guide to Eastern Birds.
- National Geographic Society: Field Guide to the Birds of North America, National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C., 1987. Excellent reference for birds across the United States.
- Ehrlich, Paul R., Dobkin, David S., and Wheye,

Darryl: The Birder's Handbook, A Field Guide to the Natural History of North American Birds, Simon & Schuster, Inc., New York, 1988. Sondra Williamson, expert birder at the Rio Grande Nature Center, tells a story to illustrate the treasure-trove in this book: "I watched a grebe eating feathers. Birds occasionally eat feathers for the protein. But this bird was eating every feather on the lake! Why? I checked the Birders Handbook: Grebes have a primitive digestive system but eat bony fish. So they eat hundreds of feathers to pad their stomachs until digestion dissolves the jagged bones."

- Audio cassette tapes of bird songs by Dover Publications, 180 Varick St., New York, NY



10014. "Tapes are unnecessary work," Sondra says. "I listen to a bird, find and identify it. Pretty soon I know that bird and its call."

- Audubon Society's Video Guide to Birds of North America, distributed by MasterVision, New York, NY 10028, 1988.

- Check with nature centers (listed in New Mexico under state parks) for bird identification classes. They cost about \$5.


**Test Answers:** 1 is the Western Grebe, 2 the American Avocet, 3 the Mallard Duck, 4 the Great Blue Heron, 5 the Snowy Egret, and 6 the Killdeer.



**RIO~HONDURAS**  
10281 Hwy. 50. Howard, CO 81233  
800 255-5784

looking for a new place to paddle? Join us in Honduras and experience tropical paddling. We offer a variety of 1-9 day or custom/guide service kayak, canoe and raft trips. Some of our excursions through lush rain forests and exhilarating whitewater are led by renowned canoeist Bob Foote and top notch kayakers Mary Hayes and Phil DeRiemer. Highly experienced expert guides lead other kayak and raft trips.

Call for more information and detailed itineraries.



**Innovative designs molded from durable crosslink plastic**

**SLEEK**

**Cruise Control**

**MONGOOSE**

**Buzz**

And now the **ATTITUDE**

**Custom, hand crafted composite boats**

Featuring Jim Snyder squirt boats: Bigfoot, Shred, Maestro and Prize. And more than 65 models by various designers including all plastic boats

\*\*\*\*\*

For a catalog and the dealer near you call us at 717-944-6320, fax us at 717-944-0422 email us at [newkayak@aol.com](mailto:newkayak@aol.com) or visit our web site at [http://www.awa.org/awa/yellow\\_pages/newwave/](http://www.awa.org/awa/yellow_pages/newwave/)

New Wave Kayak Products, Inc. • 2535 Roundtop Rd. • Middletown, PA 17057



# New Course Record at Gore

by Paul Tefft

Where is John Jaycox, the perennial king of Gore? That was the big question at the 1996 Gore Canyon race. John never showed up to race in 1996, only to hand over the winner's trophy to the new top dog of Gore, Hank Bevington. Now the 1997 Gore event was about to start and the question was exactly the same, except that the name had changed. Where was Hank Bevington?

Hank didn't make an appearance, but the hardest whitewater on the entire length of the Colorado River once again attracted most of the region's best kayakers and rafters.

The 1997 Class V Whitewater Championships (the Gore Canyon Downriver Race's official moniker for television) was originally scheduled on August 24<sup>th</sup>, but the race was postponed until September 7<sup>th</sup> due to unseasonably high water caused by El Nino induced rains. In spite of the delay a large field of competitors showed up to pit themselves against the gorge's legendary whitewater.

The course is approximately four miles long and starts just above the canyon's first class V rapid, "Applesauce." A number of exciting and technical rapids follow in quick succession. "Gore", "Pyrite", "Tunnel Falls", "Toilet Bowl", and "Kirshbaum's" are just a few of the many rapids which challenge the competitors' skills. Two of the most difficult rapids, "Gore" and "Tunnel Falls", are also the most popular with spectators. Since there is no road access to the canyon, the record number of spectators had to make a 2+ mile hike up the railroad tracks to watch the action at "Tunnel" and "Gore." Over 500 people lined the river banks at these two picturesque Class V drops to cheer the racers on.

Competitors photos available  
from Enviro Action Sports (970)  
923-3955

Left: Nelson Oldham, The current US  
Wildwater Champ, sneaking at Gore  
and smashing the Course Record  
Inset: Billy Mattison on his way to  
winning the recreational class...in  
Gore Rapid  
Photos by Todd Patrick



As usual there was plenty of action to keep the viewers entertained. A number of rafts flipped, sending team members into the cold water of the Colorado. One raft crew, Team Duct Tape, capsized. Their raft was wrapped around a "Gore" boulder for over an hour. Another team crashed and burned at "Kirshbaum's" (a long, bouncy, rock filled drop at the end of the course). Four of the "Kirshbaum's" carnage team climbed back onto their upturned craft and proceeded to cork down the rest of the rapid upside down and out of control. A pin at the bottom of the rapid was the grand finale to their run. A couple of safety kayakers and their throw ropes set the raft free.

Some of the kayak racers didn't escape so easily. One of the Ska Brewing Team members custom Ska boats was smashed to pieces in the churning hydraulic at the base of 8 foot high "Tunnel Falls". No amount of duct tape would have put this sleek, yet fragile, beer logo-stickered boat back together. Fortunately there was a cold keg of Scott Frazer's sponsor's fine product back at the event HQ, waiting to dull the memory of his Tunnelfallscapade. The hard working safety crew was also ready for a couple of cold ones after a hard day's work. They were kept busy throughout the race hauling in swimmers, rescuing kayaks and helping unwrap rafts from the gorge's numerous boulders. The event coordination staff exhaled a huge sigh of relief when the race ended and there were no major injuries.

When the spray settled and the last of the 165 competitors crossed the finish line at the bottom of "Kirshbaum's", a new course record had been set. Nelson Oldham, the current US Wildwater Champion and Aspen resident, blitzed the field with a record time of 19:12 (nineteen minutes and twelve seconds). Nelson was one of a handful of competitors competing in Perception Wavehoppers. Only a few elite paddlers are able to negotiate Gore's rapids in these fast, but difficult to maneuver, crafts.

One of these top seeded racers was Charlie MacArthur from the Aspen Kayak School. Charlie, one of the country's top sports instructors, is a fully certified teacher of skiing, snowboarding, telemarking and kayaking. But Gore Canyon ended up teaching Charlie a lesson during the Class V Championships. Charlie was right behind Nelson when disaster struck at "Kirshbaum's". "I was having a fast, clean run when I ran into a rock. I assumed I would bounce off, either left or right...instead, I ended up doing the world's first Wavehopper splat", stated Charlie. Unfortunately for Charlie a splat in a thirteen



Team Rapidfire psyched to have survived Tunnel Falls  
Photo by Todd Patrick

foot long downriver racing boat wasn't the move du jour and he blew out of the race.

Jeff Parker from Carbondale, CO, also racing in a Perception Wavehopper, captured second place in the Race Class with a time of 20:49. Jeff barely edged out Chris Webster of Boulder, who crossed the finish line with a respectable time of 20:52. In the women's division Lillian Llacer (Taos, New Mexico) took first with a time of 23:25. Second place went to Marcia Ready (also from Taos) at 25:59 and Andi Burnite (Crested Butte, CO) finished third with a time of 26:59.

For the first time in the race's ten year history a recreational kayak division (kayaks under 12 ft. in length) was included. Vail's Billy Mattison dominated the rec. field with an amazing time of 20:59. His time would have placed him fourth overall in the Race Division. Billy is no stranger to the world of paddlesports. As a former coordinator of the Gore race, a part owner of Timberline Tours, one of the region's most respected extreme kayakers, and a two time competitor in Eco Challenge, it was no surprise to see Billy on the winner's podium.

A strong field of rafters also showed up to test their skills in Gore Canyon. For the third straight year Clear Creek Rafting took top honors in the raft division. Led by captain John Rice, Clear Creek dominated the field with a time of 24:04. Second place went to perennial contender, team Mongo Products, with a time of 25:31. Mongo Products is led by one of Timberline Tours (Vail's premier rafting company) top guides, Mongo (Chris Reeder). Third place was taken by Steve's Birthday Team, a group of rafters from Denver and New Hampshire who decided to combine the race with a birthday party for their leader Steve Heinitz.

Steve had plenty of people to celebrate with at the monumental pre-race party the night before the race. Every year competitors and their entourages pack the Pumphouse Campground to get psyched for the competition. Music, whitewater videos

and massive bonfires are all traditions at the Pumphouse party. One of the competition's sponsors, Ska Brewing from Durango, provided 8 kegs for this years' Class V Bash. Tierra Tours (a Colorado based Adventure Travel company) generously provided free burgers and dogs for the ravenous revelers. Also, a fund-raising raffle for American Whitewater was

held during the big party. Lots of paddlesports prizes were handed out during the raffle, including the grand raffle prize, a Sotar inflatable two person kayak.

After the race the award ceremony and competitor raffle took place. Thousands of dollars worth of paddlesports prizes were donated by the event's sponsors: Tierra Tours, Hi-Tec, Planetary Gear, L'eau Vive, Ska Brewing, Patagonia, Perception, Sotar, Rocky Mountain Sunscreen, Wyoming Wear, PowerBar, Blue River Wear, Enviro-Action Sports and local paddlesports shop sponsors. The new record holder, Nelson Oldham, walked away with \$300 spending money and an eight day whitewater kayaking trip to Costa Rica with Tierra Tours. Vail's Billy Mattison won a new Perception kayak.

One of the biggest winners was American Whitewater. AWA President Ric Alesch was on hand to receive a donation of \$1,250 for everyone's favorite non-profit river conservation organization. For the third straight year, the 1998 Class V Whitewater Championships (tentatively scheduled for the 4th weekend of August) will be a benefit for AWA. The chances are good that the 1998 Gore Canyon race will once again raise the heart rates of the competitors as well as funds for American Whitewater. For more information on the Class V Championships you can contact: Enviro-Action Sports: PO Box 4784, Aspen, CO, 81812, phone: (970) 923-3955, fax: (970) 923-3194 or email: enviro@rof.net

To order a copy of the competitor's race video please call Phil Kantor at (303) 444-8414.

To order a VHS copy of the event's 1/2 hour television show (the race was filmed for Planet Central Television, the Travel Channel and Resort Sports Network) contact Enviro-Action Sports at the above listed contacts.

1 To purchase photographs of the race contact Todd Patrick c/o Enviro-Action Sports

Right page: Top left: Josh Anthony, making down the course in a glass boat  
Right: Jeff Ladwig about to drop into the meat of Tunnel  
Bottom: 2nd Place Finisher Jeff Parker setting up the boof in Gore



|    |                         |         |
|----|-------------------------|---------|
| 24 | Craig Cardella .....    | 0:24:18 |
| 25 | Keith Fortin .....      | 0:24:21 |
| 26 | Rob & Jonah Duo .....   | 0:24:25 |
| 27 | David Black .....       | 0:24:27 |
| 28 | Jeff Deutsch .....      | 0:24:46 |
| 29 | Nathan Seeby .....      | 0:24:48 |
| 30 | Craig Kisker .....      | 0:25:12 |
| 31 | Ken Ransford .....      | 0:25:29 |
| 32 | Mike Pagel .....        | 0:27:10 |
| 33 | Charlie Beavers .....   | 0:27:16 |
| 34 | Silas Treadway .....    | 0:27:49 |
| 35 | Ben Dalgety .....       | 0:28:59 |
| 36 | Cha Cha Tompson .....   | 0:34:01 |
| 37 | Randy Kennedy .....     | 0:38:03 |
| 38 | Mark Feinsinger .....   | D.N.F.  |
| 39 | Chris Adelman .....     | D.N.F.  |
| 40 | Jahvea Vidakovieh ..... | D.N.F.  |



| Place | Race Kayakers .....     | Time    |
|-------|-------------------------|---------|
| 1     | Nelson Oldhan .....     | 0:19:12 |
| 2     | Jeff Parker .....       | 0:20:49 |
| 3     | Chris Webster .....     | 0:20:52 |
| 4     | Bryn Dreher .....       | 0:21:01 |
| 5     | Alan Hadley .....       | 0:21:18 |
| 6     | Josh Anthony .....      | 0:22:29 |
| 7     | PT Wood .....           | 0:26:10 |
| 8     | Arlo Grammatica .....   | 0:26:23 |
| 9     | Phil Wallzynsky .....   | 0:27:35 |
|       | Charlie MacArthur ..... | D.N.F.  |
|       | Scott Frazer .....      | D.N.F.  |

| Place | Raft Teams .....                   | Time    |
|-------|------------------------------------|---------|
| 1     | CLEAR CREEK RAFTING .....          | 0:24:04 |
| 2     | MONGO PRODUCTS .....               | 0:25:31 |
| 3     | STEVE'S BDAY TEAM .....            | 0:25:41 |
| 4     | NEUVO WAVO .....                   | 0:25:44 |
| 5     | TIMBERLINE #1 .....                | 0:26:50 |
| 6     | GTR .....                          | 0:27:04 |
| 7     | KNOWN WORLD NM .....               | 0:27:05 |
| 8     | TEAM FLASHBACK .....               | 0:27:17 |
| 9     | BIG YELLOW POON .....              | 0:27:42 |
| 10    | DICK AND THE FOUR SKINS .....      | 0:28:13 |
| 11    | NOVA GUIDES .....                  | 0:28:23 |
| 12    | EXTREAM TEAM .....                 | 0:28:39 |
| 13    | NO SUBSTITUTE FOR EXPERIENCE ..... | 0:28:45 |
| 14    | BRECKENRIDGE WHITEWATER .....      | 0:29:00 |
| 15    | RIFF RAFT #2 .....                 | 0:30:01 |
| 16    | KODI RAFTING .....                 | 0:31:41 |
| 17    | ROCKY MOUNTAIN ADVENTURES .....    | 0:32:30 |
| 18    | RIFF RAFT #1/ TEAM SOTAR .....     | 0:32:42 |
| 19    | RAPID FIRE .....                   | 0:35:56 |

|    |                            |         |
|----|----------------------------|---------|
| 20 | CLEARCREEK WING NUTS ..... | 1:09:15 |
|    | DUCT TAPE .....            | D.N.F.  |

| Place | Rec. Kayakers .....  | Time    |
|-------|----------------------|---------|
| 1     | Billy Mattison ..... | 0:20:59 |
| 2     | Ted Keyes .....      | 0:21:02 |
| 3     | Curt Berge .....     | 0:21:12 |
| 4     | Paul Byars .....     | 0:21:13 |
| 5     | Craig Bishop .....   | 0:21:59 |
| 6     | Ken Oliver .....     | 0:22:01 |
| 7     | Wayne Amsbury .....  | 0:22:07 |
| 8     | Jono Stevens .....   | 0:22:15 |
| 9     | Todd Gillman .....   | 0:22:22 |
| 10    | Jed Selby .....      | 0:22:25 |
| 11    | John Mattson .....   | 0:22:40 |
| 12    | Ed Lucero .....      | 0:22:42 |
| 13    | Scott Eckert .....   | 0:22:46 |
| 14    | Rob Walker .....     | 0:22:51 |
| 15    | Tom Aex .....        | 0:23:06 |
| 16    | Shane Robinson ..... | 0:23:20 |
| 17    | Craig Frithsen ..... | 0:23:24 |
| 18    | Adam Borg .....      | 0:23:29 |
| 19    | William Finnof ..... | 0:23:31 |
| 20    | Bret Hale .....      | 0:23:34 |
| 21    | John Banker .....    | 0:23:53 |
| 22    | Matt Mehall .....    | 0:23:58 |
| 23    | Jeff Ladwig .....    | 0:24:16 |

| Place | Female Kayakers ..... | Time    |
|-------|-----------------------|---------|
| 1     | Lillian Llacer .....  | 0:23:25 |
| 2     | Marcia Ready .....    | 0:25:59 |
| 3     | Andi Burnite .....    | 0:26:59 |
| 4     | Lauren Miniea .....   | 0:28:53 |

| Catarafters .....         | Time    |
|---------------------------|---------|
| MAD MAX AND THE BOOGIEMEN | 0:26:26 |





**Don't just stand there... entry deadline: 1/23/98**

**take pictures!**



Bluegrass  
Wildwater  
Association  
po 4231  
Lexington, KY 40544



1997 Best paddling image winner  
by Joel LeCaptain



1139 Pepper Dr.  
El Cajon, CA 92021

# National Paddling Film Festival

The 15th annual film, video and digital image competition for paddlesports.

npff east: 2121198

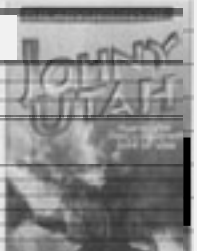
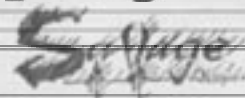
npff west: 2114, 15198



Menasha Ridge Press



perception



[www.surfbwa.org/npff](http://www.surfbwa.org/npff)

"Retendo"  
Best Instructional

Buy npff winners on the net!  
All profits to AW & ACA

"Johny Utah"  
Best of Show

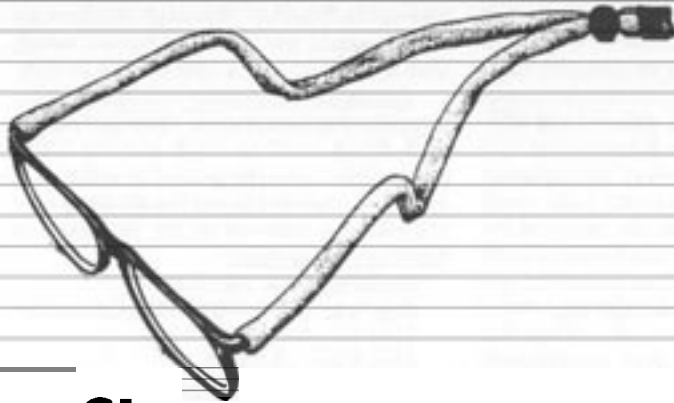


Made in  
the U.S.A.

Comfortable  
100% Cotton

Chums

Adjustable



**Chums® ... the Original  
Eyeglass Retainer**

**CHUMS®**



120 S. Main, Hurricane Utah 84737 • 1-800-222-2486

## American Whitewater adds benchmark rapids to the international scale of river difficulty.

by Lee Belknap

The American Whitewater Affiliation has introduced much needed revisions to the international scale of river difficulty. These changes, detailed in the September-October issue of American Whitewater, include the addition of plus and minus categories to classes 2, 3, and 4, and the open ended expansion of class 5 into an unlimited decimal system. With these changes, Class VI becomes an exploratory rating and only applies to rapids that have not been run frequently enough to be placed in the class 5.x range yet.

Also, in the last issue of American Whitewater we announced that from now ratings will be defined by a series of benchmarks consisting of specific rapids at specific water levels. This list of benchmarks will be distributed with the safety code in a document entitled "International Scale Of River Difficulty - US Standard Rated Rapids." This list was developed from ratings provided by some 80 paddlers from around the country. Unfortunately, introduction of this list had to be delayed until now while final proof reading was completed.

The list of benchmarks is designed to cover all popular whitewater areas of the country, with a difficulty range from Class I to Class 5.2, and a size range from steep creeks to large volume rivers. Because of the obvious effect that water level has on difficulty, each rated rapid includes a flow range.

Once again, PLEASE REMEMBER, this scale does not reflect any one person's or small group's idea of how to rate rapids. Instead this is a "snapshot" of how paddlers across the country are rating rapids and corresponding rivers. The list consists of average ratings developed from almost 3000 suggestions submitted by almost 80 of the 100 paddlers who responded. While there will be many paddlers who will believe the ratings are either too low or too high, this list contains what American Whitewater believes is the closest possible representation of middle ground in the sport today.

The purpose of this list is to provide the sport with a consistent standard set of benchmarks that other rapids and rivers can be compared to. Those who use this system will be able to compare the difficulty of any rapid to similar, more commonly run rapids found on this list. With these benchmarks we can

stop the long term drifting that has been occurring over the past couple of decades and preserve a system that everyone can use.

The 80 individuals who contributed directly to this list represent paddlers from all around the United States with an extensive variety of experience on whitewater rivers around the world. To make a very long story short, the 3000 suggested ratings these folks submitted were averaged and culled out using numerous filters on both a database and several supporting spreadsheets. It has taken a couple of years to gather the data and process it into a list that makes sense. After several additional proofreads the final list of benchmarks is finally complete. Again, American Whitewater believes that this list is the closest possible representation of middle ground for the sport today. We hope that public comment will confirm or refine this.

American Whitewater does not take these changes lightly. There will certainly be some disagreement from both sides of the difficulty curve. There will be discrepancies with many guidebooks and river management agencies on one side, and with some really good paddlers pushing at the limits of the sport on the other. There was no way to avoid this. Without these changes the rating system would continue to deteriorate. Mainstream boaters no longer use the ratings that many guidebooks and river management agencies published (often many years ago). Newer boaters moving up in the learning curve need to keep the lower classes intact without stretching them to the point where the steps that classes I through IV provide become too big to be useful. These steps have already become so large that it is necessary to add plus and minus to each numerical rating.

No rating system can take every variable into account, and this system is no exception. Each paddler is responsible for learning what it means to paddle each class level when they are ready. Remember running whitewater is an assumed risk sport.

It continues to be the responsibility of the boater to know the relationships between equipment, water conditions and difficulty. With this in mind, the rapid list was initially intended to note which rapids were on small or large volume streams. Unfortunately, not enough information is available at this time

to include this. The safety committee welcomes suggestions on which rapid on the list should be labeled as truly big water or really steep creeks. If enough information is received, future revisions will include this information.

Another area of concern is the reduced role that hazards now play when paddlers rate things. Several suggestions have been made to add a letter at the end of a rating to note the hazard level of a rapid. At this time American Whitewater feels that such a system would not be widely adopted. Instead paddlers should continue to note river hazards by describing them specifically. This method of communication generally provides much more useful information than a letter that can only say "watch out" or "look how macho I can be". If enough paddlers ask for and would use a lettered hazard rating, then we can add such a system at a later date.

American Whitewater will accept comments for the next 30 days. After that period, final changes will be made and the Safety Code will be formerly updated to include the list of US Standard Rated Rapids along with the changes outlined in the last issue of American Whitewater.

Please send comments to:  
American Whitewater Safety Committee  
1308 Maryland Ave.  
Glen Allen, VA 23060  
Email: [76513.2466@compuserve.com](mailto:76513.2466@compuserve.com)

### Guide trainer needed!

Ground floor opportunity for individual to train paddle/motorized cataracting guides, IV to V rapids - Northern Quebec in September. New company with ownership potential.

**Call Bob Evans**  
**716-753-3187**  
**or 607-324-0068.**



# International Scale of River Difficulty US Standard Rated Rapids

Four Decades of Service to the Paddlers of America

*"Our mission is to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely."*

*Adopted 1959*

*Revised 1997*

## What's new?

Three major changes are being made to upgrade the **International Scale of River Difficulty**.

- Focus more on the **variable** hardest to describe: **"Difficulty"**.
- Open the **scale** for future **growth** as more difficult runs are made while providing more **graduations** within the **scale**. The system will now include **plus's and minus's** as well as a **decimal system** within **class 5**.
- Anchor the system in the **physical world** instead of the mental by creating a list of **benchmarks at specified flows** that the **paddling community can use to compare all other rapids and rivers to**.

This code has been prepared using the best available information and has been reviewed by a broad cross section of whitewater experts. The code, however, is only a collection of guidelines; attempts to minimize risks should be flexible, not constrained by a rigid set of rules. Varying conditions and group goals may combine with unpredictable circumstances to require alternate procedures. This code is not intended to serve as a standard of care for commercial outfitters or guides.

For additional copies please write:

- American Whitewater, PO Box 636, Margaretville, NY 12455
- email: 74663.2104@compuserve.com

INTERNATIONAL SCALE OF RIVER DIFFICULTY (see section IV of the "Safety Code of American Whitewater" for complete descriptions).

This is the American version of a rating system used to compare river difficulty throughout the world. This system is not exact; rivers do not always fit easily into one category, and regional or individual interpretations may cause misunderstandings. It is no substitute for a guidebook or accurate first-hand descriptions of a run.

Paddlers attempting difficult runs in an unfamiliar area should act cautiously until they get a feel for the way the scale is interpreted locally. River difficulty may change each year due to fluctuations in water level, downed trees, recent floods, geological disturbances, or bad weather. Stay alert for unexpected problems!

As river difficulty increases, the danger to swimming paddlers becomes more severe. As rapids become longer and more continuous, the challenge increases. There is a difference between running an occasional Class IV rapid and dealing with an entire river of this category. Allow an extra margin of safety between skills and river ratings when the water is cold or if the river itself is remote and inaccessible.

Below is a list of examples of commonly run rapids that fit each of the classifications. Rapids of a difficulty similar to a rapids on this list are rated the same. Rivers are also rated using this scale. An overall river rating should take into account many factors including the difficulty of individual rapids, remoteness, hazards, etc. Each Rapids is rated at a specific range of levels. Note that under some circumstances a paddler may find that similarly rated rapids seem to differ an extraordinary amount due to unusual factors that may include boat type, weather, fatigue, and limited experience on certain types of water.

## Safety Code of American Whitewater

### INTERNATIONAL SCALE OF RIVER DIFFICULTY - US STANDARD RATED RAPIDS

| Classification  | Rapid name (s)     | River, section (s)           | State       | Level  |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------------|-------------|--------|
| <b>Class I</b>  |                    |                              |             |        |
| North East      | Ramcat             | Youghiogheny, Middle         | PA          | 1.8-2' |
| South East      | Powhite Ledges     | James, Downtown Richmond     | VA          | 5'     |
| West Coast      | San Juan           | American, Lower              | CA          | Normal |
| <b>Class II</b> |                    |                              |             |        |
| North East      | Staircase          | Shenandoah                   | WV          | 3.5'   |
|                 | Piddley            | Youghiogheny, Lower          | PA          | 1.8-2' |
|                 | Lambertville Rapid | Delaware                     | PA/NJSum-2' |        |
| Rocky Mountain  | Salida             | Arkansas, Salida Race Course | CO          | med    |

| Classification        | Rapid name (s)                  | River, section (s)                         | State                   | Level              |           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| South East            | Delabar's Rock                  | Nantahala, Gorge                           | NC                      | 3.25               |           |
|                       | <b>Needmore</b>                 | Little Tennessee River                     | NC                      | 1000               |           |
|                       | Pony pasture                    | James, Downtown Richmond                   | VA                      | 5                  |           |
| West Coast            | Main Wave                       | Payette, Main                              | ID                      | reg                |           |
| <b>Class II+</b>      |                                 |  |                         |                    |           |
| North East            | Camel-Walrus                    | Youghiogheny, Lower                        | PA                      | 1.8-2'             |           |
|                       | Bulls falls                     | Shenandoah                                 | WV                      | 3.5'               |           |
|                       | Skinner's Falls                 | Delaware                                   | PA/NJ                   | Summer (1200)      |           |
| Rocky Mountain        | Thibodeau                       | Blackfoot                                  | MT                      | 1'                 |           |
|                       | Access No. 10 Rapid             | Green                                      | WY                      | .5'-1'             |           |
|                       | Fool Hen                        | Flathead, N. Fk.                           | MT                      | 1'-1.5'            |           |
|                       | Spotted Horse                   | Hoback                                     | WY                      | 3"-6"              |           |
| South East            | <b>Patton's Run</b>             | Nantahala, Gorge                           | NC                      | 3.25 (800)         |           |
| West Coast            | S-Turn                          | Mokelumne, Electra Run                     | CA                      | 600-2000           |           |
|                       | Row Boat                        | Cache Cr., Ramsey Run (Bear Cr. to Ramsey) | CA                      | 450+               |           |
| <b>Class III -</b>    |                                 |  |                         |                    |           |
| North East            | Dartmouth / Eddy out            | Youghiogheny, Lower                        | PA                      | 1.8-2'             |           |
| Rocky Mountain        | Smelter Rapids                  | Animas, Durango                            | CO                      | 1000               |           |
|                       | Yankee Jim's Revenge            | Yellowstone                                | MT                      | 3000-5000          |           |
| South East            | Roller Coaster                  | Nolichucky Gorge                           | NC                      | 1500-2000 (2-2.2') |           |
|                       | Nemo                            | Emery                                      | TN                      | 1500-2000          |           |
|                       | Powerline                       | James, Downtown Richmond                   | VA                      | 5'                 |           |
| <b>Class III</b>      |                                 |  |                         |                    |           |
| North East            | Dimple-Swimmers                 | Youghiogheny, Lower                        | PA                      | 1.6-2              |           |
|                       | Railroad                        | Esopus                                     | NY                      | Summer             |           |
|                       | Slalom Rapids                   | Tohickon cr.                               | PA                      | 1.8                |           |
|                       | Entrance                        | Youghiogheny, Lower                        | PA                      | 1.8'-2'            |           |
|                       | Zoar Gap                        | Deerfield, Dryway Sect.                    | MA                      | 900-1000           |           |
|                       | Railroad                        | Youghiogheny, Lower                        | PA                      | 1.8'-3.5'          |           |
|                       | Double Z                        | New River Gorge                            | WV                      | 1-2.5' (3-5000)    |           |
|                       | Rocky Mountain                  | Raft Ripper                                | Arkansas, Browns Canyon | CO 1000-3'         |           |
|                       | Seven Steps                     | Arkansas, Browns Canyon                    | CO                      | 2500               |           |
|                       | Pinball                         | Arkansas, Browns Canyon                    | CO                      | 2500               |           |
|                       | Government Rapids               | San Juan                                   | UT                      | 5000               |           |
|                       | Lunch Counter                   | Snake, Alpine Canyon                       | WY                      | 10,000             |           |
|                       | Split Rock Rapid                | Yellowstone                                | MT                      | 3000-5000          |           |
|                       | South East                      | Nantahala Falls                            | Nantahala, Gorge        | NC                 | 3.25      |
|                       |                                 | Double Trouble                             | Ocoee, Middle           | TN                 | 1200-1600 |
|                       |                                 | Diamond Splitter                           | Ocoee, Middle           | TN                 | 1200-1600 |
|                       |                                 | Narrows                                    | Chattooga, Sect. III    | GA/SC              | 1.8'-2.3' |
|                       |                                 | <b>Grumpy/Snow White/</b>                  | Ocoee, Middle           | TN                 | 1200-1600 |
|                       |                                 | Entrance                                   |                         |                    |           |
| Double Suck           |                                 | Ocoee, Middle                              | TN                      | 1200-1600          |           |
| On the Rocks          |                                 | Nolichucky Gorge                           | NC                      | 1500-2000 (2-2.2') |           |
| <b>Wooten's Folly</b> |                                 | Clear Creek                                | TN                      | 2000-3000          |           |
| Dick's Creek Ledge    |                                 | Chattooga, Sect. III                       | GA/SC                   | 1.8'-2.3'          |           |
| West Coast            | (First Ledge)                   |  |                         |                    |           |
|                       | Meat                            | American, S. Fk., Chili Bar Run            | CA                      | 1800-5000          |           |
|                       | <b>Grinder/Quartermile</b>      |  |                         |                    |           |
|                       | Wolf Creek                      | Selway                                     | ID                      | 2.8'               |           |
|                       | Boulder Drop                    | Skykomish                                  | WA                      | 1000               |           |
|                       | Railroad Bridge Drop            | Green River Gorge, Upper                   | WA                      | low-mod            |           |
|                       | (Meadworks)                     |  |                         |                    |           |
|                       | Trouble Maker, S Turn           | American, S. Fk., Chili Bar Run            | CA                      | 1000               |           |
|                       | Oak Creek Falls                 | Deschutes                                  | OR                      | mod                |           |
|                       | Rubber                          | Salmon, Middle Fork                        | ID                      | 2'                 |           |
|                       | Badger                          | Colorado, Grand Canyon                     | AZ                      | 15-22000           |           |
|                       | Triple Threat                   | American, S. Fk., Chili Bar Run            | CA                      | 900-5000           |           |
|                       | Rock and Roll / Satan's Eyeball | Wenatchee, Lower                           | WA                      | 6000               |           |



**Classification    Rapld name (s)    River, section (s)    State    Level**

**Class III+**

|            |                      |                                |                                 |                    |
|------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| North East | Maze                 | Cheat Canyon                   | WV                              | 2.5-3.5            |
|            | River's End          | Youghiogeny, Lower             | PA                              | 1.8'-3.5'          |
|            | Big Nasty            | Cheat Canyon                   | WV                              | 3'-5'              |
|            | Fayette Station      | New River Gorge                | WV                              | 1-2.5' (3-5000)    |
|            | Gap Falls            | Youghiogeny, Upper             | MD                              | 2-2.2'             |
|            | Rocky Mountain       | Zoom Flume                     | Arkansas, Browns Canyon         | CO 1000-3'         |
|            | Snaggletooth         | Delores                        | CO                              | med                |
|            | Santa Rita Hole      | Animas, Durango                | CO                              | 6000               |
|            | Smelter Rapids       | Animas, Durango                | CO                              | 6000               |
|            | Black Mountain       | Hoback                         | WY                              | 3"-1.5'            |
|            | South East           | Broken Nose<br>(Veg-0-Matic)   | Ocoee, Middle                   | TN 1200-1600       |
|            | Rooster Tail         | Nolichucky Gorge               | NC                              | 2400-3000          |
|            | Quarter Mile         | Nolichucky Gorge               | NC                              | 1500-2000 (2-2.2') |
|            | Table Saw            | Ocoee, Middle                  | TN                              | 1200-1600          |
|            | Double Drop          | Cumberland, Big South Fork     | TN                              | 2000-2500          |
|            | The "L"              | Cumberland, Big South Fork     | TN                              | 2000-3000 (2.5')   |
|            | West Coast           | Trouble Maker, S Turn          | American, S. Fk., Chili Bar Run | CA 1800-2000       |
|            | Blossom Bar          | Rogue R., Grave Cr. top Foster | OR                              | 1500               |
|            | Bar                  |                                |                                 |                    |
|            | Guard Rail           | Skykomish, N. Fk.              | WA                              | 1500               |
|            | House Rocks          | Snoqualmie, M. Fk.,            | WA                              | 1500               |
|            | Middle-Middle        |                                |                                 |                    |
|            | Ledge 1              | Green River Gorge              | WA                              | 1200               |
|            | Hance                | Colorado, Grand Canyon         | AZ                              | 15-22,000          |
|            | Powerline/Cable Drop | Skykomish, S. Fk.              | WA                              | 2-5000             |
|            | Pipeline             | Green River Gorge              | WA                              | 3000               |

**Class IV -**

|                |                      |                                |                               |               |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| North East     | Blue Ledge           | Hudson River Gorge             | NY                            | 5.5'          |
|                | Staircase            | Swift River                    | NH                            | 1.5'-2'       |
|                | High Falls           | Cheat Canyon                   | WV                            | 3'-5'         |
|                | Wonder Falls         | Big Sandy Cr., Lower           | WV                            | 6- 6.5        |
| Rocky Mountain | (including approach) |                                |                               |               |
|                | Zoom Flume           | Arkansas, Browns Canyon        | CO                            | 2500          |
|                | Jaws                 | Flathead, M. Fk.               | MT                            | .5'           |
|                | Lunch Counter        | Snake, Alpine Canyon           | WY                            | 3500          |
|                | Big Kahuna           | Snake, Alpine Canyon           | WY                            | 10,000        |
|                | Spotted Horse        | Hoback                         | WY                            | 1.5'          |
|                | South East           | Veg O'Matic (Broken<br>Nose)   | Ocoee, Middle                 | TN 1200-1600  |
|                | Entrance             | Chattooga, Sect, IV            | GA/SC                         | 1.8'-2.3'     |
|                | Frank Bell's         | French Broad, Sect. 9          | NC                            | 2000-3000     |
|                | Rattlesnake / Fang   | Daddy's Creek Canyon           | TN                            | 700-3500 (2') |
|                | Boat Buster          | Wilson's Creek Gorge           | NC                            | 1-3"          |
|                | West Coast           | Ned's Gulch                    | Merced, Red bud to Suspension | CA 1500       |
|                | Bridge               |                                |                               |               |
|                | Mercury              | Green River Gorge              | WA                            | 2000-2200     |
|                | The Nozzle           | Green River Gorge, Upper       | WA                            | 2000          |
|                | Rubber               | Salmon, Middle Fork            | ID                            | 5000          |
|                | House Rock           | Colorado, Grand Canyon         | AZ                            | 15-22,000     |
|                | Blossom Bar          | Rogue R., Grave Cr. top Foster | OR                            | 3000          |
|                | Bar                  |                                |                               |               |

**Class IV**

|            |                                   |   |    |                 |
|------------|-----------------------------------|---|----|-----------------|
| North East | Fayette Station                   | New River Gorge                             | WV | 0' (2440)       |
|            | Sweet's Falls                     | Gauley, Upper                               | WV | 2400-3200       |
|            | Mash                              | Gauley, Lower                               | WV | 2800-3200       |
|            | Pure Screaming Hell               | Gauley, Lower                               | WV | 2000-3200       |
|            | S Turn or Z-Drop                  | Tygart Gorge                                | WV | 4.5'            |
|            | Middle Keaney                     | New River Gorge                             | WV | 1-2.5' (3-5000) |
|            | Rip Gorge (Ripogenioius<br>Gorge) | Penobscot R., W. Br.,<br>Ripogenioius Gorge | ME | 2000-3000       |

| Classification   | Rapid name (s)                                 | River, section (s)                | State                 | Level              |
|------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
|                  | Bastard  | Youghiogheny, Upper               | MD                    | 2-2.2'             |
|                  | Heinzerling (Pillow route)                     | Youghiogheny, Upper               | MD                    | 2-2.2'             |
|                  | Rocky Mountain                                 | Number Four                       | Arkansas, The Numbers | CO 1000 (<3')      |
|                  | Sunshine                                       | Arkansas, Royal Gorge             | CO                    | 2000               |
|                  | Pine View Falls                                | Cache La Poudre, Pine View Run    | CO                    | 1500               |
|                  | Skull  | Colorado, Westwater Cyn           | UT                    | 3500-5000          |
|                  | Zoom Flume                                     | Arkansas, Browns Canyon           | CO                    | 3000               |
|                  | Sunshine                                       | Arkansas, Royal Gorge             | CO                    | 3.5'(3200)         |
|                  | Number Three                                   | Arkansas, The Numbers             | CO                    | 2000-2500 (3.5-4') |
|                  | Number Two                                     | Arkansas, The Numbers             | CO                    | 2000-2500 (3.5-4') |
|                  | South East                                     | Corkscrew                         | Chattooga, Sect. IV   | GA/SC 1.8'-2.3'    |
|                  | Bull Sluice                                    | Chattooga, Sect. III              | GA/SC                 | 1.8'-2.3'          |
|                  | Seven Foot Falls                               | Chattooga, Sect. N                | GA/SC                 | 1.8'-2.3'          |
|                  | Jared's Knee                                   | Tellico, Ledges                   | TN                    | 500-800, 2'-3'     |
|                  | Ten foot falls (Including Entrance)            | Wilson's Creek Gorge              | NC                    | 6"                 |
| West Coast       | Chamberlain Falls                              | American, N. Fk.                  | CA                    | 1000               |
|                  | White Lightning                                | Cispus, Upper                     | WA                    | 1200               |
|                  | Ned's Gulch Bridge                             | Merced, Red Bud to Suspension     | CA                    | 2500               |
|                  | Granite  | Colorado, Grand Canyon            | AZ                    | 15-22000           |
|                  | Hermit   | Colorado, Grand Canyon            | AZ                    | 15-22000           |
| <b>Class IV+</b> |  |                                   |                       |                    |
| North East       | Pillow Rock                                    | Gauley, Upper                     | WV                    | 2400-3200          |
|                  | Meat Cleaver                                   | Youghiogheny, Upper               | MD                    | 2-2.2'             |
| Rocky Mountain   | House Rock                                     | Gallatin                          | MT                    | .5'-1'             |
|                  | Eye of the Needle                              | Piedra, Lower                     | CO                    | m/h                |
|                  | Number Four                                    | Arkansas, The Numbers             | CO                    | 2000-2500 (3.5-4') |
|                  | Sawtooth                                       | Delores                           | CO                    | hi                 |
|                  | Number Five                                    | Arkansas, The Numbers             | CO                    | 2000-2500 (3.5-4') |
|                  | Number Six                                     | Arkansas, The Numbers             | CO                    | 2000-2500 (3.5-4') |
| West Coast       | Husum Falls                                    | White Salmon                      | WA                    | 1200-1800          |
|                  | Clavey Falls                                   | Tuolumne                          | CA                    | 900+               |
|                  | Lava Falls (Right Side)                        | Colorado, Grand Canyon            | AZ                    | 2000               |
|                  | Staircase                                      | Payette, S. Fk.                   | ID                    | 2000               |
|                  | Surprise                                       | Payette, S. Fk.                   | ID                    | 2000               |
| <b>Class 5.0</b> |  |                                   |                       |                    |
| North East       | Insignificant                                  | Gauley, Upper                     | WV                    | 2400-3200          |
|                  | Lost Paddle                                    | Gauley, Upper                     | WV                    | 2400-3200          |
|                  | Cribworks                                      | Penobscot R., W. Br.,             | ME                    | 2000-3000          |
|                  | Ripogenoius Gorge                              |                                   |                       |                    |
|                  | Charlies Choice thru National Falls (far left) | Youghiogheny, Upper               | MD                    | 2-2.2'             |
| Rocky Mountain   | Big Splat                                      | Big Sandy Cr., Lower              | WV                    | 6.2'               |
|                  | No Name  | Animas, Upper                     | CO                    | 2000               |
|                  | Damnation Alley                                | Encampment                        | WY                    | 1000-1200          |
|                  | Broken Bridge                                  | Animas, Upper                     | CO                    | 2000-2500          |
|                  | Pine Creek                                     | Arkansas, Pine Creek Canyon       | CO                    | 1500-2100(3.5')    |
|                  | Rock Garden                                    | Rio Grande, Lower Taos Box Canyon | NM                    | 2000-3000          |
| South East       | No Name  | Animas, Upper                     | CO                    | 4000               |
|                  | Big Drops                                      | Colorado, Cataract Canyon         | UT                    | 30,000             |
|                  | Sock'em Dog                                    | Chattooga, Sect. N                | GA/SC                 | 1.8'-2.3'          |
|                  | El Horendo (Right Side)                        | Russel Fork, Breaks               | VA                    | 800-1250           |
|                  | Tower  | Russel Fork, Breaks               | VA                    | 800-1100           |
|                  | Watauga Falls                                  | Watauga River Gorge (sect 4)      | NC                    | -6"-0 (200-400)    |
|                  | Hydro, The Hole                                | Watauga River Gorge (sect 4)      | NC                    | -6"-0 (200-400)    |
| West Coast       | Vortex   | Kern, Forks of                    | CA                    | MODERATE           |
|                  | Starts with a bang and                         | Cascade River                     | WA                    | mod                |

| Classification   | Rapid name (s)          | River, section (s)              | State | Level     |
|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-------|-----------|
|                  | Bridge Drop             |                                 |       |           |
|                  | Mushroom                | Tuolumne, Cherry Cr.            | CA    | 1200      |
|                  | Lava Falls (Right Side) | Colorado, Grand Canyon          | AZ    | 15-25000  |
|                  | Hounds Tooth            | Payette, N. Fk.                 | ID    | 1800-2000 |
| <b>Class 5.1</b> |                         |                                 |       |           |
| Rocky Mountain   | Gore Rapids             | Colorado, Gore Canyon           | CO    | 1200      |
|                  | Double Suck             | Clarks Fork                     | WY    | 1200      |
|                  | Kirschbaum              | Colorado, Gore Canyon           | CO    | 1200      |
|                  | Pine Creek              | Arkansas, Pine Creek Canyon     | CO    | high-2900 |
|                  | Slaughterhouse Falls    | Roaring Fk., Slaughterhouse run | CO    | hi        |
|                  | Lower Narrows           | Cache La Poudre, Narrows        | CO    | 5'. 500   |
|                  | Upper Provo Falls       | Provo                           | UT    | 300       |
| South East       | Pinball                 | Little River Canyon             | AL    | 6"-1'     |
|                  | Pinball                 | Overflow Creek                  | GA    | 1-1.5'    |
| West Coast       | Straight Shot           | American, S. Fk., Golden Gate   | CA    | 1000      |
|                  | Drain Pipe              | American, S. Fk., Golden Gate   | CA    | moderate  |
|                  | Jacob's Ladder          | Payette, N. Fk.                 | ID    | 2500      |
|                  | Jacob's Ladder          | Payette, N. Fk.                 | ID    | 1200      |
| <b>Class 5.2</b> |                         |                                 |       |           |
| Rocky Mountain   | Snolic Sister           | Clarks Fork                     | WY    | 1200      |
|                  | Starter Fluid           | Cache La Poudre                 | CO    | 800       |
|                  | Lower Barrel Springs    | Colorado, Glenwood Cyn          | CO    | 3000      |
|                  | Pine Creek              | Arkansas, Pine Creek Canyon     | CO    | 4.5'      |
|                  | Slurry Pipe             | Eagle River, Gillman Gorge      | CO    | 4'        |
| South East       | Gorilla Falls/Green     | Green River Narrows             | NC    | 1-4 tubes |
|                  | Scream Machine          |                                 |       |           |
|                  | Sunshine                | Green River Narrows             | NC    | 1-4 tubes |
| West Coast       | Lumsden Falls           | Tuolumne                        | CA    | moderate  |
|                  | Screaming Left Turn     | Payette, N. Fk.                 | ID    | 1800-2000 |
|                  | Juicer                  | Payette, N. Fk.                 | ID    | 4000      |
| <b>Class 5.3</b> |                         |                                 |       |           |
| Rocky Mountain   | S Turn                  | Lime Cr.                        | CO    |           |
|                  | Upper Narrow's          | Cache La Poudre, Narrows        | CO    | 5', 500   |
|                  | Rigormortis             | Clear Cr. Cyn                   | CO    | 900       |
| West Coast       | Jacob's Ladder          | Payette, N. Fk.                 | ID    | 3500      |
|                  | Nutcracker              | Payette, N. Fk.                 | ID    | 1800-2000 |

9/15/97 11:07:40 PM copywrite 1997, AWA

## INTERNATIONAL SCALE OF RIVER DIFFICULTY (revised 9-97).

This is the American version of a rating system used to compare river difficulty throughout the world. This system is not exact; rivers do not always fit easily into one category, and regional or individual interpretations may cause misunderstandings. It is no substitute for a guidebook or accurate first-hand descriptions of a run.

Paddlers attempting difficult runs in an unfamiliar area should act cautiously until they get a feel for the way the scale is interpreted locally. River difficulty may change each year due to fluctuations in water level, downed trees, recent floods, geological disturbances, or bad weather. Stay alert for unexpected problems!

As river difficulty increases, the danger to swimming paddlers becomes more severe. As

rapids become longer and more continuous, the challenge increases. There is a difference between running an occasional Class IV rapid and dealing with an entire river of this category. Allow an extra margin of safety between skills and river ratings when the water is cold or if the river itself is remote or inaccessible.

Examples of commonly run rapids that fit each of the classifications are presented in the attached document "INTERNATIONAL SCALE OF RIVER DIFFICULTY - STANDARD RATED RAPIDS OF THE UNITED STATES". Rapids of a difficulty similar to a rapids on this list are rated the same. This scale is also used to rate rivers. A river rating should take into account many factors including the difficulty of individual rapids, remoteness, haz-

ards, etc.

### THE SIX DIFFICULTY CLASSES:

**Class I: Easy.** Fast moving water with riffles and small waves. Few obstructions, all obvious and easily missed with little training. Risk to swimmers is slight; self-rescue is easy.

**Class II: Novice.** Straightforward rapids with wide, clear channels which are evident without scouting. Occasional maneuvering may be required, but rocks and medium sized waves are easily missed by trained paddlers. Swimmers are seldom injured and group assistance, while helpful, is seldom needed. Rapids that are at the upper end of this difficulty range are designated "Class II+".

**Class III: Intermediate.** Rapids with moderate,

irregular waves which may be difficult to avoid and which can swamp an open canoe. Complex maneuvers in fast current and good boat control in tight passages or around ledges are often required; large waves or strainers may be present but are easily avoided. Strong eddies and powerful current effects can be found, particularly on large-volume rivers. Scouting is advisable for inexperienced parties. Injuries while swimming are rare; self-rescue is usually easy but group assistance may be required to avoid long swims. Rapids that are at the lower or upper end of this difficulty range are designated "Class III-" or "Class III+" respectively.

**Class IV:** Advanced. Intense, powerful but predictable rapids requiring precise boat handling in turbulent water. Depending on the character of the river, it may feature large, unavoidable waves and holes or constricted passages demanding fast maneuvers under pressure. A fast, reliable eddy turn may be needed to initiate maneuvers, scout rapids, or rest. Rapids may require "must" moves above dangerous hazards. Scouting may be necessary the first time down. Risk of injury to swimmers is moderate to high, and water conditions may make self-rescue difficult. Group assistance for rescue is often essential but requires practiced skills. A strong Eskimo roll is highly recommended. Rapids that are at the lower or upper end of this difficulty range are designated "Class IV-" or "Class IV+" respectively.

**Class 5:** Expert. Extremely long, obstructed, or very violent rapids which expose a paddler to added risk. Drops may contain large, unavoidable waves and holes or steep, congested chutes with complex, demanding routes. Rapids may continue for long distances between pools, demanding a high level of fitness. What eddies exist may be small, turbulent, or difficult to reach. At the high end of the scale, several of these factors may be combined. Scouting is recommended but may be difficult. Swims are dangerous, and rescue is often difficult even for experts. A very reliable Eskimo roll, proper equipment, extensive experience, and practiced rescue skills are essential. Because of the large range of difficulty that exists beyond class IV, Class 5 is an open ended, multiple level scale designated by Class 5.0, 5.1, 5.2, etc... Each of these levels is an order of magnitude more difficult than the last. For instance, increasing the difficulty from class 5.0 to class 5.1 is a similar order of magnitude as increasing from class IV to Class 5.0.

**Class VI:** Extreme and Exploratory. These runs have almost never been attempted and often exemplify the extremes of difficulty, unpredictability and danger. The consequences of errors may be very severe and rescue may be impossible. For teams of experts only, at favorable water levels, after close personal inspection and taking all precautions.

Shouldn't  
you spend  
some part  
of your  
life exactly  
as you  
please?



A trip for people who hate spending their spare time on anything but paddling.

A relaxing vacation.

**COSTA RICA  
WHITEWATER**

A way to explore new cultures.

**ECUADOR  
WHITEWATER**

Paddle south this winter.

**WE RUN THE KIND OF TRIP  
YOU WANT TO BE A PART OF!**

P.O. Box 246, Bryson City, NC 28713  
Phone/Fax 704/488-6199  
E-Mail, 71604.1240 @ compuserve.com



# Incident Management System for Paddlers

by Robert Molyneaux

In emergency situations, responders must coordinate their efforts to effectively resolve an incident. Unfortunately in most cases confusion tends to reign instead. The Incident Management System and its predecessor, the Incident Command System, are methods by which lines of responsibility and communication are defined, thereby minimizing confusion and uncoordinated efforts.

## A Little History.

In the late 1970's California had a large number of wildfires that required statewide assistance. Coordination of this vast army of responders was difficult with a lack of standardized terminology and technique. Since then a commission called FIRESCOPE created the Incident Command System. It has evolved into the Incident Management System (IMS), which has been adopted by public safety agencies throughout North America. The Federal Emergency Management Agency teaches and utilizes this system, both for large-scale incidents and isolated rescues.

## Why Us?

The purpose of this piece is to educate paddlers on the IMS so when they are involved in rescue incidents, they may be able to fit in seamlessly. While this system is not used by all agencies, most are aware of it. If paddlers use this same system, assisting public safety agencies may permit continued intervention by the assisting paddlers. Many of us have heard horror stories of public safety agencies halting appropriate active rescue efforts by other boaters, contributing to the demise of a paddler.

Understand that the IMS is designed to expand to the needs of a given incident, and may be limited by existing resources. It can be used in anything from an auto accident to a multi-state forest fire or earthquake. This system can also be used in large paddling events such as competitions and exhibitions, or club outings.

Any time five or more individuals are involved in solving an urgent problem the system may be used. This is based on a management theory termed "span of control." Most individuals are capable of managing five to seven other individuals at a time. Once the number exceeds seven, most people tend to lose control. It is best appreciated in decentralized incidents such as paddling incidents; where geographic features add to the complexities at hand. This piece will orient you to the basics of the system gearing toward a swiftwater incident.

In most cases paddlers are in small groups of two to five paddlers. A small group with an informal leader can effectively initiate problem solving efforts. Paddlers tend to be independent, free thinking individuals, a necessary trait in our sport. As said by Ed Grove, author of *Classic Virginia Rivers*, "Getting a bunch of paddlers together to do something is like trying to herd cats." The issue of control arises when the problem at hand requires more resources than the group of less than five can handle. At this point others become involved, such as other paddlers, bystanders and public safety agencies. Focused concentration by the group becomes essential. A designated leader and sub-leaders simplifies initiation and execution of a rescue plan.

## Sectoring

The keys to this system are:

One individual who has "established command." Formally known as the Incident Commander (IC) or Incident Manager.

Division of effort into smaller parts, called "divisions" or "sectors." These sectors are appointed by the IC.

Communication with the IC is done through the Sector Commander. Others really need to communicate with the IC through the Sector Commanders to minimize confusing the IC. (Remember span of control)

This sounds very militaristic. In fact it is. When time is of the essence, a group organized and directed by a clear leader will get a job done more quickly. A group relying on consensus must delay to reach that consensus. That is why militaries usually win over street mobs. Alfred Thayer Mahan, an American naval historian once wrote, "Good sailors in poor ships are better than poor sailors in good ships." Even if you have a mediocre rescue plan, a group working together can execute the plan more effectively than a disjointed group attempting a perfect rescue.

Do we always need to use these terms? No. But all members of a rescue incident must be able to clearly identify who is making the decisions and understand how to get information to and from that individual. However, when initially dealing with public safety officials, using buzzwords is more likely to "score points." In a rescue effort, each member should be able to readily identify who is the incident commander when asked. Ideally they should identify the incident and sector commanders by just those names. Realistically, they must know who is in charge.

## What does it take to use this system?

Pre-planning who will be the incident commander can be done informally. In the paddling setting the probe and sweeper are the primary and secondary choices for the IC. Establish this by just saying, "If we run into any problems,

the probe is in charge. If the probe is in trouble or not available then the sweeper is in charge." A simple statement that takes five seconds to say and can save precious minutes in a rescue.

If a problem does occur, the designated IC needs to do three things immediately:

Say out loud "I am in charge." This is hard for most people to do, but will give the group instant cohesiveness. If the designated IC fails to say those words, it is acceptable for a member of the group to say out loud that the designated IC is in charge. For example: "Charley is the Incident Commander" or "Charley is in charge."

Decide on a quick plan to stabilize the problem, then initiate the plan by delegating tasks.

Delegates specific jobs to specific individuals. "Somebody hold his head up" is less effective than "Jack, hold his head up."

These initially delegated tasks tend to be the sectors. Sectors can be broken down into geographic areas like "river left group" or "upstream group", or tasks "victim group" for individuals in contact with the victim, or "snag line group" for the folks setting up the snag line system. Once stabilization of the problem is underway, the IC can continue to formulate a plan to resolve the problem. Talk to each of the sectors for input to make sure the plan will work from their vantage point. As much as possible the IC should stay stationary. The IC should pick a point where he/she can see and communicate with every sector.

## Incident cont.

### Arrival Of The Public Safety Officials

If public safety officials become involved, the first arriving official should be directed to the IC. The IC should then inform the official that he is currently the IC and what the problem and plans are. Since the public safety official probably has a legal duty to conduct the rescue, the IC should ask the official if they would like to assume command. Upon the official assuming command, inform all Sectors that the official is now the IC. If you have a rational plan and you are dealing with an educated official, you may find yourself continuing with the rescue. But don't be surprised if you are dismissed. The mindset of the public safety official is probably, "If I'm here, they obviously were unable to handle the problem." Further involvement on the paddler's part may be dependent on diplomacy and conscience. Keep in mind, opposing forces will delay the rescue further.

### Assisting Public Safety Officials in Swiftwater Rescues

The other instance that paddlers may find knowledge of the ICS helpful is in situations where their technical expertise may be of assistance. In swiftwater rescues the wise public safety IC does not dismiss offers of qualified assistance. Paddlers willing to help with sufficient knowledge and skills should ask emergency workers "Who is the Incident Commander?" After identifying yourself with your qualifications, e.g., "I'm a whitewater paddler with swiftwater rescue training," ask if you may be of assistance. If your initial request is declined, you may offer to go downstream as back up to the team entering the water, or upstream to warn of floating hazards. These are important tasks frequently neglected in swiftwater incidents due to resource or training deficiencies. Of course, much of this can be shortened if local paddlers have made pre-planned methods for integrating into an incident with the public safety agencies.

### Summary

The Incident Management System is a tool used by many public safety agencies. Integration of this system by the paddling community can only enhance our safety on the river. Minimal pre-planning is required, but is essential to successful rescues. There must be no question who is in-charge. Executing the rescue plan is easiest done by breaking it down into task oriented groups or sectors. Demonstrate knowledge of the Incident Management system to public safety officials. This will increase the likelihood of your skills and experience being used to the maximum.

Editor's Note: Robert Molyneux is a physicians assistant, kayaker, and emergency services instructor in Mayland.

**L'EAU VIVE**  
(love) n, Fr  
**IS**  
**WHITEWATER**  
AND WE'VE GOT THE GOODS!  
P.O. BOX 18978 BOULDER, CO 80308  
INFO & ORDERING 970-668-4707  
<http://www.paddlegear.com>

**L'EAU VIVE**  
Boulder, Colorado, U.S.A. PADDLE

LIP LOCK™/SUPER SHOCK™/PRO SHOCK™ SPRAY DECKS

**SALAMANDER**  
PADDLE GEAR

For a quantity or your nearest dealer call:  
541-388-1821  
See us on-line at:  
[www.salamanderpaddlegear.com](http://www.salamanderpaddlegear.com)  
BAK YAK - Expedition to Rio de Paines, Champagne

# Hole Jousting

by Warren Wilson

Have you ever watched somebody surf in a hole ad nauseam, unconcerned for anyone else's desire to play? Of course you have. We all have. And, from this friendly resentment, the "sport" of hole jousting was born. Well, sort of. It was actually born out of the pleasure some of us find in knocking our friends out of holes, regardless of how long they have been in them.

Hole jousting is just what it sounds like: a sort of "kingqueen of the mountain" for holes. The object of this game is to knock people out of the hole while you maintain position in it. Whoever remains in the hole the longest "wins." Like most "civilized" competitions, hole jousting is built upon a serious foundation of rules: (1) no popping of others' spray skirts, (2) no use of incendiary devices, (3) no flipping of others upstream into the hole, (4) no use of the paddle, like a lance, knocking out your friends' teeth, eyes, etc., (5) no singing of opera (unless, of course, it is a Puccini aria) and (6) no knocking the other person unconscious. (\*Please note: With the recent growth of this sport, the rules have been adapted; modern hole jousters observe all of the above cardinal rules, but insert the word "intentional" after the initial "no.")

The standard approach to dislodging others from holes is to paddle upstream of them, then slide down on top of them, administering a strong shove in the process. The trick is to not allow them to grab you, your boat or paddle, pulling you out with them. Another common move, known as the "aerial T-bone", is to paddle into the hole from upstream, landing squarely on top of the person in the hole. If you are in the hole when somebody attempts this, you can avoid being pushed out of the hole by spinning your boat upstream so that the charging boater will (hopefully) slide over or by you.

More advanced offensive moves include:

1. The "Baby Wolf"- Yell to your friend in the hole, "Hey, look, it's a baby wolf!" to distract them just before you go in to knock them out. Don't limit yourself to "baby wolf", though. Other phrases which have successfully disarmed boaters in the past include, "Hey, look, free food!" and "Hey, look, it's Hillary and Bill in matching thongs!"

2. The "Barge"- Find an old Hollowform kayak and take advantage of its tonnage.

3. The "Olfactory Assault"- Put on some old polypropylene one month before the anticipated hole joust. Do not bathe or remove the polypropylene during this period. On the day of the hole joust, don't wear anything but the same polypro and a lifejacket. Enter the hole and threaten to embrace anybody who comes near.

4. The "Beer Toss"- Fill an empty beer

can half way with water and reseal the can. While your friends are doing battle in the hole, toss the can upstream, such that it floats by the edge of the hole, plainly in view. All competitors will quickly exit the hole in pursuit of the free "beer" and you can slide in unmolested.

5. The "Ohhh gaawddd!"- enter the hole and recite a Patrick Buchanan speech or whistle Helen Reddy's "I am woman".

6. "Red October"- This requires a precisely executed meltdown/black attack and is most easily executed in a squirt or slalom boat. In this case the offensive paddler goes over the drop above the hole, straight down on the green water tongue under the foam, then rises underneath the hapless hole occupant for a surprise attack. Unfortunately, if this move is poorly executed you might end up trying to find your teeth on the bottom of the river.

More advanced defensive moves include:

1. Ear and nose plugs- you are now impervious to the "Baby Wolf", the "Oh gaawddd!" and the "Little Buddy"

2. "Doe-%-Doe"- In this move one executes a pop-up/pirouette, preferably landing on top of the attacking paddler.

3. "Sputnik"- Tape a rubber Rambo knife to the bow of your boat and blast the hole. See if anybody messes with you.

3. "Rock-Em-Sock-Em-Robots" (a.k.a. the "Sumo Wrassler")- Discard your paddle and wrassle all challengers.

4. "Exxon Valdez"- Coat your body, boat and paddle in ball-bearing grease and watch your friends vainly try to grasp you and your equipment.

5. "XP-47Q"- This move is so secret that, if I revealed it to you, I'd have to kill you.

6. "Playin' Opossum"- This requires a good set of lungs. Just as you are being attacked, flip your boat and hang out upside down in the hole as if you are about to swim. The attacker might slide over you or leave you alone out of concern for your well being. When the attacker passes, right yourself with a Polish ender and a big smile.

7. "Droppin' the Hook"- Attach a 40 pound anchor to your boat with a 30 foot anchor line. Drop the anchor 30 feet upstream of the hole and float on in to stay. Bring food and camping equipment. The possibilities for advanced tactics are endless.

No doubt, others have developed their own versions of this sport and an organization, HOJOI (Hole Jousters International), will soon be formed to govern and promote competitions (HOJOI motto: "Hole jousting is to rodeos what roller derby is to figure skating"). An ESPN contract and Olympic event status cannot be long in coming. Until then, joust on!

## Guatemala's 3 R's... rapids, ruins and rainforest

- \*First descents
- \*Intermediate to Expert
- \*Dagger, Perception and Wave Sport Kayaks

Area Verde Expeditions  
P.O. Box 476 Salida CO 81201 (719) 539-7102





# Makin' the Move

Sam Sherwood

A year ago, I slid into my kayak and nervously pushed myself into the Cheat River. I was out of the baby pool and into a real river for the first time. The Narrows, running at four feet, gave me my first taste of Class III waves (up close and personal). I remember how awkward I felt and couldn't help thinking that if God wanted us to do this stuff, somehow He would have made it feel more natural. From my limited perspective, those waves were enormous, hungry to flip me and doing a pretty effective job of it. My counteroffensive proved to be an equally effective whitewater roll, which astonished and exhilarated me (I couldn't believe it actually worked).

Despite a pretty successful run, I was even more nervous and stiff the second day. Attempts to hide my anxiety fooled no one. Lines of trepidation, indelibly painted on my face, reeked of no confidence. And that, every paddler quickly learns, is half of the equation.

It was one of those "Are we having fun yet?" situations and I wasn't sure if I was. Yes and no. "Am I nuts?" I thought. Weren't there other ways of handling this middle age crisis? Getting into this kind of sport at 45 years old might be a bit over the top.

Whitewater kayaking is a paradox; a mixture of fun and something else. I don't know if fear is the right word, but it is some sort of adrenaline producing excitement akin to fear that can neutralize, and sometimes overwhelm, the fun factor. Kayaking is not just a sport. It's an often confused, always amorphous state of mind, constantly influenced by a barrage of good and evil thoughts that produce a roller coaster of feelings changing from moment to moment. The only remedy is experience. As my skills increased, the good overcame the bad. I relaxed more, became more confident, and it became more fun.

A year later, the same river, the same run, only the waves were much smaller and benign. Or were they? Had the fear that turned to fun now become the routine? Don't get me wrong. I have all the respect in the world for all moving water. I still flip in enough eddies to not take anything for granted. But, there comes a time when (if you're a serious paddler at all) you are faced with a decision. Are you satisfied with Class III or do you want another challenge? Do you stay where you are or move to the next level? The answer to that question is different for each individual. I was a bit scared of the answer, because I knew deep down what I was going to do before I could articulate it.

I had hoped for a soft and gradual transi-

tion, but I don't think it ever works that way. There seems to be a gap. It's a step curve, meaning, that at some point, if you want to move up, you simply go for it. You don't gradually work your way into the Cheat River Canyon, the New River Gorge or the Lower Gauley. You draw whatever courage you have from somewhere within, block out the evil thoughts, and do it.

Now the paradox returns, only in exacerbated form. The danger increases and trepidation seeks the upper hand once again. There may be some truth to "ignorance is bliss," but you don't even have that on your side anymore (if it ever was a desirable thing to have). Now you are less ignorant and you know that the next level is an arena where the risks are much higher. So you just do it.

My first move up was on the Lower Gauley. The good thing about that trip was I didn't plan it, which meant I didn't have time to think about it. I showed up at the meeting spot for a different trip and the trip leader didn't. As I waited, some friends arrived intent on paddling the Lower Gauley.

"What are you going to do," they asked. "You're welcome to come with us."

"Well, if you don't mind me slowing you down, I'll go with you," I answered quickly.

They glanced at each other and said, "No

problem. We'll look out for you."

It turned out to be a pretty good day, even considering a couple minor altercations, including me plastering myself on one of the Pearly Gates and swimming. I made most of the right moves. There were big waves and some great play spots. I got my first enders, something I had always wanted to try. That, alone, made the trip worthwhile.

The last major rapid was Pure Screaming Hell. Whether or not I like to admit it, names psyche me out; not to mention the guidebook (which always scares me) talking about the mother of all stoppers. Yet, it was the easiest one for me, as I followed one of our entourage right by Hell Hole. He made it look so easy.

In all truthfulness, the difficulty level was a stretch for me and I knew it. That concerned me, but at the same time it was a blast and whetted my appetite for more. Maybe that's normal. I revisited the question of why I was doing this. It's not a "man thing" (as least I hope not. I'm a bit old for that. I really couldn't answer, but after sifting through the events of the day, the verdict was: "I'll be back."

"Yup," they said, "you're ready for the New. It's actually easier than this. The waves are bigger, but the lines are easier." Then came one of my two favorite lines: YOU WON'T HAVE ANY PROBLEM."

So the stage was set for the New River Gorge, the "biggest" whitewater in West Virginia. The question was when. Mercifully, I didn't have much time to think about this one either, but any amount of time is too much, as far as I'm concerned. There was something about the "Gorge" that, regardless of testimonies as to how much easier it was, produced an express tenseness I could not shake.

The phone rang late Saturday night. Bill, who I had met on the Lower Gauley, called to see if I wanted to do the Gorge. I said yes. Then I checked the gages. It was running just under four feet and rising. Then I wasn't sure. This level made me apprehensive. I was hoping for something between one and two feet, but my main concern was to go with someone I trusted, and I trusted Bill. I called him back. I must have sounded like a baby.

"I don't know," I said, "this is pretty high."

"You won't have any trouble," he assured (there's that line again). "A lot of people think it's easier at this level." (That line gets an honorable mention.) I'm glad someone had confidence, even if it wasn't me. So now I was committed.

Sunday morning dawned with beautiful blue skies and a predicted high in the lower



80's - definitely the best day so far this year. We loaded up our kayaks and drove the 2+ hours to the New River Gorge Visitor Center to meet up with some others. A little chit-chat along the way kept my mind off the real and imagined hazards awaiting. We met a couple guys at the Visitors Center and then ran into some paddling buddies at the kayak store. Before we knew it, there were eight of us, five of whom had never run the Gorge before.

The closer we got to the river, the more uncomfortable I felt. As advertised, it was bit, powerful and pushy. It had leveled off at about 4 feet. My gut did a few flip flops as I put on the water. I looked forlornly back at the put in as the current dragged me off. No turning back now. The deep blue skies, contrasting against a beautiful whitewater river and lush green gorge, went unappreciated.

At the first rapid, Upper Railroad, we had to make a move to the left just right of center to avoid a huge hole. My guide made it look so easy that I didn't appreciate his power move. My wimpy move didn't cut it. I straightened out the boat and hit the hole squarely trying to punch through it (and almost did but close doesn't count). It grabbed the back of my boat and flipped me, but at least I was free of the hole (just upside down.

My roll failed once, then twice, and, on the third setup, Bill gave me a bow rescue. "This is going to be a long day," I sighed.

I had just screwed up the very first rapid and my ordinarily reliable roll failed me. The fact that better paddlers than I swam right behind me was no consolation at all. What little confidence I had was waning quickly. Half of my equation was disappearing and I began looking for a place to take out if I had to. The brain game had kicked into high gear.

"Take out you fool," said a voice.

Remember those cartoons where two tiny clones, one with a halo and one with horns, stand on your shoulder and work you over? No lie! There they were, only I wasn't sure who was the good guy and who was the bad guy.

"No, this is what you came for," the other replied.

"You're making a big mistake," it continued. Asickening feeling overwhelmed me as the inner conflict raged.

Shutting them both down, I sucked it in and headed for Lower Railroad with my group, saying nothing. As the put in faded behind me, the urge to take out grew even stronger. We stopped at some big surfing waves. I eddied out and watched, knowing I was going to need all my energy just to get to the end.

While they played, I did a little boat scouting, only it was of the steep banks and the railroad track which was now on the other side of the river. Yes, it would be embarrassing, but again, I'm a little old to worry about

that. I could make it up that steep bank. It would be tough, but I could get back to the put in, even if I had to drag my boat two miles down the track and across that bridge. An Amtrak train whistled and came racing down the track, killing my simple plan. There wasn't much room on the sides of that track. I'd be safer on the river.

The Keeneys were coming up. These were played up big time in the guide book (a lot of hoopla so I was concerned. I just wanted to get them over with.

Eight foot waves at this level (or so the book said. I didn't get the tape measure out, but I can assure you, they were big. Yet strangely, they weren't as intimidating as I thought they would be. Actually, they couldn't possibly have been more gargantuan than my overactive imagination had expected. I made it through the Upper and Middle Keeneys uptight and upright. However, I was farther to the right than I should have been and had to ferry against a powerful current to the eddy on river left.

We got out and scouted Lower Keeney. The river was necking down and crashing against Schoolhouse Rock. The move was to take the tongue to the right and then push hard right to miss the rock. It looked do-able; even for me. I wasn't that concerned. Maybe this wasn't going to be so hairy after all. I followed a guy through. He was too far left but managed to miss the rock and I followed his line because I was too close to him. Again, my wimpy power move was too little, too late, and it left too far to go. As I sank into the trough, the current grabbed the front of my boat and pointed me directly at the rock. I could see I was going to be the "before" video (the exact way not to do this rapid) only it was worse than that.

As I tried to sweep and then rudder to miss the rock, I flipped. Where most people would have folded their hand and bailed out, I held and instinctively set up for a roll. As I executed the roll, I hit the rock and was up righted with some force, thrusting one arm

**Phone: (717) 957-2413**

103 State Road • Rts 11 & 15  
Marysville, PA 17053

**GREAT STUFF TO GO WITH YOUR BOAT**

|                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Banshee • Thule    | Mitchell • Mt. Surf  |
| Salamander • MTI   | Kokatat • Gorilla    |
| Rapidstyle • Lotus | Werner • Stohliquist |

**GREAT BOATS TO GO WITH YOUR STUFF**

|                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Wavesports • Prijon | Wilderness Systems |
| New Wave            | Bell • Lincoln     |
| Dagger              | Old Town           |

Excellent selection of Accessories & Outfitting Supplies... custom, or do-it-yourself: If we don't have it (which is unlikely), we'll get it or make it!

Look for us in the Historic Marysville Train Station overlooking the Susquehanna River. Call for hours and directions.

**Check Us Out!**

**MIDDLE FORK & MAIN SALMON**

Toll Free 1-888-634-2600



straight up in the air clutching the paddle, and now I was facing upstream. To the unsuspecting onlooker, I appeared to be hot-dogging and if I had the presence of mind to twirl the paddle, I would have had them convinced. The problem was, I didn't plan any of it, let alone these moves. I was involuntarily boofing this rock backwards and sliding in slow motion into the hole behind it, bravely waiting for the carnage to happen from the hole that I could hear, but not see

behind me. Miraculously, I slid out of the hole, still backwards, and on down the rapid. I could not believe I was still upright, and neither could anyone else. I was lucky. A roar from the crowd, a modest bow, and then, after escaping that hellacious incident, I flipped embarrassingly in a "little" drop downstream called Lollygag and ended up swimming anyway. So much for that.

The next major rapid I dreaded was Double Z. The guidebook called it an "honest" Class

V. I didn't want to do any Class V's, period. I asked if I could portage, but was assured I wouldn't have to. "YOU WON'T HAVE ANY PROBLEM." The move was easy but I didn't take the best line and flipped, rolled, then flipped again. You know: he's up, he's down, he's up, he's down again, he's swimming. By now I was worn out (old age you know). But I survived again.

We came to a drop where Bill said we were going to do a creek move. The idea was to follow a chute between two boulders and ferry across to another chute. "Great," I thought, "like I've ever even been on a creek. What's a creek move anyway?" Again, his move looked effortless. The next guy had to work for it and the next guy almost flipped, but braced and moved on. I decided I didn't like the looks of it and pointed to a chute on river left.

Bill shook his head, so it was my turn and (you guessed it: I missed the ferry, my boat turned, I splatted the rock and sat impotently as the pillow slowly ferried me to the chute. Once again I came out unscathed, and once again, I had starred in a video on how not to do it.

Then comes my second favorite line on the river: "WELL, YOU MADE IT THROUGH ALL THE BIG STUFF NOW!" Yeah, congratulations are in order. Uh-Huh! I'll keep that in mind the next time I come bobbing through Fayette Station, fabricating braces out of thin air to stay upright. But Fayette Station also brought with it the sight of the beautiful New River Gorge Bridge and a great sense of accomplishment.

Again, I sifted through the events of the day and revisited the question of why. I made some bad moves, but I had survived. Not to mitigate the real hazards, my biggest problem was psychological. I had psyched myself out from the beginning and the first rapid faux pas was a self-fulfilling prophesy which haunted me throughout the day. Nevertheless, for my first run, it really wasn't bad.

Will I do it again? Well, I realize this is a bit long winded, but if you have been paying attention, you know the answer. Of course I will. I just reserve the right to torture myself and change my mind a dozen times on the way to the river. Why? Because there is a payoff. The more you do it, the more you want to do. This stuff is a blast (there's nothing that compares). But, you have to wade through some of your fears to get to the best part of it. To make the move requires some risk, and though this is an area I wish we didn't have to learn by our mistakes (as with most things in life (it seems unavoidable). That's the decision each of us has to deal with and there are no right or wrong answers. For me, at least right now, it seems to be worth it. However, call me in ten minutes and I may have a different answer.

## WERNER PADDLES

### *Fast and Clean*

Werner paddles have been helping paddlers be fast and clean for more than thirty years.

Our paddles the Wenatchee and the Ocoee have been setting the standards for years. We're now offering three new blade shapes to enhance your paddling pleasure.

**The Rogue** has an asymmetrical shape and less dihedral for those paddlers who prefer a flatter power face.

**The Questis** is shaped like the Rogue but with a smaller blade face for anyone who wants a quicker stroke rate.

**The Rodeo** is narrow at the tip for finesse in the green water, widening toward the shaft for power in the pile.

The Werner name stands for quality, performance and great design—exactly why Werner Paddles are the ones you see on the water! Call **1-800-275-3311**.

**Scott Shipley**, started paddling with Werner paddles when he was twelve. Today he's a two-time ('93 & '95) World Cup Champion and US National Slalom Champion.

See where Werner can take you!

**WERNER**  
EUREKA, WASHINGTON USA



# Stuck in a Hole ... Then in the Hospital!

by Alex Henes

As the alarm rings I slowly reach over to hit the snooze button. But wait, today is Sunday, the day that Koji and I trek north to kayak the lower Yough. I by-pass the snooze routine and hop out of bed. There is a feeling of excitement in the air. A feeling that will fill the day and give Koji and I much more than we bargained for. The three hour trip to Ohiopyle, Pennsylvania is over before we know it.

After a quick lunch at the local greasy spoon, we launched above Entrance Rapid. Entrance Rapid is relatively easy. Koji coached me as I practiced eddy turns and surfing the small holes. I felt good. My boat, the river, and I were one....or at least as much as a guy with my level of experience and skill could be. The day's first big challenge was just around the bend...Cucumber Falls.

The current really picked up as we rounded the bend to Cucumber Falls. I could barely hear Koji over the falling water as he pointed out the strategy. Other than the strong current, the only threat Cucumber presented was a good sized hole in the center of the river midway down. No problem, just avoid the hole; piece of cake. The game plan was simple enough and I started my attack. But before I knew it I was headed straight for the one and only hole I had planned to avoid. Boofing over the hole I was quickly sucked into the raging downstream current. I ran the remainder of Cucumber upside down. Koji bow rescued me at the bottom of the rapid and we discussed my run. Although Cucumber Falls had not gone to plan, I was still feeling good. I was happy that I was able to keep my wits about me and avoid swimming.

We headed down through Camel's Back Rapid, Eddy Turn Rapid, Dartmouth Rapid, and Railroad Rapid without incident. My confidence was continuing to build as we approached the next big challenge, Dimple Rock. Again Koji and I planned our line of attack. Straight down the middle, then eddy out to avoid a large hole below. This time everything went to plan. High fives exchanged, we continue down to the prize of lower Yough, Swimmer's Rapid.

Swimmer's Rapid features a large hole perfect for playing and surfing. From a beginner's point of view, approaching Swimmer's is a little intimidating. Not only is the rapid large, but there are usually at least 50 people watching the action from the shore. Some are watching the expert surfers cartwheeling and hand surfing. Others are watching the carnage as beginners like myself venture into the ominous wave. However, I was not a spectacle this time. I traversed the rapid with confidence, but without flare. Another victory for the rookie paddler. We spent about two or three hours playing in the rapids at Swimmer's. I was elated because, for the first time, I was consistently making my roll.

With spirits high we headed downstream towards Double Hydraulic Rapid. Double Hydraulic consists of two large holes, one after another. I watched as Koji skillfully hopped off of each drop and over the hole on other side. He gave me the boof signal as I began my approach. I successfully hopped off of the first ledge, only to be sucked backwards into the hole. Still upright, with Koji yelling "Paddle !!! Paddle !!!", I paddled my butt off, but went nowhere. As I tried again I felt the stern of my boat being sucked down into the hole. Koji was yelling "Ya !!!! Squirt Man Squirt." As I squirted out of the hole I flipped. Struggling to



Is this having fun  
or what? Alex Henes  
and his broken nose.



hold onto my paddle and setup for my roll, I scraped across the bottom of the shallow river. Just as I gripped the paddle with both hands, my forehead and nose struck a large rock on the bottom. The impact of the blow was a shock, but the crunching of my nose is what really made my skin crawl. I heard a sound like an egg shell being chewed. I had

broken my nose. I immediately bailed out my boat and swam to shore.

Koji was shocked as I swam in, spitting blood. My nose was gushing a red river (class III) down my face. I was swearing up a storm about my broken nose. Although I was a tad p\*ssed, I smiled as Koji documented the scene with his waterproof camera.

Koji guided me gingerly down the remaining sections of the river, trying to keep my face dry. As we approached the take out, the rafting tourists were pointing and staring. Every now and then I heard a whispered "Oh my god" or "That guy is really messed up." I was the freak show of the shuttle ride to the top of the river.

Once at the car our mission was to get to the Uniontown emergency room. (It was my second kayaking related trip to the emergency room in less than a month). The ER folks were quite fun. The nurses said that only out of towners visited the hospital with kayaking injuries. I reminded them that it is guys like me that give them job security. One nurse warned me to keep the wound clean if I were to engage in any 'dirty activities'. I assured them that, not being married nor having a girlfriend, the chances of being involved in 'dirty activities' was highly unlikely. I don't think she will use that phrase again.

In good spirits we headed back to Virginia, talking about the day's adventure. I woke Monday morning feeling like a bullet was lodged between my eyes.

Tuesday morning arrived much sooner than I had hoped. It was the first work day after my nose crunching kayak trip and I was not looking forward to the ribbing the guys at the office were going to give me. But the guys at the office would have to wait.

Hot flashes, chills and fever, had kept me up much of the night. I had sweat through two T-shirts and drank close to two gallons of milk and juice; and that damn bullet was still lodged between my eyes. I decided to pop by my local hospital and report my new symptoms to the folks in the emergency room. What I was looking for was a piece of mind; someone to tell me that my symptoms were normal. But that is far from what the doctors would tell me.

"Mr. Henes, I am afraid that I am going to have to admit you to the hospital. The wound on your nose has become infected and infections in this area can be extremely dangerous. It does not take much for them to spread to the sinuses and brain." Within thirty minutes I was receiving IV antibiotics within my own private room at the Fair Oaks hospital.

Sitting back in my space age fold-o-bed with built in TV remote, I closed my eyes as the super cool medical tech, Linda, juiced the infection from the newly opened wound on my nose. Over the course of the next five days Linda would squeeze more pus from my face than anyone on the hospital staff. I truly believe she enjoyed it. It seemed that whenever she had a spare minute, she was in my room working my face.

Although the hot flashes and chills were gone, my first night at the hospital was not a good one. It seemed every time I managed to nod off, someone needed to take my tempera-

**Cheat  
Festive  
The  
Guys  
Underwear  
Festival  
Guys**

**Keeping Boaters Warm Since 1991**

**Polatec Fleece, Thermax, Coolmax,  
Polypro, Berber Pile, Thermostat,  
Factory 2nds, and overruns!**

**Our goal has always been to Give you  
the lowest prices!**

**We will not be undersold!**

**The Underwear Guys**

**47 N. Mill St.  
St. Clair PA 17970  
717-429-2578  
e-mail: [www.pa1.com/tug](http://www.pa1.com/tug)**





ture, check my breathing, or hook me into an IV.

At 5:30 the overhead light switched on and a cheery medical tech bidding me good morning walked in. "Hello Mr. Henes, could you please sit up; we need to take a blood sample."

"Holy s@#t !!!" I thought. "These guys are hard core. The sun isn't even up and they're thinking blood? What are they, vampires?"

Sitting up, I closed my eyes and cringed as she plunged the needle into my arm. Keeping my eyes closed, I waited for her to remove the needle and give me the much anticipated "Ok, I'm done." But that never came. When the needle was removed, the tech informed me she would need a second attempt. When she finally finished and turned off the light, I settled back into bed, thinking I was home free. But I was not yet out of the woods. As the tech left she said, "Alright Mr. Henes, that's it for now. I'll see you at 6:30 for a second sample." I learned to look forward to my morning blood samples as if they were double non-fat vanilla iced lattes. I hope you know I am kidding.

As the week went on I got to know my doctors and the hospital staff quite well. They are a fun bunch of hard working folks who made my stay... well... actually enjoyable. They were all interested in looking at the pictures which documented my infamous day of kayaking and exchanging stories of adventure and personal injury. My type of crowd! The week began to fly, until Thursday afternoon.

"Mr. Henes.... they're ready for you right now. Please remove all of your clothes, put on a gown, and hop up onto the stretcher as soon as you can." In a matter of minutes I was on my way to what I had been dreading all day. The operating room! A cool draft blew up my gown as two medical techs wheeled my stretcher to the OR staging area. When I arrived I was greeted by anesthesiologist Dr. Chu, who promptly asked "How is your tolerance for pain?"

"Excuse me?" I answered, hoping I had heard him wrong. "Your pain threshold... how much pain can you tolerate? Kayakers must have a high tolerance for pain." Not knowing how to answer his question and feeling a wee bit of fear, I just laid there with a dumb look on my face. Dr. Chu went on to explain that a decision regarding the amount of anesthetic to be used had not yet been made and that he was just testing the waters. But it was Dr. Soltany who would make the final call.

Dr. Soltany is an Ear, Nose and Throat specialist who had been my primary doctor all week. He is the one who decided that I should undergo a surgical procedure to clean up my wound and decrease the swelling in my face.

When Soltany arrived he was wearing his OR duds along with a hat that looked like something Princess Leawouldwear. The hat was smurf blue and wrapped around his head horizontally and vertically under his chin. I immediately burst into laughter and turned to Dr. Chu. "His hat is all the anesthetic I will need." We all laughed and agreed that we would try the procedure without an anesthetic.

When the doors to the OR opened I could sense the sterile environment. It was a huge room with bright white walls and lights that would make Mile High Stadium proud. The technology was overwhelming. Machines and monitors lined the room's perimeter. I would be plugged into just two them.

As I slid from the stretcher to the operating table, Dr. Soltany began to describe the procedure. He was going to remove the remaining stitches, pull back the skin surrounding the wound, and extract as much pus and infection as possible. When all was said and done he extracted about two cubic centimeters of unwanted debris.

In preparation for the procedure sensors were taped to my chest and stomach to measure my breathing. The room was now filled with the beep...beep...beep of my heart. This immediately reminded me of the Levis jeans


commercial where the ER patient's heart beats to tune of Soft Cell's 'Tainted Love'. I asked the OR crew if they would play 'Tainted Love' during the procedure, but they just laughed and said they had something much better in mind.

As the operation started bright lights shined through my closed eyes and Barry Manalow filled my ears. "Oh Mandy....you came and you gave without takin....and I need you so bad...oh Mandy...." I busted a stitch laughing (just an expression), but midway through the operation I was ready for some Metallica. The OR deejay sensed this and saved the day by spinning the ever popular Neil Diamond Christmas Album. The operation was over in no time.

My last couple of days in the hospital passed rather quickly and without event. I became an expert on Princess Di, royal protocol, and the paparazzi. At least there was good TV that week. Finally on Saturday I was switched from IV to oral antibiotics and discharged home.

*Editor's note: Alex Henes, a.k.a. Faceplant, is just learning to Kayak, but his friend Koji tells me he is destined for Whitewater greatness because he takes a licking and keeps on ticking.*





**For more information**

Call **800-255-5784**

E-Mail [rmoc@compuserve.com](mailto:rmoc@compuserve.com)

Surf <http://www.rmoc.com>

**R o c Mountain Outdoor Center**  
10281 Hwy. 50. Howard, Colorado 81233

The Arkansas River provides an extraordinary classroom for leading the art of paddling a kayak or canoe. RMOC is right in the middle of one hundred miles of beautiful river, ranging from easy first-day-in-a-boat water to the stuff experts dream about. We can always match your skills and desires with the right stretch of water.

We offer weekend seminars, private instruction, custom designed instructional packages and ACA Instructor and River Rescue certification.



# A Paddler's Legacy



## Dugald Bremner Remembered

by Tyler Williams

During the last eight years of my life, kayaking has evolved from "something to try" to a driving force. At every crucial point in my development as a kayaker one person was there to teach, nurture and share those moments with me. That person is Dugald Bremner.

When I was learning Dugald gave me just the right tip to make my roll successful. Three years later I hooked up with Dugald again as he led my eager, yet under skilled, body down my first class V run. A few more years passed before Dugald and I paddled together again. During the interim I lived and breathed kayaking, honing my skills so that I was on par with Dugald in some respects, and at least in his league in others. The culmination of my kayaking career came this spring when I made a first descent of Munds Canyon in Arizona, a creek dropping up to 400 feet per mile. My partner on this run was, of course, Dugald. At last we were truly paddling partners; looking at topo maps for new runs together, relying on each other's judgement as much as our own on the water.

In early June of this year Dugald drowned. He was on the rarely paddled Silver Fork, a steep creek in the American drainage of the Sierras. His boat pinned in a crack in the riverbed at the top of a rapid. The current forced his boat underwater so forcefully that he couldn't be extricated until 4 days later, when an expert team of rope rigging specialists pulled him free.

Upon receiving news of the tragic incident I passed through various stages one goes through when grieving the loss of a friend. I talked to my friends and family about it. I wrote about it. I cried about it. I asked myself why it happened. I asked myself why I kayak. I ran through my head, over and over, the horrible image I had conjured up of Dugald's body pinned in the rocks. All of these things helped me move closer to acceptance of the tragedy.

After the incident I wondered how or if my own paddling would be affected. My first day on the river hearing the news had surprisingly little impact on me. In fact, floating on a river seemed to be a healthy way to reflect on my friend, who was still there, now one with the current of a river far away. I paddled well that first day, though I wasn't tested since I was on a familiar and relatively easy river. I tried to convince myself that my boating had not been affected.

As I began running more difficult rapids, however, I noticed something in the back of my mind that had not been there before. I asked my friend Eric Brown, who risked his

own life attempting to pull Dugald from the fatal pin, what he had learned from the experience. What he told me will alter the way I look at rapids for the rest of my life. He said to look at and consider the entire rapid, including all the potential hazards; not just a piece of the rapid or the line you plan to take. This approach sounds logical and obvious, but it is, in fact, a vast departure from how I was looking at rapids before losing my boating partner. When Dugald and I were running rivers this spring, and I was at the top of my game, I would look at a rapid and see a line almost immediately. It didn't matter what lay outside that line because I knew I wasn't going there. I had the confidence that I would be on the line that I picked.

This over confident approach has been significantly subdued since the drowning. The insidious roots of doubt have crept into my paddling psyche and moved into a headspace where once there was only focus. This fact was driven home on my last creek run, when I pinned on 2 logs in as many miles. I haven't paddled anything more than class III since.

I don't think, however, that I will quickly fade out of the sport. But the events of the past two months have caused me to re-evaluate why I kayak and what kayaking means to me. I am now more keenly aware of both of these things. I kayak for the thrill of the moment. I kayak for the sense of accomplishment that comes with running a big rapid. Most of all, I kayak because sometimes on the water I experience moments of total clarity and focus; when nothing else matters except making the next eddy. Life is simple and one hundred percent devoted to one cause. I need to have moments like this and kayaking is the only way I can have them.

But, while kayaking still is an important thing to me, it is no longer the only thing. I have rediscovered other joys in life, such as standing atop a mountain or road tripping with a friend without a strict paddling agenda to meet. As I try to figure out what direction my paddling is headed, I reflect on how my old paddling partner has positively influenced my direction. He showed me how to run rivers with respect. Dugald respected the river, all rivers, a great deal. Though he had earned a reputation as not just a good kayaker, but a brave one as well, he never took running big drops lightly. Every rapid Dugald ran was undertaken with great care, judgement and precision. What I admire most about Dugald was his drive to accomplish. He followed through with plans. There was rarely idle talk of potential adventures with Dugald. If you were willing to talk about running a river with Dugald, you had better be willing to paddle it as well, because he was.

In life Dugald taught me to roll a kayak and to paddle one. With his death I have learned to grieve and to understand why I love what I love. Thank you, Dugald, for teaching me, both in life and in death.



# Canoeing The New River.....

## By Train

(a true story)

By Brian Grzelak

Few yeople (since Navoleon marched into Russia) have been so unprepared for the adventure ahead. But it was the stuff that a young, fearless (i.e. foolish) guy like myself lives for, The Whitewater Canoe Trip!

I had just finished my freshman year in college. Cousin Joey was a married father, just experiencing the proverbial mid life crisis, "FOUR-OH!" No calculator was needed to tally up our collective boating experience. But my one previous float in a canoe was fun, so this would obviously be more fun, right?

Our waterway of choice was the misnamed New River in southern West Virginia. Actually, the New is one of the oldest rivers in North America. Its age is mirrored in the worn out mining towns that litter it's banks, scattered like the leftover beads on a candy necklace after you've eaten the good ones. But surrounding these tired pockets of despair is some of the prettiest scenery east of the Rockies. And the glistening New can be a real gem, ranging from placid float fishing pools, to the thunderous canyon stretch, to the unrunnable, spectacular cataracts of Sandstone Falls. Our chosen route ran from the tiny hamlet of Sandstone (below the falls) to the town of Thurmond. 30 miles of mostly class II-III whitewater and two fun filled days of male bonding.

Our plan was for one of us to stay with the boat at the put-in, while the other drove to the take-out then hitched back. WARNING! Trips planned around hitch-hiked shuttles frequently get off schedule. But our plans got off schedule before that part.

We arrived at the river early Saturday morning after a five hour drive in darkness. Rainy darkness. A downpouring kind of darkness. The kind of rain that got Noah's attention. The kind of rain that had, over several days, brought the river to flood stage according to the local radio station.

Doubts began to fill our minds. Inexperienced paddlers without any safety/rescue companions? Heavy camping gear with no flotation? Rain swollen river? No not that stuff. No, mostly the idea of paddling soaking wet for 8-10 hours. Then no camp fire and a long night in a tent with dubious waterproof capabilities. Yup, those are the doubts that clueless city boys have.

Discretion being the only part of valor, we opted for the Bonneville Lodge. Tucked away snugly in the front and back seats of my cousin's Pontiac Bonneville sedan (itself a rather substantial boat). We were parked at a picnic table roadside rest, nursing a couple of cold beers and listening to a baseball broadcast crackling over the mountain state airwaves.....it was male bonding at its best. Good night, Joey!

Sunday morning dawned like ...well, a new day. Yes it was no longer Saturday, but there was something else. It had stopped raining. Quick to improvise, we decided to paddle the first five miles of our original route. So I left Joey and our canoe in Sandstone and drove the Bonneville downriver to the takeout at Meadow Creek.

Most of the river valley carried a two lane highway and a parallel set of railroad tracks. Not wanting to count on limited local traffic, I decided to jog the five mile shuttle back to my cousin. Having run track and cross country in school, this seemed more of a sure bet than waiting for a ride.

I was just leaving town when the whining groans of a slowly departing coal train caught my ears. I looked over four sets of tracks in the adjacent rail yard to see a parade of black and gray hopper cars moving out like tired soldiers off to the Moscow campaign. But wouldn't you know, they marched toward Sandstone!

The thought process was brief. Save at least a half hour on the shuttle. Easily board



**WATERLINE CUSTOMER SERVICE: 1-600-945-3376**



and onboard a slow moving freighter as it lumbered up the valley. Plus, the thrill of living out one of my Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid fantasies. The train - I jumped her. She was easy.

At the end of each coal car was a small grated platform, just above and before the coupler. I stood there, clenching my fingers around the rungs of the ladder that rose to the top of the hopper. What a great idea, I thought, as the diesel behemoth gained speed along the New River shoreline. It wasn't until the first few buildings of Sandstone flicked by like reflectors on an interstate highway guardrail that I realized my dilemma. There, there was Joey, sitting patiently on the canoe, gazing out across the river in eager anticipation. But only a fool would jump from a train that was now passing cars on the parallel road like they were in slow motion. "Jooooooooooooey!!!" I yelled as the diesel roared, the cars moaned and the rails and ties tapped out their symphony of click-clack, click-clack, Joey's head never moved. I was in trouble.

Penniless and clueless, my only possession was fear. I started bargaining with the big guy upstairs. "Please, please get me off this thing and I'll never do anything so stupid again; never jump another train," I pleaded. Ten miles past Sandstone my prayers were answered as the train slowed to enter the rail yard at Hinton. Not risking the wait for a complete stop, I studied the weedy hillside that rolled down to the river. Hoping that someone would find my body before the turkey vultures, I picked a cushy (i.e. hard, rocky) landing pad and leapt.

Dazed, dizzy and slightly bloody; I nonetheless was alive. How did Butch and Sundance make it look so easy? I knew enough to lie low until the caboose passed by. Not long after I noticed another train, several tracks over, that was just starting to pull out of the yard, headed back to Sandstone headed back to Joey. I know, I know. I promised "never, never, never". But this was different. It was like an omen. The kind of act that in slightly different circumstances could start pilgrimages and cause the erection of a chapel, the printing of T-shirts. Those ten big Chesapeake and Ohio diesels were my meal ticket back to Joey, my own personal miracle. I jumped. Bigger and longer, maybe this train would never attain the speed of the first train, I wishfully rationalized. But even if it did, what was the downside? It would stop at the first rail yard in Meadow Creek, and I could just run back to Sandstone as per the original plan.

"Jooooooooooooey!!!" I screamed as the Hinton Bullet roared through Sandstone. Again his head never moved. But that was O.K., I thought calmly. This time I was more mature, confident, even a bit smug. Or at least as smug as you can get while hanging on the

end of a coal hopper rambling through West Virginia. Just five more miles till Meadow Creek and the end of this nightmare. Patiently I waited as a light drizzle started to fall.

Patiently I waited, patiently I watched, patiently I waved good-bye to Joey's Bonneville as we roared through Meadow Creek. I think we actually accelerated through the set of red lights on the tower at the end of

the rail yard. Fear quickly returned to nudge smugness back where it belonged: to that churning knot in the pit of your stomach that screams out 'WHOLE LOTTATROUBLE, BIG PROBLEM, NO SOLUTION!!!'

Onward we raced, well on our way to Albany N.Y., I was sure. I briefly entertained the idea of jumping again, only now we were moving at about 50 m.p.h. I went so far as to swing myself around to the side of the car

**New Toys!**

**WaterWare**

**Stohlquist**

**GORE-TEX**

**AIREX**

**STEATH**

at the best paddlin' shops...everywhere!

Free color catalog ■ dealer nearest you

**(800) 535-3565**

Photo: Eric Evans

[Http://www.Stohlquist-WaterWare.com](http://www.Stohlquist-WaterWare.com)

and down to the bottom step of the ladder. Even from here, the blur of rocks and brush was still just a blur. I recalled a high school classmate and his grotesquely mangled arm - the result of running into a soccer goal post, at far less than 50 m. p. h.! No sooner was I back up on the grated platform than I heard a terrible racket. It was the snapping of branches from trees that had grown too close to the rails. This "pruning" was being done by the side of the train that I had recently been hanging from. Whew! Close call! Another omen? Albany here we come.

Ten miles further down the line, the railroad chose to by-pass a long horseshoe meander in the river by blasting through a tunnel. A long, curving tunnel which, because of a Law of Physics that states "light will travel in a straight line," and because of years of steam engine soot, was DARK. Kinda like the dark you expect when its all over except that there wasn't any light at the end of this tunnel. At least not for a long time.

But things could only get so bad. Finally the train started to slow again, barely crawling as my hopper car exited the tunnel. A quick look around revealed no signs of civilization beyond a tall metal post festooned with red and green lights that must mean something to somebody, but obviously not the same thing to you and me. Maybe this is why they took trolleys off of our downtown streets. Anyhow, solution to me meant that road on the other side of the mountain. That road was now my meal ticket back to Joey. So, it was either over the mountain or through it.

Fortunately, a second set of tracks ran through the tunnel beside "my" train (that now sat still with its head and tail poking out of both ends). In hindsight I see that this set of tracks could have been meant for the Pennsylvania Flyer but, at the same time, my name was written all over them. Plus, I had a green light.

So into the tunnel I plunged, alternating strides between a lunging reach and a too short stutter as I attempted to step on ties that were seemingly positioned to make such a feat impossible. As daylight faded to black I stayed centered between the rails by waving a foot like a blind man waving his white tipped cane. About halfway through the tunnel the train started to move again, rail car couplers engaging like sticks of dynamite. Shell-shocked but undaunted, I pulled myself out of the tunnel at one end as the train exited the other.

The drizzle increased as I stood on the highway, hand, and thumb extended. Looking like something that the cat drug home, I nonetheless was successful in flagging down the first car that came by. A testimony to the generosity and compassion of the locals and to the fact that I was standing in the center of the road. After hearing my sad, sad story, a young man and his wife

offered to stuff me into the back seat, along with their three young children.

My ride would only go as far as the softball field at the local V.F.W. Jim-Bob was running late for a double-header. With tires squealing as he drifted in and out of his rain slicked lane, Jim-Bob was determined to make up lost time. The kids fussed and giggled, the wife chatted 'bout gettin' her hair done - they had lived through this horror movie so many times that even passing on a double yellow line had no effect. After 15 minutes, I longed for the hopper car.

My second ride was a bit more of a challenge. The old man in the pick-up nearly ran me down, intentionally, I believe. But 100 yards down the road sympathy or curiosity overcame him. He stopped, listened, grinned and hauled me all the way back to Sandstone. "Joooooooooeeeeey!" I yelled. This time, his head turned.

After hitching his own ride down to the empty Bonneville at Meadow Creek, Joey was almost ready to call the police. Now he was more than a little relieved at not having to report me missing to his aunt. Missing before we got in the water, no less. As I approached, he just cracked a slight grin that silently demanded, "This better be good!"

We still wound up canoeing that afternoon. Water crashed over our head, nearly swamping our boat. We rode the waves like the mechanical bull in Urban Cowboy. I periodically looked back at my cousin, paddling furiously, hooting and yelping at each big wave or drop. I enjoyed it too. A rather relaxing end to a busy day.

*Editor's Note: Please...please...Don't try this!!!*

## August 8, 1997 First Runby

### Ocean Shackleton

What a show you could have seen paddling on the River Green. Berg Wanderers gathered all around

making sure I wouldn't drown.

My very first try at this sport, I inhaled less than a quart, and only scraped my shins and knees,

while Phyllis got stung by some bees.

Snakes were playing in the suns we make our whitewater run. I wrenched my back and wore plumb out, maneuvering my kayak about.

They trained me for about one minute, then to the water ... I was in it!

Whirling, spinning, all about,  
I couldn't straighten my boat out!  
Backwards, over boulders mean,  
frightened of those things, unseen.  
Pork chop dinner after dark...  
Whitewater kayaking's a lark.  
I bet I look like Schwarzenegger  
next time I get on the river.

I'll do sit ups till I'm blue, and next time  
I'll paddle right through. The River Styx and  
all her daughters bring on those turbulent  
whitewaters!!!

*Editor's Note: The Carolina Berg Wanderers are a group of outdoor enthusiasts who most commonly paddle the Green, Nantanala, and Section 9 of the French Broad. Ocean Shackleton (a good whitewater name, don't you think?) is soon to be husband of one of the Bergs, Phyllis Nivens.*



# BIG BROTHER IS SURVEYING YOU

by Bill Hay

Like many boaters, I distrust authority, and for good reasons. One, of course, is that I boat precisely because I have a problem with authority. Personal idiosyncrasies aside, every river I can think of that has come under the influence of the authorities has suffered as a result (this is true in the East, at any rate; I have heard slightly different stories out West).

Think of it:

- The Lower Yough and its storm trooper park officials (including spies rooting out illicit drinking in the campgrounds), stupid rules, and total lack of regard for safe commercial rafting.

- The Ocoee; need I say more, but I will. I was once hassled there by a garbage collector (this is no lie) for parking my van in the *Loading Zone* at the take out. Only problem was, I was loading. Never did figure that one out, but I'm sure the garbage guy got off making me move my van and haul boats all the way across the road.

- How about the Gauley? Why are releases increasing in volume (but not duration) year after year? Don't ask me; I think 1500-2000 cfs is a great level. Ask the raft companies who like higher flows. And, camping on the Gauley? Well, I won't get into the numerous very damaging and unsightly roads built into the gorge by, you guessed it, raft companies, but I will mention the hordes of rafters blissfully camped in the gorge during Gauley Season. And, the Corps campground, Battle Run, rivals the campgrounds at the Yough. In fact, I was once threatened at length with arrest and trial in FEDERAL COURT for, this again is no lie, asking to drive in a pick up my paddling companion, boats, and gear because I had a small dog in the car (where I assured them he would remain until I left the campground).

- Oh, how about the New? Sure, it's a much better river now that the Park Service has taken over. Raft companies have no real restrictions on how many people they shove down the throat of the river, high cost, low return roads are built down into the gorge whenever it suits the raft companies (even if it is in direct contradiction to the Park Ser-

vice management plan), rude boating (by raft guides and video boaters in large groups), and noise, trash, crowds, and fun, fun, fun are the order of the day.

Well, I'm not one to ignore reality and reality is that whitewater boating is an opportunity and the world is full of opportunists, government officials among them. So, boaters, we need to adjust our attitude. I am here to help you; I am here to help you get over your unhealthy distrust of authority. These people are our friends. They want what's best for us. We can trust them. Believe me.

I was at the Upper Yough recently. Now, this is a river with a long and mixed history as a whitewater resource. It started as a relatively unknown hair run. Like many such rivers, there was a coterie of local boaters who pretty much invented the river. They defined the best lines, started many of the rumors and myths and set the style for paddling. The best lines weren't, the river wasn't nearly as hard or as dangerous as we were led to believe (but hard and dangerous enough), and the style was gonzo, straight ahead paddling.

Needless to say, friction between locals and boaters soon developed and the next chapter in the Upper Yough's history is one of vandalism, animosity, cultural clashes, and so forth. Asad, old story, but happily one that for now seems to have changed for the better. The gypsy raft companies have settled into respectable ongoing businesses in the quiet town of Friendsville, boaters do a reasonable job of keeping nudity and public drinking down to an acceptable level, the local economy has benefitted from paddlers' presence, break-ins have pretty much vanished, and the river has dropped a couple of notches on the international difficulty scale. It's a reasonably nice scene except for occasional overcrowded weekends, foul ups on the release schedule, not quite enough releases to satisfy everyone, and the like.

Nice, huh? Well, it's all going to change. I had my first inkling of this fact when I was up there earlier in the summer (I think it was July 4) and was greeted at the putin by a kid who asked me to complete a verbal survey. I

did so in my usual anti-authoritarian manner, giving gruff answers to insipid questions. I even did so again the next day when I was asked to repeat the exact same survey.

I forgot the kid (his name is Joey, by the way, and he's awkward and nice and trying to do his best without really understanding what is going on) in the rush of Gap Falls and merrily hopped my way down the river. Then, at Double Pencil Sharpener, I noticed a uniformed man with a clipboard. Suspicious thoughts re-entered my mind.

This past weekend, I again traveled to Friendsville for a weekend release and some conviviality with old friends. Don Ellis, good old Georgia boy and former open boater, was planning on re-entering the world of paddling with a trip north. We were to meet mutual friends for a weekend of good boatin', lies, and Corona.

Well, Friday I got to the putin and there was old Joey, clipboard in hand, still awkward and nice, to ask the same old survey questions. "No, I did not call for a release. Hell, no, I am not going to fish (except maybe old Don out of the water after National Falls). I traveled 300 miles. I've paddled the river 50 times. I answered this survey last time; can't you bother someone else."

Joey muttered something about having to fill out the form before one could paddle and I instantly made this into a conspiracy and related the dangers to my friends while we were on the river. I realized later that I had misheard old Joe; he was indeed my friend.

See, the next day, Don and I again arrived at the putin for a final day on the Yough before he headed off to the Gauley and I headed back to Virginia. In my ignorance, I attempted to head off Joey by siccing him on Don and another friend. "Hey, Joey, I answered the survey yesterday; why don't you ask these guys. They haven't done it yet."

But, Joey bulled ahead in time honored bureaucratic fashion and I again had to explain that I had not called for the release schedule, that I would never fish on the river unless I was out of peanut butter, that I had driven 300 miles and that I had paddled the river 50, no make that 51, times.

Duty completed, I turned to the task of pulling my sprayskirt up over all those Coronas. Joey turned to Don.

"Sir, did you call for the release." Don looked at me and I shrugged.

"No, suh, sure didn't."

"Good. Now, do you plan on fishing."

"Naw." I offered that we might be chumming that day if Don didn't do a little better, but Joey didn't get it. Don gave me one of his "I'll kick yo' lily white butt" looks.

"All right, how far did you drive to get here?"

"800 miles," Don's south Georgia accent deepened with pride. Joey, for whom 800 miles is the distance from Friendsville to the moon, looked up to see if his leg was being

pulled, but one glance at Don's good ole boy countenance convinced him this was not the case.

"How many times have you paddled the river?" Joey went on. I asked if swimming counted.

Don gave me another hard look before answering, "Six or seven."

"What's your age?"

The air stilled, the river, only recently arrived, quieted in the background, and I stopped mid-tug like a deer catching a foreign scent on a crisp December morning.

"44."

"Wait a minute, wait just a minute!" I cried in outrage. "You didn't ask me my age."

Joey was stunned, he stuttered, he scuffed his foot in embarrassment, and then he admitted the awful truth, "Well, usually I just guess."

My scientific instincts were outraged by this, "You just guess! How can you just guess! The future of the planet is at stake and you just guess. Well, what did you guess for me?"

Don grinned and Joey became even redder in the face and I prepared to call for a congressional hearing, "Well, 35-40."

Now, I looked at Don, I thanked the lord for small gifts from the government, and I patted Joey on the back and told him what a

good and important job he was doing and how the results of his important work would set the course of this river for generations to come (generations that, thanks to my new found youth, I would be part of).

Don was muttering and blowing up the air bags on his Dagger at the same time as Joey wandered off to resume his position at the picnic table over by the warning sign (I think it says Don't Paddle This River; You Might Get Hurt). But I didn't let this matter alone for long, naw suh.

"See, Ellis, here we have proof, scientific proof that, not only am I younger than Mayo Gravatt (who is 51), but that I am younger than you (who is 44). In fact, scientific proof that I am between 35 and 40." I went off to find someone my own age to paddle with.

So, you see, the surveys on the Upper Yough are not a threat. We can all relax. The state is indeed looking after our best interests. The river will be managed for the benefit of paddlers, not for commercial interests, exploitation, taxation, mining companies, landowners, bureaucrats in Annapolis, snail darters, or Bosnians. No, it will be the last best refuge for the real boater.

I had a wonderful run that day. Made every tough move, impressed lots of young women, surfed every wave including a few

that don't even exist. In other words, I floated on Cloud Nine right on down the lovely, friendly Upper Yough.

Then, at Friendsville, I instantly caught a ride back up to the putin with a beautiful young woman, and walked to my truck to let my dogs out and have a well deserved Corona. The dogs yelped in pleasure at the return of their rejuvenated master and I watched them scamper happily around the quiet, isolated field where the Yough comes through Sang Run. Then, I noticed a flyer plastered to my, and everyone else's windshield. I walked over and pulled it from under the windshield wiper and opened it.

## ATTENTION SANG RUN BOATER FIELD

Effective immediately all pets must be kept on leashes and may not be left unattended. This policy is due to numerous complaints of dogs barking and running loose, especially when left unattended while boaters paddle down the river.

**Beginning in 1998, all pets left unattended may be removed to the Garrett County Animal Shelter and the owner cited.**

I looked at my truck parked in the shade in this quiet spot instead of in the sun down at the take out. I looked at the quiet area, the nearest house being over 1/4 mile away and wondered how the authorities drummed up these "numerous" complaints in such a rural area. I thought of old Joey and his survey and my recently renewed faith in science was shaken. But, I looked at the nice field and beautiful spot and envisioned a future when uniformed guards patrol the putin to the Yough (like at the New) and garbage collectors rule the nation, and raft companies have built a shopping mall at Triple Drop, and dogs are shot on sight, and my faith in government was restored. Thank you Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

All Rights Reserved  
Bill Hay  
September 9, 1997

## NANTAHALA OUTDOOR CENTER

Slay the same-old-hum-drum-fax-phone-memo-monster...

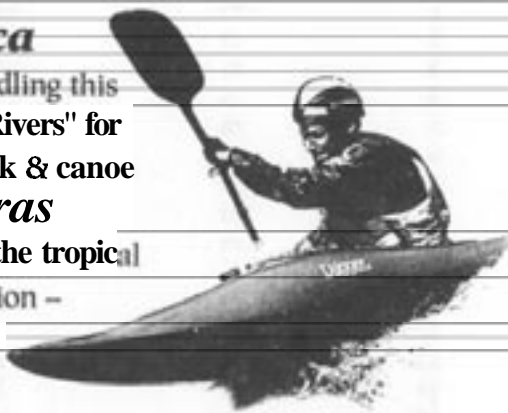
Free the paddling beast within you.

### Costa Rica

Go adventure paddling this fall - "Week of Rivers" for intermediate kayak & canoe  
**Honduras**

Escape winter on the tropical

Rio Sico Expedition -  
intermediate  
kayak & canoe.



Call NOC ADVENTURE TRAVEL for a free catalog.  
888/662-1662 ext 333 • <http://www.nocweb.com>  
Email: [adtrav\\_noc.com](mailto:adtrav_noc.com)

## Rule of Three on Upper Yough Race Day

by Lynn Aycock

I look forward to participating in the Upper Yough Race each August. My only dilemma is in making the transition from paddling the river with a crowd to being alone (at times) on race day. I was raised to believe there is that safety in threes. (One to stay with an "injured boater and one to go for help.) So—it is mentally difficult for me to race alone.

As luck would have it this year it rained and the Yough was running 2.4. The water was muddy. Kathy Howerton, Liz Garland and I had planned for months to have a separate class for women OC-1's (instead of being grouped with the OC-1 men again). We believed we needed at least three women to pull it off, so regardless of level or circumstances, we committed to the race. But due to the high muddy water, we decided that the three of us should start together as a team. We would keep track of our own time and any delays we caused each other ... because ... there is safety in threes.

Kathy experienced a separation in her shoulder while running the Twisting Falls section of the Elk a few months back and needs surgery. But she delayed the operation until after the Upper Yough and Gauley Races

were over. In truth, Kathy had no business running the river anyway - much less racing it!

Kathy borrowed a Desender from Nolan Whitesell because it was drier and more stable than what she had. Liz was in her Dagger Ocoee and I was paddling a Whitesell Whirlwind.

In the end Liz and I decided Kathy should receive a sportsmanship award from us for sacrificing her usual race time to rescue us. I was the first mishap. Because the level was higher than I was familiar with, I had a difficult time running rapids dry. I took on too much water at Triple Drop and ended up in the hole at the bottom. It backended me and I swam. Kathy rescued me and my boat, but the boat didn't stay in the eddy like we told it to. Kathy took off through National Falls chasing it and ended up flipping and rolling two or three times. Of course, this was really good for a shoulder that needed surgery anyway. Despite the fact that I waved Kathy and Liz on, they were determined to stay together, as the OC-1 Women's team.

This was just as well because Liz was next. Below Tommy's hole at Little Niagara, Liz went for the boof on the left. But the hole

got her and she swam. She was not as lucky as I. Her knee hit a sharp rock and the gash she received later required three stitches at the Garrett County Hospital. But Liz was a trooper and got back in her boat to finish the race.

In spite of my swim, me breaking four wooden gunnals, Liz's swim, the gash on her knee, and our generally sloppy boating, we all paddled together across the finish line in a whopping 1 hour and 17 minutes. We are sure the boaters that had great times in the 30s and 40s didn't have near the fun and excitement we did!

After the race we took Liz to the hospital for a tetanus shot and stitches. But the black cloud was still hanging over us, because Liz lost her keys and we were stuck at the put in for a good 30 minutes. Finally we cried "Uncle" (we had enough) and found them. We made it back in time to join the party and enjoy the band.

Sowedidit - established our own women's OC-1 class and finished the race... thanks to team effort. And a great bonding time was had by all!

## The Glorious Upper Yough Race

1997 Results

| <u>Last, First Name</u> | <u>Finish Time</u> | <u>Finish Rank</u> | <u>Gender</u> | <u>Class</u> | <u>Class, Gender, Rank</u> |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Zbel, Roger             | 0:27:40            | 1                  | m             | wwkl         | 1                          |
| Weld, John              | 0:29:10            | 2                  | m             | wwkl         | 2                          |
| Kauffman, Steve         | 0:29:17            | 3                  | m             | wwkl         | 3                          |
| Newton, Ted             | 0:29:25            | 4                  | m             | wh           | 1                          |
| Homberg, Brian          | 0:29:47            | 5                  | m             | wwkl         | 4                          |
| Snyder, Jeff            | 0:29:48            | 6                  | m             | wwkl         | 5                          |
| Whitemore, Jess         | 0:30:02            | 7                  | m             | wh           | 2                          |
| Gusic, Rick             | 0:31:21            | 8                  | m             | wh           | 3                          |
| Stough, Scott           | 0:31:42            | 9                  | m             | wh           | 4                          |
| Hartridge, Bobby        | 0:32:08            | 10                 | m             | wh           | 5                          |
| Stump, Charles          | 0:32:09            | 11                 | m             | kl           | 1                          |
| Hoda, Paul              | 0:32:34            | 12                 | m             | wh           | 6                          |
| Weld, Kara              | 0:32:48            | 13                 | w             | kl           | 1                          |
| Olivier, Kenneth        | 0:32:51            | 14                 | m             | kl           | 2                          |
| O'Brien, Chara          | 0:33:23            | 15                 | w             | kl           | 2                          |
| Miller, Robert          | 0:33:34            | 16                 | m             | kl           | 3                          |
| Cornwell-Herrera        | 0:33:54            | 17                 | m             | k2           | 1                          |
| Huber, Don              | 0:34:02            | 18                 | m             | kl           | 4                          |
| Laffey, Colleen         | 0:34:03            | 19                 | w             | wh           | 1                          |
| Helms, Nathan           | 0:34:15            | 20                 | m             | kl           | 5                          |
| Chaney, Rick            | 0:34:28            | 21                 | m             | kl           | 6                          |
| Nelson, Jeffrey S.      | 0:35:19            | 22                 | m             | kl           | 7                          |
| Kyser, Ken              | 0:35:53            | 23                 | m             | kl           | 8                          |



| <u>Last. First Name</u> | <u>Finish Time</u> | <u>Finish Rank</u> | <u>Gender</u> | <u>Class</u> | <u>Class.Gender.Rank</u> |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Burns, Michael          | 0:36:48            | 24                 | m             | kl           | 9                        |
| Bokur, Charles          | 0:37:16            | 25                 | m             | kl           | 10                       |
| Heller, Bill            | 0:37:23            | 26                 | m             | kl           | 11                       |
| Bassage, Dave           | 0:38:54            | 27                 | m             | kl           | 12                       |
| McCarty, Mike           | 0:39:08            | 28                 | m             | kl           | 13                       |
| Koehnlein, Karen        | 0:40:00            | 29                 | w             | kl           | 3                        |
| Weibking, Henry         | 0:40:45            | 30                 | m             | ts           | 1                        |
| Loller, Hanley          | 0:41:17            | 31                 | m             | hpkl         | 1                        |
| Norton, Patric C.       | 0:42:53            | 32                 | m             | kl           | 14                       |
| Vermill, Catfish        | 0:46:16            | 33                 | m             | kl           | 15                       |
| Jolly, Brian            | 0:46:54            | 34                 | m             | kl           | 16                       |
| Spangler, Tim           | 0:48:48            | 35                 | m             | oc           | 1                        |
| McGowan, Brad           | 0:49:25            | 36                 | m             | kl           | 17                       |
| Derdorf, John           | 0:50:14            | 37                 | m             | oc           | 2                        |
| Kruger, Ken             | 0:54:13            | 38                 | m             | kl           | 18                       |
| Joffrion, Paul          | 0:57:39            | 39                 | m             | oc           | 3                        |
| Lawry, Ben              | 1:07:21            | 40                 | m             | wh           | 7                        |
| Mitchell, Susan         | 1:15:00            | 41                 | w             | bb           | 1                        |
| Cooper, Cynthia         | 1:15:02            | 42                 | w             | bb           | 2                        |
| Blockinger, Fred        | 1:15:08            | 43                 | m             | bb           | 1                        |
| Holt, John Killian      | 1:15:37            | 44                 | m             | bb           | 2                        |
| Aycock, Lynn            | 1:17:36            | 45                 | w             | oc           | 1                        |
| Howerton, Kathy         | 1:17:36            | 45                 | w             | oc           | 1                        |
| Garland, Liz            | 1:17:36            | 45                 | w             | oc           | 1                        |
| Wallace, Bob            | 1:38:25            | 46                 | m             | kl           | 19                       |

**Prize Donors:**

Mountain Surf Inc.      Mountain Surf Inc.  
 Laurel Highlands River Tours      Precision Rafting  
 Wilderness Voyagers Outfitters      High Mountain Sports  
 Ohiopyle Trading Post      Betty Davis  
 Ohiopyle Prints      Wisp Ski Resort

Aquatic Center  
 Rudys  
 Greg Rouse  
 Greatful Heads  
 Chuck Stump

Special thanks to the prize begging committee, Nancy Zbel and Ann Keirski; computerized results by David Boyde; Finish line timer-Joe Greiner; Start line and prize announcer-David Bassage. And many more who helped make this a totally glorious occasion.  
 Jesse Whittemore  
 Race Organizer

# Rich Weiss He Just Paddled Hard

by Brian Homberg  
Fellow Team Member

I've known Rich for the past 15 years. I became good friends with him about 10 years ago when I started really getting into slalom. I was his training partner for three years while we trained for Atlanta. It's difficult to sum up all those years and experiences on the river into a simple tribute. Rich was a role model and ideal training partner who was never critical or overly competitive. Even though we competed against each other daily tooth and nail, we would always discuss moves and work together to solve river problems. It was so refreshing to work with such a poised intelligent, amateur athlete with an incredible work ethic.

Rich took a real interest in my success and made many others feel that way. He walked the course with me at the '92 Olympic

Trials after he made the team to help me prepare for my run. I finally got to be on the Team with him in '93, when he won the silver in Mezzanna, Italy. He was humble, very **hardcore** and really loved what he did. He was super motivated and really fun to paddle with. Rich loved to get up early and get the most out of a day. He had an intense determination to succeed and overcome adversity. A great sportsman who wasn't really into hype and a lot of glamour.

He was one of the best big water paddlers I've seen. Lets get rid of misconceptions that because he was a racer, he lacked whitewater ability. He loved it. The bigger the better. Very comfortable with it. I saw him help many people who got in trouble on the river. He and I had that rare and special synergy

when river running, like we were wing men who spurred each other on with that sixth sense to see each other through.

His racing style was based mostly upon hammering the course and being really fit for no nonsense, fast runs. Rich wasn't into the latest fads in equipment or having picture perfect technique, just paddling hard. He didn't complain.

It's such a fluke that he died on the river, like Richard Petty dying on the expressway or something. He and his wife Rosi were inseparable. As a new father and husband, it hits me hard that their expectant child will have to learn about him from other people. He was definitely THE MAN. In this age of spoiled, freaky, outspoken professional athletes, Rich's poise and sportsmanship are in sharp contrast. Believe me, he was on another level. The standard he set and the legacy he leaves behind is now his gift to us.

# CANOEING FOR KIDS

## "Paddling with a Purpose"

by Clay Brennecke

All money raised from the Carolina Paddlesports Film Festival benefits a wonderful charity called **Canoeing for Kids**. Canoeing for Kids takes underprivileged children on Canoe trips and also sends children diagnosed with cancer to Camp Kemo. Canoeing for Kids has taken over 2,700 underprivileged children from various children's homes and children's hospitals on canoe trips!

You may have heard about Canoeing for Kids when the founder, Columbian Jay Alley, paddled 2,054 miles from New York to New Orleans in the Summer flood of 1993. He did so to raise money after officially starting the charity. Recently, Jay paddled from Columbia, S.C. to Charleston, S.C. in 27 hours straight! He did so to raise publicity for the Lowcountry Canoe-a-thon, a Canoeing for Kids fund-raiser held at historic Middleton Plantation. This years Lowcountry Canoe-A-Thon was held on September 27.

Says Jay Alley, "Canoeing for Kids was founded to provide free paddling for underprivileged children. Many factors made me decide to create the organization. The love of children, the love of paddling, the love of the outdoors and a strong belief in all of these



things combined."

In the Summer of 1997, hardly a day passed when Canoeing for Kids wasn't taking a group of children down Columbia's Saluda river. On some days, Canoeing for Kids would take 2 trips per day. Imagine leading up to 80 children in a fleet of 40 canoes down a river! Throw in the fact that you have to set a shuttle, distribute pfd's, paddles, and sunscreen, and provide refreshments in the tropical 95 degree South Carolina Summer heat, and, well, that makes for a long day. Then, do it all over again that same day!

Jay Alley is one of us. He is a paddler, and a skilled one at that! When Canoeing for Kids

activities slow down after the Summer months, Alley can be found on the Chattooga, Ocoee, Gauley or Russell Fork rivers. But, he is always pressing on to fulfill the goals he has set for Canoeing for Kids. The morning of AWA's Gauley Fest for example, Jay was teaching underprivileged children in West Virginia how to paddle canoes. Canoeing for Kids had a small booth at the Gauley Fest. Look for Canoeing for Kids at the Folly Beach Surf Rodeo and at the Nantahala Outdoor Center's Guest Appreciation Sale the weekend of October 24<sup>th</sup>.

Says Alley, "Our most urgent goal is obtaining riverfront property (on Columbia's Saluda river) to build a clubhouse for all kids to go to after school. They would be able to earn letters in Paddlesports like they would for playing football, basketball and baseball. Ofcourse, it would all be for free, all we lack is a physical location."

Canoeing for Kids can be reached at (803) 772-3050  
P.O. Box 1614  
Columbia, SC 29206

WEB PAGE: <http://pwl.netcom.com/~canoe/cfk/CanoeingForKids.htm>

## CAROLINA PADDLESPORTS FILM FESTIVAL



Drawing from the finest whitewater and sea kayak films available, the Carolina Paddlesports Film Festival provides both whitewater and sea-kayaking enthusiasts an opportunity to view cutting-edge paddle films in the comfort of a full-sized movie theater packed with fellow paddlers. The Carolina Paddlesports Film Festival has featured 5 world-premier videos in its short history and has allowed local boaters the opportunity to have their video-boating skills recognized. In past years, the film-makers themselves have introduced their films, and have fielded questions from the audience.

|           |             |                |                         |
|-----------|-------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Tuesday   | December 16 | Asheville, NC  | The Fine Arts Theater   |
| Wednesday | December 17 | Greenville, SC | Coffee Underground      |
| Thursday  | December 18 | Columbia, SC   | The Nickelodeon Theater |
| Friday    | December 19 | Charleston, SC | The Terrace Theatre     |
| Wednesday | January 21  | Atlanta, GA    | Patagonia Atlanta       |

7:00pm and 9:00pm in each city

Admission is Six Dollars

All movie theaters sell beer

\*Possible showings in Richmond, VA and Washington DC TBA

We plan on showing different videos in each time slot with a raffle of great prizes occurring between the 7:00pm & 9:00pm showing. A silent-auction will give paddlers the opportunity

to bid on instructional packages of the bidders choice from The Nantahala Outdoor Center, and also on new kayaks from both Dagger and Savage Designs. Event T-shirts donated by Patagonia will be available for sale, as well as Canoeing for Kids T-shirts and sweatshirts.

The proceeds from the festival are donated to "CANOEING FOR KIDS" -a Columbia, South Carolina based charity dedicated to helping under privileged children and children with cancer. Canoeing for Kids has taken over 2,700 children from various children's homes and children's hospitals on canoe trips free of charge.

For more information please contact :  
Clay Brennecke  
4720 Portobello Road  
Columbia, SC 29206  
(803) 777-9181  
Email: [filmfestival@columbiasc.com](mailto:filmfestival@columbiasc.com)

or check out the web page:  
[www.columbiasc.com](http://www.columbiasc.com)

The festival is grateful for the generous donations from following sponsors:

Patagonia, Dagger Canoe & Kayak, Savage Designs, and The Nantahala Outdoor Center.

**CANOE AND KAYAK TOURING OUTFITTERS**  
**DRY BAGS • PFD'S • INFLATABLES • NEOPRENE CLOTHING • ACCESSORIES**

**PLUS:**

- BACKPACKING
- FAMILY CAMPING
- RUGGED CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

**NAME BRANDS AT THE LOWEST PRICES**

**CALL OR WRITE FOR OUR FREE CATALOG**

**CAMP MOR**  
 For a Free Catalog, Call 1-800-230-2151 or write  
 PO BOX 700-AWA  
 SADDLE RIVER, N.J. 07458-0700

**Return to 1939**

**Join Dr. Stephen Houston and Maya Expeditions to re-discover the archaeological site of Piedras Negras**

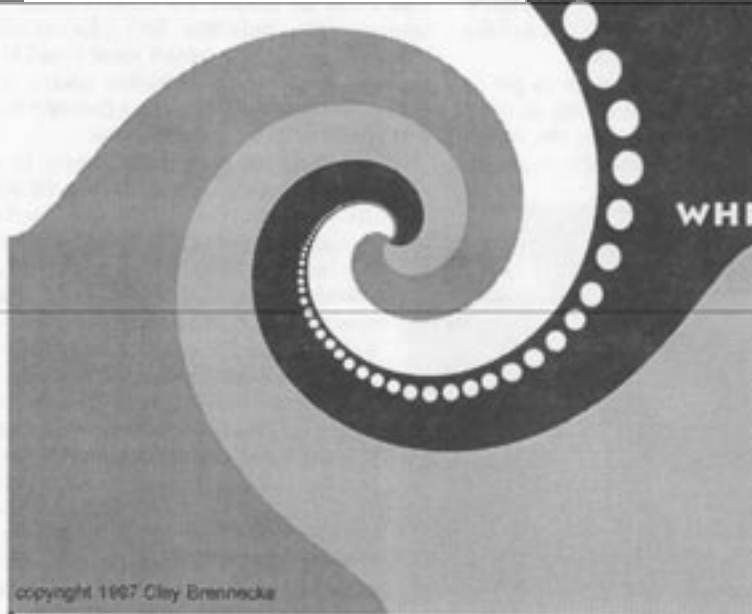
Maya Expeditions has been named by Dr. Houston as the official tour operator for the Piedras Negras Archaeological Project March -June, 1997

Take advantage of the opportunity to receive exclusive lectures and tours by the archaeologists on site during excavations

Maya Expeditions: [mayaexp@guate.net](mailto:mayaexp@guate.net)  
 Fax: 011(502)994-7748 Tel: (502)337-4666  
 call Tammy or Ramiro

Special Note: All Paddlers receive 25% discount off of regular whitewater rafting tours. AWA members an additional 5%

# CAROLINA PADDLESPOOTS FILM FESTIVAL



copyright 1997 Clay Brennecke

- DEC.16 ASHEVILLE NC FINE ARTS THEATER
  - DEC.17 GREENVILLE SC COFFEE UNDERGROUND
  - DEC.18 COLUMBIA SC NICKELODEON
  - DEC.19 CHARLESTON SC TERRACE THEATRE
  - JAN. 21 ATLANTA, GA PATAGONIA ATLANTA
- 7:00PM '6 BUCKS' 9:00PM  
[WWW.COLUMBIASC.COM](http://WWW.COLUMBIASC.COM)

## WHITewater & SEA KAYAK VIDEOS

AUCTION RAFFLE T-SHIRTS COOL STUFF  
 A BENEFIT FOR  
**CANOEING FOR KIDS**

POP OPEN A COLD-ONE WHILE GROOVIN WITH SOME SHREDDING PADDLE VIDEOS, AND TAKE HOME A NEW BOAT OR TWO! JOIN THE PADDLE COMMUNITY DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON FOR A GREAT TIME TO HELP OUT A WONDERFUL CHARITY! CHECK OUT OUR WEB PAGE! EMAIL US! [FILMFESTIVAL@COLUMBIASC.COM](mailto:FILMFESTIVAL@COLUMBIASC.COM)

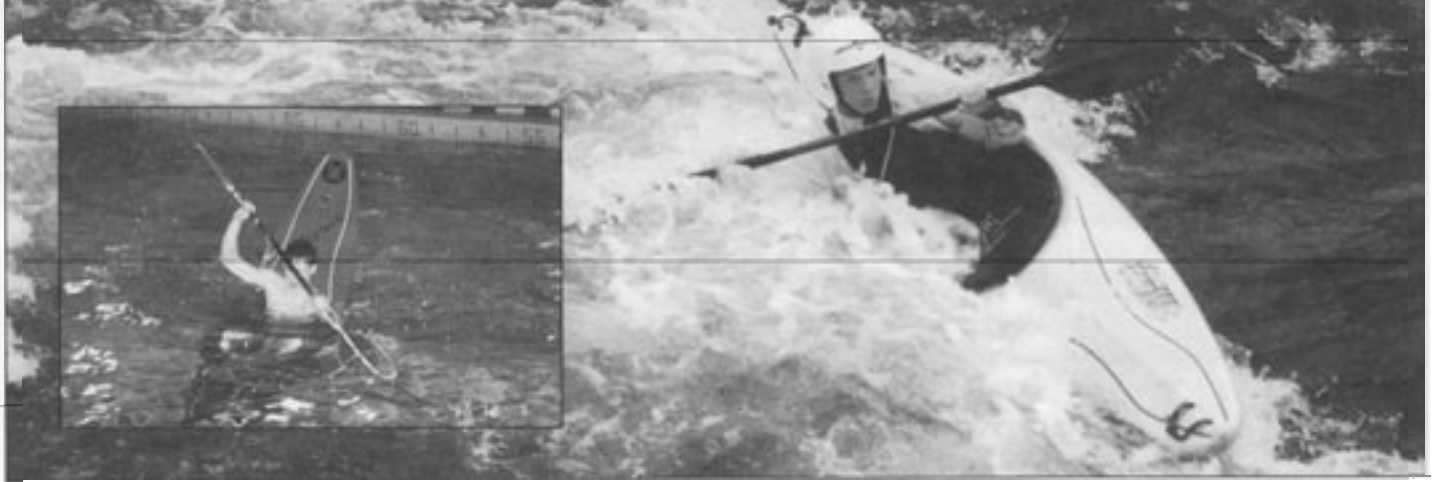
TO SUBMIT A VIDEO, BECOME A SPONSOR, MAKE A DONATION:  
**CLAY BRENNECKE**  
 4720 PORTOBELLO RD  
 COLUMBIA SC 29206

**Indoor Paddle Festival ...to go!**

**patagonia** NANTAHALA OUTDOOR CENTER

# A Teenager Learns To Kayak... With A Little Help From A Friend

by Christopher Marriott



One day I was helping out at my mom's shop, The New Port Florist, when this funny looking man named Ward Dailey came in. He looked like he had just jumped out of comic strip. He had been in the shop before bugging my mom to let my brother and I try kayaking. On this day, he caught me at the shop and he was all excited about a roll clinic he was teaching at Remsen High School. He was a very bold person and wanted me, to say "yes" and go to this roll clinic. At first I didn't know what kayaking was. After all, I was only 13 years old. Finally I said "Sure, my brother and I would try it." He took us home to grab some shorts and towels and we were off.

At this clinic I was a little uncomfortable in my boat. At first it felt funny because my heels started to turn numb! I just figured "This isn't for me!" I hopped out of that stupid boat, looked in it, and saw large sheets of ice. I immediately pulled them out of the bottom of the boat. After that we started to learn the basics, wet exit, and the buddy rescue. At this point I thought "This is a piece of cake!" We then started learning the great sacred art of rolling. This is not as easy as most kayakers make it look. The roll I mastered that night would never pass for a real roll.

I didn't get into another kayak for about six months. Then Ward came into my mom's shop and he wanted my brother and I to go with him and Guy Rocker to a play spot on the Black River, called Hammonds Hole. We said "Sure!" and off we went. As we paddled up stream on the flat water it felt like our boats had minds of their own. That darn boat would not quit swaying back and forth. As we

came into a large bay we practiced our rolls. This was definitely not like the pool clinic in Remsen. I finally accomplished the art of rolling, but my brother did not.

About mid-winter Ward started doing pool clinics at my high school, South Lewis. We did these clinics all winter with him. He also started clinics at Fort Drum. It was at these clinics that Ziggy (a friend of Ward's, not mine) pushed me off the diving board in my kayak. This doesn't sound too bad except the diving board was twenty feet in the air and they would not let me have my paddle. Going off the diving board gives the paddler the effect of going off big drops.

By now I was getting anxious to get on the river. Then came the spring of 1996. Ward called and wanted to run the Moose River. I said "Sure!" A friend of ours got his

roll down in the winter pool clinics and decided to go with us. My brother's roll was not strong enough to go on the river. We drove up Moose River Road until we arrived at a bridge called McKeever Bridge.

The second we put in Ward tried to teach us how to ferry across the river. Brit (a friend) immediately flipped because of the strong current and couldn't hit his roll. We had learned the buddy rescue so I tried to be a hero. All of a sudden I flipped and I didn't know what hit me. What I did figure out is that I had an instant ice cream headache because of the cold water. Brit did a wet exit instead of drowning. I don't know how I hit my roll, but I'm sure it looked pretty pathetic. We managed to make it through the first rapids with no complications.

Halfway to our take out we came to a rapid where the river splits. On the left was a slide, but on the right was about a six foot drop with a nasty-whirly hole at the bottom. Dave Hoover, who is a friend of ours, said "Follow me." Big mistake! I don't think Dave can see very well without his glasses. He started right and I followed, then without warning I flipped and panicked. I was about to go over the drop up side down. I soon learned that there are two major types of rolls, a very easy pool roll and the not so easy white water roll. Since I could not hit my roll I did the next best thing, I chucked the stupid paddle and clenched on to the nearest rock. As soon as the other paddlers came I knew

I was safe. Then came the fun, I had to empty my boat. I thought to myself "I'll never do that again." We finally made it to Iron Bridge Rapid, the takeout. Ward and the other skilled paddlers paddled on down the river.



Top photo: Moose River. Inset top: South Lewis Pool Clinic. Above: Otter Creek, Eaterville Rapids

Ward didn't feel that either Brit or I were able to handle the class 3-4 rapids that were down stream.

Ward and I have become great friends; actually I think of him as my second dad. So any time Ward paddles, I paddle. Ward decided that it was time to surf the big waves. He took me up to the Route 3 wave on the Black River in Watertown. He told me, "Paddle up to it at a 45 degree angle, throw in a rutter, and you're on!" That was exactly what I did. For approximately three seconds I enjoyed surfing. Then I flipped. Ward thinks I did a perfect roll, when in actuality my paddle hit the bottom and I just popped up. If he thinks it was a great roll, who am I to disappoint him. We did that for a few rotations. Once I got the hang of it, it was a lot of fun.

Later we went to Hole Brothers, where there is a perfect hole for surfing. There are three holes at this spot. The hole on river right is called Doggie Bone, the one in the middle is called Hole Brothers, and the one on river left is called Doggie Tail. When we got down to the river bank Ward said to me "Don't play in this one called Doggie Tail, but you can play in that one over there." I misunderstood him and jumped into Doggie Tail. This hole just happened to be possessive. After a minute or two of side surfing, I tried to get out of it. The darn thing would not let me go. First it flipped me, then it flushed me out. Somehow I managed to roll back up.

Ward came over and said, "You're not supposed to go in there, go in this one over here." I headed over to Hole Brothers, where there were a lot of paddlers waiting to play.

As I was waiting for my chance

at the hole, each paddler gave me advice and tips. The one I remember most was, "If you flip make sure to hit your roll, because if you don't, then you will be swimming a long way." Finally it was my turn. I paddled up to it, threw in a hard stroke with my paddle, and I was in. I only side surfed for a little while, then I flipped. I reached up until I could feel cold air on my knuckles, went out to 90 degrees, and rolled. I thought to my self, "At least I'm not swimming down stream." If you were under water while I was doing my roll you would have heard my thoughts.

After a few times surfing the hole, I started doing 360's. I soon learned how to handle that vicious beast. Once I was in the hole for a good 4 to 5 minutes. Bernie Wooten, a fellow paddler playing the hole that day, threatened to go in and knock me out of there. Sometimes these paddlers are so childish, they throw rocks at the Hole Hog (the paddler playing in the hole). It's probably a good thing that their moms don't hear the



language that is coming out of their mouths! Sometimes I'm more afraid of those animals than I am of the meanest, nastiest hole that will let you check in but you can never leave! Ward and I played these throughout the summer. Later, as my skills got better, we went down the Black River Gorge.

The Black River Gorge is just a little bit north of Watertown. We put in at Hole Brothers. From there its a short flat water paddle, approximately 1 and 1/2 miles, to the first rapid. First we came to some rapids called Knife's Edge. When we started the paddle I told Ward that I wanted to portage (to carry around) Knife's Edge. Do you think he would tell me it was Knife's Edge, Heck no, he let me paddle the stupid thing. It's called Knife's Edge because the bottom of the river is made up of Iron Ore and Limestone. Most paddlers will not paddle Knife's Edge unless they know the "true line." This rapid is dangerous because if you flip it is like a cheese grater and the chance of getting cut up is about 99%. Also, at the end of the rapid is a hole called Mary's hole, which can be fatal.

As we entered the rapid, I did not realize



Top: Hale Brother, Black River. Above: South Sandy Creek

it was Knife's Edge. All I knew was that I did not want to paddle them. The rapid starts out with big waves, then about twenty yards down stream is the Heater, a really nasty hole. In order to get past it you must drop into the Coffin's Lid, which is just one big up stream U. It was there where I almost flipped, but I quickly threw a high brace, which prevented me from going all the way over. At the end of the rapid all the safety boaters stop and wait for the rafts to come down though. Ward was explaining where Mary's Hole was. Then I

realized I had just run Knife's Edge.

After Knife's edge is a short flat water paddle until you reach a zig dam, which you have to portage. After the dam is a rapid called Three Rock. Three Rock is more like three thousand rocks; a lot of the rocks are jagged. The rapid starts out with these rocks and after a lot of maneuvering you come to the spot where it splits. You can run both ways, but the preferred

line is to the left.

The next rapid is called Zig-Zag. In this rapid you pretty much start off to the right, then move left, then back right. That's how it gets its name.

The next rapid is called Panic Rock. It was named this because in the center there is a house size rock. As you pull out of the eddy at the top, it appears that all the water is going into the rock. After the rock there is not much to worry about.

Cruncher is the next rapid. I figure it got its name because someone really got the snout beat out of them when they tried to play it. Cruncher is a river wide, nasty, possessive hole. At certain water levels paddlers will play it, but I will not. Those paddlers, I think, are pretty daring. I at least try to use my noggin, most of the time.

Rooster Tail is next. I would not classify this as a rapid because it is just an eighteen foot dam with sort of a loop at the bottom. Rooster Tail is the last named rapid, but there are still some more unnamed rapids with great surf waves in them.

In my few years of paddling, I have become addicted to whitewater kayaking. If I am paddling one given day, then I refuse to do anything else until I am done paddling. Kayaking has also influenced where I work now. I am fifteen years old and I am working at Whitewater Challengers. I guide rafting trips down the Moose River in my kayak during the summer. The best part is, they pay me for this.

On my days off work, I usually paddle a two-hundred yard whitewater section on Otter Creek, or I go up to Hole brothers, in Watertown, to play all day.

I would like to thank Ward Dailey and his wife, Nancy Ward,

for showing me how to get into the sport and for taking me kayaking. And I would especially like to thank Nancy for tolerating the both of us.

*Editors note: We hope to make KidzKorner a regular American Whitewater feature. So, if you are 16 or less and have a good whitewater story to tell, send it to Bob Gedekoh, RD#4, Box 228, Elizabeth, PA 15037. (Check the writer's guidelines near the front of this issue for more details.)*



a nanometer thicker than some of the Paris-fashion-show, waif-model type hats you've been lusting after? You bet. Are you, a river driver or some g.d. fashion slave? You have the right to help lower the risk of death or serious injury, clearly your own. (It's right there in the Constitution...somewhere...we think.) Exercise that right with Cascade.



CASCADE, FULL-BOA



CASCADE, SHORTIE



CASCADE, WITH  
REMOVABLE CHIN BAR

SPORT HELMETS, INC.

800-537-1702

315-453-3073

HELMETS@SPORTHELMETS.COM

# Acid Rock

by Dr. Surf aka  
Scott C. Reuman

## WASHINGTON, D.C. CIA Headquarters

"Think globally, Act locally!" we are told. Do your part, no matter how small, and when all those tiny efforts accumulate, so, too, will their effects. But 'small' has become a problem of great magnitude. Not since the Cambrian evolution revolution has the Earth been so threatened. New data leaked to the press by sympathetic agents reveals that the world's rivers are threatened by a new class of life. Our global vision of mankind reaching new horizons, new galaxies, new watersheds may regress to fight or flight. Evidence indicates that human society's got competition from the world of microscopic fauna. Deep in a drop of river water there are hundreds of micro-scopic things. (They're probably in your drinking water, too, but you can be comfortable knowing that your local government protects you from any that are harmful.) You probably studied those *micro-critters* in ninth-grade biology class, ten or twenty or thirty years ago. Or forty. The teacher had you go to the local stagnant pond, the same puddle that you once tricked your little brother into swimming in and then spent the next two hours pulling off leaches to avoid Mom's wrath. For the teacher's assignment, you placed a drop of pond water on a glass microscope slide, added cover slip, and focused under medium power. There, almost miraculously, were hundreds of creatures swimming and cavorting, dancing and darting, yon and hither. Paramecium and amoeba, ciliated tubules and flagellated protozoans that looked like furry hotdogs with tails, and truncated V-shaped things all of which you were asked to sketch and identify in a taxonomy text that read like a politician's design for responsibility isolation. Have you looked at those droplets lately? I'll bet you

haven't, because those little animalcules have been organizing and planning to overpower the American Way. They're taking over dam building! The facts presented here are well known to the CIA, but even that agency has dared not make public their findings to the companies and bureaucracies soon to be affected. What the CIA learned is too frightening. It could mean the downfall of what some say is humanity's greatest engineering achievement, others claim as the toxic development of mankind's mechanical maturation. What I'm talking about is nothing less than the demolition of all the rivers in the nation, possibly in the world. The world's rivers will never again be free, and it will cost our civilization dearly! This information is so critical, so massive, that even publications of less-than-stellar reputation, like *The Star*, *The Enquirer*, and *Soap News*, have refused to publish the data. "Leaks" from CIA files have provided some details. Dams create stagnant water. Any high school student knows that. If the nation's educational systems were better, any junior high student would know that. When high levels of nutrients run off farmlands that have been overfertilized to grow more high-fructose corn syrup, the nutrients enter waterways and generations of those little pond critters now feed and reproduce and evolve faster than any other species on earth. Every time a new dam is erected, new breeding territory is created in regions that surround our country's urban areas, military bases, and wildernesses. The danger is, you see, they've learned how to erect their own dams! It's very simple. So simple in fact, that under the noses of the best government and academic scientists no one even suspected. First, to help the junior high students reading this, a quick geology lesson... Limestone is made of zillions of skeletons. Yes, skeletons. Compacted over unimaginably long time spans by natural trash compactors, limestone can accumulate into walls far greater than the Great Wall of China. Far taller than the Egyptian pyramids. Far more permanent than the Mir space station. The Redwall limestone of the Grand Canyon, 700 feet thick, is made of skeletons, crushed and compacted and turned into what appears to you or me as not very different from concrete. Ok. Enough geology. What those little pond creatures have learned as they rapidly evolved behind dams built by the Corps of Engineers and TVA and Bureau of Wreck-the-Nation was that concrete dams are no different than kidney stones or limestone walls. They've learned to excrete dams!! The Corps, in an effort to maintain its dam-building preeminence, has been secretly trying to harness and train those billions of little squirming denizens. As yet, the pond-drop plethora has resisted most attempts at

control and is rapidly making plans to dam all remaining free-flowing streams. Even river sections between dams are in danger. And existing dams are being thickened to protect against eco-crazed environmentalists hoping to un-dam rivers. Rumor has it that the little Limestoneiums, as the species group has been collectively dubbed, have cross-bred with encephalitis viruses and infected Colorado Senator Ben Nighthorse-Campbell's brain which has already begun to show signs of calcification. He's calling for more dams to be built! This menace must be stopped before these king-size kidney stones block the urethra of our rivers. It may already be too late. Low-head dams have appeared on long-paddled sections of rivers throughout the West and Mid-west where the new species first submerged. The scientist who made the discovery refused to be interviewed at length saying only, "There's nothing that can be done. Once a biological agent has been released, it can't be recalled. Just ask Jeremy Rifkin." Corps agents have been observed releasing large quantities of milky solutions from tanker trucks labeled

## DamNation™ TIP TOP SECRET.

Only weeks later a dam emerged from the water, first creating a nice surf wave, then rising to make a serious low-head threat to life. Smooth and sheer. I've found the solution, but it will take a concerted effort by all dedicated river runners. Acid rain is destroying lakes and rivers and wetlands of the world. But acid rain can save us: it dissolves limestone and concrete. The primary source of these acid "precursors" as they are known, is exhaust from power plants and automobiles. Don't curse these precursors any more. You can help control the menace to our nation's rivers by turning on all the lights in the house, running your stereo when no one is listening, using your lawn mower more frequently, and, of course, driving to the river, maximizing the drive-to-boat time ratio. This will do a little damage to larger creatures such as fish and animals that drink from streams, possibly to humans, but heck, we've got to save the free-flowing rivers. I've printed bumper stickers reading, "ACID ISN'T JUST A BREAKFAST DRINK ANYMORE!" and "Don't Conserve, CONSUME!". I've promoted a new advanced academic degree program. Instead of the old-fashioned PhD, you can now earn the pH degree for only two-thirds the price; the lower your score, the better for our riparian romping. Act now to save America's free-flowing rivers. Join the thousands already fighting dams!

# DEEP TROUBLE

by Jonathan Katz

"I wanna squirt boat!" Chopper demanded, eating his first boiled chicken breast of the day at the breakfast table.

Omaha grimaced. Chopper sounded just like a four year old brat. Only difference was thirty years, and about 270 pounds.

"I wanna squirt boat, and I want it now!!!"

This time Omaha heard the edge in the big biker's voice. Chopper had been injecting high doses of steroids, to get ready for the heavyweight bodybuilding competition at the upcoming Gauley Festival, and the drugs were making him crazy. "Roid rage", they called it. Chopper had been eating nothing but chicken and broccoli. He was up to 307 and down to 2% body fat. If he came uncorked nobody in the vicinity was going to slow him down. Omaha had seen a lot of muscles when he was in prison, and muscles didn't scare him. Chopper had been in the Marine Corps and the NFL and possibly the Cub Scouts. Chopper scared him.

Omaha didn't bother to point out to Chopper that nobody manufactured a squirt boat that would fit a 307 pound paddler. Instead he sought out Moose Gunsmith, McBride—Omaha Chemical Company's former paddler turned webmaster.

"Best get Chopper what he wants, before he Tysons out on us," Omaha explained.

An hour later Gunsmith found a guy on the internet with the know-how to build what Chopper craved.

"His name's Richard Wickedmann. He's expensive, but McBride's got money he'll never live to spend. So I emailed the guy five grand and he's driving east."

Four days later an eighteen wheeler rolled up to the factory. It was a custom truck with glittering mag wheels, and on the side of the trailer was an airbrushed mural of a beauti-

ful naked woman riding a surfboard down an impossibly huge wave. Above the picture was written "The Shape of Things to Come."

Richard Wickedmann, the driver, had been weaned on good surf in Southern California. At fifteen he'd run away from home, west and south in search of the biggest waves in the ocean. He surfed thirty footers at the Banzai Pipeline before graduating to serious water at Bell's. Over the next seven years he rode all the big surf east of Vietnam.

Along the journey he mastered the art of cooking with polystyrene and fiberglass. Hand-shaped, one-of-a-kind Wickedmann surfboards brought \$2000 new in 1989. Richard shaped a dozen boards a year and spent the rest of his time surfing, drinking, drugging and trying to keep his harem satisfied. He lived like a king until March 19, 1992, when he pearled in typhoon surf and compound fractured his left arm. Sharks bit him twice before he washed up on shore. Mangled, nearly dead, he spent a month in intensive care before returning to the United States for reconstructive surgery. Late one night, zonked on Wild Turkey and percocet, he rear ended a Jeep with West Virginia plates and saw his first fiberglass squirt boat. Through thick fog a light flashed: put the surfer inside the board!! Thus Wickedmann found his life's work.

Wickedmann Kayaks are extremely rare and extremely expensive. Each is hand-cut to the individual owner. In the back of the trailer truck Richard had a complete plastic surgery center: everything he needed to build custom squirt boats from scratch. In one day he could fabricate a genuine Wickedmann Stiletto full-cut glass and kevlar attack submarine for anyone crazy enough to pay his fees and endure his methods.

Wickedmann took one look at Chopper and saw a glassmaster's challenge: a chance to build a truly razor boat for a truly monstrous boater. He did not waste words.

"You are one large mother" he said to Chopper, who nodded and flexed. It was terrifying.

"Let's start now," Wickedmann said, reach-



ing for his tape measure and calipers. "Get naked."

**Chopper had been paddling for ten years. He had absolutely no qualms about taking his clothes off in public.**

After measuring nearly every inch of Chopper's chiseled physique, Wickedmann opened the rear hatch on the trailer, revealing a fully equipped aquatic plastics laboratory and workshop. In the front end was a tank about ten feet long, shaped like a bathtub. He carefully filled it so that the liquid just touched the hairline on the sight glass bolted to the side of the tank.

"First, we must determine how much water you displace," he said. "Get in."

Slowly Chopper lowered his body into Wickedmann's vat.

The plastic surgeon checked the level in the glass, stared at Chopper's body and frowned. "You float like turd. Where do you paddle?"

"Eastern rivers, mostly," Chopper replied, "Maine to West Virginia."

Wickedmann nodded and removed a bottle from a shelf. Its white label bore the label, T.E.R.P.

"Terp?" Chopper asked, "You're not going to put turpentine in this water while I'm in it?"

"No," Wickedmann replied, pouring a pint of vile smelling brown liquid into Chopper's bath. "I need to match buoyancy of the waters you will be paddling in. So I add Typical Eastern River Pollution."

Chopper gagged.

Wickedmann worked fast. He took a carbon fiber hull blank, mounted a seat in it, and sat Chopper down. Then he fitted a cockpit blank over Chopper's body. Using a laser, he cut away the excess material from both halves of the hull, until they fit together like the shells of a clam. Then he wrapped the seam with black plastic tape. Using a blowtorch he melted the tape, sealing the edges together to form a thin, light, rigid kayak hull, without pillars.

"No center support?" Chopper asked.

"None. These hulls don't wrap very often, and when they do its almost always caused by paddler error."

"And?"

"Nobody who paddles my boats makes the same mistake twice."

While Chopper sat in the boat, Wickedmann shaped it to his body. "The trick here is to get rid of all of the excess volume," the shaper said. He was using a baseball bat and a small flame-thrower to mold the plastic around Chopper's toes and knees. The big man looked uncomfortable, but he just sat there.

After Wickedmann got a shape he liked,

he put asprayskirt on Chopper and glued it to his torso with contact cement. Then he put

Chopper back into the boat and connected a vacuum pump to the drain plug in the stern.

"We need to suck the extra air out of the boat," he said. "In this business, volume is the enemy."

By the time Wickedmann was done, you could see the outline of Chopper's legs in the deck. Wickedmann smiled. "Now it has to cure," he said. He painted a thick layer of white goop on Chopper's face, neck and arms.

"What the . . ." Chopper demanded.

"Its zinc oxide ointment, so that the ultraviolet doesn't cook you too bad. It takes eight hours to cure the boat, and you have to stay in the hull, or else it will deform."

Wickedmann turned on two huge banks of sunlamps. Under the thick layer of zinc oxide, Chopper looked like the Pillsbury Doughboy. He flinched under the impact of the UV.

"You expect me to sit in this boat for eight hours? What if I have to pee?"

"You can pee," Wickedmann replied. "Poopie too, if you want. Just don't get out of the boat."

The girl whose picture was airbrushed onto the side of the truck came into the lab. Chopper recognized her because she was naked. She looked just like her picture.

"I need you, Richard. Please come," she said.

Wickedmann turned to Chopper. "This is Gladys," he said. "We'll be back in eight hours." He slipped his arm around her waist, and led her behind a curtain in the back of the lab. While Chopper slow-cooked in the hull of his squirt boat, Wickedmann and Gladys repeatedly made, complex love behind the curtain. The noises were remarkable.

After precisely eight hours they stopped and Wickedmann turned off the sunlamps. Other than a slight sheen of sweat and some scratch marks on his face he looked well rested. Chopper, cramped, hungry, dehydrated, exhausted,

horny and sunburned, stumbled off to his kitchen, where he drank a gallon of Gatorade and passed out.

The next day the shaper told Chopper that his custom-built, razor-cut Wickedmann Stiletto had a finished volume of 29.3 gallons.

The statistic troubled Ken Omaha. "Isn't that kind of radical for a three hundred pound boater?"

"You betcha," Wickedmann replied. "Lets go see what the big man's got."

They checked the internet and called around for water. The Boston Hotline reported that the Lower Ashuelot below Hinsdale, New Hampshire was

"very high and dangerous." Wickedmann said it sounded ideal.

At the put in the river was running wide and deep, and there were a series of outstanding play waves stretching into the distance. Chopper looked lousy. His nose was peeling and his eyes were red. He stared at the Stiletto in dismay. Try as he might, he could not squeeze himself into the hull. Even after Wickedmann smeared him with a thick layer of Vaseline, he simply could not fit in.

"Can't understand it," McBride lamented, "You fit yesterday."

Wickedmann led the docile Chopper into the back of his truck, put him on the scale, and came out shaking his head.

"You're up seven pounds since yesterday. What the hell did you drink last night?"

Chopper hung his head and owned up to the Gatorade.

Wickedmann nodded. "Its the potassium. Makes you hold water. No wonder you got so fat. Eat these." He handed the big man half a dozen small white pills.

Chopper was opposed to drugs on moral grounds; the only ones he ever took were anabolic steroids — "Natural substances," he explained.

"What are these?" he asked.

"Lasix. Diuretic. P\*%# you off, so you'll drop the weight and fit in the boat."

Chopper shook his head. "No way."

"Just eat them and shut up. If they don't work I'll inject you with laxative."

By noon Chopper could just cram his bulk into the boat. He looked absurdly top-heavy in the tiny craft, and bizarre in the river gear he had modified for his first squirt experience. He had a diver's snorkel glued to the side of his helmet. Across his shoulders, on top of his life vest, he wore a bulky backpack.

"What's that Boy Scout crap?" Wickedmann asked.

"Parachute," Chopper said, looking mean.

**Chopper shoved off and spun into the first eddy. The boat was totally awash. If he did not paddle hard forward, he would sink like a submarine. McBride and Omaha followed him down.**

At the play waves it became apparent that for Chopper, buoyancy was a thing of the past. The concave bow of the Stiletto sliced through the meat of the wave like a well-honed prison shank. He could no more sit on top of a wave than he could balance on the

head of a pin. In fact, he flailed with his paddle just to keep his face above water.

Chopper was game, and paddled hard, but he simply did not have enough boat for his body. He ran the top section of river absolutely underwater, with only his head showing. The eddy lines were wide and deep, swirling walls of current and countercurrent. They rotated him round and round, sometimes end over end, spinning him out of control like an underwater helicopter.

The swirling currents in an eddy wall kicked Chopper back into the meat of the river, and the torrent spun him helplessly downstream. His helmet was totally under. He was huffing hard on the snorkel, which emitted sucking and moaning sounds and clouds of steam. He stuck his hands straight up in the air, like a customer in a bank robbery, and waved his paddle frantically trying to wrench his body back to the surface. No way. Chopper was under. He did a mystery move a quarter mile long.

Far downstream Chopper's face finally broke water. He gasped and panted. Omaha, following a hundred yards behind, realized the big man was in trouble: he was being swept inexorably toward the dam, a twenty foot drop into a maelstrom of huge water known as Paper Rapid. Omaha paddled savagely trying to close the gap, but even as he thought he was making headway Chopper's head disappeared again.

The bow of Chopper's boat broke the water for an instant as his stern hung on the lip of the dam. Then it disappeared again and he slid backwards over the brink.

Omaha paddled hard. There was no time to portage. He had no choice but to follow Chopper's plunge or let his friend die!

Abruptly Omaha realized that in fact he had a choice. He didn't have to risk a broken neck running the dam. He could simply let Chopper fend for himself or drown in the rapid. Unaccustomed to introspection, Omaha found himself asking, "How much do I really like Chopper, anyway?"

And the more he thought about the question, the more he realized that he could live without the big man.

They had nothing in common. Omaha smoked heroin to stay mellow. Chopper mainlined steroids and twitched with rage. Omaha had a modest beer belly, considering the gallons of Keystone he habitually swilled.

Chopper weighed 305 pounds, rock solid and 2% body fat. Omaha struggled on his knees to muscle an open canoe down rapids. Chopper sat back and took it easy in a kayak. Omaha loved girls. Chopper could care less, but even so had stolen Omaha's beloved Arden Tygart, ridden off with her on the back of his Harley. Omaha closed his eyes. It had been two years now, but he could still taste her. Let the bastard drown!

Omaha ran the dam anyway, for kicks, and braced upright in the big hydraulic at its base. He worked his way out the downstream corner of the hole. From a wavetop he stared downstream. In the distance he caught a glimpse of the stern of Chopper's boat, rising out of the water, and suddenly slamming into a boulder. Sickly, Omaha realized exactly where Chopper was on the river: pinned hard on Autopsy Rock.

Faced now with the certainty of Chopper's death, Omaha decided that he wasn't such a bad guy after all. Grimly he fought his way through the rapids, knowing full well that rescue in the middle of that flood was nearly impossible.

Chopper was pinned like an insect in a museum. The kevlar composite of the boat had snagged hard on the rough surface of the boulder, and the force of the water plastered him in place. He was completely underwater, and the waves splashing over the top of the snorkel were sending great gouts of water into his lungs. He gasped and coughed and gasped and coughed and fought for each molecule of air. Drowningsucks, he thought.

Chopper could not move. Time to get out of the boat, he decided. He was mortified at the prospect of a swim, but at least he would not die of embarrassment. He placed both hands on the cockpit rim and shoved hard.

Inside the kayak Chopper's body did not budge. He might as well have been embedded in cement. Wickedmann's squirt boat was just too damn tight! Chopper cursed himself for drinking Gatorade the night before, for passing up the laxatives. I'm in deep trouble, he thought. I am going to die because I am full of s#@\*!

Steroid-amplified rage ripped through his body. Savagely he shoved his feet against the bulkhead and strained, and with a great, ripping wrench he burst Wickedmann's kayak apart at the seams. The upper half of the boat was clamped to his body by the sprayskirt; the lower half was whisked away by the river. He was free!

But no sooner did Chopper rejoice in his

freedom than the river played its last and most devilish trick. The current caught the underside of the rear deck and folded it against Chopper's back, squashing him face-first into the unyielding stone. The savage force of the current crushed him into a hollow in the boulder, with no chance of escape. Certain death was here. Now.

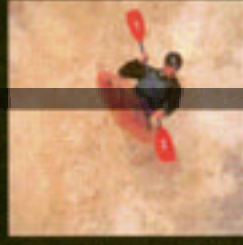
Upstream, Omaha powered desperately for the eddy behind Autopsy Rock. Could he get there in time? Once there, could he do anything useful?? If Chopper died, could he get Arden back??? Was the hassle worth the effort???

While Omaha pondered these issues, Chopper took his final inventory. Yes, he decided. This time he was actually going to die. There was no possible way he could wiggle free of this one, and no sense trying to save face. Swimming was a fate worse than death, and what he was about to do was even more humiliating than going for a swim. With his last dying breath, Chopper raised his left hand to the parachute pack still strapped to his shoulders and pulled the ripcord.

The blast nearly knocked Omaha into the river. Below the upstream face of Autopsy Rock, a huge yellow shape suddenly emerged from the water. It grew and grew into a great sphere, nearly thirty feet in diameter, bright sunshine yellow, painted with the loopy black eyes and postcoital grin of Smiley Face. The buoyant yellow balloon peeled Chopper off the boulder and yanked him out of the river. The helium balloon rose quickly into the sky, trailing below it Chopper's body, half-drowned and still wearing the upper deck of Wickedmann's shattered squirt boat. The shroud lines fouled in a tree on the riverbank, leaving Chopper hanging about ten feet above the water, happily breathing air and waving to his fans. Now all eyes could read the black lettering on the back of Smiley's head: "Chopper's Last Gasp Self Rescue Balloon."

For specs and price list email: [choper@ix.netcom.com](mailto:choper@ix.netcom.com)

©Jonathan Katz, August 5, 1997



WAVE  
SPORT



For photo credits, paddlers and locations, write or call Wave Sport P.O. Box 775207 Steamboat Springs, CO 80477 Phone: 970-736-0080 Fax: 970-736-0078

...high performance, big air time! 423.882.0404  
www.dagger.com

performance kayaks, canoes, sit-on-tops & accessories...

# american whitewater

**AWA Journal**

PO Box 636  
Margaretville, NY 12455

Change Service Requested

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT #622  
NEWARK OHIO