

american whitewater

November/December 2000

An American Hero

page 4



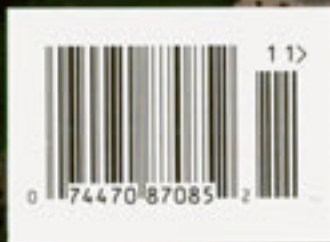
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Gore Canyon Festival

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BANKSIDE IN A TENT. STAKING YOUR TURF IN A CROWDED RV. THE BACK BED OF A LUXURIOUSLY DECKED-OUT PICK-UP. NO MATTER WHAT YOU KNOW THAT YOUR SOUL SLEEPS MORE PEACEFULLY ALONGSIDE THE RIVER THAN ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE UNIVERSE. WE KNOW OURSELVES TO IT. AND YOU CAN SEE IT IN OUR WHITEWATER BOAT DESIGNS. BOATS LIKE THE NEW AMP— A REVOLUTIONARY NEW DESIGN THE CURRENT OF THE RIVER. THIS SERIOUSLY ADVANCED WHITEWATER SCENARIO WILL PUSH KAYAKING TO A NEW EXTREME SO V IT GETS A GOOD NIGHT'S REST. BECAUSE, THANKS TO NEW BOATS LIKE THE AMP, ITS GONNA NEED IT **FOR A FREE CATALOG**

american whitewater

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Laurie, Ruthie, Margot, and Marc at Hoover Dam, spring of 1999.

Pioneer River Conservationist

Marc Reisner Remembered

By Pete Skinner
Honorary Board Member
American Whitewater

Marc Reisner, one of the greatest friends whitewater has ever had, died of cancer at his home in California in late July. AW's long time Director, Pete Skinner, tells the story of his friendship with Marc and how rivers provided their common bond.

Besides his wonderful family - two girls and wife, Lawrie, Marc leaves behind a literary legacy few can boast. His major oeuvre, *Cadillac Desert*, tells the tale of determined engineers and conniving bureaucrats who conspired to plug up the West's major river arteries, leaving behind pauperized riverine ecosystems, vast irrigated farms, and profligate human colonies totally dependent on gigantic water projects which transport lifeblood hundreds of miles to deserts God never intended be inhabited or farmed. This book and his many speeches (including one at an AW Board Meeting several years ago) spawned a highly acclaimed PBS TV special about these water projects and their progeny and the recent Time Magazine Environment 2000 insert. Like Rachel Carson's work did for the environmental movement decades before, Marc's work has spawned a revolution in American thinking about the importance of free-flowing rivers. The emerging dam removal movement and a growing army of determined dam busters across the nation will echo his work and credo for decades to come.

AW will be joining other organizations and individuals in an effort to leverage Marc's great work for river restoration through the creation of a national Reisner River Fund.

Times were good — our salad days as my Mom used to call them. Life in the Big City of New York was incredible - great music, interesting women, scintillating friendships, extraordinary work, exquisite wines, and whitewater - lots of it full of adventure and exploration. My good buddy, Marc, was the editor of National Resource's Defense Council's *Amicus Journal* which he nursed from nothing into a highly respected environmental publication and I was the Attorney General's engineer pursuing polluters with gusto. Approaching the top of our games in the late 1970s, man - the World was our oyster!

It was about that time that Marc Reisner and I shared a New Jersey apartment directly across the Hudson River from Manhattan's 47th Street - a moat that let us safely park our cars and boats and river pals but hummed madly only a mile or so away through the Lincoln Tunnel. Jim Muhlhahn lived upstairs and helped us print parts of the AWA Journal while Rob Lesser camped out on the street in his trademark VW bus. Boats, paddles, sprayskirts, fiberglass, and resin filled the little garage out back.

We were submerged in the river experience — we talked rivers, thought rivers, dreamt rivers, paddled rivers — indulging ourselves with the pictures, the tall tales, the

crazy people, and the ever more exotic equipment, much of which we built ourselves. Hardly a weekend, winter, or summer went by that one or both of us didn't escape the tumult of the Big Apple to explore watery destinations all across America. Most evenings were spent patching fiberglass dings and scanning topo sheets and road maps for the next *Big Adventure*. We were part of a very small coterie of paddlers who were at the heart of the earliest explosion of the whitewater sport in America. When a kayak-topped car zipped by in the other lane, we usually knew whom it was — that is how few whitewater freaks there were then.

Oddly enough, Marc loathed sprayskirts — fearful of being trapped in a fiberglass straight jacket. As we kayakers tumbled down flooded flumes like Bulls Bridge on the Housatonic in our Mark IV fiberglass knock-offs, Marc would blithely slide by in his rubber ducky and wave wistfully. He envied our joyful descents into horrifying hydraulics and delicate moves in the rock gardens but still found his own ways to join us in these moments in the eddies and around the campfire. He gloried in our feats of daring even more than we did. A simple river trip for us translated into an epic voyage in his mind. His fertile imagination turned us into Jason and the Argonauts.



Manhattan's West Side from Pete and Marc's Weehawken home.

While he may have envied the death-defying drops I descended, I envied his skills with words and the mountains his writing moved much more. His extraordinary facility to weave ideas, facts, figures and personalities into grand tableaux of social and environmental conflagrations greatly exceeded any paddling skills I possessed. No one I ever read (save Michener and McFee) could paint mental pictures of grand theater and visions geographic so well. No one else could cough up on the pages of a book the bile of avarice; pride and raw ambition that drove dozens of determined men out West to desecrate a huge portion of America's river portfolio. And he could tell stories about our whitewater exploits that were even more exciting to hear than they were to experience! He made us feel even larger than our very own life.

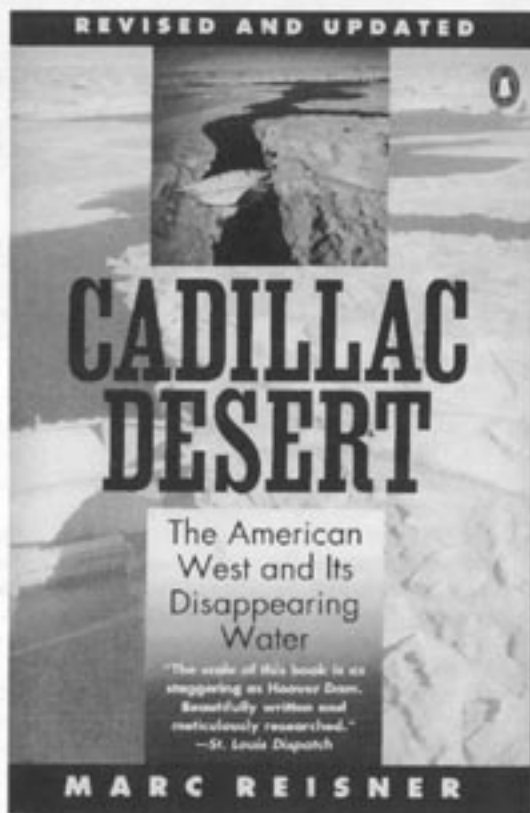
One day in 1979, he returned to our Weehawken table and announced that he was leaving to pioneer *the book* on western water projects, taking Horace Greeley's homily, "Go West, young man" to heart. He had won the coveted Alicia Patterson Journalism Fellowship and a big advance on this book. We were shocked and saddened, but exultant that this story would finally be told and Marc would tell it.

"One late November night in 1980 I was flying over the state of Utah on my way back to California. I walked back to the rear door of the airplane and stood for a long time at the door's tiny aperture, squinting out at Utah.... Emptiness. There was nothing down there on the earth - no towns, no light, no signs of civilization at all... there were no forests, no pastures, no lakes, no rivers; there was no fruited plain... a lot of emptiness amid a civilization whose success was achieved on the pretension that natural obstacles do not exist." (Page 1, Cadillac Desert)

With his departure, things started to change. Lesser returned to Idaho and I too, moved—north to settle near Albany, morphing into a whitewater resource defender. Marc disappeared into libraries, offices, interviews, newspapers, and archives. We'd talk off and on, but that magical moment in time had moved on. As years passed

without a book emerging, I began to fear the worst—writer's block or some other dread western affliction had befallen my favorite grammatical guru.

"By the late 1970s, there were 1,251 major reservoirs in California, and every significant river - save one - had been dammed at least once. The Stanislaus River is dammed fourteen times on its short run to the sea." (Page 9)



The fact was, however, that Marc had become obsessed with the story. He became immersed in the chronicles of the manifest destiny of the American West - its epic stories of giant egos, blind ambition, huge expanses of land and "untapped" resources, torrid summers and frigid winters, droughts and deluges had mesmerized him and made the job he'd committed to larger than he had ever imagined. Within a couple of years, his

finances had disappeared and times were tough. "I was nearly reduced to eating out of garbage cans," he told me afterward. While that diet eventually made his intestines rebel, he never lost his sense of wonder and the ability to visualize the greatness of people and their total commitment to goals, both the absurd and the visionary. He could do no less in his writing to do justice to their sacrifices and accomplishments.

"The [first Los Angeles] aqueduct took six years to build. The Great Wall of China and the Panama Canal were bigger jobs... but no one had ever built anything so large across such merciless terrain.... The aqueduct would traverse some of the most scissile, fractionated, fault-splintered topography in North America. It would cover 223 miles, 53 of them in tunnels; where tunneling was too risky, there would be siphons whose acclivities and declivities exceeded fifty-grade." (Page 87)

"When I finally delivered my penultimate draft to my editor," he told me afterward, "he told me that 1200 pages just would not do—shrink it to 800... period." After Marc spent a few more wrenching months of text surgery (like removing a third of those 'unnecessary' organs in his baby), the seminal text on the West's perennial water wars, *Cadillac Desert*, was delivered in 1986 to rave reviews and front shelves in book stores.

Through this book, Marc became the ultimate winner of the western water wars; his book had struck the mother lode. He became a hit on the lecture circuit and helped broker new water management paradigms in California—among them new approaches to farming rice. The rave reviews poured in from book critics, among them one from Gladwyn Hill of the New York Times who called the book a "revealing, absorbing, often amusing and alarming report on where billions of their [taxpayer] dollars have gone..." The articles that followed from the book in one periodical after another changed people's views about water resources and galvanized some of them into dedicating their lives to conservation, much as Rachel Carson's writings did for me two decades earlier.

"Cadillac Desert details the powerful and sometimes baleful influence the Bureau of Reclamation has had on the West - pushing it inexorably toward an edge from which, sooner or later, it is bound to fall off.. Cadillac Desert is not going to be bedside reading for the millions; but millions ought to read it, because in its pages is visible the shape of a future that we have stubbornly refused to foresee." Wallace Stegner

Marc liked best to tell stories of the desecration of nature, bringing to each subject a keen sense of amused amazement and gut felt outrage. His extensive vignettes described vividly emotional dialogue and revealed the *sturm and drang* of great fortunes and grand designs being lost or won. He always sought out vivid people whose drive and vision provided the bright color for the ink in his pen.

"The vanishing groundwater in Texas, Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Nebraska is all part of the Ogallala

aquifer which holds two distinctions: one of being the largest discrete aquifer in the world, the other of being the fastest-disappearing aquifer in the world... 'What are you going to do with all that water?' asks Felix Sparks, the former head of the Colorado Water Conservation Board. 'Are you just going to leave it in the ground?' Not necessarily, one could reply... 'Well,' says Sparks, 'when we use it up, we'll just have to get more water from somewhere else.'" (Page 11)

The antagonists in Marc's book really came alive in page after page. Chief among them was Floyd Dominy, long time Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, the cavalry of engineers who created the ultimate pyramid scheme of fundamentally foolish dams and dysfunctional irrigation systems across the West. Thanks to Marc's prose, we can almost picture the guy without resorting to photos.

"Most Commissioners of Reclamation were dull, pious Mormons - or if not Mormon, and pious, then at least dull. Floyd Dominy was a two-fisted drinker, a gambler; he had a scabrous vocabulary and prodigious sex drive... Dominy was freewheeling and reckless, racing yellow lights and burning rubber in all three gears. He could be methodical, he

worked incredibly hard, he always did his homework... But he had a self-destructive impulse, a violent temper, and a compulsion to tempt fate. He could, for example, make a lifelong enemy of a very powerful politician over lunch." (Page 240)

Angry over Utah Governor Clyde's comment about the questionable economics of a proposed Reclamation dam in Utah, Dominy immediately struck back at Clyde at a 1962



Marc girded for battle on the Rogue in 1965.

national convention in front of three thousand dam supporters.

"Which is the greater counterfeit?' Dominy asked. 'The Bums Creek Project or the governor of Utah?' At the end, he thundered, 'Among all the many crosses Reclamation has to bear, I would say there is none greater than the hypocritical attitudes of people like my friend George Dewey Clyde!'" (Page 241)

When he tired in the early 1960s of the relatively squalid headquarters Reclamation in Denver, Building Fifty-four, Dominy snuck in a large appropriation for yet another "dam" into the federal appropriations bill — this time an absolutely functional high-rise which glowers down darkly even today from the foothills west of Denver.

"Dominy barked at his architects, 'I want a building like a dam.' What he got was a lot worse. Square as a cinder block, thuddingly banal, it is done in the Megaconglomerate style of the 1960s and 1970s... The Dominy Building ... is fixed, solid and sealed, as impervious to a rose's scent as to a typhoon... Thousands of Bureau engineers could leave their climate-controlled suburban homes, climb into their climate-con-

trolled cars, and drive to their climate-controlled, windowless new offices, never once encountering the real world." (Page 246)

The accomplished adulterer, Dominy made indiscretions one of his trademarks.

"Whenever and wherever he traveled, he wanted a woman for the night. He had no shame about propositioning anyone. He would tell a Bureau employee with a bad marriage that his was a hell of a good lay... Alice Dominy must have known... And there came a day when she had to find out for sure. She drove into town to the hotel where... he liked to conduct his

trysts... and knocked on the door. A woman opened up. Floyd Dominy, her husband, was in the back of the room. 'He just told her to go home and mind her own business,' says one of Dominy's confidants." (Page 259)

Marc observes that Dominy may have done Reclamation "more harm than good" in spite of all his successes.

The pyramid scheme began to teeter too much for even politicians to invest more in. The end finally came most uncharacteristically.

"The man assigned to tell Floyd Dominy that he was fired was a... born again Christian from Wyoming named James G. Watt [perhaps the most controversial anti-environmentalist Interior Secretaries ever]. At [President] Nixon's behest, the FBI had run its customary investigation of top federal officials to look for improprieties, and had come back with a file on Dominy that was inches thick. ('The FBI knows every woman I've ever f___d,' Dominy once confessed to an interviewer.)" (Page 260)

As years passed, Marc grew more defiant in the face of those who had the temerity to push for more and larger stupid water projects. Chief among these is a Republican Congressman from Sacramento, John Doolittle. Marc detested Doolittle, excoriating him in a 1995 op-ed piece in the New York Times as "a true believer who could serve as Poster Boy for the Contract With America - which he believes doesn't shrink government enough." At the same time, Doolittle obsessively sought hundreds of millions of federal dollars for Auburn Dam on the Ameri-

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can River, the most expensive dam ever in the United States (in his district, of course)! Marc saved his most trenchant prose for the last paragraphs:

"Was the 1994 congressional election a vote for Republicanism? Or for Banana Republicanism? That is what you get when you mix zealotry and hypocrisy in equal proportions. After all, even the famous budget-slasher Senator Phil Gramm once said of his own appetite for pork [barrel projects], 'I'm beginning to get trichinosis.'"

In 1995, Marc addressed the Board of American Whitewater during our Board meeting in California about Doolittle's nefarious plans, about the disasters which have befallen western rivers and the many challenges rivers face ahead. Millions more heard his story on a critically acclaimed 1998 PBS TV special, "An American Nile," the story of the destruction of the Colorado River. Paramount Pictures has shown interest in the creation of a movie based upon another of Marc's books, "Game Wars: the Undercover Pursuit of Wildlife Poachers." Another book, this one about western fire fighting heroes, was on the griddle as his health faded. It's hard to attain more than Marc has accomplished as a nonfiction writer.

Just before entering the hospital this summer, he had delivered dumb dams a final *coup de gras* in Time Magazine's Environment 2000, complete with a stunning photograph of the Colorado River spurling from giant valves into the Canyon that John Wesley Powell had run a century earlier untamed. Just afterward, the editor of the July 2000 issue of the journal, *Hydro Review*, blasted Time and Ford, the insert's sponsor, for printing "an anti-dam diatribe by Marc Reisner.... arch-advocate of free-flowing rivers..." and angrily argued that Marc's "fundamental premise" is that "dams are BAD." Well, duh....

"In the West, of course, where water is concerned, logic and reason have never figured prominently in the scheme of things. As long as we maintain a civilization in a semidesert with a desert heart, the yearning to civilize more of it will always be there. "In the West, it is said, water flows uphill toward money." (Pages 13 & 14)

Marc never forgot what he believed were my feats in the whitewater sport. I saw him the last time a few months ago as he struggled to recover from multiple surgeries. Weak from all his medical ordeals, he still had the strength to wax rhapsodic about daring descents

I'd long since forgotten. While rivers seemed world's away from his hospital room, Marc's view out the window captured the awesome sweep of the Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco Bay, and Northern California where



Marc in a lighter Moment In the Caribbean waters off Nevis 1999.

some whitewater and free flowing rivers still exist—in large part because of his book. I could feel Marc's desperate longing to be out on a raft, taking yet one more paddle stroke deep inside a crashing wave on the American River, one his favorites.

He could still feel the power of the river in his soul, just as he had described Powell's first descent of the Grand Canyon long before Hoover and Glen Canyon damssquelched

the Colorado's natural floods. Of that famous river Marc wrote: "...after a short stop to rest and reseal the boats, they were on the water again, which was high, roiled, and the color of cocoa. In a few miles they came to a canyon, frothing with rapids. They lined or portaged wherever they could, ran if they had no alternative. Soon they were between vertical walls and the river was roaring mud. Cataracts launched them downriver before they had time to think; waves like mud huts threw them eight feet in the air... At Lava Falls, where huge chunks of basalt dumped in the main river create a thirty-foot drop, waves at flood stage were as high as three-story houses. There was a cycling wave at the bottom that, every few seconds, would burst apart with the retort of a sixteen-inch gun, drenching anyone on either bank of the river... The Powell expedition was running most of the rapids... with the rudest of life jackets, without hope of rescue, without a single human being within hundreds of miles. And Powell himself was running them strapped to a captain's chair, gesticulating wildly with his one arm." (Pages 29-30)

Sadly, Marc died a few months ago - much too soon; he was only 51. Along with the loss of my Mom and other close friends to river accidents, Marc's departure feels like a big wake-up call—things are really a-changing. I have less and less time to run riotous rivers and less desire to test the edge of my paddling skills or put on a wet wetsuit and launch my kayak into frigid March whitewater. How can we keep alive those wonderful feelings, the zest for excitement as age and other demands take their toll?

Marc was one of my closest buddies—his delightful turn of a phrase and wry smile are

still vivid in my memory. I still see him lounging without a care in his backyard kiddie pool, fooling around with his girls, Ruthie and Margot, and then savoring a California cabernet as his wife, Lawrie and I gaze appreciatively on yet another picture perfect California day. I still see him poised at the piano banging out blues and jazz-four numbers he loved and joking about some new absurdity he uncovered in his research.

I still see him indulgently celebrating the attributes of the mint BMW coupe he bought back in our Weehawken days and the two wheel Beamer that the royalties from his books afforded



Left to Right: Pete Skinner, Marc Reisner, Rob Lesser outside Skinners apt. in Weehawken NJ. Nov. 1978. Photo by Rob Lesser.

him. As I pounded the keyboard with my band at the Moose Fest this October, my mind fast-rewound to Marc and how our lives intertwined. Music and rivers—the two foci meant so much to us.

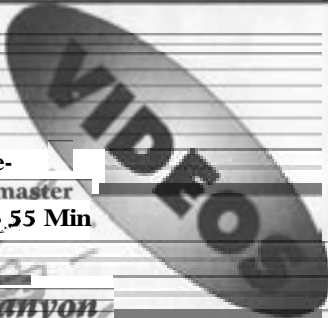
Each of us gets only a very short chance to suck the marrow from the bones of life—Marc did it with style and passion, leaving an indelible mark on America's whitewater. Since his book was published, there have been no new large dams built in America and talk abounds about breaching some of the worst concrete and earth plugs which imprison our waterways—the kind of talk that was heresy only a few short years ago.

Hamlet bewailed that we strut and fret our hour on the stage and then heard from no more. Marc's foreshortened hour on the stage will reverberate for many decades, however, not only in the changed views Americans now harbor about their few remaining free flowing rivers but also in the hard work by those who were galvanized by Marc's chronicle of the desecration of the waterways of the West take each day to prevent new stupidity.

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The Gauley Mystique

Dear Editors,

I just finished Jeff Barrow's article "A Heavyweight Bout: The Lower Gauley vs. The Ocoee". I believe the knockout goes to the Gauley. I was there that Saturday, September 25th 1999. We were taking a friend down the Lower for the first time; come to think of it, it was my first time down the Lower also. There is a rock just down from the put-in on river left. There was a boat pinned to the rock. There wasn't anything resembling a rapid upstream of this rock, yet some guy had already pinned his boat on it. He had to swim. We helped him and his friends rescue his stuff and get his boat off the rock. It was pretty obvious that this guy had no business on that river but he seemed determined to paddle and tried to make out like the pin was just a fluke. We paddled on.

I heard later that a guy had drowned in Kontz's Flume. I have often wondered if it was the same guy. (Editor's note: It wasn't.) I have felt somewhat guilty about not having said anything to the guy. I made up my mind then and there that if I see someone that is in over their head, I am going to tell them that they need to get off the river. It may not be any of my business, but at least I'll feel better about me.

I think the thing that sets the Gauley apart from a lot of other rivers, and may also account for people being less helpful, is that the Gauley is at the upper level of most paddlers limits. It is whitewater combat at it's best and sometimes in combat you can't be heroic. You just have to use all you skill and experience to get down the river. I have only paddled the Lower once, but I have paddled the Upper several times, and I'm here to tell you that if I'm sitting in an eddy in Lost Paddle and I see you get into trouble I hope there is somebody else there to help you. I'm doing all I can to just get down the river and I will give other, better boaters first dibs on rescue. Then, as a last ditch effort if there is no one else there, I will try to help you. (You have to try, bad Karma if you don't.) There is a Mystique about that river; if you've been there you know what I mean!

Bruce Foster
Statesville, N.C.

Paddlers Behaving Badly!

To AW Access Staff,

I had an interesting encounter with a paddler the other day while I was doing our in-house fire dept training in the Virginia Chute on the Potomac. We were doing our

throw bag portion of the class (12 firemen throwing bags in every possible direction) when four paddlers paddled up behind the big rock in the middle of the chute. Three remained in the eddy but one paddled across the chute into the path of our victims and our baggers. No comments were made and my students continued throwing the bags to the victims coming downstream.

This individual (I won't call him a paddler because the paddlers that I have come to know are not this rude) began to mouth off to the students because the ropes were getting in his way. He then told a female student that he would "jerk her ass off the rock she was on." This was when I became involved in the conversation. His argument was the fact that it was a public river and I should move my students downstream when he arrived to surf the hole. I didn't move my students and that is when he started calling us names.

The students gave him a wide berth. The three paddlers that were with him were very friendly and seemed more than content to surf the hole in between victims. What do all of you think of the situation?

Name withheld Cabin John V.F.D

AW Access Director Jason Robertson's Reply

Dear Sir,

Sorry you ran into the more colorful element of the paddling community this weekend. Like any sport we have our share of strong and obnoxious personalities.

The wave at the VA Chute is also one of the best places for teaching beginning boaters how to surf, ferry, and eddy. It's great because it's relatively deep, similar to smaller rivers so you can practice skills that are useful elsewhere besides the Potomac, and it's not too intimidating. These are probably the same reasons that you've been using it for your class.

Without having experienced this guy's attitude firsthand, I'd recommend trying to communicate with folks up-front when they move into an area where you're practicing. Just say howdy, let them know what you're doing, and how long you'll be there. Alternately, the ledges downstream provide many of the same benefits for rescue clinics as the VA Chute and they are less crowded (though shallower). Not saying that you have to change your training, just throwing out ideas.

For our part, we'll continue working to educate the boating community about the importance of the work you guys are doing. We're not going to convince everybody to be cooperative and courteous, but we're getting the message out.

Keep up the good work!

Increased Commercial Use of Arkansas Criticized

(Comments to Rob White, manager of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area, expressing opposition to the proposals to increase the number of commercial rafts on the Numbers section of the Arkansas from 30 to 60, and on the Royal Gorge from 150 to 225.)

Dear Mr. White,

Please have a meeting in Denver, as that is where the majority of kayakers who use the Arkansas are located.

I strongly object to increasing commercial rafts on both the Numbers and Royal Gorge sections of the Arkansas for the following reasons: 1) It is dangerous to kayak and especially to play there since there are so many rafts. Raft-kayak collisions are always unpleasant, and can be fatal if a raft crushes a kayaker against a downstream rock. I often must wait several minutes for a break to paddle into the current due to the tremendous raft saturation. This is already happening in the Royal Gorge and Brown's Canyon. 2) It is dangerous to follow a raft down a rapid, since the raft blocks your view of holes, rocks and other obstacles. This would be especially true on the Numbers where rapids are tight and technical, and rocks are numerous. 3) The aesthetics of the run are ruined when there are too many people on the runs. I don't mind seeing groups of kayakers passing through, or rafts every now and then.

However, on runs like the Gauley in West Virginia and Browns Canyon, the large number of rafts turns the experience into a circus. I get the same wilderness experience on those runs that I do at Water World or Coors Field for a Rockies' baseball game. If you increase the number of rafts on the Royal Gorge section of the Arkansas by 50%, it will be more and more like a circus. On the contrary, I recommend decreasing the number of rafts going through the Royal Gorge. That used to be one of my favorite runs, but I now rarely go there except at water that is too high for commercial rafts. In short, that run is all but ruined for me. The only way to restore it would be to provide windows when rafts must launch, so that kayakers can then have times when there won't be any rafts. Ideally, you could identify certain days every month, including weekend days, when rafts were banned. You'd find that kayakers would go those days, and not on the days of heavy raft saturation. If you increase the number of raft launches, you will find a corresponding increase in the number of raft companies,

raft guides, raft and bus purchases, and create even more demand

This is a cycle that won't end until you put a stop to it. In 10 years, there will be greater pressure still to increase the number of raft launches on the Arkansas, since the increasing numbers of raft companies will want a bigger slice of the pie. I think the Arkansas River is saturated already, and that rafting companies are making enough money there. I see no need to keep escalating the commercial exploitation of the Arkansas. Enough is enough!

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Editor's note: See AW Access Director Jason Robertson's article pertaining to this matter in this issue of the journal.

New York Photo Credit Error

Dear Editor:

I just finished reading and enjoying Chris Koll's recent article on New York whitewater. However, I was credited for a greater contribution to the article than I deserve. The photos are of such good quality, I wish I could call them my own, but alas, only a couple of photos are mine. I hope you will be able to credit all the photographers in a future issue.

Thanks to you and to everyone who contributes to AWA and *American Whitewater*. Your work benefits all paddlers to maintain and extend our paddling experience.

Yours truly,
James Swedberg
James Swedberg Photography
Long Lake, New York

Editor's note: Sorry for the mistake. Actually the error was not mine; there were two culprits. A Pitt grad would never have been that careless. I don't want to point fingers or anything... but... think Penn State and Ohio State! And, all things considered, Mr. Swedberg is being too kind. He has allowed us to publish a number of his photos in the past, and they were of much better quality than the ones mistakenly credited to him in the last issue. Our apologies.

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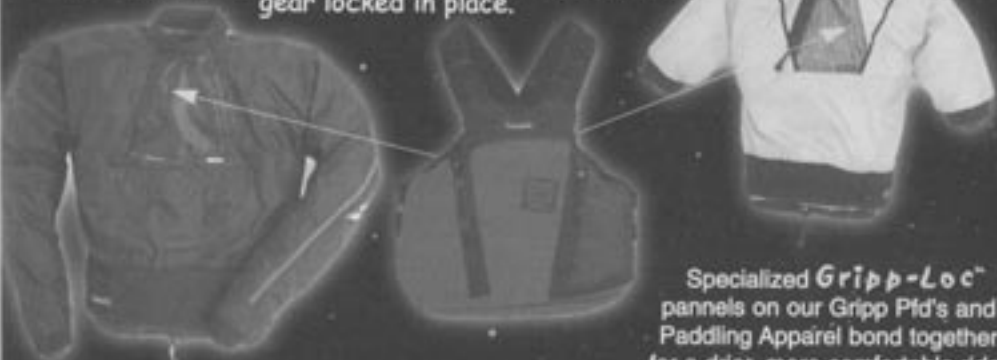
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The editorial staff of *American Whitewater* carefully reviews all material submitted for publication. We are particularly interested in receiving full-length feature articles, conservation and club news, special event announcements, articles pertaining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

Articles should fit our established format; that is, they should be stylistically pattered 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 3-1/2-inch computer disk. (Microsoft Word if possible – 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 cannot 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 flat water. 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 personali-

ties 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 nonprofit; 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.

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I hereby release my work (literary, graphic or photographic) for publication in *American Whitewater* magazine.

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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 bimonthly magazine, and by other means, American Whitewater, (AW) provides information and education about whitewater rivers, boatingsafety, 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 nonprofit 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.

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

As the last edition of American Whitewater for 2000, it seems appropriate to do a brief wrap-up of the years highlights. However, our Journal deadline requires this to be completed now, in early October — a mite early for year-end predictions!

Without consulting our crystal ball, I'd like to tell you what's transpired up until now. There have been several recent and noteworthy successes, and I'm eager to share it all, pumped up from another successful (and fun) Gauley Festival in West Virginia and this pastweekend's 2nd Annual Ohiopele Falls Race on Pennsylvania's Youghiogheny River.

This weekend's race effectively showcased whitewater, safety, the State Park, the river and the local community. The event allowed 300 boaters, with varied degrees of expertise, to enjoy running the mostly straightforward 18+ foot falls, an act outlawed by the State Park at any other time of the year. Each boater had a safe, enjoyable experience and got in multiple drops — some more than others! Whitewater legend Jeff Snyder was striding in style, and bagged nearly 40 descents just on Saturday. Equally remarkable were the 100+ volunteers, coordinated by Dr. Joe Braden and Eastern Michigan University paddlers, who set safety, logged race results, and handled logistics.

Besides raising funds for the local fire and rescue volunteers, the race was also a major showcase for American Whitewater's river access work. The event raised funds to maintain a new boater take-out on the Upper Yough, and also provided the support data needed to begin talking to park managers about controlled and legal access to the falls. The race was a great complement to our earlier legal efforts regarding access in the Grand Canyon, and the local purchase of access land along Kentucky's Elkhorn Creek.

This year American Whitewater continued to restore rivers and whitewater below dams. Working with local boaters and clubs, John Gangemi completed new flow studies this summer on the Cheoah River in Tennessee, Chelan Gorge in Washington State, and the Poe section of the North Fork Feather in California. This past weekend, while boaters were dropping over Ohiopele Falls, John and California boaters were completing a flow study on another section of the North Fork Feather, the Class IV upper stretch of this river. John has one more study locked in for the 2000 season, and we expect each of these to provide



Upper Ocoee. photo by Rich Bowers.

better rivers, better water, and better paddling in the years to come.

In mid-September, American Whitewater and our coalition partners culminated years of work with two landmark settlement agreements. The first, on California's Mokelumne River, provides better daily flows, better public access, and better whitewater flows on more than 27 miles of Class II, III, IV and V whitewater. It effectively ended a new license application that had been in the works for 29 years. A week later, we signed an agreement improving 14 miles on the Class III-V Rock Creek and Cresta sections of the North Fork Feather, wedged between Rock Creek/Cresta and the upper section studied this pastweekend. We anticipate scheduled whitewater releases on Rock Creek/Cresta as early as next summer. Overall, improved daily and whitewater flows on 40

miles of river previously dead and dewatered. Not a bad tally for the month of September!

In July, we received some not so great news. A letter from the Tennessee Valley Authority explaining that the agency would, after this coming year, no longer release "free" water into the Upper Ocoee, home of the 1996 Olympic Whitewater races and the annual Ocoee River Festival. Each of our members should have just received an update on this issue, and no one should need a crystal ball to understand that, once again, a potentially magnificent whitewater river needs our help.

As highlighted above, and mentioned in so many articles in the past, American Whitewater is only successful when boaters help us in our work. "Boaters helping boaters helping rivers." The year 2000 demonstrates what paddlers can accomplish—so write a letter to TVA, send, if you haven't already, a year end donation to help with our efforts on your behalf, and plan now to be even more involved with river issues in 2001. Those who know, use, and love water, ARE the future of rivers. More and more, it is clear that boaters can and will get the work done, that they are building an ever increasing resume of river victories, and that boaters will help set the course of rivers in the future.

Thank you for making the year 2000 a strong one for rivers, and thanks in advance for working with us to make 2001 even better. Have a great holiday season, and I look forward to seeing you on the river.



Ocoee, photo by Rich Bowers.

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Conserve

Chelan Gorge

By John Gangemi

On July 8th, 9th, and 10th a team of six boaters got a ticket. That ticket issued by Chelan Public Utilities District was a highly prized item. It granted each paddler access to the unrun Chelan Gorge in central Washington. That ticket also carried a heavy burden of responsibility for each boater: prove to Chelan PUD and the surrounding community that the Chelan Gorge is boatable. These boaters accepted the challenge enthusiastically acting as ambassadors for the paddling community both on and off the river. At the end of the three day study there was no doubt that the Chelan Gorge was more than boatable—it was a premier whitewater destination. But even more telling was the fact that the community of Chelan and the PUD embraced the boaters.

Tracey Clapp hitting Super Boof.

Unplugged

This first descent of the Chelan Gorge was a high profile and controversial event. The descent was actually a study that itself was part of a larger hydropower relicensing proceeding for the Chelan hydropower project. The Chelan Gorge had never been run before due to water withdrawals for hydropower generation. Many stakeholders in the relicensing process opposed whitewater studies. Some stakeholders felt the Gorge was not "survivable." Other stakeholders in the local community feared whitewater releases would lower lake levels and raise electric rates. The Chelan PUD was primarily concerned with liability lawsuits. Upon completion of the whitewater flow study, most of these concerns evaporated. Most of the parties in this relicense recognized that whitewater is a legitimate use of the Chelan Gorge and can be balanced with continued hydropower generation and other resource needs.

This hydropower relicense first caught my interest when I received the physical description of the river channel below the dam: "A four mile long channel dropping 400 feet in elevation much of that in the last 1.5 miles." My interest was further piqued when I read the fisheries report describing 20-30 foot falls acting as barriers to upstream fish migration. After attending my first relicensing meeting in Chelan I hiked down into the Gorge. I knew immediately that the Chelan Gorge was a future whitewater classic. I stood on the bedrock of the rapid now called entrance exam and marveled at the gradient. With only 5cfs trickling through the rocks it was difficult to see the lines but I could certainly imagine where the crux was situated in that drop. Since that first look I've committed myself to getting an annual schedule of whitewater releases into the Chelan Gorge. At times, that path has been a steep uphill battle.

Chelan Lake is a natural lake carved by glaciers. The lake is 55 miles long and 1,500 feet deep. At the turn of the century several dams were constructed at the lake outlet to raise lake elevations for power generation. Several of these dams were lost to high water overtopping the dams. The present dam was constructed in 1927. It diverts 2,100 cfs of water around the 4 mile long Chelan Gorge to a powerhouse at the confluence with the Columbia River. The minimum instream flow below the dam is approximately 5 cfs although the dam spills each spring with flows averaging between 2,000 and 6,000 cfs.

I've seen video footage of 2,000 and 4,000 cfs in the Chelan Gorge shot from the canyon rim. Trust me, it's a whitewater nightmare. Spills within the boatable range of 200 to 500 cfs rarely if ever occur due to the projects ability to control flows within this range. I proposed early in the relicense process that a recreational controlled flow study (see side-bar for description) be conducted for the Chelan Gorge. In June 1999 I traveled to observe a series of flows in the Chelan Gorge with consultants Bo Shelby and Doug Whittaker. The three of us scrambled around in the Gorge observing three flows between 250 and 500 cfs that June day. Our purpose was to identify flows appropriate for the boating component of the controlled flow study. The rapids looked hard but runnable. I was anxious to put a boat on the water but respected Chelan PUD's wishes that no one boat the Gorge until the liability issues had been covered. It was on that June day that I suddenly became aware that the Chelan Gorge was not simply another bypass channel where American Whitewater was attempting to restore whitewater flows. The Chelan Gorge was more than just another whitewater run: the emerald green water turned white as it cascaded over steep drops collecting again into crystal clear pools contrasting sharply with the multicolored lichens on the metamorphic rock of the Gorge walls. The water transformed the Gorge into a whitewater cathedral.

In the ensuing year I worked closely with Chelan PUD and their consultants developing a whitewater controlled flow study appropriate for the Chelan Gorge. We selected three flows to be paddled over a three-day period; 275, 350 and 450 cfs. During the study we actually boated 273, 391 and 475 cfs as measured by the USGS. The study design required each boater to complete a survey questionnaire after each run to record the quality of the experience. At

Rick Williams in Entrance Exam.





Bo Shelby running Throne Falls.

the completion of all three flows each boater would complete a comparative survey form to measure attributes of one flow against another. The data from these survey responses is presented graphically in Figure 1.

A year after visiting the Gorge, my anxiety was high when I arrived in Chelan the day before the controlled flow study. I questioned whether the spell of the Gorge the year before had clouded my judgment. The team of boaters arriving for the flow study were excellent paddlers. I'd selected each individual for several reasons: 1) I knew each of them had excellent Class V boating skills complemented with good judgment; 2) each had demonstrated safety and rescue skills; 3) each of them would carry word about the Chelan Gorge back to their respective paddling communities; and 4) most important these individuals would serve as ambassadors for our sport with the community of Chelan and the PUD. I was unsure how we would function as a team since some of the boaters had never met. I elected to burn off some of my anxiety that evening by running down to the Gorge. My first glimpse from the Canyon Rim reaffirmed my convictions from the previous year—the Chelan Gorge is a whitewater cathedral. I raced back along the road excited to share my enthusiasm. The boaters were just arriving.

The Caravel Resort in Chelan was kind enough to provide the boaters three rooms overlooking the 55 mile lake. The North Cascades form the backdrop as you look up to this spectacular lake. We were in heaven or I should say shock with the accommodations and treatment. As I approached the front desk the clerk handed me a key before any words escaped from my mouth. No credit card, no signature, nothing. I joked with the clerks pretending I receive this treatment everywhere. To my surprise one of the clerks asked, "Are you pro?" Caught off guard I started to laugh then corrected myself and responded "Absolutely!" People have confused me with Wayne Gretzky on the street but never on the ice. The same is true for my paddling. I just hoped the desk clerk didn't know enough about paddling to recognize I wasn't a pro.

When we arrived at the study orientation Saturday morning we found the six of us outnumbered 5 to 1 with folks working on the flow study. A professional camera crew was recording your every move with four digital video cameras. Disrobing to put on paddling gear was a futile affair with all the folks curious about all the kayak specific gear, shooting photos, and recording your thoughts for newspaper stories. The sheriff flew in the rescue helicopter expecting to transport our bodies later in the day. Of course we posed for pictures in front of the helicopter.

Finally we were able to get on the water. The first 2.5 miles is low gradient Class II. At the lowest flow of 275 cfs this section was boney. We were pleasantly surprised by some Class IV rapids to warm up when the canyon walls came together forming the Gorge. The first big rapid was Entrance Exam. We scouted this drop carefully. A crew of folks including the videographers hiked down daybreak canyon to meet us at Entrance Exam.

The boaters discussed the rapid, safety, and potential rescue scenarios. Britt Gentry gave the thumbs up while the rest of us took safety positions with ropes and boats. Britt's line was clean if not eye opening as he plunged off the horseshoe-shaped falls cleanly and made the remainder of the run look easy. One-by-one we hiked up to our boats to run the rapid. The group of boaters was working as a team far beyond my expectations. So well in fact that when I swam out of the hole now named Professor Gnarly at the bottom of Entrance Exam they had me to shore in no time.

A short distance of Class IV paddling brought us to Double Slide, the next major rapid. As with Entrance Exam upstream, the solid bedrock was excellent for scouting the rapid and setting up safety. The air temperature in the Gorge was in the high 90s. The water temperature was 75 degrees allowing us to paddle in shorties. Scrambling around on the bedrock slabs to shoot photos and set up safety was nearly as much fun as paddling. The Gorge felt like a Caribbean adventure.

Double Slide offered two routes: A sneak route on river left that required squeezing your boat just left of a rock guarding entry into the chute or the more committing right chute forcing you into a steep plunge and a powerful hydraulic. The Class IV entry forced errors making some of us miss the sneak route only to be funneled against our wishes into the right side line. This right line took on several names during the three days. I like "Chelam" the best because of the inevitable consequences at the bottom.

Below Double Slide is an extraordinarily beautiful eight foot falls. The emerald green water spills from the pool below double slide in an arc of color before crashing into a powerful hydraulic below. You can avoid the hydraulic by boofing off the bedrock slab on river left to land in the pool below. Forrest Hubler referred to this as "Super Boof" after running it. The name stuck.

The paddling team checking out their next shuttle rig.



Ashort pool below Super Boof brings you to the Class V Throne Falls. This 25 foot falls can be scouted on the river right and left. The falls is slightly less than vertical. Several rocks midway down the drop get your attention. We ran this right of center with left, center and right bow angles. A left bow angle points you at three large boulders in the pool below situated together to form a Throne hence the name. Throne Falls was great to run at flows of 275 cfs and 390 cfs. At 475 cfs we took this drop more seriously largely because the recovery time in the pool below was shortened. Making the eddy on river right to portage Pinnacle became that much more important. We all made the eddy without any problems but most of us had to roll before paddling to the eddy.

We looked long and hard at pinnacle. Tracey Clapp obligatorily tossed some logs into the current to judge current velocities, angles, and spanking factor. Much of the river moves from left to right over two vertical drops. The water slams into the undercut river right wall—not a good place to be. Locals have spray painted the rocks above Pinnacle "Go Big or Go Home." None of us were falsely inspired by this slogan so we swallowed our pride and portaged this rapid on river right. The portage gave us an opportunity to display our teamwork passing boats over some ledges to a seal launch. Ashort paddle across a pool brought us to Boulder Sieve, a mandatory portage. We made light work of this portage by having one member of the team pull us onto a slab of rock on river left and seal launch us into the pool below.

Below Boulder Sieve the gradient eased presenting continuous Class IV paddling through tight boulders. There were several play spots in this section. We called the area upstream of the bridge Extra Credit to compliment the initial Class V drop, Entrance Exam. There is a nasty and difficult-to-detect sieve in the very bottom end of the rapid below the old highway bridge. We did a sneak around this on river right.

A crowd of reporters greeted us at the take-out. Many onlookers were shocked to see us boaters embrace each other at the take-out. For us it was a gesture of thanks, elation, and most importantly a celebration of friendship made stronger through adventure. Staff from

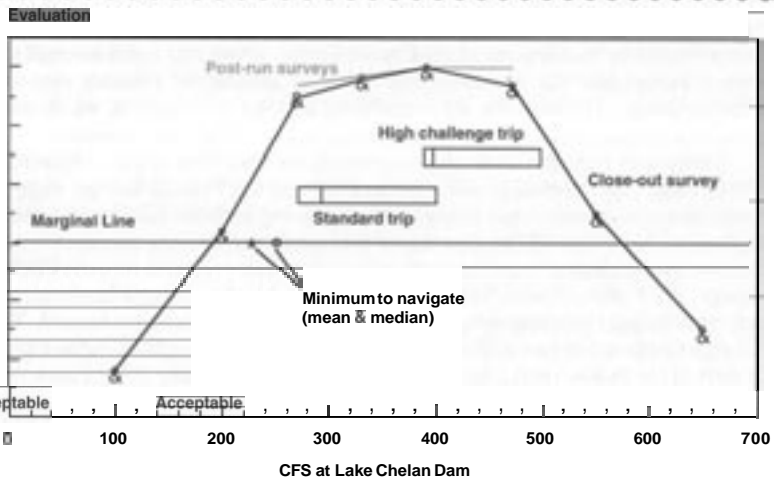


Figure 1: Survey evaluations of various flows, with median specified flow ranges for two types of boating opportunities (courtesy Confluence Research and Consulting).

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the Chelan PUD and citizens of Chelan recognized in admiration the strong bond created by this descent of the Chelan Gorge. From that point forward the crowd recognized the immeasurable value of whitewater releases into the Chelan Gorge. Through the act of paddling and the camaraderie, we demonstrated why the Chelan Gorge is so important as a whitewater resource.

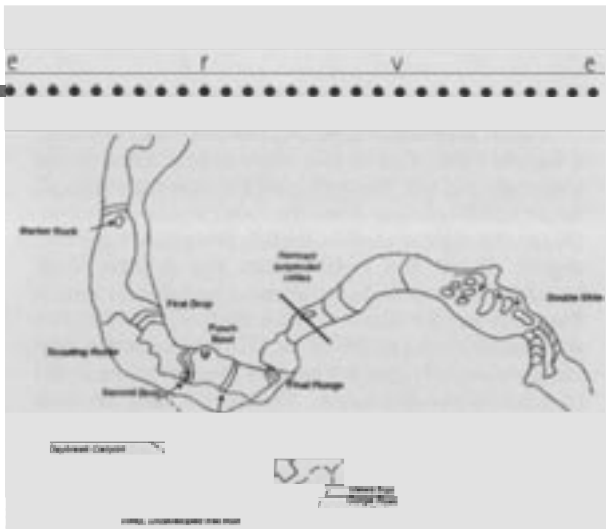
Safety and liability were chief concerns in this flow study. American Whitewater worked closely with Chelan PUD and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission over a two year period addressing both the safety and liability concerns. American Whitewater feared that safety and liability concerns would be used as a scapegoat to prevent scheduled whitewater releases into the Chelan Gorge. The Federal Power Act requires that the public be permitted unhindered access to project lands except where project works present a safety hazard. The Chelan Gorge is not part of the project works. Furthermore, the Chelan Gorge is part of the public trust. As such, the paddling community should have free access to the Gorge. To their credit, Chelan PUD recognized our right to access the Gorge for paddling and worked hard to develop a mutually agreeable scenario to allow the whitewater controlled flow study.

Chelan PUD was genuinely impressed with the boating ability of the flow study participants but liability remains one of their chief concerns. The utility is concerned that scheduled whitewater releases will attract boaters that lack Class V skills. American Whitewater has attempted to relieve Chelan PUD's anxiety by explaining that whitewater boating is self-regulating. As boaters progress in skill they begin tackling more difficult water. Commensurate with that skill development is an increasing awareness and knowledge of safety and rescue techniques. Lastly, boaters inquire amongst friends and the paddling community at large to determine if they are ready for a particular river segment. These factors weigh together, influencing an individual's judgment whether to paddle a river such as the Chelan Gorge. It's likely that all boaters will be required to sign liability waivers to protect Chelan PUD. American Whitewater will work with the Chelan PUD to develop these release forms.

Chelan PUD's safety concerns are primarily driven by fear of liability. Chelan is a public utility district. Any lawsuits resulting from whitewater injuries or death would affect all the ratepayers. As a private landowner, Chelan PUD is protected from liability suits under the state recreational use statute. Many states have recreational use statutes (contact American Whitewater for lists of states with rec. statutes). These statutes benefit both the landowner and the public because they protect landowners from liability suits thus encouraging landowners to allow the public access for recreation. A recent case in Washington has raised concerns that the hydro operators are not protected by recreation statutes if they manipulate flows creating an unnatural condition. American Whitewater is working with Chelan PUD to close this loophole in the Washington recreational statute. American Whitewater has also offered to come to Chelan PUD's defense if a whitewater boater files a suit against the utility involving a condition for which Chelan PUD was not negligent or did not create a latent hazard in the Chelan Gorge.

The success of this whitewater controlled flow study is a reflection of the high-quality individuals that participated. The boaters (Rick Williams, Tracey Clapp, Britt Gentry, Forrest Hubler and Bo Shelby) did a tremendous job on and off the water. These folks were true ambassadors for our sport. Chelan PUD for all their reluctance in the initial stages of this relicensing process provided critical support to make this study a success. Once the PUD decided to do a flow study they committed themselves 110 percent. Special thanks go out to Michele Smith and Jeff Osborn from Chelan PUD. These individuals devoted long hours over the three day study and were very accommodating to the boaters needs. Numerous other PUD staff were also on hand to make this a positive outcome. Bo Shelby and Doug Whittaker did an excellent job putting together a study design all parties supported. Together, this team of people produced what is sure to be one of the best whitewater controlled flow studies conducted in a hydropower relicensing.

I'll be working closely with Chelan PUD developing an annual schedule of whitewater releases for the new hydropower license. That schedule will be implemented sometime after 2004 when the new license is issued by the FERC. In the meantime please do not paddle the Chelan Gorge. This may jeopardize future releases. American Whitewater will be sure to announce the schedule of releases when it is solidified. You can visit our website to see still photos and video clips of the flow study at www.americanwhitewater.org.



Key drops and other features in Entrance Exam (courtesy Confluence Research and Consulting)

Mechanics of a Recreation Controlled Flow Study

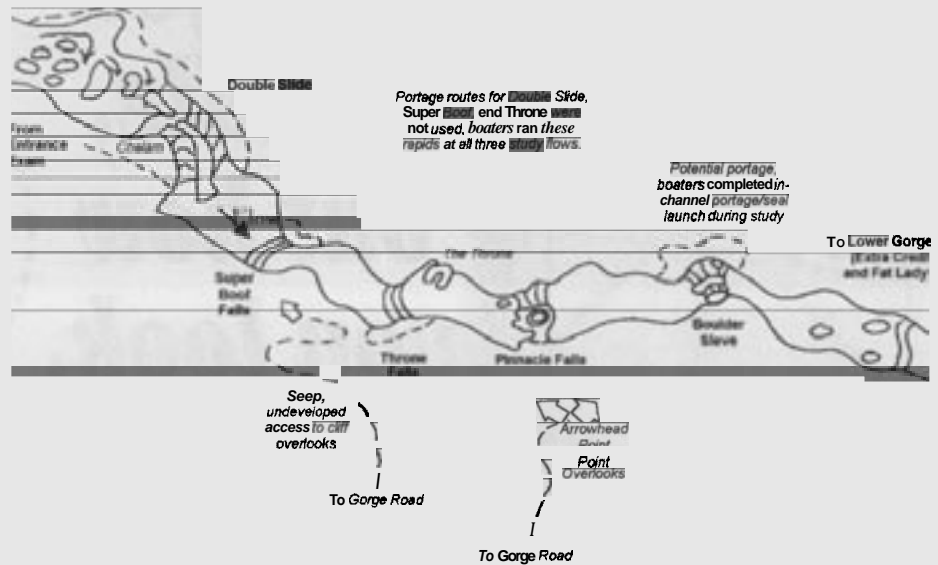
Recreation controlled flow studies are designed to identify minimum acceptable and optimum water volumes for flow dependent recreation. The actual methodology is described on page 40 in a publication released by the National Park Service *Instream Flows for Recreation: A Handbook on Concepts and Research Methods* by Whittaker et. al. The dam operator releases a predetermined range of flows selected by whitewater experts with site-specific knowledge in a controlled fashion. A team of boaters in a variety of watercraft paddle each flow. Upon completion of each flow participants respond to a series of survey questions designed to record the quality of the experience at that flow. Once all the flows are paddled participants complete a comparative survey form that measures the whitewater attributes of one flow against another. The data generated from participant responses helps develop a flow preference curve identifying minimum acceptable and optimum flows for each watercraft. Typically, kayaks have a much larger range of flows acceptable for a given river segment than rafts. The data generated from a whitewater controlled flow study is specific to the reach being paddled by participants. This data is not applicable to other segments on the same river or other rivers.

The controlled flow study is a critical component in a hydropower relicensing proceeding for boaters. This study sets the stage for future whitewater flows. The study enables the paddling community to identify specific volumes that optimize whitewater recreation. Scheduled whitewater releases may require a utility to generate when power prices are low or, in the case where powerhouses are located some distance downstream from the dam, release water into the natural river channel thus foregoing power generation altogether. Both scenarios incur financial losses to the utility and obviously they will try to low-ball the volumes to reduce lost revenue. The flow study documents the flows necessary for optimal whitewater recreation. Furthermore, pinpointing the optimum flows helps maximize whitewater use thus helping to justify the release.

In 1986 Congress amended the Federal Power Act with the Electric Consumers Protection Act (ECPA). That act requires the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to give "equal consideration to non-power values" in hydropower licensing. Equal consideration does not equate to 50-50 split of the water but it does require mitigation of impacts such as lost whitewater opportunities.

American Whitewater is viewed as the national expert in whitewater controlled flow studies at hydropower facilities. American Whitewater was instrumental in whitewater controlled flow studies at Tallulah (GA), the Deerfield (MA), the Kennebec (ME), the Black (NY), the Nisqually (WA), Bear (ID) and the North Fork Feather (CA) to name a few. Most of these already have an annual schedule of whitewater releases. On the others we are awaiting FERCs licensing decision. This year alone American Whitewater has provided expertise and boaters for five whitewater controlled flow studies: Poe hydropower project (Class III, IV and V sections) and the Upper North Fork hydropower project (Class III, IV and V sections) both located on the North Fork Feather

River (CA), Chelan Gorge (Class V-WA), Cheoah River (Class IV-NC), and the Waterbury hydropower project on the Little River (Class II-W). American Whitewater is already at work on flow studies scheduled for 2001. This important work is supported to a large degree by monetary donations from our members. Your donation can help restore whitewater to a river near you.



Map of key rapids in the Central Gorge (courtesy Confluence Research and Consulting).

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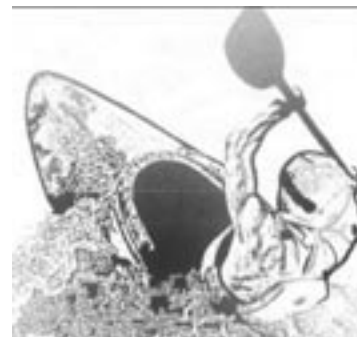
ACCESS ASSOCIATES LEND A BIG HAND AMERICAN WHITEWATER INTRODUCES A MONTHLY GIVING PROGRAM

American Whitewater invites its members and friends to consider a new way of supporting its programs. Beginning in December 2000, the organization will begin a monthly giving club - the Access Associates.

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As an Access Associate, you'll be able to take pride in helping American Whitewater maintain the foundation of its work to preserve and restore whitewater paddling opportunities across the country.

Becoming an Access Associate is simple and only involves a one-time registration process. American Whitewater will take care of the rest. For more information about this, and other methods of planned giving, please contact Nancy Galloway toll free at (866)BOAT4AW.



Settlement Reached for Rock Creek- Cresta Hydropower

Project

North Fork Feather River, California

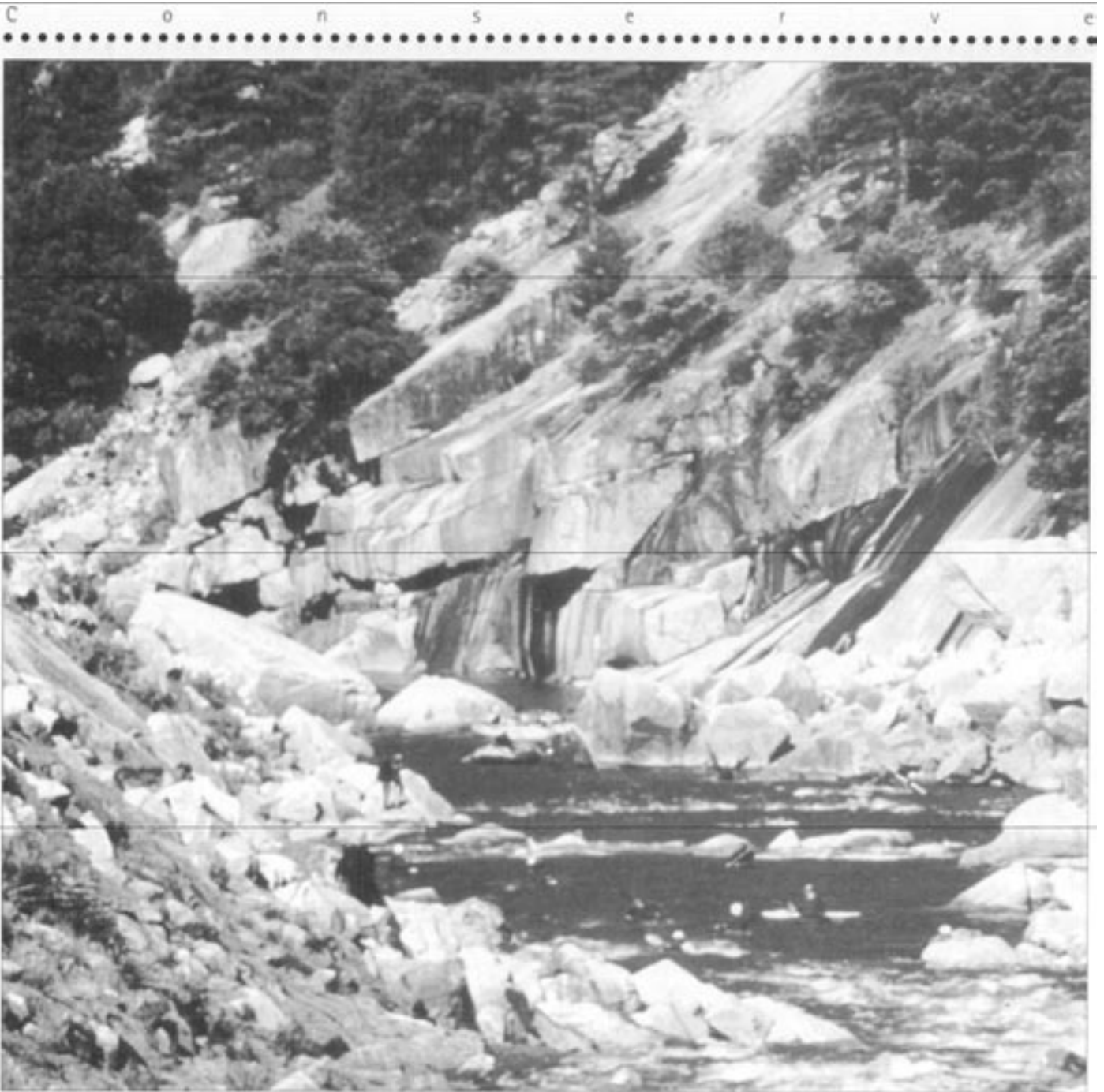
Finally a brighter outlook for whitewater flows on California's North Fork Feather River after years of conflict and disagreement in the relicensing of Pacific Gas and Electric's (PG&E) Rock Creek-Cresta hydropower project. American Whitewater, in concert with other recreational and environmental groups as well as state and federal resource agencies reached a settlement agreement with PG&E dictating future operations of the Rock Creek-Cresta Hydroelectric Project for the next 30 years. The agreement strikes a balance between continued hydropower generation and ecological and recreational restoration of the North Fork Feather River. For paddlers the agreement locks in an annual schedule of whitewater releases, accurate flow information accessible via a toll free phone and the Internet, and access improvements.

The Rock Creek-Cresta Project is a privately owned hydroelectric facility regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). FERC grants private utilities 30 to 50 year licenses. In essence, a hydropower license is a temporary permit. Roughly six years prior to license expiration, the utility initiates the relicensing process to secure a new license. The relicensing process, through the input of state and federal agencies and the public, is intended to evaluate project operations and establish specific conditions in the next license term for resource protection, mitigation, and enhancement. In theory, relicensing is a renewed investigation to determine if a project should continue to operate on a public river and, if so, what conditions are necessary to protect the river, mitigate project impacts, and enhance the river resource. In reality, a new license is rubber stamped with operating conditions nearly identical to the previous license unless the public gets involved identifying resource issues and appropriate studies in the relicensing process. American Whitewater, recognizing the outstanding whitewater resources on the North Fork Feather River dewatered by project operations, stepped in to fill that role in the Rock Creek-Cresta relicensing.

The North Fork Feather River is a tremendous whitewater resource. According to John Gangemi, Conservation Director for American Whitewater, "The North Fork Feather River could have been one of the top five whitewater destinations in the country if PG&E had not diverted all the water from the river. The North Fork offers boating opportunities from Class III to V in an outstanding aesthetic backdrop of pines and sierra granite. This settlement gives the public the opportunity to paddle the North Fork again."

The Rock Creek-Cresta project consists of two dams that dewater two separate reaches of the North Fork Feather. Under the previous license, Rock Creek dam diverted all but 100 cfs from a 9 mile river segment that contains two distinctly different whitewater runs: The four mile Class III Rock Creek run and the five mile Class IV-V Tobin run. Under the previous license, Cresta Dam diverted all but 50 cfs from the five mile Class IV Cresta run. In June 1999, American Whitewater volunteers conducted a recreation controlled flow study to identify optimum whitewater flows for the three runs dewatered by the Rock Creek-Cresta hydropower project. The results from the recreation controlled flow study formed the foundation for negotiating an annual schedule of releases in the new license.

Before the Settlement: The dewatered North Fork Feather River below Cresta Dam.



Restored: Paddlers boating a whitewater release on the North Fork Feather River.

The agreement calls for whitewater releases on consecutive weekend days in both the Rock Creek and Cresta reaches June through October. In the first three years, whitewater flows will be released on the first weekend of each month June through October for a total of ten days annually. After three years, the number of whitewater days can increase annually based on the number of boaters using the river in the previous year. Boaters will be counted during each release. Use numbers exceeding preestablished quotas will result in additional weekend days for the respective months June through October. Whitewater releases could eventually increase to 38 days annually. The settlement agreement also provides funds for development of four river access sites on both reaches, as well as, real time flow information accessible via the internet and a toll free phone.

The Rock Creek-Cresta project is sandwiched between PG&E's upstream and downstream hydropower facilities, the Upper North Fork Feather hydro project and Poe hydro project respectively. The Poe and Upper North Fork Feather hydropower projects have recently

started the relicensing process. These two projects contain 4 reservoirs, 4 dewatered river channels, and 4 powerhouses collectively. In May 2000, American Whitewater volunteers participated in a controlled flow study to identify optimum whitewater flows for the eight mile Poe reach which contains a 4.5 mile Class IV-V section and a 3.5 mile Class III section. In September 2000, American Whitewater volunteers participated in a controlled flow study to identify optimum whitewater for the reaches dewatered by the Upper North Fork hydropower project. In the coming year, American Whitewater will work with PG&E developing a watershed-based annual whitewater flow schedule in which one release will occur every weekend day June through October. This release will alternate between reaches with preference given to those reaches that demonstrate the greatest demand from the paddling community.

"Releases into the Rock Creek and Cresta reaches coupled with releases at upstream and downstream hydropower projects will make the North Fork Feather River a premier whitewater destination,"

according to Kevin Lewis, a member of American Whitewater's Board of Directors personally involved in the relicensing processes on the North Fork Feather.

Dave Steindorf, local paddler and American Whitewater Regional Coordinator, is delighted with the future paddling prospects on the North Fork Feather. "When it comes to water in California rivers we've always said that 'PG&E giveth and PG&E taketh away.' Well American Whitewater just pushed PG&E to giveth an annual schedule of whitewater releases."

For more information about the Rock Creek-Cresta Settlement or to inquire about the other hydropower relicensings on the North Fork Feather River contact John Gangemi, 406-837-3155, e-mail: San8emim@di8isvs.net.

North Fork Feather— Just Add Water!

In total, the North Fork Feather River has six separate Class III, IV and V whitewater runs encompassing 50 river miles. Surely a paddling mecca worth placing on any destination paddling vacation (See *American Whitewater* March/April 1997 issue). Unfortunately each of these runs rarely contains sufficient water for paddling due to PG&E's hydropower projects on the North Fork Feather River totaling 6 dams and 7 powerhouses. Years ago, PG&E engineered a series of reservoirs, pipes, and powerhouses diverting water from virtually every mile of this 50 mile long river canyon. Under the current operating regime for

these hydropower projects, whitewater is available only during extremely wet storms, when flows exceed the capacity of PG&E's 12 foot diameter pipes and reservoir storage. The Settlement Agreement for the Rock Creek-Cresta Project brings a predictable annual schedule of releases. American Whitewater is currently negotiating an annual schedule of releases on hydro projects upstream and downstream of the Rock Creek and Cresta reaches. These annual schedules will compliment the current settlement providing whitewater on the North Fork Feather on any given summer weekend.

American Whitewater's Conservation Program is actively engaged throughout the country restoring whitewater to rivers dewatered by hydropower projects. American Whitewater became involved in the Rock Creek-Cresta relicense in 1994. The hydro license for the Rock Creek-Cresta project actually expired in 1982 but continued to operate on annual licenses under the old license conditions. In 1998, frustrated with the lack of progress and continued impacts to the North Fork Feather, American Whitewater in concert with the California Hydropower Reform Coalition and member groups pressed PG&E to enter into settlement negotiations. After nearly three years of innumerable meetings the parties reached settlement. This is a huge success for whitewater paddling in California and overall restoration of the North Fork Feather River.

Historic Hydropower Relicensing Settlement Agreement Mokelumne River, California

On Friday, July 21, 2000, American Whitewater along with other recreation groups, environmental organizations, state and federal resource agencies and Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) signed a settlement agreement setting conditions on PG&E's operation of the Mokelumne River hydropower project for the next 30 years. The settlement is the by-product of a yearlong collaborative effort. The agreement balances restoration of whitewater opportunities and riverine ecological processes with continued hydropower generation.

The Mokelumne River hydropower project extends from the Blue Lakes area in the Sierra Nevada alpine terrain to the Highway 49 area in the Foothills. The project contains a total of sixteen diversions with three of these located on the mainstem along this longitudinal gradient. Diverting water out of the Mokelumne has limited boating opportunities on multiple whitewater runs: The fourteen mile Class IV-V Salt Springs run below Salt Springs Reservoir, the three mile Class IV Tiger Creek run below Tiger Creek diversion, the three mile Class III Ponderosa Way run, and the three mile (soon to be six) Class II Electra Run (See Holbek and Stanley's *Guide to the Best Whitewater in the State of California*, 2nd edition, pages 138-140). Additional yet more obscure runs do exist on this stretch of the Mokelumne. Scheduled releases from the respective diversions will restore paddling opportunities to these runs as well.

"Establishing an annual schedule of whitewater releases has been a high priority for us," said John Gangemi, American Whitewater Conservation Director. "The Mokelumne River appeals to a wide range of paddlers offering Class II to Class V paddling opportunities including roadside as well as pristine wilderness experiences. We worked long and hard with PG&E and other stakeholders to reach a

mutually agreeable outcome."

Long and hard is an understatement: The Mokelumne hydro-power project license expired in 1972. For a variety of reasons a new license was not issued so PG&E continued to operate the project on annual licenses granted from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. American Whitewater has been actively engaged in establishing whitewater flows on the Mokelumne since 1992.

The Settlement Agreement establishes an annual schedule of releases for the four whitewater runs affected by the project diversions. The agreement also establishes internet and toll free phone accessible streamflow information as well as improvements to access points. The whitewater component includes an adaptive management program that adjusts recreation streamflow volumes and the frequency of annual releases based on actual use.

In addition to the whitewater components, the settlement includes the following provisions:

- Establishes a number of conditions for project operation, including year-round minimum streamflows, to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish, wildlife and streamside habitat.
- Requires the breaching of existing diversion dams on East and West Panther Creeks and Beaver Creek, restoring the creeks to natural, unimpaired flow.
- Limits certain power-generating and maintenance activities, as well as the rate of change in generation-affected river levels, to protect aquatic resources and avoid adverse environmental impacts.
- Sets specific requirements for water temperature and dissolved oxygen to protect fish and other aquatic life.
- Establishes an Ecological Resources Committee comprising

C o n s e r v a t i o n
ing the licensee, resource agencies, and non-governmental organizations to make resource decisions over the term of the license.

In addition to American Whitewater, settlement signatories include PG&E, California Department of Boating and Waterways, California Department of Fish and Game, Foothill Conservancy, Friends of the River, Natural Heritage Institute, U.S. Bureau of Land

Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Forest Service.

For more information, contact American Whitewater at 406-837-3155. American Whitewater will post the flow phone and URL for flow information and schedule of annual releases on their website <americanwhitewater.org> when it is available.

Whitewater Releases for Washington's Nisqually River

Tacoma Public Utilities has selected the dates for the November and December whitewater releases on Washington's Nisqually River. This year Tacoma requires that boaters call to confirm their attendance at a respective release date. In 1999, no boaters showed up for one of the release days. Reservations need to be made at least three days prior to release date. Releases are contingent on two or more paddlers making a reservation. If you make a reservation then you must show up otherwise you jeopardize releases in the future. You can always cancel at the put-in due to weather or other factors but you must physically show up to the put-in.

Reservation information required from the paddler will be:

- *Name
- *Telephone number
- Contact person
- *Release date desired
- *Number of people in party

Reservation phone number: 253-396-3028 (in effect October 1, 2000)

2000 Release Schedule (contingent on reservations):

- November 18,800 cfs of water will be released
- November 19,800 cfs of water will be released
- December 2,800 cfs of water will be released
- December 3,800 cfs of water will be released

For those interested in a description of this run and the initial 1998 releases refer back to your January 1999 issue of American Whitewater or check the website at <www.americanwhitewater.org>.

Background on Nisqually Whitewater Releases

The releases are the outcome of a six year hydropower relicensing effort by American Whitewater to get an annual schedule of whitewater releases in the bypass channel for Washington's La Grande Canyon, a 1.7 mile spectacular Class IV and V river with its headwaters located on Mount Rainier. Prior to this license condition, and except for dam maintenance and flood conditions, the La Grande Canyon had been dewatered since 1912, the year the dam was built.

Due to concerns over access and a preconceived lack of demand for this whitewater resource, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) required an initial three year monitoring study in this 30 year license. Future releases hinge on adequate attendance and safety. Boaters are asked to complete a short evaluation form after each run. Results of the evaluation form are the basis for reports submitted to FERC. Based on the recommendations in the final report, FERC will issue a decision regarding whitewater releases for the remaining 27 years in the project license.

While short, this section of river runs through the spectacular 300-foot deep La Grande Canyon, which is in some places no more than 20 foot wide. It offers advanced to expert whitewater rapids such as "Triple Slide," "Hammer Slammer," "X-Falls," "Boof and Boogie" and one of the best rodeo holes in Washington state.

Lessons Learned From 1998 Releases

Punctuality:

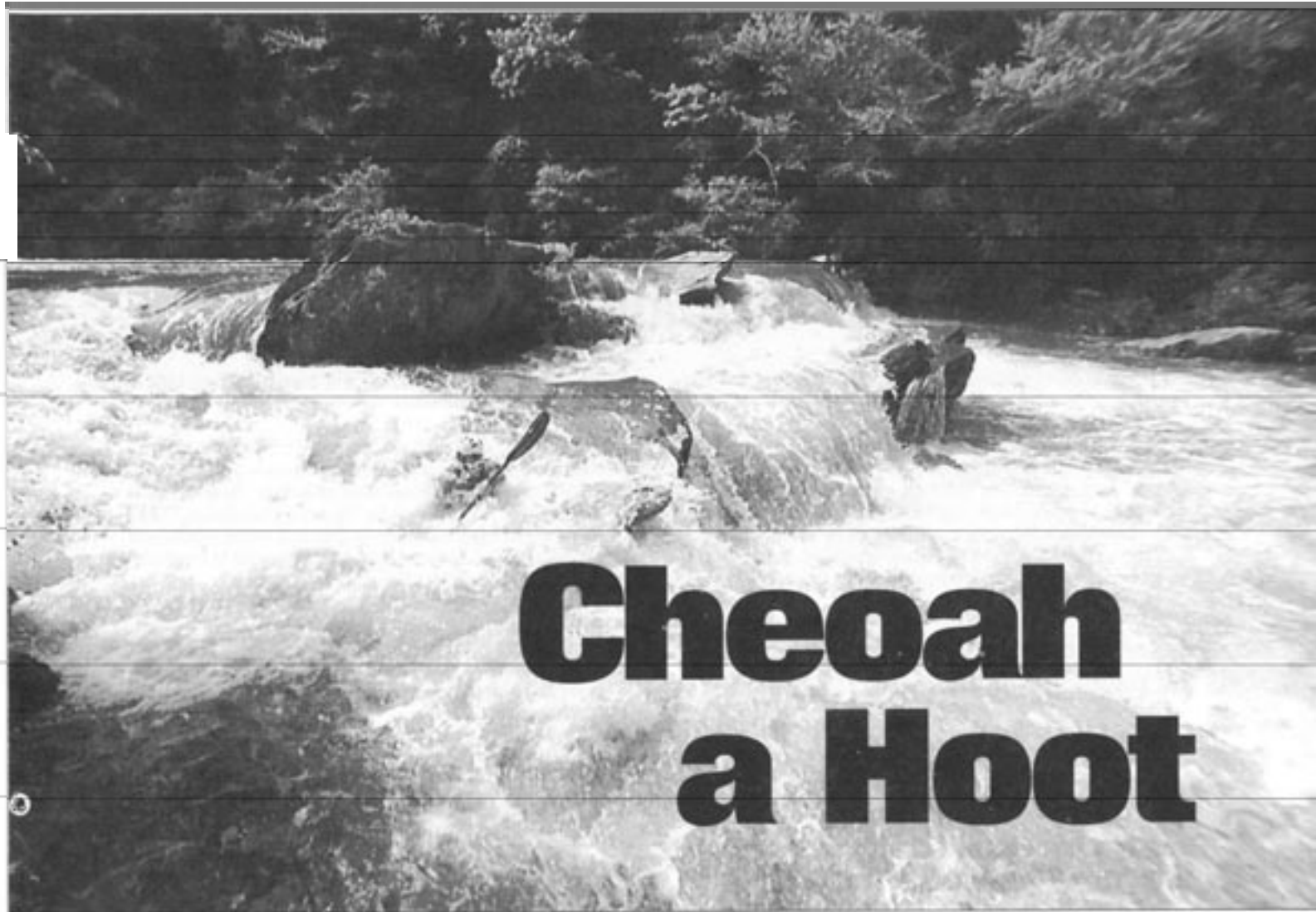
An early start is imperative particularly given the unavoidable delays descending into the canyon. Registration is at 8:00 AM.

Logistics:

Designate a team leader for each paddling group. This individual should be skilled with rigging boats for a belayed descent. Ideally, paddling teams would contain members capable of rigging and belaying boats. If you have questions about rigging boats for the lower ask for assistance from someone in the know. Additional volunteers dedicated to belaying boats into the canyon would greatly accelerate the descent.

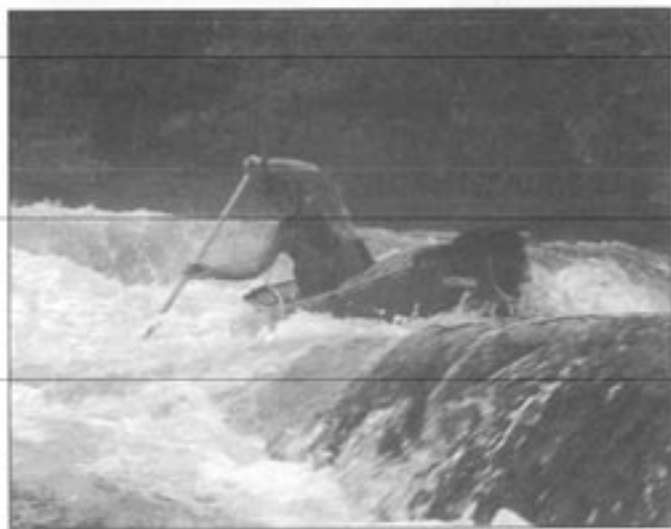
Equipment per paddler:

mandatory—throwbags, two webbing slings, 2-3 carabiners preferably locking. Assume this is an inaccessible canyon (because it is) therefore boaters must be prepared for self-rescue. Equipment necessary for self-rescue includes but is not limited to the following items; breakdown paddle, repair kit, first aid kit, bivvy kit, and extra food.



Running the Big'un.

by Chris Bell



Nolan Whitesell grinning down the Cheoah.

The Cheoah River is located in the extreme southwestern corner of NC, near Robbinsville. It is about 1.5 hours from Knoxville, TN and 2 hours from Asheville. Normally the nine-mile section between the Santeetlah Dam is bypassed and dry. However, as part of a multi-day relicensing project, four whitewater flow tests were conducted July 12-14. I ran it at all four flows and at three of them it was a hoot! We put-in at the little store about six miles upstream of the Tapoco Lodge and took out on the Little Tennessee's Calderwood Reservoir.

The Cheoah has an unusually steady gradient with an average a little under 100 fpm. This means that with the exception of 2 or 3 half-mile-or-so sections, the river is unusually continuous, more so than anything else with a similar volume or water in the Southeast. Some were calling it "warm western-style paddling."

At flows of about 1,000 cfs or under, the top 2/3rd's and lower 1/3 are about a grade different in difficulty, with the top similar in difficulty to the Ocoee. The risks are greater, however, as much of the channel is heavily lined with trees and brush, giving the run a nature akin to paddling during a flood. The main technical challenge is presented by the frequent series of offset holes. Because of the trees and brush, it is not a good place to paddle if you don't have a rock solid roll and the ability to read water well on the fly (bank scouting would not be fun).

The lower 1/3 is better defined, with a number of classic drops. My favorites were the sequence of four drops with the biggest single drop on the river (a ledge about 8 feet high) being the third and the drop beginning at the bridge downstream of the Tapoco Lodge. There were many, many waves to surf and a number of very playable holes, including two freestyle sites: one at Tapoco Lodge and one at the end of the drop beginning at the bridge downstream of the Lodge.

At the highest level we paddled (1,130 cfs), the top and bottom sections were much closer in difficulty as the offset holes were beginning to get sticky. The bottom didn't change much, so the result was a run that was a lot more fun but not any scarier (assuming strong Class IV skills, and keeping in mind that the Ocoee only requires strong Class III skills). If more of the trees and brush were removed, the upper run would almost certainly get easier at every level: paddlers wouldn't be forced to run through the meat of the holes and the entrapment danger would be lower.

This is definitely a river to run if you have the chance! Unfortunately, it may be three years, if ever, before regularly scheduled releases begin. However, as part of the relicensing process, the USGS has installed two on-line gauges. This will make it possible to catch one of the infrequent unscheduled releases that occur after particularly heavy storms. The gauge I paid most attention to is located at Bearpen Gap, just downstream of the bridge dividing the upper and lower sections of the river. Its name and URL are Cheoah River near Bearpen Gap near Tapoco, NC — http://www.nc.usgs.gov/rt-cgi/gen_stn_pg?station=0351706800

Rod Baird, one of the prime movers behind the test, has done a good job summarizing the flows:

*Flow #1 - 950 CFS = 4.50 feet on the Bearpen Gap gauge - bony for rafts, quality river running for hard boats.

*Flow #2 - 670 CFS = 4.15 feet - unacceptable for rafts, undesirable for hard boats.

*Flow #3 - 1130 CFS = 4.70 feet - thrilling for rafts, unique for hard boats. Reminiscent of the Upper Gauley in terms of push.

*Flow #4 - 1010 CFS = 4.55 feet - excellent for rafts, high quality for hard boats.

There are reports of it being run at 3,000 cfs and higher.

What can you do to help make scheduled releases a reality?

1. KEEP UP COMMUNICATION ON RUNS THAT ARE MADE.

If you find an opportunity to run the Cheoah when the dam spills after an intense rain, e-mail the level and your impressions to John Gangemi at American Whitewater. John is leading the negotiations on the releases and needs your input. The more folks who have run this river and the greater the number of levels at which they have run it the better! John's address is jgangemi@digisys.net. You should also be able to link to his address from the AW website: <http://www.americanwhitewater.org>.

2. JOIN AT LEAST ONE OF THE ORGANIZATIONS WORKING FOR RELEASES.

The greater the number of people in an organization, the greater its negotiating power. Being able to say, "I represent 250 people" rather than 200 makes a big difference because the "powers that be" know most people are not "joiners" and frequently increase membership numbers by a factor of 10 (or more!) to get an idea of the true interest.



Boater feeling the Cheoah's push.

Groups involved in the **Cheoah Alliance**, working together on this relicensing project include: American Whitewater, Trout Unlimited, Tennessee Clean Water Network, Western North Carolina Alliance, Chota Canoe Club, Western Carolina Paddlers, Sierra Club (WENOCA Chapter).

3. BECOME BETTER INFORMED

Keep current with the project status by visiting the Tapoco Project citizen's Resource Page:

<http://www.tcwn.org/tapoco/>. This is a great resource: do your part to ensure future releases!

2006: Just Around the Corner

Planning ahead for the 2006 paddling season? Add the Cheoah as a 'must do' run.

Why?

At the levels preferred by rafters and boaters, the Cheoah will offer intermediates and advanced paddlers plenty of warm-up, plenty of play, and plenty of options for a Class III-IV technical challenge. It will be a step up in difficulty and 'push' from neighboring, regularly released whitewater on the Nantahala, Ocoee, and Pigeon, and more widely appealing than the Narrows of the Green. Accommodations include camping nearby and truly civilized hospitality at the Tavoco Lodge, located near the end of the run at 'Vacation Wave.' an awesome surf. (In addition to the drama of the Big'uns Rapids at the beginning of the Lower Section, another notable feature is a perfect hole for freestyle throwing, at the end of a busy boogie, below the Lodge).

Pending the result of work that will determine the release schedule, the Cheoah will be a stellar local run for paddlers in Knoxville and Asheville, a convenient weekend trip for most paddlers in the Southeast, and a terrific addition to the 'agenda' for paddlers on tour of the Southeast.



Help Restore Rockin' Water

Since you have some time between now and when you need to load boats and pack your cooler for a weekend on the Cheoah in NC or dipping your blade in the Caribbean-like water of the Chelan in WA, plan to be part of the restoration success on these rivers. American Whitewater will continue to provide expert guidance and organizational leadership to secure recreational releases on these and many other hydropower relicensings across the country. One would expect whitewater wherever there is gradient in a river channel but hydro engineers have an eye for the same rivers that bring smiles to our faces. American Whitewater has the expertise to get that water back in the river so you can smile but we need your help. Look for and respond to action alerts with an e-mail message, snail-mail letter, or phone call. The staff and regional activists send important alerts to the whitewater community encouraging you to exercise your river advocacy.

You can help the Cheoah, Chelan and other relicensing efforts by becoming a member of American Whitewater. We have a lean, super staff of skilled professionals that work hard to restore and protect whitewater runs throughout the country. We cannot achieve successful outcomes without your membership and support. Below is a short list of some of the other rivers where American Whitewater is actively pursuing or has already obtained whitewater releases through the dam licensing process. Note also that relicensing work continues after the license is signed and releases begin.

- Chelan WA
- Nisqually WA
- Kennebec ME
- Deerfield MA
- Housatonic CT
- North Fork Feather CA
- Nantahala NC
- Tuckasegee NC
- Tallulah GA

The Other Players

As we have found in each completed and ongoing relicensing effort, it is critical to understand the disposition of the community that will be involved in the effect of recreational releases. Residents of Graham County and the town of Robbinsville (particularly, homeowners on Santeetlah Lake) are important constituents, and are supportive of the prospect of increasing recreational opportunities on the Cheoah—private boating, commercial outfitting, and fishing.

Tapoco, the U.S. Forest Service, North Carolina Division of Water Quality, potential (permitted) outfitters and the Graham County community are working with American Whitewater and the Cheoah Alliance to develop the best overall implementation plan for recreational releases, both for boating and angling. We'll be working to determine the season for releases, the number of release days per year, and the volume of the flow(s) during releases.

Visit the new American Whitewater website, americanwhitewater.org, where we will post the national list of hydropower projects impacting whitewater! Sign up on the website to help us restore whitewater to these dry riverbeds. Collectively, paddlers can make a difference. Each of you have valued skills, interests, and energy to help us protect and restore whitewater, and we hope to hear from you!



NRSTM

Northwest River Supplies, Inc.



Jason Robertson, Access Director, contemplates "Fee Demo" along Idaho's Main Payette River.

Snake River Fund Charting a New Course (WY)

By: JJ Hannah, Snake River Fund Intern

Editor's Note: American Whitewater threw a fundraiser for the Snake River in July 2000. More than 100 people helped us raise \$1,100 from the private boating community for the river. Jackson Hole Kayak and Canoe, Rendezvous River Sports, Aaron Pruzan, Brooks Holmes, Katsey Long, JJ Hannah, Wes, and River Manager Dave Cernicek deserve a huge pat on the back for all their help!

SNAKE RIVER, BRIDGER-TETONNATIONAL FOREST, JACKSON, WY- New funding techniques have brought positive changes on the Snake River near Jackson, Wyoming. This is one of the most popular sections of river in the country. With a decreased budget, aging facilities, and increased demands, mandatory fee-collection appeared to be the only solution for funding river management. However, the river community did not want to see this happen and the Forest Service has taken a different approach.

Fishermen, rafters, kayakers, outfitters, local governments, and other stakeholders worked together with the Forest Service to create one of the most unique river funding programs in the country; the Snake River Fund. Now, needs are being met and projects are being accomplished through a community driven program and voluntary donations.

In 1998 the Forest Service entered a partnership with the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole to co-manage this new donation program. The program raises money to preserve the river corridor, maintain facilities, and provide river access to the public. Funding has come from numerous sources. Commercial rafters have covered the majority of the donations over the first two years, though they only make up about 70% of river visitors. Now, the private boating community needs to show support in order for the fund to survive. If they don't, the outfitters could back out and the program could collapse.

Over the last year, private boaters have learned more about the importance of the Fund, through special events. American Whitewater helped support the Fund by sponsoring a special screening of the National Paddling Film Festival. The Utah Whitewater Club has volunteered time and built a new take-out, as well as helping with promotions on a web page. Notably, donations go directly into the river program and provide funding for proposed projects. The Snake River Fund is using these donations to provide clean restrooms, trash and recycling services, maintenance of boat ramps and trails, repaving of parking lots, a permanent drinking water system, larger changing rooms, and swift water rescue training for river rangers. These projects were requested by the public and made possible through their contributions. This community involvement is part of what makes the Snake River Fund so unique.

Managing this stretch of river in this unique way offers many advantages to the river users. The most obvious is that river users are not required to pay fees for accessing the river. Instead visitors are encouraged to volunteer time, opinions, and money to help improve and maintain this special resource. This unique partnership between the Forest Service and the public may prove to be a future trend for funding public lands and a viable alternative to Fee Demo.

Wilson Creek Declared Wild and Scenic (NC)

By Jason Robertson

On August 18th, 2000 President Clinton signed House Bill 1749 designating a 2.9 mile segment of Wilson Creek from its headwaters below Calloway Peak to the confluence of Little Wilson Creek as a scenic river, the 4.6 mile segment from Little Wilson Creek to the confluence of Crusher Branch as a wild river, and the 15.8 mile segment from Crusher Branch to the confluence of Johns River, as a recreational river. Wilson Creek, which drains off North Carolina's Grandfather Mountain, has been featured in a couple of videos. It is a challenging Class III-V whitewater run, and an excellent trout stream. American Whitewater worked behind the scenes on this bill to obtain the administration's support.

Boaters and Fishermen Win: Lehigh River is Navigable! (PA)

By Jason Robertson

The Lehigh River is a navigable waterway and therefore open to the public. There will be no further appeals on the ruling. In August, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal of Judge Ann Lokuta's earlier ruling in 1999 that the Lehigh River was navigable and open to the public. Lokuta heard the case last year when the Lehigh Falls Fishing Club appealed a 1995 decision from District Justice Bernard Hendrzak, who also declared the river navigable.

The dispute arose in 1995, when a local fishermen named Andrejewski fished on the club's posted property despite "no fishing" signs and was charged with defiant trespass. The private fishing club argued that their property deed crossed the river, and that the streambed and banks of the river were private and trespassers should be prosecuted. However, the Lehigh's navigability was decided at least three times in the 19th century, and the court was presented with historical research proving that the Lehigh River had been used for commerce in colonial America. The court affirmed that once a river has been declared navigable it remains navigable.

Salt River Management Plan Delayed (AZ)

By Jason Robertson

In 1998, American Whitewater wrote comments on proposed changes to the management plan on the Upper Salt River Canyon. American Whitewater raised concerns about 1) proposed changes in public accessibility, 2) the negative portrayal of public boaters in the public document, and 3) the need for public scoping meetings on the proposed changes. We also expressed our disbelief at the prejudicial and pejorative tone of the draft planning documents against private boaters.

In July 2000, we received a response from the Tonto National Forest stating that "review of the plan ended with direction from the Forest Supervisor's office to defer recommendations for proposed actions until more data could be collected with regard to impacts to natural resources and user experience. Data collection has been further delayed due to lack of funding."

In other words we won our fight to prevent additional restrictions on private boaters. However, the fact that this little skirmish occurred highlights the need for better communication between river management planning teams, visitors, and advocacy groups such as American Whitewater. Also, the fact that planning has been purportedly halted due to inadequate funding is hardly worth crowing about. As a result, American Whitewater will continue to advocate for better funding for the Forest Service and improving communication with river managers around the country.

Arkansas River Plan Revisions Coming Down the Pipe (CO)

By Jason Robertson

As the Journal was headed to press, we learned about public meetings on the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA) Management Plan Revision. The meetings occurred in early October. However, it's not too late for you to review the AHRA Management Plan Revision Proposal and to express any concerns you may have regarding changes that will affect the management of the river for the next 10 years.

Specifically, you may want to address the proposal to double the numbers of commercial boats allowed in the Numbers Section (from 30 to 60 per day) and the Royal Gorge section (from 150 to 225 boats per day) of the Arkansas River. There is also a proposal to increase the number of private boats allowed in the Brown's Canyon section.

For more information, contact the AHRA office at 719-539-289. Comments must be submitted in writing to the AHRA office at Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area, PO Box 126, Salida, CO 81201.

Former American Whitewater President and current Regional Coordinator Ric Alesch is preparing American Whitewater's position on the proposal.

Death Trap Being Built on Upper Sacramento (CA)

By Jason Robertson

It's one of my worst nightmares. Imagine plastering into a massive spider web strainer made of steel girders... with little possibility of escape. In this case life is stranger than fiction and railroad construction on the Upper Sacramento Box Canyon has raised this nightmare to life.

The construction of a lattice bridge piling in the Sacramento River creates a giant sieve that is difficult to avoid and, when completed, will strain flotsam and jetsam... and possibly boaters. The new piling is upstream of the old Cantera Bridge piling, and existing railroad tracks.

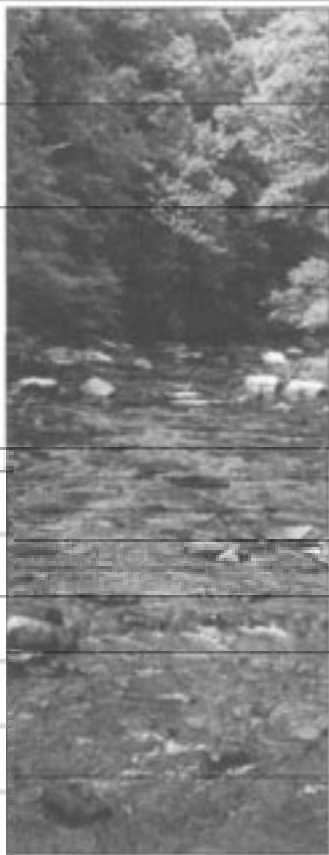
American Whitewater has notified the railroad company, BLM, and state officials of the safety problems with the bridge construction and also raised numerous legal concerns about the licensing process, liability, and compliance with state navigability and transportation laws. See American Whitewater's letter on our website at www.americanwhitewater.org/access/ for more information.

Volunteer Uses Common Sense and Helps Open Access on Laurel Hill Creek (PA)

Photographs and Article by John Maxwell

Editor's Note: After running Laurel Hill Creek in Western Pennsylvania in Spring 2000, John Maxwell ran into an access situation and solved it. This is his story.

Whitewater section of Laurel Hill Creek at low water.



Laurel Hill Creek is not a stream that is intensively paddled by hardboaters. It is pretty in places, but the whitewater is generally Class III or easier. Those who do paddle the stream are often more interested in observing the streamside flora and fauna and the three covered bridges that span the creek. There are two notable whitewater stretches: one stretch is about two miles downstream of Laurel Hill State Park before the covered bridge at Barronvale, and the second is downstream of the cottages at Whipkey Dam, near Metzler.

On a recent excursion, I put on in Laurel Hill State Park. This park is located in the headwaters of the creek, and provides an ideal put-on if you wish to camp further downstream on state forest land, or paddle 17-miles in a day. After I took off and returned to the park to get the bicycle I shuttled with, I was informed that it was illegal to access Laurel Hill Creek with a boat from park property either upstream or downstream of Laurel Hill Lake.

I looked up Bob Hufmann, the park operations manager, and asked him to explain the situation. He said the prohibition was in place because large numbers of trout fishermen use stretches of Laurel Hill Creek within the state park both above and below the lake. He worried that rafters and tubers who float on the lake in significant numbers in warmer months might follow the example of hardboaters who put on the creek. Under his reasoning this could theoretically result in a tidal wave of rafters and tubers leaving the confines of the lake to float the other stretches and create conflicts with the fishermen.

Barronvale Bridge, one of three scenic covered bridges that span Laurel Hill Creek





4 foot drop on Laurel Hill Creek at low water

In comparison to access concerns elsewhere in the country, the situation at Laurel Hill State Park is not of crucial importance to serious whitewater boaters. Not many people boat the stream to begin with. Furthermore, there are plenty of public highways that cross Laurel Hill Creek in various places. Still, it is desirable for public land management agencies, as a rule, to provide at least some form of access to hardboaters.

I proposed to Mr. Hufmann that hardboaters be permitted to access Laurel Hill Creek from the bottom of the park's main picnic area, at the downstream end of the park. This requires a 200-yard carry, but avoids conflict with most of the trout fishermen and avoids giving lake tubers and rafters the idea of floating the creek.

Mr. Hufmann accepted this access suggestion, and has accordingly revised the park's policy to allow hardboaters access to the creek from the picnic area. Mr. Hufmann also suggested that boaters could park on Triple Creek Acres Road and access the creek from the bridge. He even offered to bulldoze extra parking there for hardboaters if there was sufficient demand.

BLM May Improve Access on South Fork American (CA)

By Mike Bean



Mike Bean surfing on Maya.
Photo by Craig Sanders



John Grossman boofs off the left side of "Gunsight" a rock in the middle of the Troublemaker rapid on the SF American River, August 99.
Photo by Craig Sanders

In August, the Federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Field Office in Folsom, California started a series of public meetings to formulate an updated management plan for BLM lands on or near the South Fork of the American River in Western El Dorado County.

BLM is updating its management plan through a community-based planning process rather than through the conventional process under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and National Environmental Quality Act of 1969.

BLM has scheduled November 30, 2001 as the completion date for the updated plan, which is quite aggressive given the history of El Dorado County's slow pace in creating an update to its river management plan. After five years and a half a million dollars, it looks like at least another year before the county's updated plan will be finalized. BLM was hoping to work with the updated County plan, but having acquired a number of new parcels in the last five years and seeing no end to the County's process, BLM decided to proceed with developing their own plans for their lands. BLM is limiting its plan to land



Brett Gideon, 15, handsurfs at "Maya" a popular playspot on the South fork American River Chili Bar run. Photo by Craig Sanders.

three miles above the access point; however, this increase should be offset by boaters using this access point as a put-in.

For many beginner kayakers in Northern California, the six-mile Coloma to Greenwood Creek run has become the essential weekend training run. The run has also become an after work run for local residents. Many of these local residents are fighting to make sure access remains at Greenwood Creek.

For a schedule of upcoming BLM meetings for the South Fork American, see: <http://www.ca.blm.gov/folsom/meetings.html>.

For more information, contact Jim Eicher at (916) 985-4474 (James_Eicher@ca.blm.gov) or write: BLM, Folsom Field Office, 63 Natoma Street, Folsom CA, 95630.

use rather than whitewater recreation, although, most concede that they are closely related.

One of the hottest boater issues related to this process is the future of public river access at the confluence of the South Fork American and Greenwood Creek. Three years ago kayakers found access to this newly acquired BLM parcel via a gate on State Highway 49 approximately two miles North of the town of Coloma.

River access at this parcel provides a three-mile Class II+ extension to the three-mile Class II Coloma to Lotus run. It's also a way to skip three miles of Class II+ when paddling the Class III+ Gorge run. The trail from the gate to the river is about a quarter of a mile long. There is limited parking outside the gate along a highway where cars speed by while kayakers try to park, unload and load equipment. Everyone in the community admits there is a safety issue with this site. Many residents have complained about the parking situation.

Luckily for kayakers, BLM has not prevented public access to this parcel; however, they cannot fix the parking problem until they have an updated management plan. The County has concerns about any access near Greenwood Creek fearing increased use by boaters in the

Trouble on the Waters

If you had trouble getting to the river, let us know. Use this form to report access problems so that AW can convince legislators and government authorities where and when river access is a problem. If you have met an irate landowner, noticed signs forbidding access, or were stopped by a landowner, barbed wire fence or a locked gate, tell us about it on this form. If several boaters are arrested or involved, only 1 form should be filled out per incident naming a boater available for future contact.

River _____ State _____

Date of incident _____

Access code categories: List below or circle the categories, multiple categories are ok.

Brief description of incident:

Boater contact _____
 Address _____
 City etc. _____
 Phone _____
 e-mail _____

Landowner/Agency/Sheriff contact (if known)
 Name _____
 Address _____
 City etc. _____
 Phone _____
 e-mail _____

I. Trespass. Ticket, warning or arrest for:
 1.1.0 Trespass on private property
 1.2.0 Trespass on public property
 1.3.0 Criminal trespass arrest
 1.4.0 Civil trespass lawsuit

2. Public Access Closure
 2.1.0 Denied by federal law
 2.1.1 Denied by BLM
 2.1.2 Denied by Forest Service
 2.1.3 Denied by Nat'l Park Service
 2.2.0 Denied by state
 2.3.0 Denied by local authority

3. Injury from man-made obstacles
 3.1.0 Barbed wire or fence
 3.2.0 Low head dam

4. Obstacles running river, scouting or portaging
 4.1.0 Fence or chain on land blocking access
 4.2.0 Fence, wire, or tree on river blocking access
 4.3.0 Warning of no trespassing or posted sign
 4.4.0 Vehicle towed, ticketed, or vandalized
 4.5.0 Threats or acts of violence

5. Closures: Rivers closed that were once open
 5.1.0 Closed by private landowner
 5.2.0 Closed by government agency
 5.2.1 Federal
 5.2.2 State
 5.2.3 Local
 5.3.0 High water closure

6. New access fees
 6.1.0 Charged by private landowner
 6.2.0 Charged by government agency
 6.2.1 Federal
 6.2.2 State
 6.2.3 Local

7. Dam controlled rivers
 7.1.0 Water turned off
 7.2.0 Inconsistent flow: too much or too little
 7.3.0 No notice of releases

8. Lawsuits and legislation
 8.1.1 New legislation to block river access.
 8.1.2 Lawsuits to block access.
 8.2.1 New legislation to enable river access.
 8.2.2 Lawsuits to enable access.

Send to Ken Ransford, 475 Sierra Vista, Carbondale, CO 81623, 970-963-6800, FAX 970-963-6700. ransford@csn.net

Access is a constant struggle. The AW Access Committee needs your help.



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By Jayne H. Abbot, Events Manager

This season saw the first ever cash purse rodeo series, and we're talking some serious cash here. Check this out! Both Javid Grubbs and Erica Mitchell, the overall winners of the Outdoorplay.com Freestyle Kayak Championship walked away with **\$3,000** each, all thanks to the generous sponsorship by Outdoorplay. Now that's a nice paycheck! Here's a look at the events at the end of the season and information on the winners of both the Outdoorplay.com series and the 2000 NOWR Point Series. As always, you can find the latest information on the rodeo scene at www.nowr.org (note: the NOWR website is currently undergoing a revamp).



Outdoorplay.com Freestyle Kayak Championship

The championship series consisted of **3** events: Ocoee Rodeo in May and the South Bend and Wausau Freestyle events in August. Results for the Ocoee were posted in the July/August issue. Many thanks to Outdoorplay for their support of the sport and American Whitewater. The following are overall winners of the Outdoorplay series:

K-1 Men Pro

1. Javid Grubbs (winner of \$3,000)
2. Andy Bedingfield
3. Jimmy Blakeney

K-1 Women Pro

1. Erica Mitchell (winner of \$3,000)
2. Brooke Winger
3. Tanya Shuman and Julie Dion

C-1 Pro

1. Chris Manderson (winner of \$750)
2. Allen Braswell
3. Brian Miller

OC-1 Pro

1. Eli Helbert - tie (winner of \$375)
- Brian Miller - tie (winner of \$375)
3. Joe Langman

South Bend - August 18-19

The second event on the Outdoorplay.com Freestyle Kayak Championship brought out the best of the best hole riders in the country and the world. To add a twist to the unique downtown venue, the finals were held in the evening under lights with the latest in rodeo tunes pounding the pavement. Spectators came out in droves to check out the new sport held on the East Race Waterway, along time venue for Slalom events.

South Bend Results

K-1 Men Pro

1. Steve Fisher
2. Javid Grubbs
3. Andy Bedingfield

K-1 Women Pro

1. Erica Mitchell
2. Brooke Winger
3. Tanya Shuman

C-1 Pro

1. Brian Miller
2. Scott McCleskey
3. Chris Manderson

OC-1 Pro

1. Eli Helbert
2. Brian Miller
3. Joe Langman

Wausau Freestyle Kayak Championship - August 26-27

Over 7,000 spectators come out to cheer on the competitors in the final event of the Outdoorplay.com Freestyle Kayak Championship. Many thanks to the Wausau volunteers who made this event such a huge success. It was here that the overall series winners were determined, and those famed checks handed out to the smiling winners!

Wausau Results:

K-1 Men Pro

1. Javid Grubbs
2. Jay Kincaid
3. BJ Johnson

K-1 Women Pro

1. Tanya Shuman
2. Erica Mitchell
3. Brooke Winger

C-1 Pro

1. Chris Manderson
2. Allen Braswell
3. Brian Miller

OC-1 Pro

1. Frankie Hubbard
2. Eli Helbert
3. Brian Miller

K-1 Men Expert

1. Chris Hull
2. Justin Japs
3. Scott Alexander

K-1 Men Jr Expert

1. Mark Birbeck
2. Dustin Urban
3. Marlow Long

K-1 Women's Jr Expert

1. Hailey Hamilton
2. Hannah Scherffig
3. Dawn Hamilton

OC-1 Men Expert

1. Teal Fyksen
2. Roy Crimmins
3. Craig Smerda

Master's Combined

1. Stephen Bletsch
2. Tim Parker
3. Roy Crimmins

Sport/Beginner Combined

1. Lucas Aker
2. Tom Landwher
3. Shannon Linnane

K-1 Men Pro Free Riding

1. Eric Jackson
2. Sam Drevo
3. Dave Garringer

K-1 Women Pro Free Riding

1. Brooke Winger

2. Aleta Miller
3. Annie Chamberlain

K-1 Men Expert Free Riding

1. Zack Bannow
2. Joerg Steinback
3. Jason Mortensen

K-1 Men Jr Expert Free Riding

1. Mark Birbeck
2. Dustin Urban
3. Sean Brabant

Subaru Gorge Games - July 8-15

Unfortunately, the much anticipated Gorge Games freestyle event which was to be given prime showing on NBC was cancelled due to last minute failure of negotiations with the town in which the event was to be held. As of this writing, organizers are working well in advance with the town and expect to have a plan in place by early November.

Onawa River Rodeo - September 2-4

The ever successful and popular Ottawa River Rodeo went off without a hitch.

K-1 Men Pro

1. Eric Jackson
2. Brendan Mark
3. Andrew Holcombe

- K-1 Women Pro
 1. Brooke Winger
 2. Anna Lavesque
 3. Tanya Shuman

- C-1 Pro
 1. Luke Hopkins
 2. Alan Braswell
 3. Eric Jackson

- OC-1 Pro
 1. Eli Helbert
 2. Joe Langman
 3. Mark Scriver

- K-1 Men Expert
 1. Scott Alexander
 2. Bobby Miller
 3. Jeff Nelson

- K-1 Women Expert
 1. Fanny Gregorre
 2. Karen Stokley
 3. Brenna Kelleher

- K-1 Men Jr Expert
 1. Dustin Urban
 2. Andre Dominic
 3. Hal Monkman

- C-1 Women
 1. Gigi Rioux
 2. Naomi Heffler
 3. Fanny Gregorre

- K-1 Men Beginner
 1. Alex Egrnont
 2. Brad Stewart
 3. Jack Hewitt

- K-1 Women Sport
 1. Sarah bouders
 2. Jennifer Lawrence
 3. Leslie McLean

- K-1 Men Jr Sport/Beginner
 1. Chris Zuliani
 2. Corey Hewit
 3. Garrett Gravel

Kootenay Rodeo - September 2-4

The Kootenay also sewed as the West Coast Canadian Team Trails. Congratulations to those who made the Canadian team!

- K-1 Men Pro
 1. Tyler Curtis
 2. Rob Cartwright
 3. Ken Whiting

- K-1 Women Pro
 1. Kira Wing
 2. Charlene Starck
 3. Saskia Van Mourik

- K-1 Women Junior
 1. Hailey Hamilton
 2. Dawn Hamilton
 3. Emily Lussin

- K-1 Men Junior
 1. Mikkel St. Jean Ducan
 2. Nathan Jackson
 3. Tyler Maxwell

THANKS!!

Many thanks to all of the event organizers and their teams of volunteers who put on the incredible events that makes up our unique whitewater "scene." You are truly whitewater gems!

Thank you to all of the sponsors who supported NOWR events on a national level in 2000. These include: Outdoorplay.com, Hooked on the Outdoors, Dagger, Lotus Designs, Kokatat, Necky, Perception, Snap Dragon, Canoe and Kayak Magazine, Chaco, Chums, Crazy Creek, Croakies/Life Link, Mountain Surf, Salamander, Shred Ready, and Yakima.

To our athlete supporters: Jimmy Blakeney who helped procure pro judges, Simone French of New Zealand who handled scoring with ease, Annie Chamberlain who announced with flair and professionalism, Allen Braswell who faithfully made sure events

had a PA system, and to so many more that pitched in to make all of the events run smoothly, a very special thanks from Arnerican Whitewater/NOWR and all of the event organizers. You are incredible both on and off the water!

CORRECTIONS:

Results for the K-1 Women Sport class at the New River Rodeo were reported incorrectly in the July/August issue. Below are the corrected results. We apologize for the error.

- K-1 Women Sport
 1. Kim Powers
 2. Martha Miller
 3. Paige Hawkins
 4. Carrie Metheny

Results from the Potomac Whitewater Festival were provided in the Sept/Oct issue of the journal but missing was the Junior Men's K-1 Expert class results. Here they are:

- Junior K-1 Men
 1. Shane Groves
 2. Dustin Urban
 3. Kalef Latorney

Ocoee River Parking Fee Update

You read about the parking fees being implemented on the middle Ocoee in the last issue of the journal, and many of our members have responding with dismay. Unfortunately, it looks like these fees are inevitable and will be there when you pull up to park in the spring of 2001. As of this writing (Sept, 2000), the fee is expected to be \$3.00 per car with an annual pass available for \$30.00. Money raised from these fees will go to the Tennessee State Parks fund, not general state funds so that paddlers should see facilities improvements at the Ocoee in a year or two. Information about the fees including when and where public informational meetings will be held and an area to make your feelings known will be available this winter! spring at www.tnstateparks.com.

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RainForest World

Outer Banks Surf Kayak

Results - September 2000

Men's Freestyle Intermediate/Beginner

1. Alex Egmont
2. Nick Frank
3. Jeff Serens
4. Michael Wilsey

Men's K-1 Intermediate/Beginner

1. Alex Egmont
2. Nick Frank
3. Matt Hutton
4. Dean Hamilton

Women's K-1

1. Lindsay Usher
2. Lisa Collins
3. Andrea Zeger

Women's K-1 Junior

1. Carrier Metheny

Women's Freestyle Expert

1. Buffy Baily

Men's Junior Freestyle

1. Trip Jennings

Men's Sit on Top Expert

1. Fletcher Burton
2. Gene Marshall
3. James Dennison
4. Robert Depolo

Men's K-1 Expert

1. Kyle Marinello
2. Trip Jennings
3. Ken Hoeve
4. Tim Hall

Men's Freestyle Expert

1. John Scagliarini
2. Tim Hall
3. Steve Barnard
4. Ken Hoeve

International Expert - Open

1. Stowe Blankenship
2. Barry Shrum
3. Chris Kohut
4. Ken Jefferson



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The River Safety Report 1996 - 1999

By Charlie Walbridge

A project of the American Canoe Association
and American Whitewater

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This is the sixth collection of whitewater accident reports published since 1974. . Most canoe, kayak, and raft enthusiasts will never encounter a fatal accident during their careers, but all can benefit from the experiences of thousands of river runners contained in these reports.

Readers will become increasingly aware of how accidents occur, and will develop be better able to recognize and avoid dangerous situations. The reports show what works, and what doesn't.

The sport of whitewater paddling has grown tremendously. Although better equipment and training makes river running safer than ever, more paddlers mean more accidents. The reports in this book involve a variety of boat types, skill levels, and river difficulties. Many accounts are written by the people who were actually there; all feature a detailed analysis by river experts. The reports are gripping, disturbing, and always enlightening.

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AMERICAN WHITEWATER'S 2001 SCHEDULE OF RIVER EVENTS

Celebrating whitewater rivers across the country

The following is the early spring/summer schedule of events as known in September of 2000. Dates are subject to change. For the most current information, check www.americanwhitewater.org and www.nowr.org. A few exciting changes to note. The US Freestyle Team Trials will be held in conjunction with the IR Triple Crown and will choose the US Team in 3 separate events over a one-week period. This format, organizers and athletes hope, will choose the best athletes to represent the US at the World Championships on June 25 - July 1 in Sorte, Spain. New to the schedule this spring is NOWR's first Intercollegiate and Junior only event, the Styrofoam Cup. Held on the Nantahalla River in North Carolina, the event has traditionally hosted only Slalom but is intrigued by rodeo and wishes to hop on the growing rodeo wave. The Ocoee Rodeo is sporting a new and expanded title: the Ocoee Whitewater Games. The newly fashioned Ocoee Games came about through the merger of the Ocoee Rodeo competitions with the US Slalom Team Trails. Organizers are working hard to bring together these two whitewater disciplines into one all encompassing spectacular event. Also in the changing stage is the ever popular Oregon Cup which adds a new competition, a Boater Xcross and eliminates the long haul to the beach for the surf competition and the judging controversy of the Sunset Falls event.

AMERICAN WHITEWATER FESTIVALS

National Paddling Film Festival	February 23-24	Lexington, KY	Zina Merkin	606-258-2508	mrkin@ca.uky.edu
Tallulah Festival	April 7	Tallulah, GA	Mary Beth Bundrick	706-754-4318	tallulahfalls@georgiamountains.com
Tennessee Paddle 2K	April 6-8	Wartburg, TN	Dale Robinson	865-909-2622	daler@tennesseevaddle.com

atoney Creek Rendezvous	April 7	Johnstown, VA	Steve Podratsky	814-266-9144	mantonik@surishop.net
3 rd Annual French Broad River Festival	May 12-13	Asheville, NC	Chris Donochod	828-236-1209	
Salmon River Whitewater Festival	July ?	Pulaski, NY	Dan Murn	315-298-6475	dmurn@vacs.cnyric.org
Black River Festival	July ?	Watertown, NY	Chris Koll	315-652-8397	ckol11234@aol.com
Deerfield Festival	August 4	Charlemont, MA	Mike Coleman		colemanm@beaconarch.com

American Whitewater Cascade Series

A series of premier level races from mild(er) to wilder held across the country.

Canyon Creek Extreme Race	May 9	Clark County, WA	Keith Jensen	503-285-0464	acks@tefeport.com
French Broad River Race	May 12	Asheville, NC	Chris Donochod	828-236-1209	
Great Falls Race	June 2	Great Falls, VA	Greg Morrison	301-263-9572	g Morrison@repairnow.com

NOWR 2001 RiversLiv Series- Presented by American Whitewater

IR Triple Crown/US Freestyle Team Trials	March 31-April 7	NC and TN	Penstock Productions LLC	828-268-0676	www.penstockproductions.com
Styrofoam Cup Intercollegiate Regional Champ	April 14-15	Bryson City, NC	Will Leverette		styrofoamcup@hotmail.com
Kern River Festival	April 20-22	Kernville, CA	Terry Valle	818-340-3083	tvalle@ix.netcom.com
Gilman Falls Rodeo	April 14	Old Town, ME	Peter Lataille	207-862-2922	creekpeter@aol.com
Trinity River Freestyle Rodeo	April 28-29	Big Flat, CA	David Steinhauser	530-623-6293	splash@trinityriverrafting.com

New River Rodeo	April 28-29	McCoy, VA			
Oregon Cup / May 5-12					
Maupin Daze	May 5-6	Maupin, OR	Dave Slover	541-395-2201	allstar@telesport.com
Boater Xcross	May 7	Bend, OR	Dave Slover	541-395-2201	allstar@telesport.com
Canyon Creek Extreme Race	May 9	Clark County, WA	Keith Jensen	503-285-0464	acks@teleport.com
Bob's Hole Rodeo	May 11-12	Estacada, OR	Keith Jensen	503-285-0464	acks@teleport.com
Coosa River Whitewater Festival	May ?	Wetumpka, AL	Lonnie Carden	334-272-0952	knewton@bellsouth.net



Ocoee Whitewater Games May 18-20 (combination of Ocoee Rodeo and US Slalom Team Trials)	Ducktown, TN	American Whitewater	828-645-5299
		jhabbot@aol.com	
Wyoming Whitewater Championship	May 26-27	Jackson Hole, WY	Aaron Pruzan 307-733-2471 jacksonholekayak@wyoming.com
Bigfork Whitewater Festival	June 1-3	Bigfork, MT	Mike Dezanni
Potomac Whitewater Festival	June 1-3	Great Falls, VA	Greg Morrison 301-263-9572 gmorrison@repairnow.com
Headwaters Championship / FiBARK	June 14-17	Salida, CO	Susan Dempsey 719-539-4686 zusar@amigo.net
Animas River Days	June 8-10	Durango, CO	Four Corners Riversports 970-259-3893 info@riversports.com

OTHER EVENTS

Futaleufu River Appreciation Festival	March ?	Futaleufu, Chile	Jodie Deignan	info@futafriends.org
Cheat River Festival and Race	May 4-6	Albright, WV	Kerry Manier	304-329-3621 foc@cheat.org

Cheat River Race 2000

By Rick Gusic

On Friday evening May 5th the Fifth Annual Cheat River Race kicked off the annual Cheat Rivers Festival, sponsored by the Friends of the Cheat in Albright, West Virginia.

The racers faced a level of 2.5 ft, a flow of about 2,300 cfs. The higher water provided welcome relief from the low water of 1999; thanks to the extra water all of the competitors managed to finish the race and there were no broken boats. The Cheat Race kicks off about 1/2 mile above Decision rapid and continues 10.5 miles to the Jenkinsburg Bridge. What makes the Cheat Race special is that it is one of the only races in the east that begins with a mass start.

This year 55 boaters lined up and furiously banged boats, paddles, and bodies, fighting to get to the front of the pack. As in other years, within a mile, the pack had fragmented into small clusters of boaters racing head-to-head.

To no one's surprise, the newly revamped and rebuilt Jesse Whittemore jumped out to an early lead. Jesse battled for first with Steve Kauffman, finally winning with a time of 1:04:27. Steve finished a minute and eleven seconds behind, coming in at 1:05:38. Not far behind was the world's hardest training paddler, the Lehigh Valley's own Ted Newton. Ted crossed the line at 1:07:10. The fourth and fifth overall spots were filled by Rick Gusic (1:10:46) and Scott Stough (1:11:54).

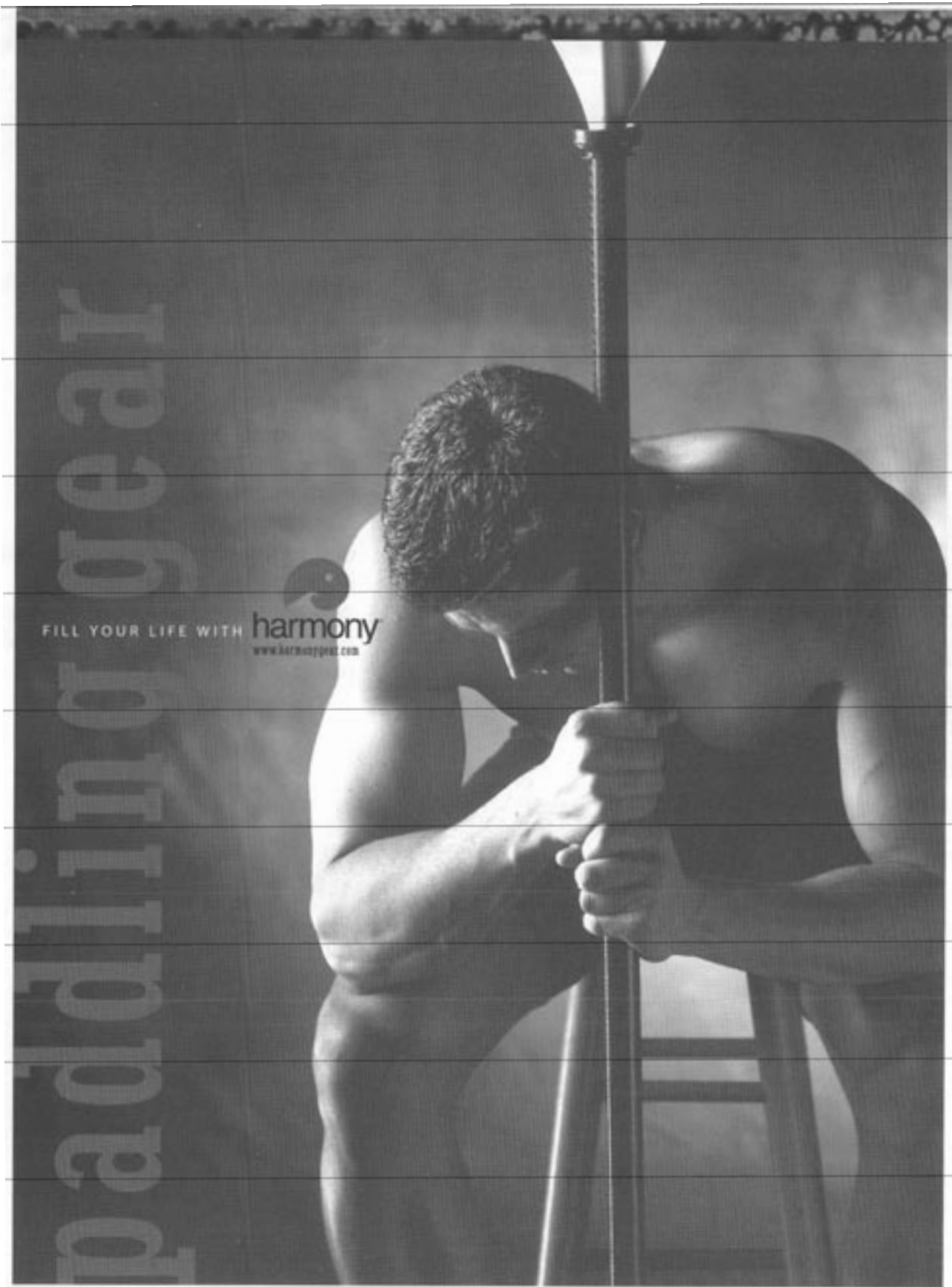
In the women's division, Colleen Laffey paddled her Wavehopper to an impressive 15th place overall and a 1st place amongst women, finishing in 1:17:40. Right on her heels was Jan Steckel, racing to a time of 1:19:03. 3rd place was awarded to Cheryl Shiber with a time of 1:21:45.

Coming in strong in the C1 class was Neal Fleenor (1:23:18). Right behind him was the open canoe winner, race veteran Steve Frazier (1:26:46).

This year's Cheat Race marked the introduction of an entirely new category and prize, the Team Award. Teams consisted of up to five paddlers, with the times of the three best finishers on each team compiled to create a team score. All members of the each team had to have ties to the same organization, ie; rafting company, boat manufacturer, club, etc... Excitement was in the air and the competition heated as three teams battled it out.

Team Mountain Streams, consisting of Rick Gusic (4th), Keven Kurcina (12th), and Doug Schmitt (20th), scored 36 pts and claimed the title. Second place went to a team from the Friends of the Cheat, scoring 41 pts. This team was composed of Jim Snyder (11th), Randy Robinson (13th), and Dave Bassage (17th). 3rd place was awarded to Moravian Kayak. It was an impressive triumph for Mountain Streams, whose paddlers once again displayed overwhelming dominance over the other local rafting companies (Wilderness Voyageurs, Laurel Highlands, & Whitewater Adventurers), who all failed to find three employees/guides who could paddle the Cheat. (Editor's note: You will never guess which team the author of this article was on! But it sounds like a dare for next year's race, don't you think!)

As is the tradition, the post race party was held immediately after at the take-out. Free beer was flowing from the kegs courtesy of West Virginia Brewery Company (thanks guys!) In the course of the debauchery that followed, not all of the entrants received their competitor's T shirts. If you were among them, contact the Friends of the Cheat. Otherwise, see you at the starting line next year!



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2000 Championships Wrap Up

The winners of the 2000 NOWR Point Series Championship are:

K-1 Men

- 1 Javid Grubbs
- 2 Eric Jackson
- 3 Taylor Robertson

K-1 Women

- 1 Brooke Winger
- 2 Julie Dion
- 3 Tanya Shuman

C-1

- 1 Chris Manderson
- 2 Allen Braswell
- 3 Luke Hopkins

OC-1

- 1 Eli Helbert
- 2 Brain Miller
- 3 Joe Langman

K-1 Jr.

- 1 Jesse Murphy
- 2 Calef Latorney
- 3 Sean Brabant



In 2000, there were two championship series, the NOWR Point Series Championship where pro and Junior athletes earned points at all NOWR events towards their overall standings. Their top 5 placements counted. In the Outdoorplay.com Freestyle Kayak Championship, pro competitors earned points at all three events in the series (in addition to prize money) towards the overall series title, and cash purse of \$7,500.

Eli Helbert, age 24 - 1st place OC-1 Point Series Championship, 1st place (tie) OC-1 Outdoorplay Series

Eli grew up in the Harrisonburg, VA region and began paddling at age eight. He now considers Asheville, NC his home. He is the current OC-1 World Champion and has bagged three 1st place finishes as a third year pro at Southbend, Potomac, and Ottawa, but considers the Augsburg Rodeo in Germany to be his favorite event. Eli is a member of the 2001 US Freestyle Team traveling to Sorte, Spain this June. When not on the water, Eli hangs with girlfriend Marion and the boys from AB, barrel-rolling. Eli would like to thank his family, 500+ friends and his sponsors, Second String Bluegrass Band, Team Edge Imports, Mobile Adventures, Lotus Designs, Watershed, Powerbar, Robson, Teva, Voyageur, and the Nantahala Outdoor Center.

Brian Miller age 27 - 1st place (tie) OC-1 Outdoorplay Series

Brian lives in Asheville, NC where he paddles upwards of 300 days a year. His favorite rivers are the Green and Little White Salmon. His boat of choice is the Dagger Ultrafuge, while mixin' it up at his favorite play spot Rock Island, TN. After six years of paddling, Brian racked up OC-1 wins at the Ocoee and C-1 wins at Southbend and



Union Chutes. He was also the 2000 Pre World Champion in C-1 and OC-1. Brian is a member of the 2001 US Freestyle Team traveling to Sorte, Spain this June. Brian's sponsors include Dagger, Outdoor Play, Mountain Surf, Immersion Research, Lotus Designs, Viking, 5-10, Surf-the-Earth, and Watershed. He would like to thank his family and friends for their support and encouragement. He would also like to thank Dagger for providing him with the opportunities to follow his dreams on and off the water.



Chris Manderson age 32 - 1st place C-1 Point Series Championship, 1st place C-1 Outdoorplay Series

Chris currently resides in the center of the boating universe, Asheville, NC where he boats 300 days a year. With eleven years experience as a pro, Chris stacked up five 1st place finishes at Wausau, New River, Coosa, Rock Island, and Nolichucky. Chris is a member of the 2001 US Freestyle Team traveling to Sorte, Spain this June. He likes the crowded, high traffic events in the United States and Europe where he can produce the most exposure possible for his sponsors: Perception Kayaks, Mitchell Paddles, Shred Ready Helmets, Smith Optics, Lotus Designs. What does Chris do when not on the water? He plays golf, walks Jake the Dog, tinkers in modern dentistry, and works his lyrical geniuses for his own rap album.

ception Kayaks, Mitchell Paddles, Shred Ready Helmets, Smith Optics, Lotus Designs. What does Chris do when not on the water? He plays golf, walks Jake the Dog, tinkers in modern dentistry, and works his lyrical geniuses for his own rap album.

Erica Mitchell age 22 - 1st place K-1 Outdoorplay Series

Erica is originally from Cincinnati, OH and started paddling with her dad at age twelve. She has distinguished herself as one of the nations most talented and diverse freestyle, squirt, and river running kayakers. In 2000, Erica stacked up wins at Southbend and Coosa with a 1st place win in squirt at the Ocoee. Erica is a member of the 2001 US Freestyle Team traveling to Sorte, Spain this June. She would like to thank her sponsors: Wavesport, 5.10, and AT Paddles.



Javid Grubbs age 19 - 1st place K-1 Point Series Championship, 1st place K-1 Outdoorplay Series

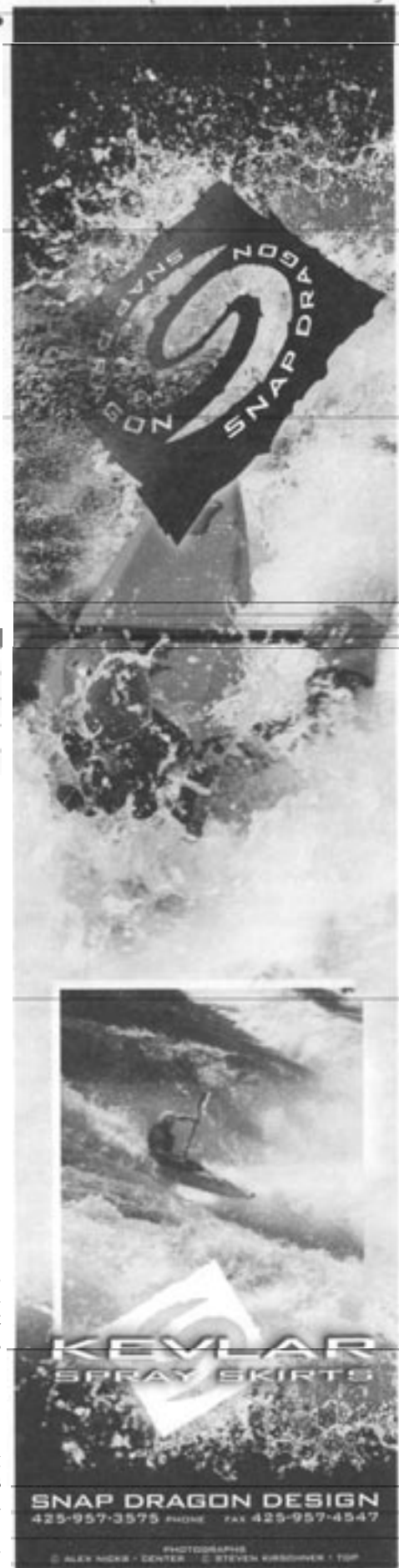
In 2000 Javid won at the Ocoee and Wausau. Javid is a member of the 2001 US Freestyle Team traveling to Sorte, Spain this June. Javid would like to thank his sponsors: Outdoorplay.com, Riot, Lightning Paddles, and Immersion Research.

Brooke Winger - 1st place K-1 Point Series Championship

Brooke has been paddling since the age of 13 and finds her roots in slalom racing, where she competed as a junior at the national level. In 2000, Brooke won at Union Chute, Ottawa, and Maupin Daze. Brooke is a member of the 2001 US Freestyle Team traveling to Sorte, Spain this June. She also enjoys riding show horses, skiing, climbing, running, and anything that puts her outdoors. Brooke thanks her sponsors: Wavesport, California Canoe and Kayak, Lightning Paddles, Manastash, Grateful heads, and Aloe Up.

Jesse Murphy age 15 - 1st place K-1 Jr. Point Series Championship

Jesse hails from the Payette river region of McCall, ID. He has been passionately paddling for nine years. In 2000, Jesse won at Wyoming and FiBark. When Jesse is not on the water his other passions are Nordic skiing and climbing. He would like to thank Peter, Shane, and Whitney at Adventure Quest and Veronica at Perception for excelling his passion in the water. Jesse would also like to thank his sponsors: Perception Kayaks, Grateful Heads, Seven2 Paddles, OS Systems.



2000 Upstream Attainment Race - Ohio pyle, Pa.

Andrew McEwan	8:57	Scott Downs	16:30
Jess Whittemore	9:07	David Hammond	16:55
Brian Homburg	9:46	Donnie Hasch	17:04
Steve Kauffman	9:52	Bob Vernon	17:24
Eric Martin	11:37	Dave Thielman	17:56
Rick Gusic	12:19	Mark Hei	18:38
Simon Beardmore	12:52	Wallie Hatfield	18:48
Scott Stough	12:59	Doug Lieb	19:11
Chris Norbury	13:02	Jason Zaleueski	19:29
Jesse Shimrock	14:14	Adam Hall	DNF
Rob Anderson	14:35	Kurt Casey	DNF
Greg Akins	14:44	Garth Boyd	DNF
Chara O'Brian	15:14	(River level 2')	

Downriver Races Held on North Branch Potomac

Reported by Chris Norbury

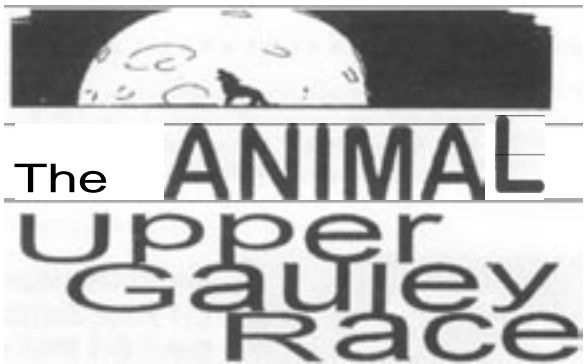
The weather and water were great on the North Branch of the Potomac at Bloomington on Sunday, September 2000. A small crowd gathered to race. The shortened classic course was won by National Champion Andrew McEwan, 37 seconds ahead of Ted Newton, who won the corresponding race in May. Steve "My boat weighs 22 lbs - honest" Kauffman produced one of his best performances of the summer to take third. In the women's class, Colleen Laffey, paddling a borrowed wildwater boat, narrowly edged out Terry Peterson, who chose to paddle a wavehopper.

Classic

1. Andrew McEwan	K1M	WW	20-48
2. Ted Newton	K1M	WW	21-25
3. Steve Kauffman	K1M	WW	22-05
4. Jesse Whittemore	K1M	WW	22-22
5. Paul Hoda	K1M	WW	22-37
6. Chris Norbury	K1M	WW	22-46
7. Scott Stough	K1M	WW	24-28
8. Colleen Laffey	K1W	WW	25-47
9. Terry Peterson	K1W	WH	25-58

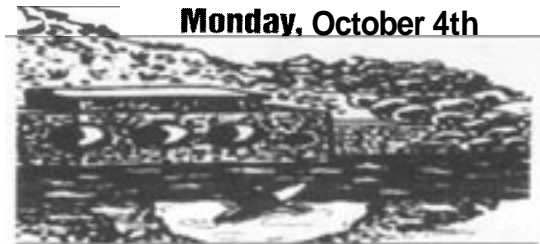
In the sprint there was an upset when Andrew, showing the effects of a long hard season, was beaten out by a second by both Ted Newton and Chris Norbury. Andrew just managed to match Steve Kauffman's time in third.

1. Ted Newton	K1M	WW	1-25
1. Chris Norbury	K1M	WW	1-25
3. Andrew McEwan	K1M	WW	1-26
3. Steve Kauffman	K1M	WW	1-26
5. Jesse Whittemore	K1M	WW	1-28
6. Paul Hoda	K1M	WW	1-29
7. Scott Stough	K1M	WW	1-40
8. Colleen Laffey	K1W	WW	1-46



The ANIMAL Upper Gauley Race

Monday, October 4th



8th "Animal" Gauley River Race - 2000

Reported by Donnie Hudspeth - Race Organizer

Participant	Class	Race Time	Overall Position
Andrew McEwan	Wildwater	0:44:36	1
Steve Kauffman	Wildwater	0:46:53	2
Jesse Whittemore	Wildwater	0:47:40	3
Rick Gusic	Slalom-Men	0:51:50	4
Michael Moore	Slalom-Men	0:52:15	5
Ben Coleman	Wavehopper-Men	0:52:53	6
Pascal Saïdi	Wavehopper-Men	0:53:44	7
Jason Hale	Slalom-Men	0:53:56	8
Deb Ruehle	Wavehopper-Women	0:54:25	9
Shannon Carroll	Wavehopper-Women	0:54:34	10
Scott Stough	Slalom-Men	0:54:58	11
Greg Gill	Slalom-Men	0:55:29	12
Shad Knopp	Slalom-Men	0:55:32	13
Colleen Laffey	Wavehopper-Women	0:55:38	14
Stewart Caldwell	Slalom-Men	0:56:22	15
Ridge Hunley	Slalom-Men	0:57:07	16
Rivermen 1	Raft	0:59:14	17
Patrick Myers	Slalom-Men	1:00:08	18
Precision Raft	Raft	1:00:20	19
Thomas Morgan	Playboat-Men	1:00:26	20
Wayne Asbury	Playboat-Men	1:00:34	21
Amy Conger	Slalom-Women	1:00:46	22
Ryan Gaujot	Playboat-Men	1:01:34	23
Team Wing	Raft	1:01:39	24
Eric Young	Wavehopper-Men	1:01:48	25
Steve Frazier	Open Boat Single	1:02:00	26
David McFadden	Playboat-Men	1:02:10	27
TK Shields	Slalom-Men	1:02:52	28
Kent McCracken	Wildwater	1:03:05	29
Class VI Men	Raft	1:03:14	30
AVA	Raft	1:03:25	31
Chicks from Six	Raft-All Women	1:04:34	32
Underdog	Raft	1:05:03	33
Milt Aitken	Open Boat Single	1:05:11	34
Team NOC	Raft	1:06:00	35
Mystic Mojo	Raft	1:06:44	36
Spangler & Rollins	Shredder	1:07:04	37
Tom Jackson	Open Boat Single	1:08:07	38
The Cheaters	Shredder	1:10:29	39
Richmond Whitewater Club	Raft	1:11:14	40
Richard Gavin	Open Boat Single	1:11:48	41
NARRly Chicks	Raft-All Women	1:11:56	42
Liz Garland/Lynn Aycock	Open Boat Dual	1:20:26	43
Team Toby	Shredder	1:23:20	44

The Upper Yough Race 2000

Class			Race Time
1	Andrew McEwan	WWKI	0:28:16
2	Jess Whittemore	WWKI	0:29:15
3	Steve Kaufman	WWKI	0:29:28
4	Ted Newton	WWKI	0:29:52
5	Brian Homberg	WWKI	0:29:53
6	Ken Kyser	K1L	0:32:56
7	Bob Vernon	K1L	0:32:59
8	Rick Gusic	WH	0:33:05
9	Scott Stough	WH	0:33:22
10	Charles Stump	WH	0:33:49
11	Mike Moore	K1L	0:34:31
12	Curtis Rohrbaugh	K1L	0:34:47
13	Kurt Casey	K1L	0:35:12
14	Bill Heller	K1L	0:35:20
15	Colleen Laffey	W-WH	0:35:35
16	Joe Hatcher	K1L	0:35:42
17	Bob Gedekoh	K1L	0:35:58
18	Donald B. Smith	K1S	0:36:05
19	Nathan Calhoun	K1L	0:36:23
20	Stewart Caldwell	K1L	0:36:39
21	Steve Barnard	K1S	0:37:08
22	Mark Hei	K1L	0:37:25
23	Ron Whitney	K1L	0:37:48
24	Kitty, Barry Tuscano	K2	0:38:24
25	Amy Conger	W-K1S	0:38:49
26	Brad McGowan	K1S	0:40:34
27	Joe Stumpf, Andy Maser	K2	0:41:10
28	Pat Norton	K1S	0:41:43
29	Chara O'Brien	W-WWKI	0:42:09
30	Steve Frazier	OC	0:42:24
31	Zegafuse, Campbell, Hubbard, Grinnan	RAFT-4 Man	0:46:48
32	Grea Akins	K1L	DNF

amphibious

although salamanders can survive on land, most prefer to live in the water.

Sound like anyone you know?

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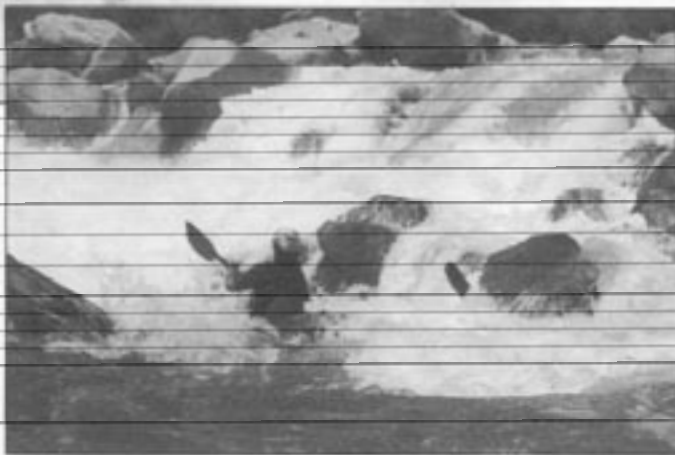
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2000 South Yuba Gathering- April 15 and 16, 2000

by: Dave Good



Matt Marshall at Submarine Hole. Photo by Torrey Carroll.

Kurt Suptee - Hairy Fairy. Photo by Torrey Carroll.

Hosted by Wolf Creek Wilderness and The Outside Inn. Sponsored by Red Bull, Perception, Dagger, Eskimo, Salamander, Xtracycle, and Patagonia.

Chucks Race Results

1 Don Beveridge	50:10	Pirouette
2 Jay Moffatt	51:05	Pirouette
3 Andy O'Reilly	51:31	Dancer XT
4 Joel Passovoy	51:48	Outburst
5 Kevin Gregerson	52:06	Laser
6 Robert Payne	52:10	Pirouette
7 Niki Kelley	53:18	Diablo
8 Dieter King	53:36	Pirouette
9 Torrey Carroll	53:51	Excel
10 Jamie Cooper	1 14 25	Foreplay
10 Mark Hayden	1 14 25	Quadro
11 The Swim and Rescue Team	1 25:30	
Mela Breen, Pete Iscaro, Matt Chapman, Dan Glauser		

The river was running about 400 cfs this year, which was actually a pretty good level for Chuck's Race on Saturday. I have always considered 600 cfs to be a bumpy and pinny level, so I thought 400 would really suck. Actually 400 cfs caused the river to drop into distinct channels, making the lines feel cleaner while the big drops were still a rush.

The race started a little after high noon and there were 15 paddlers. We were shrouded in clouds and it was spitting rain. I kept looking to the heavens to get Chuck Kerns spirit to do something about the weather. "Come on man, you got some pull up there yet or what!" Just before the start we had a moment of noise (cheers and yells) for Chuck and his spirit responded with a subtle opening in the clouds. It got bright for just a second as we were cheering in his remembrance! It was chilling. There is no doubt his spirit lives on.

Several boaters, including some of last year's racers, helped with safety this year. Thanks to Matt Archer, Robbie Dastin, Stephane, Dave Nyberg, Brent Essmon, and Johnnie Kern (a bit beat up from exploring new creeks). Polk Deters helped with his big shuttle rig and fine attitude (although he could not paddle due to sore ribs suffered on the South Merced). Willie Kern had his watchful eye on the river too—always there to help in a strong and quiet way. Thanks also to those I have overlooked.

Don Beveridge walked with first place and \$400 cash. Nikki Kelley was the fastest girl and got \$100 cash to cover the gas she burned in the Eskimo truck on her midnite escapades. The first eleven paddlers had few mishaps. Torrey Carroll put his Excel raceboat sideways in Corner Pocket—yuck. Just before the start, three guys, Pete, Matt and Dan decided they would follow Mela Breen because she knows the lines well. Turns out she got broached in a low volume channel early in the race and had to swim. The others stayed to help her. That was the start of the Swim and Rescue Team. They ended up having another swim at Hairy Ferry and posting a casual finish time with a great demeanor.

Evans Phelps held the party in her 'castle' on top of the hill in Nevada City. Wanda brought a bunch of lasagnas and everyone pitched in for an awesome meal. Jamie Simon and Red Bull supplied some entertainment and tons of high-energy drink. The hot tub stayed occupied all night and tents covered the lawn. Evans really knows how to throw a party! Kipchoge was demonstrating the new kayak rack on the Xtrabike and offering surfing opportunities on it too.

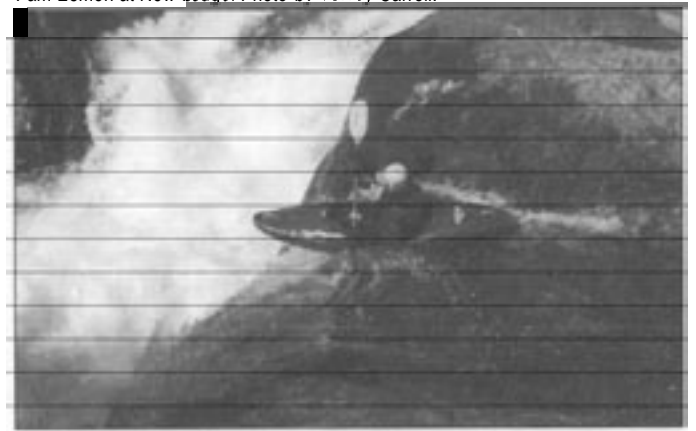
Pam Esmon at Ski Jump Falls. Photo by Torrey Carroll.



Danny Childs from Perception got the race started at noon on Sunday from the bridge at Purdon Crossing. The bike course starts in the bottom of the South Yuba Canyon and climbs to the top of Round Mountain, 1,200 feet above. Then the good stuff—smooth descending switchbacks through the forest back down to the river! The final leg of the bike course follows a trail upriver to Edwards Crossing where the kayaks are deployed. The river section is 4 miles of Class IV whitewater. A bunch of great people took part in the event this year. The relay teams reorganized at the last minute to become all co-ed. Mela and I were the sweep team. We borrowed a tandem mountain bike and paddled a Topo Duo. This was fun and trying. The fact that we are still together as a couple speaks well for our compatibility. A big thanks to all of the participants, the sponsors (Wolf Creek Wilderness, Outside Inn, Red Bull, Perception, Dagger, Eskimo, Salamander, Patagonia) and the volunteers especially, Kevin McWilliams who single-handedly loaded the bikes into the Wolf Creek van and got them back to town.

Join us next year the weekend after the Kern Fest for some grassroots, low-key good times.

Pam Esmon at New Ledge. Photo by Torrey Carroll.



Pedal Paddle Race Results

Men		Women	
1. Steffan Long	1:39:49	1. Elizabeth Collins	2:03:31
2. Drew Rrawles	1:47:36	2. Evans Phelps	2:28:55
3. John Finley	1:52:34	3. Maggie Moss	3:03:03
4. Dieter King	1:55:23		
5. Nicholas Ferlatte	1:56:50	Co-ed Teams (biker/ paddler)	
6. Jay Moffatt	1:57:27	1. Steve and Pam	1:47:40
7. Chris Abess	2:02:29	2. Heather and Brandan	1:55:05
8. JP Wollershiem	2:02:30	3. Lynn and David	1:56:59
9. Pieps Hill	2:05:05	4. Sara and Johnnie	2:08:56
10. Will Prechter	2:06:46	5. Dick and Wanda	2:10:00
11. Hector Keeling	2:10:21	6. Melissa and Tony	2:13:10
12. Andy O'Rielly	2:14:21	7. Todd and Hiedi	2:28:38
13. Scott Bittinger	2:27:37		
14. Chad Daughtery	2:29:10		

Photo by Tamara Kaurmann

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¿A LAST DESCENT OF THE RÍO LLUSHÍN?

(¿DONDE ESTA RAOUL?)

Article and photos by Matt Terry



Back: Cordillera de Las Flautas: Headwaters of the Rio Llushin (pronounced "You-Sheen"), Eastern Andes, Morona-Santiago Province, Ecuador. Photo by Matt Terry.
Inset: Hired help: Juan Marco (left) and Ernesto (right), keep their paddles ready after crossing the Rio Encanto on the way to the Rio Llushin. Photo by Matt Terry.



Jaime, followed by the local baker, el Panadero, carrying kayaks to the Rio Llushin. Photo by Matt Terry.

DAY 1

We are bouncing along a rough dirt and gravel road in the back of an old Stout pickup. It is 6 o'clock in the morning. The air is heavy with moisture from the late night rain. Soon the darkness gives way to an eerie light. We come to a landslide. It is the end of the road and we park and spill out of the vehicle. Loads are distributed and each man lifts his burden until nothing is left.

We are setting off to explore the Rio Llushin in the upper reaches of the Ecuadorian Amazon. Genner Coronel stumbles along with his pack, still weary from a late night of traveling. Duncan Eccleston follows in suite. Dan Dixon sets out shivering from the cold with his boat over his head. I sweep to make sure nothing is left behind. We hired ten strong men from the nearby village of Rio Negro to help us. They are an assortment of farmers and laborers, even a baker is in the bunch. Before we left, an eleventh porter named Raoul tried to hire on. Unfortunately, we only had enough money to pay ten people, so Raoul was sent home.

A sixteen-year old native Shuar called Rolando leads the pack, wielding his machete with uncanny zeal. Rolando is always smiling and attacks the jungle with amped enthusiasm. The sound of rubber boots sloshing in the mud leads easily to conversation. We get to know each other as we hike along in clusters. The Ecuadorians are a lively bunch and enjoy humoring each other. No one can pronounce Duncan's name correctly. Instead, he is christened Raoul. Eventually, we spread out like ants along the trail carved through the dense jungle cloud forest. Loads carried in old grain sacks alternate with our bright plastic kayaks. It is hard to believe we had opened a trail here not much more than a week ago to establish access to the Rio Llushin. Already it is overgrown with vines and fallen trees.

At the first ridge top we wait for the entourage to regroup. The dull roar of the Encanto River can

Jungle hiking with kayaks on the way to the Rio Llushin. Photo by Matt Terry.





The put-in team crosses the base of a landslide by the Charguayacu, on the way to the Río Llushín.

be heard below. The clouds are still lying low, and we can't see the next mountain ridge we have to cross. It begins to drizzle. Duncan wants to know how his boat is coming. "Alfonso," he shouts. After a few seconds, he repeats it again. "Alfonso?" This time, Duncan's call is passed along the line through the forest. Soon we hear back in various comical renditions, "...Raoul...?" Duncan's boat appears carried by a porter on each end. Along, slender branch runs the length of the kayak, and is bound at the grab loops with vines. We are impressed at their innovation.

Later we reach the Encanto River, where we posted an incredible first descent a year ago. We are excited to be continuing over into the next valley and a new territory. The sky has mostly cleared, and the sun is

shining. Everyone makes their way across the river and we decide to take a break. We have to gain close to 2,000 feet vertical to reach the next divide, before we enter the Llushín watershed. We eat chocolate for inspiration. Moving along, a pit viper is spotted and quickly dispatched with a chop to the head. I examine the snake to see if it really is poisonous. In this case, I am glad they killed the snake. One of the porters tells me that if someone were bitten by this snake, he would not make it out of the jungle alive.

Early in the afternoon we arrive at the divide and eat a good meal. It has rained off and on. The porter team surprises us when a large pot of rice with an entire stewed chicken is pulled out of a pack. This bonanza feeds most of the group. A special plate is prepared and given to Raoul, errr Duncan. The rest of us snack on Dan's homemade energy bars made of oats, barley, and quinoa, sweetened and glued together with condensed milk. The trees are enormous. It is easy to relax in the lush surroundings. Barely visible through the cluttered tree trunks is the first ridge we crossed. It gives us good perspective on the distance we have traveled.

Moving downward is a welcome relief. After traversing down the contours of the mountain slope, we drop into the narrow, twisting creek bed of the Charguayacu. It is amazing how motivated the porters are to help us with such an arduous and obscure task. Whenever we meet the local people on a boating adventure, they are curious about the purpose of our quest. A couple of the porters have seen photos of us kayaking before. Still, each of them thinks we are really looking for gold, or have some ulterior motive. The fact that we would be doing this just for fun does not make any sense.

Suddenly, the opportunity arises to show them what kayaking is all about. Enough tiny branches of the Charguayacu have joined to mostly float a boat. I grab one of the kayaks, push it towards a fast



Rolando takes off on the first kayak descent of the Charguayacu
Photo by Matt Terry.

chute in the creek, and jump on back, riding it like a surfboard. I bank off some rocks, drop into the pool below, and wipe out with the pack I am wearing. This goes over big. The fervor that ensues carries us far downstream. The Charguayacu may only have 50 cfs, but it drops at almost 200 feet per mile amidst strainers and rocks. As the melee continues, we hear rallying cries of "Raoul!?" as each porter mounts a kayak and attempts to run through a short section of rapids. We do our best to keep up with the rampage. Boats are pinned and bodies are bruised. It is a learning experience for all. Remarkably no one is seriously injured and no boats are lost.

Just before we reach the Llushín, we have to leave the creek bed and go back into the jungle because the Charguayacu turns into an unrunnable cascade of steep waterfalls. There is renewed enthusiasm to push over the last bulge. The porters have tasted what kayaking is like. They have had a crazy adventure and tackled a real first descent of their own. They now have some understanding of our passion to run with the water and to visit this wild place.

With high spirits we arrive at the Llushín, roping boats down the final steep embankments. We are all impressed that we made it to the river in one day. We are six miles as the crow flies from where we

started hiking. By tracing our route on a map, we conclude that we have hiked 10-12 miles to reach the Llushín. For our porters, the destination is complete. They face a long hike back to the village on a trail they now know. After they wash in the river, we bid our farewells. They remind us to look out for a large waterfall that is rumored to be 80-100 feet tall, a fall that denies the natives upstream access in their dugout canoes. When the last echoes of "Raoul" fade into the jungle, we find ourselves alone.

We make camp in the jungle and eat dinner on huge boulders. It is Dan and Genner's first look at the river. Duncan and I did the reconnaissance work on this trip and gave it a thumbs up. We can't wait to hear what

the other half thinks about our recommendation. Dan says matter-of-factly, "It looks hard. We'll have to be careful."

After looking at the maps, Genner shakes his head and reminds us of how far out we will be once we get on the river. "Hiking out is not an option on this one, guys," he says. "We have 45 miles of new river to run before we can even look at a take-out. The river gets more remote as we go. We'll be more than 20 miles from the Pastaza, separated by three mountain ridges. There is one way out...downstream."

Everyone gives a little shudder after his remarks, but it is agreed that none of us came here to hike out. We are committed to following



Portrait of an expedition; reflecting on the task at hand. Photo by Matt Terry.



View of the Rio Llushin from the put-in. Photo by Matt Terry.

with a spirited launch into the guts of "Powderfinger." We find a nice camp at the confluence with a sizeable tributary where there is a calm pool and good light.

DAY 3

We awake to a bright, clear day. The river has ebbed about two feet overnight; now we have a more reasonable flow. We start off with a bang. The first couple of ledges offer big-air. Every so often the river is divided by a colossal boulder with an entire forest growing out of it. Our big crux of the morning comes at a chunky rapid on a right-hand bend. We are all captivated by the drop and spend an epic amount of time deliberating lines. I reaffirm my belief that once you've got a line, the longer you spend looking at a rapid, the greater the chances of blowing it. In the entrance, the river takes control and spins me around backwards, with the weight of my heavy stern leading me towards the bottom of the rapid. All the while, I look over my shoulder and oaddle fiercely. Somehow, I manage to emerge unscathed, but I am humbled by the experience.

the river. We have food for 5 days, with emergency provisions to last 7. If we don't make contact by then, the military will send a chopper to look for us. Each of us quietly contemplates the undertaking as we finish our meal. It is a pleasant evening. We bask under the stars on a large, flat boulder and listen to the river flow.

Next, we head into some truly uncharted territory. Our

man reads "Clouds" across a huge blocked-out section. With uncanny coincidence, it clouds over and a gentle rain begins as we enter this vast unknown area. A dark, basalt gorge envelopes us with big walls that continue to offer strategic breaks on one side or another, so that we are, not completely trapped. We keep a watchful eye for the horizon line that we had been so resolutely warned of. Is it a hoax? Had anyone actually seen this waterfall? We find ourselves



Dan Dixon rides on the slipstream Rio Llushin. Photo by Matt Terry.

DAY 2

There are two storms in the night. By morning the rain has stopped; but the jungle is still dripping. As we eat breakfast, the river rises nearly a foot. It is still crystal clear. Upstream there are only pristine mountains. The Llushin drains the Cordillera of the Flutes. This range runs between the massive volcanoes of El Altar, and Tungurahua, the latter now erupting with towering plumes of ash. We are in one

chasing torrent ducks downstream, gazing at waterfalls brimming off the sides, and eyeing Cock-of-the-Rocks and hummingbirds as we pick our way along. We find a clear window for lunch, then the rain picks up and takes over. The surface of the water takes on a whole new texture, and we seek shelter under the canopy of gigantic trees.

of the most pristine watersheds in Ecuador. This area has never been inhabited.

By the time we organize and are ready to launch, the river looks full, but manageable. The jungle meets the water's edge abruptly with steep, rocky banks. The riverbed is medium-sized with powerful, channelized drops. We test our heavily laden kayaks in the water. My boat feels like a freight train in the current. Genner scouts the first rapid and gives the rest of us the line. When we regroup in the eddy below, everyone is a bit excited. "This is really pushy stuff," someone remarks. As we probe downstream, we are treated to big flushing chutes and long boulder garden rapids. Torrent ducks frolic in the rapids and the scenery keeps getting better. We eat lunch on a basalt shelf below an impressive drop. Already four side creeks have poured in, adding to the flow. It is a beautiful place.

In the afternoon, we run three big rapids. The first comes at an island in the river with a rocky landslide at the bottom of a long 4-stage drop. Next is a rapid we call "Whiteout," because of the sheer whiteness in the top half of the rapid. Duncan and I make our first portage here while Dan and Genner keep the throttle open. Duncan leads us through the last one

Soon we approach an area where a catastrophic landslide has blown out the better part of a mountainside. Rich, muddy water gurgles down the crater and turns our crystalline jewel into frothing latte. We are cautious of strainers and debris; there are a lot. Further down we find the plug. There are hundred-foot tree trunks sticking up like match sticks between big-daddy boulders. Dan tempts fate toying with huge hydraulics and slurpy sieves, while the rest of us portage the worst of it. By this time we are out of the "clouds" and back on the map. Below, I notice the yutzol shrubbery along the bank — a sign that we are in a new vegetation zone.

Duncan Eccleston running the guts of "Powderfinger" Rio Llushin. Photo by Matt Terry.



The rain pours down and the river gets bigger, but the gradient is easing off, too. We are on a big-water roller coaster ride, dodging huge holes and blasting through crashing waves. Starting to cover some serious distance, we pass major tributaries, which are pumping out big volume into the main channel. The river is nearly out of its banks. We paddle late into the day, looking for a good place to camp. At last we find a spot, a small beach with a play wave across from it. What a day!

THE RÍO LLUSHIN



Duncan finishes the bottom fun-out on "Powderfinger." Rio Llushin. Photo by Matt Terry.

DAY 4

Overnight the river clears up and drops again. After a morning surf session, we move along. The Llushin has a new character here. There are low, rock-walled gorges and prominent ledges across the river. Looking upstream we see, for the first time, clear, unobstructed views of the cordillera. Streaming waterfalls plummet down the faces of the mountains. It is quite a vision. A toucan flies across the river. From here, we move quickly downstream enjoying the scenery.

The Rio Cuyumi joins from the left and, once again, the clear water is muddied. Not far below we see the first signs of civilization, a thatch hut surrounded by banana trees and yucca. No one seems to be home. Later, we come across some people bathing in the river. As soon as we are spotted, a couple flees, running into the jungle, leaving one brave man to guard the dugout canoe. We wave as we float by and he manages to raise up a gesturing hand. As we eat lunch, we notice the river rise again.

Back on the water, the current takes us past the confluence where a second river named "Llushin" joins the Rio Llushin we are on. We now have a big water flow that moves us along. There is one last hurrah with Grand Canyon-style waves. Then flat water. We spot a village by the river. As we approach, something unusual catches our attention. In the distance, a man is polling a dugout canoe upriver. Close behind, another man is paddling what looks like a kayak, at least he is using a kayak paddle.

"Is that what I think it is?" asks Dan.

"No way," I reply. "It must be a mirage or something."

As we get closer, our mouths gape open in disbelief. The man in the back of the dugout has a kayak paddle. Eager to know the story of this paddle, we converge on the hapless campesinos.

As it turns out, the Werner asymmetrical paddle was found on a

Genner Coronel scouts "El Infierno." Rio Llushin. Photo by Matt Terry



gravel bar in the Pastaza River over a year ago. Since then it has achieved some sort of iconic status with the people here. Much like the Coca-Cola bottle in the late eighties film, "The Gods Must be Crazy." The campesinos, of course, have never seen any other kayak paddles, nor the craft they were designed for. Interested in where we came from, they find it hard to believe that we ran through the giant waves not far upstream, let alone that we came out of the mountains above. They only know that we arrived here mysteriously, and assume that we have come to retrieve the paddle. Duncan demonstrates an eskimo roll. They are genuinely NOT impressed. Dan asks the campesino if he wants to sell the paddle. He declines. Dan persists, and he finally agrees to consider. However, there is a catch. The man says that only by a contest of "machacu," will the rightful owner of the paddle be known.

"Machacu" turns out to be a high stakes thumb-wrestling match.



Duncan Eccleston soars off a drop on the first descent of the Rio Llushin. Photo by Matt Terry.

Each contender must wager something of value. The winner takes all. The campesino puts the kayak paddle on the deck. Dan decides to match the ante with his own paddle. It is a tense moment. They position their boats close. One hand is held behind the back, while the other grasps the hand of the opponent. There is a countdown followed by a fierce struggle. The boats rock back and forth, clashing sides. Muscles flex and veins bulge on the arms and foreheads. Then it is over. Dan emerges victorious. Dan gives the campesino a generous consolation prize. The paddle is handed over, and everyone is happy. We examine the paddle to see if there is a name on it. On one of the blades there is some faded lettering which spells out.... "R-a-o-u-l."

With this, we set off paddling and fade away as quickly as we appeared. Soon we cross into the turbid waters of the Pastaza. Our take-out is not far away. Before dark we arrive at the defunct cable crossing by the micro-community of Santa Ana. We are told there is a bus to Puyo from here and, soon enough, it arrives.

As the light fades away, we are off again, bouncing down a road to a new destination.

Genner Coronel running "El Infierno." Rio Llushin. Photo by Matt Terry.



destroy resources actively drawing tourists to the region. This area has been popular for community-based jungle tours, and more recently, as a world-class play boating destination.

The Issues

It is unjust that the local inhabitants will not only lose their lands, but also be denied the rewards from the gold extracted from their lands. Many of these communities oppose the exploitation of their land and rivers.

Gold mining has not been shown to be an economically sustainable form of industry, and conflicts with the established tourism-based economy in the region. Mining, with its heavy metals pollution and Acid Mine Drainage (AMD), is associated with the contamination of land and water resources. Large-scale mining and hydro development destroy precious resources and the potential for their future passive use.

Tourism in the upper Napo River basin has traditionally been very important to a sustainable economy in the region. Started in the early 1970's, tourism saw great expansion in the 1980's. Over 23,000 tourists visited the Amazon region of Ecuador in 1990, and contributed more than \$5,300,000 USD to the local economies. In 1998, the Ministry of Tourism of Ecuador ranked tourism as the fourth economy in the country, following petroleum, banana production, and

depended on the Napo River for transportation, irrigation of crops, fishing, and drinking water. This area is popular for forest hikes, caving, bird watching, plant studies, nature photography, wildlife viewing and dugout canoe excursions.

More recently, there has been a strong growth of ecotourism based in rafting and kayaking on this river. In addition to organized rafting and kayaking tours, independent boaters visiting the Napo region contributed approximately \$20,000 to the local economies in 1999. The dam site would destroy a prime section of whitewater which draws many to the area.

Altogether, tourism represents a significant portion of the regional economy in the Napo province. Much of this is tied directly to the Napo River. Both mining and hydro-development on the Napo River would adversely affect the watershed, the people, and the economy of the region. Hawthorn, Victoria, p.16.

What You Can Do:

The Comité Pro Ambiente Napo (C-PAN) is a locally based grassroots organization, is working hard to educate the people about the threats facing them, and to find alternative ways to provide healthy and sustainable to the people in the region. C-PAN is currently in an intensive campaign to stop mining and hydro development on the Napo River.

Please voice your support of C-PAN in condemning the

large-scale mining development by Ascendant Exploration in the Napo basin, and the associated damming of the Jatanyacu River by signing the petition below.

Petition:

A copy of this petition will be delivered in Spanish and English translations to local, regional, and national officials in Ecuador.

Sample petition follows:

Estimado Edison Chavez Vargas; Prefecto, Napo Province:

We, undersigned, are a group of people concerned about the development of the water resources in Ecuador. We support the preservation of unique natural areas for passive use and promote river-based tourism, which has been identified as a growing source of sustainable economy in the Oriente region.

Please stop the development of the gold mine on the Napo River by Ascendant Exploration, and the associated hydroelectric dam project upstream on the Jatanyacu River. These projects will destroy resources, which help draw millions of tourist dollars to the Oriente each year. These projects conflict with the established and sustainable tourist economy in the region.

We endorse the Comité Pro Ambiente Napo (C-PAN) as an organization which represents our interests, and whose recommendations will benefit the Napo province in planning sustainable growth for the communities in the area.

If the development of the gold mine must continue, please insist that Ascendant Exploration will be solely responsible for total reclamation of their mine sites, their operation will be closely supervised by independent third-party monitoring, and the interests of local communities will be protected.

If a hydroelectric project is truly necessary, please consider alternatives to building a dam on the Jatanyacu River, such as a diversion tunnel, or a different location.

Please do what is right and what will be remembered as a noble and intelligent action.

Sincerely,

Name (Please Print): _____ Signature: _____

City: _____ State (Province): _____ ZIP: _____ Country: _____

E-mail (optional): _____

Please send me updates yes no


I have been to Ecuador? yes no

I plan to visit Ecuador in the future? yes no

Dugout kayaking, Rio Llushin. Morona-Santiago Province, Ecuador. Photo by Dan Dixon.



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Babe Ruth

Corran Addison (Operation Zulu, Paddle Quest, Barleys Purple Day) leaps into action in the most revealing paddling segment ever done of the fabled legend (we take full credit for his legendary status). Steve Fisher (1000 Cunning Stunts, Skream 4, Tomorrow Never Comes) throws himself over water falls, waves and women, and Dan Campbell (Beauty and the Best, Searching for the 'Gee' spot) looks for his lost love (not paddling); his inner soul.

What do these three hero's have in common? Nothing, but we had to work it into the sales pitch for the film, so give us a break will-ya?

Surfing from channel to channel until we passed even Channel No 5 (which is the only thing we were wearing during the filming of the last segment), these action hero's take the viewer on a whirlwind tour of insane stunts and unbelievable masquerades.



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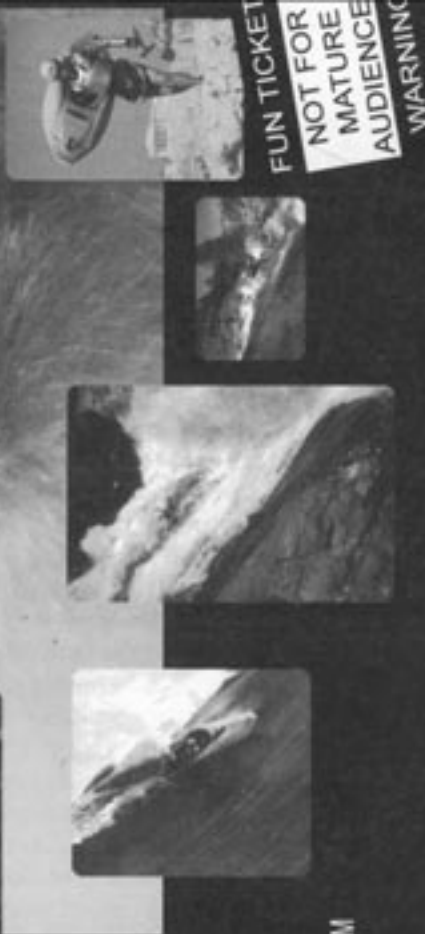
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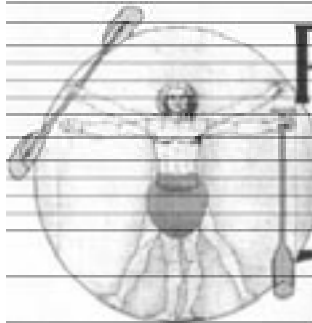
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by Shelby D. Johnson

For Jonna, Pam, Stacy, Natalie and Belinda - letting boys be boys

It has been two days since we left the poison ivy infested terrain, and the itch has started on my right ankle. Funny though, because I don't care at all. If the itch is the price of the clarity of my soul and my bright outlook on life, I consider it a bargain. In those crisp moments during the run, the pure focus was as intense as any I have experienced.

When I moved to Little Rock a little over a year ago I thought it unlikely that I would ever be able to return to Beech Creek. The chances of having a **runable** level, enough daylight, and the right group all at the same time are pretty slim. Saturday, May 27, 2000 turned out to be one of those days.

It was Memorial Day weekend and many Arkansas paddlers had made the pilgrimage to the Ocoee for a three-day weekend of boating. The folks who stayed home never expected high runs so late in the season, but sure enough a front came through late that Friday and unloaded! I had gone to bed around **10:00** that night after seeing the weather report. It showed a front coming through but there didn't seem to be much rain involved. Somewhere in the wee hours of the morning the right combination of juicy gulf moisture, high dew points, and lift occurred just east of Red Star and things started to transpire. I woke up around **6:00** that morning and thought I would check the on-line gauges to see if there might be a chance of going boating. If anything might come

up it would be **Richland**. A quick gauge check showed **Richland** at six feet and rising! The processors shifted into warp speed as I began calculating rainfall totals, comparing radar images against precipitation data, and figuring out who to call.

I got on the phone with Andy Judkins, and without even recognizing each other by name our conversation went like this. "**Hey, Richland** is at six feet and coming up." "**Dude** the Buffalo is at eleven feet—Beech Creek man!" To heck with **Richland**, we had a shot at one of the premier creek runs in the central United States.

A full two and half-hours later I rounded the corner and eased down to the Beech Creek Bridge and pulled over to the side of the road just in time to see Andy and Steve **McBee** pulling in from the other direction. We all jumped out of the cars at about the same time and went speeding down toward the gauge like seven year olds just turned loose on an Easter Egg hunt.

The creek was chock full of wood, debris, and chunks. Andy and I commented on the high level, and observed that it was either surging or still coming up. Steve had never done the run and didn't have a frame of reference for the level but could easily tell from our de-

meanor that he was in for a ride. We watched for a little bit longer as the water bashed and crashed against the concrete **bridge** supports. The gauge was either **underwater** or gone. We all peed.

We parked the cars and **be-**gan to ready our gear. I questioned both Andy and Steve in their boat selection as they both had Mr. Cleans on the shuttle rig. Andy said, "It's the only boat we have right now." He mentioned that Bob Brewer was **en-**route and that he thought Zen **Bolden** was coming too. Seconds later Bob pulled up and got out to take a look. The expression on Bob's face told the whole story. Grinning from ear to ear he jumped out of the truck and said, "Looks big." While we waited around for Zen to show up, the river continued to rise. Rain continued to fall at a steady rate. We could only imagine that a surge was still up in the canyon somewhere, given the rain still coming down. It seemed like an hour-long wait but Zen finally pulled in at the bridge. Minutes later everything was loaded into Andy's truck and we were headed up Cave Mountain road to the put-in.

Luckily, Andy's girlfriend, Stacy, was around to drive the truck back to the take-out, allowing us time for another run after Beech. The last thing we told Stacy before starting the hike down to the river was that we should be at the take-out by **3:00** or earlier. We waved good-bye and thanked her for running shuttle, then began the hike.

With boats in tow, we waded waist deep through an overgrown pasture. At the other side we picked up an old logging road which headed toward the creek. The old road hadn't seen any

care in a couple of years and was terribly obstructed with briars, black berry thorns, and poison ivy. After much cursing and a bit of misdirection we finally started the steep descent to the canyon bottom. The intensity of the roar grew as we approached the creek. With all the late spring growth it wasn't until we were right at the bank that we could actually see the creek. The lush greenery crowding the banks would make the run even more challenging.

Only Bob, Andy and myself had done the creek before and none of us remembered previous runs being this high. We took a few minutes to collect ourselves, then trudged along the shore for a quick look at Wake Up. Wake Up is the first rapid and represents one of the only runs in Arkansas where you scout the put-in! We hiked our way around the brush to a point below the drop so that we could see it well. The drop was only about five feet tall into a smiling hole collapsing back into itself. Everything within 15 feet of the hole was a massive boil and both sides of the pool contained recirculating eddies feeding right back into the bowels of the hydraulic. Running Wake Up at a high level would make for a grim start.

We spent a few more minutes gazing at the hole, psyching ourselves up before heading for the boats. Andy was on in quick fashion and sat in a river left eddy. I pulled out and eddied just below him. I zeroed out my fun meter, checked my senses, and then peeled out for the drop. I aimed right for the gut and took as many deep water strokes as I could right up to the lip and then slammed face first into the back side of the hole, dug deep, and pulled through. Andy followed next and was also able to punch right through. The others also made the move right down the gut and dug out—except for Bob. He mustered some good strokes in the launch but the hole just wasn't satisfied to let us all through without incident. Bob hung tough and surfed on a low brace for a long time. Stud that he was, after a minute or two the hole gave up and let our only **C1-er** out of its grasp. Everyone shouted with excitement as he came clean and the grin on Bob's face was classic. You've seen it before, the expression that says, "Yeah, I know I just got away with one."

The first mile of the run is known as the Jungle Gym. It's a hodgepodge of

tightly-packed drops with very few pools. With Beech Creek roaring its way through the trees, we had to stop and scout twice in this section. It was at this point, in one of the eddies, that I remember Andy saying this was a serious level. We both knew it and so did Bob. Zen and Steve knew it too, even though they hadn't seen the river before.

Near the end of this section sits a big bluff on river right with the only sizeable pool in the top section of the creek. We all collected there and talked for a bit about watching each other carefully, taking our time, and making sure everyone was staying in good shape. Bob was a little worried about not doing so well in the first section but we knew he was in as good of shape as the rest of us. I felt like he was superhuman to begin with—ya know, half the paddle, twice the man.

One frustrating thing about the creek was that low-hanging broadleaf trees occluded one's view in many rapids where vision was important. The water was running so fast that it threw off our timing, and what few eddies we could find had squirrely water on both ends or were up in the trees. No doubt about it, we had jumped on one roaring creek and it was time to put on the game face.

A little below this big bluff, the creek splits, with the left half ending in a boulder sieve and the right side ending in a strainer. I don't think the drop has a name but most know it as "the tree rapid." A long series of diagonals feed around a drop to the right, then a short straightaway into a seemingly casual left ends in a tree. The tree has claimed more than one boat before, so I warned everyone about this drop. With the high level I worried about new trees down and wanted to scout. Unfortunately Andy slipped out of the back of his eddy before we had the chance. I yelled instructions to stay to the right just before his boat disappeared around the corner. After a quick run along the bank revealed that Andy had made the right line, we all got back in our boats and ran the drop without further complications.

The next big drop was called Shotgun, but it sure looked different than I remembered. The creek flows towards a big rock just right of center, with boulder sieves on the left and the only major flow careening behind the right side of the boulder. After passing the

boulder, the drop picks up speed, moving past a long right side undercut and then feeding left into a diagonal surf wave. It was definitely Shotgun, but this time on steroids. Next it was Door Number Four which we also scouted. This one looked really spooky on the left because the high flows gave you the sense that one could make both door number one and door number two. Door number three had a tree in it and looked especially harmful. All of us made it through Door Number Four just fine and sped our way on downstream.

The rain had stopped and we were doing fine. Then somewhere in the section below Door Number Four, Andy and Steve got ahead and for the first time the group was separated. Zen, Bob and I were making our way down when we reached a particularly ominous horizon line. I recognized it as the drop called Coming Home Sweet Jesus. The rapid has a series of waves and holes that run into a major keeper hydraulic. Then right below the hole, the creek smashes into two large boulders with the only safe flow disappearing behind the one on the left. A mistake at the hole would put you on the boulders in a bad way. We scouted for quite a while and couldn't believe Andy and Steve had run straight through. Talking through different scenarios, we discussed the possibility that one of them might have gotten into trouble here. Bob had elected to walk the top hole at this drop and Zen and I looked for a line past the hole. If you ended up left, a hole ride was a certainty. We decided to try a right side boof angled left. While we went back to the boats, Bob waited below with a throw rope. Zen ran it perfectly as planned and landed the eddy. I repeated the move, then set for the peel out just above the boulders. We both made the move to the left without trouble, then Bob put-on below the hole and made it around the boulder as well. Just then we heard some yelling from downstream. It was Steve and Andy. They had stopped below and hiked back up to check on us. It was good to see them and know they were okay. They had boat-scouted the drop and run it without incident. We were all a little wigged out by this little scare, but we kept moving.

We scouted several more drops. Despite the added flow in the creek, we were all hitting our lines. When we got

to Beech Ball everyone knew it. The ball was almost completely covered up and right behind it was a massive hole. The typical line through Beech Ball is to approach the top drop right of center, land in the green water, and then work left safely around the ball. Just before his run Andy stated the obvious: "Once you land the top drop you need to get around the ball—left or right, it doesn't matter." Andy went right with no problem and everyone else followed suit.

The group was going strong and starting to tune into the big flow, when McBee lead us on a not-so-normal route on one drop. I'm not sure how, but I turned over so fast I didn't even know why I was upside down. I rolled to see myself going over another drop in which I was back-endered and forced to roll again. I collected my wits about the same time as Zen and Andy who I think had the same thing happen to them. We all had a bit of a chuckle about it as we headed downstream.

When Beech proper entered on the left the volume really got big and the waves were enormous. I knew that somewhere below the confluence White Lightning was waiting and boy was I right! The only waves I've seen that paralleled this were on Wahpoots rapid on the Selway at 9000 cfs. I had started in the section above White Lightning and before I knew it, I was committed. I could see enough to know it was all clear. I didn't pause except for that split second thought of how big the hole might be behind the first nine-foot wave. The left and right diagonals were giving me fits with two blades and I was certain Bob would get clobbered in the mayhem. I zinged down this rapid so fast I was almost nauseous. I was able to eddy left just before the drop ended in a ledge pour-over. It was fun to watch the rest of the guys come down it with only the whites of their eyes showing at the tops of the big crests. Everyone else was setting up to eddy left as well, and then Bob popped into view. He was working the hell out of that single paddle. It was awesome to see and you could tell he was wearing thin when he realized that he was too late to eddy before the pour-over. He hit it just right of center. From the upstream eddy we could see both of his ends, a single blade, then helmet and body all tumble a time or two. Then he washed out upright like it had been no

big deal. Bob eddied right, grinned, then motioned the rest of us toward the correct line on the right.

Beech Falls was next on the list. Everyone else eddied on the right above the falls to scout while I eddied left and scouted down that side. We all made our way downstream to get a good view of the falls before running it. It was magical! The falls were roaring, larger than I had ever seen them. I had thought on the way down that the right side rooster tail might be covered up, but even at this level it was clearly there. Over on the right shore, Zen pointed to where the grass and other brush was bent over downstream and the rocks washed clean. It was a spot at least five feet above the current water line! As high as it was, we realized that Beech Creek had just peaked at an even more insane level.

The line at the falls was still the same, and I managed without trouble even though the hole below was much bigger. Andy came next and made it look easy. However, Steve McBee wasn't quite so lucky. As he passed the rock he crashed semi-sideways into whatever makes the rooster tail. It knocked Steve silly, I guess, and he turned over and washed around below then finally rolled up. We figured he was hurt for sure, but he signaled that everything was okay. Zen made a flawless performance while Bob portaged on the right.

Below the falls, the creek gives a paddler the impression that it is slowing down, then pulls the rug out from under you. The next thing you know you are back in deep dukey. At least that's what Steve thought as he ended up upside down broached sideways on an S-turn drop. He kept his wits about him and made it off and everyone was thankful. The incident at the falls made Steve begin to struggle and it was showing.

In the last section of the creek lurks another danger: serious undercuts. One spot which had tried to eat Wade Colewell a few years ago found new fodder on this trip. The river left bluff arches straight out and up into a massively undercut rock. At the very bottom the low ceiling reveals splintered chunks of tree limbs and other wood lodged in its mouth. Somehow McBee turned over in the drop above and washed straight toward the undercut.

Before we knew it he was broadside on the woodpile. It was a wonder something didn't catch his life jacket and snag him there. He stayed intact, though, and washed out upside down before managing to roll up. He looked a little blue-lipped but was otherwise fine.

The undercut rapid was the last of the significant drops. We pulled out for a short break shortly after and someone informed us that it was already four o'clock. Andy knew that Stacy would be worried sick since we were more than an hour late so we got back on the river. A short time later we made it to the take-out without incident.

Either the gauge has been washed away or the park service removed it. Whichever the case may be, we had no way of knowing the water level. I knew for certain that it was still higher than my previous runs. I found a rock on the bank then floated over and etched the water level onto the bridge piling just to make sure something was recorded. I'm anxious to return and see how high that mark lies.

Sure enough, Stacy was worried and really glad to see Andy. Back at the **Boxley** Bridge we circled the wagons once more to load gear and get ready for the return trip. Time wasn't on our side and there wouldn't be enough daylight left to make another run—besides everyone was too tired to even think about it. We were all just so happy to have caught this creek at the right level that we didn't feel the need to add to the day's experience. I told Belinda later that night how thankful I was that I hadn't headed east for the Ocoee. In ten or so years of paddling it was the second time I've ever run Beech Creek.

Author's Note: Beech Creek is a **Class IV+** creek in northwest Arkansas. It flows into the upper portion of the Buffalo National River near Boxley. For those who have had the fortune of doing both, the character of the creek has been compared to the Upper Yough. The run is scarcely done because the required rainfall rarely falls in the right places. In some years it isn't paddled at all. The author has been attempting to catch this run for over six years and in that time has only succeeded twice.



Tamur...Or No Tamur

In Nepal, getting to and from the river is half the fun!

By Whit Deschner

American citizens *should* be extremely cautious when traveling overland in Nepal, especially by bus. In general, roads are in very poor condition and lack basic safety features. Many mountain and hill roads are impassable during monsoon season (June-September) due to landslides, and are very hazardous even in the best weather. Avoid travel on night buses - fatal accidents are frequent. In the Kathmandu valley, roads are congested. Not only is traffic badly regulated, the volume of vehicles on the roads is increasing by 15 percent a year. Many drivers are neither properly licensed nor trained. Vehicles are poorly maintained. Sidewalks and pedestrian crossings are nonexistent in most areas, and drivers do not yield the right-of-way to pedestrians. Of the 4,500 traffic-related deaths in 1997, two-thirds were pedestrians.

— Posted on the US Department of State web site



Originally, four of us were haphazardly planning to run the Tamur; Rob Lesser, Guy Baker, Dave Manby and myself: leftovers from a Karnali descent. On the Karnali I'd noted differences between these personalities. It was like three people going to watch a hockey game for their own various reasons: Guy to anticipate the fights, Dave to watch the hockey and, Rob to see a zamboni. Just the manner in which these three dressed pronounced the gulf between them. Guy, styled himself with wrap around yellow sunglasses and had various subdivisions of his body perforated with jewelry. He looked so much like a model that on his visa application he'd simply torn a look-alike picture from a magazine ad and pasted it on the photo blank. Dave bedecked himself in a multicolored patched sports jacket I'd had tailored for him ten years before in Turkey. To complement this anticomplementary attire he'd found a likewise patchwork pair of shorts. Rob dressed in Patagonia right down to skivvies and socks. That was our lineup: two variously eccentric Englishmen, an all American boy, (and, myself who wore a color uncoordinated Goodwill outfit; yellow tag special; Oct. 21, 1997). If the descent of the Tamur proved inadequate entertainment, surely hanging out with these paddling anomalies would fill the void.

The river itself drains Kanchenjunga — which is really the highest mountain in the world, but since it is so hard to pronounce no one admits it. It would be a descent from vertical to horizontal geology; from mountain air to the stench of burning garbage; from Buddhist to Hindu influence; from frosty nights to baking temperatures; from yaks to water buffalo; from chickens to ducks. Word of mouth pegged it as "one of the best whitewater runs in the world," ad nauseam. Five days worth (whitewater, not nauseam). During our descent I planned on seeing the backs of all three of these better-than-me paddlers being trashed in holes that I hopefully could avoid. But such wasn't to be. During an ungodly wait in line at the permit office in Kathmandu, Dave and Guy wandered off, only to learn of a mutated German rumor, that, because of low water, the Tamur had been demoted to a Class III. But what I think happened was the two wiener schnitzels who had just come from the river couldn't count past three in any other language (like myself). In any case, on the spur of the second — and for the first time since being together, Rob, Dave and Guy all agreed on one thing: They hadn't traveled to Nepal to dawdle in Class III. They changed their permits for the Marsyandi. Stoically, I stuck to my guns. My heart was set on the Tamur. And if the Tamur really was class drei then I certainly didn't have to think zwei times about an eins-person descent.

With my hiking permit in hand, I headed back to my hotel and contemplated the obstacles: I had to quickly learn some Nepali — a written language that looks like something stuck and baked in a laser printer. Thus spoken, it was all stuck and baked gobbledegook to me, which wasn't going to help me shuttling my kayak between taxis and busses, not to mention having to hire porters.

My second worry was that the trip wasn't exactly legal. Although the Tamur was slated to go commercial in '98, that didn't mean the door was open for private parties like myself to descend it. My rubber-stamped piece of paper allowed me to hike to the river — and back. It didn't say I could run the river. But it didn't say I couldn't run the river either. Actually, if I really wanted to play by arbitrary rules, what I needed was a costly expedition permit, yet on the other slighting hand, no private party had been turned away from the river (or at least had been caught). As an American I never was good at interpreting legal grey matters such as this (which probably explains why so many confused Americans own so many guns).

I imagined the conversation I might have with the police at checkpoints.

POLICE: So you are hiking from Basantapur to Dobhan.

ME: Yes.

POLICE: And back.

ME: Yes.

POLICE: With a boat?

ME: What boat? Oh that! Well, I'll be gosh darned. I hadn't noticed I accidentally packed it.

POLICE: Ha! You crazy westerners! Always kidding around. Hope you've also accidentally packed loads of baksheesh.

So as I got closer to my hotel, I began thinking it might be nice to share some of this misery with company. And, if someone did accompany me then there wouldn't be the mystery surrounding any accidental death I might suffer yielding headlines that might read:

ENIGMA OF LONE BOATER'S DEATH DEEPENS

Kayaker's Patagonia shorts found on waterbuffalo near Bay of Bengal.

....Which would really be a mystery because I don't wear anything Patagonia. I can't afford it. Not even factory seconds. Have you ever priced that stuff?

So on the off chance that I could find another pariah kayaker looking for a trip, I stopped into the Equator Expeditions office and told Pauline Sanderson, co-owner, that I was leaving the next day for the Tamur and if she knew of anyone who wanted to do it, they were welcome to join me.

Ten minutes later there was a knock on my hotel door. It was Pauline. She informed me she was joining me. I began to stammer.

"You did say anyone," she said.

"But..."

"That won't be an issue," she explained, "I'm married."

I began to stutter.

"I'm a Class III boater but I can hang on in Class IV. Anyway, that won't be an issue either since it'll only be Class III... Please let me come, I haven't had a break in two months.... I'll get us to and from the river if you can get me down it."

I began to sputter.

She continued: "I'm also an ex-lawyer. I can take care of any legal matters that arise, like reducing our death sentences to life in prison for paddling a river that we aren't necessarily supposed to be on."

I began to think. "You'll be ready tomorrow?"

"By all means."

We shook hands and I began to pack.

Half-an-hour later I was ready.

With nothing to do but wait I began wandering around Thamel,

one of Kathmandu's tumors and hitching post for budget travelers. My first time around to Nepal on original tread was in 1979. I remembered a short conversation I had on a hotel roof with a not so fellow American from Brooklyn who had just arrived to both Nepal and the hotel roof. He was fresh out of Peace Corps training and quickly into our conversation I asked, "Let me get this straight; you're from Brooklyn and you've come to tell *these* people how to live?" For some reason he immediately stopped talking to me. In any case, seven years worth of later I held him personally responsible for the change that had come to the country, so much so that I swore I'd never visit Nepal again...

But if what happened between '79 and '86 was profound change; the transpiration between '86 and '97 was radical mutation—especially in Thamel. The district had gone vertical. Sun-drenched tea gardens were all but extinct and what few outdoor restaurants that hadn't been built over now lay in the multistory cold shadows of those which had. Another metamorphose was the handicrafts. Not that Kathmandu was ever handicraft deficient, but the quality of crafts had vastly improved. For example, locally knitted wool sweaters no longer contained manure and seeds that if watered would sprout and grow to maturity—seeds that you could get hung for in Singapore.

Communication, too, had improved. Before, phoning anyone was like trying to connect with life on distant planets. But now, in every office I passed, I saw computer after computer. Today, the information age is leveling the playing field, making it possible for hormone-crazed eleven year-old Nepali boys to surf the web and ogle the same naked women that American boys loose their sight over.

However, of all the change, the population increase snatched the cake. But wanting to be optimistic and letting all these people have opportunities in life (despite the traffic jams they will have to endure to get to their opportunities) I began noting job openings.

Population control expert. Job description: Must be able to feign population control but not actually control it as that would quickly eliminate job.

Dogcatcher. Job description: Catchanddestroy all dogs. Benefits: Will be able to work from your home.

Trash collector. Job description: Must be able to identify trash. Translating language trash was written in is not necessary but will add hours of enjoyment to the job.

Heavy load long shifter. Job description: Must be able to pick up large objects with penis in front of tourists. Females need not apply.

Proof reader. Job description: Must be able to correctly spell items on menus such as "frid igs."

Etiquette school for Israeli tourists. Job description: Must teach Israelis notions of queues and politeness. Job comes with lifetime supply of alcohol.

Yet of all these opportunities, the latest fad was the one that Nepal hardly needed any more of: hucksters selling raft trips. You could hardly eat a meal or check into a hotel without being harassed. Even the free-lancers on the street sold them. In a whispering contraband tone they asked: "You wish to buy rafting trip? I have good rafting trip for you. No? Change money? How about my sister? No? Marijuana? Tiger Balm?"

Because of its popularity, rafting now pumps more money into the local economy than tiger balm sales. Because of rafting, Nepal is one of the few Asian economies whose currency did not recently collapse—a startling fact that I just made up. Yet because of this popularity, the Sun Kosi, the Marsyandi, the Kali Gandaki, and the Seti are now so overrun that their white sandy beaches have become what sandboxes are to cats. Fortunately, the monsoons cleanse the rivers each year, washing all garbage safely out of sight into the plains of India. OK, so you detect a tone of sarcasm, but if something isn't said then what's to stop Disney from coming in and purchasing the entire country?

The next afternoon, after shuttling our kayaks to the bus station and lashing them aloft our bus, we boarded, and sitting in the seats



behind the driver's cage that Pauline had specifically reserved, I commented, "You call *these* the best seats?"

"Absolutely." She said, "Look at our leg room!"

"Do you sit in the front row at horror shows?"

Moments later our driver swaggered aboard, and slipping on a pair of thin leather Italian driving gloves, he gazed out over us mortal passengers as if he was Beelzebub observing a new batch of arrivals. After a condescending "huuh!" he shuffled into his seat, tested the steering wheel, started, raced and blew the clinkers from the exhaust, grabbed the shift knob and, as if entering a mortal combat with the engine, he jammed the shift forward and popped his foot off the clutch. From that moment on we never slowed and Dharan, our interim destination, became like a distant planet, its gravitational pull speeding us forward at an ever-increasing pace. The only problem was there were approximately two-thousand hairpin corners and fifteen hours between us and Dharan.

Pauline, quick to notice my concern said, "Don't worry, if he was a bad driver he wouldn't be here now. He'd be dead."

"What if it's his first time?"

"But just look at him!" She marveled, "He seems to know exactly what he's doing."

"What? Passing on blind corners?"

"Maybe he's psychic. Maybe he knows no one is com...Jes...Ahhh!...That was close! I, um, don't think he's psychic after all."

Worse still, that evening—thanks to el nino—it grew dark. I thought night might help B'bub discern oncoming headlights around blind corners, but this didn't happen. I told Pauline, once a good Catholic, to dust off her saints, while I went to work invoking every deity from every religion I could think of. "Please Gods," I prayed, "I don't care how hard the Tamur is, just get me to it alive."

In terrifying time, the divinities delivered us temporarily from evil onto the blessed flat terai, and there, we switched drivers. Of course I didn't identify the other driver until he sat in the driver's seat. Up until then he'd been a: General bus go-for. Job description: Must occasionally boss conductor around to show superiority. Must be able to engage driver in stimulating conversation, distracting driver from minor annoyances like oncoming vehicles. Also must be able to climb out of moving bus up onto roof to pilfer passengers' bags without being swept off roof while bus passes under low tree branches. High count of hormones required.

B'bub fell quickly asleep on the engine cowl, leaving our new driver alone at the helm, merrily grinding gears. The road was cornerless and at first it appeared our new man lacked a death wish. I balanced on the edge of sleep for the next few hours. I might even have slipped into real sleep if the seats hadn't felt like they were chiseled out of granite. Once, shifting positions to let another part of my body take a turn at going numb, I cracked open an eye, only to see the driver's head nod down then jerk up. I bolted upright, but I was somewhat relieved when he woke himself thoroughly by opening the window, standing, and poking his head and shoulders into the rush of night air.

Concerned, I stayed awake. A short while later he sat back, raced the bus to a new land speed record, popped the engine into neutral and began coasting. As the bus slowed, so did the driver's consciousness. At about fifteen miles an hour, his head slumped once more; around five he twitched back awake. I contemplated waking Pauline, but she looked so peaceful and I didn't want to disturb her. Besides, I thought, just like B'bub, this driver can't be all *that* bad since he too remains alive. Surely he knows what he's doing....

After three or so similar bursts of speed and some quick cat naps he stood once more and thrust his head out the window. But this didn't last long. Soon he reverted to his coasting nano-naps. I thought: "Maybe I should go talk to him." But if I could navigate around the cage and lean over the more permanently sleeping B'bub, what would I say to the driver? If I tapped him on the shoulder maybe



I'd scare the bejabbers out of him and cause us to wreck. Again I debated waking Pauline. Maybe he'd like her tapping him on the shoulder instead. After all, she could at least say something to him in Nepali.

The driver raced the bus once more, this time almost heroically. Gazing behind me, I took inventory of the other passengers. No one was awake; no one was concerned. So, I thought, why should I worry? I turned around and my heart tried leaping out of its rib cage. I've never known such terror. In my forward-attention's absence I had become the last person awake on the bus. The driver was sagged over the wheel, fast asleep. I wished desperately to close my eyes too, but there wasn't enough lid to stretch across the bulges of my eye balls that now probably looked more like pickled onions. A tree we should have passed on the right swept in then out of our headlights and, as it brushed past on our left, we plunged off the shoulder down a ten-foot bank and, in the middle of a country that boasts the highest mountains on earth, we landed...in a swamp.

The impact threw Pauline into the driver's cage—which probably knocked him awake. It certainly woke Pauline. As the bus jarred to a stop in a dissonance of noise, there were staccato screams and a burst of hissing steam from the engine.

The driver shook his head and, when he turned and I could study his face, I swear he looked content. His expression read, "I just beat my old record by twenty minutes!" I thought B'bub, who was extracting himself from the dashboard, would be livid, but he said nothing, not even "Why'd you do that *you* knucklehead?" I turned to look at the passengers. Their faces were blank slates. Obviously, here, bus drivers falling asleep is purely providence. In America this wreck would have been a gold mine. Besides Pauline's head, which had started to bleed, there were, miraculously, no other injuries. But in America we could have all sued for emotional trauma and collected millions for the rest of our lives, living happily ever after. But not in Nepal. We weren't even given refunds. And, we were about to be wading knee-deep in a swamp just to get back to the road.

As I climbed onto the bus roof and untied our kayaks and gear, our driver joined me and undid a couple of benches. These he threw into the water, placing them end to end for the passengers to walk on. Although the benches were oriented towards the road they were thirty feet short of dry land and were nothing but a gangplank into a swamp—a swamp that made all others I'd been in impostors. This swamp was a pathogen convention center. Yellow fever and malaria mosquitoes were probably the least fiendish of the evil forces breeding there. The water was brown and soupy and filled with leeches. It smelled like a pile of athletic socks in need of a wash.

In the meantime other busses stopped, both east and west bound, giving us a choice of continuing or returning. As we reached the road neither Pauline or I could decide if the wreck was a good or bad omen. Was her wound a small but necessary blood sacrifice? Or was it just a harbinger of bigger injuries to come?

After dressing the cut with iodine, I dug out her helmet and said, "Here, see if this still fits."

"Why didn't you suggest this a half an hour ago?" she asked.

"Because your head wasn't swollen then. Besides, I didn't want to wake you."

Pauline nursed the helmet over her cut.

Snuggled in place, she shrugged and said, "It'll work: Shall we continue?"

We loaded our gear onto an eastbound bus and took residence, this time, in the very rear.

We arrived in Dharanat five A.M.—ahead of schedule. Despite the early hour, the street was a hive of activity. We carried our kayaks a block to the Basantapur bus. This bus was shorter and more beat-up than our crashed bus—before it crashed. On its side was painted, "Swastika Travels." A man sold us tickets from a booth that looked like a Punch and Judy theater. We requested sanctuary in the rear.

It was still dark when we left. The engine struggled as we headed

back into the mountains. The bus was jammed. Although I couldn't see our driver I did try monitoring his activity. But over the drone of passenger chatter, it was impossible to distinguish what he was up to. As far as I could tell, both the brake and throttle pedals were reneging on their responsibilities. At best all they seemed to be doing was changing the whine of our forward momentum. As we inched uphill, gravity became this vehicle's worst enemy: downhill, I knew it would become ours. But I was gun-shy and needn't have worried. Whoever was behind the wheel kept us securely on the road.

Dawn came and I charted our progress on a map that Marco Polo must have transcribed in his feebleminded old age. After four hours of jolting, both the road and our speed diminished. We went from about four miles per hour to four hours per mile. Although riding a bucking bronco would have been far more relaxing, I still wasn't complaining about the driver. Even though the road completely disappeared at times, he kept the bus where the road was supposed to be. Good old Swastika Travels. They only hire the best.

After leaving Kathmandu—twenty-two hours, three bus rides and one bus crash later, we finally arrived in Basantapur. Porters swarmed our equipment. I was glad I had Pauline, for it was her responsibility to pick three competent porters for our three day walk to the river. I didn't envy her, but a deal was a deal. My job, getting her down an easy Class III river, would be a cinch. I watched her, thinking she might conduct job interviews. But, instead, she had the look of a woman on a shopping spree. Sweeping her gaze through the crowd she announced, "You, you and you."

I was stunned. "What's wrong with the guy already holding my boat?" I wanted to know.

"He's not very nice."

"And that one clutching our bag?"

"He'd rob us."

"And that one?"

"Lazy."

"Then why these three?"

"They're friendly."

"How can you tell?"

"I just can. Don't question me."

Their names were Dopasaan, Lockman, and Teg and if they were friendly, I couldn't tell. In fact, Teg, a dead ringer for Peter Lorre, looked like he would be more adept at serial killing than portering. But whether Pauline's snap judgment was sixth sense or pure luck, it didn't matter. For our march to the river, we couldn't have had better companions.

The walk traversed along ridge tops through meadows and in and out of rhododendron forests. The first morning Lockman woke us at six-thirty and insisted we get up. We insisted on sleeping some more. Five minutes later he returned with a cup of tea. This time, grumpy but subservient, we complied to his wishes, rose, ate and stepped from our tea house. Awaiting us was a crystal clear panorama of Himalayas; Everest to the west, Kanchenjunga on the east—and a whole lot of malcontent geology in-between. An hour later, while we would have otherwise still been asleep, the mountains dissolved into the mists.

As we hiked I began brushing up on the essential Nepali words that I'd learned when I'd visited the country before. These were: Hello, good-bye, dahl bat, fast, very, good, how much and, boat—all the words a kayaker needs to know. With these you can fabricate such key phrases as:

Dahl bat fast good-bye. Meaning: Quick! Where the heck's the outhouse?

Boat very fast good-bye?—Is the river hard?

How much hello good-byes?—How many children do you have?

Once I tried constructing a question that included every Nepali word I knew, feeling that in doing so I would be regarded as an extremely learned and sophisticated person. Unable to understand



the response I received I asked Pauline with her limited but-knew-more-than-me Nepali to translate. She said: "The old man says that it wouldn't be compromising your intelligence to call you a moron."

Often we were asked if we were married. Instead of letting this slide Pauline would thoroughly baffle anyone foolish enough to ask by explaining that *she* was married, but, pointing to me, I *wasn't* her husband.

Her answer always failed to parry off the next question: "How many children do you have?"

When we told them, "none" they would offer us a child or two in consolation.

On the third morning we finally saw the Tamur. We were still about 1,500 feet above it, yet even from our altitude the river looked white. Funny, I thought, all these years of kayaking and this hasn't happened before. Never has a Class III looked so consistently white from this high up! The other item bothering me was that the valley seemed too steep to contain a runnable river.

As we dropped down I reckoned I'd at least see straight routes through the white, but the more we descended the wilder the river seemed. At Dhoban—and river level—I knew there had been a serious communication breakdown. But had it been in the rusty German/English translation, or had Pauline mistakenly instructed our porters to take us to the wrong Dhoban?

At a teahouse we ordered dahl bat, and Pauline asked, "What's wrong with you?"

"Nothing," I lied.

"You sure have become awfully quiet."

A plate full of steaming dahl bat that challenged my lack of appetite quickly betrayed my apprehension. I wasn't alone though: Pauline's plate also went uneaten.

Still, we pretended nothing was wrong. Teg, Lockman and Dopasaan carried our gear and boats to the river's edge. They too sensed our apprehension because after we had settled up with them, tipping them handsomely, they stuck around, hoping, I'm sure for the opportunity to carry our boats back to Basantapur. As we peeled out into the current I noted the communal look on our porters' faces: It must have been the same one friends and relatives wore as the Titanic pulled away from the wharf.

As for the run, I'll say this: The Tamur is not, never was, and never will be a Class III. And it's especially not a Class III the first day. Not that the river ever rated over IV+, just that the consequences of screwing up and loosing a boat or paddle were painfully obvious.

Often I would look up at the ridge tops and think, "It'll be a far longer walk out of this valley than it ever was getting here." And

coming to yet another substantial rapid I would begin praying to the various deities: "I promise I'll never ever complain about suicidal or somnambulist bus drivers again. Just get me out of here alive!"

Happily, the gods answered my prayer—they even saw to it that Pauline never missed a roll. She paddled like a battery-ad bunny. All she needed to affix to her programming was a little steerage. Then she wouldn't have dropped into the various holes that I specifically

told her to avoid.

When we did at last reach the safety of the Sun Kosi we felt like survivors of a natural disaster—something I'm not so sure the Tamur doesn't mean.

At Chatra, the take-out, we were quickly mobbed by surly drivers, who demanded an outrageous rate to take us and our gear the handful of kilometers to Dharan. I was thankful for Pauline's cool-headed dealings with these mafioso: an old man with rheumy eyes who looked like a toad, a skinny twerp who wore an oversized suit and purple glasses and who kept spitting beetle juice inches from Pauline's feet, and a dime-store thug who was yelling into her face. We were saved by an ex-gurka who calmly stepped forward, pointed to a distant parked bus and politely informed us that if we waited until tomorrow we could get a ride to Kathmandu for cheaper than these highway robbers' ransom to Dharan. I was so relieved that when I bought our tickets, I failed to check our seat numbers.

Although Chatra is just a one-lane bazaar, there was plenty to do. We parked ourselves in the Hamro Hotel and Sun Kosi Raft Cold Centre, and sipped beer in the sanctuary of its small garden. Then I got shaved.

Barber. Job description: must be able to steady straight edge razor on customer's throat while milling onlookers shake shack to Richter rating of 7.0.

That evening we attended a carnival. There were rides and shows and all sorts of job opportunities, such as:

Ferris wheel operator. Job description: Must power ferris wheel by running around inside it. Either gender OK but must be able to think like a gerbil.

Magician's assistant. Job description: Must be able to capture run-away rabbits and pigeons and return to their respective hats. Ability to levitate also required. Must be able to temporarily part with head and be handy at removing troublesome ketchup stains from around costume collars.

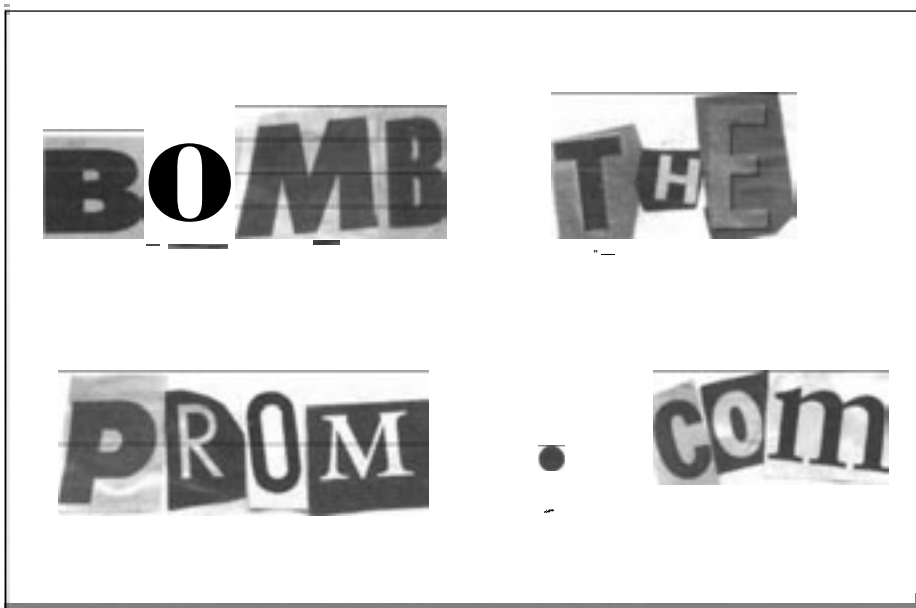
There was a contortionist also and I even thought I might see our former bus driver featured as a somnambulist, but he didn't appear.

The best show however, was Michael Jackson—well not THE Michael Jackson, but a five-year-old imposter who was dressed to the nines.

Dancing and lip-syncing to the real Michael's music, this midget-Michael had all the moves plus one Michael lacked: shoving his way-too-large sunglasses back up his nose every time he looked down. If the little squirt had done an encore I would have been terminally ill from laughing.

The next day as our bus barreled out of Chatra for Kathmandu, we sat reluctantly in our designated seats: shotgun.

Editor's note: Tamur...or Not Tamur is reprinted from *Many Rivers to Run*, a compilation of river stories by Dave Manby. This book, as well as other whitewater related dementia is available at Whit Deschner's inspirational website: Bombtheprom.com. Surf there at your own risk!



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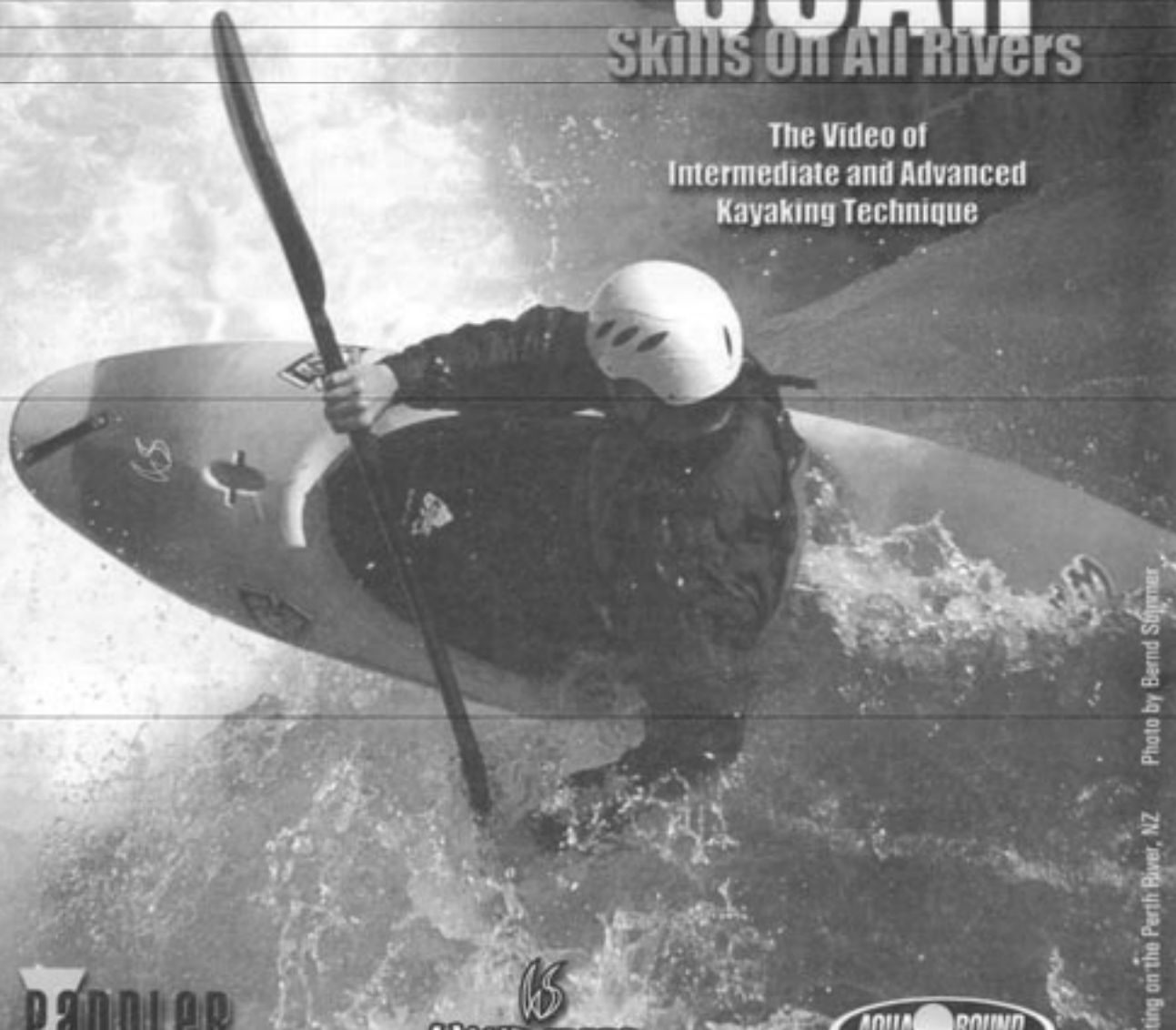


Photo by Bernd Sommer
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Vote for Directors

Here are the candidates and their statements for your consideration. Also are some changes to the American Whitewater Constitution. Approval by the general membership is next. So please vote.

Changes to American Whitewater's Constitution and Board of Directors

The following three changes to American Whitewater's Constitution have been approved by the board of directors in the year 2000, they reflect changes in operations and better representation on our Executive Committee. Per the Constitution, we are providing this ballot for your vote. Please check the appropriate box for approval or disapproval.

In addition to presenting a slate of new board nominees for 2001, we would also like to acknowledge the awesome volunteer efforts of three Directors who will be retiring from our board this year. Paul Tefft, Brooke Drury, and Sue Langfitt-Fuller have been instrumental in the growth of American Whitewater, and we recommend them as nominees for the whitewater hall of fame. While we will miss their presence on our board, we intend to keep them fully involved in rivers and whitewater. Thanks for all your work, and best wishes in all you do!

1. Proposed change to section five (Board of Directors), paragraph 4: The Board of Directors shall be assisted by a ~~five~~ seven-member Executive Committee composed of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, ~~and the Executive Director~~ ~~for the organization~~ ~~tion~~ and two at large board members nominated by the full Board.

2. Section 8 (Officers), paragraph 1: The Board of Directors shall elect the following officers of the organization from the members of the Board: a President, Vice President, ~~and~~ Secretary (add) and Treasurer.

3. Section 8, paragraph 4: The ~~Executive Director~~ ~~Treasurer~~ shall receive all funds and manage all finances of the organization and shall be responsible for keeping the books and records of accounts, in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures.

Ken Kyler

Silver Spring, Maryland

I live in Silver Spring, home of American Whitewater, with my wife, (her) cat and (my) kayaks. I started whitewater kayaking in the early '80s in Indiana and remain a member of the Hoosier Canoe Club. I am a member of the board of the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association (<http://www.gcpba.org>) and am active in the pursuit of equal allocation of user-days for private boaters on the Colorado. I am also a plaintiff on a law suit against the Grand Canyon National Park seeking better distribution of user-days for private boaters.

I also serve as the GCPBA webmaster and have been actively involved in the creation of the new AmericanWhitewater.org web site. In my spare time, I am currently working on a Masters in Software Engineering at UMD.



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Norwood Scott

San Francisco, California

I started paddling 23 years ago at Camp Mondamin in Tuxedo, North Carolina. Since those first strokes on Lake Summit, paddling has been a major force in my life. After graduating from camper to counselor I went on to teach canoeing for another four years. Since then I have been competing in slalom, rodeo, and wildwater; organizing events like the Potomac Whitewater Festival and the Great Falls Race; and sewing as board member for the Tuolumne River Preservation Trust and regional coordinator for American Whitewater. Recently, I have been participating in a number of flow studies on the North Fork of the Feather River in hopes of negotiating more favorable releases for whitewater paddling.

Besides spending a year as a ski bum in Lake Tahoe, my career has been devoted to the environment. I've worked for an environmental consulting firm, an association offering environmental services to airports, and now the Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco. As a federal employee, I have helped to coordinate EPA's comments on the recreational aspects of environmental assessments and environmental impact state-



ments to make sure our whitewater concerns are addressed.

If given the opportunity to serve on the American Whitewater board, I would like to focus on whitewater access and conservation. Specifically, I hope to help open more river reaches so that we can all play and enjoy these resources for years to come. I can bring a lot to the AW board including prior board and association experience, dedication to the environment, a love of the river, and a passion for river preservation. I think that AW has made a substantial contribution to the whitewater community, and I would love to be a part of its growth as we enter the new millennium.

Timothy Kelley

Colorado Springs, Colorado

A major in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is probably the last person you would expect to seek election to the AW board of directors. For the record, I've never built any dams. As a combat engineer, I've spent most of my time blowing things up in support of Airborne and Light Infantrymen. My agenda is to form and lead the Monkey Wrench Task Force. Hayduke lives!

Seriously, whitewater has been my passion for over 17 years. Squirting, rodeo, and creeking have all possessed me at some time. An AW member and volunteer since 1987, I look forward to taking a more active role in helping AW achieve its goals. Besides demolition skills, the army has given me 14 years experience in leadership, communication, and risk management.

After spending most of the last year in Bosnia, the army was gracious enough to station me in my native state of Colorado. Seeing first hand the growth explosion in the sport and being kept off a section of the South Platte by landowners more radical than the factions in the Balkans, I'm in disbelief. I would like to apply my time and effort to overcome these challenges.

Specifically, to inform and educate those new in the sport without being a mother hen; to increase AW membership; and to negotiate legal access and safe portage while ensuring the rights of all are respected. This is how I want to give back to the sport that has given me so much.

See ya' on the river!



Jay Kenney

Denver, Colorado

I am pleased to run again as a board member. Since first elected in 1996,

I have served on the access committee, chaired the access committee, and served as president of the board. I also volunteer at the Ocoee River Rodeo, the Gauley Festival and (try to) cover as many access issues as I can in the intermountain west as a regional coordinator. This past year has been exciting and challenging as the board grappled with a comprehensive strategic planning process and the need to put more people to work in the field and on the rivers, fighting to protect both the resource and our access to it. The next few years will be important ones in the growth and development of the organization.



I live in Colorado, paddle and tele-ski as many days as I can (water and snow depending), and work professionally running the office (in the winter) for Small World

Adventures helping to book and market adventure kayaking trips in Ecuador and beyond.



Ken Ransford

Basalt, Colorado

This past summer in Colorado a landowner pulled a gun on one set of boaters, and another threw a boat and paddle in the river after a boater stopped on that person's alleged private property. As the number of boaters increases, so will access problems. American Whitewater is the nation's leading organization fighting for better river access, and I want to keep up the fight. In my first term I chaired the fund-raising-membership committee, and also maintained a database of access incidents across the country. Since March 1998, 83 incidents have been reported. Sadly, more have come from my home state, Colorado, than any other state. The most common source of access problems are rivers closed by private landowners, followed close behind by rivers closed by government agencies. I think American Whitewater can particularly make significant headway in gaining access to rivers under the control of government agencies.

Dave Steindorf

Chico, California

I was introduced to rivers at age 7, when my father put a fly rod into my hands. It was not until 1991, at the age of 31, that I took up kayaking. On a trip to North Carolina to visit an old friend, I had my first taste of whitewater. My "friend" Lisa, now my wife of 7 years, was working as an ER doc in Murphy, NC while racing on the 1991 downriver team and dabbling at slalom paddling. Over the years I have had the opportunity to paddle with and be mentored by, to my mind, the best kayak instructors in the business, including Eric Nies (that's Eric Nies MD these days), Phil and Mary DeRiemer and Frances Glass (now the mother of the incredibly cute twins, Maris and Cole).

I am a teacher in my real life, having taught from middle school through high school and, most recently, at California State University, Chico. I turned my energy towards instruction in kayaking since taking

an ACA course with Mary and Phil in 1997. At around the same time, I became involved in the hydropower relicensing for the North Fork of the Feather River. Oddly enough, my training in economics turned out to be valuable in the relicensing process.

My passion for river conservation issues inspired me to make a video, "More than Plumbing," which won an award for best amateur video at the 2000 National Paddling instruction program for North Rim Adventure Sports in Chico, California.

I believe strongly that flowing rivers are an undervalued resource not only in this country but also around the world. As in most endeavors, education is the key to river conservation. I have been amazed at how receptive non-boaters are to river conservation when educated on the issues. Most of our progress on the North Fork Feather has been due to our ability to educate the other NGO's, agencies, and PG&E to the value of whitewater boating. However, the best way to improve people's notions about whitewater is to get them on the river. Couch Potatoes make lousy river advocates.



Vote for Directors



Tom Christopher

Leominster, Maine

During my past tenure as a Director of American Whitewater I've had the opportunity to take part in the important growth of our organization and have seen us transform a small group of dedicated volunteers into an important national organization speaking out on recreational river issues throughout the United States. As an emerging organization we have successfully developed a conservation perspective that is compatible with whitewater recreation and allows us to work with other regional and national river groups that pool resources to collectively work together in saving rivers from further degradation.

The issues of burning fossil fuels and global warming have provided the impetus for dam builders to gallop forward with an ever-expanding list of projects on rivers that have been previously overlooked as only marginally profitable. Deregulation of the electric utility industry has stimulated the interest of megacorporations who are gobbling up their smaller brethren that already own dams, with the goal of capturing the future value of hydrogeneration in the years to come.

The early work of American Whitewater in my own New England region has put us ahead of the curve, and the experience gained in the relicensing of the Deerfield, Rapid, and Magalloway Rivers has provided a springboard for success in other parts of the United States. However, we cannot rest on these regional successes as the next wave of larger dams come up for relicensing. We must challenge dam owners at every opportunity and continue to use good science and economics to support our positions. Most important we must put more people in the field to shoulder the enormous workload the coming years will bring—staff and volunteers to attend meetings, represent our interests, and continue to protect our asset base—whitewater rivers.

I have enjoyed my role in representing American Whitewater and our constituents over the years and would consider it a privilege to continue this work as our organization grows to the next level.

Richard Penney

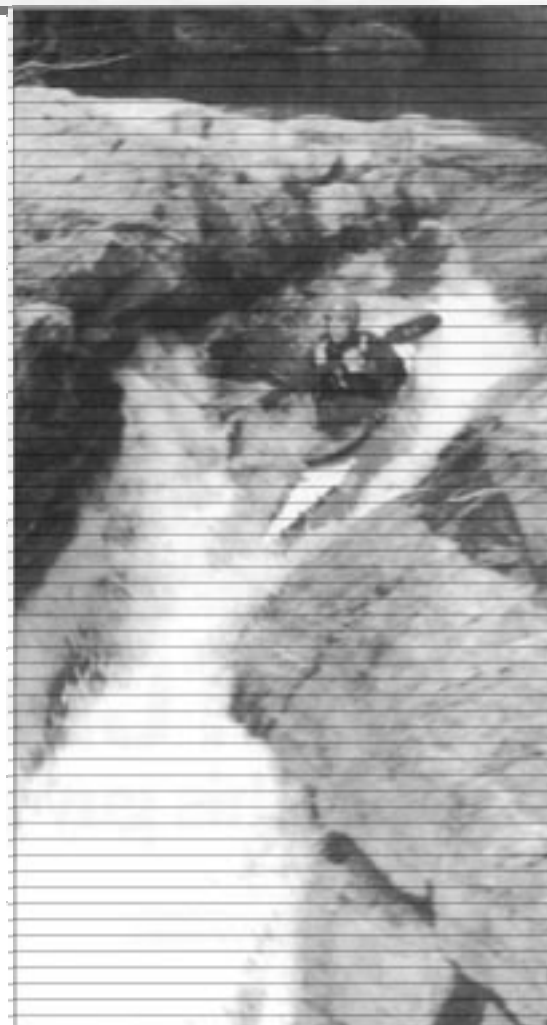
Davis, California

Like many other Southeastern boaters, I got my start in paddling at summer camp, destroying aluminum Grumman canoes on the rivers of North Carolina. But by 1975 I had my first decked boat, and I've been paddling C-1 and kayak since.

My involvement with rivers goes beyond paddling. In 1986 I wrote *The Whitewater Sourcebook* for Menasha Ridge Press. I am trained as a biologist (Ph.D., Duke, 1983), and early on connected that interest to my interest in river conservation. I got involved as a regional coordinator for American Whitewater in 1994 and since 1997 have served on the board of directors.

In 1996 I made river conservation my livelihood, becoming campaign director for the American River Coalition, leading the fight to stop construction of Auburn dam on California's American River. Later I worked as development director for Friends of the River (California's statewide river conservation organization), and now I serve as regional director for American Rivers in the Pacific Northwest.

I am looking forward to continued service on American Whitewater's board. Nationwide our favorite paddling rivers are faced with many threats. To meet that challenge we have to be organized, committed, and engaged. Through American Whitewater, we can be!



American Whitewater Board of Directors Election Ballot

Please indicate your approval or disapproval and return to:

American Whitewater
P.O. Box 636
Margaretville, NY 12455

Candidates require a minimum of 50% approval from the general membership to be named to the Board. Ballots must be postmarked by February 20, 2001.

	Approve	Disapprove
Tom Christopher		
Timothy Kelley		
Jay Kenney		
Ken Kyler		
Richard Penney		
Ken Ransford		
Norwood Scott		
Dave Steindorf		

Changes to American Whitewater Constitution

The following three changes to American Whitewater's Constitution have been approved by the board of directors in 2000. Per the Constitution, we are providing this ballot for your vote. Please check the appropriate box for approval or disapproval.

	Approve	Disapprove
1. Proposed change to section five (Board of Directors), paragraph 4: The Board of Directors shall be assisted by a five seven-member Executive Committee composed of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Executive Director for the organization and two at large board members nominated by the full Board.		
2. Section 8 (Officers), paragraph 1: The Board of Directors shall elect the following officers of the organization from the members of the Board: a President, Vice President, and Secretary (add) and Treasurer.		
3. Section 8, paragraph 4: The Executive Director Treasurer shall receive all funds and manage all finances of the organization and shall be responsible for keeping the books and records of accounts, in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures.		



Dragon's Tooth Rapid at 1200 CFS, Deerfield River,

The Deerfield settlement may provide a glimpse of what's in store for the Kennebec. Nine separate dams which restrict the flow on the Deerfield came up for a mandatory 40-year relicensing in 1986. By the time settlement was reached in 1994, boaters helped negotiate increased flows on 40 miles of the Deerfield before its confluence with the Connecticut River, including 137 separate releases between 700 and 1,100 CFS on the Class IV Monroe Bridge section and Class III Fife Brook section, every weekend and holiday, all summer long.

But conservation played a big role in the Deerfield settlement as well. The settlement maintains a minimum waterflow on the river; increases the facilitation of fish migration including salmon restoration to the Deerfield and its tributaries; improves recreational facilities within the watershed; and expands a catch-and-release fishing area along the Deerfield. Conservation restrictions were placed on 18,000 acres of land in the Deerfield drainage, permanently restricting development and insuring that boaters and fishermen will have cleaner water and less pollution. Conservation is central to Christopher, who says, "If I had to walk away from a great whitewater river in order to protect its ecological integrity, I would do that."

The settlement wasn't cheap. New England Power Company says its cost to implement the agreement will be \$27.4 million, about 13% of the river's total power generating capacity over the life of the agreement. The company doesn't plan to pass this cost on to ratepayers. John Ragonese, Relicensing Analyst with New England Power, terms the settlement as a "good result that accommodated a lot of different interests. We created the broadest range of boating opportunities while still maintaining a viable hydroelectric project." The Wall Street Journal in a 1996 front page story said "the process has led to a pact among the warring factions that is seen by other companies as a blueprint for resolving environmental disputes." The New York

Times stated, "With some 800 dams nationwide up for relicensing in the foreseeable future, what is going on here is being held up as a model for the nation."

How did it come about? It began, characteristically, in 1986 with a series of meetings of about 10 individuals in Tom Christopher's living room. Key players included Norm Sims and Rick Hudson, professors at the University of Massachusetts, and Bruce Lessels, C-1 bronze medalist in the 1987 Slalom World

Tom Christopher

Can this guy go any higher?

By Ken Ransford

Photos by Tom Christopher

"There are some who can live without wild things, and some who cannot,"

Aldo Leopold,

Wilderness Society

founder, said in 1949.

"There are some who can live without wild things, and some who cannot," Aldo Leopold, Wilderness Society founder, said in 1949. One who cannot is Tom Christopher, American Whitewater board member and perhaps the nation's leading authority on obtaining whitewater releases for boating and river conservation. Tom is best known for his role in obtaining whitewater releases on the Deerfield River of southern Vermont and Massachusetts. But he is even more excited about a pending settlement on the Kennebec River in Maine, which he describes as "the jewel of northeast paddling." At press time the deal hasn't been finalized so Tom declined to provide details, but "suffice it to say that the settlement will provide significant whitewater resources for paddlers for years to come."



Dragon's Tooth Rapid at 65 CFS, Deerfield River.



Championships and founder of the rafting company, Zoar Outdoor. After booting Tom Christopher out of their offices early on, New England Power soon realized that he knew more about power generation, river conservation, and recreation economics than anyone else. "We settled with whitewater groups before settling with any other groups," John Ragonese says. "They alerted us to the fact that success was possible, and were instrumental at bringing other parties to the table."

Alongside Tom Christopher and American Whitewater, the other parties include a who's who in environmental and river use issues: the Appalachian Mountain Club, American Rivers, the Conservation Law Foundation, the Deerfield River Compact, the Deerfield Watershed Association, Trout Unlimited, New England FLOW, and seven local, Massachusetts, Vermont and federal agencies. FLOW, which stands for "Friends for the Liberation Of Rivers," is an unincorporated association that American Whitewater helped to start with grants in 1991 and 1992.

Congress also played a key role by passing the Electric Consumer Power Act of 1986, which changed the rules by requiring the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to balance electric-power generation with fish and wildlife, recreation, environmental quality, energy conservation and other interests. When New England FLOW started, no one had ever filed to intervene in a FERC relicensing case on behalf of recreation and the environment. "Today," Tom Christopher says, "it's not hard to file an intervention."

What does it take? As Tom Christopher stated in a 1994 American Whitewater Journal article, *The Paddler's Guide to Whitewater Preservation*, boaters should:

Attend all meetings.

Use science and economics to support your arguments.

Establish and use a meaningful copy list so key players are kept informed.

Cultivate relationships with appropriate politicians and state and federal agencies. Never go away.

It's hard to argue money, and the clincher to increased recreation releases may well be a recreation economics study. Christopher and others were able to demonstrate that water for recreation on the Deerfield was worth 13 times as much as for power generation, and several other studies have yielded similar results. For a primer on how to do a recreation economics study, see the November-December 1998 AW Journal.

Like the volunteers who started New England FLOW, it takes a core group of dedicated volunteers to fight for and keep a seat at the table of a FERC relicensing. American Whitewater knows which rivers are coming up for hydropower relicensing reviews and when; call toll free 866-262-8429 or look for



#5 Dam at Monroe Bridge, Deerfield River.

Tom Christopher on the West Branch Penobscot, Last Drop of the Cribworks Rapid.



more information on our website <http://www.americanwhitewater.org>. Although AW's Conservation Director John Gangemi and Executive Director Rich Bowers know about as much about FERC relicensing as anyone, AW cannot possibly be involved in every FERC relicensing. But in order to be heard, you have to show up.

Besides the Deerfield and Kennebec, Christopher has also obtained recreation releases on Maine's Rapid and Magalloway Rivers. No one, not even Rich Bowers or John Gangemi, who works full-time across the country on FERC relicensings, has had more success than Tom Christopher.

In the past fifteen years, FERC has slowly changed direction and now recognizes that dams should have a decommissioning fund and that many should be decommissioned. Tom Silva, a Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management engineer, says there are 2,932 dams in Massachusetts today, and that "Every dam here was built for a reason, and generally that reason is no longer what it's used for now." Of the hundreds of dams coming up for relicensing soon, many are prime candidates for breaching, or for increased flows for habitat restoration and whitewater recreation. Ominously, Business Week recently said these dams are also prime candidates for generating power, since only 3% of dams in America generate power today.

If you cannot contribute in any other way, Christopher says, "at least give us your money. It's that simple. I wouldn't have gotten a seat at the table if I didn't represent American Whitewater." Why does he do it? "Our American history and work world is full of stories where one or two people have made a difference. This is the last chance I'll have in my lifetime to make a river better. I've had the opportunity in 14 years to work on four rivers, and we've made history on how those rivers will work in the next 40 years. This stimulates me: it's me, David v. Goliath, against the utilities—I can't possibly lose, even if I get totally beat up."

But he doesn't. Christopher estimates that there are only about 75 people in the country doing what he's doing and, "It's not like we're losing; We're winning! We have a high probability of success. Wacked out crazy kayakers are big players in these hearings." If we only attend.

When New England Power's John Ragonese, Christopher's chief antagonist at the Deerfield, was asked what advice he would give to a power company that discovered that Christopher was sitting across the table in a relicensing proceeding, he said, "Respect him and respect what he has to say. Make sure your dealing straight. Expect he'll do the same, and he will." Christopher said, "We knew what we were doing then was special, but not how special."

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Back: Buffy Bailey, 3rd place women's at Tunnel Falls.
Inset: Nelson Oldham, 2nd place.

2000 Gore Canyon Festival / Teva Whitewater Cup Teva Powers the Gore to New Heights

Special to AW Journal

By Paul Tefft

Photos by Todd Patrick



Bonfires, beer, and non-stop Class IV & V boating were the initial ingredients of the first ever Gore Canyon Festival. This whitewater oriented concoction proved to be a potent mix; the Gore Race has burgeoned in popularity and is now one of the country's best-attended paddle sports events.

At its inception in 1988 the Gore Race was a homespun river rendezvous featuring a handful of hard-core kayakers challenging the river, then downing of liquid courage around a campfire. When the race first was held, it was considered borderline crazy to paddle Gore Canyon at all, let alone race full-tilt non-stop. As boaters' skills increased over the years, the number of competitors grew. In the early 1990s raft teams raced down the course for the first time.

The 2000 event was a breakthrough

year for the Gore Festival...and for competitive paddle sports. The 2000 Gore Festival hosted the Teva Whitewater Cup, which included the Teva National Rafting Championship. For the first time professional raft teams vied for thousands of dollars in cash and prizes. The top men's and women's raft teams also won the right to represent the USA in the 2001 World Rafting Championship on the Zambezi River in Africa.

Almost all the raft teams that competed for the 2000 USA national title were made up

of professional river guides. These guides work for commercial rafting outfitters around the country. The Teva National Rafting Championship provided these river pros an opportunity to test their skills against each other...and the powerful Colorado River.

In spite of one of the worst snowmelts in decades, the Colorado River was running much higher than normal two weeks prior to the event. Normally in mid to late August the flow in Gore Canyon is around 1,000 cfs. Due to an unusually dry summer and the need for irrigation water downstream, the Colorado's upper reservoirs were dumping water and the river flow was hovering around 1,400. In spite of an inordinate amount of groveling by the event coordinators to the benevolent dam keepers, big money water politics would ultimately dictate the river level on race day. After all, water is money and the Colorado River water is one of the most coveted H₂O resources on the planet.



Gore Rapid can result in a long and bruising swim.

The river level remained high the week prior to the event and no official word was given on the Gore Race's status. As race day neared, mountainbuzz.com's (mountainbuzz is one of Colorado's most popular river info sites) on-line chat forum was overflowing with Gore racer's opinion on the potential shortening of the course. Some renowned Colorado hair boaters sent scathing messages through cyberspace, which blasted the event coordinators for sucking up to corporate America and being sissies. In reality, the lawsuit paranoid event team was worried about getting everyone to the finish line in one piece. They had the safety of the event's participants as the paramount concern.

The coordinator's and web surfer's worries proved to be unfounded. The race for both the kayakers and rafters started at the very top of Gore Rapid. None of the racers were seriously injured during the race and the shortened course was a non-issue. In actuality it turned out that lengthening the course caused considerable consternation. For the first time in the event's history, kayakers had to race all the way to the Pump House take-out. The lengthening of the course added a couple of miles of Class I-III water to the race. Many boaters bitched about this additional test of their cardiovascular proficiency.

One boater who was definitely not fazed by the longer course was Corey Neilson. In an amazing display of paddling prowess Corey raced with a raft team in the Teva National Raft Championships and then rallied back upriver to enter the downriver kayak race. After taking third place overall in the raft races with Team Clear Creek, Corey hurried back up to the put-in, paddled over three miles to the start line (for the second time



The paddle sports world continued to turn and race day rapidly approached. Two unprecedented kayaking deaths in Gore Canyon this summer created an ominous overtone to the event. Prior to 2000 no kayaker had ever died in Gore Canyon, and to have two fatal accidents on consecutive days stunned the Colorado paddle sports community. These tragedies and the higher than normal water level had the event coordinators considering canceling the race or shortening the course. One scenario that was debated was starting the race below Gore Rapid. Gore Rapid is one of the longest and most difficult rapids in the gorge and was the site of one of the recent drownings. At higher flows, coming out of your raft or boat in

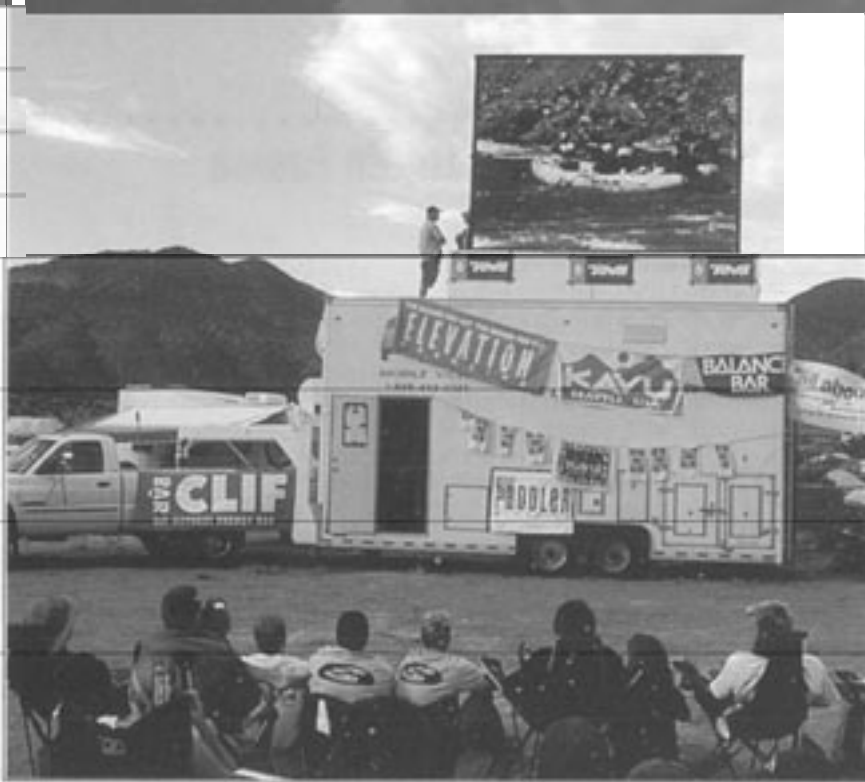
of the day but this time in his Perception Wavehopper) and blitzed the field for the victory in the Teva Extreme Downriver Kayak Challenge. In the words of the 1999 King of Gore and renowned endurance athlete Charlie MacArthur, "Corey is an animal."

Back at party central (the Pump House campground) the New Belgium beer truck had the Class VI challenge of quenching the competitor's thirst. The event's official beer sponsor was more than up to the test. The Riverside Rage had officially started.

In fact, the West's biggest paddle sports party had been going strong all day. Teva made sure that the festivalgoers had plenty of riverside entertain-



Top Left -Clockwise: 2nd Place men's Nat'l Raft, Timberline/Wing Women 1st place, Team Anzus Ferrels, Ticauada/Riot 3rd place mens.



ment. Bands played all day long and a huge diamond vision video wall showcasing the day's racers kept the spectators entertained. When the racers poured into the sponsor tent lined venue, the festival kicked into overdrive. A long queue formed at the food service tent as hungry racers needed to recharge their engines for the night's festivities.

As the sunset and the stars emerged, the revelers spirits seemed to soar. Event MC Dan Gavere kept the crowd entertained as they watched the day's action on the huge video screen and danced to the live music. Copious quantities of New Belgium beer were consumed including many kegs of the appropriately named Blue Paddle Ale.

The climax of the party was the event award ceremony. Ten thousand dollars in cash and

mountains of prizes were doled out to the day's victors. The new National Raft Champion teams—Team California (men) and Team Colorado (women)—won thousands of dollars and trips to Africa. Corey Neilson returned to the podium a second time to be crowned as the new King of Gore and Nikki Kelly was honored as the new women's champion.

In reality, the entire fleet of competitor's deserved accolades...after all, they had just conquered the hardest whitewater on the entire length of the mighty Colorado.

For photos of the 2000 Gore Canyon Race call Todd Patrick @ (970) 925-9181 and for the competitor's race video call Phil Kantor @ (303) 444-8414.

Gore Race 2000 - Timing Sheet

Division: _____

~ a f t e n

	Team Name	Captain	Bib	Start	Finish	Course
1	Unknown	Rob Rastamundt	104	8:54:00	9:27:05	0:33:05
2	Down River Equipment	John Solanik	95	8:56:00	9:30:07	0:34:07
3	Nova II	Bryce Hayes	79	8:30:00	9:04:42	0:34:42
4	Timberline Dolly Bonger	John Carney	129	8:32:00	9:07:22	0:35:22
5	Roots Crew	Tom Steinau	101	8:46:00	9:22:08	0:36:08
6	Anzus Ferrels	Ryan Pera	118	8:50:00	9:26:14	0:36:14
7	Timberline No Sub for Ex	Colin Carpenter	102	8:48:00	9:25:40	0:37:40
8	Mystic Mojo	Brad Watts	83	8:36:00	9:13:59	0:37:59
9	Timberline Team Flashback	Bryan Stallworth	86	8:34:00	9:12:03	0:38:03
10	Team Madd	Todd Bierman	80	8:38:00	9:16:15	0:38:15
11	Wacky Tacky	John Erhier	81	8:40:00	9:19:18	0:39:18
12	Creature Craft One	Darin Vancil	89	8:42:00	9:28:18	0:47:18
13	Gnar Farms	Kent Virtries	128	8:52:00	9:42:57	0:50:57
14	Creature Craft Two	Joel Bishop	85	8:44:00	10:00:53	1:16:53
15	Freight Train	Kurt Schoenig	150			



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SMALL WORLD ADVENTURES

Saving Rivers Through Liquid Fusion

By Mark H. White

Perception rocked Salt Lake City again this summer at their third annual Liquid Fusion party. The Liquid Fusion party is held every year during the Outdoor Retailer tradeshow to express thanks to Perception's dealers and industry partners according to Perception spokesperson Veronica Griner.

As in past years, proceeds from the Liquid Fusion party were donated to the Utah Rivers Council; a non-profit organization that seeks to keep the state's rivers healthy and free flowing. Prior to the event, Griner assembled merchandise contributions from numerous industry partners. The contributions were assembled into three prize packages; each valued at over \$7,000. Partygoers had the opportunity of winning the packages by purchasing raffle tickets for \$1.00 each. Proceeds from the ticket sales—well over \$2,000—went to the Utah Rivers Council.

Jim Clark, President of Watermark (Perception's parent company), described the Liquid Fusion party as the ultimate win-win event. "The party" Jim explained, "acknowledges our hard-working dealers, raises money for the Utah Rivers Council, and allows everyone to have a good time." Clark's outfit was among the party's best; a space age silver foil gig with wide pointed shoulders. Some wondered if this was a glimpse into the future of paddling gear.

Zach Frankel, Executive Director of the Utah Rivers Council, could hardly contain his enthusiasm. "Perception's commitment to conservation and the URC has been commendable. Their continued support has significantly enabled us to further the cause of river conservation and protection in Utah." The URC recently received a \$30,000 Conservation Alliance Grant from a coalition of outdoor gear manufacturers. Perception was instrumental in nominating and championing the Utah Rivers Council.

Once everyone had recovered from the party, Perception took another step for river conservation. Griner coordinated and paid for a river trip on the Colorado River's Westwater Canyon. Media representatives, athletes from Team Perception, R&D staff, and spokespersons from the Utah Rivers Council and American Whitewater were in attendance. The purpose of the trip was to create positive media exposure regarding river conservation issues.

Napo River Festival Yacu Urayra

[The River flowing
freely...downstream]

December 30-31, 2000

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- *Kayak Rodeo
- *Activist Exhibits
- *Fishing Contest
- *Prizes
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- *Guest Speakers
- *Fun !!

Event Cost: \$10 USD....Donations Accepted

All Proceeds go to Help Save the Napo River from a destructive dam and Gold Mine.

Contact yrettam@yahoo.com for more info.

New Hope For Stolen Boating Gear

Nobody likes or wants to see boating gear lost or stolen. Paddlesports is growing and unfortunately, so has theft of paddle sports gear. The Boulder Outdoor Center has launched a new online bulletin board for lost, stolen or found boating gear.

In response to an increase in theft of paddling gear, the Boulder Outdoor Center added the paddle-sports-specific National Bulletin Board for lost, stolen, or found gear to their web site this spring, at <http://www.boc123.com>. Paddlers who have found gear, had items stolen, or are suspicious about a boat someone wants to sell, can check the listings or add to them. "I'm hoping people will use this as a resource before they buy a used boat," said Eric Bader, who started the bulletin board. "I want to put a damper on theft in paddlesports."

In Boulder, Colorado the site has already helped reunite 2 stolen boats with their owners. Please help spread the word, and reduce boat theft! This site is free and available to everyone that has internet access. Get your local shop to print out the stolen boats listing and post it in their shop. Encourage your local paddling clubs to post a notice in their newsletters.

Eric Bader
Boulder Outdoor Center
303-444-8420

Getting to the Olympics: The U.S. Slalom Team 2000

By Dale Marie Herring

Fully focussed, with only the ten-second countdown filtering across rustling whitewater, David Hearn winds up his body at the starting gate on the Ocoee River in Georgia. It is April 8, and cold. Wind mixes with rain and snow to complicate the 23-gate slalom course ahead. The outcome of this race, combined with the time from his disappointing race yesterday, which won him only second place, would dictate everything — a chance at the Sydney Olympics to win the gold, or four more years of grueling training.

It is the Olympic trials and every three minutes a new Olympic hopeful charges after their dreams, racing through gates in numerical order. As the official tone sounds, Hearn's body passes through the start setting off an electronic timer that ticks off the seconds of his speed. Green and white poles scream by as he passes them downstream; red and white poles become locked in the grains of water as he crosses them upstream. Finally the last gate rests less than 25 yards from the finish line. Just a brush of the paddle jacket against it could add 2 seconds of time. A wrong twist of the paddle or lean of the body... but Hearn is thinking only of the gold, and the finish line.

As Hearn says, "Instead of letting the water tell you, sometimes it is better for you to tell the water what you want to do."

"Combined time 243.99," an official states. Translated, Hearn is among the five people who have earned a place on the U.S. Slalom Team. Yet, it is not his first time that the native of Bethesda, Maryland has gone to the Olympics. Winner of 14 World Championship medals, Hearn also competed in the 1992 and 1996 Olympics. He modestly remembers the excitement of the latter as he marched "into the Olympic stadium in Atlanta in front of a home crowd with guys like Carl Lewis, Michael Johnson, and the dream team basketball team. It was incredible. It was a big deal for paddlers to be in the company of those athletes."

Now, upon making the Olympic team for the third time at the age of 41, Hearn remarks, "Sydney's going to be tough. The Europeans are always talented. I've got to get a lot faster. Sometimes I wake up feeling old and sore, but I know I'm going to represent my country. And to do it by beating all of these young guys? That keeps me young at heart."

Hearn's teammates include a remarkable crew of talented whitewater athletes. K-1 paddler, Rebecca Bennet-Giddens from Green Bay, Wisconsin, earned her chance at the gold in a dramatic race, neck-to-neck with

veteran Olympian Cathy Hearn. Deadlocked and anxious at the April trials on the Ocoee River, Rebecca reminded herself, "You can never, ever count Cathy out." And so, with only seconds to spare, Rebecca managed the victory she needed.

"This is definitely the most nervous I have ever been," she explained

afterwards. "It's what I've been dreaming about. I knew that there was no big mistake that I could make. I had first place to lose."

On the other hand, Scott Shipley, 1993-1995-1997 World Cup Kayak Champion, smoothed his way through the trials driven by what he describes as being, "very disappointed in my Olympic showing in both 1992 (placing 27th) and 1996 (placing 12th). That was the main reason I pushed four more years, so I could have one more shot. I'm excited about Sydney. I raced there this winter and had success on the course. I'll follow my training plan so I'm in my prime for the first day of Olympic competition." Shipley has been ranked among the world's best kayakers for almost a decade.

So has Lecky Haller, paired with his brother in the C-2 World Championship, surprised the world with a gold-medal performance in Italy in 1983. Teamed with Jamie McEwan, the super duo claimed a silver medal at the 1987 World Championship in France. With Matt Taylor on his side, the two hope to find gold at the Olympics. Their smooth performance on the Ocoee, with only a half second victory separating them from rivals Scott McCleskey and David Hepp in the first competition, won them the Olympic berth.

Haller said, "You take one gate at a time. Like building a house, you get the nails, put up the walls, put on the roof, and, when it's done, you hope you have a million dollar house."

Together, the U.S. Slalom Team will make their mark on the Olympic Games in Sydney and bring to finale the fourth-ever slalom event in history. Although the sport has held a World Championship every two years since 1949, there was a long-held desire in the paddling community to see slalom racing as an Olympic event. In 1972 the sport premiered at the Munich Games. In the face of East Germany's dominating slalom presence, American Jamie McEwan, won a bronze in the one-man canoe. The victory inspired countless American paddlers.

Yet, they would not have a chance to prove themselves until the slalom event resurfaced for the second time at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. By then boat design had changed dramatically. The C-1 had been

narrowed to 70 centimeters and innovative American boat designers moved both seats on the C-2 towards the center of the boat, resulting in better maneuverability and speed. Joe Jacobi and Scott Strausbaugh took the gold in the C-2 for men and Dana Chadlek took the bronze in the K-1 for women.

By 1996 at the Atlanta Olympic games, Chadlek medaled for the second time, gaining the silver, and only U.S. medal in slalom that year. Chadlek, as well as other slalom champions, have influenced the sport in countless ways. It is a sport where each race, only a few minutes long, is just a part of a compelling litany of training, local competitions, world events, and team trials that lead, if you are fast and lucky, to the Olympics.

Men's Olympic Canoe Final Results

1. Tony Estanguet (France)
2. Michal Martikan (Slovakia)
3. Juraj Minciz (Slovakia)
12. David Hearn (Bethesda, MD)

Women's Olympic Kayak Final Results

1. Stepanka Hilgertova (Czech Republic)
2. Bridgette Guibal (France)
3. Anne-Lise Bardet (France)
7. Rebecca Giddens (Green Bay, WI)

Men's K-1 Slalom Final Results

1. Thomas Schmidt (Germany)
2. Paul Ratcliffe (Great Britain)
3. Pierpaolo Ferrazzi (Italy)
5. Scott Shipley (Poulsbo, WA)

Men's C-2 Slalom Final Results

1. Pavol Hochschorner/Peter Hochschorner (Slovakia)
2. Slawomir Mordarski/Krzysztof Kolomanski (Poland)
3. Marek Jiras/Tomas Mader (Czech Republic)
12. Matt Taylor, Atlanta/Lecky Haller, Bryson City NC/Dlymoicidnt; qualify for finals, but were 12th in qualifier



CALL ME RIVER BABE

by I. R. Guhlbul

After all, what's in a name? I'll tell you what's in a name. 'Fess up. Most of you, even if you won't admit it, got at least a little curious when you glanced at the title. You don't even know me but you were titillated by the possibilities. You probably envisioned a cross between Sharon Stone, maybe, and Meryl Streep on light steroids. Well, I hate to bring you down to earth so I'll just leave you to your little fantasies.

How I wish I had been less curious over a name. A name that would evoke in me awe, envy and, yes, downright jealousy. A name that would eventually lead to one of those epic adventures that you can't believe you're in the middle of. A devious name, whose sole purpose is to mislead and manipulate kind-hearted, naive, unsuspecting individuals. A name I never want to hear again—SHUTTLEBUNNY!

I feel a tremendous responsibility to get the story out—to alert other guileless innocents before they too fall prey.

It all came down like this. I had acquired a fairly new boyfriend (who showed initial possibilities of being a keeper) and he was definitely a hard core paddler—(mom, if you're reading this, substitute kayaker). That's what they call it, you know; paddling, not kayaking. See, how names can get you into trouble? My introduction to his obsession consisted largely of endless evenings of endless congregations of his fellow paddlers watching an ever-replenishing supply of paddling videos in some guy's basement. All of them hooting and hollering as some maniac tempted death over and over again. I learned a lot from those sessions. Things like the average IQ of a paddler, the amount of beer that can be consumed in an evening by 6 hairy guys, how I ranked when up against Team C. But there are some things you just can't learn from a video.

As the relationship blossomed, a pattern rapidly developed. My boyfriend, let's call him Joe, would come over to my place fairly late on Saturday night, all charged up about this or that river (he'd call them stretches) he had paddled that day. I would do the interested girlfriend bit and ask questions that I hoped weren't too stupid, knowing very little about the sport. Most of these evenings started with us watching TV but with Joe quickly slipping off to his river of dreams until I would wake him to send him on home. But some Saturdays he would surprise me and show up much earlier and we would actually go out for dinner and have what passes for a date in the paddling community.

Once I asked him how he managed the early arrivals when the "stretch" was the same one he had paddled before and he had been much later arriving. He said sometimes they were lucky and one of the guys would bring along a shuttlebunny. Think about it. Shuttlebunny. Some might leap straight to a vision of a long eared bus driver but to me it conjured up images of feminine pulchritude, shapely and willing with the cutest little headpiece. All right, with a bit of airhead thrown in. Nevertheless, a definite threat to our budding relationship. I should have shut my mouth, but at the time all I could think about was "my" Joe spending part of his Saturday with this fuzzy headed vision. So, under the guise of wanting to "share" what I could of his passion for paddling, I pressed

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for an explanation. It turns out, as he carefully explained, a shuttlebunny is a female friend of a paddler who cares enough about her boyfriend to offer to drive his paddling group to and from the river. All right, I thought, I can live with that. This shuttlebunny was just someone else's girl friend doing him a favor.

But as time went on, it was apparent there were others. He became more and more voluble about his gratitude toward these occasional shuttlebunnies. Once he even raved, "Can you imagine, this one even had hot chocolate waiting at the take-out." The next Saturday when he came in after his weekly river trip, I was boo-hooing my eyes out on the couch. He got that 'oh no, she's being female again' look on his face but dutifully asked me what was wrong. "Why don't you ever ask me to buh-buh-bee a shuttlebuh-buh-bunny?" I sobbed. "What do they have that I don't have?" (and several other 'pity me' phrases.)

Well, you never saw such genuine concern roll over a man's face before. "Oh honey," he said, as he wrapped his arms around me, "I had no idea you felt this way. Why just the other day Doug and Jeff wondered why I didn't ask you to be shuttlebunny. They thought you would be perfect." "They did?", I blubbered. "Well then, why didn't you ask me?" "I would have but I thought you had other more important things to do on a Saturday," he replied in his most sugary, conciliatory manner. "More important! More important!" I cried. "How could anything be more important than sharing something that means so much to you?"

And that's how I learned:

- How easy it is to set and fall into your own trap

- The difference between what he said and what he meant

- The parts of paddling you don't get from a video.

The simple goal of a shuttle is for the boaters to get to the spot on the river where they will all get in their boats and begin the day's river trip. But a major secondary goal is to have cars waiting at the take-out to pick up the paddlers at the end of the trip. This can be a long and complicated process. But this particular shuttle was to be fairly simple as it was my maiden voyage as a shuttlebunny. How excited I was! And I was determined to be the best dang shuttlebunny they had ever seen. After all, how hard can it be? Everyone drive to the take-out, cram all the boats and paddlers into the biggest vehicle, and drive it to the put-in. After that, it's just a question of killing some time until 3PM, when I was to pick up my boyfriend at the take-out. Piece of cake.

And he would be very grateful that he wouldn't have to wait around at the end of the trip. I would be a genuine heroine. Oh, did I mention that the temperature was hovering somewhere around 40 degrees? No, that was not a typo--40 degrees under a cold, gray, March sky.

So, we drove to the take-out rendezvous, a place that appeared to me to be in absolute chaos. Which we immediately added to by un-strapping, throwing and re-strapping boats in some kind of demonic appearing ritual. I hid behind a tree. But shortly they had 6 boats on top of Joe's old white panel van and 7 people inside. This particular van had only a driver's seat so the rest of us were on the floor in the back. I had no problem with this; I'm not exactly the delicate flower type—until the heater started taking effect. Now, I have no idea what they make paddling clothes from. I can't even take a wild guess as I have never smelled the likes of it before. Did I mention there were no windows in the back of this van? Did I mention that laundering river clothes and bathing is not a high priority among paddlers? Did I mention the bumpy, twisty, turny roads we took? Think rancid, think fetid, think nauseating. They will never know how close they came to adding a new smell to the already malodorous mix. By practicing a little meditation, I managed to make it to the put-in without disgracing myself but it was close. Very, very, close.

So, posthaste, the boats came off the top, lunches were tied in, and the trip was ready to take off. When Joe said "See you at the take-out," I suddenly realized that I had no idea where the take-out was. I had been meditating and swallowing hard in a passel of putrid paddlers, remember? That was my first (but not my last) mishap.

I flagged Joe down and he resignedly got back out of his boat and patiently gave me directions by drawing a stick map in the dirt. A stick map! In the dirt! Listen, I followed along OK for several "You take the first left after the old white church, etc." but after that it started to look like the trails the snails leave on my sidewalk after a rainy evening. Of course, I wasn't about to admit anything of the sort. Joe hopped back in his boat and off he went. Now what?

No problem. I had a plan. I hiked back up the trail to the van and found a napkin and a pencil stub, hiked back down to the riverside and did my best to copy the snail trails down. Then back up to the van. Second mishap. The van was parked in. Solidly parked in.

Now if the van had instead been my little 4 cylinder sedan, I would have been OK. But this van was about 30 feet long and 10 feet high. No, really! But I gave it a good shot. I climbed up into the driver's seat and reached my foot out to the gas pedal. And reached out and out and out. Not even close. No problem, I thought, I'll just adjust the seat. So I reached down for the little slidey button to power my seat forward. No little slidey button. I searched all over but all I could find was a rusty bar. I pushed, pulled, lifted but the bar went nowhere. Now what? I needed a plan.

No problem. I found a pile of fragrant towels, clothes and strange looking stuff in the back of the van. I just piled it on the driver's seat and sat on and in front of the

pile. Lo and behold I could reach the gas pedal just fine. Of course, I was perched on a less-than-stable seat cushion of sorts. But I wasn't about to let that stop me. Started up the van. Inched it forward turning the wheel as hard as I could. Inched it back turning the wheel the other way. Inched it forward turning the wheel as hard as I could. Inched it back turning the wheel the other way. Inched it forward, well, you get the picture. And after countless repeats of this exercise, I had angled the van all of about 5 degrees. I could see it all. Night would fall on my shivering boyfriend, stranded at the take-out, cursing the day he met me. I had to get this van out. I checked the 2 other cars. They were both locked up tight. Now what?

No problem, I had a plan. I thought that if I just gently bumped the other cars I could nudge them to give me more space. I only needed a little teeny bit. So I hopped back in and started gently nudging. I swear I was gentle. But somewhere in the process I heard a little clunk. That's when I realized I was no longer able to nudge. Not even gently. One look told the story. I had managed to drop the little curvy thing on the bottom of the front bumper of the van down on top of the little curvy thing on the top of the back bumper of the car in front. We were hooked. Locked. Like pop-it beads. Now what?

No problem. I had a plan. I picked up some slanty kind of rocks from the ditch on the other side of the road. I put one in front of each front tire. Then I inched the van forward just a bit. Just like I planned - the van bumper lifted to where it was just above the car bumper. Then I got 2 flat rocks and put them behind the tires and backed up a bit. I tell you; this was nothing short of genius. I was free. Well, actually, I was free of the bumper, but still parked in. Now what?

I needed a plan. Or a miracle, either would do. I was afraid to start my 'inch forward, inch backward' routine again. Then I remembered AAA. All I had to do was call AAA. Surely they could help me. Luckily I carry a car phone with me. Well, not actually with me but in my car which unfortunately I wasn't in. So that plan was shot to H-E-(double toothpicks). So, there I sat. Trying my best to carry out my glamorous and undeniably important shuttlebunny responsibility.

Just then another overloaded van pulls up and starts spewing boaters, gear, odors, etc. I went into my never fail 'poor me' routine and soon I had a volunteer driver in the van and a macho 'does this all the time' kind of guy directing. I was gratified to see it still took about 10 or more 'inch forwards, inch backs' before the van was free.

But free it was. After profuse thanks, I started to climb in the van when one of the boaters called out, "So, you're the shuttlebunny, huh?" I started to graciously acknowledge the honor when I noticed the look on his face. Now I could have been wrong but it looked sort of like sneering



amusement. You know what I mean? But, like I said, I could have been wrong.

I was finally on my way. And none too soon. The take-out was about 45 minutes away and their ETA was about 1-1/2 hours away. I picked up the napkin covered with snail trails and off I went on my search for the take-out.

It didn't take me long to realize that DOT doesn't put signs on dirt roads directing one to the appropriate rut filled lane that leads one to the chosen take-out. However, after getting this far, I was going for the gold. I took a piece of grayish, stringy tape of some kind that seemed to be everywhere in the van and stuck my napkin map to the dash. Now, I thought, all I had to do was follow the snail trails and I was home free.

Then I had to think again. One of the few parts of the instructions I had down pat was that the shuttle all took place on dirt roads. And dirt roads it was—for hours. OK, actually less than an hour. But no sooner did I make what I thought was the final turn to the river than I found myself back on the highway. Oops! Consulting the napkin, it seemed that I might have made a wrong turn about 2 turns ago. So, I backtracked to the spot, did the opposite of what I had done previously, and before you could say "Boy, is he ever going to be */#!*&," there I was, back on the highway. Without a plan.

It seemed as good a time as any to panic—so I did. I was into my 4th or 5th Kleenex when my knight in shining armor appeared. Actu-

ally, it was a shuttlehunk (?) in a dingy, black van with a kayak on top. I flagged him down, smiled ever so sweetly and poured out my predicament. I didn't even need to pull out my 'poor little old me' routine. He knew just which piece of riverbank I needed (I have never figured that one out) and led me right to it—just as the kayaks were coming into sight. I hurriedly trotted out another of my many routines—my cool chick persona-in the nick of time.

So there I was, lolling against the van, looking ever so calm and collected, when up bounces Joe saying, as cheery as you please, "I sure hope you brought hot chocolate."

Greg's Review Corner

Playboating: Moves and Training;

by Eric Jackson

Reviewed by Greg Akins

. Learn cool moves, win rodeos, become a better paddler...Or just have more fun.

Eric Jackson's newest book is all about these things. After his first book, *Strokes and Concepts*, Jackson embarks on the task of describing the route to world-class rodeo boating via the written word (and a few pictures). While the new school boating described in 'Strokes' was mostly devoted toward skilled river running—a notable departure from today's park and play mentality, Jackson's newest book takes those skills and moves them beyond park and play recreation towards competition level proficiency.

For many, video may be the preferred method of learning to playboat. It is extremely difficult to textually describe a cartwheel, and much easier to just show how it's done. But different people learn in different ways and a written description may go far towards helping some advancing boaters flatten their learning curve. Jackson does a fine job of describing these moves and includes more excellent Skip Brown photography to show the moves in progress.

Playboating: Moves and Training, however, emphasizes rodeo as a sport rather than just a fun thing to do in a plastic kayak. The book proposes spending time training, rather than just playing during a river trip. It suggests ways to become proficient at individual moves and delivers techniques for improving scores, rather than just executing various moves. The opening chapters describe strategies for developing a winning routine, as well as preparing for competition.

One of the best reasons to buy this book, even for someone already skilled at executing each move, is as a primer for competition. Jackson separates each move into a different chapter. At the beginning of every chapter is the World Kayak Federation (WKF) definition of the move and the WKF scoring description. So rather than going into a competition prepared to do about 20 left-handed cartwheels before washing out, a competitor can develop a routine that compounds points and enhances the variety multiplier. Consequently he or she might outscore a competitor who is a technically better, though less rehearsed paddler.

But this book should not be just for competitors. For the recreational paddler who wants a goal, Jackson gives clear, objective techniques for evaluating playboating prowess. Even the most relaxed, non-competitive fun-hog can impress his or her paddling partners by showing off competition level abilities.

Playboating: Moves and Training by Eric Jackson is available in bookstores, or from Stackpole books, tel: 800-732-3669 or sales@stackpolebooks.com

First Hand Account of Tsang Po Expedition Reviewed

Courting the Diamond Sow

by Wic Walker

304 pages, National Geographic Adventure Press \$26

Reviewed by Bob Gedekoh

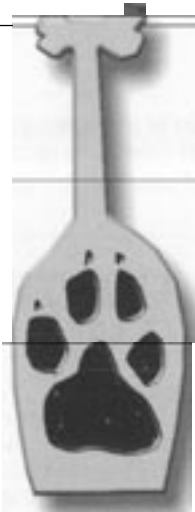
Between the Tibetan Plateau and India's Plains of Assam, the magnificent Tsang Po River carves through the Himalaya, plummeting a phenomenal nine thousand vertical feet in less than two hundred miles. Raging through a gorge four times deeper than the Grand Canyon, between 23,891 foot Galya Pelri and 25,436 foot Namche Barwa, the Tsang Po has earned its reputation as the penultimate challenge for river explorers. The harsh climate and formidable geology of Tibet, coupled with complex economic, cultural, and political obstacles, have long confounded those who attempted to unravel the secrets of the river.

In 1998, after years of meticulous planning, veteran world explorer Wickliffe Walker assembled a talented and diverse team of Americans. Their target... the mysterious inner gorge of the Tsang Po. The expedition was spearheaded by four world class whitewater enthusiasts, who hoped to use their expertise to explore the gorge from a unique perspective, that of the river itself. This team included Tom McEwan, who had pioneered challenging rivers throughout North America and Bhutan; his brother Jamie, a whitewater slalom racer who medaled for the United States in the 1972 Munich Olympics; Roger Zbel, an accomplished wildwater racer and master of steep, formidable rapids; and Doug Gordon, a former member of the US Whitewater Slalom team who had explored remote rivers throughout Mexico and Canada.

But in spite of the advantages provided by extensive land support, electronic communication systems, and satellite imaging, the Tsang Po defied definitive exploration after one of the paddlers was accidentally swept into an inescapable maelstrom. As disbelief gave way to the certainty of their comrade's death, the members of expedition had to confront their greatest challenge, a grueling ascent from the depths of despair and the inner gorge the Tsang Po.

Wickliffe Walker's dramatic and authoritative insider's chronicle of the 1998 Tsang Po expedition, from its inception to its tragic conclusion, will surely thrill anyone who has ever dreamed of exploring one of this planet's last great geographic enigmas. The expedition received extensive live coverage on National Public Radio and considerable speculative attention from the adventure media later. Now, for the first time, whitewater enthusiasts can read detailed first-hand accounts from those who were there.

Thrilling and authoritative, *Courting the Diamond Sow* is must reading for anyone with an interest in cutting-edge, hard-core whitewater exploration.



Dog Paddle

A black and white collie
in a red vest
Sits high in the raft,
Floats the foaming river.

She's thinking of Frisbees,
fetching sticks, and
being petted.

Ignoring the river-talk
"take the tongue,"
the class, the flow
the hatch of mayflies
(no fun to chase),
the bee-cursing.

She notes the roller-coaster
screams,
baby ducks, spiraling peregrine,
Thinks, what the heck,
has a canine slumber,
Floats the champagne river.

Diane Allen
Payette River, Idaho





The Doctor is In!!!!

Having problems reconciling your romantic life with your whitewater addiction? Pose your love questions to American Whitewater's expert on matters of the heart, Dr. Juste Kantgettenuff. A world-renowned psychosexual psychopathologist, Dr. Kantgettenuff is the Director of the Division of Marital Counseling in the Department of Embalming and Mummification at the University of Cairo, Egypt. The doctor's special interest is the evaluation and treatment of incredibly pathetic people leading miserable lives in screwed up situations. If that applies to you, submit your questions to the Dr. Kantgettenuff through the editor of this magazine. Make sure that you include your name and address, so that you will receive all the sympathy and/or ridicule you deserve.

GOT A JEALOUS BONE

Dear Dr. Kantgettenuff,
I have been married for seven years and have a wonderful husband. He is attractive, well educated, witty and a good provider. He dotes on our precious children. I love him dearly. But he has two flaws: he is not a whitewater boater (it scares him), and he is insanely jealous. I swear on my copy of *Wildwater West Virginia* that I have never cheated on him. But every time I return from a day on the river he accuses me of being unfaithful. I don't want to leave him, but I am a SIK Class V hair steep-creeker, and I don't want to give up kayaking. What should I do?

Ima Reely-Gudgurl
Charleston, W.V.

Dear Ima,
The way the good doctor sees it you have two options.

Since your husband is afraid of whitewater it is obvious that he is a wimp. No match for a Class V daredevil like you. (How did you get hooked up with this weenie, anyway?) So, the next time you come home from a day on the river and he throws one of those hissy fits, why don't you box his ears. If that doesn't work, kick his sorry ass! Don't think of it as domestic violence. Think of it as negative reinforcement.

Of course if you are a bloody pacifist I have a second option which is guaranteed to set your husband's feeble mine to ease. It is a patented invention of mine: Dr. Juste Kantgettenuff's Combination Dry Suit and Virtue Protector. This top-quality, full-length unisex Gore-Tex dry suit comes fitted with a rear entry zipper equipped with a sturdy lock. It is uniquely designed to keep you comfortable and dry on the river, while keeping your virtue intact. Using this marvelous invention

is simple. Just put it on before you leave to go boating and allow your jealous significant other to lock you in. When you return your spouse can release you from the Virtue Protector. Your suspicious mate can take comfort in the fact that there is no way you could possibly have committed hanky panky while locked in a dry suit! One word of advice, though. I wouldn't drink too much coffee on your way to the river if I were you.

Dr. Kantgettenuff's Dry Suit/Virtue Protector (\$599) is available wherever fine whitewater apparel is sold. Remember... When It Comes to Lust, You Can Trust Juste!!!

GET OVER IT!!!

Dear Dr. Kantgettenuff,
My girlfriend of five years just dumped me and I am so brokenhearted I don't think I can go on. We had such a special relationship. She was the very essence of my existence. My eternal soul mate. I thought that our spirits were forever fused as one.

We traveled the world kayaking together. We paddled on every continent. Then one sad day not long ago, while paddling the Narrows of the Green, we watched some cocky yahoo run Gorilla. You know the type, a crazed adrenaline addict with the body of a bull and the brains of a baby duck. I thought for sure my girlfriend would share my opinion of him, but when we got to the take-out, she hopped into that moron's rattletrap pickup and away they went. The love of my life, gone!

Oh, Dr. Kantgettenuff, please help, me? I don't think I can live without her!

Joe Piddlesprung
Nashville, Tennessee

Dear Mr. Piddlesprung
That is the saddest tale of woe the good doctor has heard since Jackson Browne wrote that song whining about how Darryl Hannah dumped his sorry ass. But you can not sing like Jackson Browne and #1 bet any money that your ex-girlfriend does not look like Darryl Hannah. So... GET OVER IT!

Face it, your old girlfriend is obviously attracted to this man because he has bigger cajones than you do! She can't help it; it is a matter of simple biology. The parrot with the brightest plumage and the rhino with the biggest horn get the mates. And it is the toughest monkey in the pack that gets the female with the scarlet fanny! If you want to win your old girlfriend back, the first thing you must do is run Gorilla. Then you will have to tackle an even more dangerous and terrifying drop, one that her new paramour would never dare to challenge. Then, and only then, may you reclaim your prize.

Otherwise, you will have to live with the

sad consequences of your cowardice, and hope that you will meet some desperate woman who does not mind your yellow belly. Good luck!

TRY AND TRY AGAIN

Dear Dr. Kantgettenuff,
I followed the advice you gave me last time and took that guy I met in a bar... the one who said that he wanted to learn to kayak... to the Bottom Moose. You were so right about him, Dr. Kantgettenuff. That morning I showed him how to kayak in the pool at the put-in. But when I pushed him over Fowlersville Falls, you could hear him shrieking for miles. What a boob! The last I saw of him he was dragging his sorry ass up the riverbank headed toward the road. Good riddance.

Now for the good news. I met another man on the Gauley last weekend and I am pretty sure he is the one for me. This guy is a Class V open boater who has guided rafts all over the country. In the winter he is a ski bum. He graduated from Penn State and doesn't make much money. And he has spent a little time in jail, but I think I could grow to like his nomadic rough and tumble kind of existence. I am enclosing a snap shot; you can see he is quite the specimen. What do you think?

Goldie Digere
New York, NY

Dearest Goldie,
As far as that first "gentleman" is concerned, I told you from the start that he was a New York sissy boy. You are well rid of him.

As for this new man, I thought at first he sounded promising. He apparently shares your love of Class V whitewater and sense of adventure. The jail time didn't bother me, though the business about Penn State and paddling an open canoe was a bit disturbing. But the good doctor could have forgiven that. But then I took a look at the photo you sent me.

Good gracious, Goldie, what are you thinking? Have you been blinded by passion? You must not get involved with this man! This guy parts his hair DOWN THE MIDDLE!

Surely you must know what that means. This man is what my Grandma Konnie Kantgettenuff used to call a *Muttafriseur*. Why, you would be better off with a *Teppeloga* (God forbid) than a *Muttafriseur*!

You must drop this *Muttafriseur*'s sorry ass immediately. You can do better than this.

Keep me posted.

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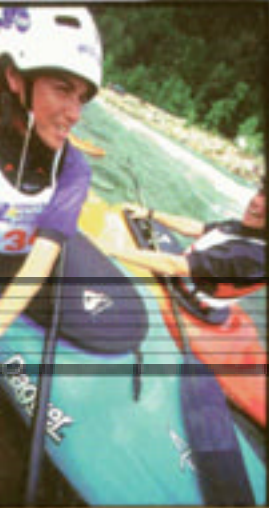
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Tim D freestyle



freestyle (*freestil*)
1. in which any style can be used 2. fresh, innovative ways to playboat including combinations of *wheels and spins of all types*
3. creativity which defies conventional methods



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