

American

WHITEWATER

The Journal of the American Whitewater Affiliation



January–February 1980

Vol. XXV, No. 1



Don Banducci searches the maw of Bad Jose for a passage on Idaho's North Fork of the

WHITEWATER

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The American Whitewater Affiliation

Executive Director
PHILIP VOGEL
P.O. Box 1483
Hagerstown, MD 21740

Board of Directors:

President
PETER N. SKINNER
N.Y.S. Law Dept.
The Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

1977-1980

Mary Kaye Hession
3304 Iowa, Apt. 5
Anchorage, AK 99503

Murray M. Johnson
14257 Firethorne Ct.
Oregon City, OR 97045

Mr. Bill Masters
Box 64
Liberty, SC 29657

1979-1983

Rob Lesser
1812 N. 21 St.
Boise, ID 83702

O.K. Goodwin
Fig Flat, Calif.

Art Block
c/o Rebell & Krieger
230 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Fred Young
Box 246
Roscoe, Illinois 61073

Treasurer
Alice Farrington
Box 1483
Hagerstown, MD 21740

Information and
Corresponding Secretary
Mindy Goodman
142 Jay St.
Albany, NY 12210

AWA Journal
Editor-in-chief
Bart Jackson
38 Windswept Drive
Hamilton Square, NJ
08690

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How to Write to AMERICAN WHITEWATER:

- Send articles, photos, cartoons, poems and drawings to AWA Editor.
- Send all membership forms and payments to Membership Chairman.
- Send advertising matter and payments to Advertising Chairman.
- Send questions of AWA Policy to Board President.
- * Obtain membership forms and all other information from AWA Secretary.
- Obtain AWA products from Membership Chairman.
- * Obtain AWA Safety Codes from Dave Smallwood, Box 1261, Jefferson City, MO 65102

AWA STAFF

Editor: Bart Jackson, 38 Windswept Dr., Hamilton Square, NJ 08690
Racing Editor: Barb McKee, 5 Marlborough Rd., Rochester, NY 14619

Regional Editors:

Alaska: Jack Allen, 5413 Emmanuel Ave., Anchorage, Alaska
Northwest: Joe Bauer, Box 394, Inverness, CA 94937
California: Rich Bangs, Box 761, Angels Camp, CA 95222
Rocky Mountains: Ed Sibert, Box 20055, Denver, CO 80220
Idaho: Rob Lesser Midwest: Fred Young
Middle Atlantic: Ernie Kincaid, Nettie, West Virginia 26681
Northeast: Dave Barnhart, 111 N. Bdwy., Irvinton-on-Hudson, NY 10533
Membership Director: Phil Vogel, Box 1483, Hagerstown, MD 21740 (301) 733-7247 (collect)
Affiliate Coordinator: Rob Forker, 302 First National Bank Bldg., Box 871,
Zanesville, Ohio 43701
Conservation Chairman: Robert Lantz, Rt. 1, Box 195G, Sunbright, Tenn. 37872
River Enhancement Chairman: Tom Daniel, 75 Everett St., Closter, NJ 07624
Safety Chairman: O.K. Goodwin Legal Counsel: Art Block
Advertising Chairman: Joel Freund, 1408 Rockwood Tr., Fayetteville, Ar. 72701
Printing Consultant: Jim Muhlhorn, c/o Barnes Press, 233 Spring St., NYC, NY 10013

AWA INFORMATION

How to Submit Articles: Deadlines for all material, including advertising, are the 25th of Dec., Feb., Apr., June, Aug., and Oct. for Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 respectively.

Publication is planned at 6 times yearly. Single copies \$1.50 each. Surplus back copies are available at reduced prices. Write to the Membership Chairman.

American Whitewater is mailed to all members of the American Whitewater Affiliation, an affiliation of boating clubs and individuals interested in whitewater paddle sport. Membership is open to interested individuals at \$10.00 per year and to clubs at \$12.00 per year. Businesses may affiliate at the rate of \$20.00 each year. Clubs and business affiliate names will be listed periodically in the Journal.

The Staff and Directors listed above are unpaid Whitewater enthusiasts who volunteer their time and efforts to bring affiliate/member subscribers this journal. Your contribution of articles, letters, race results and schedules, photos and drawings are essential for their continued efforts and the timely publication of the American Whitewater Journal.

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Editor's Soapbox

WHITEWATER

WHERE'S MY ISSUE?

According to riverside scuttlebutt, *American Whitewater's* most prevalent malady is poor circulation. "I subscribed but never got. . ." are words that haunt AWA staffers incessantly. Obviously there is a vast communication gap between our circulation department and our readership, which we will here try to bridge. We ask all affiliate clubs to broadcast the following info to their members via newsletters or word of mouth.

1. Anyone having trouble with his/her subscription or planning to change addresses should Call Collect **(301) 733-7247** and straighten it out with Phil Vogel, Executive Director.

2. *Joining AWA entitles you* to affiliation membership plus all the issues of the Journal published for the following 12 months. Since *American Whitewater* is a bimonthly, this usually means six issues. You are not entitled to back issues or extra issues to round out the calendar year.

3. *During 1979*, due to personnel changes and other problems we fell behind schedule. We have tried to catch up, but have found it impossible to fill our normal compliment of six separate issues. Thus we have combined a couple of issues: meaning that subscribers will receive #1 — 6/79 in only four magazines. Unfortunately, we cannot extend membership past the 12 month limit without renewal.

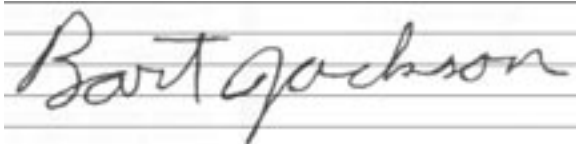
4. *Applications and cash received* 30 days before the upcoming issue's mailing, will receive that issue. Less than 30 days, and your name will be put on the mailing list for the following issue. ie: an application received March 1st will get issue #2/80, mailed April 1st as his first issue. But if you just stick it in the mail March 1st, and/or send it to some AWA staffer other than Phil Vogel and he must transfer it, your first issue will be #3/80, mailed to you June 1st.

This means, since AWA is bi-monthly, you may wait almost 90 days for your first issue. We realize this is too long for you to wait without word. Therefore, starting with 1980, all new and renewing members, upon joining will receive a welcome aboard packet notifying them that they are now American Whitewater Affiliation members, what they can expect from AWA over the coming year, and when and what number issue they can expect their first *American Whitewater*.

5. *Renewals*, like other subscriptions, must be in Phil Vogel's hands 30 days prior to the new issue. On the fifth issue of your individual subscription year, you will receive a renewal notice. The mailing envelope of your sixth issue will be stamped "LAST ISSUE". This allows an ample four months to renew.

6. *If you move* and don't send a forwarding address 30 days in advance, *American Whitewater* will not follow you. Unfortunately, leaving a forwarding address just at your old post office is seldom reliable. Literally hundreds of magazines have been returned and heaven knows how many more lost.

AWA members are the most enthusiastic and supportive in the world. And this Journal has no intention of letting any one of them down. We work hard to make a magazine that will serve your boating needs and excite your interest. But it is all a waste if it never reaches you. Obviously, you've got this issue. But if you or a fellow boater are experiencing poor AWA circulation, we invite you to call our circulation hotline Collect. Or if one of your club members would like to join us, have him write: Phil Vogel, AWA Executive Director, P.O. Box 1483, Hagerstown, Md. 21740.



Letters from Readers:

Dear Editor:

... I was a member of AWA for several years back in the '60's when I lived in the midwest, and our Y club here has joined AWA for the past couple years ...

From our viewpoint here, there are three problems that keep us from promoting AWA more fully:

(1) The unreliability of AMERICAN WHITEWATER magazine; I don't think anyone is going to believe this magazine will be published as scheduled until it actually happens for a year or more without interruption;

(2) The AWA's growing reputation for being basically an organization for "big water" paddlers; although I am sure you would deny this, almost all of the articles printed in AMERICAN WHITEWATER are about Class III-IV-V adventures, so the average paddler can't envision himself functioning as an AWA participant;

(3) The feeling that AWA is governed by a small clique of expert paddlers who are close friends; again, I am sure you would deny this, but when a fellow like Bill Masters of Perception is denied a spot on the AWA Board of Directors, there is some question about the 'openness' of the organization.

Hope the expression of our feelings here will help you in your efforts to revitalize AWA.

Chuck Hines

Asheville YMCA Kayak Club

Thanks for commenting, Chuck. It's easy to grumble in your beard, but you took the trouble to write us directly. We appreciate it. To answer your comments one at a time:

(1) Granted, we did fall disasterously behind. But within the past five months we have published four issues of this bi-monthly journal. If you wonder whether we can sustain it — why not renew your subscription and find out.

(2) It is AWJ's policy to cover all aspects and levels of whitewater boating. Unfortunately, we can only print what is submitted. In the past year, we have published one article per issue involving Class I — 111. This is not as many as we'd like. Since so much more than raw difficulty makes a river exciting, AWJ begs its readers to report on trips of all levels.

(3) Currently Bill Masters is an AWA Director. As to being a clique, AWA is governed by a group of unpaid, energetic suckers, most of whom never met until they volunteered. We desperately need aid. Anyone willing to work in any capacity will joyously be accepted and given any title he so desires. Why not join up?

— Ed.

Dear AWA:

The new format is lively and inviting — keep it up! We keep encouraging our boaters (OC's mostly) to contribute pictures and articles — by them — for you. It's a terrific magazine — all around. Especially turned on by the Safety & Rescue input. The more we all read, the more techniques we learn, the more problem-solving we do, all give us resources to turn to when we are rescuees or rescuers. Actually — S&R is what I personally read first! Then stories of people running hair. Love it!

Bobbie Reynolds

A.M.C.—N.Y.

We'd like to publish your letter in the Journal. What would you like us to publish? Let us know. Write the AWA Editor today.



The

WHITewater

FLUVIAL

AWA AFFILIATE NOTES

Affiliates, send your newsletters to our Editor to help AWA stay current with your club's activities and concerns.

PAM SHELDRIK TO EDIT KCCNY NEWS

Starting with the current Jan./Feb. 1980 issue, the Kayak and Canoe Club of New York's bi-monthly newsletter will be edited by Pam Sheldrick. AWA has just received her first effort and would like to congratulate her on a job very well done. Keep it up, Pam. Members may send contributions to her at 42 Olmstead Rd., Morristown, N.J. 07960.

WHAT'S THE DAM NUMBER?

The spring thaw is almost here and in some parts of the country, particularly the Northeast, and South Central U.S., snowfall and natural runoff have been particularly lean. This means boaters are going to have to do some hunting. *American Whitewater* is seeking to publish a nationwide phone directory to tell what's up and where. If you know any river's dam release schedule, or the phone number where boaters can find such information, please drop a postcard to the Editor so all can share your news. Upon receipt, they will be published in the Fluvial News and once a bundle is gathered we will print them into a separate directory.

Tennessee Boaters, along this line, can receive dam release information on any TVA controlled river by calling toll free 1-800-362-9250. For those out of state, but living fairly close to Tennessee borders

can call 1-800-251-9242. Boaters outside of this toll-free range can find TVA river levels by calling 615-525-5751. On weekdays between 8 am and 4:15 pm you can find an official to talk with. For weekends there is a tape, but it's more attuned to lake levels and fishermen's needs.

Thanks to Nantahala Outdoor Center for Tennessee phone numbers.

INSTRUCTION IS IN THE AIR

Now that the season is just about underway and we are all gearing up for that first freezing assault on the river, many clubs are planning to temper the excitement with thoughts of safety. Instruction courses for all levels of paddlers are being offered not only in paddling technique, but in rescue, racing, and teaching. Below is a sample of some of the courses offered around the nation.

Coastal Canoeists, Inc.

Kayak Instruction Clinic

Eastern Virginia Area

Given weekends in April and May. Limited to eight per clinic. Emphasis on river paddling skills, techniques, safety procedures.

Contact:

Bob Taylor

Box 68

Farmville, Va. 23901

wk: 804-392-6645

Arkansas Canoe Club

Annual Whitewater Canoe School

Mulberry River – NW Arkansas

April 26-27, specializing in beginners and open boats. Contact:

Jim Simmons

104 PE Building

NEWS

Northwestern State University of La.
Natchitoches, La. 71457
318-357-5126

Appalachian Mountain Club, N.Y. Chapter
ACA Instructor Training Seminar
Farmington, Conn.

April 18-20. Limited to 20 Class III paddlers age 18 and over, wet suits required.

Contact:

ACA, c/o Dam Site Associates, Inc.
Coordinator
Farmington, Conn. 06032
SASE please!
Nights: 203-677-2335
Days: 203-289-9301

Northwestern State University
Whitewater Canoe Class
Louisiana Campus

Spring semester. This two-credit beginner's course begins on the campus with practice and drills, then on March 26-29 moves to the Arkansas Mountains where students run several Class II streams. Instructor:

Jim Simmons
104 PE Building
Northwestern State University
Natchitoches, La. 71457

*Buck Ridge Ski Club &
Southeast Pa. Chapter, Red Cross*
Red River College of River Canoeing
Eastern Pa. area

April 25-27 for experienced paddlers on Big Nescopeck Creek. Graduates receive ACA Whitewater Canoe Instructors' and ARC Basic River Canoeing certification cards. Contact by March 31:

Al J. Cunningham
822 Jackson Ave.
Ardsley, Pa. 19038

Asheville YMCA Kayak Club
Beginners Kayak Course

Asheville, N.C.

Given throughout the year in the YMCA pool and on the river. The Asheville YMCA with the aid of Nantahala Outdoor Center and Merrie-Woode Mountain Adventures has developed this special course to teach kayaking. They have graduated over 100 students since 1978 and are more than willing to share their course with other YMCA's around the country. Contact:

Chuck Hines
30 Woodin St.
Asheville, N.C. 28801

Kayak & Canoe Club of New York
CPR Certification Training
N.Y.C. area

Course time and place will be named at convenience of instructor and students. Ideally, every paddler should know CPR. Also note that ARC's CPR certification is valid for only one year and re-certification demands a simple refresher course.

Contact:

Chuck Rollins
212-477-1418

Thanks to all the clubs who informed AWA of their activities. — Ed.

THE GRAND LOTTERY CONTINUES

Perhaps the only thing that rivals the Grand Canyon's beauty is the magnificent complexity of getting on its river. For practically any other canyon in the world, the water would not be worth the bureaucracy. This year, all that was supposed to change. It has, but not totally, and not the way originally slated.

Previously, remember, the entire trip list had to be submitted as a fixed entity, about eight months prior to your run. Then your application was put into the

big lottery barrel and if the ghost of John Wesley Powell was with you, your's was one of the 36 private party permits issued.

This year, the park was unable to fulfill its new system, so they have this much improved compromise. This year the trip leader alone applies. He can choose a group of up to 15 people; names don't have to be set until 30 days before running. The lottery continues but for both 1980 and 1981 there will be 90 permits available for April 1st to October 1st, plus 26 per week for winter use. Trips will be limited to 18 days each to Diamond Head, but the additional 65 miles to Piers Ferry have no time limit.

Unfortunately, this issue will not reach readers by the January 31st deadline. However, you can apply now for next season. And if your name is not chosen in the lottery, it goes on a master list and park officials guarantee you'll get a slot within three seasons. For more info and applications, write: Inner Canyon Unit Mgr., Grand Canyon Nat'l Park, Grand Canyon, Ariz. 86023.

JACK ALBERT RECEIVES RANDY CARTER AWARD

The Virginia Wildlife Federation at its Annual Governor's Award program recently presented the 1979 Randy Carter Award to Coastal Canoeist, Jack Albert. The award, initiated in 1974 was created by an endowment started by the Float Fishermen of Virginia to be presented to the year's "most outstanding river conservationist".

Jack, a former state trooper and current investigator for a Portsmouth law firm, was the co-founder of the Virginia Float Fishermen. He has for many years been a recognized conservation battler working to save local and Southeast free-flowing streams. By being this year's trophy holder, Jack finds himself in the good company of Dick Skepstrom, Pete Rowe, Hal Eaton, Tom Miller, and P.K. Petus.

The Award was originally named to honor Virginia's beloved pioneer canoeist Randy Carter. Some may remember paddling with him, but the books of himself and his students have guided thousands through rivers that he discovered.

Thanks to Coastal Canoeists' "Ca: NEWS"

SAFETYNEWSLETTER A BOATING BOON

The ***River Safety Task Force Newsletter***, edited by ACA Safety Chairman Charlie Walbridge, is an excellent, if sporadic effort aimed at informing the boating community of the latest safety developments. Articles range from latest accident statistic reports, new rescue techniques and equipment, educational plans, hypothermia prevention, and disaster or rescue analyses.

This newsletter is solid, current, and in AWA's opinion, something every club should subscribe to. While not published on a regular schedule, Charlie plans to publish more frequently this year.

Your \$5 subscription gives you copies of all available back issues and all upcoming issues until the money runs out. You cannot lose by this investment.

Right now, the newsletter is desperately searching for good, well-written articles. If you would like to contribute, or subscribe, write to:

Charles C. Walbridge, Editor
River Safety Task Force Newsletter
230 Penllyn Pike
Penllyn, Pa. 19422

NEW YORK AREA'S METROPOLITAN CANOE ROUNDUP

Saturday March 1st, 1980, the American Red Cross is sponsoring its annual canoe extravaganza in which all types of boats and boating will be displayed. It will take place at Kean College, Morris Ave., Union, N.J. from 5:30 to 10 pm; with pool shows at 6:30 and 8:30. Sleek flat-water K-4s, slalom C-1s, basic instruction

tips, poling, sailing, and gunnwaling — every aspect of canoeing will be talked about and demonstrated. In addition, each of the local clubs will have a booth to introduce neophytes and hopefuls to their group and their kind of paddling.

The aim of this roundup is to introduce newcomers to some piece of the sport, and to give them a solid club in which to seek their initial training. Adults — \$2; Children under 18 — \$1; family maximum — \$5.

Conservation Notes

W & S's SEAMY SIDE

None of us wants to see Tennessee's beloved Clear Fork inundated by TVA beavers or its shores lined with aluminum trailer camps. Thus, turning the stream and surrounding 123,000 acres into the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (BAF-NRRA), seems like just the type of protection paddlers would crave. But before we applaud too loudly, we might consider the objections voiced by McCreary County residents at a recent, local hearing:

This "preservation" according to the current master plan, would involve building an entire new series of access roads, under construction until 1986; three visitors centers; two 80-room lodges for guests; four major campgrounds; 325 miles of hiking trails; 100 miles of horse trails; three scenic overlooks with special access roads; licensed concessionaires to shuttle canoeists between points; and (get this) 10 access points to be developed on the Big South Fork with motorboat launching facilities. This lavish re-writing of nature should irrevocably transform God's beauty into a tourist zoo.

In this light, local loathing of the BSF-NRRA is justifiable and reflects years of bitterness toward government agencies

"who've" as they put it, "raped our land and destroyed our culture." The park would protect the rivers and several species of endangered wildlife and plants. But is this the only style of protection available?

Thanks to Bluegrass Wildwater *Accociation's* 'Bow Lines':

Upcoming Expeditions

PERU'S RIO INAMBARI OR ETHIOPIA'S OMO

There are not many expert whitewater explorers, but Laslo Berty is one of the few. In the past five years, he has led 10 expeditions in Peru and Bolivia and made numerous first descents of incredibly heavy water throughout Africa and the Amazon watershed. Now he is finished shoestringing it and plans to share some of his whitewater discoveries with rafters and capable paddlers. He has formed Andes Whitewater & Amazon Expeditions and his first trips for the 1980 season will be on the Inambari and Omo rivers.

The Omo flows from Central Ethiopia south into Lake Rudolf. Paddlers will run some really big water, but the majority will be Class IV, and below. The trip is slated for September '80 and has a few spaces left in raft and kayak.

The Rio Inambari trip is scheduled for April '80 and has just a few raft slots left, but will be repeated, so if you miss this one, apply again. This 23 day, \$1500 jungle adventure meets in Cusco, Peru, visits the Lost City of the Incas, and Lake Titicaca, and then trucks out for the Puente San Jose put-in. For the next 15 days you'll drop 4,000 feet through Class II-V rapids and dense, scarcely inhabited jungle. Kayakers may join this (or any

(continued on page 31)

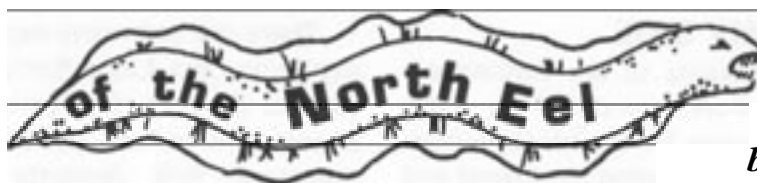


The Planning. Motley but prepared, John Bauer, Dick Schwind, and Jim Little check maps.



The Travel. Heading toward the river with a familiar load.

EXPLORING THE SECRET FORK



by Joe Bauer

Admittedly, it's easy and even pleasant to cruise in a schedule, on the same rivers, at the same times every year. But at least occasionally, every paddler should trade in the feel of the familiar for the exhilarating apprehension of "What's around the corner?" Joe Bauer does just that on the Eel's furtive North Fork and discovers not

only some of the state's finer whitewater, but a stream that carries him through beautiful scenery.

Anyone who has read American Whitewater for the last five years has probably run across one of my Eel River articles. This is the sixth, and features what is sure-

The Run. (below) Dick Schwind skirts one of the many huge, jagged boulders that can form friendly eddies or vicious boat snaggers! Opposite top, he wends a low, but technical drop.





ly the least run fork in the Eel system. Actually, only a handful of kayakers have ever seen this beautiful river.

Born in the coastal mountains of California, the entire course of the North Eel runs through secluded, backwoods country. This remoteness, along with its slim season, have helped keep this fork so secret. The massive snow packs that collect in the mountains above do not seem to get down to this low-altitude river valley. Thus this small, 250 square mile drainage system is left to collect what it can for this strictly rainfall river, runnable only in Winter and early Spring.

The first known descent of the North Fork was made by Dick Schwind and a group of Sierra Club boaters in 1973. Except for a group of three kayakers who ran it again in 1975, Dick knows of no one else having boated this river. I had my eye on the North Eel for some years. So it was with great anticipation that I accepted Dick's invitation to run the upper section.

Also on the trip were Jim Little and my brother John Bauer. Jim had been part of the 1975 expedition, so John and I were the only ones making our first trip. We had missed the 1975 run because we were exploring the canyon below Mina Bridge. (A.W.J. Vol. XXI, No. 4, July/Aug. 1976, "The Split Rock Run")

We drove up the day before and camped by the river so as to get an early start the next morning. From the two earlier runs we had learned that this trip would be very time consuming.

Leaving a car at Mina Bridge, the take out, we proceeded to the first major obstacle – the put-in.

PUTTING IN

Even at its closest point, the road is still about three quarters of a mile of rough terrain from the Eel. And the easiest (??) way to cover it is to paddle, bump, hump, and carry your boat down tiny Salt Creek, which was flowing something like 30 cfs when we tried it. This is a steep little creek and some of the portages were arduous and slow going so we were delighted when we finally made it to the Eel which was running beautiful, clear green and cold.

The first five miles has a gradient of 30 to 40 feet per mile with easy class II and class III rapids. It then picks up to 80 feet per mile and around mile 6, you hit two large rapids within a quarter mile of each other which require portages. The river is stunningly beautiful through this section. With endless time and power, the water has carved its way through the rock, leaving a display of knife-edge ridges and tall stone pinnacles.



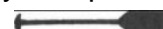
River exploration's greatest joy is encountering the unexpected. Above Jim Little and Dick Schwind enjoy themselves on a Class **IV** portage.

After the second portage, the character of the river abruptly changes to an action-packed class IV. A few rapids invite, even demand, scouting from the shore, but for the most part, everything can be eddy scouted from the boats. This section is as fine as any whitewater I've ever run. The exciting rapids assault you one after another, for the five or six miles to Hulls Creek where there is access to the river via a private dirt road.

The next eight miles to Mina Bridge is

spaced Class **II** and Class **III** rapids, a worthy run. But together the two runs are a bit too much for one day. Next time I intend to split the milage at Hulls Creek and do it in two days. That way I can more fully enjoy one of California's most remote and beautiful rivers.

One note of caution: Don't continue past Mina Bridge. The remaining six miles of the North Fork down to the confluence with the Main Eel is very steep and dangerous.



THE ENGLISH GATE

USING IT TO TRAIN YOURSELF USING IT FOR INSTRUCTION

Many beginning boaters view the English Gate as strictly an advanced learning tool; something to work up to with time. But in fact it is the optimum training exercise for all levels of paddlers, demanding every possible boathandling maneuver in the fewest possible passes. Bob Kauffman's article, reprinted from *AWJ XXI/1*, not only gives a full description of running the English Gate, but how Pennsylvania State University uses it in instructing and evaluating beginners.

GENERAL

The English Gate, called the wiggle test by the English kayakers who devised it, but known in this country as the English gate, is a sequence consisting of four symmetrical phases which also may be run individually. See Figure 1.

Although the four phases are run symmetrically, the turns within the phases may be run in any order or the phase may be entered from either side. For example, in phase one if the first turn made by a solo paddler is an inside pivot turn then the second turn must be an outside pivot turn. Had the paddler used the outside pivot turn as his first turn, then the second turn would have been an inside pivot turn. Although which turn is executed first is not critical for the beginner, it is for the expert paddler who is interested in minimizing his distance and hence time through the gate.

A score for the English Gate is normally determined from the elapsed time through the four phases with 10-second penalties assessed for each time the gate is touched. For a beginning student elapsed times

should periodically be kept but with no reference to touching the gate (buoys). The times help the student determine if he is paddling too fast or too slow for his level of technique.

When run by paddlers in closed canoes or kayaks, the English Gate is sometimes run with four Eskimo rolls. See McNair (1969) and Urban (1970) for the English Gate with rolls.

GATE CONSTRUCTION

The gate is generally constructed from poles suspended on an overhead wire. However, buoys used in place of the suspended poles proved satisfactory. For beginner paddlers, hitting a buoy is less conspicuous and embarrassing than hitting a pole, and the buoy interferes less with paddling. Also the buoy may be used on a lake where it would be nearly impossible to hang a gate. The canoe's movement through the gate results in minimal buoy movement if the buoys are kept taut. See Figure 2 for construction.

INSTRUCTIONAL USE

The gate may be used effectively with beginning paddlers after the basic skills have been learned. Then phases of the English Gate are introduced, coordinated with the development of the student's competency in the strokes. Two groups used the English Gate during our summer term. The first group consisted of students who had previous paddling experience. After receiving a review of strokes during the first session, they were introduced to the first two phases of the gate during their second session. The second group,

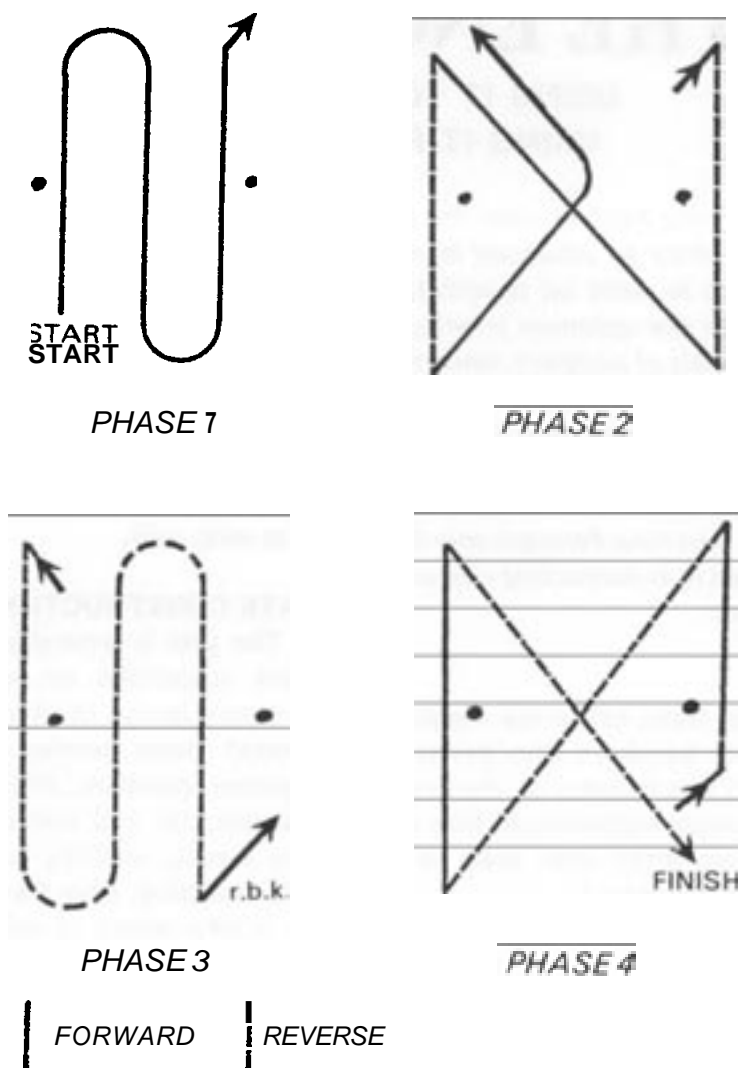


Fig. 1 – English Gate Sequence

The sequence is as follows:

Beginner:

Phase 1. Forward through the gate, a right turn, forward through again, a left turn, and forward again through the gate.

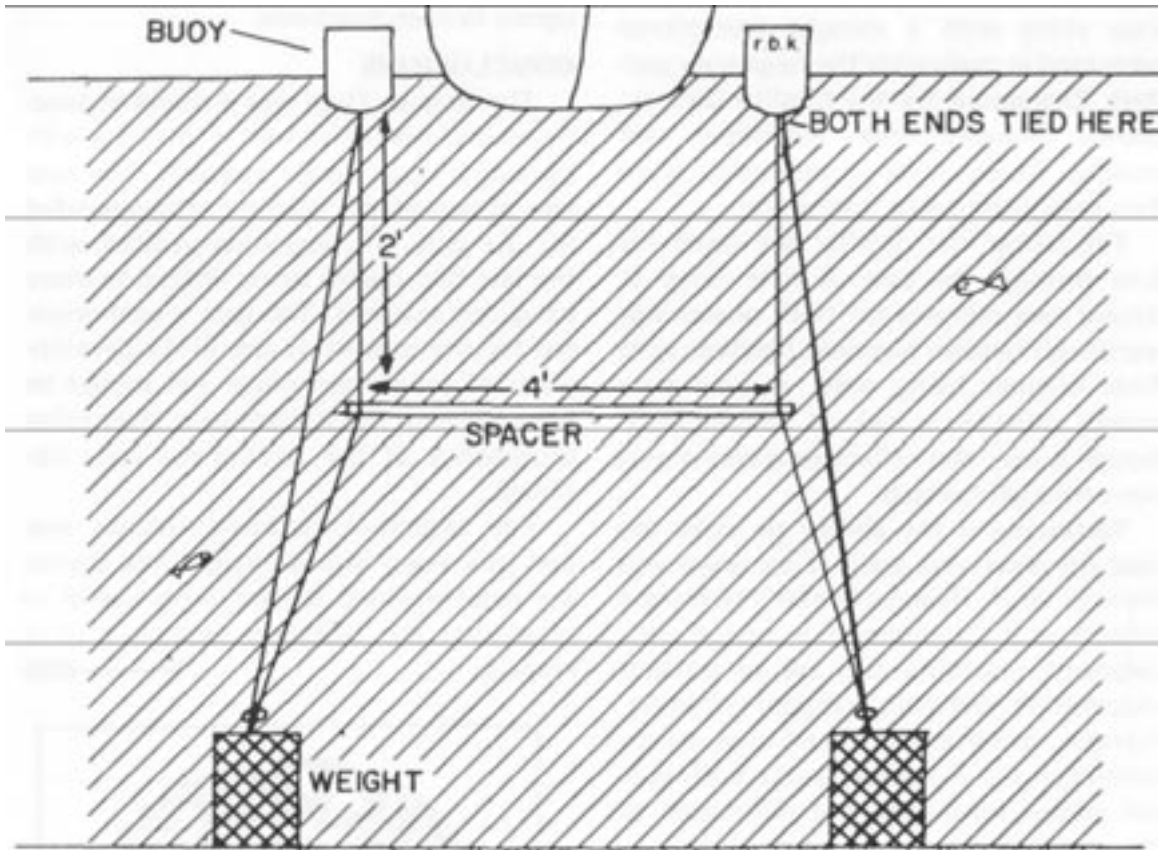
Phase 2. Reverse (backward) outside on the right, roll to left, forward through, reverse outside on the left, roll to right, and forward through the gate.

Intermediate/Advanced:

Phase 3. Reverse down the left side, reverse right turn, reverse through the gate, reverse left turn, reverse through gate.

Phase 4. Forward up the right side, roll to left, reverse through gate, forward up the left side, roll to right, reverse through gate.

ENGLISH GATE CONSTRUCTION



consisting primarily of non-paddlers, was introduced to the same phases during the fourth session after some competency was developed in the basic strokes.

Phases one and two were chosen for use since the degree of difficulty of these two phases corresponded more to the level of learning of the beginner compared to phases three and four. Also, phase three is symmetrical to phase one and phase four is symmetrical to phase two except that in phases three and four the boat reverses through the gate. More advanced students may be taught the entire sequence after which they can use the gate sequence for self-improvement.

The most difficult maneuvers for solo students were stopping and moving the

canoe in reverse. Most students initially found solo gate paddling extremely difficult and in some cases slightly frustrating, but most of these same students did remarkably well in running phases one and two considering their beginning skill level. Some of the problems may be avoided by widening the gate by six to eight inches. However, to widen the gate too far will hinder reversing the canoe during phase two.

An informal approach was used where the student could use the gate at his convenience. Two gates were set up: one for use with instructor's aid, the other for self-instruction. Two gates easily supported a class of 10-12 boats and somewhat fewer solo paddlers without congestion.

The students indicated that they thought the gate sequences were enjoyable and helpful to use.

USES IN EVALUATION

Phases one and two of the English Gate along with a straight line course were used in evaluating the beginning paddlers. Evaluation for the English Gate sequence included time, technique, and strokes. These three components were then combined into a final grade.

The better the paddler the faster his time through the gate. A time range of around two minutes for both phases was normal for tandem beginner paddlers with three minutes being slow. A slow time usually reflected a lack of technique although it may also reflect excessive movement through the gate.

Technique is the ability to make the boat do what you want it to when you want to do it. Hence a boater's technique reflects such components as smoothness, judgment regarding the use of strokes, cooperation between tandem paddlers, strength, conditioning, flexibility, stroke technique, etc. However, stroke technique was graded separately and referenced to the proper form used in each stroke.

Both technique and stroke technique received a letter grade with the final grade being the average of the two. The elapsed time was used as a check on the final since it reflected the paddler's technique. Both the bowman and sternman were graded and although positions in the canoe were not switched this could easily be incorporated within the test.

Since the English Gate sequence does not measure straight line paddling ability over a distance, a separate test was constructed to evaluate this. For tandem pad-

dlers the test consisted of paddling at least 100 yards in a straight line, changing positions within the boat and returning to the starting point. A grade was assigned to the sternman only although one may be assigned to both positions.

CONCLUSIONS

The English Gate was a useful instructional and evaluative tool in working with beginning open canoe paddlers. The first two phases of the gate are recommended for use with the beginning paddler, with the last two phases being limited to more advanced students. The gate is goal-oriented for the student; it aids in the development of proper technique and should be introduced to the student only after some proficiency of the strokes has been obtained.

For beginning paddlers, phases one and two along with a straight line course are recommended as two tools useful in measuring the paddling technique of a student.



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Surf Kayaking

Yankee Style

by Pete Skinner

Legend has it that when rivers drop, New Englanders dive into their houses, snuggle up to wood fires, and drink whiskey — never to re-emerge until the late March thaw. But in truth, not all Northeast paddlers are so entirely linked to their rivers for their whitewater. Pete Skinner shows that just off the coastline, the Atlantic offers challenging water of a different type, for as late in the season as your chilled body can stand it.

Fall was upon us. The riverbeds were dry. But the word went out: swells were surging onto the beaches of Narragansett, Rhode Island.

From Connecticut, John Barry blithered incoherently of giant waves rolling onto sandy beaches — boat-smashing surf — and tremendous salt water hair. Low water's enforced lethargy made current in any form sound believable, and good. So I resurrected craft, gear, and psyche and from the Big Apple's doldrums, we sped off toward the shore.

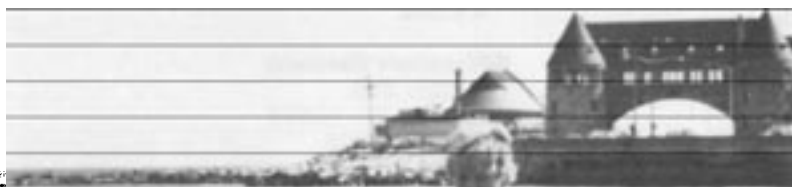
Narragansett Bay runs north to south just southeast of Cape Cod. The Beach, forming its western shore, juts squarely

out into the Atlantic and hangs below the Cape's protection. Thus, depending on wind direction and tide, waves can range from little ripples to real killers.

After a few wrong turns, we ended up at the beach at Narragansett, in a parking lot filled with cars with the familiar racks on top . . . seems like years since I've seen them.

Our jaws dropped as we scanned the shore. Gentle six-inch wavelets plopped peacefully on the sand in front of bikini-clad sunbathers and kids incessantly digging their holes in the beach. ***This*** is the surf we had driven all the way up from New York City for?

Well, a little bit of reconnoitering turned up some familiar craft with wet suit parts typically draped over the cockpit. The owner drew us aside and directed us, "Out there." and his arm thrust due west into the sun. Lo and behold, the surf did break . . . out on a submerged point some 800 feet from the shore. We watched. Every twenty or so waves, the flock of waiting boaters would spin toward the shore, churn forward for all they were worth, and try to catch what appeared to be a



John Barry and friend prepare to launch into Narragansett Bay. Patterned after a shark's nose, the upswept bow of his surf K-1 keeps it from digging into waves and sand. (all photos by Mindy Goodman)

Opposite Top: John Barry surfs in on the end of a ride.

Opposite Bottom: Russ Evert catches a low roller offshore. Long, close together and continuous, the waves and the rides were ideal.





5-8 foot smooth faced beauty, and sweep with it into the beach. And there, at ride's end, eskimo rolls and endo's abounded in a pile of froth.

"Looks like fun," I thought, and so, towering in the confidence of the ignorant, I clambered into my wetsuit (it was, after all, September in New England) heaved my board on my shoulder, and headed for the water. My first slam by the Autumn Atlantic's waves convinced me I was in for an invigorating experience. I paddled out and joined the group offshore. With the others, I squinted at the horizon, and waited for the action soon to come.

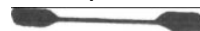
The sea lacks the predictability of the river. You can spin and start digging in for half a dozen waves, only to have them peter out before you can catch hold. Then when you least expect it, you feel a sudden surge and you are drawn skyward and pulled in toward shore. Suddenly, you find yourself windmilling with all your strength to stay on that hurtling wall of water. For those brief seconds, all force is with you, and you are the king. It's as if that huge curler you are playing on,

broke loose and started carrying you downstream.

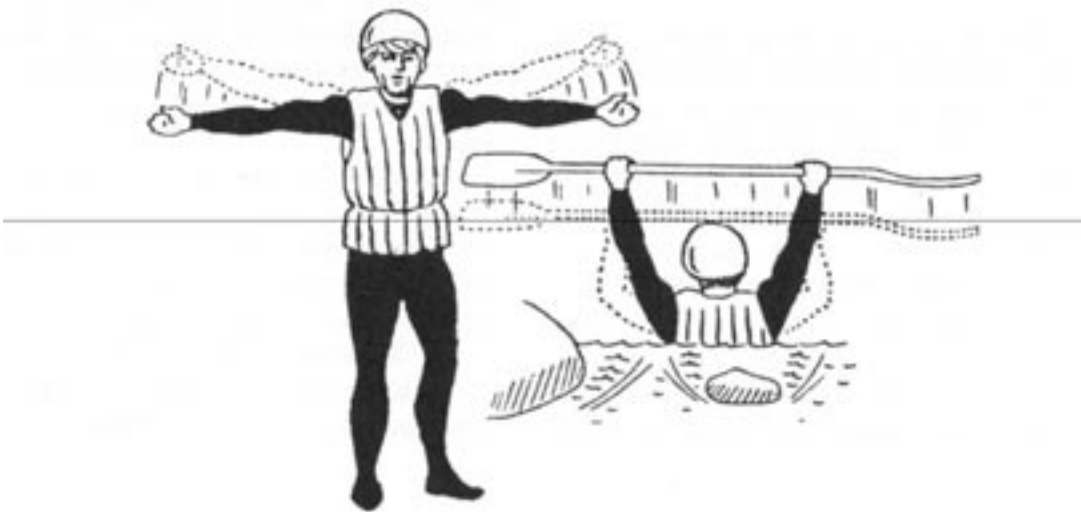
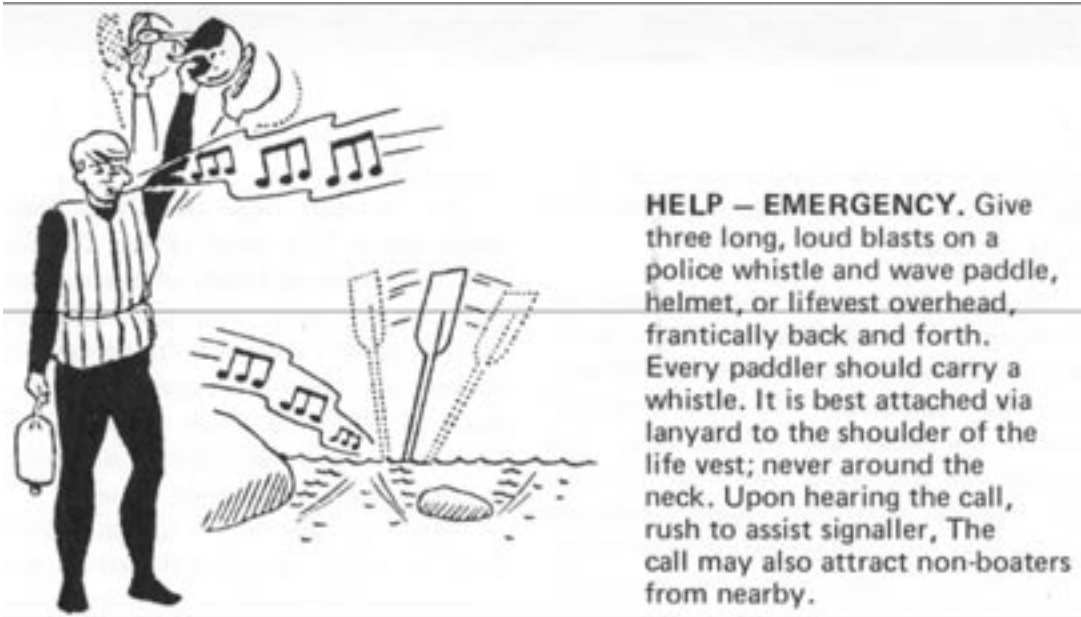
But as you near the shore, caution takes over. You must dodge the surfers and the bobbing heads of the swimmers. Also, about here, you start thinking of how in gawd's name you're going to land. Enders out here are violent tumbles in a mass of churning white turbulence. The best way to survive without a dislocation is to relax and get pushed around.

After an afternoon of sprinting like mad to catch waves and getting heaved around by the froth, we crawled exhausted onto the beach, where things were less athletic. Frisbees sailed over snapping dogs and children buried in sand piles. Lovely ladies enlivened the scenery everywhere. A far cry from March snow flurries over frozen portages around log jams and waterfalls.

Ah well, the moving finger writes, and we are now well into the pre-Spring coldrums. I guess we'll just have to forget the beach and grit our teeth for tougher stuff. Or just maybe it ought to be a trip to the Bahamas?? Wonder if the ole K-1 could be crammed onto the plane as excess baggage????



River Signals



STOP. Make a horizontal bar either by holding your paddle overhead, or thrusting both arms out, palms forward. Pump the paddle up and down or use a flying motion with arms.

Upon seeing the signal, pull into the nearest shoreside eddy and pass the signal back to boaters behind you. Some hazard lies ahead, **do not proceed downriver** until the **ALL CLEAR** signal has been passed back to you. **BE ALERT.** This signal must usually be given and received on the spur of the moment.

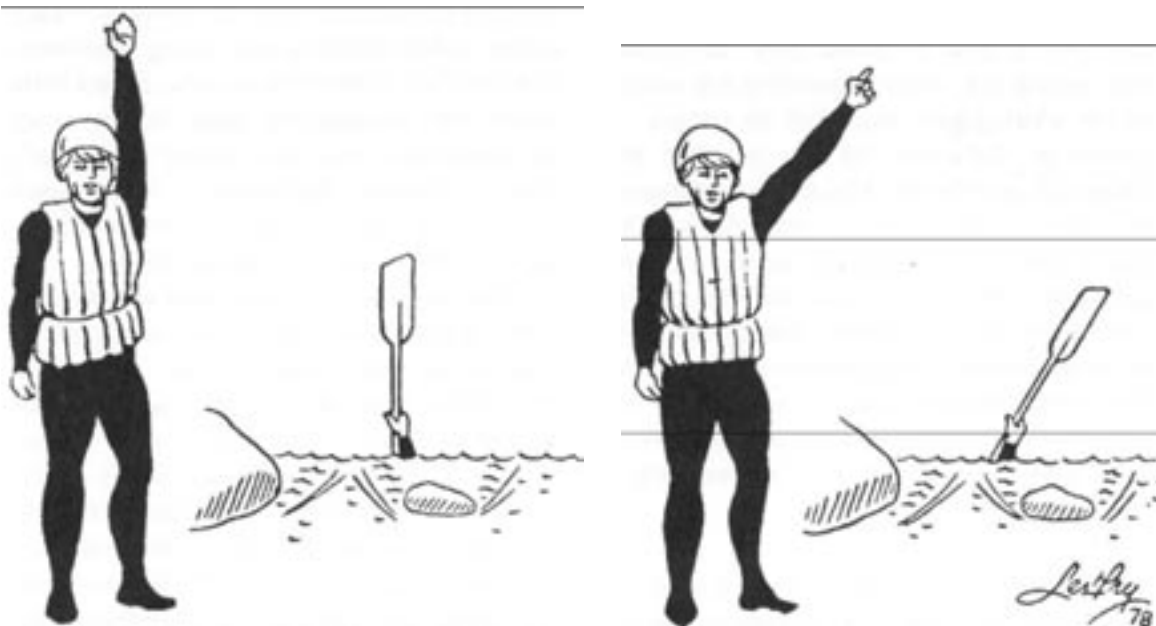
STANDARDIZED COMMUNICATION CAN BE JUST CONVENIENT OR SAVE A LIFE.

WH 1150AT B

Awhile back, in response to a request by AWA, past Executive Director Jim Sindelar gathered a committee to create a set of universal river signals. The committee of Jim, O.K. Goodwin, Bev Hartline, Tom McCloud, Charlie Walbridge, and the late Walt Blackadar, worked out the above five signals, shown here.

These signals were designed to be used strictly in real emergencies and perhaps to save a life. They are not to be used lightly, or to give a cruise in the air of a military march, cum police whistle. Remember, judgement is your best safety tool.

These signals, though not meant to be all inclusive, are excellent. But they offer no help if not publicized. AWA asks all affiliates to publish these signals in their newsletters; to include the teaching of them on your instruction weekends; to tell everyone on all trips about them. We appreciate it — it will add to your safety.



ALL CLEAR. Thrust just arm, or arm holding paddle, straight overhead. Hold vertical and steady. Turn flat of blade or palm toward the group you are signalling. Seeing this signal indicates the hazard is over, or has been scouted, and **running down the center** is the preferred route.

RUN LEFT. RUN RIGHT. After giving the ALL CLEAR signal, lower paddle or arm 45° toward the side of the river with the preferred route. Seeing this sign, aim where the signaler is pointing, not necessarily where he is.

ATTENTION. Give several short chirps on a police whistle when it is not an emergency, yet there is a definite need for the group to gather and communicate. i.e. when boaters behind you are lagging far behind, out of sight.

Hearing this signal, in the above mentioned case, the boater should stop, pass the signal onto the front paddler, and look back upstream for ALL CLEAR or further signals. The STOP signal may follow the attention signal in this case.



FLOATING THE



Jim Simmons is an Associate Professor of Physical Education and Recreation for Northwestern State University of Louisiana. He is one of those rare fortunates who earns his living imparting his white-water enthusiasm and skill to others. A native of Arkansas, he has paddled the Ouachita and Ozark Mountain waterways his life long and is an avid member of The Ozark Society. An equally devout conservationist, Jim is an active member of the Tennessee Scenic Rivers Association, American Rivers Conservation Council, the Wilderness Society, and is "constantly engaged in efforts to preserve our remaining wild rivers". Good man Jim, we need more like you.

Centuries ago, Indian tribes scouted this ferocious piece of Arkansas white-water and named it Cossatot or Skull Crusher. Today, the boater who sees this challenging river from craft or shoreline will immediately realize how aptly the red man judged this stream. Flowing just east of Highway 71 between Mena and Dequeen in Southwest Arkansas, the Cossatot is a rugged, formidable foe when it gets enough water. Unfortunately, that is not all that frequent, since it takes a heavier-than-average rainfall to make an adequate run.

Thus, without a dependable running season, the Cossatot lacks national recognition and appeal. But this in no way diminishes its excitement. The 15% popu-

larly-paddled miles of the Headwaters and Upper Cossatot offers the full range of boating difficulty. The six miles of Headwaters while floating you along shorelines of primitive, wilderness beauty, offers little more than occasional class II. But once he continues into the Upper Cossatot's Shut-Ins section, the boater is, in my opinion, facing some of the toughest white-water in the southern United States.

The scenery is as wild and spectacular as the water. The thickly forested Ouachita Mountains slope steeply down to the water's edge. Massive river-etched rock formations characterize the river's entire length. Years ago, the Department of the Interior recommended the Shut-Ins section for preservation, due to these unique natural sculptures. However, it was never approved, and then came the Gillham Dam proposal. Despite a bitter struggle by boaters, the dam went through and today it inundates a once-splendid section of the lower Cossatot.

THE FLOOD RUN

The trip was planned for Saturday morning, March 3, 1979. On Friday night, a three-inch torrential rain storm flooded the valley and raised the Cossatot to a level beyond any of us had ever seen. Our 13-man flotilla consisting of eight kayaks, two open boats, a C-2, and a C-1, gleefully accepted the challenge and headed for the put-in. We launched our boats under the

Highway 246 bridge and started floating the 9.4 miles to the Highway 4 bridge takeout, just two miles above the backwaters of Gillham Lake. We basked in the completely unexpected bright sun with a surprisingly high temperature of 69 degrees. It seemed to raise the spirits of each paddler. We would soon need it.

It was an experienced crew: several had many runs on the Cossatot to their credit. But only a few claimed to have ever negotiated it at such a high-high level. Our group consisted of Robert Booth, Mike Beard, Tom Orsini, Nolan Fulton, John Booth, Stewart Nolan, Jim Simmons (author), Don Young, Tommy Wingard, Scott Poole, Mike Moriarty, Paul Means, and to add a much needed feminine touch, Mary Orsini.

The first three miles provide a nice warmup for the difficulties downriver. Here the river drops a comfortable 29 feet a mile, through several Class II and one light Class III, until the Ed Banks Crossing at a low water concrete bridge. Then, just below, the action picks up abruptly with a fun Class II-III aptly named Zig-Zag – a very tight S turn with a small, powerful drop at the bottom.

Around the next bend, we all pulled out to scout and to set up ropes and cameras for The Canyon (also labeled The Esses), which on this day was an imposing sight. The rain had boosted it to a raging Class IV where the river sluiced through a 300 yard-long roller coaster, never wider than 40 feet, dotted with enormous holes and waves. Rescue here is difficult, but fortunately, only one boater took a swim. Below the Canyon, the river continues dropping at 40 feet per mile and courses through some Class II-III rapids that are refreshingly fun.

At the end of this section (5.5 miles from the put-in), the river turns east and broadens into a flat, quiet stretch for a short distance. You gaze up at the scenery and are lulled into thinking you've conquered the worst of it. But in fact, it is the calm before the storm. At the pool's end, a tremendous roar startlingly announces Cossatot Falls: a .3 mile long series of five-eight foot ledges and drops with a gradient of 80 feet per mile.

Normally it is a massive avalanche of talus and tilted strata carved into six distinct rapids. Each is named and ranges from Class III to the IV+ Washing Machine.

Ty Lee sweeps around the final **"S"**-turn in Washing Machine at medium level.



But with Friday night's three-inch storm the river had totally transformed: The six drops became one surging, long Class V. Rope rescue was impossible because you couldn't get close enough and the current was too powerful and swift for any hope of eddy-hopping. Once a boater committed himself at the top, it would be all or nothing, and he would be strictly on his own.

After much study, fear, and bravado, some elected to carry, some elected to run, and others chose to run the top section, carry the middle, and take cheater runs on the bottom two rapids. Although a couple of paddlers took long, dashing swims, all came through it unscathed and only two boats were damaged. The portage was at least as gut-wrenching as the run. I would judge it to be at least a Class V and demanding olympic level physical fitness to complete it.

Below the Falls, four other Class III-and-up rapids await. And the challenge

becomes a little more playful and a little less drastic. The climax of the float is Devil's Hollow Falls, a five-foot ledge, running diagonally across the channel, with a fierce backlash strong enough to hold boats and people.

Here, our C-2 was swept broadside and got stuck in the curler. The rest of us waited in the eddy above, craning our necks downstream. At last we saw them break from the curler's grip. There was the stern man, alone in the boat, back-paddling hell-bent-for downstream, and there was the bow man hanging on, and scrambling to get himself up on the deck and back into the cockpit. What a sight.

It was a treasured run and the conversation around the campfire that night filled in the many episodes of what happened to this paddler on that drop. The stories were many and expressed not only the beauty of the river at this unprecedented level, but our sheer joy at being able to paddle it that day. Several stated, and I had to agree, it was the best float ever on the Cossatot. But for all of us, it was one of those special runs that we will always use as a reference point for other trips.

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Personal Profile:

ROB LESSER

AWA TALKS WITH ONE OF OUR TOP HEAVY WATER CRUISERS & CONSERVATIONISTS

Few sections of this country have not had their toughest hair cruised by Rob Lesser. For the past 11 of his 34 years, Rob has launched his kayak everywhere from the Susitna's monstrous waves in Alaska with Walt Blackadar, to central Chile's Bio Bio. Idaho's North Fork of the Payette, West Virginia's Gualley, the Selway and the Grand Canyon have all felt his blade. Not only is he one of our most fervent whitewater addicts, he is one of the most skilled at his addiction.

One reason he stays hooked, is that boating offers Rob more than a precise technical sport or a gutsy challenge. It fulfills a lifelong, ongoing goal of experiencing the outdoors from every perspective. Born in Mountain Home, Idaho, just outside Boise, Rob has kept this area his home base for a series of vocations and avocations that have put him where he wants to be. His jobs have included being a park ranger in Yellowstone, managing a ski slope, researching in Alaska, and currently working as a successful free-lance photographer. He has a Masters in Environmental Physiology from the University of Montana and has partially fulfilled Biophysics PhD. requirements from Iowa State.

But Rob Lesser is a lot more than a bon vivant who has paddled a lot of heavy water. He is probably the most active

force in Idaho river conservation working today. This past year, amidst battling for the life of the Payette's North Fork (see AWJ XXIV 5-6) Rob spearheaded the founding of the Idaho Whitewater Association. This small, but energetic group of boaters and rafters, originally formed to battle just the one dam, has now broadened its scope and is fighting to save rivers all over the state, and to push through a state wild and scenic rivers bill through the Idaho state legislature.

When not fulfilling his duties as an AWA Director, off boating, or trying to glean a living from his photography, Rob can be found around the capitol trying to save the rivers he loves. Currently, he operates out of a small office in Boise, right within striking distance of the legislators. AWA contacted Rob here with the original intent of writing a short profile on him. But as we talked, we found his insights into the experience of paddling, his stories, and his views on river conservation so fascinating, that we decided to share them with you in this more in-depth interview.

"Heavy water paddling is very much an inner game. . . a mental edge . . . something you can establish in any boater."



**"You must learn to orchestrate the water
rather than try to conquer an obstacle course."**

AWA: Rob, as much as anyone, you're responsible for founding the Idaho White-water Association. Could you fill us in on **your** aims, and how you got started?

Lesser: Basically, we're a river advocacy group. Our ideals were originally stated by (the late) Walt Blackadar. But it was the dam proposal on the North Fork of the Payette that united us into an organization.

AWA: When was this?

Lesser: I first heard the rumblings about a dam project in March '79. So in August I met with Idaho Power's environmental people, one of whom luckily was an old lab student of mine, and we set up a meeting between the power company and the paddlers. It was in September . . . about 100 kayakers came and we saw some slides and listened. It was then we learned they were going to reduce (the flow) to 50 cfs and we became pretty vehement.

To fight them, we contacted the Public Utilities Commission and found they were having a November 27th hearing. To be able to speak, they said, we had "to intervene as an entity." So we organized an entity and called it the Idaho Whitewater Association. I was sort of proclaimed chairman. Now we're in the process of giving IWA more solidity and defining its goals.

AWA: That was a pretty overwhelming battle as you and Pete Skinner described in the last issue of The Journal (XXIV 5-6). But what are some of these broader goals IWA is defining?

Lesser: Our primary goal now is to prep candidates and legislators on current river situations. We have already brought attention to the problem of river preservation and forced whitewater as a power to be considered in the state energy schemes; and this we'll continue.

AWA: Do you see the Association expanding beyond conservation activities?

Lesser: Eventually, but social and educational aspects must come slowly. We are trying to organize a whitewater rodeo and a symposium for colleges. We're also planning a whitewater hotline for general river levels throughout the state. But these take time.

AWA: What has forming IWA done to your personal views of conservation?

Lesser: Believe me, I'm now a lot more sympathetic with the efforts of other organizations. We all coast along, calmly ignoring the (destruction of the) Tuolumne and Stanislaus. But until they threaten a river in our own backyard . . . we tend not to get involved. We don't even write a letter. People don't realize how effective each letter is . . . What we've done is something anyone could do.

AWA: Let's talk about your paddling for a bit, Rob. When did you first get involved?

Lesser: When I was in grad school in 1969, this friend of mine had just gotten a kayak and asked me to raft along with him while he tried it out on the Blackfoot River. I never intended to get in the thing, but in the end I did just before the biggest rapid. From that point on I loved the sport. I was an instant addict and 15 days later I bought my own boat.

AWA: Did you leap right into cruising hair from that point?

Lesser: Well, I started pretty constantly anyway. I paddled around Glacier National Park and various places in Montana. Then in the summer of '70, I went up to work in Alaska and paddled there. But what was hair then – both for me and the sport – has changed. Back in '70, when we first did the Lochsa, I considered it almost un-kayakable. Now they view it as a Class III-IV. The sport has really progressed.

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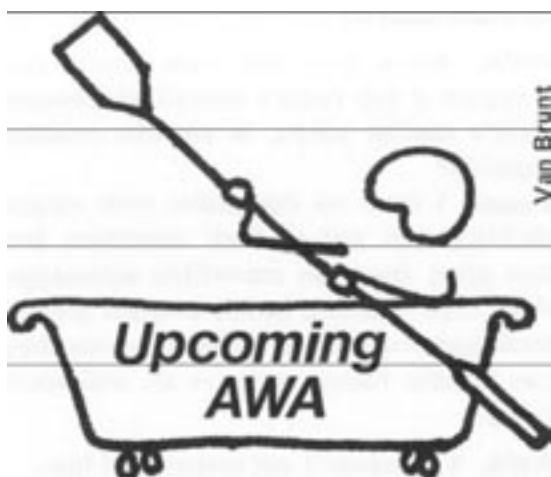
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canyon and found my boat swirling in an eddy in Staircase Rapids, totally destroyed. That's how I got to know the South Fork so well.

AWA: Well none can deny boating gives you your share of adrenalin. But what do you seek in this sport beyond the thrill?



Issue #2 of American Whitewater is floating your way with adrenalin-pumping articles, event lists, and equipment tips for every breed of paddler. Here's a sample of an issue you won't want to miss:

- **President on the Potomac**
When Washington D.C. was a barren flood plain, the author made this Class III-IV run on the Potomac. A well-written account by a boater famed for his mid-winter river crossings. *G.W. reports.*
- **Sausage Flotation**
Bill Atkinson of Boston has designed a new space-saving, sturdy flotation system for open boats, which he describes with easy installation hints.
- **Stories of —**
past runs on the Susitna — one of America's toughest rivers; future plan plans for a 500 km expedition through Swedish Lapland; findings of the International Hypothermia conference; and Much, Much More!
So send in your renewal notice now and don't miss the next issue!

Lesser: I see kayaking as an avenue to the wilderness. It takes you into a raw, pure, natural area that you'd otherwise never see. I can enjoy just a Class II if it's in a wild and scenic canyon. But of course, the heavier the whitewater, the greater the kick.

AWA: So boating seems to answer some very basic needs for you.

Lesser: Oh yes. There's something about the total involvement of river traveling. It's not just hopping into your boat and floating. There is a real challenge to whitewater and answering it brings a steeling within you. It's interesting. People are unpredictable to deal with. But Nature has cut and dried rules, and if you can work with these rules, it brings you something unique.

For me kayaking is such a mental thing. Someday I'd like to do a book on Inner Paddling.

AWA: Well, Rob, I can't think of any who could do it better. What are your plans for the future?

Lesser: Professionally, I'm going to continue with the photography. I've just gotten the upcoming cover of *Adventure-Travel* and some pictures inside. And of course much of my energies will be concentrated on IWA. We are really trying to push through a state wild and scenic rivers bill. State protection is never as thorough as federal, but it is a great way to fill in the gaps in federal systems. For example, the last 112 miles of the Middle fork of the Salmon from Tom's Bar was excluded from National Wild & Scenic.

As for my paddling, I'd like to get into more foreign, wilderness waters. I loved the Bio Bio and I really want to get over to New Zealand, and Nepal. That would be just ideal.

AWA: Well, Rob, it sounds like your goals are many and ambitious. We wish you luck with them all, and thank you for giving us your time.

FLUVIAL NEWS *(continued from page 9)*

Expedition Notes —South America AW&AE) expedition for 213 rafter's cost, or for 1/3 if you supply your own boat and gear.

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Titusville, PA 16354
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Columbus, OH 43201
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Kayak Program
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AWA AFFILIATES

Headwaters
c/o Doug Woodward
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Hong Kong Snakes K C
Tarriffville Branch
22 Bushing Hill Rd.
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Hoosier Canoe Club
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6200 Sunset Lane
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Keklonga Voyageurs
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Lifeline Editor
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LERC Voyageurs
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Ledyard Canoe Club
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Mattawamkeag, ME 04459
Meramec River Canoe Club
Earl C. Biffle
26 Lake Rd.
Fenton, MO 63026
Minnesota Canoe Assoc.
Editorial Staff
P.O. Box 14177 Univ. Station
Minneapolis, MN 55414

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Ronald D. Rains
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AWA AFFILIATES

South American Explorers Club
Robert Cook
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Lima 1 Peru

South Illinois Canoe & Kayak
Aldon Addington, Adv.
Box 263, RR #1
Carbondale, IL 62901

Southern California Canoe Assoc.
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