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american whitewater

January/February 1989

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XL-13 Length 13'3" Depth 15" Width 32½" Weight 55 lbs. approx.

Over the last three months, the XL-13 has been exhaustively tested by paddlers on the Ocoee, Nantahala, Upper Youghiogheny, Gauley, Wolf, the East Channel at Wausau and the Kennebec Rivers. The boaters who have paddled the XL-13 have praised its superb performance.

One boater on the Gauley caught eddies that kayakers couldn't make.

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The XL-13 is big enough for 200 pounders and not too big for a petite canoer.

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It is my opinion that the new XL-13 is the best solo whitewater open playboat to come along in years. There may be better canoes out there in the minds of paddlers but to date they haven't been built. Mohawk Canoes has made a giant step in introducing this craft to the marketplace and continues to challenge the competitors. Their attention to the advice of people on the water has created a great little canoe that will be hard to beat.

—Bruce Penrod

ABOUT THE PADDLER

Bruce Penrod has been paddling and racing whitewater in both tandem and solo open canoes for 10 years. His experiences include many of the most popular runs in the East from Maine's Dead and Kennebec to Georgia's Chattooga. He and his wife Janice had the first known tandem open boat run on the difficult Upper Yough. Only one and a half hours away from his home in Pennsylvania, the Upper Yough sharpens his skills often for his favorite type of river. He most enjoys the tight, technical runs of the Appalachian creeks including the only recently run Paint Creek dropping an average of 150 feet per mile and loaded with water falls. His is an American Canoe Association Instructor Trainer and the owner of Penrods' Canoe, which specializes in wood trimmed canoes and outfitting whitewater canoes. He has paddled many different boats since he began but most recently has paddled a Whitesell hull trimmed in wood. His new boat is the XL-13.

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editor's forum

Self-flagellation

This editorial will serve as a form of self-flagellation for past sins.

I confess, over the past two years I've tried to steer the content of **American Whitewater** toward higher-end boating. And despite the cogent observations of Charlie Walbridge, many of our articles have focussed on potentially dangerous descents without fully exposing the inherent risks.

Like many boaters with considerable experience on difficult water without incident, I've developed a certain ennui towards certain basic safety procedures. I don't use float bags, I wear a PFD with a low floatation value, I wear a home-made helmet. What the hell, I haven't had a real swim in three or four years--I can't remember.

That is, until last Sunday.

We were on the Lower Moose--normally a class IV river, an advanced intermediate run. Only on that day, the Moose was at near flood stage--11 feet on the gauge. To our knowledge, it had never been run at a higher level.

No big deal. The Moose's class 4 drops increased a degree and water was extremely pushy but we negotiated the rapids with little difficulty.

With the takeout bridge in sight, I had a simple series of ledges left on the run. Normally a class 3, I was already thinking of the beer as I slid over the edge and into a surprisingly sticky hydraulic.

My boat did not want to come out. When I finally did extricate myself, my spray skirt was blown, my float-bagless boat filled with water to the cockpit.

Under normal conditions, I would have had 300 yards of calm water before the river plummeted over the 40-foot slide that marks the beginning of the class 5 Bottom Moose section. But at 11 feet, a series of waves and express-train current extended from the takeout bridge to the horizon line of the waterfall.

After 100 yards of frantic paddling, my boat was no closer to shore. At 150 yards, I figured it was swim or die. At 250 yards, I finally grabbed a friendly tree limb and pulled myself over up on the bank. It was a close thing. While swimming, I wasn't sure I was going to make it.

Would float bags have made a difference? Maybe. Probably. But my brand-new Falcon was never recovered. Going through the Bottom Moose at 11 feet, I doubt there's a piece left bigger than two square inches. Of course, had I gone over the falls, I'd be in a similar condition.

I'll boat again this weekend. Hell, I hope the Moose is still at 11 feet. But I won't have that sense of ennui. Either on the river or in the pages of **American Whitewater**.



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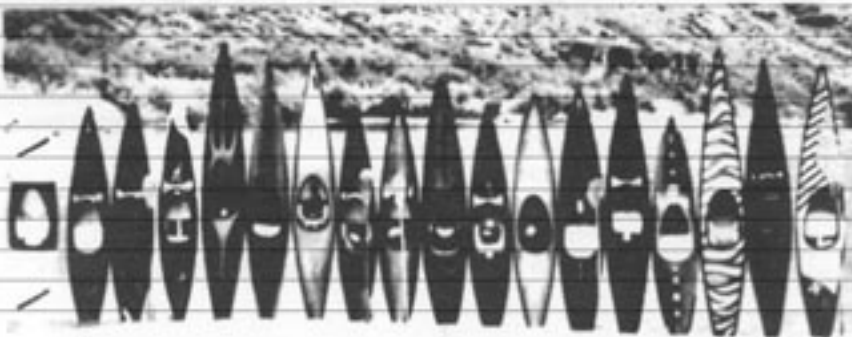
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letters to awa

A big mistake

Greetings:

Thank you for the sample of your magazine and the membership information that we requested.

We find your magazine very informative, and we are interested in a continuing subscription. Is this automatic once we join the organization and receive membership status?

We also support your goals and objectives. Enclosed is a membership contribution that should demonstrate our belief in your goals.

While reading over your membership brochure, however, we were very disappointed by your disparaging comments that seem directed toward the ACA. Our school is very actively involved with the ACA and also supports their admirable goals. Why is it that these two organizations don't support each other? Your brochure would be just as effective if you eliminated what the AWA is NOT. Derogatory comments leave a bad taste in the mouth.

We hope you will consider our sincere comments and suggestions.

Sincerely,
 Jean Bergstrom
 Program Coordinator
 Outdoor Centre of New England

Dear Jean,

In answer to your first question—yes, all AWA members receive a subscription to *American Whitewater*.

In reference to your observations regarding our membership brochure, you bring up what has proved an extremely embarrassing subject.

The offending passage attempts to point out that the AWA provides good value for a member's conservation dollars because our directors and staff are all volunteers—we don't

have the overhead of offices or salaries as do some conservation groups. "We don't have commodores," our brochure proclaimed, and that single line has resulted in a flood of deserved criticism.

The ACA, of course, uses the title of "commodore" the way the AWA has "directors." So that line looks like a direct slap at the ACA.

I know the author of the brochure had no such intention. I suspect he wasn't even thinking of the ACA when he used the term, but probably focused on that particular title because it has a rather old-fashioned, elitist sound to it. Now—don't get me wrong, ACA, I'm not inferring you're an old-fashioned, elitist organization. I know that the term "commodore" is a traditional title—one that has been retained from your old, storied past. What we did was go for the cheap shot—hoping people with no knowledge of the ACA's worth background would react against the image of a stuffy bureaucrat.

We were wrong. Apologies have already been issued to the ACA. The AWA works closely with the ACA in the area of safety—as a matter of fact, the ACA prints our safety code—and we have deep respect for the organization.

As I have said, we're all volunteers at the AWA. And while we've developed a certain capability in the areas of river conservation and safety, we're amateurs in the matter of public relations.

Atta' boy, Pete!

Dear Chris:

Please consider the letter below to Pete Skinner for use in *American Whitewater's* Letters column.

Dear Pete,

Thanks for your effort in sending back issues of the AWA journal to my new address. I'm sure address

letters

changes are just one of the many trivial and thankless tasks AWA must keep abreast of in addition to the more important concerns at hand.

The **March/April** issue of American Whitewater, listing AWA candidates and proposed constitutional amendments, was one of the issues that just arrived and need it be said I missed the opportunity to vote. Congratulations to you and the others on your success in the election (American Whitewater, **July/August** 1988, also just arrived).

However, unless I've overlooked something, the election result concerning the ratification of the constitution was omitted from the journal. Except for **Item #12**, the proposed constitutional changes appeared favorable. **Item #12** was ambiguous or, if intended as stated, too carte blanche for my taste.

Thanks to you and the rest of the AWA team, the association is very much alive and the journal has become a most informative publication on whitewater issues and the whitewater community. Spend the enclosed contribution to best advantage.

Sincerely,
Charles Peterson
Elizabeth, NJ

Dear Charles,

The constitution won. I forgot to include the results. So what's new?

Writers Guidelines

American Whitewater welcomes submissions from its readers. Proposed articles should relate in some way to whitewater...river conservation...expeditionary boating...safety...interviews with river personalities...paddling techniques. Our readers are most interested in new rivers, not previously described in well-known guidebooks. Most of our readers are intermediate to advanced boat-

ers, they do not need instruction on how to brace or roll, but they are interested in innovative designs and styles. We try to be receptive to any and all ideas.

The readers of American Whitewater are interested in whitewater...unlike some boating magazines we do not publish articles regarding flatwater canoeing or sea kayaking.

Submissions should be double spaced and neat. Correct spelling and grammar are appreciated.

Photos should be included when appropriate. Black and white prints or color slides are accepted. Photos with pronounced color contrasts reproduce best.

Stories must be edited as necessary to fit the format of American Whitewater. Remember that even the work of professional writers is usually heavily edited before publication. The editor of a major outdoor publication recently revealed that he rarely deals with amateur writers, not because their work is inferior, but because they are unwilling to accept appropriate editing. Expect to see some changes in your story.

Story length should rarely exceed 3000 words...twelve typed pages...double spaced. The best stories have a distinct focus or slant. This aspect of the story should make it unique and should catch the readers' interest. The focus should be introduced in a clear way at the beginning of the article.

It is often better not to use chronological order in telling the story of a river exploration. Our readers rarely care about what kind of vehicle was driven to the put-in or which interstates were traversed. Avoid extraneous details and cliches. Open the story with an exciting anecdote that will catch the readers' interest, then fill in the details later.

Humorous stories and articles with a different point of view receive special consideration.

The editors and writers of American Whitewater do not receive financial compensation. Every effort will be made to return submitted materials but we can not guarantee their safety.



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6th Annual National Paddling Film Festival

Hot whitewater films remains the best cure for midwinter blues

Start the 1989 paddling season off with a splash! The Sixth National Paddling Film Festival will be held on February 24 and 25 at the University of Kentucky Health Science Learning Center in Lexington. Sponsored by the Bluegrass Wildwater Association and Menasha Ridge Press, the Festival attracts paddling enthusiasts from around the country to share experiences in person and on film.

The Festival begins Friday night with a reception from 7 to 10. The competition and viewing begins Saturday morning at 10 and continues through 5 that afternoon. Spectators are sure to be entertained by the skills, exploits and adventures of fellow paddlers, the scenic beauty of the diverse waterways represented, the thrill of competitive paddling and the outrageous humorous entries.

The competition is open to amateurs with prizes awarded in the following categories: recreational/scenic, racing, humor, safety/instructional, club entry and best paddling slide. Those who make films professionally may enter the Professional Competitive Exhibition.

Slide presentations, 8 mm/super 8 mm film or video tape presentations are accepted. Presentations are judged on creativity, photographic quality, editing/pacing/content and use of sound/music/narration. All presentations must be less than 20 minutes in length. The deadline for entries is February 20, 1989.

The Festival Party begins at 8pm and is held at an indoor swimming pool. Winners are announced and awards are presented. Swimming, drinking and dancing follow and the BWA's own Women in Rubber will almost surely

make an appearance. Typically the Party rages until the wee hours of the morning, as whitewater enthusiasts celebrate the arrival of the upcoming paddling season.

Those desiring additional information or entry forms should write to the Bluegrass Wildwater Association, po box 4231, Lexington, Kentucky 40504.

Rob Turan is a park ranger at the New River Gorge National River. Naturally, he has considerable exposure to whitewater boaters and their liquid antics. But lest paddlers form the impression that all the recreational opportunities within the National River's boundaries lie on the water, Rob offers the following invitation to...

Surf some sandstone!

by Rob Turan

Somebody was doing something right when he designed this playpen. Cause he knew that eventually someone would realize just how fun it is to negotiate those rapids and to climb to the top of those cliffs. Of course, it would take a while before the world got tired of the hum-drum of day-to-day life and decided to get off its butt and play, and play, and play...

"I was cranking on 'Desperate But Not Serious' when I jumped on a radical 5.1 micro-edge into a lay-back move and was looking at a 20-foot screamer. I deduced then that the route was both desperate and way serious." River Rats, allow me to introduce you to Crag Rats.

Within 20 minutes after the

day-long immersion in the wet world of the New River and indulging in appropriate boating lingo with fellow argonauts of whitewater mayhem, you can be seduced into the contemplative and serene world of hard core rock climbing.

It is then that you too will perhaps allow yourself to partake in this other sub-dialect of the English tongue. Climbers, like their boating partners in craziness, seem to have an innate need to communicate with their peers speaking their own unique dialect. Perhaps they need to justify their suicidal (at least as the rest of the world perceives it) tendencies. Maybe they just don't want to sound like tourists.

But enough of the language

transition. Let us look at the vertical world of rock which even the most **hardcore** of boaters cannot refrain from peering at while drifting through the pools between Upper Keeney and Greyhound.

The rock of the New River Gorge is truly world class. It is a very compact sandstone resulting in a consistently hard textured finish. The cliffs range in size from 40 to 120 feet high and feature an abundance of superb finger and hand cracks.

These obvious lines were the first to be climbed. Recent development has concentrated on the faces between the cracks. These face climbs have proven to be as outstanding as the cracks themselves.

There are currently over 750 routes at New River. As the rock itself is very vertical there is not an ample supply of beginner (easy) routes. However, anyone who is in good physical condition (boater types) can quickly adapt to the rock at New River by employing top-rope technique and cranking (climbing) hard. All you really need are climbing shoes, a harness, a rope, some slings and a few carabineers for anchors.

Once you experience the other prescribed New River adrenal infix (we'll not get into B.A.S.E. jumping) of exposure on the cliffs while looking at your buddies waiting in line to run "Z", you'll probably want to sell that old boat that's been buried under the cobwebs in the yard (you've been meaning to fix it up) and spend a few bucks on lead gear.

And since some of you were probably already experienced rock jocks before turning onto boating, you can dig the sack of hexes (what's a friend) out of the back of the closet and try fitting them into those awesome cracks. You might even still have the old E.B.'s (shoes).

Probably the best place to get the initial feel of the rock is at the Bridge Buttress Area. As you come out of Teay's Landing on river right, it will be the large expanse of rock on the left just before crossing the bridge structure. Another clue will be all those people running around in multi-colored underwear. Simply look around until you find

something you like and walk around to the left to an obvious break in the cliff to get to the top to set up a top rope. Of course, then you are hooked and will want to explore other areas. Guidebooks can be purchased from Gauley Expeditions located near The Pancake House.

Since I'm more comfortable with soloing 5.9 than trying to roll in Middle Keeney, I could expound on the existential virtues of spending every spare moment exploring the infinite finger pockets of New River Gorge rock for umpteen more paragraphs. But instead I will simply say that few places in the world offer this kind of whitewater so close to this kind of rock climbing.

So the next time you're in the area, bring some gear and take off the river a little early. Try out the rock. You'll like it. It will take a little time to adjust to the language, but that's okay. Crag Rates and River Rats are really the same type of people. They just converse differently.

If you would like more information on rock climbing at New River, contact:

Rob Turan
New River Gorge National River
Box 1189
Oak Hill, WV 25901

Skinner adds to family

AWA director Pete Skinner, who frequently claims that balancing time between his full-time job with the New York attorney generals office and his varied river conservation projects requires 25 hours a day, must have discovered a way to save time as well as rivers.

Skinner's wife, Bonnie, gave birth to 5 pound, 15 ounce William Skinner on November 15. Mother and child are both fine.

"Make sure it gets in American Whitewater," Skinner said. "I don't have time to send out announcements."

Right, Pete.

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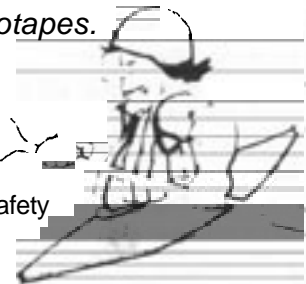
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Flexible training techniques contributes to US slalom success

By Kent Ford

Manager Nantahala Outdoor Center Instructional Program, 10-year member US Whitewater team, 2-time World champion, C-1 team event

The US whitewater slalom team has been very successful in recent years, winning best country award at several World Championships, winning gold and bronze medals at two Worlds in C-2, and completely dominating the C-1 class with three or four boats in the top seven since 1977.

Sometimes it seems that these results have come against tremendous odds--beating the well-financed and structured European teams. So it is surprising that most American paddlers wouldn't trade our system for any other in the world.

The trademark of the US system is its flexibility to allow individual paddlers to train independently. This format evolved not by purpose, but because there hasn't been the kind of government support that most European teams count on.

Ron Lugbill, US team member from 1975-81 and rookie team coach, explains how important the differences are:

"The fact that there hasn't been so much (financial) support has made it a little tougher for American paddlers," Lugbill said. "On the other hand, in the European federations, whoever has the money controls the recipients...the American paddlers are a lot freer, they can arrange their equipment, travel, and training to suit their individual needs instead of trying to fit into a group situation."

This flexibility has given the Americans the opportunity to take advantage of the frequent rules changes and improved equipment of the seventies while the larger organizations of the Europeans are unable to adapt as quickly.

"There is a good healthy vari-

ety in our training methods, boat designs and techniques that create more possibility for improvement" Lugbill said. "Paddlers are eager to try something different--and use it if it proves faster by the stopwatch."

Nowhere has this worked as well as with the US C-1 class. The undisputed leaders of this charge are Jon Lugbill and David Hearn who have placed 1-2 since 1979 and have won the team event every year. The heritage of open canoeing, and earlier US designed boats like the Slipper and Seagull helped inspire Hearn, Lugbill and Robison conceive the Max series of boats, now in its seventh version.

This flexibility has given the Americans the opportunity to take advantage of the frequent rules changes and improved equipment of the seventies while the larger organizations of the Europeans are unable to adapt as quickly.

"For the last seven years, just about all the C-1s in the world have used our boats," Hearn said. "Max C-1s are sold under license in 14 countries, and also in 3 or 4 Eastern Block countries. When we show up at a race there is a certain security in knowing that the boat we are paddling is the boat everyone else is looking at to be paddling the next year. We have switched that around from ten years ago."

The Europeans have learned to watch the Americans for other new innovations in the sport. An example of American innovation is the close cockpit C-2 now used by all higher levels of the sport.

"We don't just take for granted that the foreign design is better, even in kayak," said Jon Lugbill. "This holds

true for technique as well--for upstream gates and pivoting (squirting, as it is known by river runners now). The Americans aren't necessarily better than the Europeans now, but they definitely got those skills from us."

The US selection system is unique from many other countries and seems to have played a significant role in the development of a strong US team. The main difference is US reluctance to trim down its team size to a select few thereby allowing its weaker or younger paddlers the opportunity to gain experience of competition.

Perhaps Jon and Ron Lugbill have proven the worth of that approach, having gained valuable experience while placing third from last in 1975 before their later successes.

And unlike most other teams in the world, the US sticks to a definite American manner of final team selection based on a one-weekend, winner-takes-all trials format to pick the four best in each event. There is no percentage cut-off, no biases by coaches to clutter the athlete's goals--the best athletes on that particular day of the trials get to represent their country.

It is not a system supported by other countries. Jean Senelier, French C-1 team member and 1981 bronze medalist, points out the risk of choosing a team based on a single day's performance.

"I think that the best system for selection is by the coaches, without competition," Senelier said. "They see the athletes all year and are in good position to judge the capacity of each athlete. They are more likely to pick the best paddler for the Worlds."

Still, the US selection process has produced many youthful team members to be molded by coach Bill Endicott. The winner-take-all philosophy encourages young up-and-coming paddlers to challenge the veterans on the river knowing its their performance



World champion Jon Lugbill is testimony to the success of the U.S. team's flexible training program.

rather than their reputation that determines the outcome.

The young paddlers are in good hands under Endicott. His four books and his attitude of sharing all he can find out about the sport's winners has made him whitewater's leading authority.

"Bill helps me by helping me get each year's plan down on paper to achieve my goals," Hearn said. "His biggest asset is the time he has invested in the sport—he has the background of knowledge necessary to give quality feedback. When Bili started coaching, he took East Germany's Wulf Reineke's advice to base training on time in the boat. This led to the first big jump by the American's paddling all yearlong. Now we find Europeans training with us in Costa Rica."

The 1987 training camp in Costa Rica provided US coach Ron Lugbill with an interesting dilemma: how to balance the different training plans of the 15 Americans, five Italians and two Frenchmen.

"It is a little difficult to keep things organized and controlling the traffic on the river, Lugbill said, "but that is part of the challenge, putting together a schedule that accommodates everyone. Everyone wants to do at least some of their workouts with the group

since for so many that was part of the motivation in coming here. I sometimes do envy the European coaches, being able to just tell the paddlers what to do."

Many of the other countries have a national training plan that every prospective team paddler is supposed to follow. Paddlers aren't allowed the flexibility to design their own program.

"While these plans are well researched, they are not tailored to individuals," Lugbill said. "They are based on research in other sports—primarily running and swimming—which involve different training principals."

Currently, the most elaborate structure for coaching canoe sport is in France. The Federation Francaise de Canoe Kayak (FFCK) reaches down to every paddler in every little town all over France. The federation unites all the water enthusiasts including all the newly formed rafting organizations. Many French team members are paid for training, reimbursed for expenses while they are racing, and upon retirement graduate to jobs in the federation, usually coaching or organizing at some level of the sport.

They also have support for

please turn to page 46

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AWA to New York's DEC:

Stop breaking the law!

More damage on the embattled Bottom Moose

Paddlers noticed something had changed to the rapids on the Bottom Moose River below Lower Lyonsdale Falls during the first Fall water release. In early October, others confirmed it: Lyonsdale Associates, owner of the 2.1 megawatt hydro project at the Burrows Paper Company facility, had eliminated 800 feet of Class II rapids to lower the river 4 feet and thereby make more power revenue (around \$60,000 per year). In doing so, the Company blew away over 62,100 cubic feet of rock and created a straight channel where once sculpted boulders directed the water into pleasant hydraulics and play waves.

Did Lyonsdale have all their permits? YES!

Were the **permits** issued legally? **NO!**

For well over one year, NY Audubon, AWA, and other environmental groups have been complained that the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation has been violating their own laws in issuing permits for

"This lawsuit represents a major shift in tactics for these groups long used to seeking policy changes through less adversarial channels. There comes a time, however, when a pattern of legalized river damage becomes intolerable. No river segment will be safe if "conservation" agencies continue to break the law."

hydro projects without requiring the developers prepare environmental impact statements (EISs). AWA met with Commissioner Jorling in the Spring of 1988 to seek redress and he said the State EIS law would be enforced. Jorling apparently hasn't kept his promise.

If this huge channelization project had been treated like a dock permit for Lake George (evaluated for environmental significance and noticed in the DEC Environmental Notice Bulletin), AWA and concerned river lovers across the state would have raised a ruckus and an EIS might have been required. If DEC had issued a permit afterward, AWA would have fought long and hard to stop the project. Sadly, AWA found out too late--and the Moose got **mauled--again!**

This insult to New York's river resources was

one too many. On November 21, AWA, American Rivers, American Canoe Association, the Kayak and Canoe Club of New York and NY Audubon Society filed suit against the Department to annul the permit. Similar litigation on the federal level is under consideration as well. AWA wants DEC and other federal agencies to start obeying the law and fix the mess on the Moose.

This lawsuit represents a major shift in tactics for these groups long used to seeking policy changes through less adversarial channels. There comes a time, however, when a pattern of legalized river damage becomes intolerable. No river segment will be safe if "conservation" agencies continue to break the law.

Prosecuting a lawsuit like this will demand skilled professionals. DEC will be represented by ex-

perienced environmental legal team in the Attorney General's office. AWA's cause on the Bottom Moose was blessed by the offer of the firm of Whiteman, Osterman and Hanna to take on the case "pro bono." In particular, a well known environmental lawyer in the firm, Phil Gitlen, agreed to carry on the fight for the plaintiffs. AWA's trusty lawyer, Chuck McGraw in Washington is evaluating our options for federal forums.

The case is particularly important. Not only has the Moose been mauled by issuance of this permit, but also other river segments may have been damaged in a similar manner. Preliminary research by Ron Dodson of NY Audubon has revealed that issuance of "modifications" to existing stream disturbance permits in New York without notification of the public has been frequent. Hopefully, by next summer, the DEC will be forced to require Lyonsdale Associates to restore the rapids to their former character.

Bottom Moose release program improved for 1989

The first season of paddling the Bottom Moose under the recreational plan negotiated between Long Lake Energy and the AWA has drawn to a close with record numbers of boaters taking advantage of release days to descend the class 5 New York river.

Many paddlers responded to a questionnaire mailed out in early summer. We were seeking some feedback on what worked and what didn't work in terms of our efforts to make paddling the Bottom Moose as enjoyable as possible. Well, we do read questionnaires when they come back and we'd like to thank all the folks who took the time to give their comments.

A prime concern this year was the confusion over how to order an "optional release". The AWA would like to thank Nanette Burke and the rest of the staff at Adirondack River Outfitters for performing yeoman's duty in fielding calls for information and in coordinating optional days. This year it will be easier. No longer will you have to guess on Wednesday what water levels will be on Saturday as individual paddlers will be able to schedule optional weekend releases directly from Long Lake's offices in Port Leyden, NY (315-348-6873) up until 5 pm Friday.

Remember, we only have the 10 scheduled releases and the 10 optional days so let's use these scarce resources fairly. When requesting a release, try to ensure that others in the paddling community know about it so we have good utilization of the release. Take the time to notify ARO on the nearby Black River of your plans so that local paddlers can join you on the river.

Another area of concern was the "check-in, check-out" procedure insisted on by Long Lake as a method of (1) enforcing safety concerns and (2) reducing their exposure to liability. The general consensus was that the procedure was a pain in the butt.

Ironically, Long Lake's failure to keep boaters out of project area stretch of river on days other than the 20 negotiated dates may doom this inconvenience.

When the Moose runs over five feet, enough water spills over Long Lake's dam to make the dewatered stretch runnable. However, it was Long Lake's contention that paddlers could not take advantage of high natural flow unless it was a scheduled release date and sought a clarification of their license to that end.

The AWA filed op-



AWA director Bob Glanville on the Bottom Moose.

posing papers with FERC and FERC determined that Long Lake could not abridge our right of access. The effect of the ruling was to leave Long Lake in the position of requiring a check-in on their release days when no water is siphoned off, but not during those periods when they were altering conditions of the riverbed by generating power.

Long Lake was sensitive to this anomaly, particularly since it was costing them money to administer the check-in process. That factor, together with the successful safety record of the past season, will result in Long

Lake joining with the AWA in recommending to FERC that the check-in be abolished.

Other significant developments include: later times for releases (now they'll go from 12 pm to 7 pm instead of 10 am to 5 pm); availability of Fridays and Mondays as optional days on holiday weekends; agreements that Long Lake will step up its debris removal efforts, undertake significant replanting, to work with us to modify the weir at Ager's Falls to avoid some of its present recirculation and to enhance the area below Crystal by mitigating the intrusion of construction and

Moose releases...

by providing a path out of the river at that point.

Like most new programs we've had a few operational kinks but we are confident that many of them can be worked out. There will be a new brochure with the 1989 release schedules printing in the next month or so. Paddling shops, outfitters and clubs please notify us so we can get them to you. What we need to keep it working is plenty of input so keep the cards and letters coming:

Adrienne and Eric Ryan
AWA Regional Conservation Representatives
325 West 82 #1
New York, NY 10024

After last-minute veto threat...

Regan signs WV Rivers Bill

It was the tail end of a miserable 10-day anxiety attack. After a prolonged 2-year struggle, both the House and Senate had passed the West Virginia Rivers Bill on October 16, sending the bill to the president for signing.

Scouting downstream, all of us working on the bill thought the last drop (Presidential approval) would be a straight shot. After all, there was no longer any opposition. Or so we thought.

But the bill lay unsigned on the President's desk for 9 1/2 long days. If Regan failed to sign the bill by the end of the day on

October 26, the legislation would be vetoed. Incredible!

The rumor soon became official. The Department of Interior had sent a letter to Regan. Its message was--veto the bill.

Somebody was playing politics with West Virginia rivers. But who was it and what was the angle? We may never know. Every West Virginia politician, save one, supported the bill. Only the governor, Arch Moore, had not jumped on the bandwagon. Was Arch quietly trying to kill it? No one knew. Even groups which had earlier opposed the bill, like the

National Rifle Association, the State Dept. of Natural Resources and the timber companies were calling the White House to support it. Key supporters of George Bush in West Virginia were helping.

But the President still had not signed the bill--and time was running out.

Finally, late in the day, the nightmare ended. At 4:30 PM, my phone rang. It was Congressman Nick Rahall's staff. A familiar voice said, "He did it!"

The Gauley and the Lower Meadow are now part of a National Recreation Area, under National

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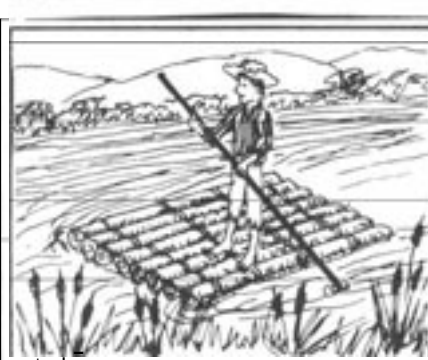
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Gauley Flow Fiasco

Park Service management; and the Bluestone is West Virginia's first wild and scenic river. Land along the banks will be acquired for public use. All three rivers are permanently off-limits to development.

This took three years of hard work. The idea was hatched by Congressman Nick Rahall and his energetic staff assistant, Jim Zoia. Both are big fans of West Virginia whitewater. After two bruising battles with the Corps of Engineers over a proposed hydro project on the Gauley, they decided to put the river off-limits to development for ever, and to add in the Lower Meadow and Bluestone for good measure.

Rahall and Zoia got local political honchos and businessmen to back

the idea, including most of the outfitters. Dave Brown of the Eastern Professional River Outfitters was a key early advocate. Private boaters eagerly jumped on board. Then so did local environmental groups.

The bill got a fast start. When it looked like a sure winner, a local environmental group persuaded another Congressman to add in the Greenbrier River. But no political groundwork had been laid for the Greenbrier. It provided to be a disaster.. With the addition of the Greenbrier, the bill did pass the House of Representatives, but its momentum slowed, then stopped.

Almost two years passed before agreement was reached to drop the Greenbrier and the bill began to move again. Finally,

it passed the Senate in September.

Unfortunately, during the long stall in the Senate, the bill attracted another problem. Trapping interests noticed that the bill outlawed trapping in the rivers it covered. They pulled some strings in the Senate to change that. But certain key leaders in the House of Representatives opposed trapping in wild and scenic rivers. So when the bill came back to the House with the trapping amendment, it stalled again.

Finally, Congressman Rahall cooked up some new legislative language which made everyone happy. The bill passed the House and Senate for the second time and went to the White House. The rest is history.

The Army Corps of Engineers, Huntington District, failed to manage water supplies in the Kanawha River drainage in a manner which would have allowed a decent fall Gauley white water season. As it was, there was only one weekend of water over 2000 CFS. The first weekend's releases were cancelled entirely, and all the rest were between 1100 and 1500 CFS.

Granted, 1988 has been an extraordinarily dry year. Although white water recreation is an official authorized purpose of the Summersville Dam on the Gauley, low flow augmentation (pollution dilution) of the Kanawha River in Charleston is a superior purpose of water management in the basin. If the Kanawha falls below about 1920 CFS, then the EPA apparently requires industries in Charleston to start curtailing operations. please *turn to next page*

Little River Canyon a national park?

Alabama's DeSoto State Park, home of the expert whitewater of the Little River Canyon, could become part of the national park system if the federal government follows the recommendation of Jim Martin, director of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Martin said Little River Canyon, which is part of DeSoto, was "something unique and special." In a recent meeting with a national park planner, he suggested linking the canyon with portions of Weiss Lake in Cherokee County and with the abandoned Tennessee-

Alabama-Georgia Railroad line, which runs from Gadsden to the Georgia line.

"I've always had a strong feeling that with the beautiful old railroad bed, you could put a grader over it, pack it, resurface it and plank those bridges and you would have one of the most outstanding trails for hiking, biking and horses," Martin said.

It is not clear if this proposal will be in the best interest of the paddling community, but it could improve the chances of the canyon being preserved in its natural state.

Much of the canyon is either owned or

leased by the state of Alabama and much of the more scenic part is inside DeSoto State Park. However, in the past, the State has not provided enough funds for proper enforcement. Federal protection might at least provide better enforcement.

Niagara Gorge Update

After careful thought, the Directors of AWA authorized fellow director, Bob Glanville, to file an appeal to the New York's highest court of our case against the State for blocking access to paddling on the Niagara Gorge.

The ruling in the courts below never fully addressed the important issues raised by AWA. Until a final decision is reached, we believe lawmakers will be reluctant to order the State Parks Department to grant paddlers access.

conservation

There are three major water storage facilities in the Kanawha basin: Summersville Dam on the Gauley, Bluestone Dam on the New and Sutton Dam on the Elk. There is also a series of locks and dams above Charleston, which have been demonstrated to have some capacity to temporarily store and then release water. The big question: could the Corps have managed this complex system so as to allow several weekends of 2000-plus releases on the Gauley?

According to the AWA's Steve Taylor, the answer is almost certainly "YES". Steve is in the process of examining the flow management over the summer, and his biggest obstacle has been getting

the basic data from the Corps. Steve is well known by the Huntington Corps, ever since he led the fight to kill their plans for a "long tunnel" hydro project which would have dewatered the first third of the Gauley below the dam.

One example of the Corps mismanagement is already clear. Claytor Lake on the New is used for hydro, and the outflows from the Lake can be "captured" at Bluestone Lake and then slowly released to help assure minimum flows at Charleston. This procedure requires Bluestone to be gradually lowered below maximum pool so it has the capacity to hold the Claytor Lake outflow. If Bluestone is not lowered, the Claytor water passes through Bluestone

Dam and is not captured. For purposes of low flow augmentation, most of this water is "wasted."

If this water had been captured, it would have reduced the need to release water from Summersville Dam over the summer. Well--you guessed it--over this sum-

mer the Corps maintained Bluestone at maximum level the whole time. This needlessly created a requirement to use about four weekends worth of Gauley releases during midsummer, so that when September came, all this water was already gone.

AWA promotes whitewater registry

At the present time there is no national list of whitewater rivers. In fact, for most states, there is no comprehensive database identifying rivers in the state. Federal and State agencies analyzing the

availability and quality of outdoor recreation opportunities have little or no data to work with so far as whitewater recreation is concerned. The absence of this data leaves a significant gap in government

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planning and in other activities carried out by the National Park Service, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the National Park Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the President's Commission on the Americans Outdoors and in the work of other Federal and State agencies. Whitewater rivers fall through this gap.

Lack of whitewater data hampers protection efforts

River conservationists are troubled by the fact that Federal agencies with authority to build, or approve the building of, dams and other water projects are totally unaware of the location, scarcity and demand for whitewater recreation opportunities. Also, State agencies issuing permits for water projects usually do not have this data.

When development is proposed for a popular whitewater river, Federal and State agencies, electric utilities and private developers are all unaware (or claim to be unaware) that the section involved is a scarce and important public resource. This lack of data has severely hampered the efforts of local canoe clubs and national groups to protect whitewater river segments.

Even whitewater rivers of a very rare type (those with Class IV whitewater in the summer) such as the Black River in New York, the Housatonic River in Connecticut and the Savage River in Maryland, have not been recognized by State and Federal agencies as

important outdoor recreation sites until long after damaging developments were proposed.

The database stage: A computerized inventory of significant whitewater rivers

The first step needed to deal with the data and recognition problem is to prepare a nationwide inventory of whitewater rivers. The AWA, with the help of local experts and volunteers from throughout the country, has prepared such an inventory. It is based on guidebooks and expert judgement from those who know the rivers first hand.

The inventory has been entered into a computer data base which can be used for a variety of purposes. It will be used by AWA to quickly identify whitewater rivers threatened by hydropower developments or other potential damage. It may also be possible to persuade the Park Service to use the list in its State river conservation efforts and to **update** its Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI) to include and identify all significant whitewater river segments.

The EPA could tie the data into its system for monitoring trends in water quality and land use along rivers. Other agencies (such as the Forest Service, FERC, etc.) could also use the database in various ways.

The recognition stage:

An official register AWA would also like to use the inventory as the basis for an official register listing significant whitewater rivers. We

propose that a Whitewater Rivers Register—similar to the National Register of Historic Places—be established and maintained by the National Park Service. The Register should contain a list of all **whitewater** river segments which provide significant recreational opportunities.

A register of this kind would be a useful planning tool for Federal and State agencies in the management of public lands and for those agencies (FERC, the Corps of Engineers, the Soil Conservation Service, EPA, etc.) planning developments which affect waterways.

In the Outdoor Recreation Act of 1963, the Park Service was required to "prepare and maintain a continuing inventory and evaluation of outdoor recreation needs and resources of the United States". This job has never been completed. An official National Register for one important type of outdoor recreation resource--whitewater rivers--would certainly be a big step in the right direction.

Eligibility for **Inclusion** on the Register

Under the AWA proposal, to qualify for inclusion on the National Register a river would have to have rapids classified as **III, IV, V or VI** (using the AWA rating scale) and be used for whitewater recreation. The river would not have to be shown to unpolluted, unique, nationally important, unusually scenic or even entirely free-flowing. However, there should be a significant local level of

interest, including local government interest, in including the river on the Register.

Adding rivers to the **official** Register

Rivers would be included on the National Register by nomination. Local governments and private organizations, with the consent of the State Rivers Program Manager, could nominate rivers for the inclusion on the Register.

If the Park Service determines that a nominated river meets National Register criteria and that local and State **governments** will take reasonable action to preserve its recreational and scenic characteristics, the river will be added by publication of a notice in the Federal Register. Unlike the wild and scenic rivers system, an Act of Congress (with the inevitable delays and lobbying efforts) would not be necessary.

It used to be necessary to pass a Federal law to place a dam on a free-flowing river. Then Congress passed the Federal Power Act to have an agency make these decisions in a less political manner.

This was wise **at the** time, just as it would now be wise to permit the Park Service, after local and State government requests, to make a decision that an important river resource should be preserved and protected (at least to some extent). it should not be necessary to pass a Federal law in each case. Inclusion on a National Register would be almost like a "license" to

please turn to page 44

Strong slate of candidates to provide AWA leadership

Anita Adams Princeton, WV

I am an ardent kayaker. Being on a river with friends, challenging myself and communing with nature's elements...that's Utopia. It's difficult to describe the incredible affect whitewater boating gives, but it can't be replaced. Therefore, I am determined to do all I can to keep our freedom to paddle and to protect America's rivers.

My first whitewater river trip was in 1980 when I rafted the Rogue River in Oregon. I started paddling in 1984 concentrating mainly in slalom racing. While racing, I enjoyed the opportunity to kayak, C1, C2 and open boat.

Now, I adventure in recreational kayaking and squirting. But I think it's important we river enthusiasts, regardless of craft, develop a cohesive, educated group.

My husband, "The Dale Adams" and I kayak every chance we get. I've had the pleasure of boating in the midwest, southeast, east, west, Canada, Costa Rica and France. Off the river, I work full-time as a physical therapist. I am studying to become a registered E.M.T. and I am CPR certified.

The AWA is improving and growing every year. But

Leading us into the next decade

As an organization of volunteers, the AWA is only as strong as the individuals who step forward to donate their time and talents toward realizing our goals of safety, river conservation and the promotion of whitewater sport. Fortunately, the AWA has been blessed with a history of able leaders, and this year's candidates for AWA Board of Directors are no exceptions.

Drawn from both the eastern and western boating communities, this year's candidates demonstrate the AWA's growth as a national whitewater organization. All are accomplished paddlers with an awareness of our sport's concerns developed by countless days on the river.

Study the resumes of all the candidates and take the time to complete and return the ballot enclosed in this issue. Vote for four of the six and mail the ballot by January 31, 1989.

the AWA **needs** to become more visible. The AWA is an important organization with a serious mission and it needs everybody's involvement. As a member of AWA Board of Directors, I would be dedicated to promoting AWA membership and working on river conservation and recreation issues. If we all want to continue getting our gradient fixes, support of the AWA is critical. I would be honored to help the future of whitewater action by participating on the AWA Board.

Dan Givens Boise, ID

I began kayaking eight years ago. Since that fine summer, my love for the sport that offers the beauty of wilderness coupled with adrenaline filled excitement has grown with every passing season.

Although I have paddled class five water all over the Pacific Northwest, much of my paddling time is spent on one of North America's most challenging and continuous class five runs, the North Fork of the Payette. Unfortunately, this powerful river (45 minutes from downtown Boise, ID) is under the threat of hydro-development.

It is my intention to serve the AWA by furthering the



cause of river conservation to the best of my ability.

While my profession is **advertising**, I'm also Head Kayak Instructor for Boise State University and Kingfisher Expeditions. In addition, while attending college, I was a safety boater for Cascade River Co. My conservation efforts include working in conjunction with Friends of the Payette to organize a television forum **concerning** proposed **hydro**-development projects on the North Fork of the Payette, and utilizing local media in televising reports on white-water expeditions, kayaking classes, and local competitions.

Over the last four years, I have witnessed **our sport** enjoy incredible growth. Hamessing and directing this growth toward increased AWA membership is a simple but vital key to both the **AWA's** future success and effectiveness. As an AWA board member, one of my primary goals would be to increase membership through effective promotion and advertising.

Kayaking has enhanced my life both physically and mentally. I will indeed work hard to preserve its future so everyone can have a chance to enjoy its unique benefits.

Sara Lawrence **Lotus, CA**

A native Californian, I grew up in a small town named Ojai. My earliest memories of whitewater are of riding my horse up the **Sespe** gorge, a small steep seasonal creek in the mountains behind our home.

Over the last eight years I have been a **bit** more involved with rivers. My first whitewater experience was a raft

trip with friends on a beautiful Eastern Sierra river. That first river trip impressed me so much - we had great people, a full moon, hot springs to relax in, a great electrical storm over the valley below us, a four-plus earthquake and five inches of snowfall during the night!

An auspicious beginning! Soon after that experience I moved from the city to the Sierras and began working, guiding and managing for commercial raft companies on the South Fork American River. There I fell in love with the rolling foothills of the Western Sierra and have made my home near this river.

I have been working for El Dorado County Parks and Recreation Division for the last three years, helping to educate the private boaters and enforcing the River Manage-



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ment Plan on the South Fork American. It is a full-time job where I am assisted by two seasonal recreation aides. I really enjoy my summers working on the river and spend my winters skiing and gearing up for the next summer season.

Three years ago I helped to organize and still chair a local "American Rivers" Chapter of Friends of the River. In that time our chapter has organized many fund raising events and contributes to the first and continuing success of the American River Festival. I hope to be able to contribute to AWA in various ways, especially providing it with a close connection to our western extremity.

Tom McAndrew Philadelphia, PA

From the time I began kayaking four years ago, I've been involved in most of the major issues that concerned paddlers in the Mid-Atlantic region. I have directed some of my energy towards boat registration, river access, and hard-boat quotas. The majority of my efforts have been in conservation.

Hydro projects continue to endanger the dwindling supply of whitewater rivers. I have been a team player in several regional efforts to stave off hydro projects.



My primary role has been to "marshal the forces". To accomplish this I've established a working relationship with several conservation leaders and a network of regional clubs' conservation chairpersons. Frequently I've served as a communication link between these two groups.

As a director I would continue my conservation efforts, which would ease the work load of Pope Barrow, allowing him to pursue new options for controlling hydromania. In addition, I hope to contribute to American Whitewater, since it has become our best marketing tool for attracting new members. Lastly, I would continue to pursue the thrill of whitewater paddling. The satisfaction I get from river running is what sustains most of my off-river paddling activities.

Harpo Sher Sacramento, CA



About myself: I am 25 years old and I have been boating for eight years. I live in Sacramento, California and I love going to whitewater rodeos around the west. I dig running gnarly class V water and squirt boat-

ing in my Jet.

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through beautiful and amazing canyons on freeflowing rivers. I would love to do this the rest of my life, and hopefully, my children in their lives could experience it, too.

I oppose the groups or individuals who want to dam, destroy or damage these irreplaceable rivers and river canyons for their personal gain or other insignificant reasons.

I want to stand with AWA and fight these people no matter what it takes to keep the rivers of America alive!

Mac Thornton Washington, D.C.

My platform is so simple I have it displayed on my license plates: "NO DAMS." This is not a radical viewpoint. There are damn few dam proposals which can **survive** a rigorous technical analysis, which takes into account the very significant costs of environmental and recreational degradation caused by dam construction and operation. In fact, only a fraction of the dams which have **already** been **built** could withstand such an analysis. I am a firm believer in attacking unwarranted river development on disciplined economic, engineering, legal and political grounds. Unfortunately, license plate sloganeering doesn't accomplish much.

These lessons have been learned in the several battles I've been involved in during the last few years. As Chairman of the Savage River Defense Fund, I directed a fundraiser which netted over \$15,000, and we defeated a hydropower construction proposal. As Conservation Chair- man (Middle States) of the American Canoe Association,

and Conservation Chairman of the Canoe Cruiser's Asso., I have played a significant role in most every river battle in the Middle Atlantic states in the last few years. I have taken lead responsibility for a number of issues, such as the various **porties** by the Army Corps promoting flood control structures in West Virginia.

I am also very concerned with promoting river safety. I have served as the legal advisor and draftsman for the 1987 and the new 1988 revisions to the AWA Safety Code. As Co-Chairman of the Potomac River Safety Committee, I have knocked heads with well-meaning park and recreation officials who tend to confuse over-regulation with the enhancement of safety.

I want to help keep the AWA in the forefront of the fight to preserve our precious whitewater heritage. It is **we** who must do the job. No one else is going to do it.





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The year's tragedies

Low water helped prevent Eastern fatalities in 1988, but Rocky Mountain and Pacific Northwest paddlers were confronted with the tragic consequences of mistakes on the river.

by Charlie Walbridge
AWA Safety Chairman



The only good thing to come out of the widespread drought of 1988 has been the decline in whitewater fatalities. So far as I know there were no deaths among experienced canoeists and kayakers in the East this year. The West, unfortunately, was not so lucky. There were five deaths that I know about, and I have a nagging suspicion others occurred. Most occurred in the Rocky Mountain area, which experienced a short flush of high water.

The year started off inauspiciously on January 1 when a teacher from Bellevue, Washington met his death while running Eagle Falls of the Skykomish. This drop, rated class V+ or VI depending on who you talk to, is a vigorous fifteen foot high ledge with a long, complex lead-in. The victim, a riverguide, was a relative newcomer to kayaking. He apparently got off his line in the approach, spun out, and ran the drop sideways and backwards. It appears based on a viewing of the footage supplied to CNN that he hit an underwater rock which jutted out halfway down the falls. The flow pinned him there in his boat for about fifteen minutes; when he was released he was dead. CPR was applied by an off-duty firefighter traveling along the road without success.

The next fatality came in March, involving two very experienced paddlers in Oregon. They were running the Sandy River, a popular local run, in squirt boats. They eddied out above a drop which contained a tree on one side; one chute missed it easily, the other was tight and difficult. The victim elected to go for the tight chute; he hit the tree and pinned instantly with the boat completely submerged. Rescue was out of the question for the remaining person, who summoned help after a few gallant tries. Body recovery proved to be extremely difficult.

The string of Rocky Mountain area fatalities began in late May. An expert canoeist from the San Fran-

cisco Bay area lost his life following a swim on the lower section of Idaho's South Fork Clearwater, a challenging roadside run. An experienced boater, he took off ahead of his group to run a steep class IV+ drop below a bridge. Rob Lesser remembers this drop well because he lost a boat there. He played a hole, swamped, and flipped. He then took a horrible swim through boulders and holes before pinning underwater for a moment on a huge rock at the bottom. He washed out less than a minute later, unconscious. The group race downstream and brought him to shore, but it was too late. No one had formal CPR training, and there is no way of knowing if that would have made any difference.

The next accident occurred in the notorious "Miracle Mile" of Idaho's Secesh River, a tributary of the South Fork of the Salmon. The victim, a very experienced kayaker from British Columbia, was the fourth boater down a long, complex Class V rapid when he missed a tight eddy turn, flipped, and washed through several big drops. Rolling up in a midstream eddy, he ran several more drops before capsizing a second time. After failing several roll attempts, he bailed out. As he washed around the corner well out of throw bag range, his friends ran for their boats. They gave chase, but there was no sign of him anywhere. After recovering his gear, they began a thorough search of both banks. By the time they spotted his body pinned against a submerged log it was too late to do anything. His body was recovered the next day by a team composed of local paddlers and search and rescue personnel.

This unfortunate narrative picks up a few days later in Colorado with the Poudre River running at peak flow. The victim, a gutsy 63 year old kayaker, took a horrendous swim in Class IV+ Mishawaka Rapid in the "ridges" section. After recirculating in a nasty hole/eddy current, he was

spat out unconscious into the continuously swift water below. His friends could keep up, but were unable to get him to shore. When he was rescued by a commercial rafting party, he was long since gone.

In addition, there were a number of rafting fatalities. Typically they involve one boat parties in difficult whitewater, with one person slipping away after a capsizing. The one incident which sticks in my mind is an instance where a rafting party came to grief on the Selway River's powerful Ladle Rapid at a level of about five feet. The victim was a big man, weighing over two hundred and forty pounds, who was wearing no wetsuit or helmet. When the boat flipped, he hit his head and was probably knocked senseless. His more experienced friends were able to hold on to the raft after it capsized and made it back to shore, but not after floating through another major drop. The victim was carried downstream through several more big rapids, and was finally discovered floating face-down fifteen miles downstream.

What convinces a paddler with little more than a year's experience to run Eagle Falls? What makes a squirt boater risk a pinning on a tree when a clear chute was available? Why does an expert open canoeist bypass his entire group before running a difficult drop, then play in a huge hole? And why do other groups run difficult whitewater with so little backup that a victim could be carried downstream for miles? One possible answer is lack of respect, or to be more precise, an incomplete appreciation of the consequences of error in major drops.

Whitewater contains a certain uncontrollable element of risk which is always present, and increases with the difficulty of the river. It is what mountaineers call "objective danger" and can be lessened but never eliminated. Often with our fancy equipment and flashy skills we forget the huge forces with which we are dealing. And when an error in judgement teams up with careless backup, death can result.

I'm concerned with signs that our vigilance is dropping, and that we are taking unnecessary risks. Very dif-

ficult rivers which once were run by "teams of experts, taking all precautions" are being paddled "on the fly" by loosely organized groups. It's one thing for an individual expert to consider a run over a dangerous drop; quite another to trivialize its dangers by running with minimal preparation or backup. Lack of group support is becoming commonplace, and while it might not have changed any of these events, it might have made a difference. Cutting corners like these is an unnecessary risk, and many of us should reconsider our actions.

Stories of loosely-run trips having near-misses are becoming more frequent. I heard of one frightening instance where a group from the Midwest took on the Tellico, a fast class IV run. They ran as individuals rather than as members of an organized group. One paddler got between two bunches of people and pinned. The first group did not notice his absence; the second almost passed him as he struggled for his life. Only the fact that he was behind only part of the group and not all of it saved his life. A truly supportive group would have noticed his absence in minutes.

I am also concerned at what I see as appalling lapses of good judgment. Great Falls, a class VI drop outside Washington D.C., has changed from a discreet expert run to a "rite of passage" for every would-be hot-shot in the area. There has been a wildwater race there, and someone even wants to put on a slalom race with full media coverage. Water of this difficulty is fully capable of killing someone who makes a mistake. Peer pressures and media pressures are at best distracting, and at worst may entice people to get in over their heads. I feel that we must be extremely careful not to be pressured by external influences when running dangerous rapids. Everyone wants to look good, and judgment can be clouded by excitement or ego. And although some publicity is good for the sport, a widely publicized fatality could hurt us a lot.

The same influences are at work in everyday runs. A healthy spirit of friendly competition will get the best from each of us, but runs the risk of

pressuring boaters to go too far, too fast. Squirt boaters in particular must be aware of the added risks posed by these high-performance crafts. The reported deaths have been out of proportion to their numbers, and most have been caused by their lack of experience in this new type of boat. I certainly feel that they should be ready to exit quickly in the event of a pinning, since they tend to "wrap" suddenly and severely.

Whitewater sport must always strike careful balance between excitement and safety; between freedom for the individual and support for the group. I feel we have gone too far in the excitement and freedom direction, and would like to see the old habits of mutual support reestablished. They are:

(1) Everyone in a group should know exactly how many people are boating with them. Take frequent informal head-counts with larger groups. If you're on a heavily used river and can't get cooperation from your group, buddy up with someone.

(2) Everyone should keep track of the boater immediately behind them and of the group as a whole. If the boater behind disappears, the paddler or group halts until he reappears. If someone is unaccounted for, rescue should be initiated promptly.

(3) When running difficult drops, set up safety whenever possible. This may mean positioning boats or ropes, but most often it means allowing portaging paddlers to get into the water below the drop before proceeding.

(4) Be aware of outside influences when contemplating a run down a dangerous drop, especially when your equipment, experience, skills or physical condition may be marginal. Do nothing which may pressure another boater to get in over their heads.

Let's be careful out there in 1989!

please turn to page 45 for an important announcement

Kwazulu!



**Paddling through the heart of the
Zulu nation, near the site of Rorke's
Drift where native and British
soldiers grappled in heroic fury,
boaters test their own
bravery on fierce African water**

by Joe Greiner

A stunned General Chelmsford could not believe his own eyes.

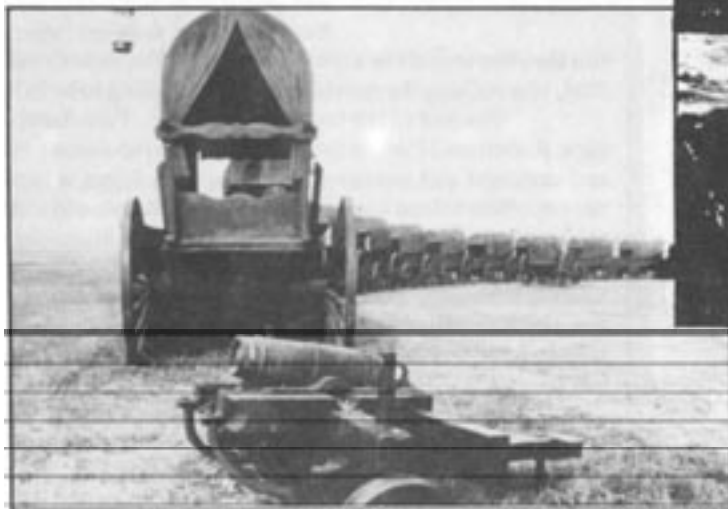
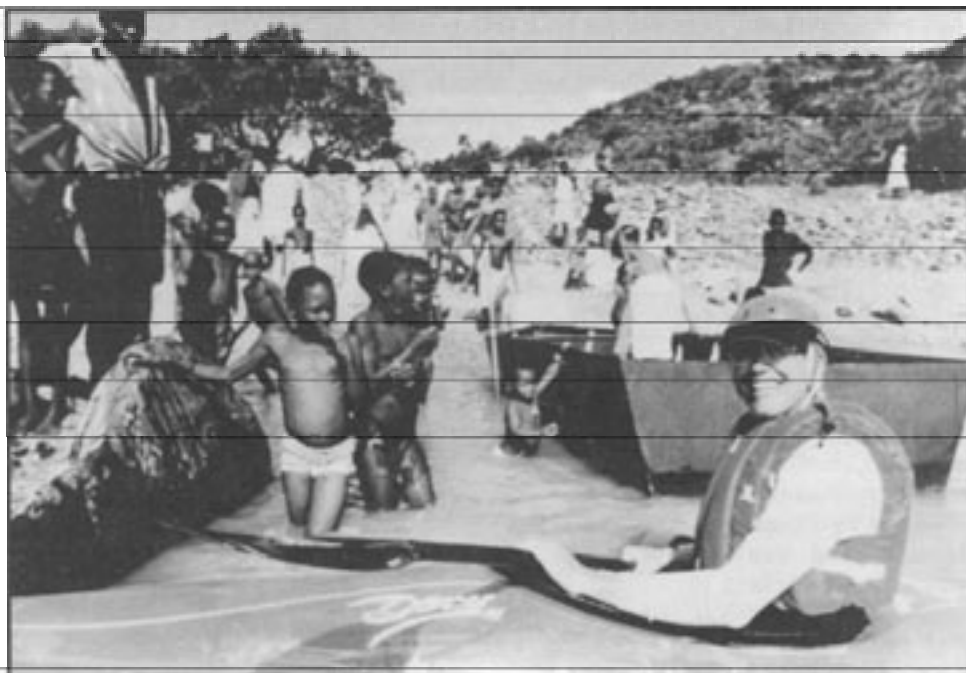
On the plain below the stone plateau known as Isandhlwana lay the camp that he had left that morning. The British invasion of Zululand was only 5 days old and here on the plain before him were the smoking remains of that camp. Disemboweled troops lay among dead Zulu warriors. Regimental colors were nowhere in sight. The cannons were gone. 900 British troops lay dead. 400 Native troops in redcoats had perished. 2000 Zulus were later estimated to have died in the assault.

On that day, January 22, 1879, British and Natal Native Troops suffered the worst defeat ever, anywhere in the world, by British Imperial troops at the hands of a native army.

Some of the very few survivors had made their way to the Buffalo River and crossed over at Rorke's Drift. They had time to warn a small force under Lt. Chard. The Lieutenant and some 150 men prepared to face a wing of the blooded Zulu warriors.

The attack came swiftly and mercilessly. The defenders were driven into an ever smaller perimeter. Night fell and still the Zulu impi warriors attacked. The troops replied with the courage born of desperation of dying men. Midnight and still the fight wore on.

An old Chinese game goes; scissors cuts paper, paper covers rock, rock blunts scissors. Finally, in the early morning, the attackers had been blunted on the rock known as Rorke's Drift. The defenders had held. The Zulu retreated.



Photos: (top) Kayaks capture the attention of Zulus gathered on the river bank. (middle) A thundering cascade amidst rolling African landscape. (left) Circled wagons and artillery mark the Rorke's Drift battlefield.

back across the border of the Buffalo River to their land, Kwazulu.

Six Victoria Crosses (British equivalent to our Medal Of Honor) were awarded to the defenders of Rorke's Drift. This number is still today the highest number of Victoria Crosses awarded in any single action.

If **Isandhlwana** was the British equivalent of Little Big Horn, then Rorke's Drift was Horatio at the bridge. The British invasion was eventually successful at Ulundi. After **Ulundi**, the mighty and proud Zulu nation that had been built by the strong, charismatic, and insane Shaka, consolidated by Dingane, Mpande, and Cetshwayo, would now lie in quietude. The British had succeeded. The threat of a strong native nation within their colony of South Africa was tranquilized.

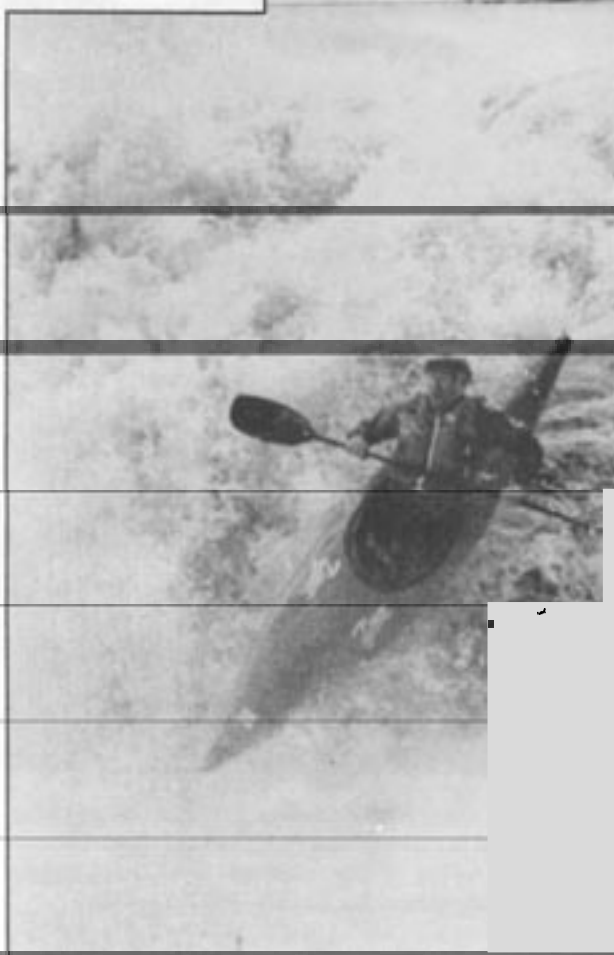


On February 8, 1988, Robert Harrison and I stood at Rorke's Drift on the Buffalo river and watched Zulu women ford the river and walk to work at a nearby farm where they were employed producing comforters. Almost exactly 109 years and about 6 generations after that fateful day, we were here to

run the river and make a movie. Actually, Francois Odenaal, was making the movie and we were going to be in it.

The plot of the movie was simple. Two Americans, Robert and I, come to South Africa to run some new and different and uncrowded rivers. Tim Biggs, a local boater, offers to lead us down the Buffalo. We would start at historic Rorke's Drift and paddle about 100 kilometers until the confluence with the Tugela and take out in the heart of Kwazulu. The Buffalo and the Tugela form one of the borders between the self-administered Zulu Land known today as Kwazulu and the rest of South Africa. The left shore would be Kwazulu, the right, South Africa.

Immediately, we met the curious natives. We believe that we were only the third or fourth group to do the river, so whitewater boaters were still a novelty. As we approached a family grouping of native, thatched roof





huts, we could hear and see the news travel and soon a thin stream of curious humanity flowed to the river and waited for us. These groupings are known as kraals and soon the sight of the kraals and their cattle became commonplace.

The children were shy and frightened. Whenever I have been around children before, I could always get at least one to "take a ride" on my kayak. But, I couldn't get any of these people to do so even though many were demonstrably good swimmers. Some of the women were very young, very developed, very naked, and very natural. After repressing our natural **European/American** reaction to naked female beauty, we eventually came to

accept this style of undress as naturally as they did.

The movie crew got some nice shots of us entertaining the Zulu on-lookers with our **eskimo rolls (with and without paddle)**. They were so friendly, curious, and natural that it was hard to leave the groups when they did form. Their speech was lyrical and musical with strange clicks and strong inflections. Tim spoke fluent Zulu and we were always entertained when Tim would call out to a new group the traditional Zulu greeting. Surprise, shock, and pleasure would sweep through the native group as they heard their language. A brief pause would be followed by the traditional response.

Tim would give the counter response and, now totally enthralled, the final response would be chanted by **the** crowd.

I never ceased to marvel at the musicality of the litany of the greeting. Like the sound of running water, it was gentle to our ears.

We had hoped for challenging water on the river and an adventure film. Alas, the river was low, so Francois decided to make a film about **making** a whitewater film and so the whole crew would be part of the cast.

The first two days had quite interesting whitewater. Most of the rapids were shallow and **technical**, with one stretch of 3 **kilometers** reminiscent of the steep boulder gardens of the **Watauga**. The average gradient in this section was about 80 to 100 feet per mile. Unfortunately, the only **good** places for cameras were at large, open, and mostly uninspiring rapids. They did manage to get a shot of us portaging a 45 foot falls. We didn't know it at the time, but the pace would pick up.

As part of the film crew, Francois had hired a two seater helicopter. The film crew, food and water, and beer were being shuttled in and **out** of various shooting spots. Nights, though, found the three of us bedded down by a campfire on the sand beaches of the Buffalo under the clear African sky and the Southern Cross.

On the fourth day, we came to a very difficult rapid that all **previous** trips had to portage. Because of the lower flows on this trip, Tim and Robert were able to run it. It took a long time to set up the cameras and the **sound**, but it paid off in good action shots.

At lunch, Tim lobbied for extending the filming one more day. With the shots from that morning plus two other rapids that we could film that afternoon, plus a spectacular section downstream called The Blockage, Tim felt that there was great potential for real action even at the low level. The film crew agreed and so, after lunch, we three boaters went back up to run a rapid that we had run just before lunch.

We had not planned on filming this rapid, but with the revised timetable, this short, steep, drop was added. We had all run it successfully that morning. The camera was readied. The sound was on. Tim went first and

smoothed it again. Robert waited and then put his open canoe right in the narrow slot at the bottom. I was last.

The cameraman signaled my turn had come and I squeezed through the tight slot at the top of the drop and accelerated towards the bottom. In a flash, I was at the bottom and about two feet off line. The out flow of this rapid was very narrow where a peninsula came out **from** the right **bank** and pinched the flow to about six feet wide. The camera was set on the end of the peninsula. My bow hit right at the feet of the cameraman.

I saw sky as my bow rode up in the air. I tucked hard and was underwater. I stayed tucked and waited for the turbulence to subside. This would signal that I had washed through the opening and into the pool below where I could roll upright. The turbulence did not subside. I knew then that I was pinned, cockpit upstream, against the face of the peninsula.

I popped my sprayskirt and pushed **HARD!!**. I was free of the boat. Now, would I also get pinned? I felt the current grab me and draw me down. I was being tumbled and spun. I was afraid that I was stuck in the turbulence upstream of the peninsula. Then, I felt a downstream current hit me and I was pushed hard backwards. I was free of the peninsula but not on the surface. My life preserver finally lifted me to the surface about ten feet below the out-flow from the rapid.

I saw my boat behind me, with part of the stern in the current and the rest of it pinned against the upstream face of the peninsula. I found my paddle next to me and grabbed it and swam for shore. Just as I reached shore, the boat came loose and I turned to see Robert dive in from the other shore to grab it and swim it to safety.

Several wide-eyed and concerned crew members were on shore. The swiftness and total surprise of the incident had left them all helpless and shocked. I was probably underwater for 15-30 seconds and my boat was probably pinned for 30-60 seconds. **Fear** and adrenalin are **magnifiers**. It seemed like longer to all concerned.

After I had caught my breath and I could feel the adrenalin subside, I took inventory and all my body parts



were there as was all the gear. Everything had been clipped into the boat and had survived all right. Only my dignity and my self-confidence had been bruised. I quickly let everyone know that physically I was 100%. Mentally, I was shaken.

Once everybody was certain that I was all right, they all conferenced for a moment. Francois approached me on eggshells.

In filming, they make one long "master shot" and, in editing, they cut away from it to a close up of the action or another angle and then cut back to the master and then cut away again, etc. For dramatic action shots to be successful, they have to have these "cutaways", usually shot at the same time by a second or third camera. There had been no second camera because there was no hint of drama in a rapid that we had already run, and therefore, there were no cutaways. What did I feel like? Could we shoot some cutaways?

I said that we could and I swam out into the pool and re-enacted my popping to the surface and swimming and paddle retrieval. Two people took the kayak back to the scene of the crime and threw it into the water and Robert dove after it.

Everybody was now setting up for the last scene of the day, the entrance rapid into a little black gorge. This was a rapid that normally I would run. But at this level of boating, I believe that 75% is mental. I had too

many impure thoughts streaming through my consciousness to run this next drop. Normally, I would have enjoyed the challenge of this rapid. That day, I walked around it and set safety.

They didn't need it. Tim and Robert took different lines and both had great runs. Robert had his best run of the week, smooth and seeming effortless right where he wanted to be. The crew got some good action shots against a very scenic backdrop.

That night, I reflected on my day and part of me hopes that the film of my dramatic moment is not so good. **After** all, I walked one rapid, got trashed in the next, and then walked a very **runable** next rapid. Since they only filmed a few other rapids, this could look very awkward. On the other hand, this was a dramatic moment and all action films need drama. For the sake of the film, I hope it comes out all right. Since I paddled a different boat in the film than I normally do, maybe my friends won't recognize me and I can remain an incognito turkey.

The final morning we arrived at The Blockage before the crew. To Tim's surprise and delight, we found that we could run the whole thing. On his last trip, the water was too high and The Blockage had created a series of sieves and suckholes that made passage by water unthinkable. At this level, the water was low enough **that** we could go **UNDER** much of this **gigantic** boulder fall.

The Blockage consisted of about a mile in a narrow canyon where huge house-sized boulders had fallen into the water and on top of each other. We also found that the crew couldn't land near enough to film. It took some hiking on Tim's part, but he was able to go upstream to where the chopper could land and get a small waterproof camera that we duct taped to his boat. We would run The Blockage and be filmed from water level while they were filming from the chopper overhead.

The sky was overcast as we ran this section. At times, it was like boating in a cave as the boulders towered over us and we slipped through the air pockets under them to emerge with more choices to make.

Finally, we broke into open water. The chopper flew off. We headed for the takeout.

We arrived in late afternoon in a downpour. The Tugela was in flood and we rode the last several miles on brown floodwater.

After we were reunited with the crew, we found that not all of the drama had been on the river.

The night before, high winds had grounded the chopper where it sat and the whole crew and the chopper had been forced to spend the cold, rainy night unsheltered and underfed on the rocky bluff overlooking the rapid we now call "Joe's Folly" and the little black gorge.

JP, one of the crew, had a bad fever and survived the night under a space blanket. The ground crew who didn't know about the change in schedule was expecting to meet the film crew at the takeout that night and grew more and more worried as the film crew didn't show up.

This morning, the film crew had used the chopper to locate the ground crew and soothe their jangled nerves and then went back to film our passage of The Blockage. A large storm was coming in and after The Blockage was filmed, Susan, the pilot frantically shuttled in and out, taking 4 people, one at a time, to the takeout. Just as she touched down with Francois, the last person out, the storm hit.

Had it come earlier, she would not have been able to complete the shuttle and one or more of the film crew



would have been stranded. As it was, she was stranded in the Zulu village until the weather cleared. We had a long discussion and Francois insisted on staying with her.

The rest of us rode the five hours over dirt roads back to Rorke's Drift. The next morning the weather had cleared and Susan and Francois were able to fly out.

South Africa had been sweet and clear. The sun, the great engine that drives the cycles of life in this rich, fertile country, had shone on us. We had met the descendants of Shaka, seen the kraals of Kwazulu, smiled at the curiosity of the Zulus, glimpsed the life

of a nation that had once humbled the mighty British Imperial Army, boated interesting water, and made some new friends.

The plane stood at the end of the runway. The engines sprang to life, roared with power, and were held back by the brakes. The craft shook as if with anticipation, eager to be off into its natural element. The brakes release and we roll away, slowly at first. Then the big bird gathers itself to the blue, summer, warm, breezy, African sky and we are on our way home. It is over.





Flood City...

or

Whitewater Playground?

*A lot of people would tell you
that Johnstown, Pennsylvania
has seen enough of high water.
Obviously, they are not
whitewater paddlers.*

By Bruce Penrod

Ten years ago, the citizens, media and government of Johnstown, Pennsylvania commonly identified the community as "the Rood City."

It was a handle honestly earned. The Stonycreek River flows through Johnstown where it joins its smaller sister, the Little Conemaugh, to become the Conemaugh River. Southeast of Johnstown, the Stonycreek and its tributaries grow from a drainage area of about 500 square miles.

Over the years, a series of devastating floods swept down the Stony and Little Conemaugh to rock the city.

In 1889 the largest earthen dam in the United States was located on the Little Conemaugh, just 18 miles upstream of the city. Built to service the Pennsylvania canal, the dam and its impoundment had been purchased by a private group of wealthy Pittsburgh industrialists as a summer retreat.

The condition of the dam had been allowed to deteriorate, and its spillway had been blocked to prevent the escape of stocked fish. When a severe localized storm dumped inches over the area, frantic efforts to clear the spillway and increase the dam height

with sandbags were not enough in the face of rising water. The dam failed.

The lake behind the dam has stretched back for five miles. Within 30 minutes, the lake had drained down to mud flats. A 20-foot wall of water rolled down the valley at 30 miles an hour, leveling everything in its path.

In the center of Johnstown, a stone arch bridge stretches over the Conemaugh. It was one of the few structures to withstand the brunt of the flood. The water smashed into the bridge, in-

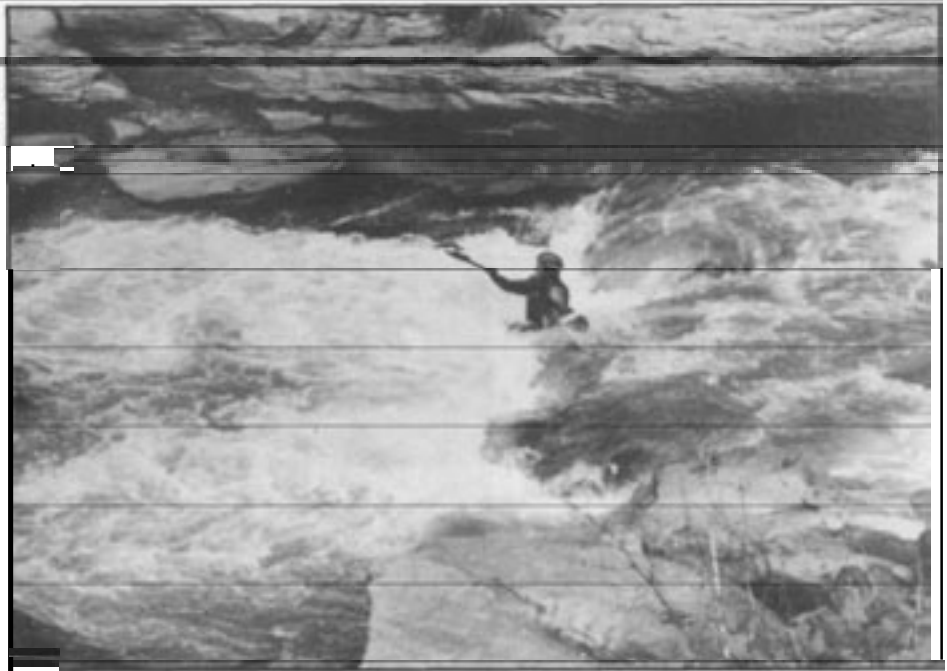
stantly clogging its arches with collected debris, creating a dam that backed the water up the Stonycreek Valley.

After the surge had passed, the center of Johnstown was inundated by this newly fashioned lake, topped with a solid raft of smashed houses, trees and other debris. Ironically, many victims who had somehow escaped drowning but remained trapped in the debris burned to death when the mass of splintered wood caught fire.

The flood of 1936 did not feature such dramatic circumstances, but proved no less destructive as water swept through the city claiming loss of life and thousands of dollars of damage.

But the flood of 1936 inspired action by the Army Corps of Engineers. A massive flood control project was undertaken in the 1940s with a series of river retaining walls built throughout the city. Following completion of the project, the city was declared "flood free."

Without the threat of future inundation, the commu-



Photos: (opposite page) Bruce and Janice Penrod in an open C2 on Shade Creek; (above) Gary Johnson drops into a hole on Paint Creek; (left) An 8-foot drop on Paint Creek.

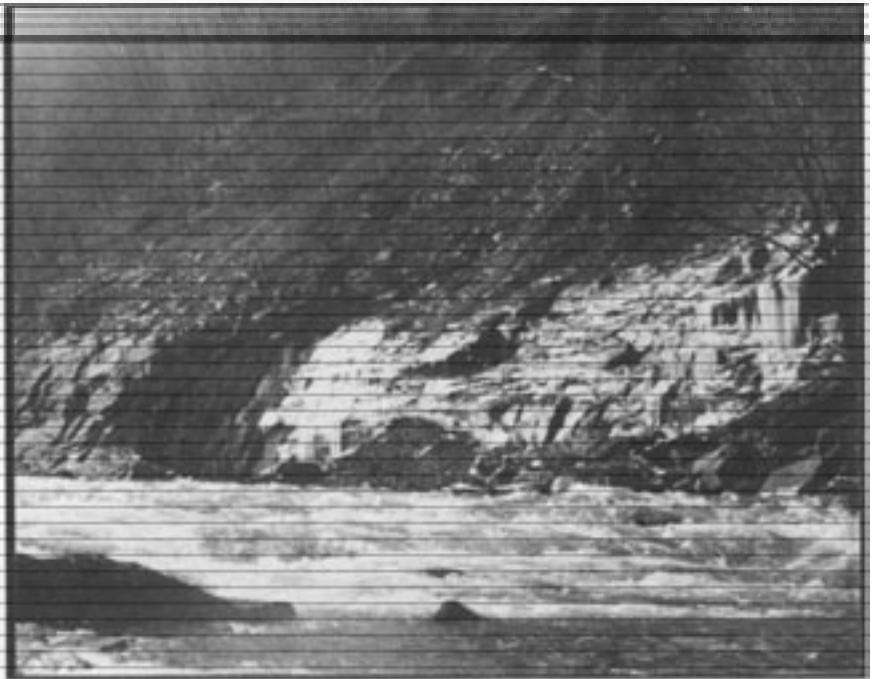
nity was able to assume a more benevolent attitude toward its watery fate, adopting its "**Flood City**" nickname. TV and radio stations identified themselves by this handle and all was well until 1977.

It was then that a freak storm dropped eight inches of rain over night in the surrounding mountains. The rivers and streams, unimpressed by man's attempt to control them, again swept through the area, claiming 200 lives. The pet name "*Flood City*" has not been used since.

This background provides the whitewater enthusiast with some interesting information: the Johnstown area receives considerable rain; and that the mountainous watershed can condense this run-off into raging torrents.

But what has been a nightmare for the city can be a dream for the paddler. Within this watershed there are no less than seven Class III to V whitewater runs that cover 40 miles of stream bed and best of all can be done on one weekend, thanks to close proximity of each and generally easy shuttles. When the water flows in this watershed, it becomes a paddlers' playground.

The character of each run is as different as rivers much further apart in different part of the country. The amount



Paddling by "The Wall" in Stonycreek Canyon.

of rapids haven't been counted but number well over one hundred with drops to challenge any level of paddler.

A number of the runs feature easier Class III, including Quemahoning Creek. Flowing into a large reservoir that then flows into the Stonycreek River, this creek is a good introduction to the area for intermediate paddlers.

Starting at the road bridge just below the town of Boswell, the Quemahoning offers five miles of continuous whitewater before ending at the reservoir. The creek is small and downed trees often block its narrow channels.

The best place to take a look at the Que is at the Route 219 bridge, just north of the Route 30 exit. Since there isn't a gauge on the river, this is also the place to see if it is runnable.

The Lower Stony, which is below the Stony Canyon, can also be observed from Route 219 on the McNally Bridge, just south of the Route 56 exit. This is a 3-mile section of river that has several nice Class III rapids and with higher flows can provide that big water feel. The Lower Stony is the recipient of all the tributaries detailed here, so it can feature decent volume.

The put-in is at its confluence with Paint Creek, described below. The paddler's gauge is on the Holsopple Bridge just off Route 219 at the 403 exit. A level of 2' is adequate, but 4' or 5' is much better for this section.

The Top Stony is about 25 miles upstream from the lower section. Its gauge is on the Route 30 bridge, about 5 miles east of Route 219, which doubles as one of the takeouts for this section.

At good flows of 1-foot or more, this is a tight Class IV run. The first



The Dark Shade has only one rapid--but the rapid continues unabated for a mile down a long, narrow sluice-way.

major drop is a 90 degree right turn through a narrow chute. Several steep drops occur for the next mile or so before the river calms down a bit. After two miles of Class II stuff, the Top Stony picks up with several river-wide hydraulics and continues until the takeout. This section, although somewhat isolated from the rest, shouldn't be missed by the weekend visitor.

The Clear Shade is probably the most scenic of area runs and also

has the longest shuttle. It requires a 5-mile drive on back roads, a 2-mile flat-water paddle and a portage around the Windber Reservoir before the action starts. But once it does, the excitement doesn't slack off until the Clear Shade's confluence with the Dark Shade. The rapids begin with fun Class III difficulty but soon build to almost continuous Class IV. Evidence of the '77 flood is apparent and the creek continues to change every year. The run ends with a

5-foot plunge over a falls. The takeout is on Route 160, north of Central City.

Clear Shade flows into Dark Shade just below Route 160. Two miles up Dark Shade is the put-in for this exciting run. Dark Shade has often been compared to a mini-Upper Yough. It starts slowly but once it begins to drop, look out. Its only rapid is about a mile long and you're constantly looking downhill (or up, if you get spun around). Most notable are blind drops, a 5-foot

Whitewater Weekend promotes possible Stonycreek releases

Only two miles above Stonycreek Canyon, just south of Holsopple, lies what once was the largest reservoir in the state of Pennsylvania. When it was constructed in 1913 by Bethlehem Steel to cool their iron works, the Quemahoning Reservoir was considered mammoth in size at 900 acres.

Now, of course, several larger reservoirs exist. But as the Bethlehem Steel mills decreased their output in the 70's, their need for water diminished to only a fraction of its use in the first half of the century, leaving a surplus in the impoundment.

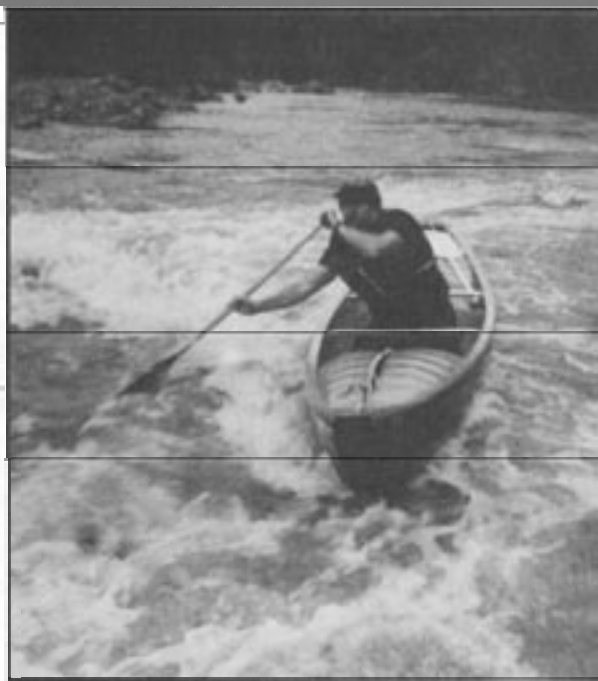
For years now, water has drained over the spillway well into the summer. Even during the drought of 1988 when other lakes were drying up in the summer, the Quemahoning Reservoir was still full or close to it.

Bethlehem Steel recently agreed to sell this large body of water to the Greater Johnstown Water Authority for use as drinking water. The capacity of the reservoir should be big enough for whitewater releases, also.

The Benscreek Canoe Club, Inc. from Johnstown has been working for years to make whitewater releases a reality, but talks with Bethlehem's Manufactures Water Company have been non-productive. With this new public rather than private ownership, it is hoped that releases can be negotiated.

As the Johnstown economy has been depressed by the ailing steel and coal industry, an emphasis has been placed in boosting tourism. Whitewater recreation has the possibility to be an important local attraction—if only the canoe club can convince area politicians and powers-that-be of its great potential.

The best argument lies only 90 minutes away in Ohiopyle and its Lower Youghieny River. With increased pressure on this popular run, many private boaters are being turned away by a newly-installed quota system. Private boaters are looking for an alternative, especially on weekends. The five miles of almost continuous Class III, IV water of the Stonycreek Canyon would be a great alternative.



Mike Burk on the Stonycreek River

It is important for this attempt at releases that the paddling community join the Benscreek Canoe Club for their 2nd Annual Stonycreek Whitewater Weekend on April 1st and 2nd to demonstrate that this whitewater run can draw tourists and paddlers.

Some of the activities planned for this event include cruising the river, a cash prize whitewater rodeo, camping only four miles from the takeout, racing events, displays and whitewater videos.

Although water releases have never been obtained from the reservoir, the Benscreek Canoe Club is making a formal request for a surge of water from the new owners. Hopefully, they will grant the request. But the Stony is usually runnable anyway that time of the year.

For release or water level information for this event, you can contact Bruce Penrod at (814)487-4164, Gary Johnson (814)467-9466 or Mike Burk (814)487-7588. No matter what the water level, put this exciting event on your calendar and help support a very worthy cause.



Action on Paint Creek: on the left Bruce Penrod plunges down a steep, narrow chute as onlookers watch from the rocks. On the right, a kayaker plays in a hydraulic just below the put-in while Penrod strokes upstream to join in the fun.

falls, and a very sharp right hand turn. At high water levels this section takes on a Class V character.

At the confluence of the Dark and Clear begins Shade Creek, a delightful 11-mile Class III, IV run of almost continuous character. Three bridges can break the run into smaller sections of 3 or 4 miles each. A paddler's gauge is on the second bridge near Camp Harmony, about 2 miles off Route 160. This third section is the best, with a takeout in Seanor on Route 601 or you can paddle another half mile into the Stonycreek Canyon.

By running the Shade into Stonycreek Canyon, you miss one good rapid above the canyon, but you can carry up the railroad tracks to catch it as well. Showers is a steep rock strewn drop with a flipping hydraulic in the middle.

Below Shade Creek, the Stonycreek River travels over what could be called a "hydraulics laboratory." Upper and Lower Swinging Bridge Rapids would make a great site for a slalom race and has several good playspots. Below the railroad bridge the river drops to more great playspots before getting serious about gradient.

At the Wall or Choice Rapid, the river separates into three channels with the left being the steepest. Next, the Three (Ugly) Sisters present the paddler with exciting drops. The last Sister has a very sticky hole that looks like Swimmers on the Lower Yough.

Rooster Tail is run on the left

with a sneak on the right. Scout Rapid with Scout Hole can be easily scouted from your boat on the left. You can actually paddle right beside the drop in a calm pool and then turn around, paddle back upstream and run the drop.

Next is Hydro Rock with plenty of play hydros. The Beast is next and tends to be one of the worst places to swim but not bad to paddle. Run either left or right. After the Beast, the river calms down a bit until after the portage around Border Dam.

Two more major rapids are encountered before the takeout. Pipeline with a serious recirculator that can easily be bridged, and Dislocation. It has been named for obvious reasons and at low levels an undercut is apparent. A few minor rock gardens finish off the run.

If this hasn't been enough, Paint Creek flows into the Stony at the takeout. Three miles upstream is the put-in for this excellent and steep run. Carry down to the creek from Route 56 and put in below the unrunnable 15-foot falls.

The action starts right away and doesn't let up until the bottom. Several drops require intense scouting and dangers exist in the form of a 6 and 10-foot falls, undercuts galore, a steep 12-foot slide and rocks, rocks and more rocks. Parts of the run can be scouted from a car as you drive to the put-in, but don't think you've seen all of this Class V run. You may want to save this gem for the climax to the weekend but then

again, maybe you'll be tempted to run it first and get the worst (or best) over with.

These eight runs will keep you very busy on a weekend, but it is possible to do them all if you get up early, eat during the shuttles, and paddle till dark. If you want to give it a try, the Stonycreek gauge in Holsopple should be at least 4'. Hit the runs in this order: Saturday at 6 am (1) Que Creek for a warm-up, 10 am (2) the Top Stony, 2 pm (3) Clear Shade, 5 pm (4) Dark Shade, Sunday at 7 am (5) Shade Creek into the (6) Stony Canyon, 3 pm (7) Paint Creek into the (8) Bottom Stony.

Two days and 40 some miles of whitewater later, you can be proud to say you've done the whole thing. I don't know anyone who has done this in such a short time but I think it would be possible. As a matter of fact, I think I'll give it a try next time the water is up. Then I'll take the week off for a rest!

Class III, IV water...Wildwater race...Whitewater rodeo...Cash prizes...Spaghetti dinner

THE 2ND ANNUAL
APRIL 1 & 2, 1989

Win a whitewater open solo
playboat, the Mohawk XL-13



Schedule of Events

Saturday, April 1

10 am to 12 pm--Put in and cruise the river. The put-in is on Route 601 just north of Holsopple, PA. Watch for signs

1 pm--Cash prize Whitewater Rodeo at Scout Rapid. Classes for kayaks, decked canoes and open canoes.

6 pm--Stony Creek Celebration at Windber Recreation Park. Includes spaghetti dinner. Videos of day's events. Mohawk XL 13 (whitewater solo open playboat) drawing and prize give-away. Camping available at the park.

Sunday, April 2

11 am to 12:30 pm--Race registration at put-in.

1 pm--Sanctioned decked wildwater race and whitewater open canoe race. (This is also the site of the 1990 Whitewater Open Canoe Nationals!)

The Stony is easy to find:

The put-in is only 20 miles north of the PA turnpike, just off Route 219 and 50 miles south of Interstate 80. It is about 10 miles east of Johnstown, PA.

Whitewater clubs--Schedule this as a weekend trip!

Choosing a custom boat

With dozens of models to choose from, finding the boat best suited to your paddling style and river preference demands a basic knowledge of how various designs function.

By Chris Koll
Editor

In one of William Nealy's early whitewater cartoons, a pair of boaters are pictured standing on a bluff surveying a rapid below. Behind them, porters struggle up the slope, staggering under burdens of various kayaks and paddles.

"Think I'll start out with a WSL-9 and a Kober," explains one boater to the other, "and switch to a Mark VI and my Illiad for that hole....**CADDY!**"

Appropriately, the cartoon is entitled, "Kayaking on Fantasy Island." A paddler might often wish he owned a specific design of kayak or canoe to suit conditions on a particular river, but the cost of purchasing a fleet of different boats makes the possibility of matching boat to river an expensive luxury.

The cartoon is especially relevant in regard to the world of custom-built whitewater boats where specialization of design has produced dozens of different models—each geared toward specific boating styles.

Ten years ago, kayaks and canoes were identified by two generic labels: they were either race boats or playboats. Selecting a whitewater boat



At one time, all of the kayaks pictured above would have been labeled as "squirt boats." But while all these models have the ability to perform a pivot turn, their design and appropriate uses are vastly different. From left to right: the Vulcan and ProJet, both squirt kayaks; Falcon, cruising squirt kayak; Scream'n Meanie, creek boat; Vampire, a creek and cruising combination.

was not particularly difficult: there weren't many options.

Today's paddlers are faced with a series of difficult choices: there are race boats, squirt boats, cruising boats, cruising squirt boats and creek boats. Even when a boater settles on a particular model, he must then decide upon custom fitting options—cutting or chopping the hull—which will play a significant role in determining the boat's ulti-

mate performance. He needs to establish the lay-up of the boat, a condition which will effect the boat's durability and price. Finally, there's the issue of cosmetics: mono-colored decks, metal-flaked decks, exotic designs, colored hulls...

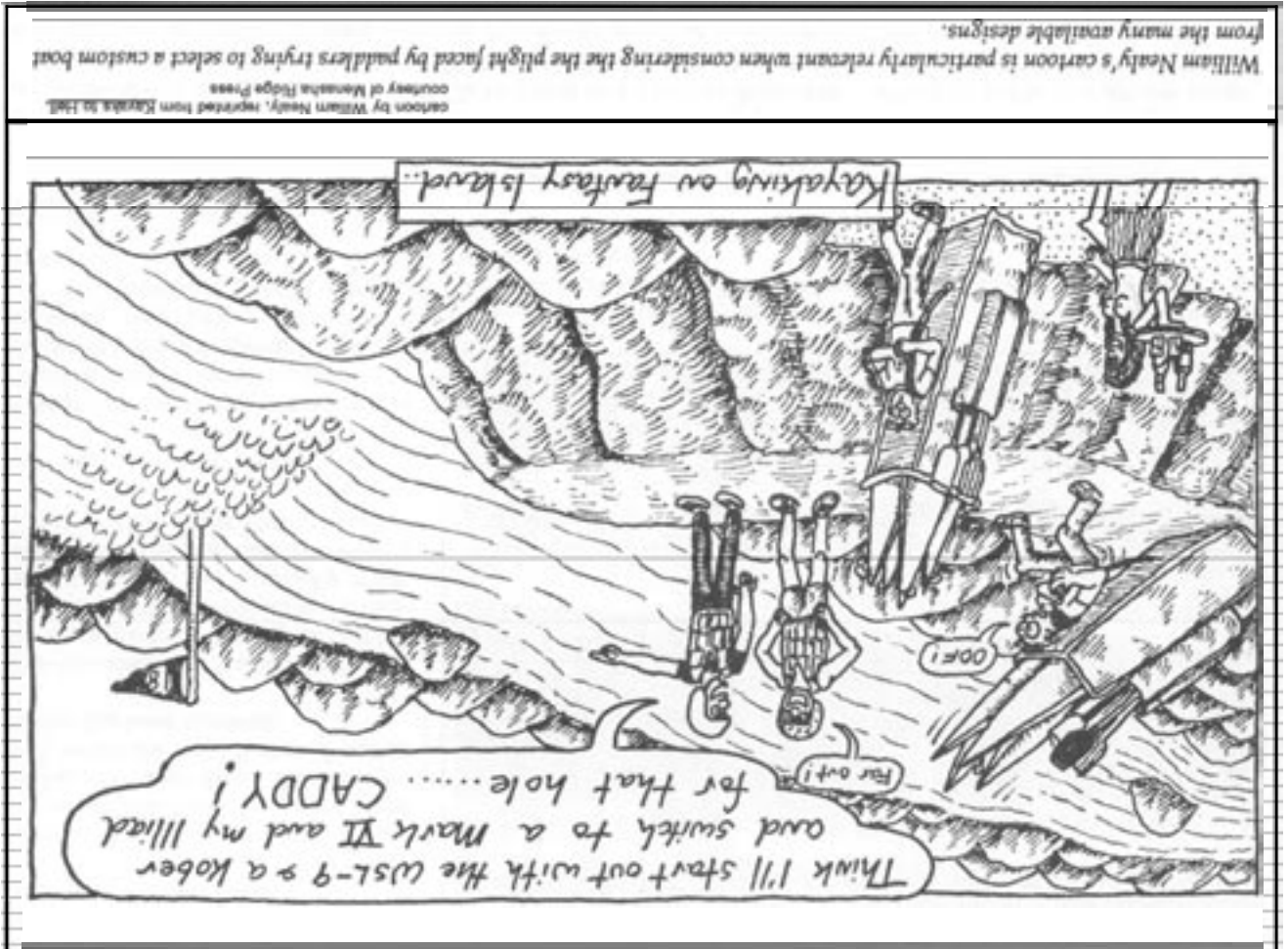
It's enough to make a paddler pull out his hair, or maybe throw up his hands and yell...**"CADDY!"**

"You know, Jess Wittemore once told me, 'There really aren't any bad boat designs.' And when you think about it—that's really true. For every design there's somebody out there who's going to enjoy paddling it."

William Neely's cartoon is particularly from the many available designs.

designers have demanded more from their boat designs. They want boats that squirt, blast, mystify, run gates, negotiate big water, run steep creeks and cruise quickly from top to bottom. Boat designers have accommodated them. There are designs that perform all of the above exceptions well. The rub is: It's impossible to build a boat that does all of the above.

Rail—the line where the flat bottom of the hull starts to contour toward the deck. A sharp rail refers to an abrupt upward angle while a soft rail indicates a gradual, curved arc toward the deck.



site of a locking hull. Generally floating hulls have very soft rails.

Rocker—the amount of curve to the bottom of the hull's long axis. Hard rocker refers a good deal of **curve** to the hull while the term flattened means rocker has been removed.

Cut—The amount of **hull** removed along the seam line from the original mold to customize a boat's volume to the individual paddler. Cut is usually measured in quarters of an inch. Therefore, a 3/4 cut indicates that 3/4 of an inch of the hull has been sliced from the boat before the deck is seamed in place.

Layup—boats are composed of various combinations of fiberglass, kevlar and polyester layers using either vinylester or epoxy resin. **Layup** selection is a process of balancing weight, strength and price.

There! That wasn't so bad, was it?

Humans have a natural tendency to categorize objects. It helps us define the world around us.

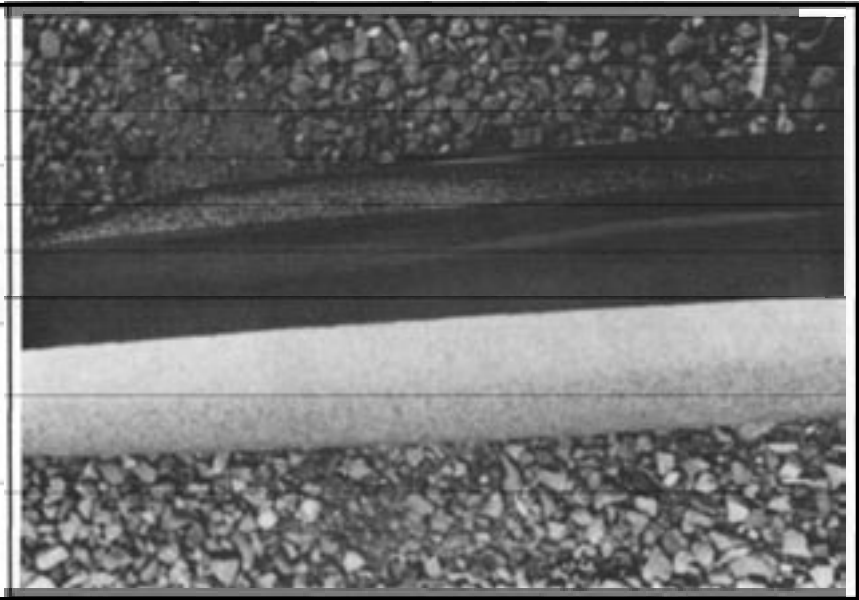
Unfortunately, most objects **are** not neatly categorized—and boats are no exception. But in an effort to give some sort of perspective to the **range of** available custom boats, here are five labels that seem to fit the majority of whitewater craft out there today. Admittedly, these classes are generalizations and many designs fall into gray areas between them.

Squirt boats

By definition, you'd think a boat would qualify as a squirt kayak by its ability to perform a squirt--the river runner's term for a pivot turn. Accomplished by sinking a boat's rear up-stream edge into the current with a reverse sweep, a squirt enables a paddler to stand his boat on end and make quick turns by spinning on its axis.

Although Jess Wittemore deserves credit spreading squirt moves to the general river-running public, the maneuver was first discovered by racers in their low-volume slalom crafts.

"It all started with race boats," Schreiner said. "Long before Jess burst onto the scene, I was up in Canada, up



A close-up look at a Falcon shows the defined rails and chine characteristic of a cruising squirt boat. Hard rails provide a "locking hull" effect that helps provide superior speed to boats of this design.

at Madawaska, and one of the people I was with said, 'You gotta come down and see this...' There was a guy named Dieter Hahn in a Lettman Beavertail. He was paddling forward and standing it up on its tail. That was three or four years before Jess was well known."

Wittemore observed the same phenomenon while paddling with Washington, D.C. racers and later started the squirting craze with his line of boats based on racing designs. But while the classic designs developed by Wittemore were the first boats to be known as "squirt" kayaks, they no longer bear that designation.

It's not that Wittemore boats don't perform bow and stern pivots, blast **and** splat—but starting with the Arc, West Virginian Jim Snyder changed the direction of squirt boat design by launching a series of designs that ultimately resulted in **today's** hottest squirt model, the ProJet.

"Jim went through a progression of 16 plugs before finally developing the ProJet," Schreiner said. "When you consider the time it takes to build a plug, that's a tremendous amount of work. There was the Arc, the Plane, the Jet and a whole lot of boats in between. But right now, the ProJet is the **high end** of the squirt boats—it's the Porsche of squirt boats."

The Snyder line of kayaks wrested the title of "squirt boat" away from the Wittemore designs by their ability to perform a greater range of subsurface moves and because of the vast differences of design philosophy between the two boat builders. Snyder and Wittemore boats are simply too diverse to be lumped under a single label.

So, using the ProJet as a model, was is a squirt boat?

Basically, squirt boats are **short**—between 10 and 11 feet. They have floating hulls with hard rocker and are cut so the **edge** is at or below the waterline.

While precursors of the ProJet, like the Jet, offered a flat deck and sharp edges, current squirt boats usually feature concave decks and **radi**-used edges.

"The concave deck and the radiused edges act like an airplane wing," Schreiner said. "When you run water over it, it provides extra lift. That's a suggestion John Lawson made to Jimmy and he incorporated it into the ProJet."

Although the ProJet outsells all other kayaks built by New Wave 2:1, there are many other models of squirt boats that share the same basic design criteria but offers subtle differences. The Vulcan, a Lawson design, is a little

larger and wider and attracts larger paddler; Snyder's Pro-Magnum qualifies as a squirt craft when it's chopped to squirt boat length; even Wittemore has entered a boat in this arena with his new Cyborg.

Schreiner is a noted designer himself and has developed the Demon series of boats. More noted for its ability to squirt and blast, with the proper cut, the Demon III is an able squirt boat.

And while New Wave is the country's largest manufacturer, squirt boats are also available from Watauga Laminates of Banner Elk, North Carolina. Headed by Chase Ambler, Watauga produces the Jet, and Mobius Thruster and the Extra Jet.

Despite the proliferation of new designs, it is clear that Snyder's ProJet remains the runaway favorite among squirt boaters...that is until this month when New Wave begins taking orders for his latest design: the T-Bird. With radiused edges, higher knee bumps, fancy adjustable foot rests and a recessed cockpit, Schreiner looks for the T-Bird to quickly emerge as one of the premier squirt boat designs.

Although performance varies from model to model, paddlers can expect to find certain common characteristics:

(1) The hard rocker makes a squirt boat exceptionally easy to turn. The drawback to hard rocker is hull speed—squirt boats are notoriously slow and difficult to paddle upstream.

(2) The floating hull allows the paddler to turn by simply shifting his weight—great when cranking turns back and forth across the face of a surfing wave. The drawback is that floating hulls are extremely tippy tough to control in pushy water.

(3) The extreme cut of a squirt boat expedites squirt maneuvers and allows a boater to take advantage of subsurface maneuvers. The disadvantage is that the low volume boats push through the water reducing speed. Squirt boaters actually need to paddle their boat on edge to prevent the nose from diving.

(4) The short length makes squirt boats more maneuverable and quicker turning but again, the reduced water line makes for a slower boat.



Basic design differences between squirt boats and cruising squirt boats are apparent in this comparison. Note the shorter length and harder long-axis rocker of the Vulcan and ProJet on the left. A closer inspection also reveals the rounded "floating hull" of the squirt boats while the Falcon (right) is built with hard rails.

Cruising Squirt Boats

Squirt boats aren't for everyone or for every occasion. Paddle a river with long flat water stretches or attempt to paddle upstream against a strong current, and a squirt boat's short-

comings are revealed. They are notoriously slow.

But for paddlers who desire the ability to utilize the stern pivot turn, or in some models, even the bow pivot—there is the cruising squirt boat.

Wittemore designs dominate

this category. Quite simply, there are no boats that squirt as well without sacrificing speed as Wittemore's four classic designs—the Falcon, Sylon, Blaster and Surge.

"Jesse began by taking race boats and modifying them," **Schreiner** said. "The Falcon was the first one, he reduced the rocker to make it flatter and added the wings and the point. Then came the Sylon and the Blaster. He took the hard rocker out of the Blaster and moved the cockpit toward the bow.

"Then there was the Surge. It was **flattened** even more making it harder to turn—you have to rely on a pivot—but the result was an extremely fast boat. It's great for crashing from to eddy to eddy."

What are the characteristics of a cruising squirt boat?

(1) The boat is full length (13'-2") providing the long waterline for added hull speed. The downside of a full length boat, of course, is loss of turning ability.

(2) Rocker is often removed from the hull's long axis. The absence of rocker adds speed and increases the

boat's ability to squirt. The downside, again, is reduction of spinning ability and also the tendency for the nose of a "flat" boat to dive while negotiating a steep drop.

(3) Hard rails with defined chines create a "**locking** hull" for superior speed and direction control in fast-moving water. Likewise, a boat with hard rails tends to be less "**tippy**" than a squirt boat with soft rails. However, the cruising squirt boat lacks the maneuverability of a floating hull.

(4) A cruising squirt boat is cut so the rear edge is at or near the waterline to facilitate squirting. The edges are usually hard and decks relatively flat.

Other than **Wittemore** designs, many former racing designs are now used as cruising squirt boats. The **Pri-jon 82** and **Whipper** series, with appropriate cuts, are quick down the river while retaining the ability to put their nose in the air.

Cruising boats

Among custom boat manufacturers, cruising boats don't enjoy wide popularity. Because the charac-

teristics of a cruising boat are similar to more durable and economical designs in plastic, many paddlers who desire this kind of boat simply opt for a kayak by **Perception** or **Hydra**.

Still, weight advantage of a glass boat proves attractive to many paddlers—especially women—and custom cruising kayaks is on the upswing.

Essentially, a cruising kayak is a middle-of-the-road kind of boat. It does a lot of things relatively well, but it lacks the high-end performance of the more specialized designs. What a cruiser does offer that is unavailable in other classifications is outstanding comfort for any sized paddler, ample storage room for multi-day tripping and large volume for paddlers who prefer to stay on top of the surface in big water.

The characteristics of a cruising boat are well known:

(1) A middle length of approximately 12 feet allows good turning ability while retaining some speed.

(2) Hard rocker further accentuates turning ability.

(3) Medium rails offers middle ground between a floating and locking

Buying tips:

Custom boats available from several sources

Where do you go to buy a custom kayak?

Basically, there are three sources:

(1) Buy direct. Most custom boat manufacturers will sell directly to their customers. Buying direct offers the advantage of having your boat built exactly to your specifications. A paddler's weight, inseam length, shoe size and expected performance characteristics determine the final "fit" of the boat—how much the hull is cut or chopped.

In addition, paddlers buying direct can order specific color and design of the boat's cosmetic finishes.

(2) Buy from a distributor. Many white-water specialty shops carry custom boats to satisfy the paddler who needs to touch and feel the product before he parts with cash. However, the paddler is limited to the range of cuts stocked by a distributor. A 140-pound paddler who buys a full-cut **Projet** expecting a boat that squirts with ease will be disappointed. Distributors that carry a design in a wide range of cuts are a good bet.

In addition, with direct-order lead times for popular designs running up to four months, buying from a distributor may be

the only way a boater can quickly acquire a particular model.

(3) Resale. Custom boats aren't for everyone. After one day in a squirt boat, many paddlers throw up their hands and slap a "for sale" sign on their kayak.

Consequently, boaters can often find great deals on hardly used boats. However, paddlers should take note of the cut and layup of the boat. Most manufacturers laminate a card bearing cut and layup specs on the hull inside the cockpit. Or just check the size of the person who's selling the boat. If he's 200 pounds and you weigh

120—and the boat was built specifically for him—shop elsewhere.

Custom boat manufacturers

New Wave, 2535 Roundtop Rd., Middletown, PA 17057. (717)944-6320

Phoenix, Berea, TN. 1-800-3540190

Seda Products, PO Box 997, Chula Vista, CA 92012.

(619)425-3222

Watauga Laminates, Rt. 4, Box 74, Banner Elk, NC 28604. (704)963-4093

Wilderness Systems, 1310 Starr Dr., High Point, NC 27260 (919)883-7410

hull.

(4) Radius edges produces a more forgiving boat as there are no sharp edges to catch.

(5) Adequate volume to carry provisions on multiday trips. Also, cruising boats place a great priority on a paddlers' comfort.

Paddlers have a wide variety of boat manufacturers from which to choose a cruising kayak. Phoenix specializes in an entire line of cruising kayaks while a number of Western boat builders caters to cruisers.

Creek boats

During the past five years, paddlers across the country have launched all-out assaults on steep mountain tributaries once considered unrunnable. Nicknamed "steep creekin'" by Appalachian boaters, the activity created a dilemma for paddlers who prefer custom kayaks.

Squirt boats proved too susceptible to swift current in tight places and tended to submerge during critical junctures. Cruising squirt boats were too long to fit into tiny eddies and their low-volume bows plunged in steep drops. Cruising boats supplied adequate volume, but didn't allow boaters the option of squirt moves to make quick pivot turns.

Not surprisingly, custom boat designers have moved to fill the void. Enter the creek boat:

'It's generally short, usually between 11 and 12 feet in length, for moving into tight spots,' Schreiner said. 'It has a round bow for buoyancy so it doesn't plunge when going over steep drops but a squirtable stern so boaters are still able to use some of their squirt moves. Another characteristic is they generally have a locking hull for strong moves you want to make. When you want to do that ferry, you can do it and not get washed out.'

One of the first custom creek boat designs is the Fit by Snyder. But Snyder has improved upon his initial design with the **Scream'n Meanie** which promises, if advance orders are any indication, to be one of New Wave's largest selling models during the 1989.

What's the sudden attraction? Are that many boaters turning into

creekers? Not really. But in developing a boat suitable for running steep creeks, designers have inadvertently developed a boat that finds middle ground between the high end performance of the squirting boats and comfort and consistency of the larger volume cruisers.

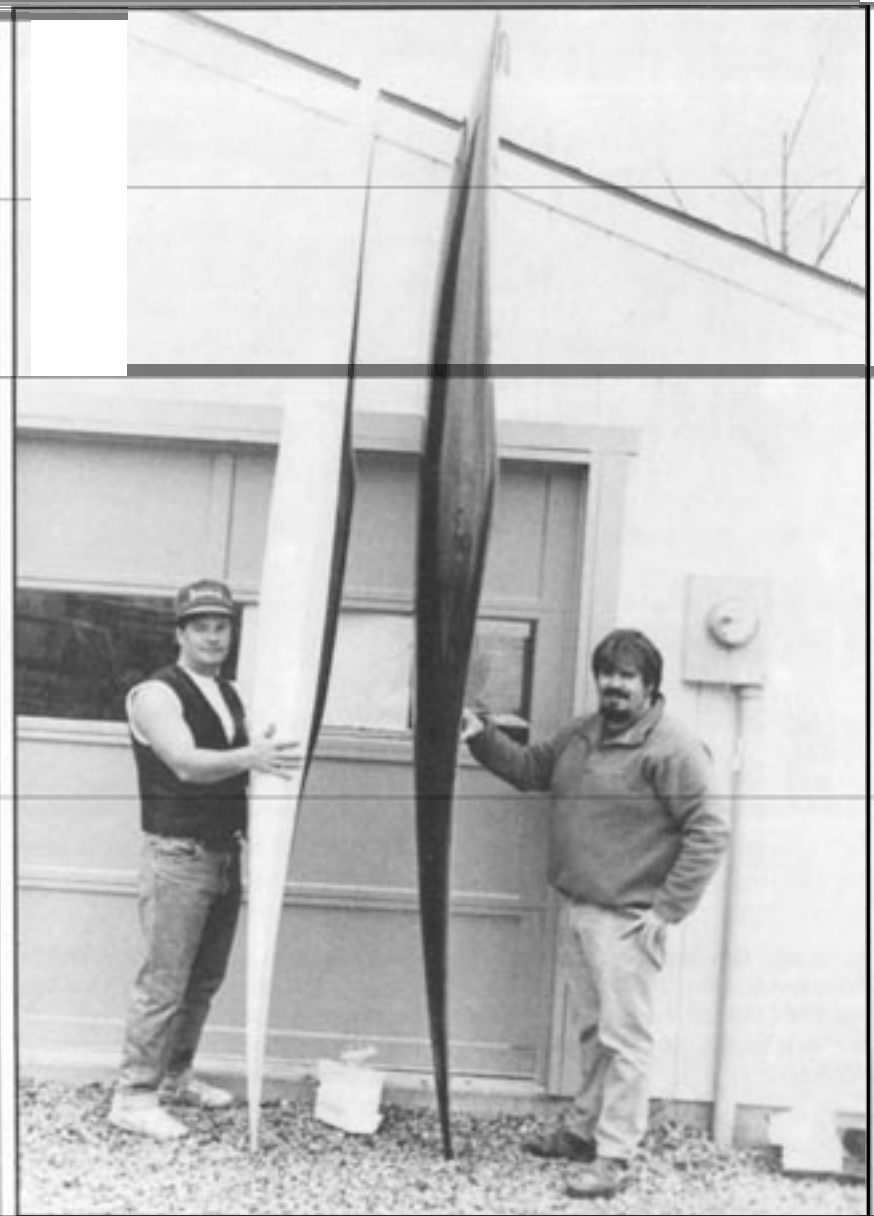
The creek boat's scorecard looks like this:

(1) Moderately defined rails provide the stability and speed associated with a locking hull.

(2) The short length helps offset the loss of turning ability that comes a locking hull and allows the boat to fit into the small eddies of tiny creeks.

(3) A rounded bow cut well above the waterline and slightly radius front edges for buoyancy combined with a bigger rear cut and harder edges to enhance the ability to squirt.

Snyder is not the only designer to offer creek boats. **Lawson's Vampire**, a difficult boat to categorize, seems



Creek boats are rapidly becoming some of the most requested custom designs. Creek boats can be distinguished by their short length, moderate rocker and defined rails. While the flat stem allows squirt moves, the bow offers more volume for buoyancy while descending steep drops. The **Scream'n Meanie** (left) was designed specifically as a creek boat while the **Vampire** (right) is a slightly larger kayak with many creek boat characteristics.



In the foreground of the New Wave workshop, a custom deck to a Vulcan awaits seaming while in the rear, foam pillars are cut for a low-volume kayak.

to fit into this category. Also, one of Friendsville, Maryland's premier creekers, Phil Coleman, has recently unveiled the New Vision—his entry into the steep creek arena.

Race boats

Unlike other river craft, race boat specifications are determined not only by performance but by rigid IFC length and width criteria. Basically, race boats have evolved with a single purpose in mind: to tear through a course

of slalom gates as quickly as possible.

The acquisition of a race boat for general river-running is questionable. The paddler might be better served by a cruising squirt boat. However, characteristics of a race boat are:

- (1) Full (13'-2") length.
- (2) Extremely hard rails for maximum hull speed.
- (3) Sharp edges cut close to the water to avoid hitting gate poles.

C-boats

While decked canoes don't offer

the number of models as kayaks, C-boat designs share many of the same characteristics of five categories of kayaks.

Pete Zurflieh of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania has designed a number of performance canoes including the Edge, the C-boaters answer to the Jet. In addition, Zurflieh's Descender provides the C-boater a craft for steep creeking.

Not surprisingly, many of the custom C-boat designs available are either current or former racing boats. With the USA dominating world canoe racing, state-of-the-art designs by champions such as David Hearn dominate custom boat canoe offerings.

Keep in mind that preceding categories are extremely arbitrary. The entire purpose of custom boats is that no two boats are exactly alike--and a particular cut or other modification could easily allow a design to jump from one classification to another.

But why further complicate the issue. The best test is simply jump into as many boats as possible and buy the one you like best.

Then you can start saving for your next design...

"CADDY!"





Unsolicited advice

You've been paddling a plastic kayak for several years and now you're shopping for a custom boat—looking to move up to some of the weight and specialized performance advantages offered by fiberglass and kevlar.

Now—what boat should you buy?

According to sales figures of New Wave, one of the country's leading custom boat manufacturers, paddlers are purchasing Projets by a 2:1 margin over all other designs.

But as the accompanying story explains, before a paddler can make an intelligent boat-buying decision, he first must take a hard look at the style of boating and kind of water he prefers. A squirt boat may not be the answer.

Over the past several years, I have encountered many paddlers who recently purchased a Projet. And they like it—within certain limitations...like on low-water, class III rivers. But for many Projet owners, when Gauley season comes around, they're back in their plastic boats.

That's fine for paddlers who can afford multiple boats, but what about the person looking to buy a custom boat as their primary river craft. Well, for my money, I'd go with a Sylon. As a cruising squirt boat, the Sylon offers the combination of good speed, comfort and stability along with the ability to squirt. And what's more important, it's a boat you can feel comfortable on practically any river.

Personally, I own a Sylon, Falcon, Magnum and a Sabre—and I like them all. If I could afford it, I'd also buy a Projet and a Screaming Meanie—I think I'd like them, too.

But if I had to own just one custom kayak—one to play on the rivers from the Gauley to the Big Sandy to the Cheat or Black—it would be the Sylon.



A front-end view of a variety of custom boats shows the hull differences between various designs. The second boat from the top shows hard rails and defined chines while the Projet, fifth from the top, features a rounded "floating hull." The Scream'n Meanie, third from top, provides some middle ground.

continue using the river for outdoor recreation.

River conservationists
would have a better handle

Although National Register status as we envision it would not provide extensive protection as does the wild and scenic rivers system, rivers on the Register would at least have some official status and recognition.

River conservationists would have a better handle and focus than now exists to prevent dams, diversions and other forms of river abuse from proceeding (as they do now) with little or no consideration of their possible harmful effects. The establishment of a National Register would also help educate the public about the values involved and the need to preserve this special type of resource.

The job ahead

The database for whitewater rivers has already been prepared by AWA. What is needed to get this idea off the ground is a grass roots effort by whitewater river conservationists nationwide to convince the Park Service and the Congress that a National Register of Whitewater Rivers is a good idea.

The protection stage

If a National Register is established and if it develops a high degree of recognition, it may also be possible to consider a third stage beyond the database and recognition stages.

This would require a campaign of public education to generate the awareness that whitewater rivers are important and valuable natural resources deserving of some level of governmental protection. At that point, Congress may be willing to put in place some legislation to encourage some level of preservation of these rivers.

Encouraging preservation
of National Register rivers

The level of preservation and government involvement for rivers would not be as extensive as that provided by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. That Act is best adapted to unspoiled rivers on Federal land.

For private lands, the level of protection could be similar to that available to other natural resources (such as historic properties) and sensitive private land areas (such as coastal barrier

islands) which are widely recognized as worthy of recognition and protection.

There are various ways in which the Federal government can encourage State and local governments to take actions to preserve the recreational values of National Register rivers. One important element would be financial incentives.

State preservation projects (including scenic easement purchases) could be a priority for State grants now provided under the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Or the Federal share of these grants could be greater if a National Register river was involved. Federal and State tax incentives for river conservation could also be incorporated into the protection plan.

Another key protection would cover potential damage by Federal and State government projects and permits. This is often referred to as "consistency" protection. (The best known model is the Coastal Zone Protection Act.) For example, a Federal law could specify that before the government issues federal licenses or spends federal dollars on projects adversely affecting National Register rivers it must first take into account the effects on the river. (This would be similar to the National Historic Preservation Act.)

Additional protection short of an absolute ban on harmful projects may also be desirable. For example, Federal law could specify that where a project could degrade the use of a river for whitewater recreation, the project could proceed only after a finding is made that there is no feasible (and less environmentally harmful) alternative.

This would be similar to provisions of the Department of Transportation Act governing the building of highways through State and local parkland or historic sites. In addition, it would be wise to require that where a damaging project does go ahead, the damage be mitigated as much as feasible.

No extensive government
involvement if public lands not
involved

The types and level of protection envisioned for rivers on the National Register could vary depending on whether the river flowed through public or private lands.

The types of protection afforded

to National Register rivers flowing through private lands could be quite different than that for National Register rivers already within Federal lands (such as national forests, parks, etc). For private-land rivers, there would be no governmental land acquisition, no governmental management of private noncommercial river use, and no Federal restrictions on property use bordering the river. Any land-use restrictions would have to be established by local or State governments or willingly agreed to by land owners in exchange for tax benefits or other compensation and privileges.

For National Register Rivers flowing through public lands, a higher degree of protection could be provided. In addition, the wild and scenic river system, the Wilderness Act, or national park designation would provide means of affording the kind of most extensive protection that is appropriate and desirable.

Some protection
for many rivers

Relying only on local governments for land-use management for private-land rivers on the National Register could leave them open to some environmental degradation, particularly from developments which do not require Federal permits. However, a commitment by the local government to ensure appropriate protection should be a precondition to inclusion in the Register.

Moreover, the Register would be an addition to the wild and scenic system, not a replacement for it. For the "crown jewels" which meet the standards of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, that system would still be available. However, inclusion in that system would be rare for private-land rivers (as it is today). The types of governmental controls and management used in that system are not appropriate for hundreds of private-land rivers. And Federal designation of those rivers requires a powerful constituency.

A more flexible tool
for river protection

The National Register concept provides an additional and flexible river conservation tool. In the arsenal of river protection weapons, there is now only one effective firearm--wild and scenic

designation. With designation comes Federal management and land acquisition. This is simply not feasible for a large number of rivers. For some river conservation needs, wild and scenic designation is like a nuclear bomb when a smaller caliber weapon would suffice.

With only a moderate Federal role and without comprehensive "wilderness" type protection, more rivers flowing through private lands could be protected. This could be done without government ownership and management.

Additionally, for rivers which should be designated as wild and scenic, inclusion in the Register could be both (1) an interim step toward more comprehensive protection at a later time, and (2) a way to focus public attention on the preservation alternative. It could also force meaningful consideration of that alternative before irreversible actions permanently foreclose preservation of the recreational values.

Other types of valuable river resources

Whitewater rivers are obviously only one among several categories of scarce and valuable river resources

deserving of governmental recognition and attention. AWA is proposing a register of whitewater resources **because** these resources are most important to our constituency and **because** we have expert information about them in our

whitewater rivers inventory. The register concept could work just as well for other important river categories, such as blue ribbon trout streams or outstanding scenic river segments characterized by waterfalls or deep gorges.

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Controversy remains despite Great Falls race cancellation

Washington D.C. area paddlers reading the Washington Post Sunday, October 23 may have been startled by a provocative headline, "Race Organizers Paddling Rapidly Toward Showdown with the Park Service." The article told about the plans of racer Eric Jackson to stage a sponsored, highly publicized slalom race down the Virginiaside of Great Falls of the Potomac. The Park Service was quoted as being very negative on the idea.

On October 27, Canoe Cruisers Association Potomac River Committee Co-Chairperson Mac Thornton, Park Service Liaison John S. Thompson, US Team Coach Bill Endicott, and racers Davey Hearn and Eric Jackson met with Park Superintendent John Byrne to explore the issues surrounding Great Falls paddling.

The meeting was a frank and productive exchange of views, and not a "showdown" as hyped by the Post. Mr. Byrne was and is concerned about the possibility of novices underestimating the degree of skill needed to paddle the Falls, although he does recognize the value of the Falls as a recreational opportunity for highly skilled paddlers. He is very concerned about publicity of Falls paddling, and he is studying all the Park's legal options with respect to Falls paddling.

Later in the week, Eric Jackson made the judgement to cancel the event for a number of reasons, Park Service concerns being one.

The Canoe Cruisers Association has a strong position of long standing on this issue, as expressed in a letter of March 28, 1986 to the Park Service by Mac Thornton. CCA staunchly defends the right of expert, qualified boaters to paddle Great Falls. At the same time, CCA regards Great Falls as a Class VI (risk of life) rapid which should only be attempted by experts after careful study and with appropriate safety precautions.

CCA does not make judgments as to who is and who is not qualified to

run the Falls. In addition, out of sensitivity for the concerns of the Park Service, CCA is opposed to local publicity of Falls running, and believes the Falls should only be run in the early morning (before 9 am) and in the evenings when the Park is not crowded. Paddlers should be aware that putting in the Potomac above Great Falls on the Virginia side is not permitted, and that violators are subject to arrest.

While CCA believes that paddlers should cooperate with the Park's desire to minimize public exposure to Great Falls runs, not all paddlers agree with this position. Over the last 12 years since Great Falls was first run, there is no indication of a "monkey see, monkey do" problem. It is believed that Great Falls has been run by over 70 informed paddlers, many hundreds and probably over a thousand times total without any serious injuries or any fatalities.

racine cont.

paddlers of all levels to try different boats. The US doesn't have these advantages, but also doesn't have the restrictions.

"The French system is clearly the best for all paddlers," Senelier said. "We still have some ground to make-- the fishing organization still has some more cardholders than the paddling Federation; even though the total numbers are similar.

"The French system is less elitist," Senelier said. "The French system is more suited for all the paddlers, and with so many paddlers, we are sure to have champions. However, there are some problems. The system has such control over each paddler that when something goes wrong, our paddlers are less accustomed to dealing with it. The US paddlers are completely invested in their racing--partly because

Over this same period, four uninformed, novice paddlers have perished in Great Falls. In 1979, three rafters put in above the Falls and two died. Interviews with the survivor showed that the group had no idea where they were; they did not know of the existence of the Falls. In 1983, a father and son put in at River Bend (above Great Falls) and got too close to the Great Falls Aqueduct Dam. They were swept over and the father died in the Falls. Finally, in 1986, two boys put in a raft from the upper parking lot in Great Falls Park and went over the Falls with one boy dying.

Interviews with the survivor revealed that they did not know they were putting in above the Falls. Thus, the data is that (1) Great Falls is anything but a deathtrap for informed boaters, and (2) there is no indication that "monkey see, monkey do" behavior has ever occurred.

of the financial commitment. French paddlers don't have to make such financial sacrifices."

Competing against the massive European systems has helped unify the US team. And ten years of international experience has made David Hearn a strong advocate of the flexibility the US has offered him.

"Having to fend for ourselves is good in a way," Hearn said. "We need to just keep looking ahead to what our next big advantage will be. I am not sure what it is now, but I am sure something will turn up. I think it makes us a little bit hungrier, not having coaches looking after our every move. Maybe that is better. It is certainly fun to race against paddlers who have been over coached, over videoed, and over managed."

Massero evaluates West Coast hydro sites

AWA hydro site evaluator, Steve Massaro, returned in early November from a 6 week, 14,000 mile odyssey assessing the threat of small hydro development on and opportunities of relicensing for Pacific Coast and Idaho rivers.

Late in October, Steve returned, laden with river inventory documents, hundreds of photographs, interviews with three dozen activists and state and federal bureaucrats and a thorough knowledge of key rivers deserving AWA focus.

Steve was authorized to visit and photograph only those hydro sites where whitewater or superb scenery are involved which will or could be changed as the result of permitting new developments or relicensing old ones. He didn't visit dams which have been fought about for years where a big photo library already exists.

In general, his trip was to accomplish four tasks:

1. Meet and motivate local paddlers regarding AWA.
2. Locate and characterize key relicensing sites and river inventory data.
3. Explain to **concerned** activists procedures used by AWA to fight dams.
4. Involve local activists with AWA.

Steve accomplished all these objectives and more. He was nearly hit by a train and successfully interrupted a robbery. He even came in under budget, except for the several thousand extra miles he put on his car crisscrossing the mountains of the western states. (Hydro sites are further apart out than they are out East!)

Announcing:

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The next edition of the River Safety Report, edited by Charlie Walbridge, is expected to be published by the American Canoe Association in the spring of 1989. Containing reports of dozens of accidents and near misses, it has a **wealth** of information which can be used by individual paddlers to keep out of trouble. Most of these reports have not been circulated widely, and are not available anywhere else. We need your support to get this material printed!

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Anyone ordering the new River Safety Report before February 28th can receive an equal number of copies of the previous edition for only \$2.00 each. These must be requested at the time of purchase. Advance payment only, please.

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Boating "in the now"

A sensitive paddler's journey

I visited a lady friend the other evening. She was deeply engrossed in the reading of a book as I walked in the house. I glanced at the title. It was "Learning to Live in the Now" or "The Art of Living in the Now" or some similar kind of nonsense.

She looked up in time to see me fail to hide a guffaw.

"It's a good book," she protested. "The author makes a lot of important points. I tend to live in the past or the future. I'm learning from this book."

Now, hey, I'm a **modern-thinking** kind of guy. I've been known to shed a public tear at sad **movies--especially** when I find the popcorn's finished. Alan Alda and I must have much in common, I mean, like I'm typing this on an IBM computer. And in a bar when the lights go up at closing time, I've never been afraid to cut through the macho bull and show a little tenderness...

But I told her, this is the **Adirondacks**, baby, not **California** or someplace. I mean, like, for a paddler during the winter in **upstate New York**, you don't have a choice but living in the past or future. The now is five feet of snow in the woods, ice two feet **thick** on the ponds and lakes, a six-pack chilling out on the porch and the **Super Bowl** on the tube.

Clearly in a snit, my friend placed the book down sharply on the side table. From the dust jacket, the author smiled benignly at me.

"That's just your problem," my friend replied. "Your perception of the now is so limited. In your mind, you could be on the water now. Imagine yourself on the water, and then change all the bad things you've done in the past. You could improve your boating skills without leaving this room."

Well, I simply scratched my head. Maybe she had something. So, I sat down and did my best to put water on my brain and live in the now, as it were. I conjured up a vision of how I should boat, and every time I did something right, I wrote it down--resolution like--so I wouldn't forget what I was learning in the now later on when the now was in the past:

(1) In the now I scouted rapids from shore. Sometimes even when I didn't have to take a leak.

(2) In the now I was not influenced by other paddlers into running dangerous drops. Unless they were attractive women, or if they were going to take my picture, or if they ran it first in a fiberglass boat, or if they ran it at all in a Jeti.

(3) In the now I helped instruct novice paddlers at roll sessions. I was particularly attentive to female paddlers in two piece **bathing** suits as they practiced hip snaps.

(4) In the now I took better care of my equipment. I always removed my **drysuit** from the back of my truck except, of course, when it looked like rain and I'd let it remain for cleaning.

(5) In the now I ambitiously patched the Silon, **ProMagnum** and Sabre kayaks that have cluttered the garage, unused for two years, for want of repair. They were unable to fit into the Goodwill Box along with the other two damaged Sabres, Sonnet and a Mirage.

(6) In the now I packed a nutritious lunch for long days on the river. I assiduously assembled an all-natural trail mix of unsalted nuts, dried fruit and

whole-grain crackers (no **M&Ms** and corn chex here, **bub!**), canapes of sharp cheddar and cream cheese, peeled carrots and apple slices to be served on a checkered tablecloth spread over a flat rock and washed down with draughts of Perrier. And once in a while, in the now, I even remembered to take the lunch out of the shuttle vehicle so I have it with me on the river. More often than not, though I end up **splitting a Snickers** and a Budweiser with a buddy.

(7) In the now, I appreciated the scenic splendor of the river corridor as much as I do the actual whitewater boating. I blew off a day of boating during a **Gauley** trip to hike the New River Gorge. I opted to tour **Canaan Valley** instead of running the Blackwater at a prime level. I admired fall foliage on the Fulton Chain of Lakes in an open canoe rather than plunging down the Bottom Moose. I might add, in my version of the now, there were eight days a week...

Suddenly I was shaken out of my reverie by the lady's hand on my shoulder.

"I can just tell it's working for you," she said. "In your mind, you're boating in the now. Isn't it so exciting? Isn't it so real?"

Well, I confessed, yes--it was. And just to prove how authentic my imaginary paddling trip had been, I capped it off with my customary **post-paddling** routine:

I sucked down a single beer and fell fast asleep on her couch.

By Gary Carlson, a sensitive kind of guy who often "lives in the now"--especially on Sunday mornings when he can't remember Saturday night, anyway.



*Take
me
to
the
river...*

*drop
me
in
the
water...*

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