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american whitewater

January / February 2002



CANADA

Feature page 45

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american whitewater

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Journal of the American Whitewater

Volume XLII, No. 1

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Forum

Ch...ch...ch...CHANGES!

"Turn and face the strange changes." David Bowie

• By Bob Gedekoh

Beginning with this issue I will be sharing the editorship of **American Whitewater** with my young friend Ambrose Tuscano. After ten years alone at the helm of this peculiar ship, I welcome the company. This means that I will have more time to think, more time to write my own articles, more time to get wasted and raise hell, more time to chase women and, most importantly, more time to kayak. And it means that Ambrose will have less time to do all of those things, which is good, because those things were starting to get him into trouble!

Ambrose's father and I started kayaking together about fifteen years ago. Back then Ambrose didn't want much to do with whitewater. All he wanted to do was play hockey. Naturally, we figured he was going to grow up to be a real wuss. Then one spring day when he was about sixteen, Ambrose decided that he wanted to learn to kayak. A week later he paddled the Upper Yough. About a week after that it became obvious that he was more fearless and a far better paddler than his dad. It took Ambrose a little longer than that to get better than me. (But not much.)

Since then Ambrose has paddled rivers all over the country. Standing 6'7" with size 18 feet,

Ambrose is a little too big for Tricky Whu, but he is just the right size for extreme boating, since he is far too big to fit into any siphons. He spent last summer following Roc Skribar down classic Class V runs in California, then went slumming and paddled the Grand Canyon this fall. Now he is back in the Sierras, working in the ski industry (ski bum) and waiting for the rivers to rise so he can set a world record by running a falls six inches higher than the one Tao ran.

Ambrose graduated from Davidson College last spring with a major in Field Biology. (Aside to certain WVU students who kayak, it only took him four years.) As best I can tell he minored in paddling the Green River. He spent a semester doing fieldwork (and, of course, kayaking) in Costa Rica. Like his parents, Ambrose is a granola eating vegetarian tree-hugger. But he does drink Coke when they aren't around. He is also one of the world's foremost experts on the mechanics of bluebird fornication.

Ambrose is a devoted fan of Britney Spears and the World Wrestling Federation. In fact, he recently had a picture of Britney and The Rock tattooed on his hind end.

Ambrose is single, very smart, and good look-

ing enough for most normal purposes, but he does have a girlfriend and she has a gun and knows how to use it.

Ambrose is no stranger to the pages of **American Whitewater**. He has contributed several articles and served as an Associate Editor for about a year. He is Bobby Miller's personal editor and he aspires some day to be asked to join Bobby Miller's posse. Ambrose really loves poems about whitewater and hopes that you will all send him some to edit. Unlike me, Ambrose actually knows when it is appropriate to use a semi-colon.

The Staff and members of the American Whitewater Board are also very excited that Ambrose has agreed to come on board as Co-Editor of this magazine because, like me, Ambrose will work for nothing. Besides, they think he is less perverted than I am and will be a good influence on the magazine and me. They think he will keep me from publishing nasty things. Boy, are they in for a big surprise. Wait till they read his first Forum! You won't find stuff like that in Paddler!

As for me, I'm really looking forward to our collaboration. Between the two of us we should be able to come up with all sorts of wild and twisted ideas. By this time next year **American Whitewater** will be the most talked about whitewater magazine in the world. And quite possibly every hair on AW Executive Director Risa Shimoda's head will be white as snow!

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Hairy Peter

• By Ambrose Tuscano

Hairy Peter was the kind of man who attracted attention wherever he went—and it wasn't just his size either. He seemed to rub people the wrong way; you might say he was a bit coarse. It was not uncommon to find him at the take-out of a popular river in the midst of a crowd of p\$%%ed off boaters. The big Hairy Peter, a head taller than the rest, would gesture cockily at his fellow paddlers, until they looked like a pack of rabid dogs with hackles raised.

Now, what, you might ask, could one boater say that could offend his comrades? Well with Hairy, it could be any of a laundry list of issues that might drive his mild-mannered boating partners to sputtering and speaking in tongues. Sometimes it was something as innocent as, "Tell me you really believe the Cheat's a better run today than it was fifteen years ago."

"But Hairy," ableding-heart boater would protest in disbelief, "back then the Cheat was the dirtiest river in the east."

With a patronizing smile Hairy would say, "Yeah, but Coliseum was so much better."

What really got his friends' collective goat, however, was his stance on dams. His views even managed to offend boaters who fell into the moderate Republican camp. After returning from a commercial trip down the Grand Canyon, Hairy was heard to claim that, as marvelous as the Canyon was, he was more impressed with the Hoover Dam, just downstream. "Have you guys ever seen that thing," he asked in awe. "To me it's the greatest achievement of mankind. It's a symbol of our domination of the earth."

To Hairy Peter, a dammed run was just as good as a free-flowing one. "Take the North Fork of the Blackwater, for instance," he would argue, "it's a great run, but the Narrows of the Green's better because it runs all summer." It was Hairy's view that boaters should stop fighting with power companies. "Instead," he said, "we should get down on our knees and thank them for dependable water." In his opinion, there was a natural balance to the world of whitewater: dams would be built for profit and groups like American Whitewater would fight their construction and nag at their operators for recreational releases. There was no need to interfere at all, he would say, just let these forces battle it out and reap the benefits.

All of this tedious background on Hairy Peter is necessary only to explain how, at the age of 24, he found himself alienated from all of his potential boating partners on the entire east coast. He had begun boating in upstate New York, been forced by lack of friends

AND THE PORCELAIN THRONE



to Morgantown, fled West Virginia for Asheville and finally reached his ultimate, friendless dilemma: boating alone was dangerous. The day this point became painfully obvious to him he was dragging his boat down to the put-in trail to the Green for another lonely solo run. Suddenly he heard a rumbling sound coming from up the hill. He turned around just in time to dodge a kayak, skipping madly down the trail. As he stood there frozen in shock another boat came flying out of the trees to his right, sailed off the bank, and smacked him right in his mid-section. Hairy doubled over in agony as a herd of Green regulars cheered loudly from their position up the trail, thinking they had scored a direct hit. To their disappointment Hairy only suffered a couple of broken ribs.

After the ribs healed, Hairy knew it was time to set out for new territory. His face was posted in so many kayak shops and cheap riverside bars in his favorite eastern towns that he did not dare continue boating any water flowing into the Atlantic. The solution was obvious. Hairy would have to set out for California. While he was suspicious of a state made famous for its liberal sentiments, Hairy figured there must be some sensible people living there. After all, California's rivers were some of the most heavily dammed in the world. "Obviously," he thought, "someone out there has their head screwed on straight."

When Hairy stepped off the plane in Sacramento, he felt an enthusiasm that he had not known for years. Something about coming west made him feel like he was on a sort of whole-body Viagra. He was humming to himself as he made his way to baggage claim. The first bag to roll onto the conveyor belt was his paddling gear. As he waded into the crowd about the carousel, he was stunned to see a hand reach out and snatch his bag. Hairy started shoving his way through the press of travelers, trying to keep sight of his bag. Behind him he heard someone mutter, "What a d\$#k!"

As Hairy started gaining on the thief, he was struck by the unmistakable fact that she

was a woman. He nearly marched right up to her and spun her around forcefully, but fortunately he realized his mistake just in time: the bag was not his. Instead, in his most suave voice he tried one of his bombproof pick-up lines. "I think I see some good hard paddling in your future," he crooned.

"That's a good one," she said, laughing. "You must be a boater."

"How did you guess," Hairy asked in amazement.

"I think your sleazy line blew your cover," the woman answered.

"So what brings you to California," Hairy asked, with something close to genuine interest in his voice. Truth to tell, he was shocked that she hadn't tried to smack him.

"I'm doing a feasibility study," she replied with a smile.

"A what?" he asked, puzzled.

"You know, a first descent," she simplified.

"Oh," he laughed, "why didn't you say so before. Actually, I'm looking for someone to boat with. Mind if I tag along? I'm a pretty good Class V paddler—after all, my name is Hairy."

She stared at him, trying to absorb all of the information. "I guess I'd have to ask John," she finally answered. "He's in charge of everything, after all. By the way, my name's Patty."

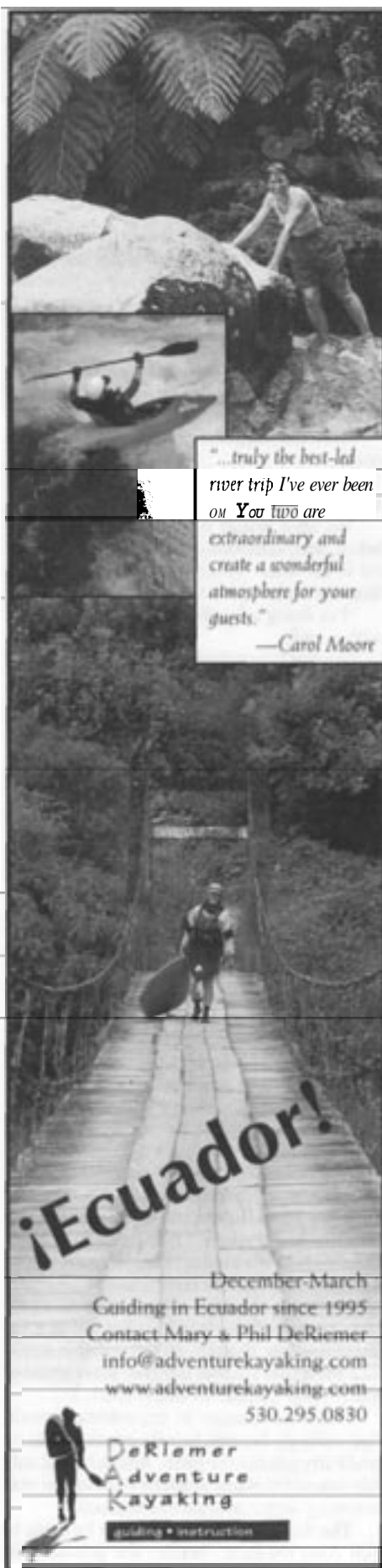
A look of disappointment flashed across Hairy's face as they shook hands. Obviously, this John was the boss of her. But Hairy admired such devotion and subservience in women. He immediately began plotting to steal her for his own.

Five hours and many drinks later Hairy and Patty stumbled out of a Sacramento nightclub. They were laughing and Hairy had his arm around her shoulders. So inevitably they weaved their way to a nearby hotel, and the rest, as they say, was history.

At this juncture, a bit of background on our new character is warranted. Patty, or more formally Patty Busch, was the daughter of a wealthy beer tycoon. Having been fed her family's horrible product from her baby bottle, by age 4 she was on record as the youngest alcoholic child ever. The condition really didn't bother Patty much in her life as a vagrant kayaker, though. In fact, reliable statistics show that she was only ten years ahead of the average paddler in this respect.

Hairy, no stranger to macrobrew himself, had willingly become heavily intoxicated as he and Patty painted the town. And so he had only his own self to blame when he woke up the next morning with a murderous headache.

The first thing he heard when he came to full consciousness (besides the pounding in



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his skull) was a female voice talking. Opening his eyes slowly, he discovered that it was Patty speaking into the receiver of the hotel telephone. Evidently Hairy was only catching the tail end of her conversation, because just as he attempted (and failed) to sit up, Patty said, "Well then we'll see you tonight, John."

The mention of this name drove Hairy into fits of jealousy. "So you were talking to him again," he almost groaned.

"Well, yeah. I do still want to boat."

"Why can't you just boat with me," he asked plaintively.

"Because if we aren't part of the official AWflowstudy, we don't get on the Stanislaus. And John's running the show, comprende?"

At this point, Hairy's knee-jerk political views came spewing out of his mouth (followed shortly by more substantial matter). The rest, as they say, was history.

Afterwards, Hairy may have had what amounted to slight feelings of regret. He really had a hard time distinguishing these from his stomach's attempts to jump out of his chest cavity. Maybe this hadn't been the proper time to espouse his views on such

sissy liberal organizations as American Whitewater. Perhaps Patty just hadn't been mature enough to understand his opinions. And then again, maybe Hairy had just thrown away two opportunities of a lifetime. Surely he would never get a chance to paddle this new stretch of the Stanislaus that was being explored. Even if the damnable organization could secure a few releases, Hairy's high-minded principles would never allow him to go near the river. Also, memories of Patty would forever be so closely associated with the name itself, that he could barely stand to think about the river.

These and other gruesome thoughts plagued Hairy all morning and afternoon as he knelt alone on the floor of the hotel bathroom. To a casual observer he may have appeared to be a guilty parishioner, praying to a holy statue for forgiveness. But in reality he was just one sick d\$#k. Lest you feel too sorry for him, though, let me remind you that Hairy Peter was no stranger to the Porcelain Throne.

The moral of this story: don't be a Hairy Peter; support American Whitewater.



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harc



Risa Shimoda
Executive Director
American Whitewater

Will this winter still and snow bring? It is a bit too early to tell, yet while the snow is falling in Kooski or Burlington, you may casually be planning a Spring trip. In the southern Appalachians or Cascadia, you will likely be running rainfall and loving it.

Wherever you are, you know that later in the year you will see all of your old friends on some predictable controlled flow runs:

- The Nantahala will float thousands per day and introduce many lifetime boaters to the treat rivers provide our body and soul.
- The Tallulah will run the first two weekends in April and the first three weekends in November. This will be the second no permit 'evaluation' year, after which we hope to initiate a long-term plan that meets boater expectations and minimizes environmental impact.

- On the North Fork Feather in northern California (Class II-IV), you'll be able to count on runs for the first time in half a century! The Rock Creek and Cresta sections will run in June. After years of meetings, we finalized our agreement with PG&E last October.
- The Middle Ocoee will start up in March and run according to the scheduled TVA posts...

On the other hand,

- The South Fork American will run from ...well...uh...
- The Forks of the Kern will run, but you'll need to take off on a Friday to get a permit.
- John's Creek will be running and you can't boat it.
- The Sky will be running but you'll not be putting-in at Sunset Falls and there will be the issue of crowding on railroad property.
- You'll wonder how long and hard the fight will be to save Canada's whitewater crown jewels.

In other words, we've accomplished a lot, and there's more to do.

Before the winter thaws, think about how you can help your local and favorite rivers. There is a lot of work to be done... and that means we need you! You can make a difference. If any river or issue update in the journal this month raises your temperature, contact us, and we'll do some work together, for the sake of your rivers.

While we are on the subject of volunteers, meet the new AW Board members for 2002. They were profiled in the November/December journal and we are indeed fortunate to have their experience and skills on board. Help me welcome Eric Eichberg, Sarah Stephenson, Aaron Pruzan, Dave Cernicek, and Pam Fitz with your support of their past volunteerism and willingness to personally invest in AW. How can you help them, fiduciaries of the organization? Become a monthly donor, help organize a fund-raiser, train to be a judge at an AW Freestyle event, work on a local river issue. Thanks to you all.

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Ocoee



Tallulah



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Dear Editor:

Thanks for "The Danger of Boating with Others" by R. Moldover (Sept. 2001). It's about time someone pointed out the dark side of group dynamics on the river. Macho behavior, peer pressure, misunderstandings, miscommunication, boat collisions, missing scouts to keep up with the group, ignoring your own safety during rescue attempts, being more concerned about personal humiliation than personal safety, etc., etc. None of these problems are caused by the river and none of these things happen on solo trips. They are all created by group dynamics and have undoubtedly contributed to many fatal accidents over the years.

Since these problems are all related to basic human nature, they are not about to go away. But if they are pointed out to us (as Moldover has), we can learn to recognize them and take steps to protect ourselves from their dangers.

But the most dangerous dynamic of group trips, ironically, is the thing we all like best about groups, that comfortable, secure feeling of boating together with friends. Having faith in the group is a great confidence builder. It allows us to do things we would not feel comfortable doing alone and serves us well in situations where rescues are easy. But the same feelings can work against us when the rapids get more dangerous and the possibility of rescue gets more remote. In these situations, the comfort of friends can work against us, offering little more than a tranquilizing effect that allows us to put aside our fears and paddle into oblivion. Even after 19 years of both solo and group boating, I am occasionally amazed, and disturbed, to find myself blindly following another boater into something that I would never run alone without shore scouting.

How often does this lead to serious problems? You can get an idea just by asking yourself if any given accident victim would have gone solo on that same run. If they would not have been doing this stuff alone, then clearly group dynamics played an enabling role in the tragedy. My guess is that this insidious problem is a contributing factor in at least 70% to 80% of all fatal whitewater accidents.

So what can we do to alleviate this problem? Boating alone is one solution. It also eliminates all those other problems of group dynamics and offers large helpings of freedom and adventure as well. But solo trips are not for everyone. Humans are not really designed to be alone, and almost all boaters get uncomfortable without others to share the experience.

For the great majority, who prefer to boat with others, the solution is simply a better understanding of who is responsible for whose safety. We are all told that, except for children, we are responsible for our own safety on the river. But, aside from solo boaters, few ever think about what this really means. Quite bluntly what it means is if you die on the river it's your own fault. And if you die on a group trip, it's because you not only misjudged the river and/or your skills, but you also misjudged

the ability of your group to rescue you.

The group will always try to rescue you (for hero points if nothing else) but there are limits to what any given group can do in any given situation. It's up to you to determine what those limits are. If you need a rescue and they can't do it, for whatever reason, then you made a bad mistake. And you might pay for it with your life, just like twenty some other boaters did in the first half of this year.

Being on the river with a group of friends can be a wonderful thing, but we must guard against the many problems of group dynamics. And, most importantly, we must never let the warm glow of trust and friendship confuse the issue of accountability. We are each responsible for our own safety. Always.

W. Scott Morris
Santa Fe, N. Mex.

"Not an issue for Denial"

Dear Editor,

As has been reported elsewhere we have learned with great sadness of the death of Stephen Korinchak, 28 of Gibsonia, Pennsylvania, while paddling in Ecuador. Steve was paddling with a top shelf outfitter, and the river, the Papallacta was at a low level. In the midst of a Class III+ rapid there was a log that stretched diagonally across the current, apparently invisible. Steve went first and pinned, head just out of the water. His boat never folded, but the log was across the cockpit, making it impossible for Steve to get his legs out or remove his sprayskirt. His boat then shifted, putting his head under water. Heroic efforts succeeded in freeing him in "2-5" minutes, but Steve was dead and could not be revived.

This is truly awful. Not only a loss of life, but in circumstances that would normally seem so safe; superb guides on rivers they know well, taking the time to scout even a moderately difficult rapid. In short, sounds like they did everything right. No one could blame Steve, or apparently the outfitters, for being foolhardy and "bringing it upon themselves." My sympathies go to the friends and family and to the paddler himself.

This also makes me wonder how much longer it will be until the "PAS" (personal air supply) becomes as standard as the PFD. The 2-5 minutes it took to get him out of the boat might have been survived even with a rudimentary air supply. Same would perhaps be true with many of the flush drownings that keep occurring. Pardon me if I am too melodramatic, but despite all the advances in gear and technique, we still paddle powerful rivers only one breath from death. Acceptable, I suppose, if there were no choice in the matter.

However, I note that there now is a commercially available product (which I am not

connected with), which make a "PAS." In as much as it is commercially available using it is now only a matter of choice and a few bucks; one no longer has to be an inventor! Speaking of "inventions," by the way, I will also note that there are other systems, some more complicated and expensive (like Spare Air - in the PFD), and some simpler (like the tube through / down the paddle jacket - which to my knowledge was first tried out by the Snyder's in the late 80s.) Neither of these latter two has been commercialized for kayaking, but I've played with my own crude versions of the latter two and both work quite nicely.

Scuba type re-breathers have been talked about as well. I mention these items *not to promote any particular product, only to encourage considering their use and further development.*

Of course, as will be pointed out, these things have drawbacks. They cost some, (although less than a funeral by a long shot!) They are a bit of extra bulk and hassle, and they need to be practiced with to be used effectively in emergencies. As well, they will clearly not work in all conceivable accidents, and they may intimidate the technophobes and irritate the traditionalists among us. Finally, the wearer may be looked upon as geekish or timid by the macho types. (Heaven forbid!)

Furthermore, in any discussion of the subject it will inevitably be stated that these devices will encourage people to "run things they shouldn't," or "rely on them too much." Of course, that same argument could be made for the seat belt, but do you use yours? I must say that the position above strikes me as a rationalization for denial. Kayaking denial takes the form of either the "it won't happen to me" or "I don't want to think it" syndrome.

Personally I'd opt for the presence of the safety factors, run the same stuff, but with the comfort of knowing that if the unforeseeable (but clearly, not so unexpected) occurred, and the Grim Reaper came knocking on my door, I'd have at least a chance of making him wait there for absolutely as long as possible. Maybe, just maybe, he'd get tired of waiting and go bother someone else.

Dana Castro
Connecticut

Not Enough Beer?

Dear Editor,

David Krueger (Letters, TOO MUCH BEER???, American Whitewater, November/December 2001) was concerned about the number of cans of beer he calculated that Jeremy Deem and his 19 friends had taken on their seven day raft trip—45 cases x 12 = 540, or 27 cans per person. He probably should be twice as concerned because as most boaters know, there are 24 cans of beer in a case!

Bill Stehlin Charlottesville, VA

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

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

If possible, articles should be submitted on a 3-1/2-inch computer disk. (Microsoft Word if possible – others accepted.) Please do not alter the margins or spacing parameters; use the standard default settings. Send a printed copy of the article as well.

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

Photos may be submitted as slides, black or whiteprints, or color prints. Keep your originals and

send us duplicates if possible; we cannot guarantee the safe return of your pictures. If you want us to return your pictures, include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your submission. Because we publish in black and white, photos with a lot of contrast work best.

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

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

If you are writing about a commonly paddled river, your story should be told from a unique perspective. Articles about difficult, infrequently paddled, or exotic rivers are given special consideration. But we are also interested in well written, unusual articles pertaining to Class III and IV rivers as well. Feature stories do not have to be about a specific river. Articles about paddling techniques, the river environment and river personali-

ties are also accepted. Pieces that incorporate humor are especially welcome. Open boating and rafting stories are welcome.

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

Profanity should be used only when it is absolutely necessary to effectively tell a story; it is not our intent to offend our more sensitive members and readers.

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

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

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

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Purpose

American Whitewater

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

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

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

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

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

SAFETY: AW promotes paddling safely, publishes reports on whitewater accidents, maintains a uniform national ranking system for whitewater

rivers (the International Scale of Whitewater Difficulty) and publishes and disseminates the internationally recognized AW Whitewater Safety Code.

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

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

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

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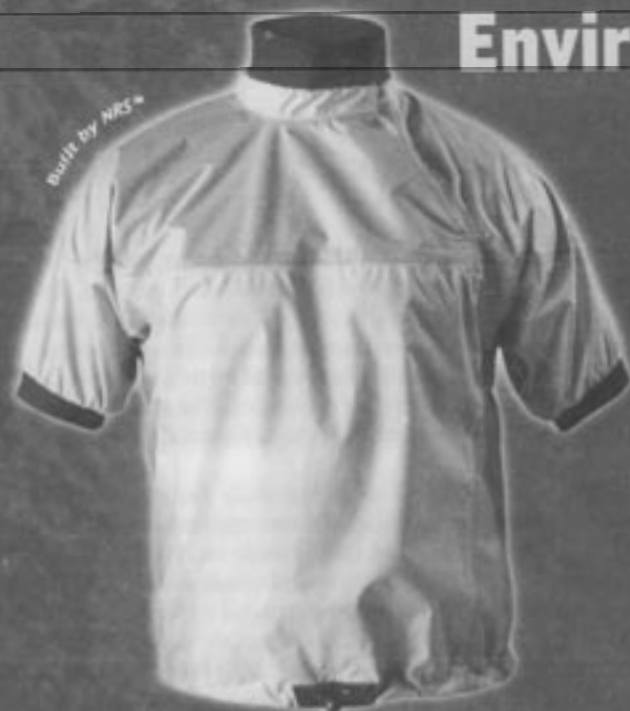
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FERC Takes Balanced Approach on Housatonic River, Connecticut


The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the agency overseeing private hydropower dams, recently initiated a flurry of activity for the relicensing of two hydroelectric projects located on the Housatonic River. On October 10th the FERC issued "Additional Information Requests" on the application submitted by Northeast Generation Company (formerly Connecticut Light and Power) for their hydropower facilities on the Housatonic River. On October 19th the FERC issued their intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for these relicensing proceedings. On October 23rd the FERC released the second scoping document for this proceeding.

"The relicensing of the Housatonic hydro projects has now transitioned to the FERC arena" stated John Gangemi, American Whitewater Conservation Director. "Clearly, the FERC has taken a more balanced approach on resource issues in this proceeding. Prior to this the Connecticut DEP has skewed instream flows for angling interests at the expense of river restoration. The studies requested by the FERC will enable stakeholders to make sound decisions based on objective information."

FERC's prolific list of additional study requests, forty-three in total, is indicative of a deficient license application from the utility. Before any further decision can be made on Northeast Generation Company's license application, the information and additional studies requested by FERC must be completed by the applicant. FERC also stated the application should include all comments of the USF&W, EPA, National Park Service, American Whitewater, Trout Unlimited, the Appalachian Mountain Club and others.

FERC wrote, "In order to assess the effects of the proposed flows on the visual resources of the project area, please provide any narrated videotapes and other supporting data of the whitewater flow studies at Falls Village and Bulls Bridge. If videotapes are not

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available, please provide any videotapes of other studies (fish habitat, instream flow analysis, etc.) that can be used to assess minimum recreation flows in these reaches. Also, please consult with appropriate stakeholders, including the AMC and the American Whitewater Affiliation, regarding acceptable minimum recreation flows for whitewater boating experiences and report these results to the Commission."

FERC continued, "Please quantify the economic costs and qualitative benefits of whitewater activity based on a range of flows, including the proposed recreation flow and release schedule contained in the license application and the release flows contained in the Section 401 Water Quality Certificate. Please include in the analysis the costs and benefits of whitewater boating as: (1) a flow of 2,300 cfs; (2) the flows based on the schedule of releases contained in the license application; and (3) the flows required by the Water Quality Certificate. This information is necessary to enable staff to evaluate the cost versus benefits of the proposed operational changes which would enhance the whitewater recreation opportunities but could reduce the project's power generation benefits. Note that while the costs to implement such measures can usually be quantified, the benefits often cannot. Thus the benefits typically can be described qualitatively."

The difficulty presented to American Whitewater and other stakeholders concerned with improving river flows for recreation came about as a direct failure of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection to consider the balanced use of the resource. Foolishly, the CDEP issued the 401 Water Quality Certificate prior to all studies being completed, thereby playing right into the hands of

the utility. Their action advocated "run-of-river" operation and left all bypass reaches in a degraded condition, clearly choosing to ignore the economic benefits provided to the region by a well-established boating public.

FERC went on to request additional information on public access and a discussion of how the proposed recreation facilities may add to or relieve congestion at Bull's Bridge, and to assess the potential for development in the project area. Other areas mentioned by FERC included the effects of flows in the bypassed reaches and increased recreational use resulting from proposed enhancements on the recreational, aesthetic and natural resources of the Appalachian Trail, with an emphasis on facilities at Bull's Bridge.

While there is no guarantee boaters will be able to overcome the legal setback of an inadequate and faulty 401 Certificate, it does provide an opportunity to leverage the FERC requests into a full-fledged, unbiased flow study that, hopefully, FERC will use as a tool in balancing use of the Housatonic resources in a way that will enhance whitewater boating. What is encouraging is the request for economic studies relative to the benefits of whitewater boating and the impact of this activity on the local region. This is only the second time FERC has requested this type of analysis in New England, the first being the Kennebec River in Maine a few months ago.

American Whitewater and its partners will continue to press for equal consideration on this troubled project and will exert every effort to resurrect and rescue this important resource from an ill-advised and devastating decision made by a recalcitrant state resource agency. Contact us if you would like to assist in this effort.

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Ubiquitone Halloween Jam Benefits Access

Ubiquitone held a special Halloween benefit jam for American Whitewater's access program at Fairfax Virginia's Firehouse Grill. Over a hundred people came out to preview their costumes, dance, talk, and party late into the night.

Ubiquitone (www.ubiquitone.com) grooved for over three hours with their distinctive sound blending funk, jazz, bluegrass, and reggae. Lead singer Eric Starr is a long-time American Whitewater member, Class V kayaker, and an avid supporter. Formed in the summer of 2000, Ubiquitone is a mainstay on the mid-Atlantic festival circuit, including regular appearances at Sunshine Daydreams in Terra Alta, WV and mainstage sets with Keller Williams, Leftover Salmon, and Ekoostik Hookah. Ubiquitone also headlined the 2000 Gauley Festival for American Whitewater.

This kind of festival is important because it pulls the boating community together. It also provides an essential funding source for our access program. Since few foundations fund access, preferring to fund direct conservation, we rely heavily on creative support from our members to help us with this vital work. *If you have a band, or ties to a band, that is interested in jamming for river access, call Jason Robertson at 866-BOAT-4-AW (866-262-8429).*



Access Flash Reports

Skykomish River, WA Rich Bowers, Jennie Goldberg, and Thomas O'Keefe are meeting with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to discuss plans for permitting boater parking at the Sunset Falls Trap and Haul facility on a seasonal basis. More at: www.americanwhitewater.org/rivers/id122091

Chattooga River, GA/SC Jason Robertson met with Senator Cleland's (D-GA) staff in November to discuss the Forest Service's failure to plan for reopening the headwaters of the Chattooga. AW volunteers, Don Kinser, and Bruce Hare had more than 300 boaters at the Tallulah write letters to the Forest Service on this issue. More at: www.americanwhitewater.org/archive/article/230/

■ **Colorado rivers, CO** The courts ruled in favor of boaters in the opening rounds of the Colorado's navigability crisis and allowed American Whitewater and the Colorado White Water Association to intervene on behalf of the defendants in the Lake Fork Gunnison case. Meanwhile settlement talks are continuing on the South Platte. More at: <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/archive/article/304/>

■ **California rivers, CA** The California Department of Boating and Waterways asked boaters for comments in December about our needs for non-motorized access and facility improvements. This was a tremendous opportunity for the whitewater community to get river access improvements particularly on rivers with upcoming whitewater releases like the North Fork Feather. More at: www.americanwhitewater.org/archive/article/297/

Great Falls, VA The Park Service is planning to improve the overlooks and trails on the Virginia side. American Whitewater supports ALTERNATIVE C1 with the caveat that some trail safety improvements at Fishermen's Eddy should be implemented immediately. More at: www.americanwhitewater.org/archive/article/298/

■ **Tohickon River, PA** In October, American Whitewater learned that the scheduled releases were not held due to maintenance problems with the dam, *"When the upper gear-boxes were removed from the bunker valve it was found that it contained approximately one of the two required gears."* The PA-DCNR explained that releases could occur at a later date following repairs if the current drought watch is lifted. More at: www.americanwhitewater.org/archive/article/300/

■ **Michigan rivers, MI** The Center for Biological Diversity and others filed a lawsuit in federal court alleging that hundreds of miles of rivers in the Ottawa National Forest (U.P.) have been purposefully neglected by the United States Forest Service. The suit tries to protect some of the finest wild and scenic whitewater runs in the state including the Black, Ontonagon, Paint, Presque Isle, Sturgeon, and Yellow Dog Rivers. More at: www.americanwhitewater.org/archive/article/313/

Savage River, MD Jason Robertson met with the Upper Potomac River Commission and Maryland Department of the Environment to plan for whitewater recreation on the Savage River. More at: www.americanwhitewater.org/archive/article/213/

Boofing Into the Future:

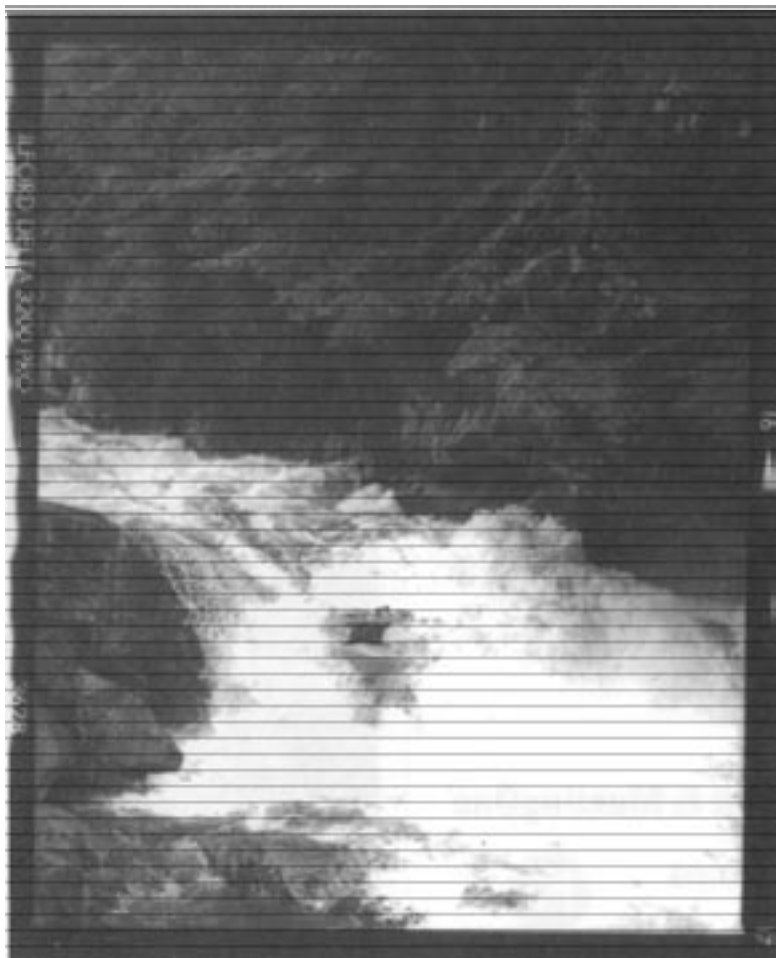
A Flow Study on the Cascades of the Nantahala.

• By Kevin Colburn

In 1989 I opened the *AW* journal to a photo of a guy named Forest Calloway running a big stompy drop on the Nantahala River. This article was titled "Nantahala's Upper Cascades, Not Where NOC Holds Roll Clinics," and was my first introduction to creek'in. I was thoroughly intrigued with the Cascades and with creek'in in general. Some girl named Risa wrote the article, "hmm," I thought, "she must be a rad boater." I was 13 then and now that rad girl is my boss and making sure that river flows is a big part of my job. American Whitewater is currently helping to drive the process of ensuring a balanced flow regime on all sections of North Carolina's famous Nantahala River.

The regular flows on the Nantahala that we all know and love are the product of a hydro project that diverts water around a 10 mile stretch of river that lies dry most of the year. This section of river holds the Class IV/V Cascades and the Class III Upper Nantahala and is virtually dry except when White Oak Creek flows big. Perhaps not for long though... Just after Gauley Fest 2001, American Whitewater worked with Duke Power to pull off yet another controlled whitewater flow study in the Southeast. Surely this was one of the most successful flow studies yet, largely due to the characters that showed up.

Local boater of NOC fame, Bunny Johns, was Duke's consultant and did a great job at arranging all the logistics and working with *AW* in study design. John Wishon, whose family has lived in the Upper Nantahala watershed for generations, was one of the folks representing Duke Power. The *Lunch Video Magazine* crew was there to shoot the video that is a critical part of the study. They did a



wonderful job that will help us show what a great resource the Cascades and Upper Nantahala are. The unofficial Western North Carolina Resource Agency Rafting Team were laughing and swimming their way down the Upper Nantahala. Adventure Quest was there to learn about river conservation and to paddle as part of the study. American Whitewater volunteers and regional boaters were there to paddle and objectively describe their experiences for the study. The many boaters that showed up to paddle that were not part of the study were incredibly respectful and waited to put-on until after the study groups had finished their runs. And most importantly, no one got hurt!

I slept in a gracious boater's basement and awoke before dawn

for the study. I arrived at the powerhouse groggy and might have helped give an introduction speech. I was still asleep when I noticed the ice coating my boat and slid into the steaming lake-warmed water. We ducked through the vegetation and did cheesy boofs, not to be confused with cheesy poofs, off the first 6 footer. We rounded the bend to the V crack, a seldom run 10 foot vertical U ledge. We all tried different things with similar outcomes, meltdowns through light warm foam. Just after the slot we rounded yet another bend and lined up on the true cascades below the confluence of White Oak Creek. The Cascades drop wicked steep through a roadside canyon and were still shrouded in thick fog. In groups of six we launched off the 12 foot boof at

"The Horns of God," flew down the slides and off the 10 footer at "Big Kahuna," skipped over the hole at "Junkyard," and threaded our way through "Chinese Feet."

Another group of paddlers put on the Upper Nantahala and made their way down that stretch, through the fog. Many of the paddlers from the cascades study continued down the Upper just for kicks. We did four progressively higher runs and as the levels got higher the Upper got more fun and the Cascades changed in character from precise creek'in to a big water romp. The last flow was great for the Upper but was juicy enough on the Cascades that we decided not to study it due to safety considerations. Folks still flocked to it for fun runs though, and there was a great deal of carnage. There was carnage on the Upper too, at least one of the rafts dump-trucked and dumped out some Duke Power folks and members of the previously mentioned rafting team. Those guys have too much fun with their jobs.

All this wonderful creek'in over 2 days was interspersed with filling out surveys, having discussion groups, and meeting with AQ and the various other groups to talk about the process of dam relicensing. By the end of the second day the focus groups nailed down the optimal and minimum acceptable flows for both reaches. The data is still in the mill but the group felt that 250 and 350 cfs offered two unique and good flows for the cascades. The 175 cfs flow was runnable but below optimal and the 500 cfs release was fun but would exclude a lot of boaters. The group felt that 350 was a likely optimal flow for intermediate boaters to enjoy the Upper Nantahala, and that people would paddle it at 250. The 175 release



was too low and the 500 release was not significantly better than 350.

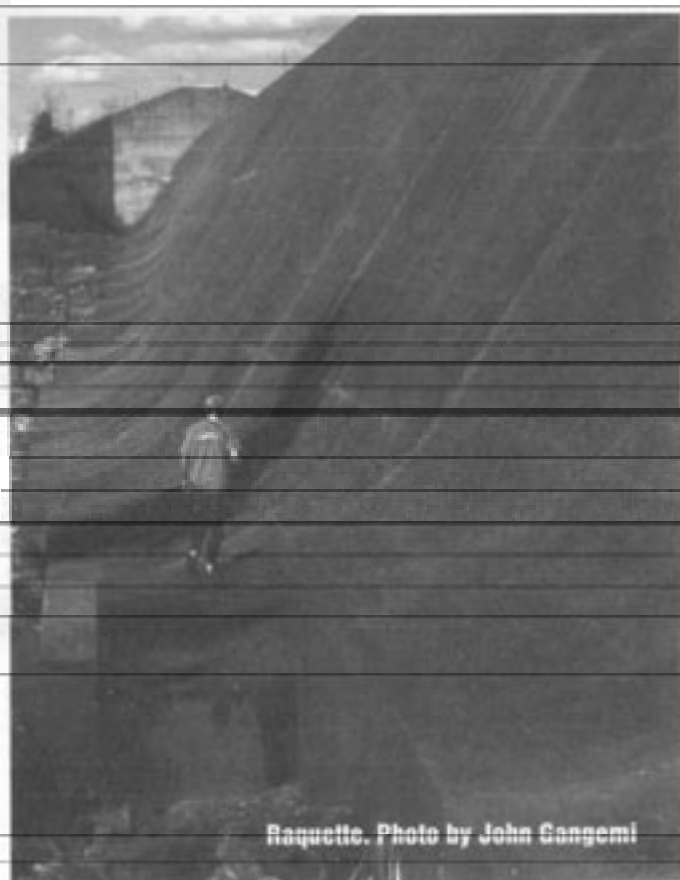
American Whitewater would like to extend a big thanks to everyone involved with the study, and also to all those that avoided paddling the cascades those days to ensure a positive outcome of the study. We could not have pulled it off so well without you.

Both photos , page 19 and above, are flow study participants soaring off a couple of the drops in the Cascades of the Nantahala in late September 2001.

Giving the Adirondacks Back to Kayaks

By Kevin Colburn

American Whitewater devoted a week and a half this October exclusively to the conservation of New York's amazing Whitewater Rivers. The entire full-time staff attended the Moose River Festival to support that great event and to spread the gospel of the glory of flowing rivers. Particularly glorious was a 5-staffer simultaneous descent of Ager Falls. MooseFest provided a great forum for us at AW to learn about the threats to New York Rivers and where we can be of help. This was grassroots outreach at its finest, and we were all impressed with New York boaters' knowledge and passion for their state's rivers.



Raquette. Photo by John Gangemi

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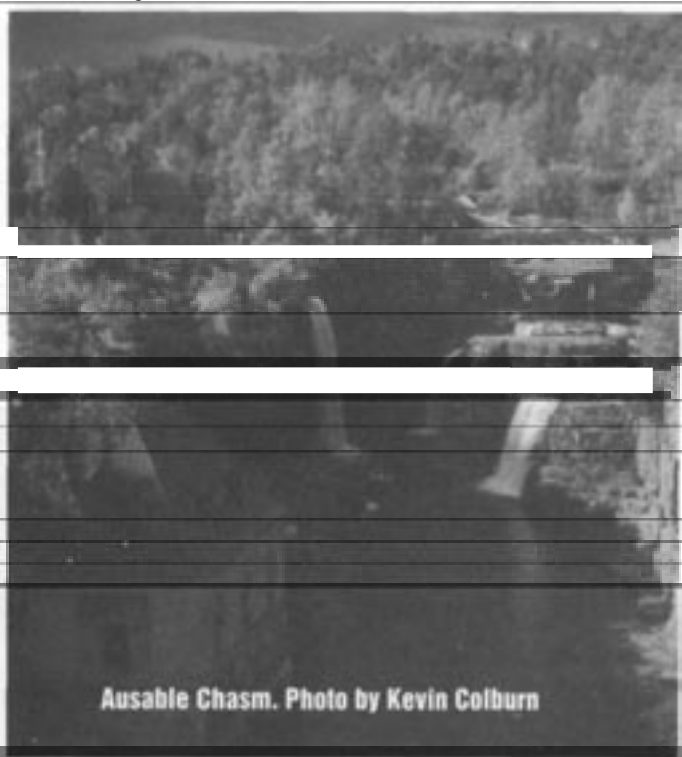
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720.946.2170 or meetingone.com**

The trip was not all talk though, we got out there and got our feet wet. Unfortunately though, given the drought conditions and the seemingly endless number of dams in New York, our feet were about all we could get wet. John Gangemi, Tom Christopher, and Kevin Colburn toured hydro projects, hiked dewatered riverbeds, met with outfitters and boaters, met with power companies, and logged a huge amount of miles on their rental truck. All across the Adirondacks we hiked into waterfall laden canyons and rock-hopped up massive dry slides.

These travels took us to the Hoosic, the Oswegatchie, the Saranac, the St. Regis, the Raquette, and the stunning Ausable rivers. There is no doubt that New York is whitewater rich, however the proliferation of dams on New York rivers has radically limited that richness by flooding runs under reservoirs or dewatering them with diversion pipes. The following is a summary of the projects we visited while in New York this fall.

Hoosic River: Located ten minutes north of Albany in the town of Schaghticoke. The Hoosic contains a gorge dropping 146 feet in just under two miles. The hydropower project capitalizes on this same gradient diverting water around the gorge to a powerhouse downstream. Few boaters in the Albany area are even aware this resource exists because boating flows rarely occur. American Whitewater is working closely with the utility on this relicense proceeding.

Oswegatchie River: American Whitewater staff attended a site visit with FERC staff from Washington, D.C. in October. This relicense contains two hydro projects encompassing four dams. The project is located just outside Hailesboro, New York. The dams dewater the Island branch, a seven-mile braid of the Oswegatchie that contains at least one twelve-foot waterfall. Another section contains a great looking play hole downstream of the Fowler powerhouse. American Whitewater filed written comments in early November on this project. American Whitewater is looking for local boaters to work with us to restore flows, access and flow information on the Oswegatchie.



Ausable Chasm. Photo by Kevin Colburn

Ausable River: New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG) is relicensing the Rainbow Falls hydroelectric project on the Ausable River. American Whitewater has pushed hard for access to the Ausable River in this proceeding because it is the start of the Class IV Ausable Chasm. The downstream property owner, Ausable Chasm Company (ACC), doesn't want boaters in the Chasm claiming that it will impact their private business. During the whitewater flow study in May 2001, an ACC representative falsely stated that boaters could not get out of their boats to scout individual rapids in the Chasm. Six out of twelve boaters declined to participate under those conditions. Under New York state navigability laws, boaters do have the right to get out and scout or portage up to the high water mark. The November 1 and 2, 2001 scoping meeting and site visit was well attended by local boaters thanks to American Whitewater's organizing efforts. This is a hotly contested proceeding that could potentially set a precedent thereby threatening access on more than just the Ausable.

Saranac River: NYSEG is also relicensing four dams on the Saranac River just outside of Plattsburgh. From the looks of the geology, the Saranac probably contained some great whitewater paddling aesthetically comparable to the Ausable Chasm prior to dam construction. All that remains within the hydropower project for



High Falls Gorge on the Saranac. Photo by Kevin Colburn

whitewater is a short bedrock section below Kent Falls Dam and a stiff two mile (?) Class V-VI section below High Falls Dam. This proceeding is just getting underway. American Whitewater is looking for some dedicated boaters to assist with this relicense proceeding.

Raquette River: The Piercefield Hydro Power Project influences flows on about a ten-mile section of the Raquette River. The powerhouse is located at the dam. The lake formed by Piercefield Dam (located in the town of Piercefield) appears to have considerable water storage. The downstream river contains distinct sections for Class III and Class IV-V paddling. Contact Kevin Colburn if you have information about these whitewater resources or would like to assist with this proceeding.



St. Regis River: American Whitewater recently signed a settlement agreement with Erie (aka Orion Power, formerly Niagara Mohawk) for the licensing of this hydropower project. The settlement grants public access to the reach as well as release of flow information.

With the help of volunteers, American Whitewater looks forward to creating more paddling opportunities in New York on these and other rivers. The Runs we investigated are all up for relicensing and range from remote scenic float trips, to dynamic park and play, to Class V steep rivers. Thanks to the research and exploration work we did on this trip, we hope to offer boaters of every ability and genre a new place to do their thing in New York in the coming years.



High Falls on the Saranac. Photo by Kevin Colburn

Upper Ocoee Update

No quick solution has been identified for the dilemma of TVA's refusal to provide free recreational releases in the Upper Ocoee. However, American Whitewater has made major strides in ultimately reaching a fair agreement on flows in the Upper Ocoee.

In September, members of a subcommittee of TVA's Regional Resource Stewardship Council met with Kevin Colburn (American Whitewater conservation and access associate) and several other stakeholders to discuss TVA's management of the Ocoee River. The group quickly grasped the complex issues and began brainstorming on possible ways of equitably managing the river. Presumptions were laid to rest and much progress was made. A few of us even went rafting the following day and had a great time. In October the group reported back to the full subcommittee, as did several TVA representatives. The exciting process began at the Ocoee was largely shut down during this meeting but all was not lost.



Upon request from American Whitewater, the group decided to recommend that the Ocoee be included in a 2-year operations study that will begin in February 2002. This study will act similarly to a dam relicensing since it is a NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act) process that will have ample opportunity for public input. We now have what we have wanted all

along, a public process to work with! Kevin Colburn has even been nominated to represent downstream recreationalists on a council that will help shape and analyze the study. We now have a framework through which releases may one day be granted. We will be alerting boaters every time there is an opportunity for comment on this process through our web page and through the journal.

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Canadian Rivers Update

As we head to press in December, we have learned that Action Plein-Air Haute-Gatineau, the Canadian river protection association working on protecting the Gatineau from development, will be called in early 2002 before the 19 mayors who form the regional government, to argue against the private hydro project. Action Plein-Air Haute-Gatineau will explain their vision of development and management of the river in the "natural" way.

We hope that a final decision about the proposed dams, in our favor, will be made shortly after, perhaps as early as the council meeting the last week of January. This may be overly optimistic, but local river advocates have been encouraged by what they sense as a growing consensus for protecting the rivers from development. However, we can not take this decision for granted and strongly encourage you to read the complete article on the proposed dam construction projects and write letters to Canada's government expressing your concerns.

Triggers for Brown's Canyon Permits Approached (CO)

Denver, CO – Mike Harvey reported in early December that the State Parks Board decided to table Brown's Canyon Permitting for one year on the Arkansas. This means that the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA) will do more thorough counts next year on Brown's to determine if private boaters have in fact met the triggers set forth in the management plan. This means that boaters have one year to disperse use on weekends. In other words if you have always done Browns on the Fourth of July weekend you might consider paddling somewhere else this year. Check www.arkrivertrust.org for more information.

American Whitewater Advocates for Wild and Scenic Director

Washington, DC – In early December, American Whitewater's Access Director Jason Robertson joined Bill Meadows, President of The Wilderness Society, and Rebecca Wodder, President of American Rivers, in a meeting with the Forest Service to advocate for the creation of a Director for Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers.

This directorate is critical to ensuring that the Forest Service fulfills its mandate to protect and enhance the crown jewels of the National Forest system. Wilderness, wild and scenic rivers and other congressionally designated areas make up at least 20% of National Forest lands, and are at the heart of our most valuable remaining intact ecosystems. These areas provide recreational opportunities and places for spiritual retreat, and they are critical sources of clean air and water. They provide important wildlife habitat and are rich in biodiversity. Proper management of these complex areas requires leadership and field staff that have the ability, and the authority to protect the many values for which these areas were set aside. The current Administration has placed an emphasis on better management of existing protected areas, and a Director for Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers is critical to ensuring a greater field presence and increased funding for these programs. It will cost little, and will greatly benefit our nation's natural heritage.

Grand Canyon Suits Progress

Boulder, CO – In December, as settlement talks continued on American Whitewater's Grand Canyon lawsuit, a small working group of interested parties including Access Director Robertson, private and commercial boaters, commercial outfitters, environmentalists, river guides, and others met in Colorado to talk about what a future river management plan might look like for the Grand Canyon. Robertson observed, "We laid our cards on the table and every aspect of use was fair game for discussion. The basic question was how to maximize use while protecting the resource and wilderness qualities of the experience?" Following the meeting, all participants agreed that the final plan should be structured so private boaters would wait no more than three years to get on the river from the day that they chose to go. The computer models and permit systems under discussion appear to make this an achievable goal.



If You Compete, You Are Going to Need to Know This!! "Just the facts, folks!"

• Michael Phelan, Events Director

From the beginning of competitive whitewater paddling, American Whitewater has been incredibly influential. It is the only organization that has stepped to the plate and offered the skills, experience, and resources necessary to support a new developing sport. Even if you only consider the influence it exerts through its conservation and access efforts AW influences are significant. Virtually every single event in the United States is held on a river stretch that American Whitewater has or will work to protect or restore. In addition to providing access to the rivers necessary for events, AW also offers affordable insurance, obtains corporate sponsors to defray costs, purchases advertising, coordinates a national calendar, and maintains competitive results. AW then uses its events as a platform for increasing access to whitewater for the greater paddling community. American Whitewater has *been* and *will* continue to be the driving force behind whitewater paddling of all types and levels.

For 2002, AW is proposing a number of changes and enhancements that have been gleaned from a variety of sources including event organizers, sponsors, pro and amateur athletes, and the AW staff and its Board of Directors. These changes are being introduced for four reasons:

1. Better communicate the conservation and access issues specific to the various regions within the United States.
2. Provide a competitive model that supports and nurtures amateur competitive paddling.
3. Raise additional revenues to assist American Whitewater with achieving its mission of conserving and gaining access to whitewater.
4. Improve the planning, implementation, and management of paddling events.

Changes for 2002

American Whitewater has been working very hard this past year to make significant improvements to the state of competitive paddling. The goals of these enhancements were to better serve athletes, sponsors, and event organizers. In order to create a seamless transition into a more refined system, NOWR was dissolved and a new organization was created called American Whitewater Freestyle (AWF). Guiding this new organization will be an advisory board of some of the most influential and representative people in freestyle paddling.

Karla Westcott
Dave Slover
Joel Heath
Peter Lataille
Dylan King
Aaron Pruzan
Shane Benedict
Ben Coleman
Dan Gavere
Adam Druckman
Liz Ferrin
Keith Wallace
Terry Valle

Wausau Rodeo Organizer
Oregon Cup Organizer
Vail Invitational Event Organizer
Gillman Falls Event Organizer
Amateur Competitor
Wyoming Whitewater Organizer
Athlete/Liquid Logic
President of USFKA
Team Manager for USFKA
Teva Director of Sports Marketing
Teva Promotions Coordinator
Wave Sport Team & Brand Manager
Kern River Festival Organizer

10 Things You Gotta Know

1. Teva and AW have joined forces to host the "2002 Teva Whitewater Tour." The Tour will include twenty-five events in four geographic regions and will culminate with the **Teva Whitewater National Championships sanctioned by American Whitewater.**
2. All athletes must be current members of American Whitewater prior to competing. Athletes will be able to join AW at events or purchase a one-day membership for \$10.
3. All paddlers must register with AWF prior to competing. Registration allows for the tracking of points and ensures that all necessary insurance information is on file. Once registered, athletes will receive a membership card that must be presented at each event in order to receive a bib.
 - a. There is no registration fee for Beginner, Sport, or Expert competitors.
 - b. If an Expert wishes to have their points count towards a spot at the Teva Whitewater National Championships then they must pay a registration fee to the AWF. This fee is the same registration fee that has been charged in the past. The fees help to cover the costs of maintaining the necessary records and the Championships.
 - i. Expert \$20
 - ii. Pro \$40
4. The state that an amateur chooses to register in will determine that athlete's home region.
5. An athlete's home region is the region that the athlete must qualify in to attend the National Championships presented by Teva and American Whitewater.
 - a. Amateur athletes may not register in more than one region, but they are encouraged to compete in as many events as possible.
6. Points received in an amateur home region are worth 25% more.
 - a. The Pro Am event in each region is worth 50% more points to both amateur and pro athletes.
 - b. The Wausau Double Up is worth double points to all athletes despite region or status.
7. Amateurs placing in the following categories, according to earned AW Freestyle and Boatercross points, from each region will be eligible to attend the Teva Whitewater National Championship.

a. Junior	(15) Men & (15) Women
b. Junior Expert	(15) Men & (15) Women
c. Beginner	(15) Men & (15) Women
d. Sport	(20) Men & (20) Women
e. Expert	(25) Men & (25) Women
8. Pro athletes will compete for (60) spots for Men and (60) spots for Women to attend the Championships.
9. The Teva Whitewater National Championships will be held at the Olympic Whitewater Center on the Ocoee River in Ducktown, TN, October 10-13th.
10. All American Whitewater Freestyle information including schedule and rankings will be available at www.americanwhitewater.org.

Athlete Ranking

Among the many other enhancements, the AW National Events Calendar has been reworked into the "Teva Whitewater Tour." "The Teva Whitewater Tour" will include four geographic regions: Southeast, Northeast, Rocky Mountain, and Pacific Coast. Each of the regions will include between five and seven events. These events will include both freestyle and boatercross events and will encourage canoe, and rafting competitions when and where appropriate. Athletes will be ranked in two categories according to points collected in freestyle and boatercross events.

Athletes competing in the "Teva Whitewater Tour" will be able to earn both freestyle and boatercross points. An athlete's freestyle or boatercross ranking will be based on the points gathered in each discipline at "Teva Whitewater Tour" events. In order to compete at the Teva Whitewater National Championships sanctioned by American Whitewater an athlete must qualify for freestyle and boatercross separately.

Amateurs will be ranked in their home region and a limited number of athletes from each region will be invited to attend the first **Teva Whitewater National Championships**. Pro athletes will not register in a specific region, but will continue to compete nationally for a limited number of spots to attend the Championships.

Through the combined efforts of Teva and American Whitewater, AW will reaffirm its commitment to ensuring that all whitewater events act as a platform for conservation and access issues. Each event will address regionally specific conservation and access concerns.

Schedule

Look for the Official American Whitewater Freestyle Series Schedule of Events on www.americanwhitewater.org.



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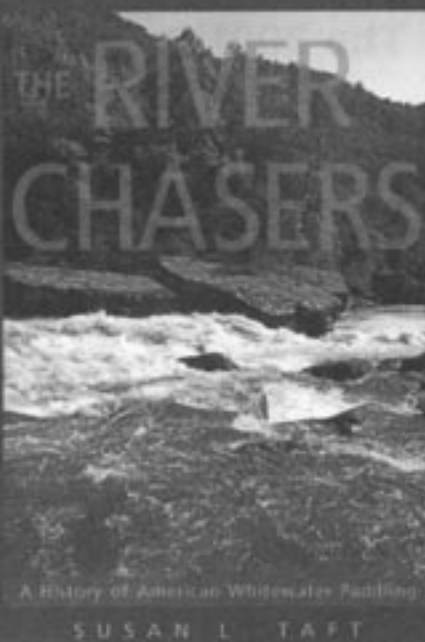
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This one-day workshop will provide whitewater activists with tools necessary to work on their local river issues. American Whitewater's staff of nationally recognized experts will present modules on access, conservation, hydropower licensing, events, freestyle judging, the Website Streamkeeper Project and safety.

Limited spaces available. For information and registration,
contact Nick Lipkowski (301) 589-9453.

nick@arnwhitewater.org

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THE RIVER CHASERS

By Susan Taft

The history of American whitewater canoeing & kayaking, tracing the evolution of paddling through the people, rivers, & events over the last 60 years. Covers wood/canvas canoes & folding kayaks to composites & plastics, from slalom & squirt to rodeo & extreme boating.



Magic is Alive & Music is Afoot

The 2001 Russell Fork River Rendezvous

(And Gas Drilling Threats are Dead - for Now)

• *By J. Brent Austin*

Last year, the Bluegrass Wildwater Association's 2000 Russell Fork River Rendezvous ended on a promising note: the original dam threat that spawned the event years ago was in the past. An impressive river survey had been completed by Bluegrass Wildwater Association's Steve Powers. Money donated by past Rendezvous receipts had helped finance Appalshop's film project on the Russell Fork River and the Breaks area, featured in an article in American Whitewater's May/June 2000 issue. The local organization, Headwater's, founded by native Jerry Elkins, was gaining prominence in the fight against rampant and careless environmental practices in the area. And, proudly, we looked forward to donating more money to our river champion, American Whitewater.

Events

The 2000 Downriver race, whose results were not published til now, yielded the following times:

October 2000 Russell Fork River Rendezvous Race Results

1	Danny Inman	11:00
2	Tommy Hilleke	11:30
3	Eric Strittmatter	11:34
4	Nate Helms	11:39
5	Howard Tidwell	11:45
	Jason Hale	
6	Chris Young	11:49
7	Clay Wright	11:55
8	Greg Hoskins	12:12
9	Duarte Morais	12:21
10	Eric Hendrickson	12:22
11	Peter Persolja	12:28
12	Eric Rolston	12:32
13	Buffy Bailey	12:34
14	Jon Lord	12:36
15	Daniel Talley	12:46
	Steve Matz	
16	Willy Witt	12:48
17	Kyle Winkler	12:49
18	Josh Bethea	13:13
19	Harry Field (C-1)	13:35
20	Todd Miller	28:32
21	Alan Jones and Rob Anderson (Shredder)	About 2 hours

By April, 2001, things had changed dramatically for those supporting environmental interests when the unthinkable was suddenly announced: plans were being laid for gas drilling INSIDE the Breaks Interstate Park, home of the Class V section of the Russell Fork. Paddlers, environmentalists and local groups immediately voiced opposition. Petitions were circulated on behalf of the Russell Fork River Rendezvous all over the country. Local signatures were collected at the Elkhorn City annual Apple Blossom

Festival, where boaters paddled down to the city beach where a local group burned a gas well in effigy to the insistent rhythm of the Russell Fork River Rendezvous drummers. Television crews and locals were captivated by the opposition to the drilling, which continued gaining momentum.

Soon, locals and paddlers were voicing their opposition to the plan before the Park Board and Kentucky's Attorney General and several Kentucky legislators had joined the fight. By the time of the 2001 Russell Fork River Rendezvous, plans to drill were indefinitely stalled. After the Rendezvous, the original culprit, Blue Flame Energy, withdrew its application to drill in the park. Thousands of petition signatures and vigorous vocal opposition at the local level clearly were major factors in this environmental victory.

By the time the 2001 Russell Fork River Rendezvous, held from October 1 through October 8, rolled around, it had become clear that it was unlikely that the gas drilling would go forward. As a result, the immediate focus of the phestival became to do what we do best: celebrate. However, this was not just a celebration of the defeat of gas drilling; it was also a celebration of unity in the aftermath of the September 11



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Events

tragedy in New York. So, with spirits soaring and love in our hearts, we set out to make the energy of the 2001 Rendezvous the best yet. We believe we succeeded.

At mid week, things were going smooth at the phestival site - perhaps too smooth. The various encampments were taking form, the firewood was being delivered, the weather was perfectly clear with temperatures in the 70s. The moon hung nearly full under crystal clear night skies, amplified against the vivid background of the Milky Way. Down at the Spiral Encampment, a steady family vibe of drumming and flute wafted up to the Journey Beyond Encampment. It sounded good, so I took another big drink of Rum and Coke and headed down the hill, making a quick stop at the new BoatHenge Encampment to gather more energy to take to the groovin' session down below.

With the infrastructure of the Rendezvous in place, and people, especially volunteers and food vendors rolling in, I knew that if I was going to engage in celebratory libations, this was the evening. By the weekend, hordes of paddlers and festivarians would be present, demanding a more sober reality for me. But not this night. The rum flowed freely, just like the gargantuan rolling logs by the bonfire that I decided to dance upon. Holding my large cup confidently, I pro-

ceeded to lose balance, hit the ground with a tumble and roll to my feet, where amidst laughter from brothers and sisters, myself included, I realized that I couldn't walk without pain. Soon my ankle was the size of a softball.

The next day, as I hovered in a camp chair with foot elevated, I could hear the occasional exchange over the walkie talkies: "Don't let Brent out of the chair or we'll duct tape him to it." Pleading with Betsy, head of Security and otherwise an Amazon warrior on a golf cart, I desperately wanted to make sure the signs were hung in the right spots, the tapestries hung at the stage, tiki torches put in place, all sorts of things to contribute to ambiance and function that I had wanted to create. But Betsy was resolute on my staying still: "Dragonfly has everything under control. She has volunteers galore and everything is getting done - relax."

As Friday rolled around, a number of paddlers did low water runs though the gorge (about 125 cfs) and the stage was ready for the P.A. system and sound guy who was volunteering his services. Friday is the really big pulse for the Rendezvous, as the weekend warriors come in to paddle and/or participate in the phestival. Musicians, boaters, locals, and numerous others streamed in, predictably, with one hitch: the sound guy and equip-



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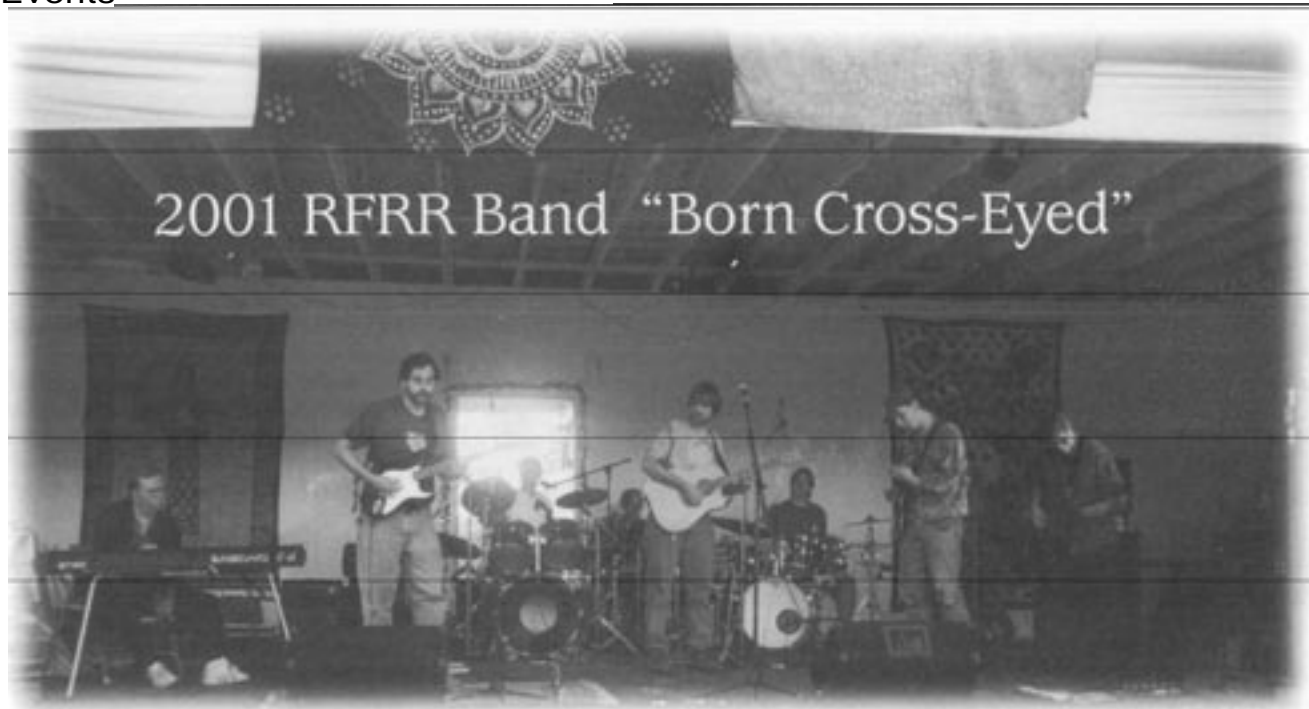
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ment broke down on the way. He was getting the vehicle repaired and was going to be late.

A drum circle broke out in the Spiral Encampment, and soon the energy was cranking. About 9:30 p.m. a big thunderstorm hit, seemingly out of nowhere, and people scrambled for shelter. At the same time as music was beginning to take off on stage with groups such as A.M. Flavor, Redgrass and Inner Vision Collision. Rain fell in buckets and winds gusted 30 to 40 mph, creating chaos among the various tarp cities, but the music still flowed into the night, seemingly in rhythm with the intermittent torrents of warm rain. Around 4:20 a.m. at the tail end of the rain two east coast drummers showed up and kicked off a Phat drum circle at the Journey Encampment that lasted past dawn.

Saturday, Race Day at Garden Hole, saw 900 cfs heading through the gorge. The racers met at 11:00 a.m. to get bibs, free entry into the Rendezvous, sign waivers and do a practice run through the gorge. Greg Hoskins, with assistance from race coordinators Willy Witt and Jay Ditty and Lee Belknap as Safety at Fist, coordinated the race and recorded the times as follows:

October 6, 2001

Russell Fork River Rendezvous Race Results

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Chris Hipgrave (Big Sea Kayak) | 10:43 |
| 2 | Tommy Hillebe | 10:56 |
| 3 | Danny Inman | 10:57 |
| 4 | D. Jackson | 11:06 |
| 5 | Jason Hale | 11:07 |
| 6 | Peter Persolja | 11:15 |
| 7 | Chris Young | 11:29 |
| | Corey Hall | 11:29 |
| 8 | Eric Strittmatter | 11:37 |
| 9 | Toby Rassing | 11:44 |
| 10 | Toby McDurbin | 11:50 |
| 11 | Kyle Wingler "Lap Dancer" | 12:01 |
| | Greg Hoskins | 12:01 |
| 12 | Caeleb Copeland | 12:04 |
| 13 | Willy Witt | 12:32 |
| 14 | Kurt Williams (Hand paddled) | 13:00 |
| 15 | Jon Lord (Ride in Climax Hole - 1:00) | 13:06 |
| 16 | Ben Burgen | 13:11 |
| 17 | Jay Ditty (C-1) | 14:20 |
| 18 | Matt Walker | 14:49 |

As the 3:00 p.m. race kicked off, back at the phestival site on stage, Bluegrass was flowing. At 4:20 p.m., Born Cross-Eyed kicked into gear with some of the best covers from the Grateful Dead ever seen at the Rendezvous. They were followed by Kuchi Guru, Rhesus, Barnhouse Effect, Dreadnot and Geo Funk. Drum circles migrated Saturday from the Spiral Encampment to the Journey Beyond Encampment where one fire guru, Joe Coon, had constructed a fire belching Dragon out of a big hollow log. Sensual dancers spun between it and a huge bonfire to the flowing percussion of the drummers. Back at the stage, the other fire guru, Paul Fantetti, had constructed a humongous bonfire which kept hundreds warm and enthralled with pyrotechnic props and antics.

Meanwhile, a whole other scene was taking place at the Acoustic Bonfire, where musicians strummed, picked and fiddled.)





Serving piping hot and fresh vegetarian meals were the usual groups from years past: Heartwood and Earthheart. They were joined by others including Stone Heart, Ruth Cox and family, and Carlos and family who also took care of the carnivores. The race results were announced on stage and attendees were reminded what the phestival is all about, including the fight to prevent gas drilling in the park. The attendees were also reminded that the Russell Fork watershed faces ongo-

ing threats from corporations and other extraction interests, threats that would degrade the river and its fabulous surroundings. These threats persist in spite of a healthy Russell Fork's incredible potential to foster eco-tourism and environmentally sound economics. Lee Belknap explained American Whitewater's role in protecting the Russell Fork, then turned the mike over to Jerry Elkins of Headwaters, Inc., who explained what their locally based organization does to

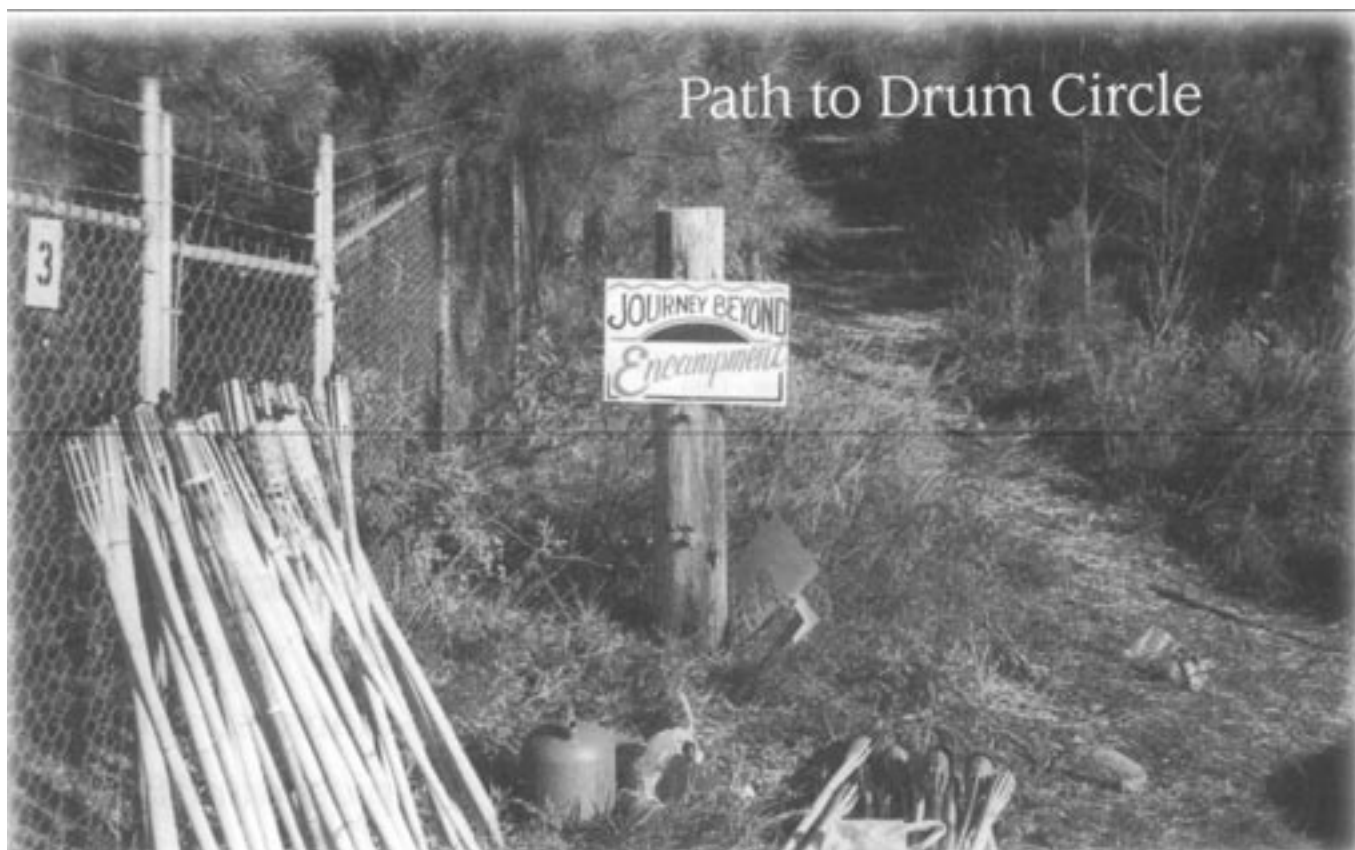
protect the headwaters of the Russell and Levisa Fork rivers.

Sunday was another picture perfect day for paddling and as sudden as the onslaught was Friday, the camp cleared out, leaving little evidence of the event that had just transpired. Being an environmentally conscious group, everyone picked up after themselves. By Monday, as we handed the keys back to the Kiwanas they shook their heads in disbelief and said: "You rafters are sure environmentally conscious and we really appreciate you keeping our place so clean - ya'll be comin' back next year won't ya?" I reckon so.

How about September 30, 2002 through October 7, 2002? We'll do the race Saturday, October 5th. See you there.

For more information on the Russell Fork River

Rendezvous, see our web page at:
<http://www.surfbwa.org/russellfork/>



All Women's School Receives Whitewater Infusion

Sweet Briar College, a women's school located about 80 miles northeast of Roanoke, Virginia, recently got a genuine boost to its outdoor program. The twenty-year-old program, still using much of its original whitewater equipment, turned to alumnus and renowned whitewater instructor, Juliet Kastorff for help. With her assistance the college was able to purchase new boats and gear for its students. In addition, Juliet and her husband, Ken, offered free clinics to Sweet Briar students. "Not only did Juliet and Ken help us with the boats and gear, but they gave us the gift of their own experience," says Laura Staman, director of the outdoor program. She hopes the new equipment will allow more students to become involved in whitewater.

Big Sandy/ Cheat Race Details

Important Race News!

• By Ric Gusic/ Race Organizer

April 13th, 2002 - Lower Big Sandy Race

Last year during the annual Cheat River Festival, a race was planned down the lower Big Sandy. Unfortunately, due to low water, the race had to be cancelled. This year another attempt will be held on Saturday, April 13th. As last year, the race will be dependent upon rainfall and water levels, so hope for rain! The appropriate water levels for the race are still being decided, but there will be a low and high water cut-off. Tentative plans are for the race to be a mass start, beginning at the bridge in Rockville and ending at the take-out (the confluence with the Cheat River). For information regarding safety, prizes, sponsors and rules visit www.rockvmountainkavak.com.

If you have any thoughts, opinions, or ideas, let us know via the site.

Cheat River Race 2002

A few weeks later, the annual Cheat River race is scheduled. The race will take place the Friday evening before the festival. The start will be 5:15pm. The race will be held in a format similar to last year, using a mass start. Entry donation will remain at \$20, which will include refreshments (yes, beer) at the take-out, shuttle, t-shirts, a festival pass, prizes, and a post race party. Again, only \$20 for all this... plus proceeds benefit the Friends of the Cheat. Plans are also in the works to address last year's top suggestion, food. We hope to have arrangements worked out for some type of meal at the party. No promises, but we're trying. Finally, similar race classes will be used and the team competition will return. As last year, a minimum of three people or groups will be needed to form a class.

The team competition will include both a corporate and a club competition. American Whitewater Affiliate Clubs may enter teams and we hope that the race will serve as a national championship for club teams. Check in with www.rockvmountainkavak.com for all changes and updates.

2001 World Rafting Championship

The World Rafting Championship (WRC) was held in Summersville, WV for the first time this year. Governed by the International Rafting Federation, this annual competition brings together the best men and women rafting teams from around the world. The WRC has previously taken place on some of the world's most exciting rivers, including the Orange River (South Africa), and Rio Futaleufu (Chile). The WRC has also been a popular subject of the international media, with the television coverage reaching 140 countries and more than 1 billion viewers yearly.

Teams of rafters from a dozen different countries competed in three separate events over the course of Gauley Fest weekend.

1. Head-to-head sprint: Two teams set off simultaneously to race through the Fayette Station Rapid on the New River. The winner of each heat advanced through a series of heats until two rafts were left in the final. The final two teams battled for first and second place.
2. Raft slalom: Each team had two chances to race the course, consisting of 12 gates hung over and throughout Fayette Station Rapid on the New River. This event tested the teams' technical skills.
3. Downriver Race: This race consisted of nine miles of fast-paced, adrenaline-filled rafting down the Gauley River. Teams raced for the title of fastest in the world.

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A New Method for New Paddlers

• By Risa Shimoda

We have become a pretty impatient lot. We want to get a meal and our change in minutes at a fast food drive-in window, need to peruse the entire cable network before settling into the next half hour of tube-watching, and love to know that we can purchase a couple of books and a closeout rain jacket on-line, in minutes. Fortunately, fast food can sometimes be healthy and a good value, we often find an entertaining show that is worthy of our research, and the books and rain jacket usually arrive with minimal hassle!

Now, paddling instruction has just entered the world of addressing our need for convenience and demand for 'deliverables.' This year, the Nantahala Outdoor Center is introducing Rapid Progressions, (an instructional program from which you 'Learn to paddle, guaranteed.')

Rapid Progressions involves instruction packages aimed at novice paddlers. For each of several packages that are available, students begin by reviewing a list of skills that they should be able to achieve. The NOC's highly experienced staff members support their progress and provide a great environment for learning.

If, at the end of the program they feel that they have not achieved their goals, they can return for another class, tuition-free. Further, if they decide to retire early from a budding paddling career, the NOC will return the instruction fee.

This is a creative program designed to encourage potential students to 'go for it.' It will also create a challenge for staffers of the well-respected staff at the Nantahala Outdoor Center to put their well-deserved reputation on the (bottom) line. No guts no glory.

American Whitewater wishes the NOC the best with their new program. First of all, they deserve kudos for aggressively pursuing a new method to reach and teach new boaters. In addition, Rapid Progressions students will become members of American Whitewater, as a part of their program enrollment.

Green Race Results

The Sixth Annual Green River Race was the biggest and best ever. A record breaking 63 people turned up to race, and the showing of spectators was three times past crowds. Top times were almost 20 seconds better than previous years, and the head to head was huge, featuring heats with as many as 5 kayakers at once racing through the drops.

Big thanks go out to the following organizations who gave us their support: Pyranha, Watershed, Diamond Brand, Asheville Pizza and Brewing Company, Stahlsac, Impex, Red Bull, Perception, Penstock Productions/LVM, and Wildflower Bakery.

1. Tommy Hilleke
2. Al Gregory
3. Clay Wright
4. Chris Harjes
5. Bo Wallace
6. Chris Young
7. Jason Shephard
8. Jason Hale
9. Nate Elliott
10. Eric Strittmatter
11. Pat Keller
12. Glen LaPlante
13. Scott McClusky
14. Dave Hepp
15. Fred Coreil
16. Adam Hunter
17. Andrew Wilmont
18. Jeff Owen
19. Nate Bahlinger
20. Corey Hall
21. Chris Buckner
22. Lane Rankin
23. Brent Meadows
24. Brad Kee
25. Leland Davis
26. Brad Hinds
27. Shane Benedict
28. Kirk Williams
29. Daniel DeLaverne
30. Jason Parker
31. Rick Gussic
32. Todd Scott
33. Riley Cathcart
34. Billy Price
35. Thomas Oliver
36. Brandon Roy
37. Matt Gadette
38. Matt Sheridan
39. Katie Hilleke
40. Jeff Golden
41. Andy Grizzell
42. Jay Moffat
43. Casey Mitchell
44. Robert Pearson
45. Pat Bradley
46. Drew Refshauge
47. David Kahn
48. Stacy Heer

49. Josh Bethea
50. Chip Smith
51. Jimmy Hopper
52. Eamon McCollough
53. Donnie Kemp
54. Jeb Hall
55. Dan Glauser
56. Maria Noakes
57. Jeremy Womack
58. Brad Moulton
59. Toby McDermott
60. Amos Shuman
61. Eli Helbert
62. Neil Killiam
63. Tim Bell

HEAD TO HEAD

1. Chris Harjes
2. Bo Wallace
3. Eric Strittmatter
4. Jason Shephard
5. Tommy Hilleke
6. Al Gregory
7. Chris Young
8. Jason Hale
9. Nate Elliott
10. Pat Keller
11. Glen LaPlante
12. Scott McClusky
13. Dave Hepp
14. Fred Coreil
15. Adam Hunter
18. Jeff Owen
18. Andrew Wilmont
18. Nate Bahlinger

HAND PADDLERS

1. Kirk Williams 5:45
2. Brandon Roy 5:56
3. Drew Refshauge 6:17
4. Jimmy Hopper 6:30
5. Donnie Kemp 6:42
6. Dan Glauser 6:44
7. Luke Garland 16:07

Hand Paddler Head to Head Winner

1. Jimmy Hopper

SHORT BOAT CLASS

1. Pat Keller 5:19
2. Jeff Owen 5:27
3. Lane Rankin 5:30
4. Brad Kee 5:32
5. Brad Hinds 5:38
6. Shane Benedict 5:39
7. Jason Parker 5:50
8. Rick Gussic 5:50
9. Riley Carthart 5:53
10. Thomas Oliver 5:54
11. Billy Price 5:54
12. Matt Gaudette 5:56
13. Katie Hilleke 5:58
14. Jeff Goulden 6:03
15. Andy Grizzell 6:06
16. Jay Moffett 6:07
17. Robert Pearson 6:09
18. Pat Bradley 6:16
19. David Kahn 6:18
20. Stacy Heer 6:18
21. Chip Smith 6:28
22. Eamon McCollough 6:32
23. Maria Noakes 6:54
24. Jeremy Womack 7:07
25. Tim Bell dnf

OPEN CLASS RESULTS

1. Tommy Hilleke 4:42
2. Al Gregory 4:45
3. Clay Wright 4:49
4. Chris Harjes 4:56
5. Bo Wallace 5:03
6. Chris Young 5:03
7. JJ Shephard 5:07
8. Jason Hale 5:13
9. Nate Elliott 5:13
10. Eric Strittmatter 5:14
11. Glen LaPlante 5:21
12. Scott McClusky 5:21
13. Dave Hepp 5:22
14. Fred Coreil 5:24
15. Adam Hunter 5:25
16. Andrew Wilmont 5:27
17. Nate Bahlinger 5:27
18. Corey Hall 5:28
19. Chris Buckner 5:30
20. Brent Meadows 5:31
21. Leland Davis 5:37
22. Daniel DeLaverne 5:49
23. Todd Scott 5:50
24. Matt Sheridan 5:57
25. Casey Mitchell 6:09
26. Josh Bethea 6:21
27. Jeb Hall 6:45
28. Brad Moulton 7:25
29. Toby McDermott 7:56
30. Amos Shuman 8:14
31. Eli Helbert 8:33
32. Neal Killiam 10:10

Steep Creeks of New England: A Paddlers Guide

Author: Greg & Sue Hanlon

• Reviewed by Barney Bonito



Left: Paddler, Lance Alpi running the last drop on the Mettawee River, N.Y. Photo by Barney Bonito.

Bottom: Paddler, Lance Alpi nailing the 1st descent of Shelburn Falls, MA. Photo by Barney Bonito.

There are only a handful of Northeastern whitewater guidebooks to choose from, but none of them are as specialized and informative to the seasoned creek boater as *Steep Creeks of New England* by Greg and Sue Hanlon. This guide picks up where all the others left off. Greg and Sue Hanlon give the Class V whitewater community the vital logistical information it needs to run the steep, in-your-face whitewater of beautiful New England.

The guide contains 29 descriptions of creeks located from southern Massachusetts to the northern woods of Maine. Specific details are broken down into 6 categories: general information, description, water levels, shuttle, history, and additional information. The guide also contains topographical maps.

The book also includes rare pictures of the most famous boaters from New England, the Kern brothers, who, to this day, set the standard for safe New England creek boating.

The biggest myth about northeastern creek boating is that the Kern Brothers paddled all

the runnable hair before they moved away from their home state of Vermont. Hanlon's book exposes these creeks and others to the whitewater community in

an easy-to-understand format. The descriptions are very accurate, but not too lengthy.

Consider the Big Branch, one of the standards for Class V in the

northeast. Greg knows this creek very well. According to the guide, the Big Branch located in Danby, Vermont, received the highest rating of three stars for its quality of whitewater and outstanding scenery. Brian Totten and Steve Heanue first ran this benchmark creek in 1997.

Cascade Brook is another creek that has almost no documentation at all, except in *Steep Creeks of New England*. Flowing down the backside of one of the largest vertical walls in all of New England, Cannon Mountain, this 650 feet per mile creek defines why New Hampshire is called "The Granite State."

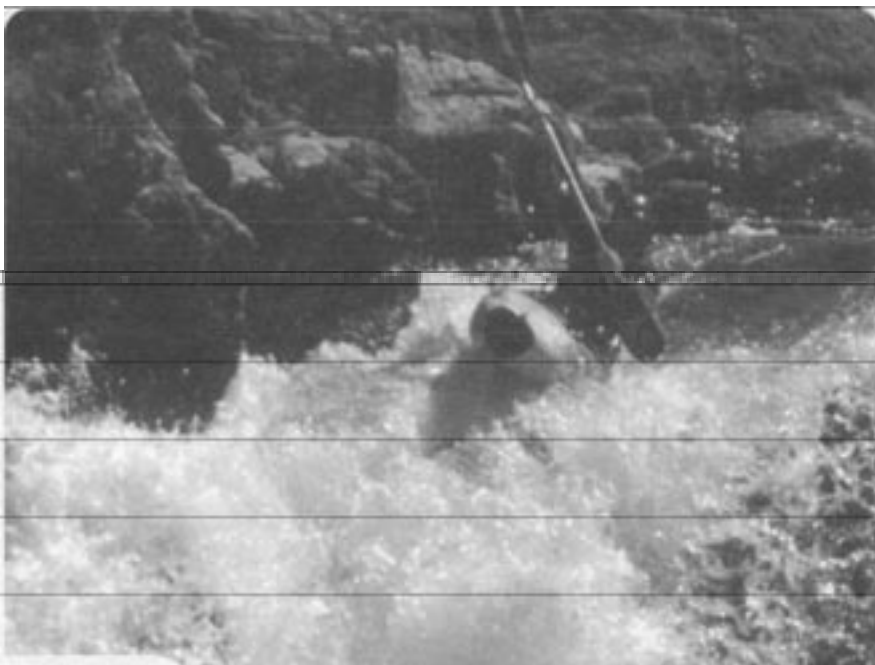
The guide does not document



any boating in the great state of New York. *Steep Creeks of New England* also does not cover all of the creek boating possibilities in the northeast. Nor does it claim to. In the final pages of his book, the Hanlon's list a handful of these runs that define the future of hair boating. Such runs like Black Brook in the Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts, which is 100 yards of game day whitewater, 1st descent by Steve Heanue and Lance Alpi. Greg also mentions Kent Falls

Connecticut. This is the type of run that only the outer fringe of hair boaters would ever even consider as the possible future of creek boating. Kent Falls Brook still has not seen a descent. It is this kind of local insight where Greg's book, *Steep Creeks of New England*, gains respect from the small community of New England creek boaters.

According to the monthly streamflow spreadsheet, found in the back of the book, the trend of springtime runoff in New England starts in March and ends in May. This book is really essential to any aspiring Class V boater



and absolutely mandatory for the seasoned creek boater that just needs a little guidance. *Steep Creeks of New England* is published by New England Cartographics, costs \$14.95, and can be found on sale online at www.amazon.com.

Editor's note: If you access Amazon.com via the AW website, you help AW out!

Top: Paddler, Barney Bonito running Button Falls, VT. Photo by Lance Alpi.

Bottom: Lance Alpi scouting the yet to be run Upper Gorge of Bourn Brook, VT. Photo by Barney Bonito.

Stay tuned for your Fox Channel 5 Special

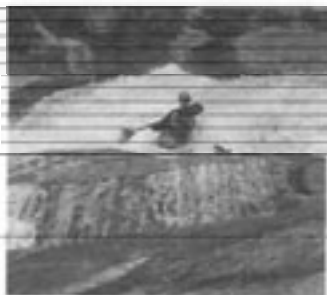
WHEN FLASH FLOODS HIT:

The first descent of White Oak Canyon

• By Bobby "ZoneDogg" Miller

Nestled by the Skyline Drive in Madison, VA lies a famous canyon named White Oak. It had sparked my interest because of its reputation for big waterfalls (6 of 35 feet high or greater) and 1000 feet/mile gradient. I had hiked it in the summer of 2000, but deemed it unrunable. However, the more I reflected upon it, the more I thought that it could be paddled. So I decided to go back for a second look.

On Sunday, August 12, 2001, my friend Joe Stumpf and I decided to hike White Oak and clean out the trees. (There was nothing to paddle; everything was too low. We had looked long and hard. I stuck to the main roads and the gentleman's clubs, while Joe searched the back alleys and the whitewater houses of ill repute.) So we headed to White



We walked up the trail to Flaming Moe (the last major waterfall), then hiked the creek bed from there. We cut several trees out on our way and were feeling good about the prospect of eventually making a run. Then, as luck would have it, we got hammered with a violent down pour, just as we reached Two-Headed Wriekazoid (the third major waterfall from the top). We retreated down the trail to the car. As we

was a raging torrent with trees barreling down it. We hiked all the way up to the bottom of Two-Headed Wriekazoid and prepared to put-in.

Two-Headed Wriekazoid is the smallest of the major waterfalls on White Oak (listed as 35 feet), but it is probably the least

steep this creek was going to be. There was nothing but a small eddy separating this rapid from the next gnarly drop.

The next rapid featured a small ledge into a boil and down an 8-foot slide. It needed to be run on the right to avoid a stiff piton. Below this a steep slide was split



runable. It slopes about 15 feet into an undercut wall, then plunges 20 feet onto rocks and into a cliff. The cool looking boulder drop immediately downstream had a large tree, so we started in the eddy below it.

The first drop was a small boulder garden leading into an 8-foot drop, followed by a 3-foot boof. This was great fun, but it gave us the scary sense of how

in the middle by a sloping rock. The water was going over the rock, rather than to the right of it, as we had hoped on our hike. The water going over the rock headed down the left into a deadly slot littered with large trees. If that slot were an ice cream flavor it would be praline and puke. The right side was a cool slide that dropped 12 feet. We decided to walk the approach to make sure



Oak to start our mission.

We brought our boats along because you never know what is going to happen. After many wrong turns, thanks to the DeLorme Gazetteer that I wasted \$20 of my hard earned money on, we finally arrived in the parking lot at the bottom of White Oak Canyon. We packed in Bow Hack and his big brother (bow saws) and prepared to do some damage to any strainers we might find.

raced down the trail, water was running off the side gutters in epic proportions. We suited up in the pouring rain and headed back up the trail at around 5:45 with our boats.

The first part of our hike with our boats was worrisome because the creek was still basically dry. However, the further up the canyon we trekked, the more water we found. By the time we reached Flaming Moe, White Oak Creek



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we didn't end up in the death slot on the left. We put-in and ran the cool slide on the right.

The next plunge was a blind 8-foot ledge with vertical cliffs surrounding it. We had left a few trees in the pool at this top of the drop and these helped with scouting. We were able to pull our boats up on the trees and look over the edge. I determined that the best move was a SIK boof in the middle. It was time for me to deliver an old fashioned, behind

75-80 degree angle. There is an ugly slot on the left that you didn't want to visit. Unfortunately, the rocks in the approach slide are angled to the left, making it difficult to hit the line.

I gave Joe the thumbs up and he got the camera ready. I peeled out in front of an undercut and dropped a 5-foot clapper onto the approach slide. I was right where I wanted to be, cruising at a speed of 223 miles

called All American Slam. This rapid goes over a 10-foot slope before going off a 40-foot drop onto rocks. The right side is deep, but getting to it would be sketchy. I'm sure it's runnable; maybe next time I'll give it a try.

After a cool boof into a neat slide and some small boulder drops, we reached Flaming Moe, the last big waterfall. It derives its name from an old Simpsons song that includes the lyric, "Happiness is just a Flaming Moe away." Flaming Moe gets right down to business. There is no approach and no run out. It is a straight up 60-foot falls at an 80-degree slope into a deep pool. The pool is short and the outflow is blocked by strainers. And some ugly rock shelves in the falls proper jut out to smack you if you are off line.

It was almost dark when we arrived at this drop. I decided to make the scout quick and then run it. Joe tried to video my descent, but it was too dark to see through the camera. I lined up

shell, Flaming Moe ■ FREAKIN' HUGE!

I got back into my boat and ferried across to the trail. There were still some fun slides and boulder drops downstream, but it was too dark to run them safely. We had a mile and a half walk in the pitch black to get back to my car. It was definitely challenging and there was a little cursing as we stumbled along. We finally made it, tired but proud of what we had accomplished.

White Oak Creek is truly a magical run and the canyon is absolutely breathtaking. The stream is one of the toughest in the Appalachians and the big drops have the potential to dish out some serious injuries. Joe and I ran about a half-mile of the run, or about half of the mile that drops 1000 feet. There are still plenty of big drops above where we launched: Infinity and Beyond (huge cascade dropping 82 feet), Better Left Unrun (a 60 foot falls onto rocks), Gore (a 20 foot cascade into a huge boulder), and



the woodshed beating to this drop. I peeled out and launched such a SIK one I that flew through the air and bounced off the cliff on the left (Oh Yesh! It was SCHWOWWEEEEEEEEETTT!).

Joe followed with a boof that would have brought a smile to the face of even the strictest boof connoisseur.

After a cool 10-foot slide through a slot, we were out of our boat scouting a narrow slide. This slide had looked awesome when it was dry, but it looked horrendous with water in it. The water went down a 10 foot plunge, piled up onto the left bank, then fell off a cliff that was creating a boil of epic proportions. We knew that the slot was clean, but it still looked like it could slam you. We made a quick portage, but ran the cool 4-foot slot drop in the run out.

After a good clapper, we were out scouting the 4th major waterfall, Minnie Moe. This waterfall is listed as 41 feet high, but it has a long approach slide that drops close to 20 feet. So the "grand total" drop is about 60 feet. The 41-foot plunge is at a

per hour (using actual Aircraft measurements...they use Aircraft in Virginia). But I hit a rock at the crux of the drop that shot me left. So there was nothing I could do but run the left slot. I flew down into the slot and launched aerial as I dropped in, landing back on the slide. As soon as I landed, I bounced again, this time on top of a large piton rock.

Had I not bounced, the impact of hitting this rock could have hurt a lot more than a good kick in the ass. Once I had bounced, my boat did a complete rock 360 and I slid down toward the pool. On my way, I caught a weird shelf that shot me in the air and flipped me. I fell about 10 feet before landing headfirst in the pool at the bottom. I rolled quickly and beached my boat. I was okay except a sore elbow from impact at the top of the slot (I forgot my elbow pads). The video footage of all this is awesome and should be up on zonedogg.com soon.

Joe wisely walked around this monstrosity and met me at the bottom. We both decided to walk the next drop as well, which is



perfectly and came screaming down Flaming Moe at a speed that I never thought possible. It was quite a rush flying down this drop, but my fun did come at a price. I went straight into the pool at the bottom and the impact knocked me into next Tuesday. You have to expect a monstrous impact when you attempt a drop as large as 60 feet, but this time I was seeing stars. I was knocked out of my boat, so I swam to shore. My boat came to rest against the strainers in the run out, but I was able to pull it off without any trouble. In a nut-

Energizer's Big Brothers (boulder drops that fall on and on).

I hope to run White Oak from the top some day soon when I have plenty of daylight. Just paddling the bottom half was one of the steepest, dangerous, and most challenging things I have ever done and one of the greatest accomplishments of my paddling career.

I can't wait to return to White Oak for another incredible creekin' experience.

Pay Day!

Whitewater Releases on the North Fork Feather River, California

• AW Editor

North Fork Feather River dewatered by Cresta Dam. Photo by John Gangemi.

On October 24, 2001, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issued a new license for the Rock Creek-Cresta Hydropower Project, located on the North Fork Feather River in California. The new license requires Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) to provide whitewater releases on two different sections of the North Fork Feather, Rock Creek and Cresta. These releases are the culmination of five-years of lengthy negotiations by American Whitewater and local volunteers in the relicensing process. American Whitewater recently caught up with two of these dedicated volunteers, Kevin Lewis with the Shasta Paddlers and Dave Steindorf with the Chico Paddleheads. Kevin and Dave were pivotal to the success achieved on the North Fork Feather often logging long hours in settlement meetings. In the interview below, Kevin and Dave provide the details about the upcoming whitewater releases and negotiations that lead to this Settlement Agreement for a new hydropower license. (To learn more about the progression leading to this outcome see the following articles; "North Fork Feather River—Just Add Water." American Whitewater Journal, Volume XXXVIII, No. 2, pgs. 28-32 and "Whitewater Feasibility Study Completed for the North Fork Feather River in California" American Whitewater Journal, Volume XXXIX, No. 3, pgs. 15-16.)

Pay Day!



Back: Concrete Flume delivering water to Cresta Powerhouse.

Photo by John Gangemi.

Left: Do you like smooth sierra granite? Photo by Rich Bowers.

AW: When did American Whitewater, Shasta Paddlers and Chico Paddleheads first get involved in the Rock Creek-Cresta hydropower relicense?

■ **KL:** In June 1996, American Whitewater, Chico Paddleheads, Shasta Paddlers, and California Outdoors filed comments on the FERC Draft Environmental Assessment for the project. We actually got involved late in this relicensing process but the project was far behind schedule—the previous FERC license had already expired thirteen years earlier. When we filed our comments asserting that the new license proposal failed to include a provision for whitewater flows we were basically told to focus our energy on other relicensing proceedings by stakeholders already at the table. In their eyes Rock Creek Cresta was a done deal. We didn't take their advice and the rest is history.

AW: How do PG&E's hydropower projects impact the North Fork Feather?

DS: Clearly, PG&E was attracted to the North Fork Feather by the same attributes that attract boaters: gradient and water. Unlike most other California rivers dominated by a spring snowmelt hydrograph, the North Fork Feather River receives substantial input from groundwater springs keeping base flows around 800 cfs even in late summer and fall. Fifty-years ago PG&E constructed a system of dams, canals and powerhouses capable of diverting most of the water from the river channel for much of the year except during extreme storms. This series of dams, canals and powerhouses has had massive environmental and recreational impacts to the North Fork Feather River. Prior to dam construction, the North Fork Feather was rated one of the top five rainbow fisheries in the country. That fishery collapsed shortly after the hydropower projects went on-line due to sedimentation,

rapid flow fluctuations, and high summertime water temperatures. Whitewater recreation is virtually nonexistent on the North Fork Feather due to the lack of 'spill' over the dams, coupled with an absence of flow information to the public. In fact, nearly 97% of the river was diverted for power generation in the previous license. The license we have just negotiated allows continued diversion of water for power generation, but prohibits PG&E from monopolizing the resource to the point of excluding all other uses of the river. The new license takes a more balanced approach, allocating a percentage of the water to instream uses. PG&E will continue to produce a significant amount of power with these projects but the impacts of that power production will be mitigated. After all, we all like our lights to go on.

AW: Why did American Whitewater put so much effort into this hydro relicense?

DS: American Whitewater recognized that the North Fork Feather offered some of the best roadside accessible whitewater in California. Furthermore, prior to construction of the hydropower projects, the North Fork Feather contained sufficient water to be boatable all year long. Diversions for hydropower operations completely dewatered these reaches, robbing the public of a recreation opportunity and depressing commerce opportunities in the local economy.

■ **AW: What would have happened if American Whitewater did not get involved?**

DS: To be blunt, for the next thirty years boaters would have stared at the dry riverbed wondering what the North Fork Feather would be like with water in it. The FERC failed to recognize the whitewater potential of the North Fork Feather. The draft license applica-

tion issued by the FERC in 1995 did not contain requirements to provide whitewater releases in the new thirty-year hydropower license. American Whitewater saw the writing on the wall back in 1996 and jumped in to change the outcome: American Whitewater jumped in to save the North Fork Feather for present and future generations of paddlers.

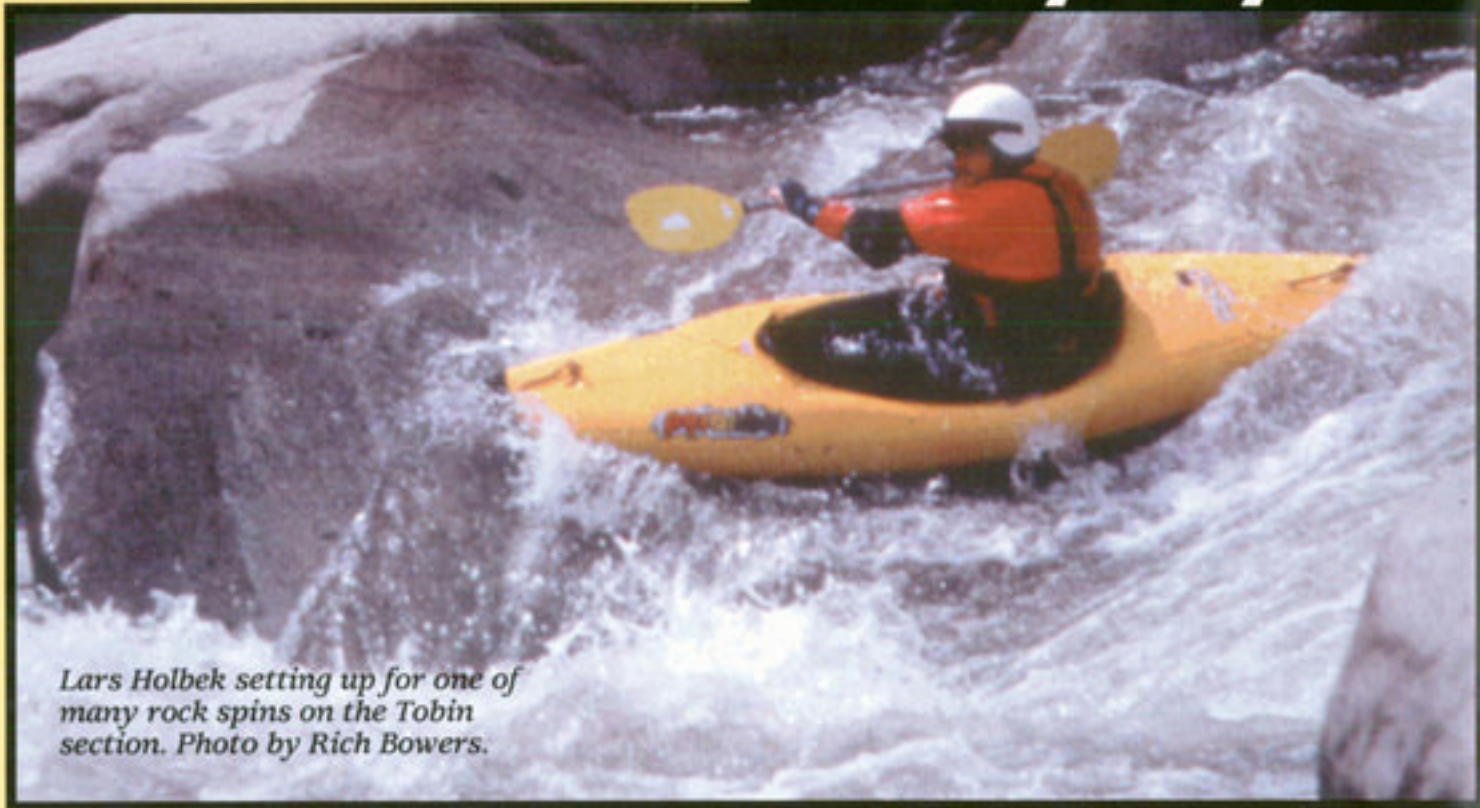
The real difference came when American Whitewater's Conservation Director, John Gangemi, began the campaign to restore the North Fork Feather. John's expertise in river ecology gave him the ability to work closely with agency biologists to craft an annual hydrograph focused on restoring the ecological integrity of the Feather. This was invaluable in our success on this project.

AW: What were the major obstacles to restoring whitewater flows to the North Fork Feather?

KL: Actually, the obstacles seemed endless. Due to the advanced stage of this relicensing process, the FERC would not order additional studies. We were lacking nearly every study imaginable necessary to address flow allocations for fisheries, wildlife and recreation. The existing studies were outdated and the data questionable. I would say the two greatest obstacles were the lack of a whitewater boating study to identify boating flows and speculative arguments about whitewater flows damaging the fishery.

AW: How did you overcome these obstacles?

KL: Our first goal was to complete a boating study in order to quantify the number of boating days available under current operating conditions as well as the number of days lost due to project construction. This data was essential to make a strong legal argument to



Lars Holbek setting up for one of many rock spins on the Tobin section. Photo by Rich Bowers.

the U.S. Forest Service and the FERC that project impacts on whitewater boating opportunities had to be mitigated. Unfortunately, PG&E refused to conduct a whitewater study claiming instead that periodic spill over the dam crest provided ample opportunities. American Whitewater carefully undermined PG&E's argument at a stakeholder meeting by providing detailed flow information proving that whitewater opportunities did not occur regularly. PG&E then consented to provide water for a whitewater flow study but refused to fund a qualified consultant to conduct the study. American Whitewater organized the study which took place in June 1999. The study truly marked a turning point—now we could definitively quantify the water necessary for whitewater opportunities and overlay that on the natural hydrograph of the North Fork Feather River. We then began to work with the Settlement Group crafting an annual whitewater release schedule based on the hydrograph.

■ **DS:** Speculation about whitewater impacts on the fishery was more difficult to overcome. First, we made a decision to only request whitewater releases that would have naturally occurred on the Feather without the dams. We felt flows in this range were ecologically important for both restoring health to the river and providing boating opportunities. This helped us distinguish between the interests in protecting fishery versus angling opportunities. Some stakeholders referred to the proposed whitewater releases as high flows, when in reality these were the natural flows of the Feather. People had gotten so used to seeing only a trickle of water in the North Fork Feather that anything greater seemed like a flood. Secondly, we developed a plan to monitor the whitewater flows during the first three years to determine if there was any biological

impacts. That's why the whitewater releases are phased in overtime. We are confident the releases will actually have a positive effect on the river.

AW: Describe the whitewater resources on the North Fork Feather.

■ **DS:** The Rock Creek and Cresta reaches contain a wide spectrum of whitewater opportunities, ranging from Class II to Class V. Furthermore, the granite domes lining the Cresta reach create the most scenic section of roadside whitewater in California. Rock Creek actually contains two whitewater reaches distinctly different in difficulty. The four mile Class III Rogers Flat section starts at Rock Creek Dam and ends at the Dump Road access point. Below this the Class V Tobin section begins the first two miles of which contain some of the best IV+ and V- whitewater imaginable—house sized granite boulders sculpted by geologic time and the flows of the Feather. There are over twenty drops in this two-mile section creating a maze of slots and boofs! The last two miles of the Tobin section are fun Class III-IV drops.

The Cresta Run starts with two miles of incredibly scenic Class IV. Granite domes that stretch out of sight and waterfalls cascading down the sheer walls of the canyon. I think the Cresta reach is the perfect introduction to Class IV paddling—something that is lacking in the summer in California. The last three miles provide great Class II-III beginner run that sports some good play spots.

AW: What is the whitewater release schedule?

■ **KL:** For the first three years of the license, releases will occur on the first full weekend of the month, June through October (in normal and wet years) and June through September

(in dry and critically dry years). Water will spill over Cresta Dam on Saturday and Rock Creek Dam on Sunday. The flow volumes will decrease with each passing month to mimic the downward slope of the natural hydrograph for this watershed.

AW: Is this release schedule permanent?

■ **KL:** The Settlement Agreement contains an adaptive management clause based in part on the demand for the river by whitewater paddlers. This clause, referred to as use triggers, is activated in the fourth year of the license. Whitewater releases may be added or removed to each month based on usage levels during the previous year. There is also an adaptive management clause requiring ecological monitoring of whitewater flows as well as monitoring potential conflicts with anglers. Negative impacts detected by either of these monitoring efforts could result in changes to the whitewater release schedule.

AW: How will boaters know about the releases?

■ **DS:** American Whitewater will publish the release schedule annually. Changes in the release schedule will be posted after April 1, once the water year type (based on snowpack) is determined. For up to date information visit American Whitewater's Streamkeeper pages for the Rock Creek and Cresta reaches (Rock Creek <www.americanwhitewater.org/rivers/id/196/>; Cresta <www.americanwhitewater.org/rivers/id/197/>).

AW: Would you do it again?

■ **KL:** Of course: there is so much to gain. There are hundreds of opportunities for restoring whitewater flows to rivers impacted by hydropower projects all over the U.S. In California alone there are 167 dams impacting

Pay Day!



Paddle raft on the Class V Tobin section during the Whitewater Flow Study. Photo by Rich Bowers.

whitewater opportunities. I am currently involved in a relicensing on the Pit River where hydropower projects dewater about 15 miles of riverbed that would normally be great whitewater.

DS: Yes, I am working on three other hydropower relicensing proceedings on the North Fork Feather: The Upper North Fork hydro project operated by PG&E with an 8 mile Class III and 10 mile Class V section (see "Old School Meets New School," Journal of the American Whitewater, Volume XLI, No. 1, pgs 14-18 and "Who would have Thought..." pgs 21-22, same issue); the Poe hydropower project also operated by PG&E dewatering a 9 mile reach containing two distinct sections of whitewater—45 mile Class V and 45 mile Class III section (see "Poe Flow Study," Journal of the American Whitewater, Volume XL, No. 4, pgs 24); and a the Oroville hydropower project operated by California Department of Water Resources.

AW: Now that the FERC has issued the license is there more work that needs to be done to secure releases?

DS: We expect a huge response from the boating community when releases begin. Unfortunately, construction on Highway 70 combined with PG&E's dams limits access and parking in some places at present. To accommodate the increased recreational demand American Whitewater is working closely with the U.S. Forest Service and CALTRANS to improve access to the river in both the Cresta and Rock Creek Reaches. This will require some capital improvements. The Settlement Agreement calls for PG&E to provide \$100,000 for access improvements with another \$200,000 in matching funds. American Whitewater and other stakeholders will be seeking those matching funds to phase in the access improvements.

In addition, American Whitewater is part of the Ecological Resources Committee (ERC). The ERC is responsible for monitoring the resources of the North Fork Feather for the 30-

year term of the new license. As part of the ERC, American Whitewater will be required to commit resources for the next thirty-years to protect the interests of whitewater recreation, and the many other conditions of this license agreement.

AW: Do you have any advice for others trying to restore whitewater opportunities on dewatered rivers?

KL: Show up at the meetings: otherwise, other parties make the decisions for you! Start early in the process and be persistent. Build a data set based on sound scientific studies—avoid uncertainty and assumptions. Forge strong alliances with other interest groups and agencies. Be aware of the utility's strategies - particularly the "divide and conquer" tactics and attempts to "drive the process." Always maintain the moral high ground. Lastly, contact American Whitewater—they have a wealth of knowledge based on a legacy of success in hydro relicensing available to boaters. You can contact American Whitewater at www.americanwhitewater.org.



Kevin Lewis taking it to County Line Hole, Cresta Reach. Photo by John Gangemi.

Release Schedule for the Rock Creek and Cresta sections on the North Fork Feather River, California.

Month	Volume (cfs)		Release Days per Month			
	Dry*	Normal**	Dry (yr 1)	Dry (cap)	Normal (yr 1)	Normal (cap)
June	1000	1600	1	4	1	5
July	800	1200	1	4	1	4
August	800	1000	1	4	1	4
September	800	1000	1	4	1	4
October	800	1000	0	0	1	2

*Dry and Critically dry years

**Normal and Wet years



Huck!



photo - Charlie Munsey



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Jeff Owen - Spirit Falls, WA

A high-action photograph of a kayaker in a red kayak navigating a turbulent white-water rapids. The water is dark and churning, with white foam from the rapids. The kayaker is positioned in the center-right of the frame, leaning into the current. The word "Pop" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font, oriented vertically and slightly tilted to the right, positioned over the white foam of the rapids.

Pop

Shane Benedict - Skookumchuck



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CANADA



Dams Kill Rivers in Canada Too!
next page

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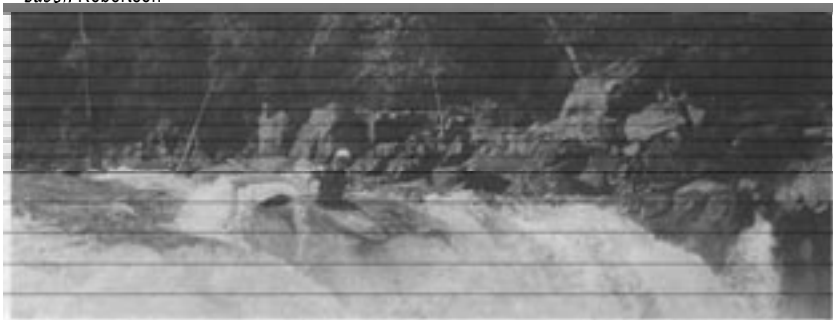


Dams Kill



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©Jason Robertson



Les Barrages Tuent Les Rivières! Fin du Monde por Rivières Canadian.

• By Jason Robertson

It's not like I need a new river conservation cause. I don't. Especially not one in another country, I've got enough river and social issues on my plate as American Whitewater's Access Director. But, sometimes, a place or a purpose worms its way under my radar and I just can't look the other way. This summer, one such crisis inveigled its way into my perception when I learned that ALL OF MY FAVORITE CANADIAN RIVERS ARE THREATENED by dams.

If you've been to Ontario or Quebec for a paddling trip in the last six years, you've probably seen the poster. You know, the one with the crazed childlike drawing of a paddler with teeth clenched on a paddle and a broken blade. This is the logo for the Gatineau River festival, which takes place on the last weekend in August.

This year's poster carries a new message, a simple message, in blood red handwriting, "Dams Kill Rivers. Les Barrages Tuent Les Rivières."

Why now? Why 2001? Earlier this year, as the United States began experiencing power shortages, Natural Resources Minister Jacques Brassard proposed building 36 low power dams on 24 rivers by 2005 to generate a measly 425 megawatts. Without exception, the

"In a move suggesting that the provincial government has either taken leave of its senses or is gearing up for the next election, Natural Resources Minister Jacques Brassard has announced that private buyers can build hydroelectric dams on 24 of the province's most beautiful and well-used recreational waterways."

The Montreal Gazette 5/29/2001

Rivers

in Canada

Tool

At left background photo is by Julie Keller.®
Insets are photos by Jean Marc Poey.®

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"In a province where there is no pressing need to expand hydro production for domestic consumption, the idea that some of the best recreational sites should be stopped up with concrete defies logic."

The Montreal Gazette 5/29/2001

proposed dams are on infamous whitewater rivers of all skill levels, ranging from wilderness canoe runs on the Mistassini to the classic surf on the Class III Gatineau and the Class V+ Seven Sisters on the Rouge {See sidebar for complete listing}.

I'd heard rumors about the dams earlier this year, but didn't believe that they were real. After all, if someone were proposing to dam 24 classic rivers in the States, wouldn't boaters and conservationists throw their paddles in the air and scream bloody murder until someone took action to protect them?

The problem in Canada is that the population is too small, the environmental laws are too lax, the rivers are too remote, and people simply don't know about the resources in their backyard or that these invaluable rivers are about to be lost in order to line some banker's pockets. Regardless, Canada's government knows the value of the American Dollar, and it's up to us to remind the nation's leaders that our tourism brings money to the hinterlands of their nation and that whitewater boaters are prepared to spend money on their vacations to protect these rivers.

The first time I went boating in Canada, my friends and I heard about something called the "Sept-Soeurs" (Seven Sisters) on the Rouge. People talked in hushed whispers about discovering the Seven Sisters as though they had found the Holy Grail. Eventually, my group found a kayaker who could tell us where it was, and Brooks, Christian, Cameron, Paige, and I set out on our pilgrimage.

The Rouge has since been featured in countless videos, but at the time, it was still an unknown. The river had not yet become a destination in itself, like the Green Narrows in North Carolina; instead, it remained the stuff that legends were made of, in fact the legend came complete with a guardian tower, a foreign tongue, mysterious objects, naked sirens on the rocks, and six terrifyingly exciting adventures.

We knew that we'd entered somewhere special upon seeing the old log and rock tower at the top of the gorge, which bears the cautionary yellow legend: **R-VI Danger Chutes**. Moments later, we came around the bend and were confronted by a bleak horizon line. When we got out to scout, we immediately knew the first 12-foot drop was runnable, but it was followed closely by a second with a monstrous



(Jason Robertson)

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"Hydro-Quebec has revised its estimates and says that a dam project with production costs estimated to be more than three cents a kilowatt/hour is unacceptable. Not one of the small-dam projects can produce electricity at less than three cents a MW/hour."

The Montreal Gazette 5/29/2001

keeper hole and a narrow boof point. Following the bubbles, we counted 1, 2, 3... 7 seconds from the base of the first waterfall to the lip of the second. Not a lot of room for error. In a moment of comical hysteria, Brooks leapt down between the rocks into the mysterious remains of an old motorboat, posing alternately as a pilot, mermaid, and masthead. The tension broken, we ran both drops clean then hiked back up and ran them over and over again before finally heading fifty yards down river. I treasure the memory of a wonderful run on the first drop, launching my Fury, landing and sinking through the boil, pulling a complete mystery move, and sur-

facing with time for one solid boof stroke that launched me cleanly over Number Two.

The third drop, sometimes referred to as The Slut, was deep, thrashy, trashy, sloppy, and easy. Tear around the bend, throw your wad, drop about 20 feet, and go deep. The longest I stayed down was four seconds. The Slut looked fearful, but it didn't hold any of our group, though Jimmy Blakeney tells a scary story about Herve Amalbert and Steve Fisher getting pummeled there at this year's Montreal Big Water Invitational high water rodeo (view the video on-line at http://kayakmag.com/movies/kayak_movies.html).

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"These new small power plants will strip the Quebec tourism sector from vital assets and Quebec citizens from a unique part of their heritage. On the other hand, at the economic level, small power plants benefit essentially to a few private promoters, since they generate no employment."

Federation Quebecoise du Canot et du Kayak.

Deeper in the canyon, around the bend, lurk drops Four and Five. Four is a devil's choice; go right down the run-out slide feeding directly into the crapper on Five, or snake through the boofs and broaches on the left, hoping to stay upright long enough to launch over the sweet spot on Five. Either way, the margin for error is high, and the hole below Five looked trenchy. Ultimately we ran both drops clean and our group cruised through with primal screams echoing over the roaring rapids.

Moments later, at Six, my nemesis, I had my glasses ripped off my head and was left with an arm in my Chums. Since then, I've run the drop about 20 times, in 20 different ways, and I've only had a clean line once. I don't know what it is about the drop, it looks easy, but it's got my number. I think, I just relax too much before running it.

Seven, is the redheaded stepchild of the run. It's the runt, and hardly bears mentioning except that there's a nudist colony on the left and you often see more flesh than you'd ever expect in a remote Canadian river when you paddle through the drop.

It would be a crying shame to lose this river to a dam; and for me, it would be like watching an ex getting married

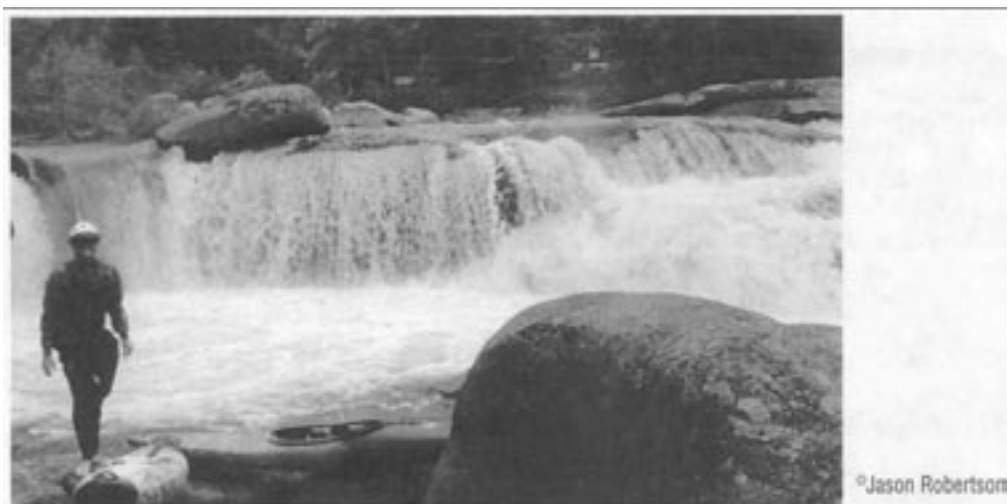
to a guy I've never liked or respected.

If the Rouge was the only river on the dam list, I might be complacent, but it's not. The dam list includes other classics loves, like the Gatineau, which is only two or three hours from the Ottawa, and the Mistassibi in Northern Quebec.

One lasting memory of the Gatineau will be of watching giant meteors burn across the night sky under the Milky Way. My friends and I were laying in the grass at the Bonnet Rouge take-out, and one meteor in particular bounced in green, blue, and red across the field of stars leaving a yellow arc flaming in the atmosphere for several minutes.

Much will be lost if the Gatineau is dammed. Sure, the river has some flat water, but nothing as bad as the lakes on the Ottawa and the holes and waves aren't give-me's. But there are five or six phenomenal big water play waves and holes with names like Lucifer and Haute Tension, and there is NEVER a line to get on them. Imagine playing at McCoy's on the Ottawa or Hell Hole on the Ocoee without a soul in sight, and you get an idea of what a visit to the Gatineau is like.

I honestly don't know if I like the rapids, solitude, or the



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"What chance does a remote river have when even those like the Rouge that support commercial rafting and extensive recreational traffic are candidates for damming. It is very disturbing."

American Whitewater Member & Canadian John O'Leary

names on the Gatineau better. Lucifer had a series of named holes; the first center hole is "L'Ange Gardien" (Guardian Angel), which is followed closely downstream by "L'Agneau de Dieu" (God's Lamb) on the left and the aptly named "L'Anus de Lucifer" (Lucifer's Anus) on the right.

Haute Tension includes three fast surf waves with a deep, clean play hole called "Transformateur" (Transformer). I can't recall when I've ever laughed so hard on the river as when I watched my buddy Chad drop into the Transformateur, blast the hole, bite the bow, and get a dozen un-intendo cartwheels. Every time he started to come

out he'd roll up, place a bracing stroke on the right and accidentally throw himself in for another violent trundling. When he finally rolled out of the hole the rest of us took turns surfing and spinning in the hole and joking about Chad's cosmic trip before getting flipped ourselves.

There's more to the Gatineau than awesome play waves; there are also the songbirds and raptors, the skeletal logs and other remnants of the last proud bonnet rouge log drive in 1994, the "bleuts" (blueberries) hanging over the eddies, and broad six-foot waterfalls that remind me of the Chattooga in Georgia.

Beyond the whitewater, the most amazing and irreplaceable thing that would be lost if the Gatineau is dammed are the quartzite canyons. These crystalline white walls look like icy glaciers with hard chunks of coal on the surface. In all my traveling, I've never seen anything like them, and neither words nor pictures do them justice. You simply have to visit the Gatineau to appreciate the canyon cliffs in all their chipped, polished, and reflected beauty.

After a run on the Gatineau, you can head 10 minutes upriver from the tasteful and friendly riverside, beachfront campground at Bonnet Rouge to Maniwaki and eat at the fabled Centre Chateau Logue for a five star meal at cut-rate Canadian prices (three beers, four courses, and great

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A night's drive northwest of Ottawa, the government is proposing dams on five sections of the Mistassini and three sections of the Mistassibi. Both rivers feed Lac Sainte-Jean, and both have long, continuous rapids with play holes that make the ones on the Ottawa look tiny. These rivers are remote, have no local advocates, and are true wilderness runs ranging from multi-day Class I canoe sections to easily portaged Class V+ whitewater.

Though I haven't boated the Mistassini yet, I've scouted the last few drops into the lake. This rapid is visible from the highway crossing. The river constricts and plunges into a monster hole that has a foam pile on the back that is at least 20 feet high. Just upstream, there are a series of classic falls rivaling the Streamers on the Potomac's Great Falls.

A few miles further North, the Mistassibi enters the lake.

The Mistassibi is a broad, shallow draft river where the water runs in thick sheets across multiple 6-foot ledges making phenomenal play and keeper holes.

The crux rapid must have a local name (perhaps "Hawaii"), but I've never run into anybody that can confirm what it's called, so my friends have alternately dubbed it the Funnel or the Firehose. The river necks down to about fifty feet, forcing all the water through the canyon walls. This forms a giant 10-foot high funnel that gapes upstream and jets water and air out downstream through a closed siphon. The Funnel is a hungry and sloppy eater, and I've never seen another rapid like it.

My memory of running the Funnel is incomplete but involves gunning into the funnel and getting shot out the back. I recall a young Andrew McEwan going in low and getting troughed, while Ryan B went in high and got thrown violently into the meat. My vague memories are the result of too many nights driving and too many days playing on Canada's incredible rivers.

So far, I've described visits to four classic rivers that would be shoe-ins for Wild & Scenic status in the States and protected from dams, but Canada doesn't have America's legislative protections, and their government is proposing as many as ten dams on just these four rivers.

Unfortunately, the dam list goes on, and includes other Canadian whitewater treasures like the beautifully named Metabetchouane, Sainte-Ursule falls on the Maskinonge River, Neuf Falls on the Batiscan River, Kipawa, the Grand Canyon of the Chute Sainte-Anne, Matawin, and the epic falls on the Petite Nation. Canada's dam policy is truly a tragedy in the making.

In my last Canadian trip, I spent five days playing on the Ottawa, Gatineau, and LaChine. I never used cash to pay for anything, only plastic. My credit card receipt was about \$250 Canadian or just less than \$175 American. I ate great, slept hard, played harder, and would've spent a lot more for the same culinary and living experience in the States. Sure I had to drive 12 hours to get to Canada from Washington DC, but it was worth the overnight haul and loss of sleep for such an awesome experience and rewarding memories. Now, I can't believe that this experience is at risk of becoming only a memory, and that in just four years I may only have the crowded play spots of the Ottawa to enjoy on my summer vacations to Canada.



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Wade Gapes, Rapid Magazine

Back home in the States, I'm looking at the wall in my office, staring at my copy of the 2001 Gatineau Festival poster. Dams Kill Rivers. If enough of us write to the Canadian government and share our dreams, stories, and experiences about visiting the rivers and spending our money in Ontario and Quebec, we might just be able to look back on this threat and say with pride "Americans Saved Canada's Rivers for Canadians."

More information is available from Federation Quebecoise du Canot et du Kayak at: <http://www.canot-kayak.qc.ca/preserv/riv_menacees_f.html> and from the government at: <http://www.mrn.gouv.qc.ca/2/23/230/liste_preliminaire_site.asp>.

Want to help?

Write to the Federation Quebecoise du Canot et du Kayak and let them know what you think of the government's plan to destroy 24 of Canada's rivers for an inconsequential amount of power. The Federation will forward your comments to the appropriate authorities:

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<<http://www.canot-kayak.qc.ca>>

Dams Kill Rivers in Canada Too!



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JimiCup 2001

• *By Deb O'Keefe*

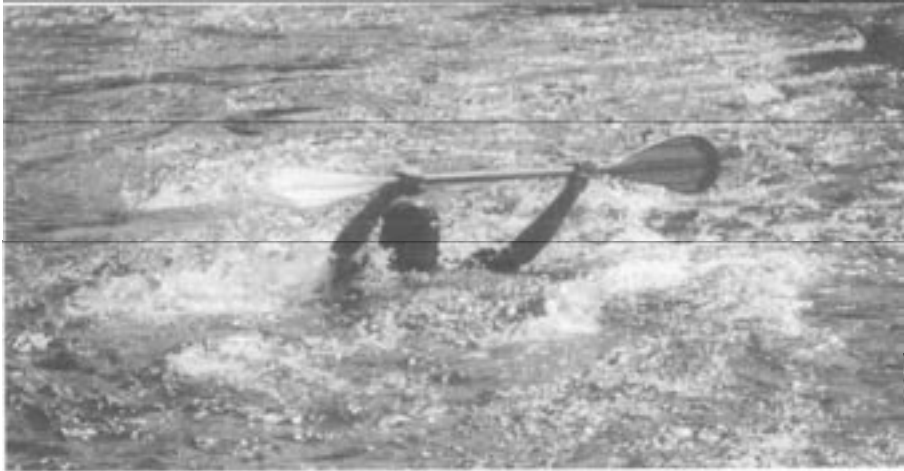
Welcome to JimiCup 2001, a squirt boater festival! The annual event takes place on the Ottawa River and was attended this year by over 40 people. This was the third annual JimiCup even though it was my first year in attendance of this great Canadian river celebration. What started with just a small group of squirt

boaters has blossomed into a unique whitewater event. Participants represented three countries, four provinces and ten states. Scott Docherty organized JimiCup with the help of several local paddlers. During the three day event, participants had numerous opportunities to play, both on and off the river.

Friday started with a clinic taught by Jim Snyder. Here paddlers could learn new moves and sharpen their technique. We were all lucky to have the opportunity to learn from one of the masters and founders of squirt boating. Many paddlers spent Friday at Smoothie, a superb mystery spot at the top of



JimiCup 2001



Left page top: Group picture of JimiCup participants. Photo by Ed Skrzykowski.

Left page bottom: Squirter boaters relaxing and playing at Smoothie. Photo by Chris Martin.



Top: Chris Towles in a mystery move. Photo by Chris Martin.

Bottom: Eric Zitzow setting up for a mystery move. Photo by Chris Martin

McCoy's Rapid. Paddlers were able to achieve consistent down-time in the five to ten second range. Someone should have posted an addiction warning on the side of the river; once you got to ride Smoothie, all you wanted was more! After a fulfilling day of playing, we retired to River Run Campground for a

bonfire and much socializing.

Saturday was a glorious day, sunny and warm. More paddlers arrived to enjoy Smoothie and run the river. The Ottawa is a beautiful river, with big Class III/IV rapids separated by deep, boily pools. Some of these pools are big enough to be called lakes, but the whitewater action in the




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rapids is more than enough to justify the flatwater. However, extended periods crammed into a squirt boat have a tendency to cause frequent stops; it takes a lot of discipline to persuade your feet that they WANT to return to the boat for the next rapid. The group stopped to play at Pushbutton and Brain Douche. Near the end of the run, organizer Scott Docherty had an unfortunate run-in with a rock that deprived him of one blade of his prized wood squirt paddle! The rest of the group tried their best to console him at the end of the day by serving up large quantities of Kawartha Lakes Cream Ale, with some degree of success.

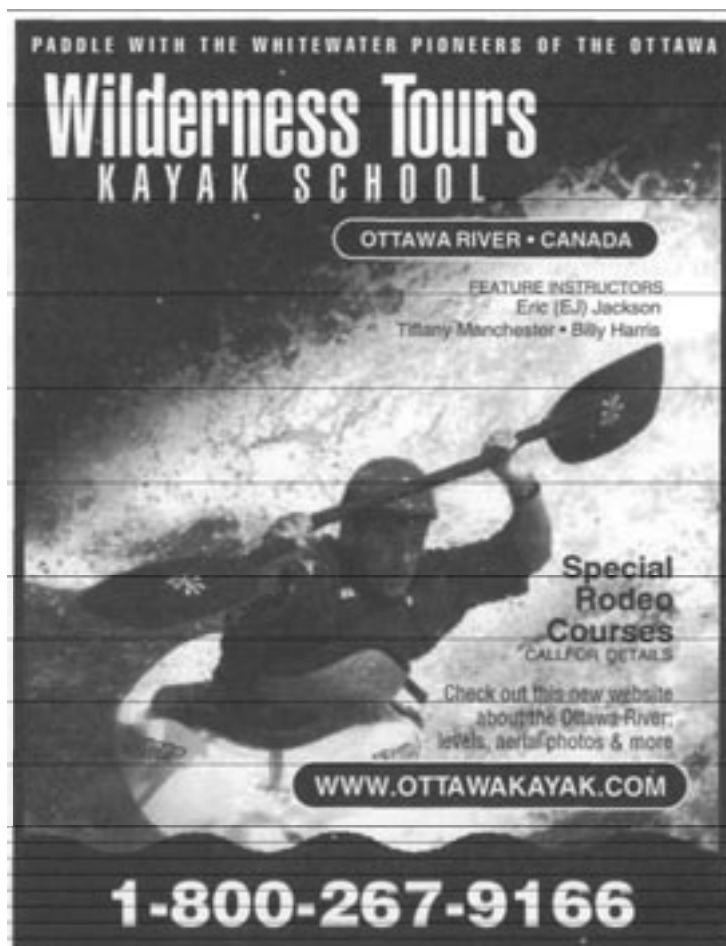
The evening activities continued at the campground with bids for Nerf Golf teams. Both U.S. and "Canada A" Teams were well represented, with a strong showing from the Voodoo Rocket boys and Team Bermuda. The course was rugged, with traps and penalty shots in abundance. Occasional interference from cars (running over the Nerf golf ball) made for added excitement. The golf participants were a hardy bunch, continuing the game by flashlight well after dark. Team Canada took home the trophy this year, while Team U.S. vows to take less penalty (tequila) shots next year.

A fun-for-all downtime (mystery move) competition took place Sunday. Almost everyone participated in this event. Each ride was timed and an extra .5

second could be added or deleted depending on the exit move. Paddlers had a total of five rides to complete their score. First prize went to Joel Harris for a total of 80.8 seconds underwater. Second was Jason Rodwell with 80.5 and Eric Zitzow rounded out the top three with 75.8 seconds. The longest single ride of the day went to Joel: a total of 23.6 seconds! Back at the campground, prizes were awarded to all participants. Thanks to the following companies/people for their generous donations: Dagger, Jim Snyder, Level Six, Murky Water, Perception, PS Composites, RapidMag, Wild Rock Boatwerks, SiV,

Langford Canoe, Shred Ready, Fat Eddy's Threadworks, and Joel Harris' mom. A group picture was taken at this time to show off all the squirt boats and metalflake glitter!

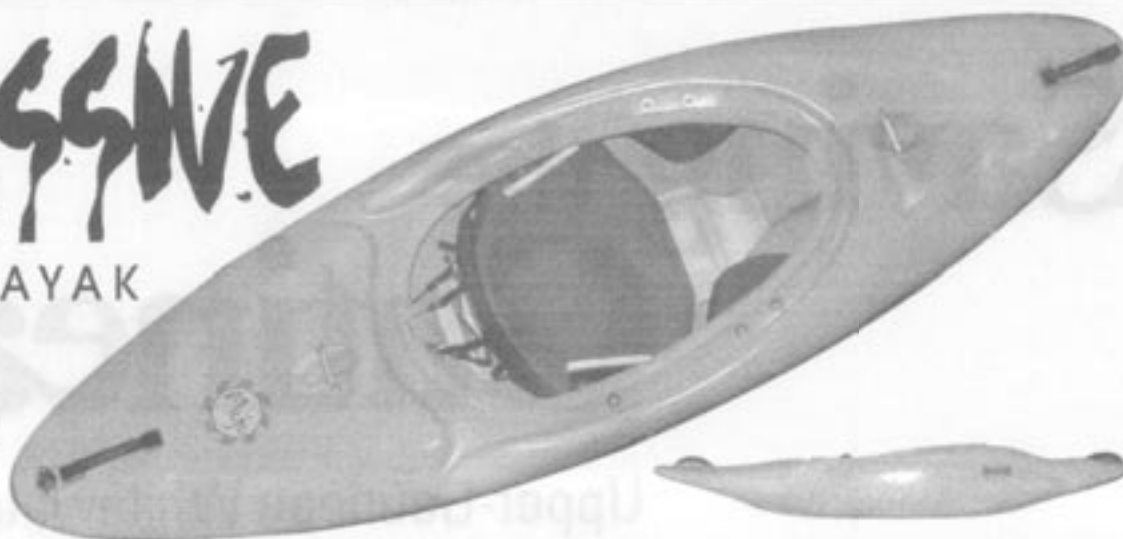
The JimiCup was an excellent event celebrating all aspects of squirt boating. It was great to have a chance to paddle with a large group of squirtists on such a beautiful river. Plenty of ideas about outfitting, new moves, and boat designs were available for/ from all. All told, the event was a tremendous success. If you were unable to attend this year, be sure to make plans for JimiCup 2002!



A black and white poster for Wilderness Tours Kayak School. At the top, it says "PADDLE WITH THE WHITEWATER PIONEERS OF THE OTTAWA". Below that, "Wilderness Tours" is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font, with "KAYAK SCHOOL" underneath in a smaller, all-caps font. A dark oval contains the text "OTTAWA RIVER • CANADA". Below this, "FEATURE INSTRUCTORS" is written, followed by "Eric (EJ) Jackson" and "Tiffany Manchester • Billy Harris". The central image shows a kayaker in a helmet and gear, paddling through white water. To the right of the kayaker, it says "Special Rodeo Courses" and "CALL FOR DETAILS". Below the kayaker, it says "Check out this new website about the Ottawa River: levels, aerial photos & more". A dark oval at the bottom contains the website "WWW.OTTAWAKAYAK.COM". At the very bottom, the phone number "1-800-267-9166" is displayed in a large, bold font.

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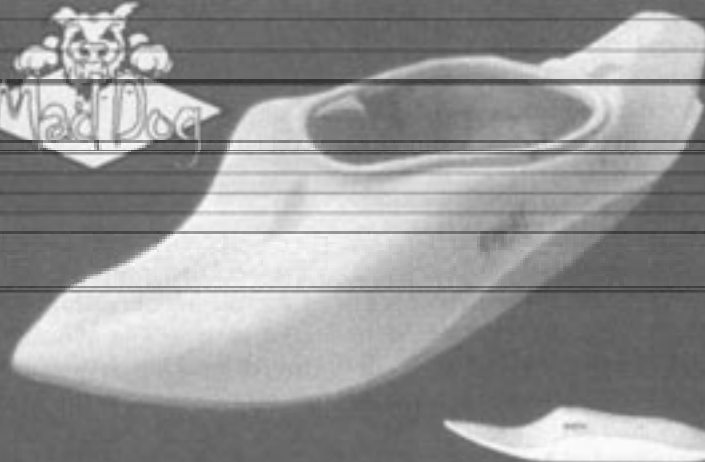
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Saving the Gatineau!

Upper-Gatineau Whitewater Festival

- By Don Karn
- Photos by Jean Marc Poey *

At one of the early editions of the Upper-Gatineau Whitewater Festival, Jasmin Lefevre, co-founder of the festival, stood admiring the crowds of paddlers at the Bonnet Rouge Rapids pull-out. He was heard to mutter, in an odd mixture of awe and exasperation that he found it inconceivable that anyone, who had ever paddled the Festival section of the Gatineau between the towns of Maniwaki and Bouchette, could ever let anything happen to it. The awe came from the magnificence of the river, the exasperation from its vulnerability.

Of course what Jasmin was talking about was proprietorship and if putting people on the River gives them a stake in its future, then the Festival has to be considered an unmitigated success. Every year there have been increasing numbers of paddlers on the Gatineau. From a modest beginning five years ago, the 2001 edition saw over 1000 kayakers, canoeists and rafters take to the water during the last weekend of August.

For close to 180 years, proprietor-

ship of the Gatineau was in the hands of a succession of lumber barons and pulp and paper companies. They used the river to drive raw materials from the region's forests to manufacturing markets. Finally during the early 1990s the log drive ground to a sluggish but inexorable halt. For the first time the river became accessible to the local community. Judging by many of



the local newspaper reports of the time, the initial reaction was to return control to outside, allowing exportation of local raw materials, this time electricity. As with the lumber trade of the past, the region itself would lose the benefit of the full potential of its own resources. There was some men-

tion of development of ecotourism, but there seemed little understanding that once given over to hydro development, the unique attraction of the river for ecotourists would be compromised.

It is not surprising that the local community was slow to realize the true value of the River. It is bounded by private property, no public roads run parallel to the rapids section of the river,

and the Kitigan Zibi Algonquin Indian Resewele lies along five miles off it's west bank. As Mayor Robert Coulombe of Maniwaki observed with some irony in his welcoming speech at this year's Festival, it took a canoe club from Montreal to help the local population discover its own river and appreciate its potential.

In the summer of 1996, the Portageurs Canoe Club of Montreal organized an exploratory canoe trip.

Aware that the log drive had recently been terminated on the Gatineau, they decided to explore the Maniwaki Bouchette section of the river. To their surprise and delight they stumbled upon a rare treasure. They also learned that this new found treasure was threatened with hydro de-

velopment. Jasmin Lefebvre and club president Alain Bonin decided to organize a canoe festival. From the start, the objectives of the Festival were clearly spelt out: to make people aware of the natural splendor of the Gatineau, to lobby to preserve the Gatineau in its natural state and to work for the preservation of all threatened Quebec rivers by donating Festival proceeds to the Comité de

1



range of skill levels. There are several lines available on all rapids, from the cowboy-rodeo route of the RIVN (Class IVN) to sneaky RII (Class II) lines following the inside turns of the river, to the sure-footed path of the well-marked portages, all this running through pristine wilderness less than 90 miles north of the nation's capital.

But the Gatineau experience is more than the river. As Karl Gesslein, a kayaker from Ithaca, New York, wrote on his

The Festival started quietly in late August of 1997. 150 paddlers gathered in Maniwaki to experience the thrill of the Gatineau. By pure accident, I happened to be present. During a short break in the frivolity of that first Festival Saturday night, I listened with interest as president Bonin spoke of the importance of remembering the objectives, one of the most important being to make the local community aware of its own river. I was intrigued, and shortly after, I introduced myself to him as a local who wanted to check out the river. I wondered if he had a spot for me in a canoe the next day. He hesitated a moment, asked me if I knew how to swim and if I had any whitewater experience. "Lots" I lied, and that's how I discovered the Gatineau. The next morning I jumped into Alain's canoe. I've been there ever since. But my experience is far from unique. One ride is all it takes and lots of others have clamored on board. There is now a dedicated group of local preservationists that helps with the logistics and operation of the Festival site.

If it's the vulnerability of the Gatineau that lends a sense of urgency

to the organization of the Festival, and in a perverse sort of way, leads to its success, the river itself cannot be ignored as a drawing card. There are several park and paddle rapids in the vicinity of Maniwaki, among them La Gueule du Lion, (Lion's Mug) and La Bouche du Chaton, (Kitty's Mouth), but the main Festival run is a surprising compact stretch of 8 km. (5 mi). There are 8 separate rapids packed into the run with minimal flatwater between the breaks. Names such as Haute Tension, (High Tension), Le Mur (The Wall) and l'Anus de Lucifer,



(no translation necessary), give an idea of the types of waves and holes on the river. But even at festival time, with Hydro Quebec cooperating with a release from the Baskatong Reservoir, the river can be paddled by a wide

web site after the 1998 Festival, "...the Gatineau Festival was by far the best paddling weekend all summer. I was skeptical about the 6 hr. drive but... I can safely say that it was worth it. I have never met any culture that is as hospitable as the French-Canadians. They fed us, shuttled us, let us camp and gave us hot showers and kept up a nice fire that burned all night long. Never once was I made to feel as stupid as I felt for not being able to speak French..."

Two of those hospitable French-Canadians "bookend" the main festival

route. Access to the river is provided by Margueritte Lafrance, (the name Margueritte is also French for daisy, hence the flower logo on the access signs), while Isabelle Gagnon is owner-operator of the enchanting and spectacular Bonnet Rouge take-out and campsite. Nicer people you would be hard-pressed to find and they are precious collaborators. They

share the paddlers' vision of sustainable tourist development of the river with scrupulous respect for the natural setting. But on the Gatineau, collaboration can never be taken for granted. In at least two instances, under pres-

sure from private hydro developers, cooperative land-owners have changed their minds and now deny river access to paddlers, and the Festival.

From the put-in campsite at Margueritte's to the take-out at Isabaele's, the river drops 55 feet. Talk to a whitewater paddler and a hydroelectric engineer about drop and we all know that they see two different things. The paddler sees eddy lines, souse holes and haystacks, the engineer sees megawatts. The curious thing about the Gatineau, is that Hydro Quebec doesn't see enough megawatts to find development profitable.

But Hydro Quebec, a provincial crown corporation isn't the villain in this story. For several years the provincial government has been talking of stimulating regional economies by allowing private enterprise to enter the ring. In May of this year the talk became a real threat as the Quebec government announced that it would proceed with its privatization program for small scale hydro projects **where local and native communities agreed.** The Gatineau was on the list of 24 rivers, with two of the 36 proposed sites. Hydro development at either of the Gatineau sites, the Corbeau or Cèdres Rapids, would drive a stake through the heart of the festival.

There are many arguments against the government privatization program. Ironically, Quebec Natural Resources Minister Jacques Brassard, father of the program, acknowledges one of the most compelling. If all 36 sites on the privatization list were to be developed, their combined production would be 425 megawatts. According to

Brassard's own figures, 425 megawatts represents only one year of what he projects to be Quebec's annual increase in energy needs. Admittedly, as we go forward in the new century, energy needs will increase but one has to wonder if sacrificing 24 rivers to produce a paltry 425 megawatts is a reasonable trade-off. Instead, preservationists encourage investing in research and alternative sources of production including wind, solar and en-

ergy efficiency. All of these endeavors produce more power and create infinitely more permanent jobs. By sparing the sites, Brassard would leave intact Quebec's image as an attractive adventure-tourism destination and allow the regions' to control the sustainable development and exploitation of this exponentially expanding sector of

the economy. Indeed, the success of the Whitewater Festival attests to the vitality and growth potential of adventure tourism.

And what about the Upper-Gatineau Whitewater Festival? Do participants get their money's worth? You be the judge. At this year's Festival for a \$30.00 Am. pre-registration fee, you got shuttle service to the Festival rivers, two breakfasts, a supper, camp grounds, hot showers, indoor washrooms, campfire, marquee tent, and a Saturday night Festival party complete with entertainment, auction, music, laughter and camaraderie. But you also got something incalculably more important. You had the satisfaction of knowing that your presence on one of Quebec's threatened rivers will help shape local and native decision makers' choices. Your continued presence, as a valued, visible visitor, will reaffirm their choice. Finally, as Jasmin

Lefebvre would muse, you got to buy into a piece of a river. One ride, that's all it takes and it becomes yours, yours to enjoy and yours to look after. Any other conclusion is inconceivable.

The Gatineau River

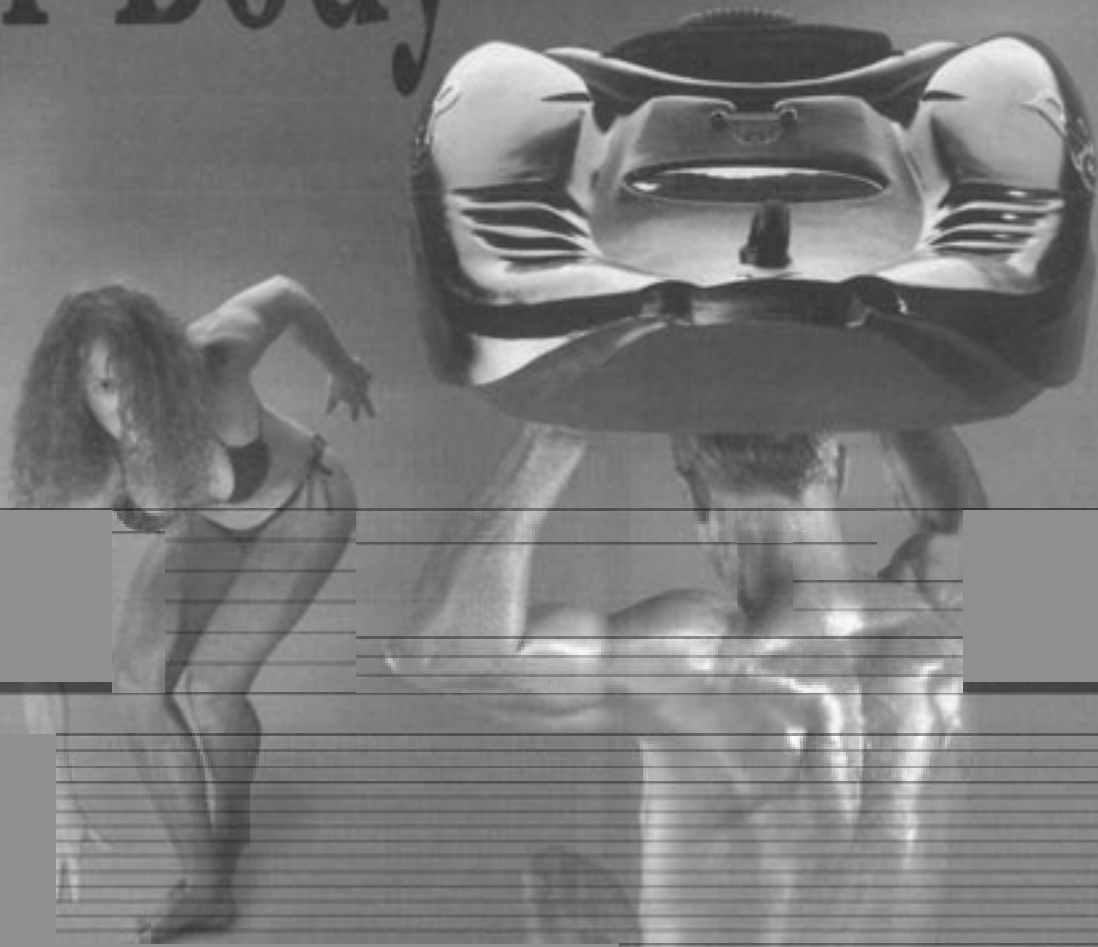
General Description:
From lac Pain de Sucre (Suagar Loaf), 47d52' north latitude by 75d31' west longitude,

the river flows almost due south for 363 km (230mi) where it empties into the Ottawa River.

Lac Pain de Sucre / Baskatong Reservoir: The first 130km (80mi) section from lac Pain de Sucre to the Baskatong Reservoir merits consideration for a 5 or 6 day canoe trip. It is on this first section that you can paddle the so called "Scenic," a 20 km



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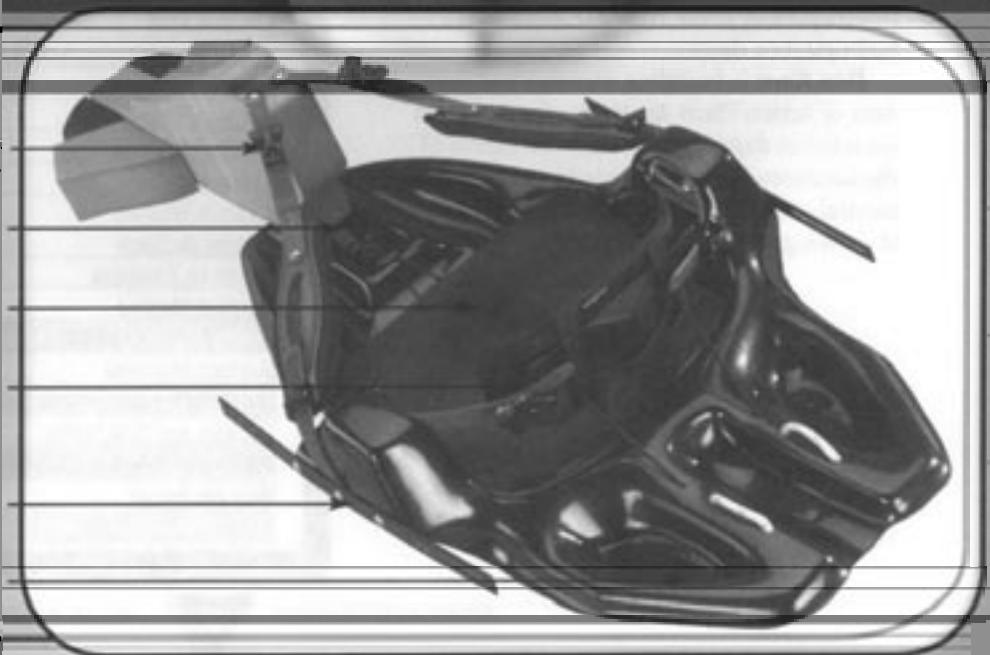


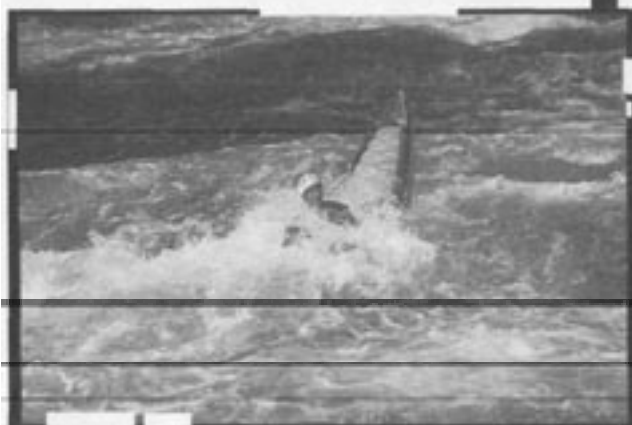
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(12mi) stretch of almost continuous Class II⁷ III, and marvel at the magnificent Trinity and Serpent waterfalls.

Baskatong Reservoir: The 400 km² (160mi²) Baskatong Reservoir was created in 1928 with the construction of the Mercier Dam. The dam is owned and operated by Hydro Quebec and has been used to control water flow to Hydro's three generating plants downstream. After 75 years of operation, Hydro has recently decided to install turbines with a capacity of 60 MW.

Baskatong Reservoir / Town of Grand Remous / Maniwaki / Town of Bouchette: A 60 km (40mi) section containing numerous falls, chutes and challenging rapids. The heart of the Upper-Gatineau Whitewater Festival lies in this section. It is also the section that has been targeted for private micro hydroelectric generating projects.

Town of Bouchette / Ottawa River: The remaining 120 km (75mi) is mainly flatwater, interrupted by three Hydro Quebec operated hydroelectric dams.

Don Karn is founding member and president of Action Plein-Air Haute-Gatineau, an association dedicated to the preservation of the Gatineau River and its tributaries in their natural state. Visit the official festival web site at <www.gatineau.org>.

Preliminary List of Sites

Region - Site	River	Estimated Production (Megawatts)
REGION: Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean		
Chute de l'Épouvante	Métabetchouane	5
Chute Martine	Métabetchouane	9
Ile aux Faucons	Mistassini	14
La Grande Chute (Cinquième Chute)	Mistassini	13
Ile du Pin Blanc	Mistassini	12
Ile au Portage Belley	Mistassini	13
Onzième Chute	Mistassini	10
MB-2 (5.5km de Mistassini)	Mistassini	17
MB-3 (19.5km de Mistassini)	Mistassini	28
Chute Blanche	Alex (trib. Péribonka)	2
Chute Gagnon	Shipshaw	8
REGION: Capitale nationale		
Chute Sainte-Anne (Grand Canyon)	Sainte-Anne	10
REGION: Mauricie		
Chutes de Sainte-Ursule	Maskinongé	7
Chute Pellerin	Shawinigan	1
Chutes du Neuf	Batiscan	13
REGION: Outaouais		
Ile du Corbeau	Gatineau	25
Rapides des Cèdres	Gatineau	25
Chutes du Moulin et de la Petite Nation	Petite Nation	18
REGION: Abitibi-Témiscamingue		
Barrage des Rapides-des-Quinze	Des Quinze	25
REGION: Côte-Nord		
Chute à Boulé	Portneuf	4
Chute du Six Milles	Sault aux cochons	11
Chute du Quatre Milles	Sault aux cochons	5
Chutes à Thompson	Franquelin	5
Chute à Fred	Riverin	1
Chute des Quatorze Arpents	Pentecôte	15
Chute Route 138	Aux Rochers	11
Chute des Noyés	Aux Rochers	13
La Grosse Chute	Manitou	17
Chute à Aubin	Manitou	12
Chute à Wallace	Manitou	3
Courbe du Sault	Sheldrake	14
Chute au Tonnerre	Au Tonnerre	4
Barrage Magpie	Magpie	11
REGION: Lanaudière		
Barrage Matawin	Matawin	10
REGION: Laurentides		
Rapides des Sept Sœurs	Rouge	17
REGION: Centre-du-Québec		
Rapides Spicer	Saint-François	17
Total		425

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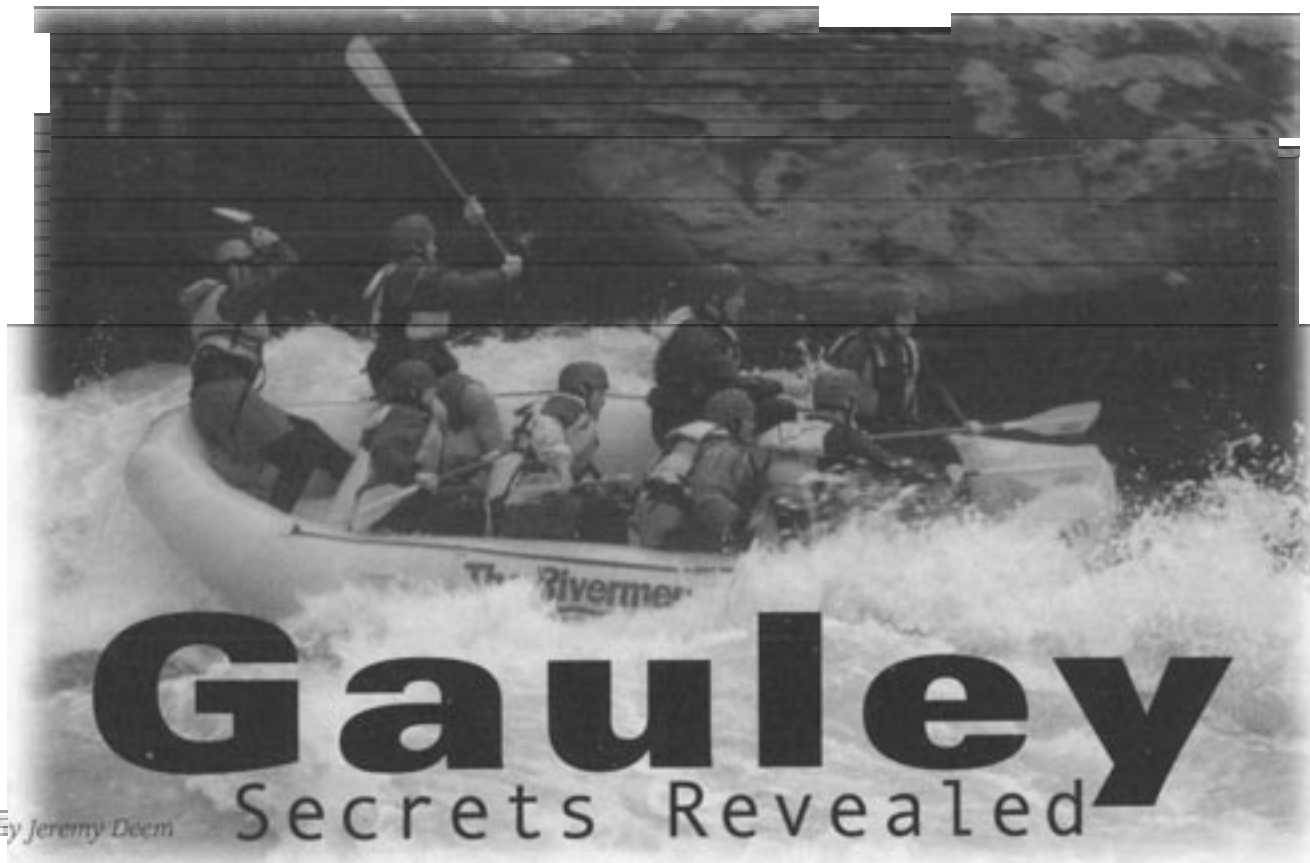


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Gauley season 2001 has come and gone folks, leaving behind memories of blissful current-miles, well-deserved pummelings, a spectacular Gauley-Fest, new bags of tricks, perhaps some seemingly unjust pummelings, and, for sure, a renewed appreciation and fondness for that splendid six weeks spent in our spectacular gorge. I have been reflecting upon the season from the perch of a treestand (fortunately for us West Virginia natives, bow season opens the last Saturday of Gauley season every year.) Although my freezer remains empty, the treestand think-perch has yielded some food for thought about the Gauley. In an effort to set the record straight on some very common myths/misconceptions often repeated on the tailwaters of the Gauley, I paid a visit to our friends at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Summersville. Amaze your paddling buddies with the answers the next time you head to the Mountain State to paddle.

Q: Why is there a Gauley season?

A: This could be a very long and complex answer, but we'll try to keep it simple. The Summersville Lake Project is, primarily, a flood control project. The reservoir is kept low in the winter, allowing plenty of space to accommodate the spring runoff in the 803 square mile drainage, and kept higher during the summer for, among other reasons, lake recreation. Water is released downstream throughout the year as needed to assist in flood control, lake shoreline stabilization, downstream water needs, and other causes as deemed, in order of priority, by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Water needs to be dumped in larger quantities every autumn as the cycle continues. So, a bunch of folks from all sorts of organizations got

together in 1983 to make some decisions regarding future usages of the dam, including the commercial whitewater faction, private whitewater boater's factions, upstream users, marina concessionaires, campground concessionaires, the DNR, the state tourism board, the DEP, the NPS and the Army Corps of Engineers. The main resolution that came out of this concerning "Gauley season" was the 1986 addition to the Water Resources Development Act, section 1102, which outlined and legally enacted regulations specifically denoting whitewater recreation on the 26 miles of river below the dam as a "project purpose" of the Summersville Lake Project. To put it quite simply, Gauley season is a federally protected entity.

Q: When was the Summersville Dam constructed?

A: Although the project was authorized by Congress in 1938, construction was not initiated until 1960. Under the supervision of the Army Corps of Engineers, the project was completed in nearly seven years, and was dedicated by President Lyndon B. Johnson September 3, 1966.

Q: Will the new hydroelectric power project effect the releases during Gauley seasons in the future?



Continued page 66

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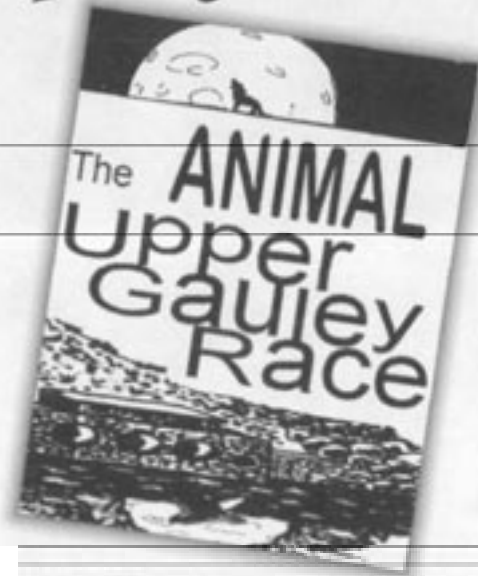
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A: Because of section 1102 of the Water Resources Act, "Except in cases of emergency, no suspension or modification of (normal releases) may be made solely for reasons associated with the generation of hydro-electric power at Summersville Dam." On top of this good news, the hydro-power project operates when approximately 800 - 4000 cfs are releasing from the dam, which happens to be the standard range of navigability on the Upper Gauley. This has been making, and should continue to make for more Gauley days during wet times of spring and summer.

Q: Is it true that the Summersville Dam is the largest earthen dam east of the Mississippi?

A: At 390 feet high and 2,280 feet long, the dam was in fact the largest rock-fill dam of its type in the eastern United States upon its completion. However, the dam at Carter's Lake in northern Georgia now has that title. Our beloved earthen blockade is now second in that category.

Q: Is it true that the dam was almost called the Gad Dam?

A: Sure is! The Army Corps of Engineers generally names each lake project for the nearest post office or stream on which it is located. The nearest post office on this project was located at the small town of Gad, which was actually flooded out by the new lake. After briefly considering the name "Gad Dam," it was determined that the name Summersville would be more acceptable. Sorry, Gad!

**Author's Note: A very special thanks to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' employees Kevin Brown, Park Ranger, and C.J. Hamilton, Resource Manager.*

• By Travis J. Graham

What follows is a more or less actual account of one man's attempt to complete the Upper Gauley Race as quickly as possible without looking stupid or becoming needlessly winded.

■ Saturday, September 22 (T minus 2 days):

Attend Gauley festival. Observe fancy kayaks which, to open boater, do not appear to differ from one another except with regard to color. Observe giant trucks with giant racks, giant RVs, giant inflatable gorilla. Make rounds of various booths; make trips back to van where lemon drop shooters are located. After several trips to van, observe that point of Gauley festival itself is not necessary to have fun, only lemon drop shooters.

■ Sunday, September 23 (T minus 1 day):

Day of rest. Avoid all substances which smell of lemon and/or vodka. Disabled for several hours after brief contact with "lemon fresh" dishwashing detergent.

■ Monday, September 24, 9:00 a.m. (T minus 5 hours):

Arrive at Summersville dam. Cold and rainy. Fortunately, every man, woman, child, and dog in Gauley River corridor owns \$415 Gore-Tex parka. Odd, since many otherwise appear to be homeless. Register for race, obtain T-shirt. Consider backing out after obtaining T-shirt, since obtaining T-shirt is real goal of whitewater events in general. Decide to hang tough.

■ 11:00 a.m. (T minus 3 hours):

Race meeting. Get bib, instructions, takeoff time, directions to food, beer. Amble around parking lot, listening to unintelligible but intense-sounding talk from foreign raft racers. By their hand gestures, I can pick out the word for getting worked in several languages. German: "gehammerschmacken."

■ 12:50 p.m. (T minus 12 minutes):

Get in boat, drift down to starting point. Interviewed by nice English guy with professional-looking camera. Tell him I am not really a racer, but Canadian fur trapper. He asks if I am looking for beaver. Jocularly all around.

■ 1:00 p.m. (T minus 2 minutes):

Observe fellow open boater Steve Frazier. Has paddle that appears to be constructed of 4' x 8' sheet of plywood and landscaping timber. Also notice that he has a waterproof digital watch attached to boat to time himself. Wonder if I should



have small waterproof calendar attached to my boat. He starts at 1:01, at which time massive reactionary waves from giant paddle swamp my boat and wash away nearby mobile home. Little do I know that this same water is to plague me for the rest of the day. He bounds out of sight.

♦ **1:02 p.m. (start time):**

Race official holds onto my boat as countdown commences. At end of countdown, boat is dramatically released. Somewhat anti-climactic as I then stop to puff on airbag.

♦ **1:10 ish:**

Negotiate warm-up rapids, Initiation, etc. Using high-powered binoculars, can discern competitors in the distance, speeding away. Boat dry, strokes solid, but beginning to think I shouldn't have worn long-sleeved paddling jacket.

♦ **1:30 ish:**

Run Bud's Boner. At bottom, notice that some water from Frazier's giant paddle is still in my boat. I thought I had emptied it all. Stop to dump boat, at which time I notice gaunt figure dressed all in black, paddling black canoe, approaching rapidly from behind. Grim Reaper come to carry me away? No. Dennis Huntley come to whip my ass in race. He passes, splashing further water into my boat. Damn!

♦ **1:35 ish:**

Run Insignificant without significance or incidents, but, at bottom, find still more water from competitors' damnable splashing in my boat. Must bail again. Check under airbag to see if more water is hiding there. Paddling jacket was bad idea; feel like wrestler cutting weight in sauna suit.

♦ **1:40 ish:**

Iron Curtain. Run drop completely dry, but rain and sweat from paddling jacket almost fill boat to gunwales. Must bail. Decide to remove paddling jacket, so take off helmet, bib, gold chains, life jacket, shoes, contact lenses, wrist watch, St. Christopher, hair net, paddling jacket, etc. All is well until try to put bib back on; hung up on fashionable buckles on back of life jacket. Can't reach back of bib. Feel

Continued page 68



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like four year-old unable to put on coat by himself. Mommy nowhere in sight. Dance around on rocks trying to reach behind my head like the guy in Deliverance for at least two minutes. Aluminum canoe full of Cub Scouts passes by.

1:50 ish:

Pillow Rock. Run drop dry. Feel cocky. Hit small wave in run out. Stop to bail boat. Feel stupid.

2:05 ish:

Approach Lost Paddle. Raft of determined-looking Slavic types tries to pass in pool above rapid. I cut corner, they follow current. Arrive at rapid at exactly the same time. Raft bigger than canoe; Slavic types lack western concern for personal space. Decide to catch eddy.

2:07 ish:

First drop, second drop of Lost Paddle go as planned. Still some pesky water from un-sportsmanlike splashing left in boat, but no time to stop. Approach fourth drop. Am momentarily confused: it appears that someone has taken 50-foot inflatable gorilla from Gauley Festival and placed it on rock in mid-stream. Turns out to be Charlie Walbridge. Experience feeling of relief that all boaters secretly feel upon seeing Charlie on river. Now know that if anything bad happens, Charlie will simply come and save me. Meet Slavic types again just above Tumble Home. They appear not the least bit concerned that I will crush their tiny raft with my canoe; in spirit of international diplomacy I yield right of way.

2:15 ish:

Iron Ring. Run drop dry. Really. Look around to see if anyone saw. Nope. Sure plenty of people saw while I was trying to get bib on like feeble-minded hunchback.

2:20 ish:

Approaching Sweet's Falls. Decision time: boof or main line? Main line will probably result in flip, roll. Roll in open canoe gets cheers from crowd, which is funny, since you only have to roll if you screw up. Boof, however, calculated to get bigger cheers, since result will be either spectacular run or spectacular crash. This writer is all about spectacular; decision made. Hear roar of falls, almost drowned out by roar of boaters drinking beer and eating high quality commercial rafter-food. Moment of truth: boof executed, run through box canyon. Happy with run through Sweet's, almost cancels out the fact that other competitors could have paddled to Gauley Bridge by the time I got here. Expect to be honored for hot boof by award of cool hip-hop nickname, hopefully not Big Doggy Loaf or similar.

2:30:

Exit, river right. Woman climbing down rocks offers me a beer, says she can't carry it across river on back of kayak. I turn her down, expecting to get own frosty beer in matter of seconds. Fate plays cruel joke: beer on other side of river only. Lesson: never turn down anything woman offers. Gorge self on rafter-food at rafter area. While gorging, notice fellow open boater flip and roll at Sweet's. Crowd cheers. Give second half of interview concerning beaver joke to nice English man with camera.

2:40:

Take-out. Notice that foreign rafters do not seem especially sensitive to nudity, particularly their own. Everywhere I turn, am confronted by the bare ass of a stranger to our shores.

7:00:

Race party at Class VI. Once again, overwhelmed by quality and quantity of commercial rafter-food. Can't understand why rafters don't fatten like hogs on such a diet. Humbly take my award (T-shirt) when my name is called. Discover that nice English guy is actually the guy in charge of the Horizon Line video of the race, and that beaver joke has made the video. Therefore, am now Famous Boater. Look for boat manufacturer to give me RV. Doesn't happen, probably because I lack goatee, nickname. I offer to work as team mascot for Rivermen Chicks Raft Team, especially for the one with the long blond hair and glasses. Same result as with RV. Drink until besotted, smuggle out giant cheese wheel.

► Tuesday, September 25 (T minus 364 days):

Begin training for next year with lemon drop shooters.

Dave's

Big Adventure

• By Russ Mueller

"Help! Foot entrapment!"

The sound of every boater's nightmare came from somewhere upstream. As soon as I heard this dreaded phrase I was out of my boat and running up the shore, throw bag in hand. I could only imagine what deadly situation Dave had gotten himself into . . .

It had been a dismal year for boating. In fact, the past three or four years had left a great deal to be desired. All the spring trips had been cut short due to bad weather. My usual boating partner, my daughter (and, truth be told, myself as well), had turned into a fair weather paddler. We usually did not consider boating if the temperature was below 70 degrees. This year was no exception. We spent three days on the Tuckaseegee, then home, due to rain and cold. Maybe if we could hook up, we would do the Wolf once or twice.

Though Dave and I worked the same watch, we never spoke much, except maybe to say "Hi." The day this all changed, I was working the desk and it was quiet in the station, which in and of itself meant this was no ordinary day. You see, Dave and I are cops, big city cops. So we don't have many quiet days. Anyway, while I was at the desk, I heard someone mention the word "kayak." Suddenly I was all ears. I had never met another cop who boated. As I eavesdropped, I learned that Dave, an insomniac, and had recently seen an extreme sports film about kayaking on late night television. He was telling some of the other guys that he had just bought a boat so that he could start paddling whitewater.



My jaw dropped to the floor. Before I could stop myself from interrupting I blurted out, "Are you nuts?"

"Huh? Why would I be nuts?" he asked. "I saw those guys on TV and it looks pretty easy. If they fall over, they just come up again."

I no longer found this conversation amusing. I was starting to believe that he had serious brain damage. I began to grill him on his river-running knowledge: "Do you know how to read water? Do you know what a strainer is? A weir?"

Of course, all of his answers were "no."

"How do you know all this stuff?" he asked.

"Because I'm a whitewater boater; I have been for a long time. You just can't buy a boat, find a river and go down it," I said. "There are things you have to know. How to roll, ferry, make eddy turns..."

A quick look at his face told me I had shattered his dream. Reluctantly, I asked if he wanted me to teach him all that stuff. His eyes lit up, and we made arrangements for him to bring in his gear the following day so I could look it over.

As you might have guessed, Dave had been "had" at a local sporting goods store. They had sold him some strange half kayak, half canoe, and told him he could take it on white water. The PFD they sold him was made for water skiing. The paddle would either kill him or give him arms like a steroid-abuser. Dave didn't find this nearly as funny as I did. In between fits of laughter, I told him of a local store where he could get all the right gear.

The next week we were off to the river, where he began his education in moving water. I won't bore you with the details of his training. Suffice it to say, it wasn't as easy as on TV. I will say, however, that he provided me with more than a few laughs that summer. With fall arriving and warm weather waning, we headed out to the mountains of North Carolina for a paddling road trip.

Now Dave, being Dave, had wanted some books about kayaking to augment his practical training. Big mistake! Somehow he came up with a copy of the River Safety Task Force *Report*. You know the book I'm talking about; the one full of death, carnage, and destruction. Not good light reading the week before your first river trip...

As I made my way back upstream (fearing the worst and cursing myself for not having a third boater along, even on the Tuckaseegee) I saw Dave, sitting on rock in the middle of the rapid yelling, "Foot Entrapment! I read about it and now it's happening to me!" A quick assessment brought me a sigh of relief, and then a fit of laughter. I realized that if he was sitting on the rock, his foot could not be stuck. I told him if he got off of the rock and into the current he would be fine. As he floated free, I fell over in the water laughing. Gathering his boat and paddle, I met him

downstream in an eddy.

That evening, after the obligatory campfire had gone out, Dave slept outside the tent, not wanting to waste the rare sight of high mountain stars. I thought he would never stop talking about his foot entrapment or the number of stars in the sky. Finally, he drifted off to sleep with a smile on his face.

The next day was cloudy and cool, and before putting on the Nanty I made sure Dave had his wetsuit on. I told him that the word Nantahala was a Native American term meaning, "Icy cold river of death." If he swam, he would be glad for the warmth of the wetsuit. Then, tempting the River Gods, I decided to wear just poly-pro and a paddling jacket. Dave asked why I wasn't wearing my wetsuit, and I sealed my fate: "I don't swim on the Nanty," I declared.

A thick mist hung over the Nantahala so that we could not see more than a few feet ahead. With Dave on my butt, we started out on Dave's Big Adventure!

We paddled along smoothly for the first few rapids. Dave's boat control left something to be desired, but what the hell! It was his first time on the Nanty and things were going pretty well. The River Gods started to take control at Whirlpool rapid. I told Dave to follow my line. Well, not only did he miss my line entirely, he came all the way from river right to hit my boat with his, and sent me over the top of the rock, into the whirlpool. It was all I could do to stay upright.

Things smoothed out for a while, and then came Quarry rapid. I ran the hole then did a sweepstroke and turned my boat around to see if Dave made it through. I caught the small eddy to the right of the first wave, and was sitting there with my paddle on the deck of my boat, when suddenly I was upside down with no paddle. Yup, swim time. Dave had hit

my boat and flipped it over. To add insult to injury, as I completed my wet-exit, Dave yelled, "I'll help you" and plowed into my boat, sending it out of my reach. As I pulled myself from the water, shivering from the cold, Dave floated by with a guilty look on his face. After a hard walk down stream, the River Gods, punished me for my insolence by producing two boaters with amused looks on their face. They asked if I could use some help. I hitched a freezing ride on the grab loop of one of their boats and retrieved my gear. Dave was sitting on the shore, trying not to laugh and failing miserably. "Don't laugh out loud," I explained, "or the River Gods will hear you." He scoffed at the idea of river karma.

We continued down the river and both made it through Diagonals, the next named rapid. Just downstream sits a large rock on river right. I was turned around, floating down stream backwards and talking to Dave about the falls. I noticed he was heading straight for that rock. "Dave," I said, "put some angle on your boat to avoid that rock." Dave hacked at the water with his paddle, not even turning his boat a little. His eyes got really wide and, as he hit the rock sideways, he (yup) leaned away from it. As his boat flipped he started yelling at the top of his lungs, "I'm broached!"

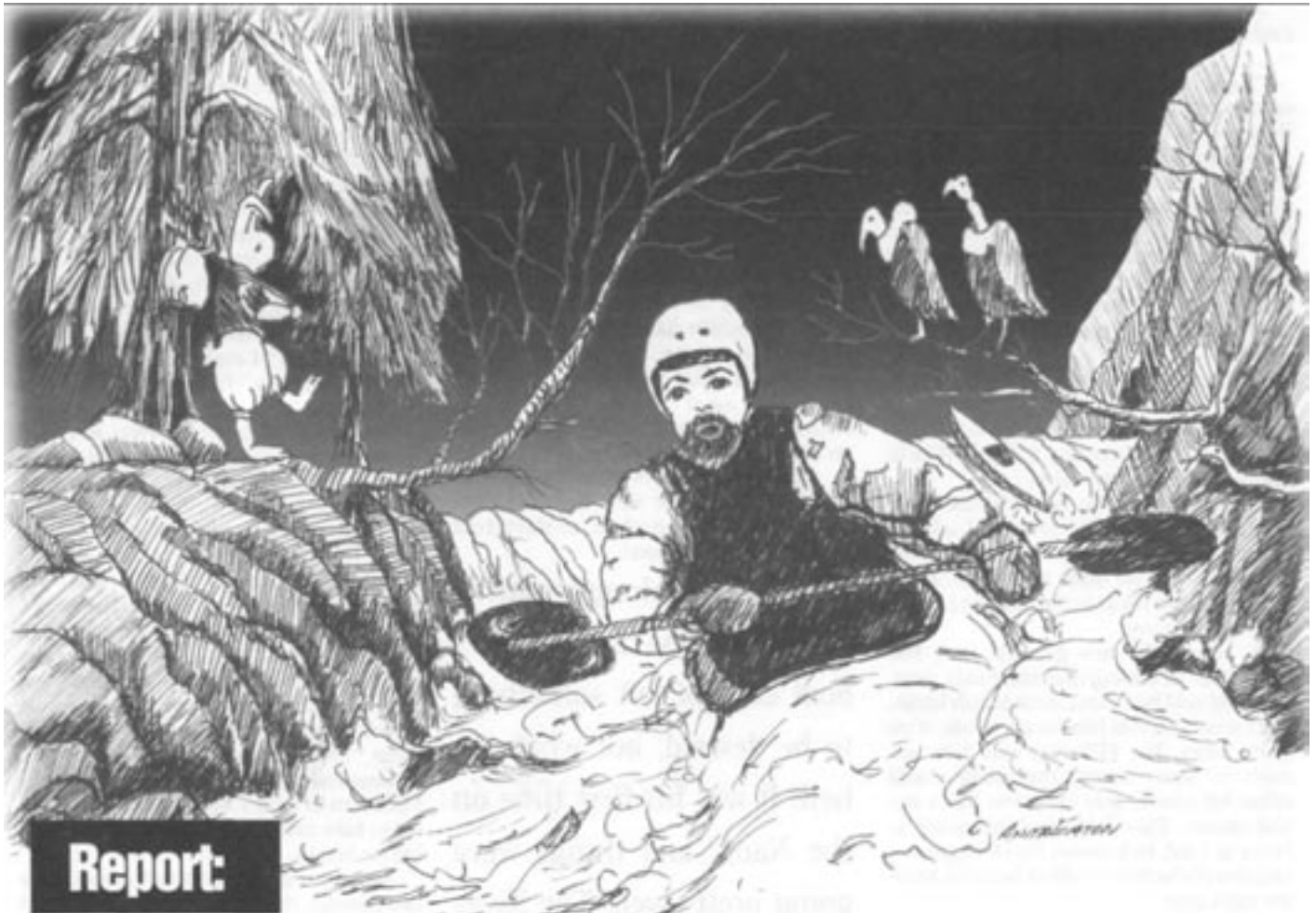
Dave bailed and suddenly understood why I told him to wear a wetsuit. His eyes got as big as baby moon hubcaps and he was gasping for breath.

As we were getting his gear to shore, Dave said through chattering teeth, "I read about this stuff and now it's all happening to me! Foot entrapments, broaches, what else can go wrong?" I told him not to tempt the River Gods by asking. "And while you're at it," I said, "throw that book away!"

The rest of the trip was mostly uneventful except for Dave's run of he falls, which I must say was unique. He stayed upright all the way through and didn't stop grinning until we got home.

Nowadays, Dave has a new book that he brings on all the trips. He has given up his morbid fascination with river death and has obtained a talisman against evil: Nealy's book on kayaking. Dave won't leave for a boating trip without it.

Adding Dave to our paddling group has rekindled my passion for paddling. I am now involved again with pool sessions, sponsored by the local paddling club. Dave is a joy to boat with because every trip is new and exciting, each new river he runs becomes his favorite, each line is an adventure. What Dave lacks in paddling skills he more than makes up for in good humor, love of paddling and enthusiasm. No drive is too long for him; no run is too short. Bad days on the river, that would have you or me talking about giving up paddling, have no effect on Dave. His passion for the sport never dampens.



Report:

West Virginia Actually Designed by Walt Disney **You Be the Judge!**

• *By Rex Dalrymple*
• *Illustration by Anita Eaton*

The Flashback

The memory came back like it was yesterday:
"What on earth was that?" my wife exclaimed.
There was a long pause before I answered.
"It looked like... dancing chickens on a riverboat."
There was another long pause.

"Yes," she replied, "that's what I thought, too."
We were on the train around Disney's Magic Kingdom, and had just caught a brief glimpse into the show area of Splash Mountain. If you've not seen Splash Mountain before, it can be more than a little puzzling. Now, several years later and a thousand miles away, that bizarre feeling came back as I caught the eddy on Otter Creek. What was it I had just seen?

Enjoy Your Ride

West Virginia's Otter Creek begins in a Rhododendron bog, meandering through low trees and pleasant meadows. The creek is barely a boat-length wide, and as Chris Dangler, Jan Ardner, Ed Bumpass, and I floated along single file, occasionally the first person in line could talk to the last as we negotiated a tight bend. It was

relaxing and fun, and reminded me of the beginning of the Splash Mountain flume ride. Floating through the calm Otter Creek headwaters I could hear Brer Rabbit singing his tune. The words seemed appropriate:

I'm lookin' for...a little more adventure
I'm headin' for...a little bit of fun now
I'm hoping for...a little more excitement
Time to be movin' along

The Splash Mountain similarities continued. Sometimes the trees would close in, choking the creek like a thorn-less briar patch. As we struggled with overhanging and downed trees, another verse came to mind. This time a turtle, concerned for Brer Rabbit, sang:

He's lookin' for...a little more adventure
But he's headed for...a little bit of trouble
He's headin' for...a little bit of danger
Time to be turnin' around

At one point, the trees formed a thick, gloomy canopy. A side stream flowed in, almost black with tannin, and the creek became dark and sinister-looking. Suddenly the river reminded me less of Splash Mountain and more like another Magic Kingdom boat ride,



Pirates of the Caribbean, which starts with the haunting phrase: "Dead... men... tell... no... tales."

As the gradient picked up, I tried to purge the thought of Pirates of the Caribbean by singing the second song from Splash Mountain. In this tune Brer Rabbit goes to his Laughing Place. As the river became more bouncy and fun the song seemed fitting. Perhaps, I thought, rivers are my Laughing Place:

Everybody's got a Laughing Place
A Laughing Place, to go-ho-ho
We found one that's filled with fun
And you'll find yours we know-ho-ho

Keep Your Hands and Arms Inside the Boat

The gradient kept increasing, and the rapids got longer and harder to scout. Successful negotiation of the rapids required both tactical river reading (watching the water immediately in front of you), and strategic river reading (looking farther downstream to find a line, an eddy, or potential hazards). At one point, strategizing about the next 20 yards, I failed to pay sufficient attention to a hole I was punching, and flipped. As I set up to roll, I remember thinking, "Wow this is really deep; I thought it would be shal—"

Bam! Bam! Bam! I washed over the rock, rolled up a second later, and made a beeline for the first eddy, with blood pouring from my knuckles.

Beeline - hmm.... That reminded me of the scene in Splash Mountain where Brer Bear, chasing Brer Rabbit, follows him into his Laughing Place, and somehow ends up with a beehive on his head. It's funny for everyone—except the bear. Was it to be Brer Rabbit that day, or Brer Bear?

Hang On to All Loose Articles

A few rapids later, I was running sweep. Everyone had bounced down the center-right for 50 yards, then made a sharp left behind a big rock, presumably catching the eddy that must be there. After an appropriate pause, I followed, expecting to turn behind the rock and find my friends in the eddy. As I came around the rock, I was dumbfounded to discover

1: no friends

2: no eddy

3: a mysterious voice from the trees on the left bank saying, "Go Mumbrim!bt!"

"Huh?" I thought, "this might be important."

"Go RIGHT!" the voice helpfully repeated.

I took some hard strokes to the right and concentrated on negotiating an angled four-foot ledge with a weird boily hole - but on my left was... (long pause) dancing chickens on a riverboat? No, it looked more like... an overturned root ball from a giant tree sitting just behind a big pour-over. Next to the root ball was an upside-down kayak and a swimmer; just below it sat an upright kayaker.

I eddied out and did a head count. Ed was standing in a shallow eddy, gathering his wits. Chris was chasing Ed's boat, and that must have been Jan shouting advice from the left bank. Thanks, Jan. How he got there I still don't know.

After a brief exchange with Ed, I ascertained that he was okay, but his paddle was missing. The next hundred yards looked fairly safe, so I followed Chris downstream, looking for the paddle. I spotted it, and caught up to it in 100 yards, but I couldn't grab it before it floated into the next rapid. Chris had eddied out in the rapid, and the paddle was headed right for him, so I got his attention, and he fished it out.

In Case of Emergency, Please Notify an Attendant

"Okay, mission accomplished," I thought. Then I assessed my current situation. I had ended up in a river right eddy under an overhanging rock wall. Water poured off the wall from a little stream 20 feet overhead, forming a waterfall curtain around the upper part

of the eddy. To river left was an island I couldn't see over. The current on my side of the island flowed into a rock and log sieve where Ed's boat had stopped. Chris had caught a micro-eddy just above it, and he was currently busy hauling two boats and two paddles around the obstruction. Through pantomime gestures, I asked if I should come down where he was. No! was the emphatic reply. He already had his hands full without another boat in that confined space.

I paddled up in the eddy to check out my other options. The little waterfall drummed on my helmet like a heavy rain shower. Attaining the previous eddy was not possible. It looked like I could ferry over above the island and run the river left side, but I couldn't tell if that side was clean. What I could see was a piton rock and a tree across the river on that side. They looked avoidable, but I couldn't see the water, just the things that stuck up. The only way to get on the island and scout from there would be to broach on the upstream point and risk being swept down one side or the other. Hmm.... I looked at the shore side. I'm not a climber, but I grabbed a piece of the bank wall to see if it was possible to climb out. It came off in my hand. I was stuck.

In Splash Mountain, Brer Fox and Brer Bear do eventually trap Brer Rabbit, and things look bad for the fuzzy bunny. At this point the ride plunges into a dark cavern where Brer Rabbit is to meet his fate. At the lip of the drop, two vultures perch above the boats, saying:

"Time to be turnin' around...if only you could"

"If you finally found your Laughing Place, how come you aren't laughing?"

Eventually Jan was able to scout the far side of the island for me - it was okay. Thanks again, Jan.

Be Aware, the Boats May Slop at Any Time

A short time later, I was punching a hole at the bottom (so I thought) of another rapid, when I was blinded momentarily by the splash. As I cleared my eyes, I missed taking two critical paddle strokes that would have brought me into the eddy with my friends. Looking downstream for the next eddy, I saw every boater's nightmare: a fallen tree across the river, and no place to stop. I had brief visions of popping my skirt and climbing over the tree, but instead I saw a high spot that I could get under. After some furious backferrying, a limbo move, and a dropped paddle, I was under and past the tree. One 30-yard boulder garden later, I recovered my paddle and eddied out. There's nothing like a river-wide strainer to get your heart rate up!

At this point, Chris said we should stick a little closer together, so everyone could see the lines. Since he was the only one who had done this river before, we complied. Bouncing down the very next rapid, we spied another tree blocking the bottom of the drop. A slot along the bank might have been clean, but we couldn't tell. Chris caught the only eddy available, a sporty one-boat model on the left bank. Following dutifully close behind, as instructed, I squeezed in next to him, not fully out of the current, grabbing a rock, then a rhododendron branch, to stay in. We looked up with dread as Ed, already committed to the rapid, tried mightily and failed to stop higher up. A flurry of bouncing boats, flailing paddles and grabbing hands ensued as Ed joined us. In a few moments we stabilized, with water, rocks, boats, people, and a tree branch forming a delicate force balance puzzle. Jan watched, grimly, from the top of the rapid. After a careful discussion of physics, and deliberate execution of our plan, Chris was able to get on shore and scout the slot.

It was okay, though not easy. I screwed up and ran it backwards.

Please Remain Seated Throughout the Ride

One long, steep, blind rapid followed another. I saw and used pantomime signals I had never needed before. Imagine trying to say without words to someone 50 yards away, "boof this rock angled left—no, not THAT rock, THIS rock you can't see from there—then

cut back right and paddle hard through the V-hole—oh, and watch out for the tree."

The happy Splash Mountain song was gone, replaced in my head by the Pirates of the Caribbean song. As if the proper lyrics weren't grim enough, I would occasionally come up with new verses:

"Yo Ho, Yo Ho, a pirates life for me
We kindle and char, inflame and ignite
Drink up, me hearties, yo ho
We boof and we piton, we're really a fright
Roll up, ka-yakers, yo ho
We kidnap and ravage, and rifle and loot
Drink up, me hearties, yo ho
We get stuck in holes, and pin on tree roots
Roll up, ka-yakers, yo ho
We're rascals, scoundrels, villains, and knaves
Drink up, me hearties, yo ho
What's over this ledge? I hope it's just waves
Roll up, ka-yakers, yo ho"

By this time I had six deep scrapes on my hand, a bruised elbow, a sore wrist, and one finger was numb. This was definitely not a ride suitable for the whole family. But the rapids kept coming, and it was fun, in an intense, scary sort of way. Atypical eddy conversation went like this:

Person A (arriving in eddy): Wow, that was interesting. How did you run that?

Person B: I boofed the rock.

A: The first rock, or this bottom one?

B: Well, both, actually.

A: I tried to boof the top rock but the current pushed me too far left. That didn't happen to you?

B: No, remember that tree at the beginning? - I hit that with my bow, and it spun me around, and I had to run that first ledge backwards. Then, when I finally got straight, I was lined up for the boofs.

A: Lucky you. I got creamed in that hole.

B: Yeah, I saw. Are you okay?

A: I'm fine. What's up ahead?

B: Another horizon line.

Exit Quickly and Carefully to Your Right

After about five hours on the river, we saw some hikers, who presumably had hiked up from the take-out.

"I think there's only a mile or two left," said Chris.

We all breathed a sigh of relief. An hour and a half of steady progress later, the light was beginning to fade, and a mist was forming that made it hard to see the rapids. We saw some more hikers.

"I think there's only a mile or so left," said Chris.

This time he was right, and as the gradient eased, we knew we were close to the take-out. At last, the Splash Mountain theme was complete, as the final, celebratory song (with dancing chickens) ran through my head:

Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah, Zip-A-Dee-Ay

Seven hours boating, what a tiring day

Thankful that every-one is OKAY

Wonderful feeling, wonderful day!

Notes on a forefather...

Lest you end the day feeling that the world should thank you for gracing the planet with your smarts and great accomplishments relative to helping rivers, have a seat. American Whitewater recently received a note from Jerry Meral, PhD., AW member, with a financial gift to the organization. He referenced a letter we'd sent to a few members to ask yaddlers to match the award for Perception's Conservationist of the Year (2000) that the recipient, John Gangemi, has donated to AW on behalf of the volunteers who drive our conservation efforts. The letter was signed by past recipients of the award who are past and present board members: Pete Skinner, Mac Thornton, Pope Barrow, and Tom Christopher.

Jerry, currently the Executive Director of the Planning and Conservation League (CA), politely noted that he is also a member of this illustrious crew, and it created a bit of embarrassment to have omitted this oh-my-gosh-important emeritus board leader from our the letter, and more importantly, our thoughts.

Okay, to get this over with - he was a first descender of Cherry Creek Section of Tuolumne, Wild lum Section of North Yuba, and the Highway 395 section of Walker, Moccasin Creek. Gnarl noted.

The list of his full set of conservation accolades would fill this page, so let the following river-related kudos suffice:

1973 Founded Friends of the Rivers

1974 Filed lawsuit against New Melones Dam Founded Friends of the River



Filed original lawsuit against Auburn Dam

Helped found Protect American River Canyons (to oppose Auburn Dam)

Wrote initiative and ran campaign to preserve Stanislaus River (Proposition 17)

1980 Founded Tuolumne River Preservation Trust

Helped Organize American Rivers - wrote article in American Whitewater calling for such an organization

Jerry has made an enormous impact on behalf of the conservation community in California, having worked as Staff Scientist for the Environmental Defense Fund and as Deputy Director of the California Department of Water Resource (In this role he supervised the Energy and Water Development and Planning Programs, the Office of Water Conservation, and the Delta Planning Program) and now at PCL Under Meral's direction, PCL has been instrumental in the passage of every recent piece of key California environmental legislation.

Jerry is an early American Whitewater board member and was honored with the Perception RCOY Award in 1984. His numerous other awards include: Sacramento Pride Environment Award, 1989; California Trout, Roderick Haig-Brown Award, 1989; California Common Cause Public Service Award, 1984.

[Hey Jerry, thanks for keeping us on your radar screen. Admittedly vulnerable to the pitfalls of collective memory and record keeping, we hope to 1) never let you down in our pursuit of our mission and 2) avoid silly omissions that may indicate our lack of care.]

PRISON

invest in durable goods.

Clay Staley wraps the big one on Oh-Be-Veyfal. © Christian Robertson

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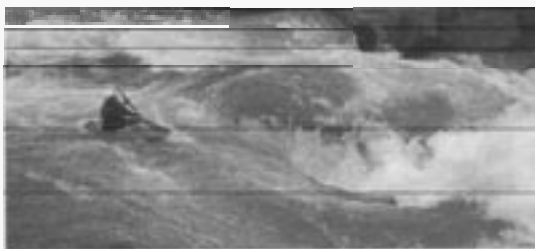
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Livin' the Dream....in South America

• By Mark H. White



"The Center for Disease Control has reported cases of yellow fever, typhoid, malaria, hepatitis, rabies, dengue fever and schistosomiasis....and that's not to mention the very real possibility of traveler's diarrhea, infections and severe sunburn." The nurse seemed gravely concerned about the health consequences I might suffer during my upcoming adventure. "Of course," she said. "you'll probably be just fine as long as you stay away from water.....especially the rivers."

I explained that three friends and I were making the trip specifically to immerse ourselves in treacherous whitewater rivers. The good nurse gave me one of those 'You're being foolish, but I'll try to respect your decision' expressions that I so often received as a boy. She shook her head, then sunk a needle deep into my shoulder. She paused, then dramatically extolled the virtues of sunscreen. "And be sure to get the waterproof kind."

As my medicinal guardian angel scribbled on her prescription pad, she did her best to offer a parting, positive observation about my objectionable travel plans. "At least you won't be riding on any rafts-you'd really get wet!" I considered describing the Class V whitewater experience I was anticipating, but instead, just thanked her and promised to take my malaria medication.

Standing at the clinic's counter to pay my bill, I opened the newspaper to see that five Americans had been recently been kidnapped while in Ecuador. They had been abducted near the Colombian border; not far from where I was headed, and were being held hostage in return for an outlandish ransom. The article insinuated that the Americans' fate looked bleak. This was not encouraging. But it was too late. My buddies and I had purchased non-refundable airline tickets and were emotionally committed to paddling in the tropics. I set the newspaper down and made a mental note to keep this information from my wife.

Two of our party had kayaked extensively in Ecuador during the previous year. They had returned home with fantastic photos and stories of wild landscapes and stunningly pristine rivers. The place sounded like a whitewater paradise, and I could only resist their promises of a whitewater dreamland for only so long. Disease and kidnappers be damned, I was heading south.

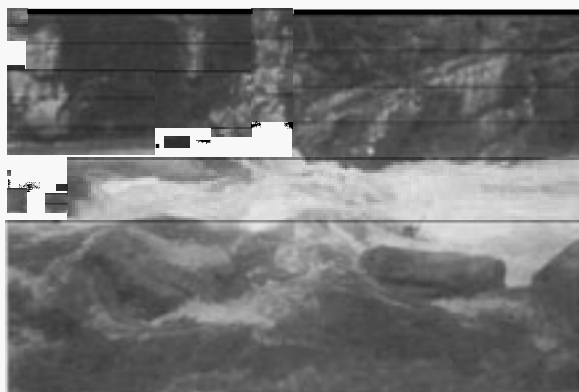
Any intrepid mountaineer, climber or kayaker who has gazed at a map of South America

has no doubt been awestruck by the Andes Mountains. This massive range stretches from the narrow isthmus of Central America all the way to Chile's southernmost tip. Even at the equator, where the sun's rays bombard the Earth with incredible intensity, the tallest peaks are perennially covered with snow and ice. Them rugged Andes serve as a gigantic weather stopper, catching the moisture laden El Nino and El Nina storms that thunder in from the Pacific. As the snow melts and the rain percolates down the Andes' eastern flank, thousands of streams merge, eventually forming the planet's mightiest river; the Amazon. It was to be our destination.

We flew into and spent our first night in the capital city of Quito; a crowded city that resembled other crowded, noisy South American cities. Armed, flack-jacketed policemen standing at every other corner quickly led us to suspect that crime is a serious issue in Quito. Our modest hotel featured its own machine-gun wielding security guard that provided some sense of comfort during the night. We surmised

Clockwise:

**Gringas Revueltas,
Land of the Giants,
Vida es Dulca
Rapid, and on the
opposite page,
Quarry Surf Wave.**



that Quito was an interesting place to visit, but an even better place to leave behind.

Once in the countryside, I began to appreciate Ecuador's impressive diversity. Semi-active, snow shrouded volcanoes reaching 20,000 feet rise from the lush green valleys, while the warm Pacific coast is only 100 miles away. The modern capital city of Quito serves as home to over two million residents, yet only a two hour drive away are humble hut villages inhabited by indigenous Quicha peoples. They lead primitive lives, with no electricity and plumbing, often miles from the nearest dirt road.

The world's largest and rarest of birds, the Andean condor, rides the mountainous thermal currents, while the world's largest hummingbird and countless other species of songbirds and parrots dwell in the forested Ecuadorian lowlands. In a diminutive country the size of Colorado, the geology, climate, people, animals and





ivers are diverse and wondrous.

Traveling around Ecuador proved to be nearly as fun and probably more dangerous than paddling the rivers. Taxis; both cars and small trucks, are common throughout the country, so getting around was certainly much easier than I had anticipated. It would be possible for a party of kayakers to rely on the very inexpensive public bus system for their transportation, but this option is limiting, and not nearly as efficient as using the privately-owned taxis.

We once waited over three hours for a bus that had been delayed due to a mudslide. When it finally did arrive, we discovered our boats would not fit into the luggage compartment and the bus was not equipped with roof rack. The inside of the bus was already packed with Ecuadorians who crowded toward the open windows, curious to witness the antics of boat-wrestling gringos. I wasn't sure if the passengers were disappointed or relieved when it became apparent that there would be no room for the Norte Americanos on the bus. We signaled the next passing pickup truck.

When riding on top of a stack of kayaks piled high onto a bald-tired truck that is speeding along a narrow, winding mud road, velocity is not a desirable thing. Over time, I developed an appreciation for the older drivers who seemed to drive more conservatively than their younger counterparts. I was especially pleased to make the steep, wet drive over the misty Papallacta Pass with a 45 year old driver who brought along his wife and young daughter. I figured that my insurance policy was the driver's regard for their safety.

Steep, densely forested mountains cradled practically every river we ran. In many places, the walls rising from the river's edge were nearly vertical, but nevertheless covered with huge trees, broad leaf plants, bamboo, and ferns and vines, that often hung 100 feet down to the water. The water's clarity was exceptional. Although the Ecuadorian foothills and lowlands receive an incredible amount of rain, the lush forest acts like a gigantic sponge, soaking up all that falls, then releasing it gradually into the rivers. There is very little erosion except in the areas that have been cleared of native vegetation for farming and ranching.

Of course a sustained, torrential downpour can overwhelm the jungle sponge and cause the rivers to rise dramatically. It was not uncommon to see small tributaries gushing into a larger river every fifty feet or so. Waterfalls of all sizes and heights were a spectacular, yet common sight. We made runs during

unimaginable downpours that caused the river's volume to double every few miles.

We encountered no disappointing or mediocre runs while in Ecuador. But the Jondachi was my favorite. In thirty years of paddling, I've found very few rivers that match the Jondachi's whitewater, scenery and exotic soul. We accessed the river by way of a narrow, half mile trail that the local folks had improved by creating a yard wide 'board walk' out of ten inch diameter logs. Where the trail neared the river, it became completely encased in an overhead canopy of vegetation. The tunnel opened onto a suspended foot bridge from which we discovered a clear, effervescent stream snaking its way through a labyrinth of granite boulders. It looked like a set from a Tarzan movie.

When not boofing, boat scouting or scrambling over the rocks to peer down into the Jondachi's next drop, we were marveling at the waterfalls, supernatural ferns and precarious foot bridges. Frequently, groups of green parrots, pendulum birds and yellow tails would fly from one side of the river to the other, then disappear into the thicket. Every inch of the river and surrounding land teemed with life, including the boulders that were blanketed in thick coats of brilliant green moss. From the spongy moss, seedlings and ferns took root, providing sanctuaries for countless little creatures. While eddied out to watch a companion kayak through yet another photogenic slot, I noticed a hand-size spider erratically jogging along the mossy cliff.

The 20 mile-long lower Jondachi was equally stunning, and considerably larger in volume. Countless Class IV pool drop rapids offered complete entertainment and infinite photo opportunities. Of course we wanted to document the beauty and good times to show our friends back home, so we stopped to take lots of photos. We stopped so often in fact, that we ran out of daylight before running out of river. Watching the sky turn from blue to brilliant orange behind the horizon was fantastic and surrealistic. It was also a bit disturbing. As the jungle darkened, the natives became restless. Croaks, chirps, buzzing and a hundred other indistinguishable sound created a symphony that seemed to actually vibrate the night air. Silhouetted by the fading light, bats frantically pursued flying insects all around us. In every regard, the immediate place and time was perfect.

However, we were still a long way from the take-out and not prepared to spend the night among the creatures. We carried no sleeping gear, no dry clothes and no protection from the bugs. I had long since consumed my treated water and allotment of energy bars. I began to mentally prepare myself for what would inevitably be an uncomfortable night. We would of course survive, but the thought of being crawled upon by hand-size spiders and who knows what else for the next 12 hours was definitely not part of my dream plan.

About the time I reconciled myself to being spider chow, we heard our shuttle driver Marcos calling from a distant gravel bar. He had waited three hours beyond our agreed upon arrival time, probably wondering how four people could have so much free time and excessive wealth, yet so little common sense. We thanked Marcos profusely and loaded our boats onto his little pickup truck to continue our South America Dream Tour.

GETTING THERE

The logistics of an Ecuadorian kayak trip are not as challenging as one might believe. However, a sense of adventure and the ability to speak a little Spanish goes a long way. Numerous runs can be tackled in one day and there are many rivers located near villages or towns with cafes, taxis and even small hotels. Keep in mind, however, that these cafes, taxis and hotels are not exactly comparable to what we encounter in the United States. In an effort to stabilize their economy and attract tourism, the Ecuadorian government just established the U.S. dollar as the official currency. This, of course, takes the mathematical challenge out of financial transactions for us gringos.

There is a well-written guidebook that features about two dozen tried and true runs — including the spectacular upper Jondachi. The book also sheds light on local customs, shuttles and places to eat and sleep. The book's authors humorously created their own 'Fiesta Factor' and 'Degree of Suffering' rating system, assigning one to six beer mugs or skulls respectively. (I believe the Jondachi received an honorable six beer mug Fiesta Factor ranking.) Rental boats are available at several popular destinations.

For those who would rather leave the hunting and gathering to someone else, so to speak, along with locating river access points, arranging transportation and whitewater equipment, there are two reputable outfitters to choose from; Rios Ecuador at www.riosecuador.com and Small World Adventures at www.smallworldadventures.com. The *Kayakers Guide to Ecuador* can be obtained from Small World Adventures.

Whitewater Love TROUBLE?

The Doctor is In!!!!

Having a difficult time reconciling your love life with your whitewater addiction? Share your troubles with Dr. Juste Kantgettenuff, American Whitewater's expert on aquatic and romantic Tricky Whu. Dr. Kantgettenuff will do his best to help you negotiate the treacherous shoals of the River of Love. And Dr. K is always happy to address and exploit even the most depressing and disgusting personal situations for the edification and amusement of our readers. So send your pathetic whitewater love troubles to Dr. Juste Kantgettenuff, care of the editor of this magazine. And if you're on your bike, wear white.

THE TROUBLE WITH LUDNIG

Dear Dr. Kantgettenuff,

I have a horrible problem that is destroying my life and marriage. Worse still, it is keeping me off the river. My problem's name is Ludnig.

Up until a year ago my wife Britney-Lewellyn and I had a truly blissful existence. We both had fantastic jobs and made so much money that we could afford new rodeo boats every month of the year. We had every weekend free to paddle. In the winter we boated in Chile and Ecuador, in the summer it was Alaska and France. I figured, "This is as good as it gets."

Unfortunately, my wife wanted more. I should have known trouble was coming when she started to put little booties on the dog. Then she came home from her sister's baby shower in tears. Next Britney-Lewellyn cancelled her subscription to VOGUE and started to read WORKING MOTHER. Before I could say Peek a Boo, Ludnig was on the way!

Amazingly, by the time Ludnig popped out four months ago I was almost looking forward to his arrival. I imagined my golden haired boy fearlessly following me down the South Fork of the Poudre. I envisioned him dutifully making hotel reservations, loading the RV... carrying my kayak down the steps to the Tallulah and up the mountain at Panther Creek. I was certain Ludnig would love and respect Britney-Lewellyn and I unconditionally, because he would realize that he was lucky to have such extraordinary parents. And I thought he would treat us accordingly. I even imagined that Ludnig would be just like his mother and father... perfect in every way.

Talk about unrealistic expectations! I must have been out of my mind. Ludnig isn't anything like that at all!

Honesty Dr. Kantgettenuff, I can't believe even that Ludnig is a normal human baby. Nothing as awful as Ludnig could be normal! We Episcopalians aren't supposed

to believe in such things, but sometimes I think that Ludnig is demonically possessed. By comparison to Ludnig, Linda Blair's character in *The Exorcist* looks like Martha Stewart!

Ludnig has absolutely filthy personal habits. He spits and farts and slobbers and

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What Are You Doing This Winter?

drools. He pukes and pees and poops all over everything. He even throws it at me! What does he care? He doesn't have to clean his messes up. We've gone through three maids in the last six weeks.

Little Ludnig is very demanding. He screams all the time. Nothing ever satisfies him. The only time he isn't squalling is when he is eating or sleeping. And, of course, he refuses to sleep at night like everyone else. Oh no, not Ludnig! He raises hell all night long. The nanny is completely exhausted. (And I know damn well that when and if she manages to get a valid green card, she'll expect to be paid!)

And the worst thing about all of this is the way my wife is acting. In spite of all of his nasty habits, Britney-Lewellyn insists that Ludnig is just the dearest little thing. She thinks Ludnig can do no wrong. She calls him her Little Fuzzy Wuzzy Teddy Bear and Mommie's Lovin' Puddin' and Pie. This from a woman with an MBA from Harvard! I'm really getting worried about her. I think Ludnig may have driven her over the edge.

Even more worrisome is the fact that my wife hasn't been in her kayak since Ludnig arrived. In fact, she shows no interest in boating at all. Britney actually tore apart the last issue of American Whitewater and used it to cover the table on which the nanny

changes Ludnig's sh*##y diapers!

And when I decide to take a day off to go boating, Britney-Lewellyn goes ballistic. She says I'm being selfish. As a consequence I've only managed to kayak fifteen days during the past three months!

Britney-Lewellyn thinks that I should spend all my free time with Little Ludnig to prove to him that I really really love him. She says that sometimes she wonders if I love Ludnig at all. To be honest with you, Dr. Kantgettenuff, sometimes I wonder about that too.

But deep in my heart I suppose that I really do love Little Ludnig. Just like I love the Republican Party... or Dick Cheney! But I wouldn't allow them to foul my house and ruin my life! And I damned sure wouldn't let them keep me off the river.

I tried to find a prep school that would take Little Ludnig, but they won't enroll him until he is toilet trained. Can you imagine? My god, Dr. Kantgettenuff, that could take a year... or, in Ludnig's case, even longer! I need help and I need it now.

Respectfully yours,
T. Barclay Regal, III
Upton Downs, Connecticut

Dear Mr. Regal,

Dr. Kantgettenuff has some good news and some bad news for you.

The good news is that Little Ludnig sounds like a perfectly normal baby.

The bad news is that Little Ludnig sounds like a perfectly normal baby. That means, Mr. Regal, that you are going to be stuck taking care of his sorry ass for at least eighteen years. (Actually, given that you live in Upton Downs, you will probably be stuck taking care of him for a lot longer than that.) But do not despair. Dr. Kantgettenuff can help.

My dearest Grandmamma, Connie Kantgettenuff, always used to say, "Naughty babies are very much like plump weenies, the best way to deal with them is with a long, straight stick."

But no, I am not suggesting that you should go to the nearest Home Depot and purchase a baby whacker. God forbid! Time have changed since Grandma's day and I'm certain that Britney-Lewellyn would never stand for that, especially there in Upton Downs.

Instead, you need to purchase the following supplies: six 4'X8' sheets of stainless steel, a French drain, a heat lamp, and a garden hose with a powerful spray nozzle. With these simple materials and a set of blueprints that I will provide (just \$14.95,



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GOLDIE CHECKS IN

My Dearest Juste,

I am living on the road now, sleeping in my pickup and competing in whitewater rodeos all over the country. And I am meeting lots of fascinating people. I just have one question for you.

Do you think I should embark on a relationship with one of the male rodeo boaters?

Awaiting your reply,
Goldie Digere
Somewhere along I-70

My Dearest Goldie,

No!!!!

Forever your servant,
Dr. Juste Kantgettenuff

check or money order), you should be able to construct one of Dr. Kantgettenuff's patented Deluxe Infant Care and Containment Centers, also marketed as Dr. K's Sooper Dooper Baby Kennel. Once you have finished your little project, you can toss Little Ludnig inside. Then you won't have to mess with him more than four or five times a day... only at feeding times.

And cleaning Ludnig up will be a snap... just hose the little darling off. The heat lamp will do the rest. No more nasty diapers to mess up the environment. One precaution: Ludnig should not be left in the box unattended for more than six hours at a time. (Still, that's long enough to hit the river, don't you think?)

And you need to do one more thing... and do it immediately. Ban all trendy periodicals and manuals from the house that pertain to child rearing. The Good Doctor believes they contain nothing but rubbish. Articles like "Teaching Your Child to Deal with Schoolyard Bullies, Tell Him to Cry and Run" or "Smarter, Bigger and Faster: A GOOD MOTHERS Guide to Breastfeeding School Aged Children." I kid you not. Dr. Kantgettenuff has seen such things!

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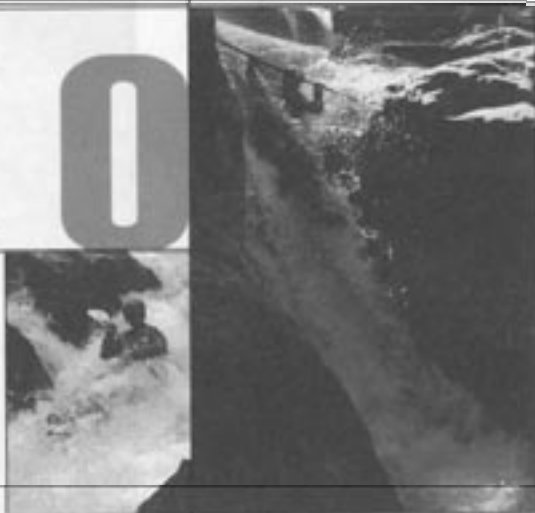
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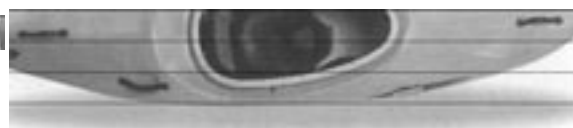


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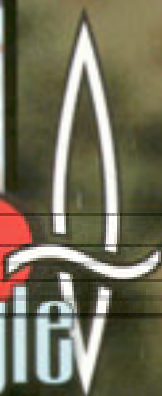
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