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May/June 2005

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AMERICAN WHITEWATER

A VOLUNTEER PUBLICATION PROMOTING RIVER CONSERVATION, ACCESS AND SAFETY

American Whitewater Journal

Volume XLVI, No.3

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Dane Jackson at Rock Island, TN
Photo by Kristine Jackson



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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.

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 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 Gauley River Festival in West Virginia (the largest gathering of whitewater boaters in the nation), and the Deerfield Festival in Massachusetts.

AW was incorporated under Missouri nonprofit corporation laws in 1961 and maintains its principal mailing address at 204B Philadelphia Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912; phone 1-866-BOAT-4-AW or 1-866-262-8429. AW is tax exempt under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.



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The opinions expressed in the features and editorials of American Whitewater are those of the individual authors. They do not necessarily represent those of the Directors of American Whitewater or the editors of this publication. On occasion, American Whitewater publishes official organizational policy statements drafted and approved by the Board of Directors. These policy statements will be clearly identified.

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Safety First!

Cheap Insurance for Spring

by Eric Nies

Everybody's got that one good river story, the one where Crawdad lost his boat, and Sketchy Pete had to make that ferry using Kylie's 189 bent-shaft after he swam, and Janie got to the take-out after dark, and missed it... with the car keys.

And I bet that story happened in the spring. It's the time of year for epic misadventure. Think about it: you haven't rolled since August, your drytop leaks like a sieve, it's 40 degrees and sleeting, and you jump on something flooded with a fresh crop of new strainers and three hours of daylight left.

So, some thoughts for smart early-season boating.

Pick Your River, Pick Your Boat, Pick Your Friends

A lot of bad river stories start with "You know, we probably shouldn't have put on in the first place...." On super-nasty days, set your sights low. Do a shorter run, or something easy, or something with roadside access. You almost always have a sane option, and if you don't, well, that's what X-Box is for.

Remember, also, that short and cold days make any run a potentially serious undertaking. So get on the river early and have a solid group. This is not the day to watch Sketchy Pete flip six times and take the wrong slot at "Let's Make a Deal." This is the day for everyone to know the run well (including the hikes out) and to get to the takeout in one piece with plenty of daylight left.

Early in the season, I also tend to leave my little play boat behind and pull out the creek boat, even on runs that I'd normally play on a warm day. This gives me room to wiggle my toes and bring my safety junk, and keeps me up and out of the water so I stay warmer.

Eat, Drink and be Toasty

Dehydration predisposes to hypothermia, so you might skip the morning coffee (heresy, I know, but it is a diuretic) and chug some Gatorade instead. If you time it right and drink early, you'll pee at the put-in and again at the take-out.

Load up on some long-lasting calories (fats, protein, and complex carbs) before you get on the water, too. One of my buddies swears by truck-stop pizza (you know who you are, Nori), but I think that's pretty gross in the morning. I just stick to the usual chocolate milk and bacon.

If It's Cold, Dress Warm

In cold weather and on cold water, many good boaters rely on a good brace, last year's drytop, and a little luck to stay warm and dry. This works fine until the luck runs out: you swim, or park on a strainer, or have to go wading to get someone's paddle off the river bottom. All of a sudden your happy river day is gone, and on top of whatever else is going on, you are wet and shivering in the middle of nowhere. Your hands don't work, your IQ drops 20 points, and those dry clothes at the take-out suddenly become hours away instead of mere minutes.

For cold-weather boating, your most important piece of safety gear is clothing that keeps you warm in the water--not throw ropes, not pulleys, not float bags or first-aid kits or saws or anything else. Big mishaps often involve being out of the boat, either by choice (wading to your pinned buddy) or not (taking a swim, losing

gear and hiking out). So, the sensible move is to dress warm enough for swimming or hiking or wading or getting worked in a hole or whatever other nonsense the day might throw at you. If you are dressed to swim and rock-hop, you can deal with most of the mishaps of a day on the river.

The flip side of this is also true: underdressing is a major safety liability, both for you and for your group. Think about it. If you have a little bad luck, and then you go polar, your buddies are the ones who have to deal with it. And if one of your buddies has a significant problem and the water is 45 degrees, you may not be in much of a position to help if you're wearing a drytop, flip-flops and a speedo.

What to Wear

For nasty days, nothing beats a well-maintained drysuit. Drysuits, though, are prone to leaks, and can fail catastrophically if you break your zipper, rip a gasket, or tear your suit on a rocky portage. So it pays to baby your drysuit, and to wear good pile or even neoprene underneath. On the river, take some care with the zipper, and watch yourself when clambering on rocks and over trees. Some savvy boaters wear regular or neoprene shorts over their drysuit.

Off the river, use zipper wax and a gasket protectant like 303 routinely, and replace your gaskets when they start to look ranky. Remember, once it has ripped, a gasket is usually cooked. Even if you patch it, it will probably rip again somewhere else. For those little pinhole leaks that always show up eventually in your suit fabric, often all you need to do is look for them carefully and patch them with a dab of Aquaseal, inside and out. Drysuit bibs are also available, and work quite well if you take care to mate it properly with your drytop. And again, they need to be babied.

If you're looking at bibs or a full-on drysuit, two very good options are the relief zipper





and built-in booties or socks. If you spring for these options you will be happy you did. Kokotat also makes a women's drysuit with a drop seat, but some women prefer to get the men's version and use that Sani-Fem gizmo to pee. This is quite a bit cheaper, and is probably less prone to failure.

If you can't spring for a drysuit, you can make sure your drytop is in good shape, and then pair it with a good wetsuit. Some people like paddle pants, but I think wetsuits are just better for swimming, wading, and grubbing around on rocks. By the way, I've never believed that old saw about wetsuits "trapping an insulating layer of water." Wetsuits are warm because they are made of thick rubber, and because they keep water from sloshing over your skin. If you maintain your wetsuit so that it doesn't leak, it will keep you warmer.

I used to wear pogies until I had to do some rope-work on a below-freezing run on the Big Sandy a few years ago. Man, my hands got cold fast. Now I use neoprene gloves on cold days. My buddy hates to paddle with gloves, so he paddles with pogies and brings a set of neoprene gloves in his drybag. Your cold-day outfit will be complete with some warm, sturdy footwear and something extra on your head, either a beanie or a fat helmet you keep for when it's chilly.

Medium-cold days (or warmer days on colder water) present the temptation to underdress below the waist and to rely on the boat to stay warm. I take the opposite philosophy, and tend to wear neoprene pants into the summer, even when I've hung up my drytop.

My last advice for staying warm is to keep your boat dry. Go over your boat and your skirt periodically to make sure the screws are snug and the holes are patched.



Spare Paddle

Early in the season, a lost or busted paddle can turn your day into a nightmare. A cold, nasty day is the day to bring a break-apart, along with an extra set of pogies or gloves or whatever. In a pinch, you can improvise pogies from plastic bags (I've used riverside trash) and duct tape.

Piezoelectric Lighter

Fire can be a lifesaver in the wilderness, so bring a lighter, some kind of firestarter and a candle. The candle is especially good to heat up and dry out a crack in a kayak so you can patch it with duct tape. I carry this gear in a ziplock in my drybag, and carry a second set inside my drytop.

I highly recommend piezoelectric lighters. If a regular lighter gets damp or rusty, it stops working. Piezo lighters, also called "electronic" lighters, generate a spark by compressing a special crystal. It turns out that these lighters are nearly impervious to water. You can use them with wet hands, or even drop them in water, and they will still work fine. Piezo lighters are a little harder to find than the regular kind, and cost a buck or two more. They are worth it.

Food and Shelter

If someone has a bad injury on your trip, they may be stuck on the riverbank all day, or even overnight, until more help arrives. At a bare minimum I carry my firestarting kit, a warm hat, a couple of Powerbars, a small headlamp, and an "Emergency Survival Bag" made from that space-blanket stuff (you can get this from Campmor for about ten bucks). This makes a decent start for a forced hike or riverside bivouac, and you can carry most of this under your drytop.

At times, I've also carried a lightweight tarp, extra clothes, a backpacking stove, and even a sleeping bag and a pad in the back of my boat, depending on the length and remoteness of the river and the expected weather. Another great item for cold days is a thermos with hot chocolate or the like, ready to drink. If someone swims on a cold day and gets a bit hypothermic, this can really help.

Case In Point


It was 40 degrees in Morgantown WV and overcast, so of course by the time we got to the Upper Blackwater it was blinking "26 F" on the clock at the Miners & Merchants Bank, with 5 inches of new snow at the take-out and more coming down while we dressed.

Our group was solid, well-dressed, and familiar with the run, so we moved fairly quickly and smoothly downriver. A little past the halfway point, I took a hard hit on my hull, and 5 minutes later I was sitting in 2 inches of water. My boat was obviously cracked and leaking.

On the plus side, I was wearing high-top booties, thick wool socks, lots of rubber, and a good drytop, so despite this turn of events I was staying warm in my portable icebath. Since we'd gotten on early and picked a short run, we had options. I was dressed warm and I knew the area well, so I could have stashed the boat and started hiking. Also, we had the stuff to patch it, and since everyone was well-dressed and reasonably warm, we could have stopped for 20 minutes and given this a go.

As it turned out, the leak was fairly slow and group was strong, so we just cranked up the speed and boogied for the take-out. Since I knew the run, I could pull over before something tricky and dump my boat. Twenty minutes and half a mile of high-speed creeking later, we were at the take-out, and I was still warm enough to deal with the epic hour-long snow slog up the take-out hill (but that's another story).

Boat Smart

Simple things kept us out of trouble that day: a strong group, an early put-in, familiarity with the run, bombproof clothes. If we'd needed more, we had it: first aid, extra clothes, fire, food, spare paddle, duct tape, all distributed around the group so that no one was packing more than a few extra pounds. In fact, what I remember most about the day was an amazing creek run with good buddies and half a foot of new snow—plus, that part at the end where I broke my boat. I hope you remember your near-adventures the same way. 

Letters to the Editor



Dear American Whitewater,

First off, I want to come clean about my affiliation with Rapid Air. I am a small time investor in the product who did so out of a sincere belief in its inherent, non-monetary value several years ago. I have no day-to-day affiliation with the product's sale or production.

Now that we've got that out of way, let's get down to brass tacks. I was thrilled to see Dr. Johnson's well-written coverage of the product in the last AW Journal. It's time that Rapid Air becomes more than an Internet rumor. There were, however, a couple of inaccuracies that I feel bear reconciling.

Rapid Air is not a redesigned, preexisting, emergency air supply system. It was designed specifically for use in whitewater. Its whitewater-specific mouthpiece retains air pressure when exposed to moving current unlike existing scuba regulators. Dr. Thompson vaguely mentions having "modified" his Xtreme Air unit. It has become apparent that this was done by using the Rapid Air specific mouthpiece on the Xtreme Air to bolster its effectiveness. This detail was omitted.

Rapid Air can be refilled from a standard scuba tank or by a Rapid Air network dealer. One does not need to be a certified scuba dealer to refill a Rapid Air product; there are many refill options available to unit owners. In addition, the company offers instruction on using and refilling Rapid Air safely and responsibly.

And for the nitpicking: the company name is Rapid Products Inc and the designer's name is Jeff Bennett (with two t's).

Any specific questions or comments can be answered on the website: <http://rapidair.net/>

Or Tel: (303) 761-9600 - Fax: (303) 761-9293 - info@rapidproducts.com

Sincerely,
Matt Brockman
Basalt, CO

Editor's Note: The following e-mails were exchanged by Sgt. Jason D. Campbell and Carla Miner, American Whitewater's Membership Coordinator between March 14th and 18th, 2005.

Dear American Whitewater,

I just wanted to let y'all know that AW has been a nice break from the harsh reality I'm living here in Iraq right now. My wife has been sending me my American Whitewater and I look forward to them. I will be home and back on the water soon, but till then my bi-monthly AW will give me a little bit of a fix.

Yours Truly,
Sgt. Jason D. Campbell

Hi Jason,

As our thanks to you for protecting our freedoms, we are renewing your membership at no charge. American Whitewater values your support of our mission to conserve and protect America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely!

We appreciate your commitment to the United States and your efforts to keep this great country free! Please enjoy your next year's complimentary membership as our commitment to you.

Carla Miner
Membership Coordinator, American Whitewater

Hello Carla,

I just received your e-mail and it ran cold chills up my neck. I am very glad that you guys at AW are behind us here in the desert. I thank you for the renewal of my American Whitewater membership while I'm over here, that means a lot to me. Y'all rock!

Be home soon,
Sgt. Campbell

Dear Editor,

American Whitewater is incredible. I visited UK, France, Africa and OZ this year, and I can see what AW does to help paddling access very clearly.

Keep up the great work,
Deb O'Keefe

Corrections

In our November/December issue from last year, we neglected to properly credit the photographers for Travis Winn's story, Sichuan China. Both full-page photos (pgs 32 and 35) feature Travis Winn kayaking and were taken by Lin Hong from Chengdu, China. The photo of a snow-covered mountain (pg 33), named Gongga Shan, is by Ben Foster. Photos of a river running through town (pg 33) and a raft in a swimming pool (pg 34) are by Feng Chun from Chengdu, China. Finally, the photo of the Tibetan House (pg 36) and of the Panda (pg 38) are by Dan Monskey.

Executive Director The Journey Ahead

by Mark Singleton

Over the past few months, American Whitewater has been going through the process of consolidating our office locations. In March, American Whitewater vacated its office in Silver Springs, MD. This move saves AW the overhead expense of a large office in the Washington, DC market. Jason Robertson is staying in the Washington DC area as AW's Managing Director. Jason will hold down a smaller office footprint and remain connected with AW's mission through critical national policy work and financial management. The new address is:

American Whitewater
204 B Philadelphia Ave
Takoma Park, MD 20912
phone: 301-502-4610
Email: jason@amwhitewater.org

Carla Miner, AW's Membership Services Manager, has moved to Salt Lake City, UT. She takes the membership services functions she was performing at the Bigfork location with her. The new membership services office address is:

American Whitewater Membership Services
3691 S 3200 W
West Valley City, UT 84120
Email: Carla@amwhitewater.org
phone: 801-649-2327

A location search for executive offices in western North Carolina is underway. I have been in dialog with possible location hosts and am in the process of negotiating the terms of an agreement. When more information is available it will be posted to our web site and reported in subsequent issues of American Whitewater. For now, the Asheville address remains:

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These office location changes allow us to operate more efficiently within the available resources and create a sustainable business model to support our core mission, to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely.


In staff news, Craig Plocica has joined AW as Development Director. Craig is now working closely with me to implement programs that increase AW membership, stimulate funding of river stewardship initiatives and build industry partnerships. Craig's experience within the paddling community and the non-profit sector make him an ideal member of the AW team. Please join us in welcoming Craig to American Whitewater.

Dave Steindorf, a long-time AW volunteer and board member, will be joining the staff to work on far western river issues. Dave has been highly visible representing the interests of AW in California with the Feather River project. Please welcome Dave into his "new" staff role on the river stewardship team.

After more than nine years of service to American Whitewater, John Gangemi has taken another position with a consulting firm specializing in environmental planning. His many contributions to AW are too numerous to list here; most significantly he was responsible for the science-based methods that have been key to many of AW's conservation success stories. John will be missed, but he is not getting away easily; he will be available for limited AW projects as a consultant. For those wishing to say good-bye to John



Dave Steindorf - California Stewardship Director

face-to-face, with their best Gangemi story, a roast will be held in his honor as part of the AW Spring Board Meeting in Reno, NV on Sunday night, May 15. For more information on the event please contact me at mark@amwhitewater.org or email me your best story about John. For his many contributions to AW, I wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to John and his family. 

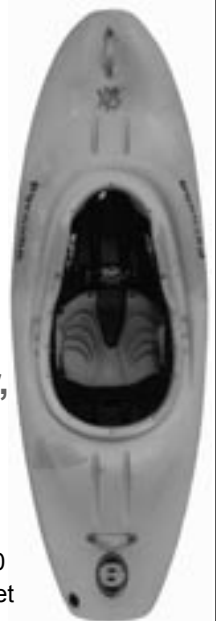
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History

by Susan Taft



Playing... to Playboating

The term “Playboating” was coined sometime in the 1980s but “playing” on a river has been around much longer.

An article titled “Playing the River” was published in the Spring 1956 issue of *American Whitewater*. Written by Wolf Bauer of the Washington (Seattle) Foldboat Club, it promoted the use of playing to increase river-running skills, and in particular, considered the mastery of ferry surfing to be a very important and fun part of the whitewater experience.

However, since that time, playing itself has evolved into an independent sub-sport of whitewater—playboating—with its unique design and technique-specific aspects for whitewater.

While boat design today is an integral part of playboating, that was not always the case. In the 1950s, the thinking of the day

for river-running boat designs was (not coincidentally) the same as the “ideal” design features for slalom racing—a combination of rocker and length, often in excess of 3 meters or 13 feet. This logic continued into the 1960s, and while playing began to incorporate more than just wave surfing and hole pop-ups, river-running and the associated playing still remained closely linked to slalom racing for boat designs and paddling technique. This all changed profoundly in the 1970s with a new generation of river runners and the increasing popularity of rafting. Commercial rafting provided paddler-guides an opportunity to play and hot-dog their river-running skills and new tricks, not just for their clients but also among themselves. Bigger holes and waves were surfed—and enders entered the lexicon. Since many paddlers were building their own boats, modifications in slalom hull designs became the norm in order to improve on hull performance specifically for river-running and playing. By the end of the decade, squirtboating—a truly divergent and radical way of thinking—began to take shape. With its evolution in the 1980s came blasts, boofs, cartwheels, and pirouettes.

Although still offering more traditional slalom-based designs, plastic kayaks which were first introduced in 1973 grew in popularity. With the beginnings of rodeo competitions in the early 1980s, forward, backward, and side-surfing—with some paddle twirling thrown in—ruled playing at competitions. In 1982 Perception introduced the 11’6” Dancer, a boat designed specifically for playing. At the time it seemed to be a fairly radical departure from the norm with its short, high performance hull. But short and shorter soon became the trend. It was no longer sufficient to just run a river, paddlers wanted to play on it.

In the early 1990s, competition by paid-professional paddlers became the driver for playboating, not only for developing new tricks for competition, but also for developing new playboats. This took a huge leap forward in 1994 with the introduction of the first planing hull, Necky’s 8’10” Rip. Over the next few years new designs abounded with radical hard-edged, flat planing hull designs and became even shorter at sub-8 feet. With these new designs came new ways to play on rivers. New tricks were developed for waves,




Wick Walker on Tariffville Gorge.

Photo by kaitiaki.co.nz

particularly green waves. Hole-riding took on another dimension, combining surface moves from the old “displacement” hulls to sub-surface moves from squirtboating hulls. Now there were airwheels, loops, clean 360s, clean cartwheels, and super clean cartwheels. For many, playing became the sole reason to paddle. River-running became secondary and the boat designs reflected that with shorter sub-6 foot hulls developed specifically for playboating. Destination paddling was in.

While it seemed for a time that playboating’s evolution might continue to move the river experience toward extinction, playboating actually continued to enhance it. As if coming full circle, an increasing number of designs in the last few years are combining design features for river-running—a little more length—and playing with a planing hull. River-running itself, the reason for

playing in the first place, continues to be enriched by the on-going evolution of playboating, a proposition that has continued since Bauer first described “playing” fifty years ago. 

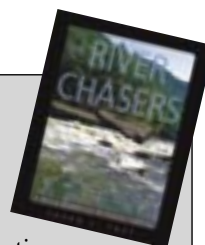
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Sue Taft is the author of *The River Chasers*, the history of American Whitewater Paddling.

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HOLES Getting over your Fear

by **Tanya Shuman**

I can remember when I first started kayaking. I loved river running and enjoyed the challenge of successfully running a rapid without flipping over, making it to point A to point B with no problems.

This was back in the day when boats were 10+ feet. Playboating was out of the question. Yeah, I'd front surf on waves. But playing in holes—no way!!! I would avoid them at all costs.

I was terrified of big holes. OK—let's be realistic—any hole. I would pretend that I liked them, but secretly I hated them. I would even wait in line acting as if I was really excited to play. When my turn came up, my strategy was always the same: "get in and out of the hole as fast as possible." Trying a trick was out of the question. I was in survival mode.

Sometimes I would simply miss the hole on purpose and act as though I had tried my very best and some odd surge had surprisingly flushed me downstream. My acting was Oscar-award winning but the bottom line is: The only one I was fooling was myself. So how did I finally buck up, eliminate my fear of holes and start really playboating? Well, I have to admit, big holes still scare me, but I have learned how to relax. Building



*Tanya Shuman at the
2005 World Championships*

Photos by Marlow Long

my confidence helped eliminate the fear factor.


The first task was building confidence in my roll. My roll in river running was powerful but in holes it was another story. I was nervous flipping over in holes and not being able to roll back up. When entering a hole I would think: "Please don't swim, please don't swim. I don't want to be a complete loser." This would lead to my typical routine of getting in and out of holes at lightning speeds.

However, this got old and I was determined to learn freestyle kayaking. So at new playspots I would watch other paddlers move around in the hole. By watching first, I began to understand how to move in a hole, both forwards and backwards. Basics first. And sometimes I purposely rolled to understand that it's not hard to roll up in a hole and most of the time the hole actually helps you roll faster and better.

It was scary at first and I did swim a ton, although with each swim I realized it

wasn't that bad and at least I was trying to do something besides getting in and out of the hole. Remember, swimming is ok; it's part of the learning process.

Learning how to move in a hole was a huge confidence builder. There were times that the fear of getting stuck in a hole took the fun out of kayaking, but I started with little holes and moved my way up to bigger holes. After learning the right strokes and correct boat balance, I became more confident and had fewer panic attacks. I was able to move around and feel relaxed in a hole and could concentrate on learning tricks.

Kayaking is challenging and definitely has its frustrating moments, but the rewards far outweigh the struggles. You are constantly learning and relearning, taking your paddling to the next level. Keeping positive and not frustrated will help you keep the fun in kayaking 'cause ultimately fun is what it's all about. 





“Sometimes I would simply miss the hole on purpose and act as though I had tried my very best and some odd surge had surprisingly flushed me downstream. My acting was Oscar-award winning but the bottom line is: The only one I was fooling was myself.”

Feature Interview

KIDS in Kayaking



danejackson

by Clay Wright

Living at Rock Island, I have the opportunity to paddle almost every day with one of the most interesting guys in the sport. Though he hasn't won a big freestyle event and couldn't drive a Subaru, even if it were offered, Dane Jackson's passion for kayaking is every bit as strong as his Dad's (longtime pro boater, Eric Jackson). This is causing amazing things to happen for this 11-year-old boy. In the past two years he's gone from paddling around in the eddies to throwing a tricky-woo in competition and completing freewheels off a 20 ft falls. Some credit good genes and coaching, some say he's just got a gift. I say he's the only river-rat kid raised on whitewater videos to get a kayak his size and daily opportunities to use it. Whatever the case, and whatever he does in the future, here's Dane being his own man: a child of 11 with nothing to prove, answering my questions while waiting to go to the river.

Full name, age, birthdate:

Dane Oliver Jackson, 11 years old, 7/19/93

Height, weight, shoe size:

4'4", 65 lbs, size 3 shoes

What is your playboat/creekboat of choice?

I play in my Fun 1 and creek in my Fun 1.5

Years kayaking down whitewater:

Nine years paddling, learned to roll three years ago.

"On my first real paddling trip I...":

Went into two big holes because I didn't know my right from my left! (Little Falls of the Potomac)

What is your favorite place to go playboating?

Rock Island!

What is your favorite river that you've run?

I love the Ottawa and the South Silver... wait, no, Brush Creek, too, and the Tallulah.

What is the hardest rapid and then hardest river that you have run?

Oceana Rapid on the Tallulah and South Silver... big slides.

What are some of the challenges to being an 11-year-old kayaker?

I think I get cold easily and it's hard getting a dry top that fits really well—the arms are always too long! Clay knows all this Mom!

Can you think of any advantages?

They never ask me to run shuttle or buy anything.

Can you remember a time when you were really scared on a river and tell us about that?

Humpty Dumpty on the Little River Canyon was pretty creepy. There was a sieve there and a pinning rock and I was a little too far left at the top and got too close to the pinning rock—well I was on the pinning rock—scary!

What has been your happiest moment in the sport of kayaking?

Making the US Freestyle Team in 2005. It was really fun when I got my first airscrew at the beach in Australia, too!



Do you prefer running rivers, creeks, slalom paddling, or playboating, and why?

I prefer all of them.

Mom: Is there one you like especially?

No Mom, there is not one I like especially, they are all really fun.

Will you pursue slalom racing like your Dad?

Yes.

Why do you think there are so few kids in paddling?

I think few kids' boats have been made, so most kids can't paddle.

Freestyle or freeride? (Do you like competitions or just boating?)

I like to do both. Freestyle is fun, but I like running lots of different rivers because I get to play at different spots.

What is your favorite freestyle trick you can do?

A Helix is my favorite move. It's just a really cool move.

Name a few of your favorite rapids and why you like them.

I love Oceana, it's a big slide and it's fun because it's really steep and fast.

What river that you haven't done is #1 on your 'to do' list and why?


The Zambezi! It looks really big and really fun.

What freestyle trick that you haven't done is #1 on your "to do" list and why?

(Screws up his face and looks perplexed) I can't think of a move I can't do...wait... there's one move that I am working on right now. I would like to get better at my airscrews. (I haven't seen his airscrews...yet).

What do you want to be when you grow up?

A kayaker, of course. What kind of question is that?

Thanks, Dane—now we can go boating! 



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Just 'Kids
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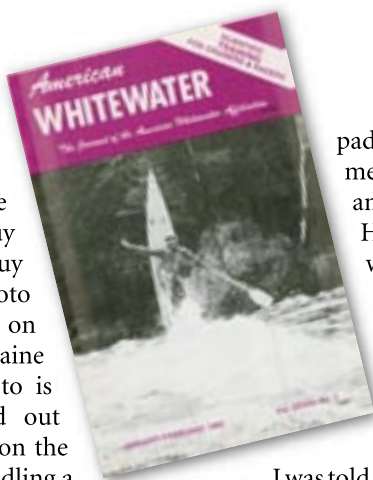


family kayaking

by Eric Jackson

In 1983 I made my American Whitewater Journal debut. I was considered to be the best ender and pirouette guy on the East Coast, and a guy named Hal took my photo launching out of the water on the Kennebec River in Maine at "Z-Turn" rapid. The photo is from 1982. Z-Turn washed out in 1984, so don't look for it on the way down the river. I was paddling a homemade Phoenix Savage (made in my dad's basement) in 1981. I was quite happy to see my big ender, one hand on the paddle, appear on the cover of AW.

I hope my son Dane gets the same satisfaction from his first AW Journal Cover in the Spring of 2005, 22 years after my first cover. His photo was taken by his mom, Kristine, while surfing the river left shoulder of Rock Island hole. In this photo, he is taking a break in between trying different moves, and his smile says it all. What you don't see in the photo is Emily



paddling back up the eddy, me at the top of the eddy, and somewhere up in New Hampshire is my dad, who is now retired from kayaking. He is watching from a distance and seeing the benefits that kayaking has brought to his family.

I was told that by designing the Fun 1, Fun 1.5, Star, and 2 Fun that I was creating kids kayaking. Kids kayaking is great; I am proud to have made kids kayaking a reality. However, it is family kayaking that I am most proud of. Kids kayaking with their siblings, parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents, and cousins; that is my favorite part of the kids' kayaks. This is what has allowed me to be the parent I have always wanted to be—to use kayaking as a medium for life's lessons.

Responsibility: If you don't finish your school work you can't come kayaking.

Becoming a citizen of the world: By traveling to different rivers they learn that people live differently from place to place and that "normal" does not exist.

Respect the environment: It really hits home when the kids see how clear cutting causes a green creek to become a brown one, when a dam can cause the river to be dry indefinitely, and when trash changes the mood of your favorite spot.

Respect and trust adults: When your kids are learning they depend upon you for safety and guidance. You have to help them portage around hard rapids, and they are happy to have you with them because they need your help to truly enjoy the trip. Once they are better than you are, they'll want to take a leadership role and help you, offer confidence-boosting advice or a pep talk above a hard rapid. It is a great thing to watch.

Learn decision making ability: Run or walk the rapid? What line to take?



Left: Dane and Eric Jackson


Above: Kristine Jackson

Right: Emily Jackson

Photos by Tanya Shuman

What clothes to wear? What equipment do we need? What better way for kids to learn how to think for themselves than to kayak. You can't paddle the rapid for them, you can't decide if they will be warm or cold, you can't decide whether they think they can make the line or not. Your kids don't take this stuff lightly after the first time they get on a river underdressed, or scare themselves by taking a line that was harder than they expected. They will usually learn to operate well within their skill level before they get past Class II.

Finally, as a parent, you simply have more fun being able to enjoy your favorite activity with them, while watching them become better people in the process. Kayaking is addictive and for people with addictive personalities, like me, being addicted to it is the best way to avoid all of the negative addictions we are exposed to.

So look for the Jackson family on the river, and we'll keep an eye out for your family, too. 



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Feature KIDS in Kayaking



The World Championships Australia 2005

by Emily Jackson

While packing for my second trip to Australia, I tried to think of the necessary items ranging from kayaking gear, sun block, and video games to bring for the 20 hours of traveling. The whole time I was packing I couldn't help but imagine what it was going to be like. I had a good picture in my head because I had already been to Penrith for Pre-Worlds the year before. I thought about the crowds of people, the conveyor belt, and all the fun I knew I was going to have.

Australia was just as I had remembered, only better! The kayakers came from as far as South Africa and as close as Japan. During the first couple of weeks, people flew in an average of one or two per day. As the weeks went on the people coming

per day seemed to multiply. When it came close to the competition at least 10 people per day were arriving. The crowds seemed to arrive in large swarms each day. For the longest time I was the only junior girl until Natalie from Canada arrived; after her they started showing up daily.

While all the people were arriving the lines for the hole got much longer and training got more serious. A lot of people were having awesome practice rides like Billy Harris, Anthony Yapp, Jay Kincaid, and my Dad. The women's class has some outstanding rides by Tanya Faux, who is the local Aussie girl. Some other impressive women were Ruth Gordon from Canada, and Kristen Podalak and Tanya Shuman from the US.

One thing that was fun to watch was certain junior women getting comfortable with the hole and learning how to do moves they have never even tried before. One girl that made some huge changes was Katie Kowalski from Canada, who had learned how to spin, ender and cartwheel all in the few weeks she was there. The junior men were also looking awesome. It is hard to say who was performing the best because it was a very close competition, but I can say that the UK had a dominating junior men's team. The US had an impressive junior team as well. It was made up of Justin Patt, Todd Baker and Dane Jackson. Dane was the youngest competitor at the age of 11; he is also my little brother.




For me the worlds was crazy, not only because I got to compete but because I had a little brother and a father competing. I didn't have only my competition to think about but I also had to think about Dane and my Dad's competition. It was very fun to have my whole family cheering for each other and watching each other compete. It is not everyday that you get to compete at a world-class level and have your brother and your father competing, too.

All the other classes such as Squirt, C1 and OC1, were very fun to watch. Everyone seemed to have a blast and helped coach one another. Stephen Wright would be out every morning coaching Devon Barker, long before anyone else would be at the course. Deb O'Keefe won the women's squirt and Dustin Urban won the men's. Their performances in the competition were pretty close to one another so it was fun to see who ended up winning. For C1, UK's Adam Hall went home with the gold. Canada's Paul Danks had an impressive winning ride for OC1.

When the event started it was all about the cheering. My two favorite cheering squads were the UK team and the Japanese. The UK team all had flags and grouped

together to have a larger noise effect, while the Japanese couldn't sit still. They were always bouncing off the walls and yelling loudly the whole entire time a fellow team member was in the hole. It was funny to watch because you couldn't understand a word they were saying.

While watching the people who had awesome practice rides, you would expect them to do as well as practice but in certain cases the pressure was too strong for some people. One person that did not do as well as expected in the competition was Tanya Faux. She was by far the best in practice but she didn't make the first cut. This seemed to make everyone a little bit nervous.

Some people overcame the pressure and they were the ones who did amazing in the competition. Everyone who did well deserved it, and it was fun to watch everyone compete at such high standards. I enjoyed watching my Dad as his daughter and not another kayaker because I knew how much he wanted to win. I was probably at least three times more nervous for him then I was for myself. I hope that one day I can follow his footsteps up onto the podium. 

Emily Jackson, U.S. Junior Women's Team, summons the crowd's energy as she competes at the 2005 World Championship in Penrith, Australia.

Photo by Kristine Jackson



Feature KIDS in Kayaking

School Teacher D.A.R.E.s Kids to Choose Whitewater Over Drugs

by Ambrose Tuscano

Devon Barker is a national board certified elementary school teacher with six years teaching experience in Idaho schools; she is also a two-time national freestyle kayaking champion. Her love of teaching children and her passion for kayaking inspired Barker to create a program that encourages kids to reject drugs. Barker now takes her Dare To Kayak Program to schools, youth groups and even Rotary and other adult civic clubs.

The program targets children, ages 9 to 13. Its message is, don't just say "no" to drugs; instead say "yes" to something you are passionate about. Barker uses her love of whitewater kayaking as an example. The reigning National Champion freestyle kayaker is no stranger to big risks. Not only is this evident in her bold approach to freestyle kayaking, but also in her career choices. After teaching school for six years, Barker took a chance and put her career on hold while she pursued her dream of becoming a full-time kayaker.

After her first season of full-time kayaking, Barker went back to the Idaho school where she had been teaching and shared a video of her exploits with the children. In a discussion with 6th graders, the subject of drugs and sports came up. This interaction inspired Barker to create a video and discussion questions for the kids; the Dare To Kayak Program was born.



Barker uses the D.A.R.E. acronym to help kids see how they can become strong people without using drugs. Her version of the D.A.R.E. principles read as follows:

Dare to be who you want to be.
Always do an activity you love.
Risk losing, so that you can reach your goals.
Everything can be achieved with hard work, dedication, clear vision, and a deep down drive, which says, "You can do it."

She also encourages the kids to write their own version of the D.A.R.E. principles. This helps them think actively and creatively about the solutions to drug use. Some of her favorites include:

Do believe in yourself. -Abby 5th grade
Achieving goals can be easy without drugs. -Gavin 6th grade
Right the wrong. -Brooke 4th grade
Everyone has dreams; dreams are what make people happy. -Adam 6th grade

The emphasis of her program is on getting hooked on extreme sports, not extreme



*A daring group enjoys
Devon Barker's program*

Photos by Devon Barker


drug use. After being presented to over 500 children (and counting), it is an obvious success. Barker even added a second day to her Dare To Kayak Program in response to the popular demand for a hands-on kayak demo day. On pool day, kids learn about paddling and water safety and they get to practice wet exits.

For Barker, her program is in keeping with the principles of the traditional D.A.R.E. anti-drug program that she used with her students when she was still teaching. However, it improves on the famous "Say no to drugs" slogan by giving kids something material to focus on instead of an absence of drugs.

"I wanted to take a different approach," says Barker. "I show them how I live a drug free, yet exciting life through kayaking and use this example to help them to find a passion in their own lives."

One of the things that interests kids most about her presentation is the allure of traveling across the globe. Barker's

kayaking has taken her to many fantastic places and children find her travels to places like Europe, Chile, Canada and Ecuador fascinating. "For many students," Barker says, "this is the first time they have realized that being involved with kayaking or any sport or activity can take them around the world."

This winter, Devon Barker made yet another impressive trip, representing the United States at the Freestyle Kayaking World Championships in Penrith, Australia. Now that she's back, she plans to expand her Dare To Kayak Program throughout the western US, and to continue challenging kids to stay off drugs. 


A Kid's Perspective on Paddling

by Jason Craig

I started kayaking as early as I could remember, just sitting on my dad's lap in a boat while he took me around the river. After a while, as I started to paddle more and more on my own, I got better and better and began to love the sport more and more. Up to the age of 8 I ran rivers with my family in rafts, inflatable kayaks and canoes. A highlight during those years was when I was six and I went on a raft and kayak trip down the Grand Canyon. At the end of age 8 a friend named Josh got me an Eskimo Kayak. It was impossible to roll but I tried as best as I could and found myself running some pretty hard rivers in it.

I live in Reno and my mom works at the Nature Conservancy. Last year, right before the Truckee River Festival, the Conservancy was having a kayak party at the Patagonia Outlet. I met Eric Jackson there and he told me to come down to the new Whitewater Park and try out the Fun-1 kids' kayak that he had. Right off the bat I loved the Fun-1 and ordered one through Reno Mountain Sports, our local kayak dealer.

I learned a lot about the river when I was waiting for my kayak to arrive by taking my boogie board into surf holes where I played with the current and exit points of holes. It was awesome! When my boat finally arrived I took it into the ditch behind my house and learned how to roll. I practiced

river running, surfing and hole riding whenever I could. After a while I got real comfortable and I enjoy this sport a whole lot. A word to all those kids out there: kayaking is fun for adults, but it is ten times more fun for kids. Stick with it in spite of those doubtful situations. 



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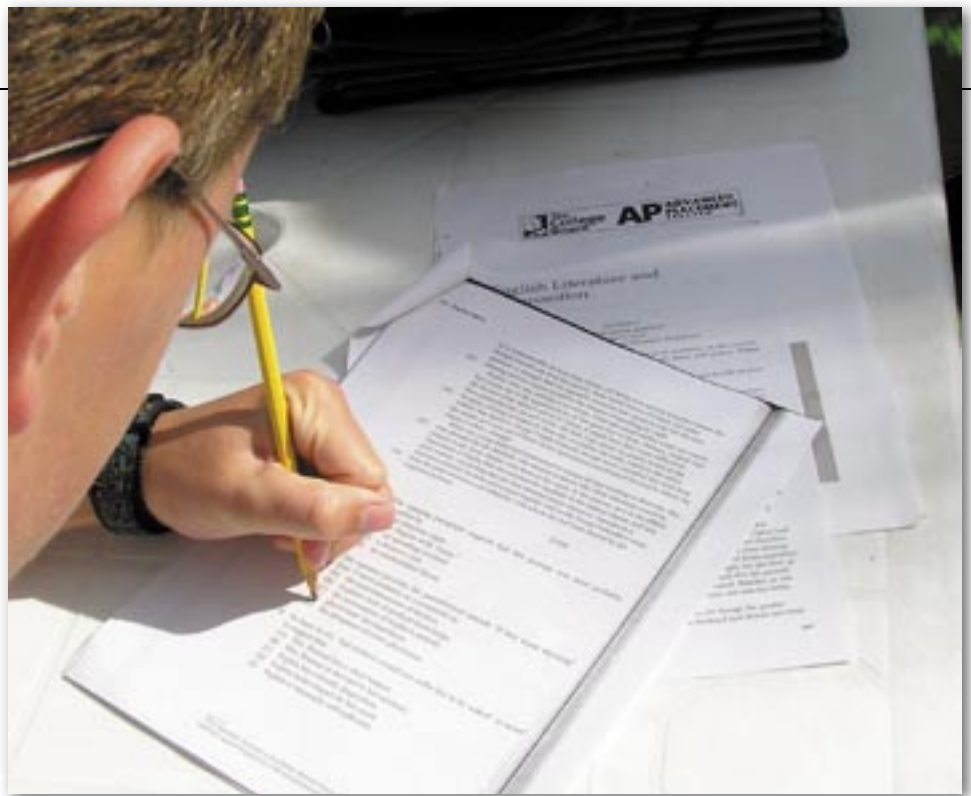
First of all, I came on this trip to Australia with The Academy of Huge Experiences. Huge Experiences is a high school for kayakers that travels around the world for mainly freestyle training and competition but most of all, for experience!

by Jeff Gette

I am a slalom boater. This quarter, the school decided to add a slalom section to their kayaking program. Martin Nevaril is our slalom coach here in Penrith, Australia. We (Martin, Ashley Nee, Casey Eichfeld, Isaac Levinson, Rick Powell, and I) are training at the Penrith Whitewater Stadium, which is about 20 minutes from Sydney. It was created and used for the 2000 Sydney Olympics. It feels soothing to know that the Olympics were here.

The freestyle students' names are Matt Fithian, Nathan Silsbie, Eric Chance, Saunders, and Craig Rivette from S. Africa. The teachers are Kristi Murrin, Spencer Lawly, Natasha Peterson, and Jeremy Besbris.

When I first arrived in Penrith, two things were happening: the 2005 freestyle Worlds and Australia Day, the biggest holiday in



Australia (very similar to July 4th in the US). Australia Day is January 26th and since I got here early, only the teachers and I were here for it. On Australia Day we went to Darling Harbor in downtown Sydney to see the celebration. It was by far the biggest and longest fireworks show I could ever imagine! It was a very good experience. After a great fireworks welcome to Australia I got to watch the Freestyle World finals, which were on the 29th. EJ won, beating out Jay Kincaid in K1. They all did awesome tricks. It was cool to meet all the well-known boaters.

After a relaxed first couple of days down here, the slalom group began training and schooling at an intense level. We are training on the course normally twice per day. Ironically, they scheduled us with the French Team which consists of two 2004 Olympic gold medalists who are Tony Estanguat [C1] and Benoit Pechier [K1]. It also contains Fabian Lefavre [K1] who is a 2003 World Champion. It is slightly nerve racking when you are paddling down the course and see them in front of you or vice versa. Even though the champions are nice, it would be devastating to your reputation to hit one. Ironically, one of them actually hit me! It was pretty scary at first, but then he apologized and we went back to training as usual. Ashley got her boat designed exactly like Benoit Pechier's boat and was rather embarrassed to sit beside him in an

eddy after almost hitting him. We all felt a little pathetic at times because we would do back enders and try to get vertical. We would get vertical, but then all the French guys came down and started to show off in front of us. They would sit on their sterns for minutes at a time and completely show us up. We also saw them in Jack's Hole (good loop hole) doing cartwheels vertically and pulling off some other cool tricks like Split Wheels, Tricky Woos, etc. It was cool to watch. Sometimes they made us feel downgraded, but we have been learning from these professional boaters and feel grateful to be on the water at the same time as them.

For other exercise we have also been doing flat-water workouts and going for runs between sessions. We've been running around the Olympic sprint course, where we get to stand on the podium. We always run past the Olympic rings on the bridge, which is extremely motivational.

We sleep, eat and do classes at a YMCA camp called Camp Yaramundi. It is a 35' by 35' house with 16 beds in it. Our house is directly above a river. There is a cliff about 20 feet high running along the river that has ropes to climb back up. After it rains, these rocks are fun to jump off of and get cooled down in the river. Since it is a YMCA, there are many other nice facilities. We have our own little trailer kitchen, huge

Left: Eric Chance prepares for the College Board AP exams while he travels and kayaks.


Right: Nathan Silsbee boofing on the Pacuare River, Costa Rica

Student community service, Turrialba Orphanage, Costa Rica

Photos by Martin Nevarill, Bryan Kirk, Natasha Peterson and Kristi Murrin



bathrooms and tons of outdoor space. There's a rugby/football field that we play either rugby or ultimate Frisbee on. There are also two ropes courses that we will get to play on soon. Around the camp we see tons of animals including kangaroos, wombats, snakes, gigantic monitor lizards, cockatoos, parrots, fish etc... This is only three weeks into the trip, four to go.

By the way, school has not been much easier unfortunately. Not that it was hard in the first place but I thought the schedule wouldn't be as tight as it is. We are all learning so much more than we ever did in our other schools that sometimes all the school time seems worth it. School is balanced out by the awesome field trips like the ones to the Blue Mountains and Sydney. There is a camping trip coming up that I am really looking forward to as well. 

For more information on Jeff's huge experiences surf to www.hugeexperiences.com.

Don't miss the chance to win a \$5000 scholarship to the Academy of Huge Experiences! See page 67 for details.

AHE teacher Natasha Peterson teaches in an open-air setting in the Blue Mountains of Australia

Photo by Kristi Murrin



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Feature



The itinerary for the World Class Kayak Academy school year of 2004-2005 could get the mind spinning: Ottawa in September; quick stop at Lachine Wave; on to the Gauley and the Dries of the New; Zambezi River in October; the White Nile in November; Ecuador in February and March; California and Oregon in April and May to find spring flows and national competitions...

by Whitney Lonsdale

At first glimpse, this might look like a dream paddling vacation for a bunch of spoiled kayaker kids. However, with a closer look, the picture is quite different. While the schedule at World Class Kayak Academy is arranged around finding the best whitewater out there, the mission at World Class goes far deeper. Through accredited, college-preparatory academics, river running and competitive paddling, world travel and cultural immersion, World Class aims to challenge its students and help

them grow into responsible, compassionate young adults, interested and engaged in the world around them.

Established on these ideals, World Class Kayak Academy was the first accredited academy for kayakers. Key founders of the academy were Whitney Lonsdale, Andrew Holcombe, Jesse Murphy, Greg Campbell, Andrew Peterman, and Scott Doherty, many of whom were the backbone of the first kayak academy in the country, The Academy at Adventure Quest.

With the energy and dedication of these whitewater and education professionals, since its inception in the fall of 2001, WCKA has rivaled the success of any kayak academy to date. It will graduate its third senior class this year with seven seniors, having visited destinations such as Africa, Mexico, New Zealand, Chile, and Ecuador. WCKA has created relationships with companies such as Nike and Red Bull who generously support its students through the scholarship program. With the daily focus on academics and athletics, WCKA also strives to cultivate a spirit of teamwork and goodwill through projects such as Soft Power Education in Uganda and the Ecuadorian Rivers Institute.

In line with its mission to contribute to the communities in which it travels, World Class held its first ever Paddle-a-thon on Gauley Fest weekend, 2004. The goal was to raise money for Soft Power Education, a non-profit school building program on the White Nile in Uganda, one of World Class' destinations. Students and teachers paddled the entire river twice on the Sunday of Gauley Fest and took pledges of sponsorship for their 52-mile mission. In the end they raised over \$5,000, which funded the creation of a Youth Arts Education Center on the Nile. The group then participated in the building of the center while they were staying at the Nile in November. As it was a big success last year, World Class is hoping to repeat the Paddle-a-thon in 2005, making it a larger event, including more of the paddling community, and raising more money for a great cause.

Each month students at World Class write a newsletter to give their families, friends and the community an update on all that's been



Program Director, Scott Ligare, in Ecuador, 2005

Photo by Philly Williams

happening on the road, in the 'classroom' and on the river. The following is taken from the November 2004 newsletter from Africa...

November 2004

November was an incredible, and incredibly full, month for World Class. We traveled over 4,000 kilometers through East Africa, saw awe-inspiring sights, met awe-inspiring



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people, and paddled awe-inspiring whitewater.

While many of the students expected our overland adventure to be a reprieve from studies, it turned out to be a continual academic experience. One of our stops was at an orphanage for baby elephants and rhinos, another at a giraffe-rehabilitation center. In each place we were able to get a closer, more intimate understanding of some of the planet's wild and wonderful animals. Our journey through the Ngorogoro Crater and the Serengeti Plain of Tanzania provided us as well, with many opportunities for knowledgeable guides to impart information about the countless animals we encountered. Despite the jostling of our overland vehicle, and our many hours of traveling both in the truck and in the safari jeeps, we were able to complete more than a full week of classes before arriving in Uganda. Our current coursework included study of the discovery of the Nile in Cultural Studies; Fluid Dynamics in Physics; Integrals in Calculus; The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn in American Lit.; Heart of Darkness in World Lit.; and My Traitor's Heart in Brit Lit.. All teachers and students are preparing for their exams and final papers, with only a few more class days left before exam week and our return to the States in mid-December.

Our two-week overland trip was not all just sitting in a jouncey truck, looking out the window, and watching the African landscape go by at 80 KPH. While on the

*Adam Johnson going big on Nile Special
White Nile, Uganda*

Photo by Philly Williams



road we found time for strength and core workouts, as well as a few games of Ultimate and Capture the Flag to mix it up. Once we arrived at Bujagaali Falls, on the White Nile, we found ourselves in shape and eager to paddle.

Our arrival at the Nile held the anticipation of surfing Nile Special and Malalu, two of the best waves in the world. The two sections of the Nile we have been paddling have rapids ranging from Class III to Class V. The day-one section, called Silverback, is a 10 kilometer run in a Class III/IV section. The day-two section, which is a Class III/IV play run, is a fifteen kilometer run that has an abundance of play waves and holes as well as two of the best kayaking waves in world. When it comes time to paddle after classes, the students split up into two groups and have the option of running Silverback, or throwing huge aerial maneuvers on Nile Special and Malalu.

The month of November proved to be rich in cultural activities, as the first half of the month we spent on our overland trip. For thirteen glorious days we explored East Africa, beginning in Livingston, Zambia, traveling across Tanzania and Kenya, and ultimately ending up in Uganda at the headwaters of the mighty Nile River.

While in Tanzania, we stopped briefly for a 3-day excursion into the Serengeti Plain and the Ngorogoro Crater to see close-up some of Africa's most incredible wildlife. At our Serengeti campground we were instructed, once night fell, to stay close to camp or "Animals Might Attack." Needless to say, no one left their seats around the campfire to go exploring at night. By the end of our

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Feature



Loading boats in Ecuador, 2005
Adam Johnson on the Malalu Wave,
White Nile, Uganda


Photos by Philly Williams

safari, we had seen lions, leopards, elephants, wildebeests, flamingos, cheetahs, hippos, giraffes, gazelle, and enough zebras to make your head spin.

At the elephant orphanage we watched seven small elephants, ranging in age from four months to two years, playing in the mud with each other and their human "mentors;" we learned about their individual histories and heard about plans for their re-introduction into the wild. At the giraffe sanctuary we stood on a terrace which put us at eye level with the giraffes; from there we fed them, and were allowed to pet them so long as the food kept coming. A few students held the giraffes' food pellets between their own lips and the giraffes had to "kiss" them in order to get at the food! All in all, our overland trip turned out to be an awesome AND epic adventure.

On the 12th we arrived in Jinja, Uganda, where we were introduced to the Soft Power Education staff and crew. At a Soft Power constructed primary school we were serenaded by about a hundred students; we saw another school which the organization was in the process of fixing up, and one that they were preparing to begin work on, all with the volunteer assistance of overland trekkers and white water adventurers. We had the opportunity to work on the construction of a pottery center near our camp. We shoveled, hauled, and pounded mud, laid brick, threw pots, and sculpted busts of each other and of the pottery apprentices. We also met a whole bunch of terrific little kids who pitched in and helped us at the site and then held tight to our hands as they escorted us safely back to the road. We were able to see what an amazing operation Soft Power is, which made the \$5000 (!!!) we raised for them all the more meaningful.

Finally, we heard from an aid worker, stories of the little-known guerrilla war which has been going on for years along the Sudan border and of its terrible impact on the people, especially the children, there. We all left this presentation feeling particularly lucky to have been born and raised in a country where we don't have to worry about being kidnapped in the middle of the night to fight for someone else's cause.

Overall, November proved to be one of the most culturally rich and diverse months in World Class history. 

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*Jimmy Blakeney watches Ben Guska
throwing a big airblunt, New River Dries at 30,000 cfs.*

Photo by Bryan Kirk

Playspots

Where is your favorite place to paddle? Is it a river that's hard, one that's beautiful, or does it just have the best play around? If your answer is the latter, then this section is for you! We asked boaters to write about their favorite places to play and the results are in. These 20 spots from across the US (and southern Canada) represent a diverse mix of complete runs and park-'n-play, waves and holes, beginner

spots and features where the pros love to get aerial. Some places described here are big-time, household names and others are obscure but equally fun. We've provided just enough information to whet your appetite for these runs and playspots. So the next time you plan a whitewater roadtrip, be sure to check out some of these spots.

WEST



Jay Kincaid in the main feature of the Reno Whitewater Park

Reno Whitewater Park Truckee River, Nevada

by Jay Kincaid

Location: Downtown Reno, NV

Features: Holes

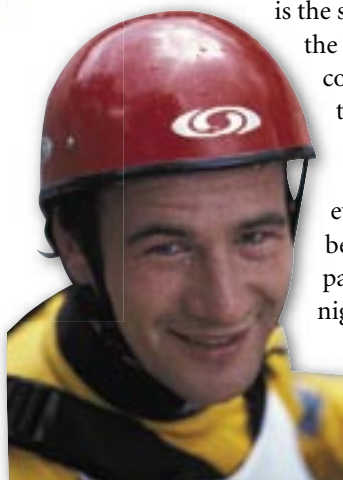
Season: Year-round

Flows: Above 300 cfs

Beta: Flows available at American Whitewater's flows page, americanwhitewater.org/rivers.

Just choose Nevada, then pick the Mayberry Park to Cottonwood Park section of the Truckee River.

Description: The white water park in Reno is unique simply because of where it is. Finding the river is easy enough; all you have to do is head downtown, toward the casinos, and you will run right into it. The whitewater park is 1500 feet long with two channels and three main play spots. The best flows are above 600 cfs, but it runs year round. The main play spot, which is in the North Channel, offers every hole move in the book at the right flows. It is a wide hole with a stable foam pile and a nice shoulder on the surf right side. In fact, this is the site of the Reno River Festival and the birthplace of the Phonix Monkey, courtesy of Billy Harris. It is also the birthplace of the highest scoring competition ride to date, due to the fact that you can do every hole move imaginable. Also because of the city lights you can paddle there at any hour, day or night. All of the play spots are good for beginners as well as experts, making fun for everyone.



Jay Kincaid blunting at Bob's Hole

Bob's Hole McKenzie River, Oregon

by Jay Kincaid

Features: Hole

Season: Year-round

Flows: 750-3000 cfs

Beta: To check the levels, go to <http://kayak.physics.orst.edu/~tpw/kayaking/display.cgi/Oregon.html> and look under Clackamas River at Three Lynx.

Description: Bob's hole is a famous play spot, mostly because of its close proximity to Portland, Oregon. It is on the Clackamas River, upstream of Estacada and can easily be identified by all the cars pulled out next to it. Bob's Hole is kind of the west coast version of Hell Hole on the Ocoee. The comparison is not about the feature itself but about its popularity. Bobs has been changing over the years and, to be honest, you never really know how it will be different from year to year. Nevertheless, it is a great play spot that offers all kinds of hole moves plus some good surfing on the shoulder. It is good for all skill levels but be sure to dress warm even in the summer, as the Clackamas River is very cold.

PLAYSPOTS NORTHWEST

Neil's McKenzie River, Oregon

by Lila Thomas

Location: West-Central Oregon

Feature: Wave

Season: On a good year, it runs all winter and is a staple diet for most playboaters in Central Oregon.

Flows: It is in from 2.1 to 2.7 ft

Beta: You can find flow information by going to Pat Welch's webpage, <http://kayak.physics.orst.edu/~tpw/kayaking/display.cgi/Oregon.html>. Check the gauge on the McKenzie River at Vida.

Description: Neil's, on the McKenzie River in Central Oregon, is the ultimate place to play! It boasts a solid feature with excellent eddy access and a beautiful view of the towering Eagle Rock. The feature is a wave/hole that at low water becomes a hole and at high water becomes a green wave. To me, 2.6 is the optimal level because the wave widens and lengthens to make a long, glassy green wave with a nice fluffy foam pile on top. It is perfect for blunting, carving and spinning. On player's left, there is a nice



Dave Grove on Neil's

Photo by Jeff Bryan

pocket shoulder that literally launches aerial blunts. At most levels, this feature sports both a hole in the center and wave on the players left, so it is the best of both worlds. You can go from looping and cartwheeling in the center to fast carving and blunting on the left shoulder all in the same ride!

Neil's resides forty-five minutes east of Eugene, Oregon. It's on the Mom's Pie run of the McKenzie River, about 2/3 of the way down (right below Eagle Rock). The run is about two miles of class II that beginners can easily manage and experts can have an excellent time playing on. Take-out at Silver Creek boat landing or continue on to Brown's hole and Martin's rapid. The shuttle can be easily done with a bicycle. The put-in is located in the Mom's Pie parking lot, right off Hwy 126 past the town of Vida. I recommend warming up after the run with a slice of pie and some coffee. The owners are "boater-friendly" and there is a locally famous rooster that always seems to make his way in through the sliding glass door.



Lake Creek Oregon

by Lisa Beckstead



Location: Oregon Coastal Range

Features: Five-mile section of Class III-IV whitewater with various size waves and holes, depending on water level.

Season: Lake Creek is rain fed, so the main season is winter. Depending on the rain, it can start running in late fall and go until early spring.

Flows: Optimal flow is 10-12 feet for most of the play spots on this run. It can be run as low as 8 feet, but at that level many paddlers just go to Mill Wave for a park and play session. If the level rises above 15 feet, you need to be careful of trees and debris on the river.

Beta: You can check flows for this run at the Pat Welch website for Oregon River Flows <http://kayak.physics.orst.edu/~tpw/kayaking/display.cgi/Oregon.html>. The gauge is called Lake Creek at Mapleton.

Description: Lake Creek is about one hour from Eugene, heading toward the coast on Hwy 126. To avoid any confusion, the put-in for this run is on Lake Creek but it flows into the Siuslaw about halfway down the run. This local favorite Class III-IV run has play features all the way down. There are various-sized waves and holes depending on the water level, and you can pretty much do all the tricks at one spot or another! The most popular put-in for playboaters is at "the ledges," a series of ledge drops that are shallow at low water and great catch on the fly play at higher water levels.

There are two awesome wave-holes downstream in "Little Horn rapid" which are great for cartwheels, blunts and loops. They are catch on the fly, one right behind the other, so be sure to eddy out at the green wave at the top of the rapid, river left. Just around the corner from Little



Tao Berman looping on Lake Creek

Photo by Jock Bradley



Laura Nash surfin' The Skook

Photo by Patrick Camblin



Skookumchuck Tidal Rapid British Columbia, Canada

by Laura Nash, additional comments by Tom O'Keefe

Horn is "Greyhound." This can be a wide, shallow hole at lower water, but at higher water levels (14+ feet) it becomes a huge, fast wave for sick aerial blunts! Next stop is "Grassy Yard Hole" which is my personal favorite. This is a hole with a pretty retentive pile and a green shoulder, so you can do all the tricks at this spot. From there down, there is a mile or so before you reach the next significant play spot, "Mill Wave," which at the right flow is a steep, fast, green wave, and at some flows will turn into a wave-hole. "Red Hill" is another wave about ½ mile downstream and pretty much the last defined feature before you reach the takeout. This feature can be a really fun fast steep wave with lots of bounce, if you catch it at the right level.

Even though this river is rain fed and not snowmelt, it is still a winter run. Bring your warm fleece, skullcap and gloves! It gets warmer in the spring season. This river is only good at high water levels (8 ft and above), so the water is always moving fast. Also, at higher water levels there can be lots of debris and trees floating in the river. Make sure you are dressed properly for a long day; this section has plenty of play spots, so you can easily spend four hours on the river.

Location: Coastal British Columbia

Features: Large wave with a steep player's-left shoulder and a frothy pile.

Season: April through October, with the most numerous peak flows in July/August

Flows: 11-16 knots, at 16 the first wave greens out completely and bigger waves form below

Beta: The "gauge" is not easy to find, but if you go to the Skookumchuck description on paddleguides.com, you'll be able to find a link to the flow data. Look at the Max Flood numbers. 11-16 knots are good, but don't forget to check the time. It sucks when the flows peak at 4 a.m.

Description: Cruise time down the green face, easy air and a soft, salty pile characterize the main wave. Catching the Tube Steak Wave that only forms at fast flows is a guaranteed "Tour" through massive boils and crash-pile waves. The main wave is perfect for learning aials. A solid roll is an asset (ideal not to swim) due to the large boils and whirlpools below the wave.

The wave is accessible and user friendly for those who are just learning playboating fundamentals. Within a session you'll be surfing and spinning with ease. But the wave accommodates all skill levels and when the pros are in town it's a great place to watch some truly impressive moves as they take to the air. The rocks adjacent to the wave provide a great spot for spectators.

The Pacific Ocean that rushes through the fjord and creates the wave is cold year

round. The wave itself is a 45-minute temperate rainforest hike or an equivalent paddle down the fjord from the town of Egmont, BC. The town boasts one general store, one pub (Iris, the bartender, will kick you out if you're not wearing shoes), two marinas and a campground (approx. \$10 per night). Three lakes in the immediate area provide a great place to chill while waiting for the tidal flows to peak.





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WEST Playsp

Cal Salmon Run Salmon River, California

by Mariann Saether

Location:

North
California

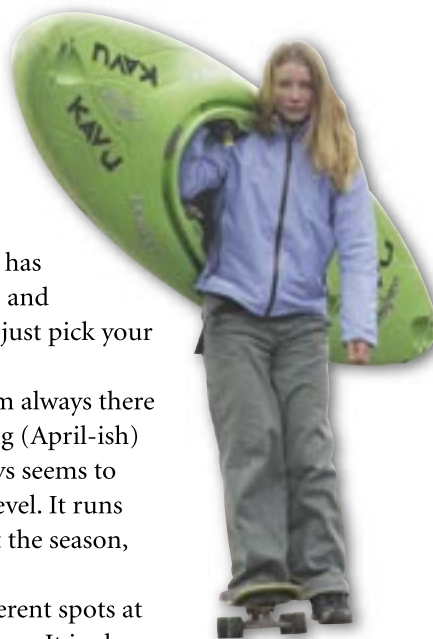
Features: It has
a few waves and
holes on it, just pick your
favorite

Season: I am always there
in the spring (April-ish)
and it always seems to
be a good level. It runs
throughout the season,
though.

Flows: Different spots at
different flows. It is always
good....

Beta: www.dreamflows.com, Somes Bar
on the Salmon.

Description: It is a playrun, but not for
beginners. It starts off with a bang, with
a nice little drop that always seems to be
fun. The water is not too cold, and the
river has a big feel to it. What makes it
my favorite playspot is that it combines
a few good rapids (Freighttrain, Cascade)
with some nice playboating. There are
waves to catch on the fly, holes to play in,
and wavetrains to play in. It is possible to
hike out before the major rapids in the
lower part, but why bother? If you add
in the nerve-racking road to the put-in,
you have got yourself a true Californian
classic. If you are lucky, the Oakbottom



Rafts "playing" on the Cal Salmon

Photos by Chantal McDermott

wave just downstream from the take out
is running, and if you are even luckier,
you can hike in to Wooley creek and get
some nice action in your creekboat. This
whole area is a unique, special place. You
have it all on your plate: big water, creeks,
scenery, wilderness. Enjoy!



Alborton Gorge Clark Fork River, Montana

by Dunbar Hardy

Location: Missoula, Montana (Zoo Town)
Features: It has kick your butt holes at higher levels, and plenty of high quality fast eddy-serviced surf waves at most levels.

Season: Year-round

Flows: The Gorge never really gets below 3,000 cfs, so there is always water, and there is almost always something there for play, regardless of the levels.

Beta: To find information about flows, releases (if applicable), events, etc., contact Tarkio Kayak Adventures (www.teamtarkio.com) for an update on the levels and play, as the instructors are out on the water every day in the summer. Mid-May each year is the Best of the West Freestyle Competition (www.kayakfreeride.com) usually held in Triple Bridges' Hole.

Description: Alborton Gorge is a scenic year round 3 mile long class III play run only 30 minutes west of Missoula. It is a classic pool drop run with warm summer

A gang enjoying Jonesy's Wave on the Hollywood Section of the Lochsa River, ID

Photos by Dunbar Hardy



water that provides a good learning ground for budding intermediates and quality play for more advanced paddlers. Given that it always flows, there is a strong local paddling community of rippers and surfers. Higher water thru May/early June provides a stomping session at Triple Bridges' Hole. As the water drops throughout the summer, surfing at Fang and Gouda's Hole becomes epic, and later in the summer, lower flows provide good surfing back at the Put-in Waves of Triple Bridges. On summer evenings, it's great to get your surf on and then head back into town to cruise through the nightlife of Higgins Street (check out the classic Charlie B's, Sean Kelly's, and the Old Post).

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Rush Sturges going big at the Nile Special, Uganda. Photos by Mahow Long

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Land Heflin rippin' up Gouda's Hole on the Alberton Gorge

Photo by Shawn Robertson

Josh Stone in Berg Park's bottom hole at 1200 cfs in mid-June

Photo by Tom Westendor

Hollywood Section Lochsa River, Idaho

by Dunbar Hardy

Location: Northern Idaho

Features: The Lochsa is perhaps one of the best roadside big water surf wave runs in the West! It is home to the famous Pipeline Surf Wave as well as Jonesy's Wave and Cedar Hole.

Season: The Lochsa usually starts flowing in early April, with a typical peak in later May/early June. The ideal timeframe with good water and nicer weather is later June. Lower water settles into the Lochsa by mid-July.

Flows: 1,500 - 15,000 cfs

Beta: Contact Tarkio Kayak Adventures (www.teamtarkio.com) for an update on levels, as these instructors are out teaching clinics and surfing when the Lochsa is flowing strong. In late June of 2005, Tarkio Kayak Adventures is hosting the first-ever Legends on the Lochsa Symposium. This event will gather some old school, well known historical paddlers who will give slideshows and video presentations from their past exploits, as well as a big boater party with prizes/raffle. The Lochsa promises to be flowing at great levels during this event, so go to www.teamtarkio.com for more info.

Description: The Lochsa can be described as a big fluffy wave run. Big is to be stressed, as it is a great training ground for further big water paddling trips to rivers like the Futaleufu or the Grand Canyon. The Hollywood Section is the heart of the Lower Lochsa, which runs from House Wave Rapid thru Lochsa Falls down to Pipeline. This section has continuous waves, many of which must be surfed on the fly. Additionally, Cedar Hole, Jonesy's and Pipeline (short hike/crawl up) offer quality, eddy serviced play opportunities. With the Hollywood Section usually ending at the Pipeline pullout, this take out becomes a classic park and bar-b-que surf session spot. Northern Idaho wilderness surrounds this pristine, high-quality, free-flowing, playful run that is not to be missed.

Berg Park Animas River, New Mexico

by Josh Stone

Location: Farmington, NM (Four Corners area, 45 minutes from Durango, Colorado)

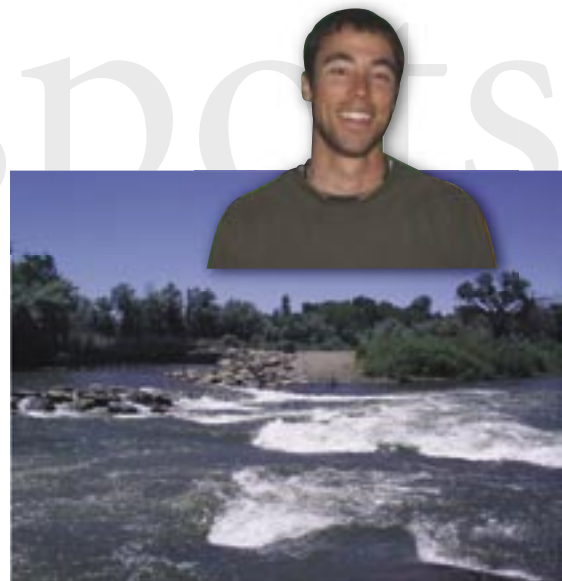
Features: It has an upper wave that is good for low winter flows and a bottom hole that is great for summer flows

Season: Can be done year round...in spring runoff, the bottom hole gets huge!

Optimal Flows: The top wave is good from 400 cfs-1000 cfs. Above 1000 cfs, it washes out. The bottom hole is good to go above 1100 cfs, and offers good eddy service up until 2,000 cfs.

Beta: You can get beta on American Whitewater River pages under Animas River Farmington WW Park.

Description: This is my favorite spot due to the fact that it is centrally located in



the community, and it is not used that often. While everybody is waiting in line at Corner Pocket on the Animas in Durango, you can get as many rides as you like at this spot in Farmington. The bottom hole offers up loops, spins, and almost any aerial move when the water is above 1300 cfs. Access for the park is easy (a walk down a short path). There are no egos at this park, and when the flows are low, it is very beginner friendly. When the flows get above 2800 cfs., it can issue out some good spankings and some involuntary play moves. The best part is that it is located close to San Juan College, and it makes a great place to spend an afternoon lunch break!

180 Little Salmon River, Idaho

by Devon Barker

Location: Riggins, Idaho

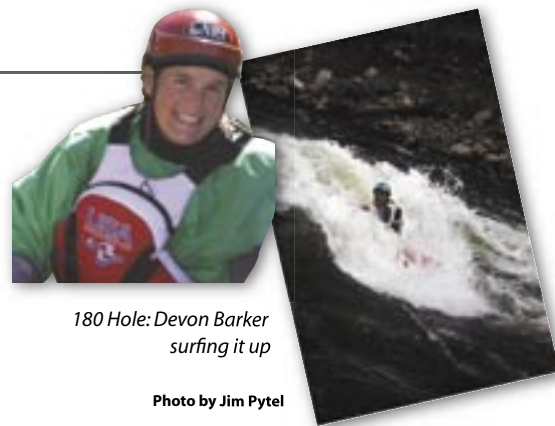
Feature: Hole

Season: Spring

Flows: It runs from 750-4000cfs.

Beta: Use the Little Salmon at Riggins gauge on the AW flows page (<http://www.americanwhitewater.org/rivers/id/566/>) for water levels.

Description: This is my favorite playspot because of its speed. The 180 hole is very fast and retentive. It has a great pile for hole moves and two perfect shoulders for wave moves. The surfer left shoulder has an auto feed for air blunts. When the river is above 3,000 it becomes easy to spin long (old school) boats. The 180 hole was discovered many years ago, but because it is



180 Hole: Devon Barker surfing it up

Photo by Jim Pytel

in close proximity to all the famed surfing on the Main Salmon it is not used much. Because the Little Salmon is a roadside run, you can run any section—including the waterfalls—in conjunction with surfing at the 180 hole. This site has eddies on both sides but you have to nail your first roll and come up with a strong forward stroke to catch one in time, as the water is moving fast. If you miss the eddies, the rapid below is fast and exciting and there is a trail back up to the hole.

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Playspots

SOUTHEAST

The Nolichucky Gorge Nolichucky River, TN and NC

by Andrew Holcombe

Location: Western NC/ Eastern TN,
near Erwin TN

Features: Water level dependent;
everything from high water, big wave
surfing to low water cartwheeling.

Season: The Nolichucky is a free flowing
river, so it runs all year. However, the best
chance at high water is during the winter/
spring months or in the fall after a big rain.

Flows: 1500 cfs up to your
comfortable limit.

Beta: Water levels can be found at
www.americanwhitewater.org under the
River Tools section. Look at water levels
for North Carolina or Tennessee.

Description: In my opinion, the Nolichucky
is the best-kept secret for playboating in
the southeast! Lower levels offer a more
technical river running experience but
with plenty of chances to cartwheel and
loop in the numerous holes throughout
the run. If surfing waves is your thing be
sure to check this run out at around 4000
cfs and up—the higher the level, the bigger
the waves. Many spots do have eddy access;
at higher water, however, many features are
catch on the fly, so be on your game! The
entire Nolichucky Gorge is 8 miles and is
usually rated class III-IV (class IV at high
water). Most of the bigger rapids are
in the first four or five miles. The run
out gives you a chance to check out
the amazing scenery but still has the
occasional surf wave/hole. If the entire
run doesn't appeal to you, it is possible
to run the first mile or so and walk back
to your car via the railroad tracks on
river left.



Spencer Cooke practicing Loops.



Chris Gragmant at Secret Spot

Photo by Spencer Cooke



TEVA CENTR

ER SPREAD



Theresa Rogerson practicing attainments on The Ledges of the French Broad.

Photo by Dixie Marree Prickett



The Ledges to Alexander Bridge French Broad River, North Carolina

by Dixie Marree Prickett

Location: Near Asheville, North Carolina

Features: Waves, holes, pour-overs, etc.

Season: This runs all year, no minimum and no maximum.

Flows: The best flows for playboating are between 6,000 and 12,000 cfs, when the waves at the top of the course come in. Above 12,000 everything starts to blow out, and it is not possible to catch eddies to get back up to the features, although there is a great trail on river right that allows you to walk back up for multiple runs.

Beta: There is great info on the www.boatingbeta.com

Description: If you are looking for an after work or lunch break spot to get your paddle on in the greater Asheville area, this is it! Ledges is only ten minutes from downtown Asheville, and it has something for paddlers of all skill levels. No shuttle required if you are only paddling at Ledges Park (there is a nice parking lot with a great launching site), and there is a trail on river right so you can hike back up for multiple runs. If you are doing the entire run from Ledges to Alexander Bridge, simply follow the road downstream for 3.4 miles and you will see the Alexander Bridge and a

parking area on river right. This is the take-out, or your park and play put-in for the Alexander bridge wave/hole. If you are a beginner, it is a great place to learn how to read and run whitewater, catch eddies, practice ferrying, and there are a few deep pools that you can practice your roll in. For the beginning playboater this spot is wonderful for learning the basics because there are features for practicing spins, cartwheels, blunts, and loops.

At regular flows (800 - 4,000cfs), the top of the Ledges Park rapid features a great 360, learn to carve, and blunt hole on the center-right. Just downstream, center-left is 88 Dodgers, a small pour over rock that creates the perfect cartwheel pocket. This is an excellent place to learn how to initiate, rotate, and cartwheel until you puke. A few more yards downstream, center-right is a small wave feature that is a one hit wonder. At the end of the run, center-right is a sticky hole that is great for blast wheels, low angle cartwheels and spins. You can take out here if you only want to park and play, but if you want to continue downstream for three miles of class II-III you will come to the Alexander Bridge where there is another great hole or wave depending on water levels. There is eddy access at this feature but it is not good at as many levels as Ledges is. Alexander Hole is in from 1200 to 2200 cfs. Above that it becomes a wave feature that is flushy with not so great eddy service.

This stretch changes drastically above 4,000cfs for playboating. There are a series of waves that come in around 4,500 cfs but they are best between 6,000-10,000 cfs. They are at the top of the course on river right and are some of the best waves I have surfed in the southeast. I was extremely pleased to find that I could surf my brains out in such close proximity to my home and work.

WWW.MOUNTAINSURF.COM



Clay Wright looping at the top wave in Rock Island, 6,000 cfs.

Photos by Kristine Jackson

Rock Island Caney Fork River, Tennessee

by Clay Wright

Location: Central Tennessee

Features: One main hole and one large wave (at high water)

Season: Year round

Flows: Look for levels from 2000 – 3000 cfs if Ocoee's Hell Hole makes you nervous, and up to 10,000 if you are looking for bigger thrills.

Beta: Call 1-800-238-2264, press "4" then "36" for "the last available eight hours of discharges from Great Falls Hydrostation" and stay on the line to make sure "two or more generators" are releasing the morning before you come surf. For more information, check the TVA website, <http://lakeinfo.tva.gov/htbin/lakeinfo?site=G FH&DataType=All&SUBMIT=View+data>.

Description: Far from the crowds of the Ocoee and just two hours from Nashville, Knoxville, or Chattanooga there's a park and play spot known throughout the world as one of the best anywhere. World Champions train here, the US Freestyle Team Trials have been held here three times, and you will regularly see prototypes on the water since Dagger, Liquid Logic, Pyranha (and of course Jackson Kayak) all visit to fine-tune their play designs. Rock Island hosts an amazing combination of easy access, predictable water levels, world class features, and consistent flows. But it isn't for everyone ...

OK, the main feature is "the hole" and it isn't exactly beginner material. At 3600 cfs releases, even the top pros will be warming

up before dropping into "the pit" to launch an entry move. Luckily, there are some small glassy waves up top on which to do just that. These "top waves" aren't big enough to throw air-screws, but make for an enjoyable surf and spin experience and energetic paddlers will have no problem catching the eddy above the hole to head back up for another round. Unfortunately for the beginning paddler, a missed roll or a weak forward stroke will send you right into the hole. Swim right hard and you will make the huge recirculating eddy on the right before the next rapid every time.

If you don't you may encounter "Brave Wave," a 5-foot standing wave in the rapid downstream. At lower flows, the wave is more of a pocket hole and the current pushes into an overhung shelf of limestone about 50 yards downstream. At levels of 3600 cfs or better, the wave stands up and an eddy forms next to the shelf, allowing expert surfers access to the aerial realm of wave surfing (so long as they roll and paddle aggressively). Head left quickly, and it's an easy trip back up for another ride. Miss a roll or two and you are better off heading right around the shelf before walking back up on river left. This shelf becomes much less of an issue at levels above 4200 cfs. The wave can be surfed up to 15,000 cfs, though some levels are better than others. While long periods of high water will flood this spot (and the hole as well, on occasion), Brave Wave is perhaps the most consistently surfable freestyle wave in the US.



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MID-ATLANTIC



The Dries - Put-In Waves New River, West Virginia

by Jimmy Blakeney

Location: Fayetteville, West Virginia

Feature(s): Low water (15,000-24,000cfs on the Thurmond gauge): Holes

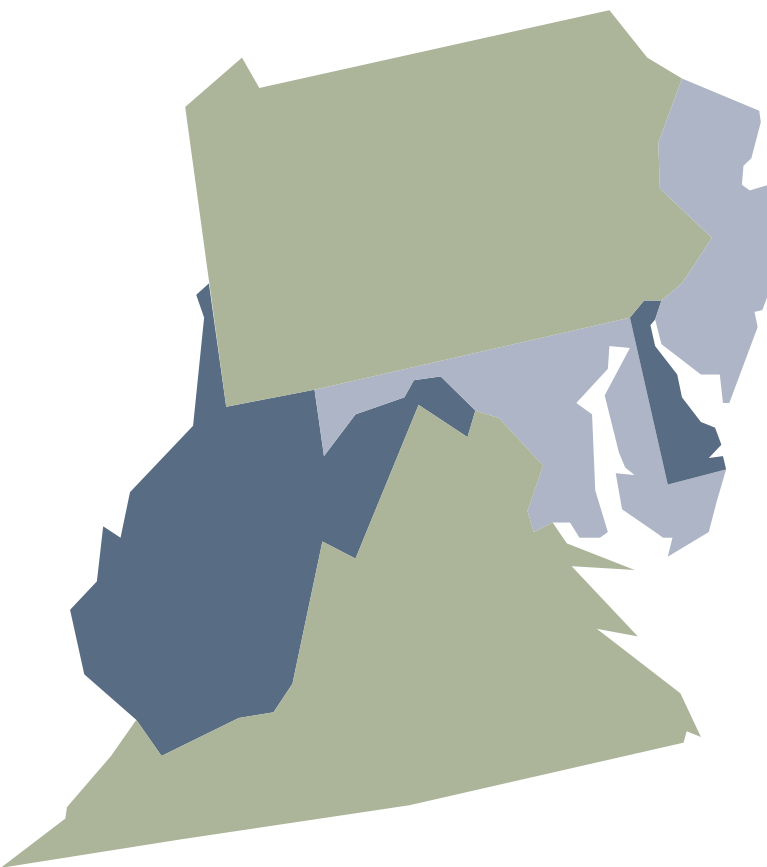
Medium water (24,000-35,000cfs): Big waves and holes

High Water (35,000cfs+): Huge waves

Season: Spring and anytime the New River watershed gets a lot of rain.

Flows: What are the minimum and maximum? 15,000cfs and up on the Thurmond gauge. What is optimal flow? My personal favorite levels are: 24,000cfs for the whole Dries run, 35,000cfs for three great surf waves back to back, and 60,000cfs for the biggest, best wave (for pushing your limits).

Beta: Use the Huntington District page (<http://www.lrh-wc.usace.army.mil/wc/whitewater.html>) to look upstream at levels on the New in Virginia, as well as the Greenbrier and Bluestone rivers, which feed into the New. The Thurmond gauge is what we use to talk about the level of the Dries, even though 10,000cfs is diverted before the Dries proper.



Left: Put-in waves looking downstream at the gorge, 60,000 cfs.

Above: Jimmy Blakeney watches Ben Guska throwing a big airblunt, New River Dries at 30,000 cfs.

Photos by Bryan Kirk

Description: For years, the Dries of the New (the section below the traditional New River Gorge run) was a local secret. Due to the diversion around this section of river (during much of the low water season when most visiting paddlers are in town) not too many people were running it. In the late 90s more and more people were starting to discover this stretch. At the same time playboats were coming of age. Today, the Dries and the modern playboat have discovered one another in dramatic fashion, as you've probably seen from the images that come from this river at high water, most notably from the "put-in waves."

The run itself is a class III-IV big water run—just how big, of course, being determined by the level. At lower levels it's pretty straight forward, but as the water rises it gets pushy and eventually becomes class V. I'd say the cutoff for it being a class III-IV run would be somewhere around 30,000cfs, but that's just my opinion. The run is best known for its great surfing and one long class IV (V at high water) rapid called Mile Long. It has a super convenient shuttle and is only about 4 miles long. It's also the lowest elevation run in the area, so it's typically the warmest too!

In 2000, two huge floods hit Fayette County. One of the areas hardest hit was the Laurel Creek watershed, which feeds into the New River at the put-in of the Dries section. As tens of thousands of cfs destroyed one of the best creek runs in the state, the giant boulders and debris that spewed into the New created something new; the Dries put-in waves were born. Now, five years later, the waves that resulted from a constriction of the riverbed from a 100 year flood are world famous. First word of mouth, then the Internet, photos and video footage; word got out, and spread quickly. Huge waves with easy access and excellent vantage points from which to watch and document it all...a great combination.

So you want to surf the Dries? Here's some beta to help you plan your trip:

When you hear locals say "the Dries are at 40,000cfs," they are referring to the reading of the Thurmond gauge, upstream on the New. This is the last gauge before the Dries section, but above where the Hawksnest Dam diverts 10,000cfs, which enters back into the riverbed above the last rapid on the run.

The Dries runs quite often due to the massive drainage of the New River (over 1,000 square miles!!). You can predict future flows by looking upstream at gauges on the New, Greenbrier and Bluestone Rivers. Locals will watch these upstream gauges carefully after a rain event to see where the water is coming from, which helps to determine when it will arrive at the Dries. It's often several days after a big rainfall that the water peaks at the Dries, which makes it very convenient for planning a trip.

Above 10,000cfs there's water spilling into the Dries, and it's runnable at pretty much any flow. However, the high quality playspots generally come in around 17,000cfs on the Thurmond gauge (meaning there's 7,000cfs in the riverbed). As the river rises above 25,000cfs the put-in waves start to form, and from there on up the waves generally get bigger and better, peaking out at around 60,000cfs when one enormous 20-foot wave takes center stage in the middle of the river.

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MID-ATLANTIC

Z-Dam James River, Virginia

by Kristen Podolak



Location: Richmond, Virginia

Feature: The hole at Z-Dam is formed by a fish passage cut in a low head dam. The dam is roughly shaped like a Z, hence the name.

Season: It flows throughout the year, but bundle up in the winter.

Flows: If the level is below 5.1 the hole becomes sticky, locals say you can play it up to 12ft but I've never been there at that level. My favorite level for the spot

is around 5.4ft on the James River gauge (<http://www.americanwhitewater.org/gauges/id/600/>). I've yet to paddle it at higher levels when the hole turns into a wave, but from the pictures I've seen, it looks good.

Beta: On the AW site: <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/rivers/id/1951/>, on local paddler http://www.localpaddler.com/news.php?resource_id=589, on kayakmind http://www.kayakmind.com/James_River_playspot_Z_Dam_is_Z_fun_place

Description: Z-dam is an awesome spot to learn or improve your hole moves. I've seen almost all of the hole moves done here (mostly by Stephen Wright), and it is where I learned to loop. The flow comes in evenly and creates a consistent pile. It's not uncommon to see playboaters hit up to five front loops in a row there. The hole may be intimidating for beginning paddlers because it can be retentive, however it is not too difficult to get out on the sides. Another important consideration is to stay out of the dam on either side of the fish passage. I've yet to see someone go in, but I imagine it wouldn't be fun. You could



Photos by James Sneeringer

probably pull yourself out with some effort at levels around 5 ft. My favorite part about playing at Z-Dam is that you can watch fish swim up the fishladder. You literally see them swim upstream below your boat while you surf. There is good eddy service on both sides of the river below the feature and parking is less than a mile downstream at Pony Pasture. Z-Dam is located in Richmond, VA. One downside to this spot is that it is an urban river and hence, there is pollution. I usually wear earplugs and noseplugs and try to swallow as little water as possible.



Shockwave (Powerline) Susquehanna River, Pennsylvania

by Joe Stumpf

Location:

Southeastern
Pennsylvania

Features: Depending on the dam configuration and spill Shockwave can be anything from a huge trashy hole to a steep breaking wave that rivals the New River Dries put-in waves for giving up airtime. At the ideal flow you can pull off any trick in the book three feet off the deck!!!

Season: Varies, see description

Flows: Above 45,000 cfs; best above 200,000 cfs

Beta: To determine the flow, use the Marietta or Harrisburg gauge but keep in mind that other dams on the river can greatly alter the actual flow at Holtwood. PP&L operates a hotline with flow, spill, and lake level information at 1-800-692-6328. Brad Nelson of Starrk Moon Kayaks, located just below the take-out, usually



knows if Holtwood has water. Call the shop at 717-456-7720. On the internet, check out Jeremy Lauck's Chasingrain.com for pics, video, and a helpful playspot guide.

Description: Much of the year a 55 foot high, ½ mile long dam renders the riverbed high and dry. When the flow approaches 45,000 cfs, water begins to spill over sections of the dam and into a mile long maze of channels that form one of the best and most underutilized whitewater playgrounds on the east coast. This is most likely to occur during the winter and spring though Holtwood locals have been known to log over 100 days a year on the water. At levels between 45,000 and 200,000 cfs most people ignore Powerline and spend their time surfing playspots such as Storm Hole, Playspot, Rock and Roll, Accelerator, Pleasant Surprise, and Bear Trap, any of which alone would be worth several hours of driving. At levels above 200,000 cfs, Powerline washes out and the mid-river rocks that create its eddy become covered and begin to form Shockwave. The best levels for catching big air are around



Joe Stumpf flying high on Shockwave at 275,000 cfs

300,000 cfs. This particular playspot is somewhat unique to the east coast because it is in the middle of a river that is almost ½ of a mile wide and void of any eddies. At these levels, a swim would likely be over a mile long, so a sound roll and understanding of the river environment are a must. After your ride you have two options: Paddle like hell to catch a river right eddy adjacent to the bridge or, run the river down to a take-out below the bridge, two miles downstream. A third, and as of yet unexplored option might be the use of a jet ski and sled put-in via

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Shockwave (Powerline) Susquehanna River, Pennsylvania *continued*

Cold Cabin Road, though the legalities of such an activity are unclear.

Growing up paddling in the Baltimore area, you develop a certain amount of patience both in waiting for rain and in driving what are usually long distances to the river. This is definitely the case for Shockwave. An ideal flow of 300,000 cfs typically will only occur once a year at best. In addition, Holtwood is not that close to any major paddling population center, so most people find themselves driving quite a ways to get there. Thankfully, there are lots of other world class playspots that form at levels as low as 45,000 cfs. One of the most amazing things about the place to me is that it is so uncrowded. This is probably because of its somewhat isolated location and because of the difficulty in accurately determining the exact configuration and spill of the dam. Though many Holtwood regulars would like to think they can forecast what will be running at any certain level, it is typically just a guess so you get used to being pleasantly surprised and occasionally disappointed after your long drive. At higher levels the dam configuration has much less effect on flows.

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NORTHEAST



Route 3 Wave Black River, New York

by Eric Jackson



Location: 30 miles south of the Canadian border in Watertown NY

Feature: Wave

Season: This is an awesome summer wave that runs once the river drops below 2000 cfs.
Flows: 1,600 cfs is perfect

Beta: Check out <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/rivers/id/3595/> for flows. Be sure to stop into Riverside Gardens, where Tommy Gunn can offer you an ice cream cone and tell you about many opportunities for the river and about the projects he is working on. The Route 3 Wave is part of a great stretch of whitewater on the Black River in a downtown setting. Like most urban rivers in the Northeast that were used for industry at the turn of the 20th century, the Black has been seriously abused. Tommy Gunn and Sara Daniels (Blackwater, Ltd) started a process of putting their home river back on the front burner. They have proposed doing work on the river to enhance the Route 3 Wave along with other projects such as river walks, purchasing Sewall's Island and revamping the most abused section of the river to help make it paddle friendly again. They even hosted the 2005 USA Freestyle team trials for the World Championships on the Route 3 wave.

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PLAYSPOTS

NORTHEAST

Route 3 Wave

Black River, New York *continued*

Description: The Route 3 Wave can be described as a sweet green wave with a soft foam pile on top. It is very shallow, but deep enough for a good boater to be able to do many wave moves like blunts, air blunts, backstabs, helixes, and donkey flips. It is a great spinning, front-, and back-surfing wave. The wave only has a foam pile on top during optimum levels (around 1,600 cfs). Too high or low and the wave turns flat. When the wave is flat it is still good for longer boats to surf. Surfers right is where the best part of the wave is while surfers left is flat. When you flip, try to keep your paddle shallow because the bedrock and cement is not too far below the surface. When heading to the Ottawa or coming back to the USA from the Ottawa, this wave is a great stop off. Just downstream from the Route 3 Wave is Hole Brothers, another great Black River playspot.

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La Chine Rapids

St. Lawrence River, Quebec

By Jon Adler

Location: Downtown Montreal, Quebec
Features: "Big Joe," a glorious, colossal wave, is the highlight. The "Pyramid Wave" and dozens of catch-on-the-fly waves can be found in the ½ mile long BIG water approach.
Season: To attain back up for multiple rides, the St. Lawrence must be at its seasonal lows, generally starting mid-summer and continuing through the fall.
Flows: La Chine is an incredible ride at a wide range of flows; however, the higher it is, the harder it is to get back up for multiple runs.



Beta: The best way out to Big Joe is to follow a boater who has been there (you can usually meet one in the parking lot). The big-water approach to La Chine makes you feel like a cork in the ocean. The relentless mile-long return ferry might make your arms fall off after hours of big-water play.

To find the wave, first pick it out from the large shoreline park on river left. Far out in the right-center of the mile-long rapid, toward the bottom, you can pick out a wooden dock and picnic table with a mess of whitewater to the river right of it. Big Joe is in that mess. Burn the image of that dock into your memory, and walk back to the placid upstream pool. Paddle all the way up the pool until you reach the strong current, then ferry downstream of an island into the rapid. There are many doors that lead to Big Joe. To take the conservative line (if there is one), stay toward river left (meaning 100 yards or so from the shore), then ferry right, after the primary set of ledge-holes. If you have good boat-scouting skills, then ferry out into the belly of the beast, catch waves on the fly, and watch for holes!

Description: A visit to La Chine must be put on your list of "Things To Do Before I Die." There may be waves as epic as La Chine somewhere, but there are no waves better than La Chine anywhere. All factors converge at La Chine for the ultimate experience: an exciting approach, a variety of choices, and no limit to how big you can go!

Big Joe, the primary wave, is easily 25 feet wide and can be anywhere from 10 to 15 feet high. The jaw-dropping wave is divided in the middle by a seam. Surfer's right of the seam is glassy and steep, a great place for carving, spinning, and resting during a long surf. River left of the seam is "The Pit." From the crest of the wave, a dive into the pit generates blistering hull speed, enabling any trick you know how to do. Even better, the seam in the middle means big Joe has four edges to use for initiating a move.

If "Big Joe" turns into "Big Line," or you want a warm-up, or if for some inexplicable reason you get bored of Big Joe, catch the "Pyramid Wave" just to the river left. Pyramid is easily 6 to 9 feet high, steep, consistent, and completely green—an exquisite combination. If Pyramid existed anywhere else but in the shadow of Big Joe, it would have much more notoriety.

Even from a distance, Big Joe looks impressively large.

Photos by Simon Wiles



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NORTHEAST

Chambly-Sur-Richelieu Richelieu River, Quebec

by Jon Adler

Location: Chambly, Quebec on the Richelieu River (45 minutes north of US/Canada border)

Features: Large wave/hole river center; smaller, fast wave river left

Season: April (after ice out) through late May

Flows: The Richelieu is fed by Lake Champlain (very large watershed). Flows change slowly and respond long after widespread rains and snowmelt in the Lake Champlain watershed. Generally, if the Lake Champlain gauge at Burlington, VT is above 98 feet, Chambly is in. You can go when it is slightly lower for the smaller wave, but the main wave gets very shallow in the trough.

Beta: You can find the Lake Champlain at Burlington gauge on the USGS web site, www.usgs.gov. Click on water to find the "water" home page, choose Vermont, and then from the map or station list, find the Lake Champlain Gauge. Or, skip all that and type this into your browser: <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nh/nwis/current/?type=flow>. Lake Champlain is under "St. Lawrence River Basin." The Chambly Rodeo happens every Spring; find out when at www.kayaknews.ca.

Description: Chambly is an exciting spot along a pleasant riverside park in downtown Chambly, just below a dam on the Richelieu River. The scene after work on warm spring afternoons is a variety show of boaters, surfers, and riverside spectators. The main wave (river center) normally measures about 5 feet. Good eddies, an easy ferry out, and a short 100-yard walk allow for plenty of surfs. Depending on the level, there is usually a large, forgiving foam pile, complemented by enough steepness to generate hull speed for whatever trick you want to pull. The slightly-less-exciting lower wave has eddy service, is never crowded, and remains fun at slightly lower levels when the upper wave gets too shallow in the trough. It is a narrow, steep wave great for lightning-quick spins. Both spots are at the top of a half-mile long class III-IV rapid...don't miss your roll!

John Alder surfing at the Chambly main wave.

Photos by Cheryl Robinson



Simon Wiles on the main wave at Chambly.

Expo 67 (Habitat 67) St. Lawrence River, Quebec

by Jon Adler


Location: Near downtown Montreal, Quebec.

Feature: Wide, large, friendly wave/hole

Season: Late spring through early summer; sometimes later.

Flows: Expo is in at a wide range of flows, and is the ideal compliment to La Chine and Chambly. If Chambly is too low and La Chine is too high, head to Expo. There is overlap—if La Chine is doable but on the high side, Expo is still in. But, if Expo is too low, it greens out and is hard to catch; if too high, it is not bouncy enough and hard to get out of the foam pile.

Beta: Boaters at La Chine can usually tell you whether Expo is in. If you venture out to La Chine and find yourself unable to attain back up for another ride, ferry back and head to Expo.

Description: Expo is about as forgiving as an enormous wave can be, with a glassy entrance, a big foam pile, an easy ferry back, and a short rope drag back to the staging eddy. The wave is so wide that two boaters can surf it at once without being in each other's way (indeed, this is expected on crowded days). Aggressive aerial tricks are a bit harder here than at La Chine (but still doable), largely because the wave is not quite as steep. Nevertheless, you can spin and blunt until you're dizzy. At many levels, the wave is so easy to surf that you could eat lunch with one hand while surfing with the other. This means that at peak times, which are generally after work and weekend afternoons, there is often a line to get onto the wave. 

Simon Wiles (right) shares the Expo 67 wave with another boater.

Photo by Cheryl Robinson



Stewardship



by Joe Bousquin

Minimizing Impact on California's Upper Cherry Creek

I first viewed Upper Cherry Creek from the cockpit of a single engine Cessna 172, piloted by my friend Larry Berg on a late summer afternoon in 2002.



Above: No vancancy at the Flintstone Camp

Background photo: Pure High Sierra granite, a sure fire boater magnet.

As we flew over the vast expanses of naked granite in the Emigrant Wilderness and Stanislaus National Forest, I couldn't believe what I saw: a uniform crease in a cradle of bedrock, with a river tucked into the fold, flowing through a perfect cleft on the jutting chin of the planet.

This was like no river I'd ever seen.

The smooth slides and big drops of its gorges had only been run for the first time a few seasons earlier by a group of paddlers on the cutting edge of the sport, among them Scott Lindgren, who would later lead the successful first descent of Tibet's Upper Tsang Po Gorge.

What Upper Cherry's pioneers couldn't have foreseen was the "white rush" that would start in the paddling community soon after they loaded their boats on their cars. It didn't matter that they had to hike nearly 11 miles, with a fully loaded boat, to get to the put-in. Or that many boaters, not willing to go "as big" as Upper Cherry was, would end up walking a total of nearly 20 miles as they added in their portages around the more troublesome parts of the run. The 49ers came over the Rockies, and paddlers—scores of them—would climb up and over Styx Pass to drop into Lord Meadow to sample the river that drenched the granite.

In August 2002, as we circled over the stream from thousands of feet up, I knew the previous spring's run off had been a seminal event for Upper Cherry. That was the first year boaters started coming in numbers from far away places like North Carolina and New Zealand to see what Upper Cherry had to offer. Of course, I was curious, too.

And why not? Here was a river that some of the best paddlers in the world—men and women who had flown around the globe and back with their kayaks in tow—were now describing as the best run they'd ever completed, the cleanest river on the smoothest granite with the highest percentage of big, runnable drops ever discovered. This was, in a sense, our North Shore.

In just a few seasons, it seemed like everyone who had ever hucked a Class V

Minimizing Impact on California's Upper Cherry Creek

continued

drop was talking of the clean giddiness of the Teacups, the mach-three acceleration rush of Cherry Bomb Falls, the jolt-you-awake pump of Coffee Rapid. By the runoff of 2004, it's estimated that no fewer than 50 paddlers made the fully loaded trek in, and paddled out on Upper Cherry Creek. I was among them, and it was my first descent of the gorge.

Two-thousand-five promises to be no different. In fact, in all likelihood, more people will descend on Upper Cherry than ever before. When I stood in the Wellington, New Zealand airport this winter, and saw a centerfold spread of Upper Cherry on the pages of that country's *Adventure Magazine*, I knew the river had arrived. Add the countless guest appearances Upper Cherry has made in whitewater videos, coupled with this year's epic Sierra snow pack, and it's not unreasonable to think traffic up Kibby Ridge come June or July could be an issue.

At least, it's caught the attention of the Forest Service, which is charged with managing the area.

"When I first became aware of kayakers hauling boats way up into the wilderness three or four years ago, it kind of horrified me," says Bob Wetzel, the Forest Service's wilderness coordinator for Stanislaus National Forest, which encompasses Upper Cherry's drainage. "The river canyons in the high Sierra are very often the most rugged and daunting and chaotic ribbons of wildness we have. Suddenly, if for a couple weeks or more a year there are clusters of excited, colorful plastic boat folks moving in those corridors, it changes all that."

Wetzel's concerns became a reality last year, when he started fielding complaints from other wilderness users about kayakers' impact in the pristine canyon. Gripest ranged from plastic scrapings left on the trail by boats being dragged to the put in, to heavy campsite impact and a disturbance of the "soundscape" by paddlers whooping it up on the river.

While Wetzel admits some of those concerns may seem small, the short window of Upper Cherry's run off and rising numbers of paddlers who want to run it mean an increasing, concentrated

impact on the area each year. Wetzel says the Forest Service doesn't plan to take any action at this point, other than to maintain the mandatory wilderness permit system already in place, but it's up to paddlers to make sure there's no need for further regulation.

"We've got to watch and monitor it and I'll be looking to boaters to suggest ideas on how to address these issues," Wetzel says. "I want to encourage boaters and all wilderness users to be active participants for the care of the wild."

After Hours Wilderness Permits Now Available

As far as permits are concerned, Wetzel has already taken positive action for paddlers—and all users—by streamlining the permitting process at the Groveland Ranger Station. While permits are free, in the past it's been difficult to pick them up, because they were only available during business hours, an inconvenience for boaters approaching Cherry Lake the night before their run. Wetzel says now that shouldn't be an issue. Following a dialogue between American Whitewater and the Forest Service, the Groveland Station now plans to make wilderness permits available on an after-hours pick-up basis for people who call ahead to request them.

"Just call the front desk and tell them you'll be coming through after hours to pick up your permit, and that should meet the need," says Wetzel.

The number for the Groveland Ranger Station is 209-962-7825. The after-hours policy only applies to wilderness permits, and not those required for the Lower Cherry Creek or Tuolumne runs; those permits can still be picked up on a same-day basis.

Fortunately for paddlers, Wetzel doesn't come across as a heavy-handed government type, and his actions already show he's willing to work with the paddling community. He's a man who likes to talk about the connection between human beings and the planet, and the sacredness of the wilderness experience. Perhaps more importantly, though, he seems to understand the deeply neurotic soul of a kayaker.

"There is a dichotomy of values and emotions with a boater; they are one with the hydrologic cycle and are literally throwing themselves into it to feel a connectedness with nature and that experience," he says. "But on the other side, they're after the e-ticket, balls-to-the-wall, adrenaline rush. There's a competing set of emotions there."

In a way, then, Wetzel is pointing to something we've been loathe to admit to ourselves for years: kayaking, and kayakers, do have an impact on the rivers we run, even if we are usually sensitive to environmental issues and wilderness ethics. No matter the truth in the old saying "A canoe or kayak across the water leaves no trace," the fact of the matter is, we're not on the water when we're hiking with our boats cross-country, cooking at the river's edge or taking a dump in the woods.

Norwood Scott, American Whitewater's secretary, executive board member and a graduate of National Outdoor Leadership School, says paddlers need to think about their impacts not only on Upper Cherry, but other high Sierra runs, such as Fantasy Falls on the North Mokelumne, which is also within the Stanislaus National Forest.

"We're certainly not the only users, and it's highly unlikely that paddlers are responsible for propane canisters and tin cans being left at Upper Cherry's Flintstones Camp, because of the weight issues," says Norwood Scott. "Paddling is a low-impact sport, but it's not a no-impact sport. It's time for us to recognize and mitigate the impacts we may be having in these areas. We should leave the area cleaner than when we arrived."

What Can We Do?

There are a few simple steps, suggested by the Forest Service and following Leave No Trace principles, that we can take during this year's runoff to help preserve this exceptional resource. (See sidebar for complete Leave No Trace guidelines for river corridors).

- Don't drag boats. Plastic scrapings left behind on the trail are a noticeable impact for hikers who come behind you. If you can't carry your boat, don't go. Carrying your boat in is the price of admission on Upper Cherry.

- Buy and use handheld radios for your trip. Not only will this cut down on noise at the rapids, it's a good idea for safety as well. Keep noise to a minimum while running the river, within practical limits. If your friend is getting worked in the hole and needs

help, by all means, blow your whistle. Safety supercedes the “soundscape,” but keep noise impacts in mind.

- Camp at least 100 feet from the water, where possible, to lessen impact for wildlife on the important river’s edge. Sometimes, in areas like Flintstones Camp, it may be difficult to follow this guideline. In those areas, camp as far from the water’s edge as possible.

- Use existing campsites and don’t make new fire rings. If you find more than one fire ring at a campsite, consider concealing the additional ones that don’t need to be there. Even better, use a light-weight hiking stove instead. At the time of year Upper Cherry and other high Sierra runs flow, a fire isn’t always necessary for warmth, and cooking over a stove lessens impact to the area. If you do light a fire, make sure it’s dead out, with water, before you leave.

- Don’t burn your trash. Plan ahead and bring as little packaging as possible, and then, pack it out.

- Manage your waste properly. The best practice, of course, is to pack it out. After that, in areas where it’s possible, dig a cat hole. Often, in the dry, high Sierra, the “smear method,” where you spread your droppings on a rock in direct sunlight, works well to dry the waste out so it can blow away later. But use good judgment.

Don’t use the smear method in high-traffic areas, where others are likely to come across your waste. Pack out your toilet paper.

- Urinate directly into moving water. In the dry high Sierra, this is a better alternative to urine crystallizing on rocks and producing an unattractive smell that attracts animals. The dilution factor of the river is a far more efficient way of removing it from the area.


- Limit the size of your group. The current permit limit on Upper Cherry is 15, but groups of 6 to 8 are both more manageable on the river, and have less of an impact on the environment.

- Limit the amount of time you spend in the canyon. The less time we spend there, the less impact we’ll have, while making room for others who also want to enjoy this special place. Don’t “lurk” at Flintstones Camp waiting for the water to get to the right level. If you want to make sure you get in at the right window, paddle across the lake to check the flow, or offer to make a donation to someone with a motorboat to take you across the lake and check it out.

Taking these simple steps now—this year, as we paddle Upper Cherry and other high Sierra runs—could make all the difference for years to come. If we don’t, imagine the impact on our experience if the Forest Service decides it needs to station

a volunteer ranger at Flintstones Camp or elsewhere in the canyon. We don’t want this to happen, and the Stanislaus National Forest has shown a very positive attitude in working with paddlers to address these issues within the boating community. There are plenty of places where kayakers, management agencies and other wilderness users peacefully coexist, and Upper Cherry Creek can be one of them.

“We need to start a self-imposed system to so that the Forest Service isn’t forced to impose one on us to fulfill its obligation to all users in the Upper Cherry Creek area,” says Norwood Scott. “Go in there in smaller groups. Get in there, get the run done and get out as quick as possible. Think about other paddlers behind you, and other users in the area, and limit the impact at Flintstones Camp. If we can do that for just two weeks or so during the season, our efforts should help kick-start the rejuvenation process that takes place the other 50 weeks of the year.”

And that should enable us to get on this exceptional run, without increased regulation, for years to come. 

Joe Bousquin is a paddler, AW Member and freelance journalist who lives in Newcastle, California. Contact him at <http://www.mediabistro.com/JoeBousquin> or jbousquin@yahoo.com.

Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics for River Corridors

Plan Ahead and Prepare

Learn about river-specific issues, regulations and permits.
Use a river guidebook and map to plan your trip.
Schedule your trip so that you encounter appropriate river flows for your groups ability.
Prepare for extreme weather, hazards and emergencies.
Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use; visit in small groups.
Repackage food to minimize waste.
Know river skills and carry the necessary equipment to minimize your impact.

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Durable surfaces include rock, gravel and sand. Focus activity where vegetation is absent.
Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites. Select a campsite large enough for your group.
When on day hikes in the river corridor, walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when muddy.
In pristine areas, disperse use to prevent creation of new campsites and trails.
Leave campsites clean and natural looking.

Dispose of Waste Properly

Pack it in, pack it out.
Use a washable, reusable toilet or other approved method to pack out human waste, toilet paper and tampons. Check local regulations.
Liquid wastes can be dumped into main current in many high volume (over 500 cfs) rivers. In low volume rivers, scatter liquid waste 200 ft. from water, away from camp and trails. Check local regulations.
Use a tarp in the kitchen to catch food and trash, which attract unwanted animals.
Pack out all small food particles and small pieces of trash.

Leave What You Find

Appreciate ancient structures, artifacts, rock art and other natural objects, but leave them undisturbed.
Do no build structures or dig trenches in campsites.
Avoid introducing non-native species, including live bait, by cleaning equipment between trips.

Minimize Campfire Impacts

Minimize campfire impacts by using stoves.
Use a fire pan or designated fire ring for open fires and charcoal.
Elevate fire pan and use a fire blanket to catch embers.
Use dead and downed wood no larger than an adult’s wrist to keep the fire small.
Consider brining your own firewood or charcoal.
Burn all wood and charcoal to ash. Carry out ash with other garbage.

Respect Wildlife

Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
Never feed wildlife; it damages their health, alters natural behaviors and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
Protect wildlife by storing food and trash securely.
Control pets or leave them at home.
Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting or when food is scarce.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
Communicate with other river visitors about your floating and camping plans.
Leave larger camps for larger groups.
Avoid camping or eating near major rapids where scouting and portaging take place.
Non-motorized crafts usually have right-of-way over powerboats; slower boats should keep to the right.
Let nature’s sounds prevail.

Following these principles will help protect and conserve our rivers. Practice and promote Leave No Trace Outdoor Skills and Ethics.
1.800.332.4100 or www.lnt.org or 1.406.549.0514 or www.river-management.org

Stewardship

Cheoah River to Flow Again This Fall!

By Kevin Colburn

"Idaho called. Seems they're missing a few miles of river, and they think it wound up in the Cheoah Valley. With fairly constant gradient, continuous big water rapids, and fun catch-on-the-fly waves, this treasure is a little piece of Idaho whitewater lurking in a forgotten corner of Appalachia."

—Quote from the new guidebook, *NC Rivers and Creeks*, by Leland Davis

Southeastern boating will never be the same after this September, because one of the region's best rivers is about to come to life. Based on 5 years of intense negotiations, American Whitewater is proud and overjoyed to announce that the Cheoah River will begin regularly flowing this fall for the first time in over half a century. The new hard-fought federal license for the dam on the Cheoah River will provide boating opportunities and ecological enhancements for at least the next 40 years. Finally, after years of hard work by AW staff and volunteers, we can say it: WE WON.

- There will be a flexible and dynamic flow regime restored to the Cheoah River that will restore ecological and recreational functions beginning in September of this year. Specifically, a continuous flow ranging from 40 to 100 cfs will be released into the river as well as 16-18 days of boatable flow annually that will range from 850 to 1000 cfs.

- Those 16-18 boatable releases will be adaptively managed for the life of the license by the resource agencies and/or by the FERC. This will allow beneficial changes in flow frequency, timing, magnitude and duration.

- There will be public access areas constructed at the top and bottom of the Cheoah by the US Forest Service, and several enhanced roadside pull-offs in between constructed by the power company.



Like Idaho --- but without all the pine trees!

Photos by Leland Davis

- Trees that have grown up as a result of the dewatering of the Cheoah River channel will be removed from the river, which will enhance ecological recovery as well as recreational boating.

- After five years of biological monitoring, the resource agencies can request additional recreational releases - and/or FERC can require them. Biological monitoring will be paid for by the power company - not the public as was requested in the settlement agreement.

- These additional releases will be provided FREE OF CHARGE. Yes, we beat the potentially precedent-setting TVA-type proposal in the settlement agreement that would have forced the public to pay a corporation to let a river flow.

- 10,000+ acres of ecologically-precious private lands will be protected, including buffers on Yellow Creek and other tributaries. These lands ecologically connect two massive protected areas and protect water quality and aquatic habitat.

- Other ecological enhancements are required such as significant contributions

to resource protection and enhancement funds, relocation and restoration of species of concern, and significant ecological monitoring.

- Other recreational enhancements are required such as canoe portage trails around each dam, new reservoir access areas, improved public camping facilities, continued funding of the USGS gage, and a new hiking trail along the Cheoah River.

To accomplish these landmark mitigation measures American Whitewater worked closely with other paddling organizations, environmental organizations, and state and federal agencies. American Whitewater staff and volunteers collaborated on a whitewater flow study, wrote a detailed economics study, attended almost 100 days of negotiation meetings, and drafted several hundred pages of comments and proposals.

American Whitewater was a major player in this dam relicensing, and our efforts to see this river restored were unwavering



from the very beginning. John Gangemi, then AW's conservation director, was the first AW staff member to visit the Cheoah. John remembers; "I was excited because I knew I had just discovered a river restoration opportunity that would allow AW to change the whitewater landscape in the SE." John handed the project over to AW's new eastern conservation and access director, Kevin Colburn, in 2001. Kevin and John worked closely with Western Carolina Paddler's Rod Baird and other volunteers for another four years to bring this project to its recent conclusion.


The process that brought you the Cheoah had more twists than a Southern Appalachian back road. The final twist came when, after nearly four years of successful advocacy for ecological and recreational enhancements, the paddling interests were forced to abandon the settlement process when an unprecedented clause was added to the settlement agreement that would have required the public (paddlers) to pay for recreational releases. While very proud of the settlement agreement and our contributions to it, we simply could not agree to something that we felt was illegal and unethical. For the remaining year of the relicensing we worked hard – and successfully -- to have the "Payment for Water" clause excluded from the license, while defending and supporting the rest of the settlement.

Instead of paying for water, we'll get the additional free releases as long as they can be provided with no significant ecological impact, and as long as paddlers are using the river. This is an amazing opportunity

– and all you have to do to help is paddle the Cheoah River as much as possible and responsibly have a blast in Graham County. It is a tough job, but someone has to do it!

American Whitewater's work to restore the Cheoah River could not have been possible without the support of our individual and foundation donors, members, volunteers, and paddling partner organizations. We would like to extend a special thank you to volunteers Rod Baird, Chris Bell, and Bob Wiggins.

Here at AW we are so excited about the Cheoah, and we hope you are too. It is certainly a time for celebration – yet the future still holds many challenges. American Whitewater will need to be actively involved in the Cheoah's adaptive management for years to come. We can't imagine a better member benefit than a brand new whitewater classic, and we hope that Cheoah paddlers will recognize this and support American Whitewater through becoming members and through donations. In September, the Cheoah River will begin flowing consistently for the first time in over half a century – and we can't wait to see you there!

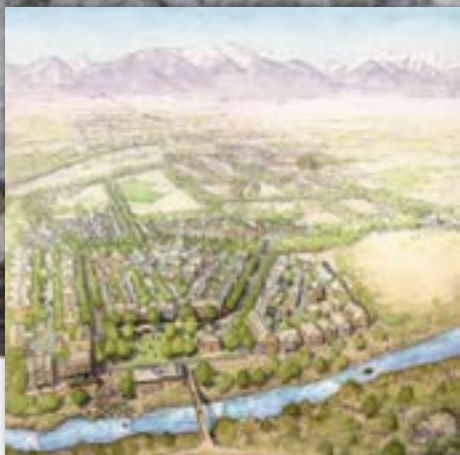
"Beautiful crystal clear nine-mile long action packed class IV roadside river in wilderness setting seeks whitewater paddlers that enjoy big water, wave wheels, boofs, surfing, scenery, new experiences, and a good time." If interested, visit the Cheoah River! 

Did you know that:

- Tapoco Lodge is located a stone's throw from the Cheoah take-out and is the only place you can buy a beer for 30+ miles? (they also have great cabins and trails).
- The Cheoah take-out is also the take out for Slickrock Creek and the access point for beautiful flat water paddling on Calderwood Reservoir?
- Just a few miles from the Cheoah put in you can hike through one of the largest tracts of virgin forest in the eastern US, in Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest.
- An endangered species of mussel, the Appalachian Elktoe, lives in the Cheoah.
- The Cheoah area has some of the highest biodiversity in the world – just last year a new species of crayfish was discovered in the watershed.
- Awesome mountain biking can be found less than 30 miles from the Cheoah at Tsali.
- The Nantahala River used to flow down the Cheoah before a side stream captured it, causing it to flow through the Nantahala Gorge.
- There are only so many rivers on which you can wave wheel a creek boat with ease. The Cheoah is one of these rivers.
- Next year, thanks to AW, you'll be able to paddle the Cheoah, West Fork Tuck, and the Nantahala Cascades, and of course the Upper Ocoee and Tallulah Gorge, and we played a big part in the lower Nanty and Hiwassee and Tuck and well – you get the picture – Join AW!

AW News & Notes

A Town Built by Kayakers



Jed and Katie Selby, both long-time members of the paddling community and of team Wavesport, are doing something quite unusual.

While most professional kayakers are perfecting the latest moves, the Selby's are perfecting the art of town building. A few years ago they were living in their cars, cruising around the US to rivers and festivals. Now, through a series of events that I'll let

them explain, they've become a sensation in the world of New Urbanism.

First off, tell me a little about yourselves, and your involvement with kayaking.

Katie: I've been kayaking since 1999 and am a total addict. I guess there are worse things to be addicted to.

Jed: I have been paddling for 10 years and competing for 5. I like kayaking a lot.

What are some paddling achievements that you're especially proud of?

Katie: I was proud of running the Rio Embudo in New Mexico last spring and getting myself to the Ottawa last fall when there was nobody there and the Garb wave

was at perfect flow.

Jed: I don't really know. What sticks out the most is the amount of fun I had traveling around for several years only thinking about flows and where we would paddle next.

So how in the world did you two go from the freestyle kayaking circuit to doing a project of this magnitude?

Katie: Hmmmm, let's see. It sort of just happened. Jed had the idea and I was against it at first as an environmentalist. Then I realized that the moral purity of doing nothing was to be resigned and not make a difference. In a field with so little integrity, there is so much to be done to make the world a better place and make

Photo by Javid Grubbs

Jed: I'm crazy!

Both of you have been all over the country. What attracted you to Buena Vista so much?

Katie: I have loved Colorado since I skied here as a kid. Living on the Arkansas River is great because for Colorado, it is a really long season. There are good runs, nearby creeks and awesome whitewater parks in Buena Vista and Salida.

Jed: I have always loved Colorado and this area has the most to offer for kayakers anywhere in Colorado. I like the balanced lifestyle available in Colorado and the change in seasons.

Neither of you have experience in the development world. What gave you the courage to believe you could pull this off?

Katie: Jed gave me the courage. Not to sound cheesy, but honestly, I had trouble keeping the vision because it was such a different thing to do, not to mention the magnitude. Every time I would doubt us, Jed would hold together the vision, then I would be extra motivated to do more research so that I could be confident that we were really doing something great and in the best way possible. And anything we didn't know, we definitely made up for by hiring some of the best planners there are.

Jed: Like I said, I'm crazy. When we got started I had no idea what we were getting ourselves into. Ignorance was my courage.

What came first, the desire to build a whitewater park, or the desire to build a town?

Katie: Definitely the whitewater park. That was what we saw when we initially were looking at the property. We thought it would be cool to have a community-oriented neighborhood there, but it was truly the possibility of the river and a public river park that would otherwise be private land that made me feel like we had to do something.

Jed: Whitewater park.

So you're doing a New Urban project? What is that?

Katie: It's kind of like building a historic-type downtown, rather than a subdivision. Most things are within walking distance and there's lots of different things all mixed together. I really liked it from the beginning because it is the most sustainable way to use land. It's efficient and people tend to drive a lot less.

Jed: It is a real estate development that involves building or adding to an entire neighborhood or town—not developing a single use area such as a housing subdivision or shopping center.

Tell me a little more about features of New Urban Developments, and how they differ from the standard developments of today.

Katie: They typically are a lot nicer to walk through, because there are wide sidewalks and tree-lined streets without garage doors. And in five minutes, you can get somewhere.

Jed: A New Urban or Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) has

most daily needs within walking distance and is designed around people rather than cars. Cars become more optional, not absolutely necessary.

What would you say are the main benefits of a New Urban Development?

Katie: There is only so much land and it is just being developed at such an alarming rate. It is really hard to repair that once it is done. To do it in a sustainable way is important.

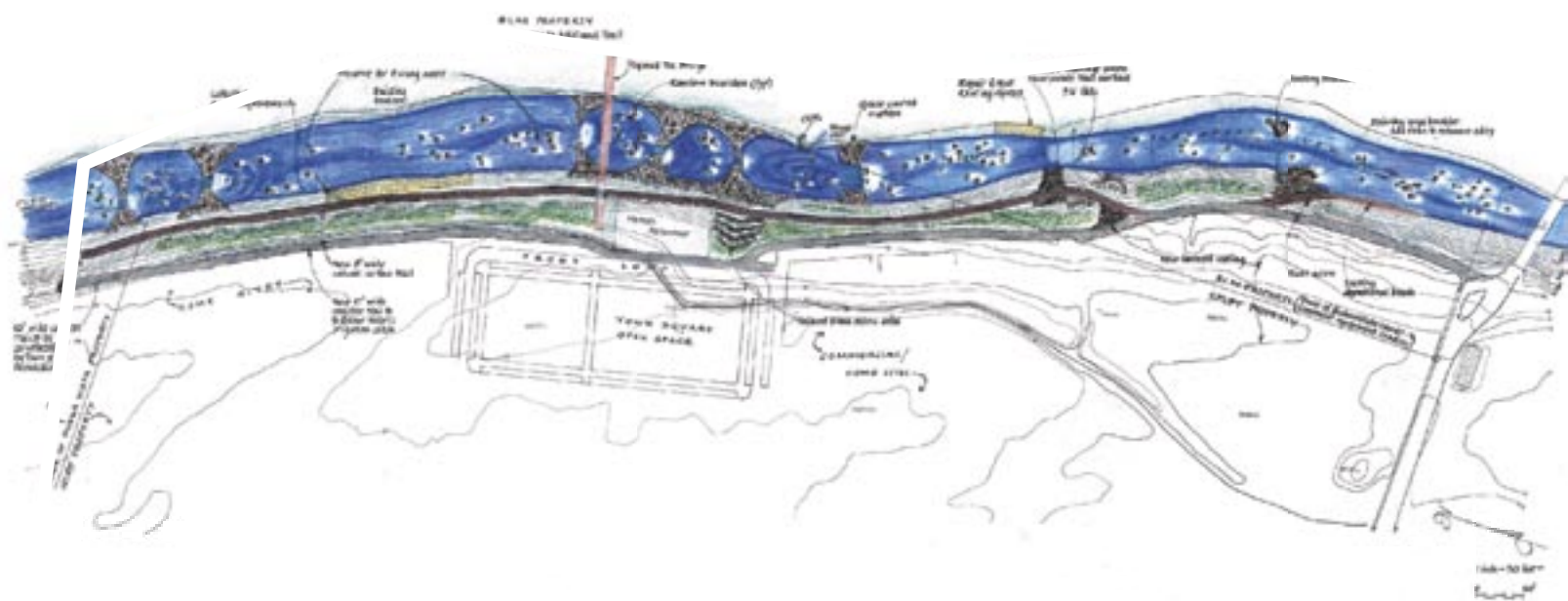
Jed: Many historic towns become tourist destinations; why don't we live in these types of places rather than just visit.

*It's a built green development right?
Please explain.*

Katie: Well, there are several aspects that make it green. The most important one in my opinion is the sustainable use of the land. Right now, the US Green Building Council and the Congress for the New Urbanism are getting together to create a green communities certification, which there hasn't been up to this point. So that is an exciting process. Also, we are using xeriscape standards for most of the landscaping, Built Green Colorado building guidelines, dark sky lighting, bio-filtration of storm water runoff for purification, rooftops aligned for active and passive solar orientation, and narrow streets, which limit impervious services.

Jed: Yes, dreadlocks and efficient homes are required.

The word “developer” doesn’t make most people think warm and fuzzy thoughts. Do any of your paddling buddies look down on you for what you’re doing?



AW News & Notes

A Town Built by Kayakers

Katie: I used to be worried about that. At first I would have done just about anything to not say directly that I'm a "developer." But now I am so present to making a huge difference that the way I see it is people that really care have to get involved, or it will continue like it has for so long. And that just really sucks.

Jed: I don't know.

Tell me some specifics about the whitewater park you're building.

Katie: Well, I wrote the grant to Great Outdoors Colorado, on behalf of the Town of Buena Vista. We were awarded the grant in early December and hope to get it built this spring, but fall might be more realistic. I wrote the grant around us donating our river corridor, 2.6 acres, to the town and so it will link in with their current park and make a several-mile loop

trail through the town. The park will have three additional whitewater play features (one is in Buena Vista now), trails and interpretive signs. It is designed to be a multi-use park for people of all different interests and abilities. There will be good pools for swimming and fishing and rocks to picnic on. It will be a really cool permanent public park.

Jed: Waves, holes, pizza, beer, places to sleep, is there anything else to life?

This is the largest addition to the town ever. What do the locals think about all this?

Katie: We haven't heard really anything negative yet. We planned it with a public process and so I think a lot of people feel like they got to help design it. People are really excited and come to our public meetings to speak in our favor. Every now and then I get stopped by a local that I

don't know who wants to thank me for what we are doing. That definitely feels good.

Jed: Most of them like it.

Are you planning on hosting kayaking events on the main play feature?

Katie: Yeah, definitely. I'd love to get something like that together.

Jed: Yes.

How do you two see this project benefiting the paddling community?

Katie: I just think access is such a huge issue, as well as having paddling that is good and accessible and fun. Building whitewater parks has become such a cool way to be able to work and paddle everyday. In my opinion, that's a huge benefit.



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ENDLESS RIVER ADVENTURES



Katie Selby new Urban Developer?!!

Photo by Yonton Mehler

Jed: This park is located right in the middle of the state and the Arkansas River typically has the longest season. It will be a statewide destination and of course benefit the local community.

Where are you in the whole process right now?

Katie: We almost have our final approvals and are working through getting the whitewater park built this spring. Pretty much, we're working all the time right now and jonesing to paddle.

Jed: We should start construction late spring to early summer.


Paint me a picture of how you imagine the park and development in ten years.

Katie: I see a strong community and killer paddling right down the street.

Jed: I can't paint very well but I can tell you. After I paddle I will be sitting on the deck of the restaurant eating pizza, throwing ice cubes at you while you are on the wave below. Then I will walk home, sit in my hot tub and recover.

Is there anything else you want to add? Maybe plug your sponsors or something?

Katie: No, but thank you so much for taking the time to speak with us.

Jed: Hi, mom. Oh yeah, check out our website: southmainriverpark.com. 



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Events



A packed house views last year's Teva Mountain Games freestyle event.

Photo by Tony Axelrod

Teva Mountain Games at Vail June 1-5, 2005

The Teva Mountain Games is the country's largest adventure sports, art and music festival. Athletes from around the world will converge upon the mountains and rivers of Vail to compete for cash prizes and national media exposure. The Mountain Games include competitions in kayaking, rafting, climbing, mountain biking, road biking, adventure racing, trail running and fly-fishing.

The whitewater events include the Dagger Paddlecross on Wednesday, June 1, featuring head-to-head raft and kayak races through the class IV rapids of Dowd Chute. On Thursday, June 2, the *Paddler Magazine* Extreme Creek Race takes place on Homestake Creek, one of Colorado's steepest and most technical creeks, with numerous 10-15 foot waterfalls packed into ¼ mile. The East vs. West Amateur Rodeo takes place on Saturday, June 3, featuring a battle for bragging rights between Colorado's Front Range and Western Slope boaters. Also on Saturday, the world's best freestyle boaters will throw down at the Teva Pro Rodeo, in front of huge crowds in

the heart of Vail Village. Finally on Sunday, June 5, there is the crowd-favorite 8-Ball Sprint, a Chinese downhill style free-for-all with lots of full-contact kayaking action in Vail Village.

In addition to the athletic competitions, the Teva Mountain Games will highlight the culture of outdoor adventure. The new Everest Awards will recognize and award the year's best outdoor and adventure athletes, photographs, films and videos. The Sounds of the Games includes a concert by the Legends of Hip Hop, featuring Coolio, Tone-Loc, Young MC and Digital Underground at the spectacular Ford Amphitheater. The new family adventure zone will contain interactive opportunities for kids and adults alike including a kayak demo pool, a climbing wall and more. The penultimate party of the event, the Teva Mountain Ball, will move to a new, larger venue this year and feature the Arizona Women's Roller Derby League playing a match in the midst of the celebration.

Don't miss these great competitions at the 2005 Teva Mountain Games:

- Adventure Racing—GNC Mountain Adventure Sprint Race

- Trail Running—GORE-TEX® USA National Trail Running Championships, Teva X1 Fun Mud 5K

- Kayaking—Teva Pro Rodeo, 8 Ball Sprint, *Paddler Magazine* Extreme Creek Race, Dagger Paddlecross Race

- Cycling—Nature Valley Colorado NORBA X-Country Championships, Speed Trials, Vail Pass Hill Climb (Road)

- Climbing—Speed Bouldering, Freestyle Dyno Climbing

- Rafting—PaddleCross Race

- Film & Photography—National Outdoor/Adventure Film and Photo Competition

- Canines—Ultimate Mountain Dog Competition

- Fly Fishing—One Fly Competition

To register for events or for more information, contact Mountain Games LLC at (970) 477-0111 or log on to www.tevamountaingames.com.


Events Schedule

Wenatchee River Festival

The Washington Kayak Club is organizing the Wenatchee River Festival for June 10-12, 2005 in partnership with local businesses and regional affiliate clubs. The event will be held at the Riverside Center in Cashmere, located at the take-out for the play run on the Wenatchee River and will feature clinics, gear demos, competition, food and beverages, a gear auction and raffle, and entertainment.

The goals of the festival are to raise awareness of river issues in the Pacific Northwest, raise funds to support American Whitewater, promote rivers and paddling in the region, and to provide an opportunity for celebration. The event will be family oriented and there are numerous

nearby activities for those who enjoy sports besides paddling, including world-class rock climbing, mountain biking, and hiking.

Saturday evening will include food and entertainment and the primary fundraising activity will be the much-anticipated live auction. All proceeds from the Wenatchee River Festival will be donated to American Whitewater. 

For more information on the festival, logistics and beta on the rivers, and a list of all the great auction items visit the festival website at www.wenatcheeriver.com

May 7	French Broad River Festival	Hot Springs, NC
May 7	Cheat River Festival	Albright, WV
May 14	Reno Whitewater Festival	Reno, NV
May 21	Heff Fest on the Nolichucky	Erwin, TN
June 4	Teva Mountain Games	Vail, CO
June 11	Wenatchee River Festival	Wenatchee, WA
July 16	Potomac Whitewater Festival	Washington DC
July 30	AW Deerfield River Festival	Charlemont, MA
Aug 27	Ohiopyle Over the Falls Day	Ohiopyle, PA
Sept 24	AW Gauley River Festival	Summersville, WV
Oct 1	Russell Fork Rendezvous	Elkhorn City, KY
Nov 19	The Thing @ Tallulah	Tallulah Falls, GA



JUNE 10-12, 2005

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SEATTLE RAFT AND KAYAK

Official Supplier





This event is organized by local volunteers and sponsored by the Washington Kayak Club to support the continued work of the American Whitewater's Access, Conservation, and Safety efforts in the Pacific Northwest.

Official Supplier





Executive Director, Mark Singleton and Outreach Manager, Ben VanCamp work signing up members during the National Paddling Film Festival

Photo by Christie Dobson

Events NPFF Recap

by Zina Merkin

The National Paddling Film Festival charted another first descent in 2005. The move to the newly-renovated Lexington Convention Center had been well scouted by Director Dave Margavage and the volunteers of the NPFF. The audience overwhelmingly approved the move. After years of squeezing our growing production into the narrow halls of the University of Kentucky's Health Sciences Center, then the historic but cramped spaces of the Kentucky Theater, it was a thrill to be in the wide-open spaces of the Lexington Convention Center. The 2005 National Paddling Film Festival was more comfortable for the audience, more visible to the general public, and offered more booth space for the NPFF's donors, vendors and conservation groups. With the powerful sound system and dual, high-resolution projectors illuminating the big twin screens in the main theater, plus large format TVs placed strategically in the entrance and exhibit areas, everyone attending the NPFF could follow the action.

And what action! The overall variety and breadth of the videos this year is a testament to paddlers' creativity and the endless possibilities of our favorite playmate, water. Many past winners were represented, challenged by several talented newcomers to the NPFF. Many in the audience left the festival filled with ambitions to film their own adventures, dreaming of paddling rivers in all corners of the world. Videos showcased exotic places including Iran, Ethiopia, and Argentina. Films were submitted by artists from Italy, Germany and Ireland, in addition to the US and Canada.

Traveling the farthest to attend the festival was Vittorio Pongolini, maker of Kayaking - Where the Days Start, flying in from Milan. While his film didn't win, judges praised it as "beautifully photographed," with "great compositions." Vittorio had stiff competition in the Accomplished - Documentary category, including former NPFF winners Rick Gusic's documentary, The Grand Canyon, and Vince Shay's The

Search III: a Paddlesurf Documentary. The judges liked Shay's "beautiful surf footage" and "professional look and feel." Chuck Taylor's PDXKayaker 004: Swim Another Day was lauded for "spectacular settings, great paddling, lots of laughs, good technical values, fun." But the Accomplished-Documentary award went to The Grand Canyon, praised for its humor, match of music to action, interweaving of historical information about the Canyon, and the framing of shots.

Judges enjoyed Tales of Tallulah by past winner Milt Aitken, calling it "very entertaining" and "non-stop fun," capturing "awesome footage with some true characters." But the winner of the General Boating category, and the Accomplished Division, was Andrea Desky's Freestyle Trilogy: the Art of Kayaking, receiving high marks for photography, creativity and idea development. Artistic and expressive, it was a fresh approach to the subject. As one judge said, "It was outside the box."

In the Professional Division, Performance Video's River Runner's Edge edged out Ken Whiting's Guide to Sea Kayaking to win the Instructional category. River Runner's Edge also won the Professional Division, and the Best of Festival! One judge called it "technically perfect." Other comments included "a great overview of river strategies for any boater," and the "on-boat and floating cam video is exceptionally effective." Whiting's film was praised for its storyboarding, humor and "beautifully executed photography." Twitch V, making its East Coast debut at the NPFF, won the General Boating category with its "unusual visuals" and "unique presentation for fun and drama." Cited for "great editing -- no wasted film," it kept the audience at the edge of their seats. Close behind was Olaf Obsommer's Sickline3, with "great pacing" and "fantastic use of camera," tying for the audience-voted Paddler's Choice award. Particularly noted was the underwater footage. Long Live a Free Magpie, by James McBeath and Lisa Utronki, about the magnificent whitewater river in Canada threatened by proposed hydro power

development, won the Documentary category. The river scenery is spectacular, but the story and character development as the paddlers interacted on their multi-day trip is what made this film really stand out.

The Amateur Division had only one category, General Boating. While the technical quality among the amateur films varied, judges had good things to say about them all, as well as advice on improvements for their next projects. Flush'd, by Spencer Lincoln, received points for creativity and "unique shots." Its appeal included "seeing the consequences of the bad lines." The storyline was a strong aspect of White Granite by Nick Barron, featuring the Middle Fork of the Feather River in California. Dan Fowler's Liquid Winter was a "crowd pleaser." As one judge



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Events NPFF Recap

put it, the “carnage and pacing kept it very entertaining.” Gravity, by Chris Gorman, was praised for its “good ratio of funny ‘bloopers’ footage to well-executed moves.” Judges also applauded its sequencing, “great camera angles,” and “high action.”

Becky Bristow’s film, A Russian Wave, was the winner of the Amateur Division, and also tied for Paddler’s Choice. It’s interesting that a film with very little whitewater tied with Sickline3, but that goes to show that paddling comes in all speeds. Judges and the audience appreciated that A Russian Wave told a complete, and unusual, story. “I took the journey with the film. Very entertaining!” said one judge. In addition to being well done technically, the peek into a different culture intrigued viewers. On Boatertalk, one poster noted that, “... ‘sometimes’ the best video isn’t about the highest drop... more often than not, ...[it’s a] video about being entertained and seeing something ‘different’ for twenty minutes that makes someone feel good. Touches someone in some way....Makes a person laugh. Helps a person learn something. Gets someone interested in learning more about the sport.”

Last but not least, the 2005 Best Paddling Image was by John Michael Cox. The crispness of the image of a paddler in Gorilla, on the Narrows of the Green River in NC, capturing the texture of the glistening rocks, combined with the magical moment while the boater is suspended mid-flight, make this a compelling shot. Thank you to the dozens of participants who submitted a total of 148 photos, making it the toughest competition in the history of the film festival. It’s a great combination – raising money for river conservation while showing 148 reasons why it’s worth the fight to protect our rivers.

Corran Addison, NPFF 2004 guest host, last year encouraged participants to aim for something that could win at Sundance. And judging from the entries this year, that’s exactly what the filmmakers are doing. It was an exceptionally good set of films, in all divisions, and the volunteers of the NPFF want to thank all of the talented

filmmakers for their efforts. Without the artists, the festival wouldn’t exist. Thank you for sharing your rivers, your visions and your adventures with us all.

In addition to the film competition, the NPFF enjoyed a special presentation by this year’s guest host Kent Ford. Kent is a champion paddler, as well as a coach, instructor, sports commentator and partner in Performance Video. His wide-ranging talk was very entertaining, from light moments as he explained how he used condoms to protect his microphones on the water, to moments of sheer awe watching old footage of paddling masters of a bygone era, doing truly remarkable things in craft which seem cumbersome at best by today’s standards. Kent discussed how paddling has been influenced by instructional films. Also fun was watching footage of the Olympics, from the demonstration runs where Kent wore a microphone and narrated as he ran the course, to the views of the course looking like a giant set of Legos, just waiting to be rearranged.

Having Kent join us was special for another reason. A supporter of the NPFF from the beginning, he consistently has been a generous contributor of video libraries to the silent auction each year. He has submitted many entries to the competition. And most of all, he has been responsible for setting a superior standard of quality for paddling instructional films. And so, deservedly, he was presented with the William Nealy Award, “to honor extraordinary distinction in lifetime achievement, exceptional contributions to the state of paddlesport arts and imagery, or for outstanding service to the National Paddling Film Festival.”


Adding to the festive atmosphere all day and up through the awards ceremony that night were the wonderful friends who came as sponsors and exhibitors. Whether helping someone figure out which model boat they should try, handing a happy filmmaker an award, or just having a friendly chat, folks from Wavesport, Jackson Kayak, Lotus and AW were great.

Jimmy Blakeney and Clay Wright, Christie Dobson and Dixie Marree Prickett, Mark Singleton....the list is long. And a special thanks to Eric Jackson and his family, who donated a boat for the Silent Auction as well as a SECOND boat as a “raffle” for AW recruitment. Due to the Jacksons’ great efforts and an overflowing “swag bag” of generously-donated merchandise put together by AW Events Coordinator Ben Van Camp, over 110 people joined or extended their membership in American Whitewater at the National Paddling Film Festival, including several Ender Club members and one lifetime membership – a new single-event membership drive record for AW! The lucky renewing AW member winning a brand new Jackson All-Star Kayak was Louisville boater Penny Kephart.

The NPFF would also like to thank Apple Computer and Apple Systems engineers Bryon Songer and Francis Shepherd for traveling to Lexington to present the excellent and informative Final Cut Express-HD video editing software seminar, helping the NPFF to expand the opportunities for filmmakers to learn about the latest developments in video production. As Apple and others continue development of more affordable high definition (HD) video technology, the NPFF is eagerly anticipating the appearance of the first crop of HD paddlesport entries in the coming years.

If you couldn’t make the NPFF competition in Lexington – you missed an incredible event – but don’t worry. You can see some of the best of the entries and winners from this year’s competition, as well as selected entries from previous years, by catching an NPFF Road Show coming to a location near you. The NPFF Road Show is a unique opportunity to raise money for American Whitewater and local river conservation causes while enjoying awesome videos, many of which cannot be seen anywhere else. Check out the NPFF website, www.surfbwa.org/npff, for more information on NPFF Road Shows and how your club or organization can have fun and raise more money for AW and local river conservation efforts by hosting one yourself.



Thanks to all who participated for another fantastic NPFF in 2005. Have a great year of paddling in 2005, and when you're out there enjoying the rivers that you, the NPFF and AW have helped to protect, please keep taking those images and making those videos. Enter them in the 2006 NPFF to keep the fun and FUNds flowing, and we'll see you next February! 



Top: Jackson Kayak's Eric Jackson and Clay Wright

Bottom: Wavespor's Jimmy Blakeney and Robert Pearson

Photos by Christie Dobson



2005 Best Paddling Image

Photo by John Michael Cox



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Contests



Win a Kayak of Your Choice: American Whitewater's First Annual River Writing and Photo Contest!

River Humor Sponsored by Pyranha

Make us laugh! If you (and, more importantly, other people) think you're funny, send us something that shows it. Humorous stories need not include photos, though authors may include illustrations. Stories must involve whitewater rivers, at least peripherally. Prize: Winner's choice of any whitewater kayak from Pyranha



River Story Sponsored by Jackson Kayak

Tell us a story about something extraordinary that happened on a river. Send us a story—preferably with pictures—that makes us smile, gasp or nod our heads in appreciation. Stories need not be about difficult or previously un-run rivers, as long as they keep us interested. Prize: Winner's choice of any whitewater kayak from Jackson Kayak



River Conservation and Access Sponsored by Kokatat

Educate us! Tell or show us how river conservation and/or access has affected or might affect a whitewater river. This is a great opportunity to share the secrets to and the rewards of a conservation or access victory or to inform AW members of a river that needs protection or restoration. Photos encouraged. Prize: A Rogue Gore-Tex® Drytop



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Rules and Details:

1. Eligibility: Entries must be received by midnight, August 15, 2005. Only members of American Whitewater are eligible to win contest prizes.

2. Format: Manuscripts may be no longer than 3000 words. All material submitted for the contest must not have been previously published and not submitted elsewhere until the prizes are awarded. Written work must be saved in electronic format; Microsoft Word is the preferred document type. Entries will be accepted on floppy disc, CD or DVD, or via e-mail. Word count, along with writer's name, phone number, e-mail address (optional), and division entered (River Story, River Conservation and Access or River Humor) on the title page only of the manuscript. Do not put your name on any page other than the title page. Please title all entries and have that title, along with page numbers, on each page. Photos should also be accompanied by a title page including photographer's name, phone number, e-mail (optional) and a short (<100 word) description of the scene. All entries must be original and the sole work and property of the Entrant.

3. Addresses:

Mail entries to:

American Whitewater

Attn: River Writing and Photo Contest

20 Battery Park Ave, Suite 302

Asheville, NC 28801

E-mail entries to: editor@amwhitewater.org

E-mails must have the word "Contest" in the subject line in order for entries to be considered.

Separate entries do not have to be mailed separately, but they must follow proper formatting. Not responsible for lost, late, postage due or misdirected mail.

4. Categories:

River Story: Entries should tell a story involving a whitewater river. Entries will be judged on the originality and entertainment value of their story and by the quality of their writing. Entries must be non-fiction and should include photos that enhance the understanding and appreciation of their story.

River Humor: Qualified entries must tell a story, or comment on a river-related issue with an attempt at making readers laugh. Entries will be judged on the success of their humor and on the quality of their writing. Winning entries will be printed in a magazine that represents American Whitewater, an organization comprised of whitewater enthusiasts of all ages; entries not suitable for this audience will be disqualified.

River Conservation and Access: Entries should discuss an actual or potential opportunity for river conservation or access. Preference will be given to works concerning little-known resources, or those discussing well-known rivers with a unique twist. Articles with photos are encouraged.

River Photo: Entries must include whitewater river-related content in their composition. Photos should tell a story, evoke an emotion, or make viewers think without needing written explanation. Entries should be of sufficient quality to be printed at full-page dimensions. Photos of sub-standard resolution will be disqualified. Photos, both digital and film, may be cropped and brightened/darkened. Any further image manipulation is forbidden and may result in disqualification of an entry.

5. Judging: Submissions will be judged on the basis of the above guidelines. Decisions of the judges on all matters, including but not limited to the verification of winners, the interpretation of rules or the creation of further rules is final and binding on all parties.

6. Legal: Author/Photographer retains ownership of her/his work. Any manuscripts, photos or digital media will not be returned unless entrant includes a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Contest void where prohibited by law. American Whitewater reserves the right to publish any and all entries at any time following the contest. Entries to the written categories will be edited prior to publication.

7. Tips:

For Authors: Few stories can be effective and enjoyable when told chronologically. If you have a reason to write (other than beating your chest), you will find that your story sounds nothing like a trip report. Remember, it is ok to leave out details that will not improve appreciation of the story. Finally, more is not better when writing; if you say it as efficiently as possible, readers and judges will thank you.

For Photographers: This contest will not reward the photo of the gnarliest rapid. Please do not put yourself or your friends in any compromising or dangerous position to compose your entry.



Scholarship Contest!

American Whitewater and the Academy of Huge Experiences announce a \$5,000 Academic Scholarship to the author of the best original composition describing a remarkable river experience.

Have you ever considered attending a high school for kayakers? Want to go to New Zealand and Chile and paddle amazing rivers after school? Have you had a remarkable experience on the river that you want to write about? If so, here's an opportunity to receive a \$5,000 Academic Scholarship for the 2005-2006 academic year and find yourself studying on the banks of, and then paddling, the best rivers in the United States, New Zealand and Chile, including the Ottawa, Dries of the New, Kaituna, and Pucon...

The Rules

- Applicant must be thirteen to eighteen years of age.
- Only one composition per member per category will be accepted.
- Entry must be solely the work of the applicant; plagiarized entries will not be accepted.
- Previously published works will not be accepted.
- All entries become the property of American Whitewater and Huge Experiences.

- A panel made up of American Whitewater staff and Huge Experiences faculty will judge entries.
- Decisions of the panel are final.

Submissions

- All entries must include a cover letter that lists: your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, current grade level, and your high school name and address.
- Entries may be fiction, non-fiction, poetry or news writing.
- Entries must be double-spaced and no more than 1,500 words in length.
- All entries must be submitted via email, as an attachment in Word document or Acrobat PDF format, to info@hugeexperiences.com.

Deadline

Entries must be received by August 8, 2005. Entries submitted after this date will not be considered.

Award

- \$5,000 Academic Scholarship to the author of the best original composition.
- The Winner and all other applicants will be notified via e-mail and/or by mail no later than August 15, 2005.

For more information contact David Hughes at www.hugeexperiences.com or (423) 902-2029



Contests



Kids, Win Yourself a Kayak!

American Whitewater and Jackson Kayak are pleased to announce the Jackson Kayak 2005 AW Membership Drive for Kids. Jackson Kayak believes that it is critical that younger paddlers understand the importance of supporting river conservation and access through American Whitewater with membership. To support their commitment, Jackson Kayak will award a new Jackson Kayak to the paddler who collects the most AW memberships before September 1st. Additional prizes from Lotus Designs and AW will be awarded.

The Prizes

- If you sell 10 AW memberships (that's just one every two weeks!) you get a free Jackson Kayak / AW t-shirt from Lotus Designs (organic cotton, so soft!).
- If you sell 20 AW memberships (one a week) you will get the free t-shirt and a Jackson Kayak hat (cute smiley guy and all!).
- If you sell 30 AW memberships you will get the free t-shirt, free hat, and a free Lotus Design AW branded Lolita PFD!
- The Grand Prize: if you sell the most memberships you will get the:
 - Jackson Kayak / AW t-shirt from Lotus Designs
 - Jackson Kayak Hat
 - AW Hooded Sweatshirt
 - Jackson Kayak of your choice!

The AW Kids Membership Drive starts now and ends on September 1st. Only paddlers under the age of eighteen (not past their



eighteenth birthday by September 1st) will be eligible to participate in the contest. The winners will be announced at the AW Gauley River Festival in Summersville, WV on September 24th. Winners need not be present to collect their rewards.

Here's How It Works

1. Download the membership form from americanwhitewater.org and make as many copies as you need!
2. Hit up your paddling buddies, neighbors, cousins, uncles, aunts... well, you get the picture. Get them to support American Whitewater river stewardship by joining AW today.
3. Make sure you include your name and membership # on completed forms and mail them back to AW (the address is on the form!).
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 as many times as possible so you can win the Jackson Kayak of your dreams or other great prizes!
5. Check the AW website and Jackson Kayak website to see how you are doing against the other youths in the country (We will post updates every few weeks).

The Fine Print

- Participants in the contest must be AW members and under the age of 18 during the entire contest.
- Each membership form submitted must include the name and AW membership number of the recruiting member.
- Only members using the contest form will be counted.
- Running tallies for each recruiter will be available on both the AW and Jackson Kayak websites.
- All membership forms must be received at the AW office no later than September 1st, 2005.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call or email Ben VanCamp.

(p) 828-252-0728

ben@amwhitewater.org

A big thank you to Jackson Kayak, Lotus Designs and everyone who joins in. Good Luck!

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Affiliate Clubs

AW's Original Purpose

by Carla Miner

The Affiliate Club Program lies at the very heart of AW's existence. AW's original purpose since 1957 has been to distribute information among its Affiliate Clubs. AW's relationships with local clubs have provided the backbone for the river conservation and access work it accomplishes. Over 100 clubs are now AW Club Affiliates and they are all doing great work on your behalf. If you don't belong to a club consider joining one.

For 2005, AW is excited to announce several programs for AW Affiliate Clubs.

2nd River Stewardship Institute: A week-long conservation and access training program designed to prepare river activists with the tools necessary to successfully save their rivers.

2nd Flowing Rivers Grant Program, sponsored by Clif Bar

BRAND NEW Affiliate Club section of the AW Journal dedicated to promoting your club and its events with the whitewater community at large. If your Affiliate Club would like to be one of the first to begin listing your club's major events in the Journal, please email ben@amwhitewater.org for more details.

The AW Journal Club Affiliates by State:

Alaska

Fairbanks Paddlers, Fairbanks

Alabama

Birmingham Canoe Club, Birmingham
Coosa Paddling Club, Montgomery
Huntsville Canoe Club, Huntsville

Arkansas

Arkansas Canoe Club, Little Rock

Arizona

Grand Canyon Private Boaters Assoc, Flagstaff

California

Chico Paddleheads, Chico
Durham Troop 16, Durham
Gold Country Paddlers, Lotus
River Skills Center, Mt. Shasta
River Touring Section, Angeles Chapter
Sierra Club, Los Angeles
Sequoia Paddling Club, Windsor
Shasta Paddlers, Redding

Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter, San Jose
Sierra Club Angeles Chapter, Granada Hills

Colorado

Avid4Adventure Inc., Boulder
Colorado White Water Association, Englewood
FiBark Boat Races, Englewood
Gunnison Valley Paddle Club, Almont
Pikes Peak Whitewater Club, Colorado Springs
Pueblo Paddlers, Pueblo West
Rocky Mountain Canoe Club, Englewood
University of Colorado Kayak Club, Boulder
WATER, Grand Junction

Florida

Project Challenge Inc., Miami

Georgia

Atlanta Whitewater Club, Atlanta
Georgia Canoeing Association, Atlanta
Georgia Tech Outdoor Recreation, Atlanta
Peachtree City Paddlers, Peachtree City

Idaho

Idaho Whitewater Association, Boise

Illinois

Chicago Whitewater Assoc., Evergreen Park

Indiana

Hoosier Canoe Club, Indianapolis
Ohio Valley Whitewater Club, Evansville

Iowa

Iowa Whitewater Coalition, Des Moines

Kansas

Kansas Whitewater Association, Mission

Kentucky

Bluegrass Whitewater Association, Lexington
El Rio Loco Paddling Club, Barbourville
Viking Canoe Club, Louisville

Maine

AMC Maine Chapter, Hallowell

Maryland

Greater Baltimore Canoe Club, Kingsville
Mason Dixon Canoe Cruisers, Smithsburg
Monocacy Canoe Club, Frederick

Massachusetts

AMC Boston Chapter, Lunenburg

Minnesota

Boat Busters Anonymous, Stillwater

Missouri

Kansas City Whitewater Club, Grandview
Missouri Whitewater Association, St. Louis
Ozark Mountain Paddlers, Springfield
Ozark Wilderness Waterways, Kansas City

Montana

Beartooth Paddlers Society, Billings

Nevada

Sierra Nevada Whitewater Club, Reno

New Hampshire

Ledyard Canoe Club, Hanover
Merrimack Valley Paddlers, Merrimack
Mt. Washington Valley Paddlers, Franconia

New Jersey

Hunterdon Canoe Club, Flemington
The Paddling Bares, Milltown

New Mexico

Adobe Whitewater Club, Albuquerque

New York

FLOW Paddlers Club, Rochester
Housatonic Canoe & Kayak Squad, Ossining
Town Tinker Tube Rentals, Phoenicia
Whitewater Challengers, Old Forge
Zoar Valley Paddling Club, Dunkirk

N. Carolina

Camp Carolina, Brevard
Carolina Canoe Club, Raleigh
Dixie Division of ACA, Tuxedo
Nantahala Racing Club, Gastonia
Triad River Runners, Winston Salem
Western Carolina Paddlers, Asheville

Ohio

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, Columbus
Keel Haulers Canoe Club, Westlake
Outdoor Adventure Club, Dayton
Toledo River Gang, Waterville

Oregon

Oregon Kayak and Canoe Club, Portland
Oregon Whitewater Association, Beaverton
Pacific Outback, Forest Grove
Willamette Kayak and Canoe Club, Corvallis

Pennsylvania

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Sugarloaf
Benscreek Canoe Club, Johnstown
Canoe Club of Greater Harrisburg, Mechanicsburg
Holtwood Hooligans, Lititz
KCCNY, Philadelphia
Lehigh Valley Canoe Club, Lehigh Valley
Three Rivers Paddling Club, Pittsburgh

S. Carolina

Foothills Paddling Club, Greenville
Palmetto Paddlers, Columbia

Tennessee

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts, Elizabethton
Chota Canoe Club, Knoxville
Eastman Hiking and Canoeing, Kingsport
E. Tennessee Whitewater Club, Oak Ridge
McCallie School Outdoor Program, Chattanooga
Memphis Whitewater, Memphis
Tennessee Scenic River Association, Nashville
Tennessee Valley Canoe Club, Chattanooga
University of Tennessee Knoxville, Knoxville

Texas

Bayou Whitewater Club, Houston

Utah

University of Utah, Salt Lake City
USU Kayak Club, Logan

Vermont

Vermont Paddlers Club, Jericho

Virginia

Blue Ridge River Runners, Lynch Station
Blue Ridge Voyageurs, McLean
Canoe Cruisers Association, Arlington
Coastal Canoeists, Richmond
Float Fishermen of Virginia, Roanoke

Washington

The Mountaineers, Seattle
Paddle Trails Canoe Club, Seattle
University Kayak Club, Seattle
Washington Kayak Club, Seattle
Washington Recreation River Runners, Renton
Whitman College Whitewater Club, Walla Walla

West Virginia

West VA Wildwater Assoc., S. Charleston

Wisconsin

Badger State Boating Society, Waukesha
Hoofers Outing Club, Madison
Northern Paddle and Trail, Rhinelander
Pure Water Paddlers, Eau Claire
River Alliance of Wisconsin, Madison
Sierra Club / John Muir Chapter, LaCrosse

Wyoming

Jackson Hole Kayak Club, Jackson Hole

Canada, British Columbia

Vancouver Kayak Club, Vancouver

Canada, Ontario

Madawaska Kanu Camp Inc., Ottawa

Discounted AW Memberships for Affiliate Club Members

by Carla Miner
Membership Coordinator

In the recent past, AW has been offering discounted AW memberships to whitewater enthusiasts who are also members of one of AW's Affiliate Clubs.

We now have the ability to offer this discounted membership online! For each club, AW will create a unique URL that will automatically offer the discounted membership and/or we will provide a coupon code that is specific to your club that will allow individuals to receive the discount on the normal AW Membership Page.

Both options work equally well and help make life easier for members of your club.

Several clubs have already set up the program and their members are enjoying the benefits of joining AW for only \$25!

If you are interested in learning more about this program, please contact me and I would be happy to help your club set up this program. I can be reached at: 888-BOAT-4AW or membership@amwhitewater.org.

Join American Whitewater as a Club Affiliate!

"10" Reasons to Join AW as an Affiliate Club

1. Receive the *American Whitewater Journal*, the oldest continually published whitewater magazine.
2. Join the list of Affiliate Clubs noted in each bi-monthly *AW Journal*.
3. List club events in the *AW Journal*.
4. Your Club's members can become AW members for \$25. A \$10 savings!
5. Have technical expertise for your Club conservation and access committees 'on tap.'
6. Have access to technical and onsite assistance for your Club's event planning.
7. Enjoy VIP benefits for "Joint Members" at AW events.
8. Participate in exclusive AW Affiliate Club promotions.
9. Post Club information on the AW Website to help paddlers find you.
10. Eligible to apply for a spot in the AW 2005 River Stewardship Institute.

For more information,
contact Carla Miner at
membership@amwhitewater.org
AW Outreach Office at 828-252-0728
or sign-up on-line at:
www.americanwhitewater.org/membership

Guidelines for Contributors



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

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

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

Photos may be submitted as slides, black or white prints, or color prints or electronic, digital photos, 300 dpi tiffs, Photoshop or high res jpegs minimum 3"x5." 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. The better the photos the better the reproduction. American Whitewater feature articles should

relate to some aspect of whitewater boating. Please do not submit articles pertaining to sea kayaking or flat water.

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 II, III & IV rivers as well. Feature stories do not have to be about a specific river. Articles about paddling techniques, the river environment and river personalities are also accepted. Pieces that incorporate humor are especially welcome. Open boating and rafting stories are welcome.

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, please don't send it in! Because of our deadlines you will not be able to review the editorial changes made prior to publication.

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Send your material to:
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Takoma Park MD 20912-4213
E-mail: editor@amwhitewater.org

American Whitewater River Festivals

DEERFIELD RIVER FESTIVAL

JULY 29th - 31st
CHARTERMOND, MA

GAILLEY RIVER FESTIVAL

SEPT. 23rd - 25th
SUMMERSVILLE, WV



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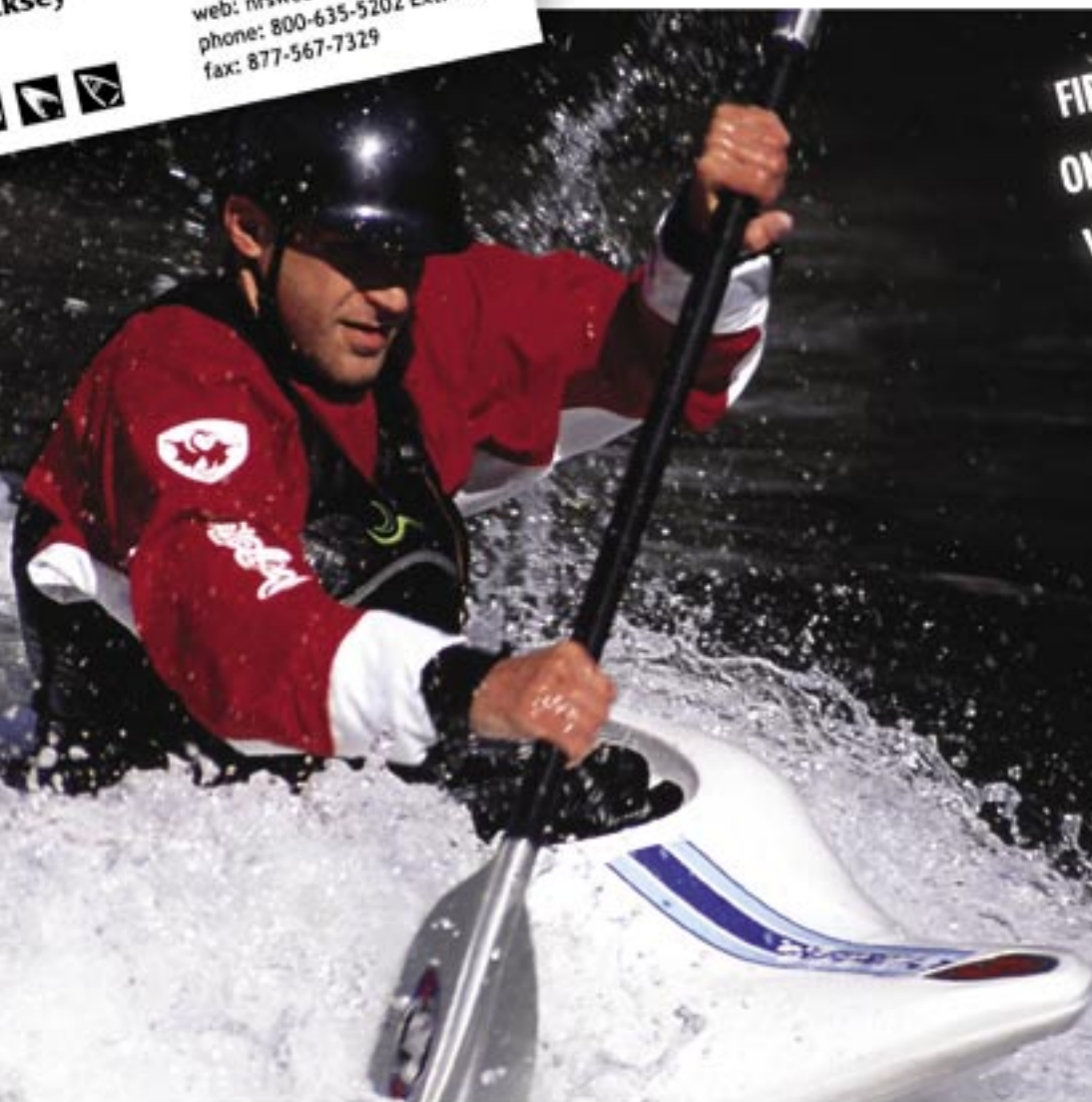
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