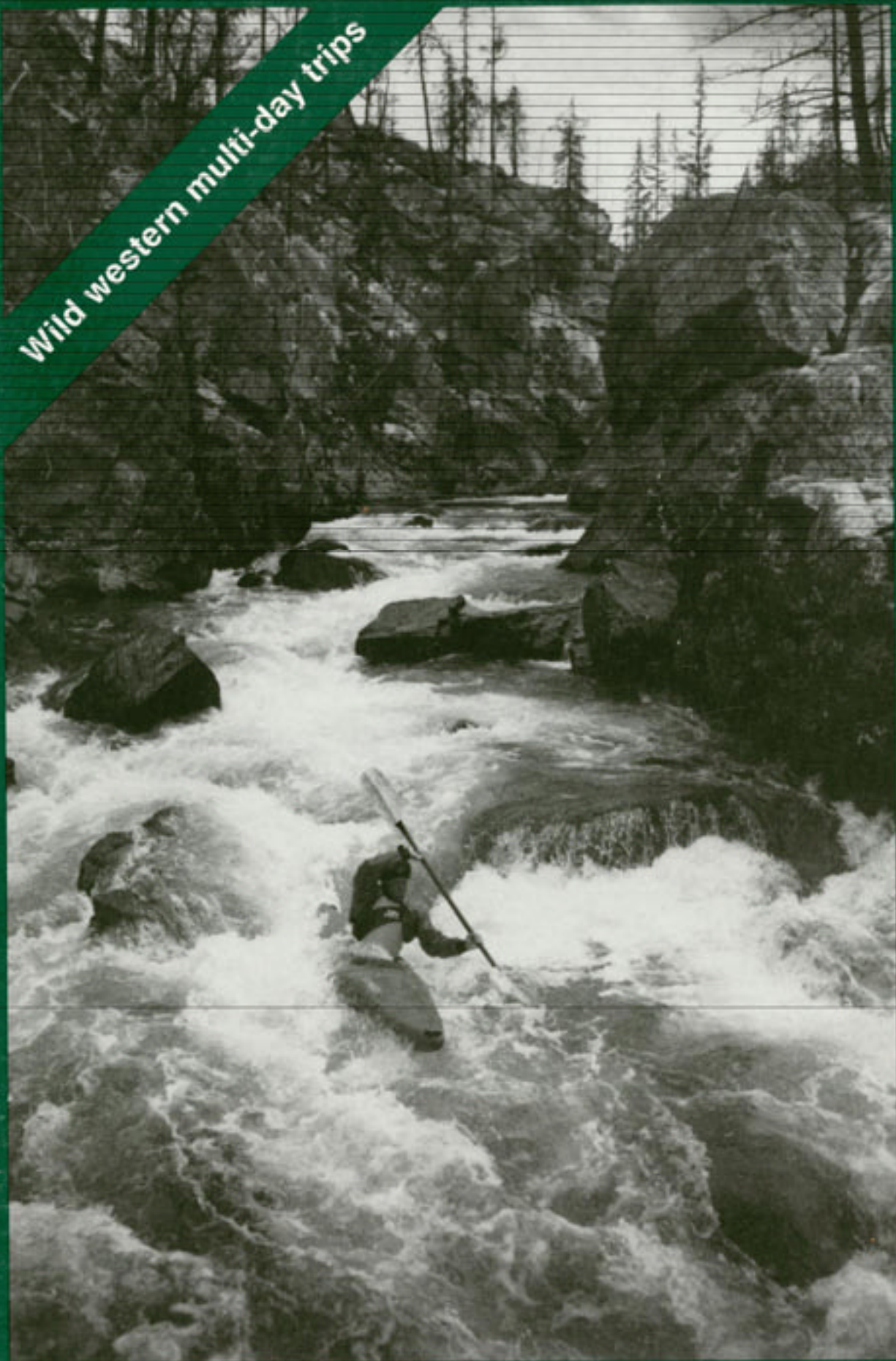


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Jeff Snyder blasting
a hole on the Cheat
River, West Virginia.
Photo: Kevin O'Brien

american whitewater

November/December 1990
Volume XXXV, No. 6

JOURNAL OF THE
AMERICAN WHITEWATER
AFFILIATION

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Front cover: Tim Shanahan paddles through one of the many mini-gorges on the Stillwater River. Photo by Dave Pennington.



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FORUM

Who writes for American White-

2

Well, in the case of this issue, our list of contributors is damned impressive.

Tim Shanahan is a squirt and hair boater from Washington, D.C., who is making quite a name for himself around the country. An engineer with a masters degree from Virginia Tech, Tim recently did what most of us only dream of, quit his job and spent a year kayaking in New Zealand and the western United States. When most easterners head west they satisfy themselves by running the old standards...the Colorado, the Salmon, the Arkansas.

But no one ever said Tim was like most eastern boaters. Shanahan tackled four of the country's most difficult multi-day expeditionary rivers, in the company of some of the best known hair boaters west of the Mississippi. Tim held his own...and lived to tell the tale.

Pittsburgher Mark Fair took time out from completing his doctoral thesis at Carnegie Mellon to write his story on the first successful descent of the North Fork of the Blackwater. Many of the east's most experienced boaters have eyeballed this run and almost everyone thought it was hopeless. Mark, who had only been kayaking three years, and his friends proved them wrong this spring. Fair will soon be doing his steep creeking in California; he will start post-doctoral work at Stanford this winter.

Lee Belknap is not old, but he is an old-timer. Another engineer, currently living in Richmond, Virginia, Lee has been boating for more than a decade. Lee was around when most of the current crop of hot shot southern boaters were still pups, and a lot of them owe him a debt of gratitude for services rendered during their formative years. One of our regional coordinators, Lee's special interest is safety. In his article he shares his considerable experience in improvising gear and surviving adverse conditions.

Terry Peterson is a sports management graduate of James Madison University who currently resides on the banks of the Upper Yough, where she makes her living as a raft guide, ski instructor and photographer. An accomplished boater, Terry finished her contribution on taking better whitewater pictures just before leaving for the Russell Fork. Terry is also an avid mountain biker and fantastic telemark skier.

Besides being a mechanical engineer, Jim Goddard is a hedonistic whitewater fun hound who relocated to Oregon from Pittsburgh several years ago. Not long ago he and his wife, Gracie, contributed an article on rivers in the northwest, and Jim's whitewater photos have appeared in a number of publications.

Last but not least, Mike Fentress is an engineer specializing in the production of electricity from geothermal sources. He is also one of California's most respected hair boaters, a contemporary of Stanley and Holbek. His most memorable swim article came as a surprise to all of us who know him; we didn't think he had ever abandoned his boat. But he has a good excuse...check his article out and see.--Bob Gedekoh



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PURPOSE

The American Whitewater Affiliation (AWA) is a national organization with a membership of over 1800 whitewater boating enthusiasts and more than 110 local canoe club affiliates. The AWA was organized in 1961 to protect and enhance the recreational enjoyment of whitewater sports in America.

EDUCATION: Through publication of a bi-monthly journal, the AWA provides information and education about whitewater rivers, boating safety, technique, and equipment.

CONSERVATION: AWA maintains a national inventory of whitewater rivers, monitors potential threats to whitewater river resources through its "River Watch" system, publishes information on river conservation, works with government agencies to protect and preserve free-flowing whitewater rivers, and provides technical advice to local groups regarding river management and river conservation. AWA also gives annual awards to individuals to recognize exceptional contributions to river conservation and an annual "hydromania" award to recognize the proposed hydroelectric power project which would be most destructive of whitewater.

EVENTS: AWA organizes sporting events, contests and festivals to raise funds for river conservation. Since 1986, AWA has been the principal sponsor of the annual Gauley River Festival in Summersville, West Virginia, the largest gathering of whitewater boaters in the nation, other than at international racing events.

SAFETY: AWA promotes paddling safety, publishes reports on whitewater accidents, and maintains both a uniform national ranking system for whitewater rivers [the International Scale of Whitewater Difficulty] and the internationally recognized AWA Safety Code.

ORGANIZATION AND PURPOSES: AWA was incorporated under Missouri non-profit corporation laws in 1961 and maintains its principal mailing address at PO Box 85, Phoenicia, NY 12464. AWA has been granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. The charter includes the following purposes: encourage the exploration, enjoyment, and preservation of American recreational waterways or man-powered craft; protect the wilderness character of waterways through conservation of water, forests, parks, wildlife, and related resources; promote appreciation for the recreational value of wilderness cruising and of white-water sports.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF: Except for membership services and the Executive Director position, all AWA operations, including publication of the bi-monthly magazine, are handled by volunteers.



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Not for mortals

Dear AWA,

I read with great interest your article "Two Gallon River" on the Green river narrows. I regularly paddle the intermediate section above the Narrows, and have hiked into the gorge several times to see the horrendous drops described in the article. I am glad that the article emphasized that the Narrows is not for ordinary mortal paddlers. Traffic has been increasing on the river all summer, as have chances that someone will die in one of these unbelievable drops. You have done a public service by accurately describing the mindset and skills required of the hair boater, and by printing photos that show exactly what awaits the paddler on this truly dangerous section.

Two points: The photo at the top of page 44 is of the Tongue (aka Cloudmaker), which is located in the section above the Narrows. Also, though a part of the Narrows drops at 600 feet per mile, the steepest single mile, according

to U.S.G.S. Topo maps, drops about 400 feet/mile.

Thanks for the article and the one on Overflow Creek, another southeastern gem.

Sincerely,
H. Metzger
Mills River, N.C.

(Editors note: Stay tuned, H. Metzger...we've got a great article coming about the Horsepasture...another southern steep creek!)

Cut the profanity

Dear Sirs,

I am writing in response to the article in your last month's issue on Overflow Creek in Georgia. I want to commend the writer on an article both informative and well written. I however, take exception to the language used. The use of the Lord's name in vain really made me sick. Since I am a Christian it was very offensive

to me. Why ruin an otherwise good article with language like that especially using the GD's. I know people talk like that in life but please keep the talk by the creek and out of the articles. I'm sure it will offend a lot less people. Keep up the good work and keep protecting those rivers.

Sincerely,
Bruce Fox
Columbia, SC

Short boat source

Dear Sir:

Where did the visiting Scots in your whitewater tour article get their small, stubby kayaks? The only plastic one I've seen advertised is Hydra's minnow which their literature describes as good for class 2 water.

Sincerely,
Robin Sare
Thunder Bay, Ontario

(Editor's note: The Scots seemed to favor small plastic kayaks manufactured by Seda. Seda originally earned a fine reputation as a leading manufacturer of glass boats--but in the last seven years it has entered the plastic boat arena with a line of kayaks that appear well suited for the steep creeking described in the article you referenced. You'll find a Seda advertisement in this issue)

Overflow inaccurate

Dear AWA,

Great job on the last issue of the Journal and the Gauley Festival. All involved in the Festival did a great job putting it together. It is a pile of work and Anita and crew pulled it off in style. The Gauley Festival is probably the largest event in the paddler's world and I look forward to it year after year. The Festival gives a chance for old friends to get together and to meet new friends. MAY IT LONG LIVE!

Now for the reason I am writing this letter is to express my concern about the highly inaccurate "Overflow" article. I first read the "Green River" article and was amazed at the accuracy of description. The article was well written and warned

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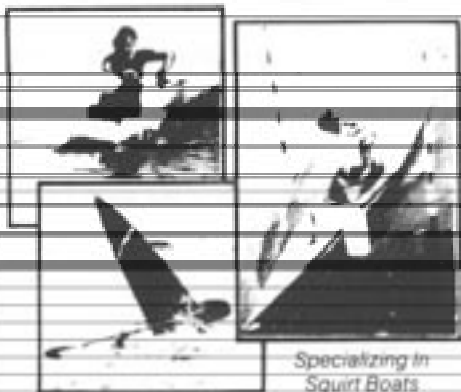
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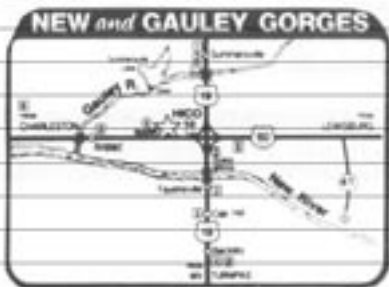
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LETTERS

any "greenhorns" to beware. Forrest Callaway, the author, has had many runs on the Green and is knowledgeable in sharing his memories and experiences. I would give his paper an "A" in whitewater journalism. The Overflow article, on the other hand, was not only misleading but dangerous. The first fault of the article was that the shuttle to Overflow from the Overflow Chatooga outpost was one and a half hours. They must have been lost, because the shuttle is only forty-five minutes. Referring to the put-in the article mentions that the first drop at the culvert has been run by paddlers. I would like to know who, because if they did, they are dead! The errors in accuracy are so flagrant and occur so often that the whole article became a joke to myself and my fellow paddling friends around the campfire. We read that the fools were tossing logs in the creek at "Gravity" which is immediately below "Blindfalls" not "Swiss Cheese" which is the last rapid on the run.

After laughing we suddenly realized this was not a laughing matter, but a serious matter. We became mad. Throwing logs in a creek run could lead to serious danger to a paddler and to voluntary manslaughter charges. We carry saws when we run Overflow to remove any log debris in the way. The three fellow paddlers including myself that I was around the campfire with have had over thirty runs on Overflow between us. The group of four people that wrote the article had only one.

Printing the Overflow story was a mistake for such paddlers with a single run on the creek, but everyone makes mistakes. I have double digit runs on both the Green River and Overflow Creek and I respect them with all my heart. They deserve that same **respect** when written about.

Play it safe on all rivers and creeks. One bad move can mean serious injury or death. SO DON'T MONKEY AROUND!

Thanks and sincerely,
Francis A. Mallory
"The Goforth Gang"
Saluda, NC

(editor's note: Given your extensive experience on Overflow, you are no doubt correct in asserting that author Dudley Bass errors in naming some of the drops. But I think you are a little tough on him. The point of the article was describing how paddlers react to boating an unfamiliar, difficult creek and how they face dangerous situations--not to provide a guide to the river. As far as the practice of throwing

logs into hydraulics, well, again you make a goodpoint. --c. koll)

More rafting?

Dear Sirs,

Enclosed is my renewal for AWA. The safety portion of your Journal is great. Keep up the good work. Safety first when it comes to the water. I do have some complaints about your Journal and that is I am a rafter. Your Journal seems to be directed to 90% kayaking and 10% rafting. Also the rivers you profile are mostly in the East. The West has a lot of great rivers which have a lot more rafts going down them than kayaks. I would have to say that rafting is the #1 river sport here. All I would like to see is equal time in your Journal for both rafters and Western rivers. Looking forward to my next copy of AWA.

Mike Kiel
Kila, MT

(Editor's note: The membership of the AWA is predominantly composed of **hard-boaters**, and our articles represent that constituency. However, recently **introduced high-performance** rafts have attracted more sophisticated paddlers and I expect sometime in the future we might see some raft articles. So far as more Western articles are concerned--we're beating the bushes for more Western articles and we have a bunch on tap for upcoming issues.--C. Koll)

Thanks to H.A.C.K.S

Dear Pope,

Enclosed please find a check for \$450, representing the HACKS proceeds from our spring Covered Bridge Slalom race. Please sign us up as an affiliate club and consider the remainder of the funds to be a contribution to the AWA Whitewater Defense Fund.

Many thanks for your help with river conservation issues on the **Housatonic** and elsewhere. Keep up the good work!

Regards,
Douglas Gordon
HACKS President

Kayak mold needed

Dear Mr. Koll,

Puerto Quito, a small town founded in 1974, is located in the Province of Pichincha (Ecuador--South America), at 800 meters above sea level and four hours from Quito. Its weather is warm and its people are gentle, simple and friendly--especially with foreigners. Its economy is based primarily in the coffee, cacao, rice and banana production, as well as livestock and wood exploitation. There are also unexploited deposits of gold, silver and other metals, especially in the beds of the river Canigues, which is very rich in minerals.

In the last two years, boys in the area have become interested in kayaking because of the Caoni river nearby, and this has been publicized on radio, television and other media. Every year, on Sunday of Carnival, traditional Regattas are organized by local authorities as a big celebration which starts very early in the morning, with fireworks and music bands all over town. Everything is prepared for the televised "big event", including the organization of a great dance in the evening.

Nevertheless, the club has no kayaks of its own. For the Regatta, we use innertubes and dugout canoes. The only way members of the club can practice in

real kayaks, including learning to roll the kayak, is by borrowing them from several individuals in the capital city of Quito. This assistance has helped us get started, but they live four hours away from Quito and we dearly cannot make any further progress without kayaks of our own here in Puerto Quito. Since new kayaks are prohibitively expensive for us, the only solution is for us to make our own.

This is why I am writing to you. We understand that there may be individuals or clubs in the United States that might be willing to donate their old kayak mold to our club. Would it be possible to put our letter or simply the request in your Journal? That would help tremendously in publicizing our great need for a mold. The mold could be sent, perhaps, to Alex Newton (USAID Quito, APO Miami 34039), who had been lending us his kayak from time to time. His office tel/fax is (593-2) 521-100/561-228.

From all the boys in our club, I send a warm thank you, and if you have any questions, it may be easier to reach us by letter directly to Mr. Newton.

Sincerely,
Ramiro Jaramillo
President
Club Fluvial de Regatas de Puerto Quito
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Paddler input needed for Arkansas River plan

By RICALESCH
A WA Regional Coordinator

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has begun a study of the 140-mile segment of the Arkansas River from Leadville near its headwaters high in the Colorado Rockies to the Royal Gorge near Canon City. The study will be completed as part of the Resource Management Plan (RMP) for BLM's Royal Gorge Resource Area. The RMP is the general land use plan that BLM prepares for all lands under its jurisdiction. A wild and scenic designation would protect the river from new dams and major diversions, and BLM needs to hear from many interested citizens about this important study.

The Arkansas River is Colorado's premier white-water stream, with an international reputation for offering over 100 miles of class II-IV boating opportunities in a gorgeous mountain setting. It is the most heavily used whitewater river in the region, and paddlers annually journey from all over the country to enjoy the river's many classic runs. In a 1987 survey reported in River Runner, the Ark' was selected by the magazine's readers as one of the nation's top ten rivers. (Over 150 rivers were identified by the survey respondents.)

In the late 1980s BLM and the State of Colorado jointly developed an Arkansas River Recreation Management Plan, and in 1990 they established the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area as a cooperative project. However, the issue of maintaining the river's free-flowing character was not

addressed in the plan. BLM resisted efforts by conservation organizations to identify the importance of retaining the river's free-flowing nature, saying that it would address the wild and scenic issue through the RMP.

BLM recently completed the first two steps in the study process, according to Mike Gaylord, Wild and Scenic Study Team Leader. They determined that the river is "eligible" for wild and scenic status. In other words, it is "free-flowing" and has "outstanding remarkable values." They also determined that the river would probably be classified as a "recreational" component because it has roads, rail lines, and small diversion dams along its course. This is the same classification given to most of the Cache La Poudre River--Colorado's first and only legislated wild and scenic river to date.

The next and much more substantial and controversial step in the process is to determine if the river is "suitable" for wild and scenic designation. This includes consideration of outstanding resource characteristics, land status, water rights, conflicting demands on the river, and management feasibility. A designated wild and scenic watercourse includes the river and a corridor one-quarter mile on either side. Not all of the land need be federal, but it should be managed to preserve the qualities that make the river eligible for wild and scenic designation.

BLM intends to expand its public involvement efforts during this phase of



Paddler at play at "Ender Rock" on the Arkansas River.

the study, and interested persons should get on the mailing list by writing to the Area Manager, Royal Gorge Resource Area, BLM, PO Box 2200, Canyon City, CO 81215-2200. You should request informational bulletins, which will be prepared over the next several months, and a copy of the draft RMP/EIS when it becomes available, probably late next summer.

You should also request that they expand the suitability study to include a critical section of the river not identified for suitability review. Unfortunately, BLM made a preliminary decision without substantial public input to exclude one of the most scenic and popular sections of the river, the Royal Gorge. Please ask in your letter that this highly scenic canyon, just downstream from their identified study area, be included in the suitability study. When you receive materials from BLM, remember that the wild and scenic study is incorporated within the larger RMP plan, so some materials you receive may not be of interest to you. The final EIS will probably be completed in 1992, and a recommendation would be forwarded to the President and Congress at the time.

This study is critical for long-term protection of the Arkansas. The City of Colorado Springs is considering construction of a water-supply dam north of Buena Vista, which would destroy a highly-valued segment of the river and affect downstream flows through Browns Canyon, the Lower Arkansas Canyon, and the Royal Gorge. Fortunately, the river will receive interim protection for up to five years while the wild and scenic study is in progress.

On a related matter, we have been told that the state and BLM are already considering some changes for the Arkansas River Plan, which was finalized only a year ago and sets user limits and commercial/private boater allocations. We should insist that any changes in the plan be developed only through full public involvement. The state reportedly intends to get input only from the citizens advisory task force. The task force is a small committee made up of local interest groups, which includes one private-boater representative, but it was intended to help implement the plan, not make substantive changes in it.

AWA contributes \$2,000 to West Virginia Rivers Coalition

The AWA has made a grant of \$2000 to our affiliate, the West Virginia Rivers Coalition (WVRC), which last month received a major grant of \$40,000 from the Outdoor Industry Conservation Alliance. Founded last year by the AWA, the WVRC is pushing for Wild and Scenic designation of 12 superlative Appalachian

whitewater streams.

The \$40,000 grant from the Outdoor Industry Conservation Alliance was conditioned on WVRC receiving \$10,000 from the its 21 member organizations.

Meanwhile, WVRC announced that, after a month long search for a full-time **Executive** Director, the post was awarded to Roger

A. Harrison of Morgantown, West Virginia. Harrison is an active river conservationist, having served as the Conservation Chairman of the West Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club.

Harrison is moving to **Elkins**, West Virginia to conduct a grass roots political campaign to support WVRC's goals.

In addition to the AWA grant the Canoe Cruisers Association of Greater Washington donated another \$2000.

Individuals wishing to support the WVRC should send a \$20 membership contribution to Roger Harrison, WVRC, P.O. Box 247, **Elkins**, West Virginia 26421.

Campaign launched to fund WVRC

As the end of the year approaches, AWA is embarking upon a special fundraising campaign to further the efforts now under way by the West Virginia Rivers Coalition (WVRC) to gain Federal Wild and Scenic Status for 12 river segments located within the Monongahela National Forest.

Launched by a \$40,000 grant from the Outdoor Industry Conservation Alliance, the Coalition, organized and sponsored by the American Whitewater Affiliation, requires an additional \$25,000 to adequately fund its anticipated two year program, estimates AWA Director Mac Thornton. While \$2000 of this year's Gauley Festival proceeds have been donated to WVRC to help fill the gap, AWA is now appealing to its membership for individual contributions to help assure the success of this truly momentous project.

Roger Harrison, the newly appointed Executive Director of the WVRC, has his work cut out for him as he assumes full-time supervision of this grass-roots movement to gain protection for the designated rivers within the Cheat, Potomac and Gauley River Basins. During the initial phase of WVRC

operations, Harrison will literally be conducting a **door-to-door** campaign to educate West Virginia residents, political and civic leaders on the issues at hand.

The enormity of this undertaking is compounded by staunch opposition from timbering and mining interests, as well as from proponents of hydroelectric and flood control facilities, and the

U.S. Military, which now seeks to use the Monongahela National Forest for unspecified purposes.

It is vital that AWA members take a personal, active interest in the protection of one of America's premiere whitewater regions now through individual contributions to WVRC. All donations are tax-deductible and should be directed to AWA, **p.o. box**

85, Phoenicia, N.Y. 12464.

In addition to cash gifts, new or used computer, Fax, or other office equipment would be most welcome. All donors would also become members of the AWA West Virginia Rivers Coalition.

Please do what you can today.

Keep the momentum going!

Working to improve French Broad

By **PETER GREGUTT**

How do you save a river? How do you "preserve and improve" it? For the last seven years a dedicated group of individuals, businesses and community organizations in western North Carolina has been grappling with just these questions. The answers they've come up with have varied at different times and in different situations. But the efforts coming out of this pooling of resources, energies and ideas have played a major role in the unfolding of the French Broad River Renaissance.

The French Broad River runs for 117 miles

through North Carolina, before crossing into Tennessee at Knoxville, where it joins with the Holston to form the Tennessee River. Once the region's economic lifeline, the river became a dumping ground in the 1950's and 60's, despite its stunning scenery, good fishing and class III and IV whitewater.

When the French Broad River Foundation, Inc was founded in 1983, it inherited the fruits of nearly a decade of efforts to bring the ailing river back to life. After the concerned citizens of the Upper French Broad Defense Association defeated a Tennessee Valley Authority proposal to build dams on the upper river in the mid 70's,

TVA began funding river improvement efforts planned and coordinated by the Land of the Sky Regional Council, an inter-governmental planning agency for the four North Carolina river counties, their cities and towns.

Studies were undertaken, river parks were built, and assistance was given to local governments attempting to clear their stretch of the river. The annual French Broad River Week, featuring a variety of river events staged throughout the four county water shed, was established as a vehicle for increasing public awareness of this vital resource.

In 1983, despite the considerable progress that

CONSERVATION

had been made, the river still suffered from a major image problem. No one thought or spoke about the river much, and they certainly didn't go out of their way to visit it. Mention the river to a local resident, and he would probably turn up his nose.

This was the heritage of decades of neglect.

For this reason the Foundation at first concentrated on public awareness activities, publicizing the new river parks and other improvements and mobilizing public support for further progress. This group sponsored a series of "Water for Life" workshops focusing on various water quality concerns. River Week, which the foundation co-sponsored with Land of Sky, and Clean Streams Day, an annual cleanup effort, both attracted considerable media attention.

Low cost river outings, which the Foundation organized in cooperation with local outfitters, brought many new faces to the river. And the annual French Broad Riverfest, for six years the highlight of River Week, was begun.

During this time the Foundation also became increasingly involved efforts to revitalize the three miles of Asheville riverfront. In 1988, the group developed Jean Webb River Park, the first concrete step in the proposed, more ambitious development, at the Riverfest site. For everyone who uses the park, or even admires its landscaping while driving past, Jean Webb River Park brings the riverfront's potential to life.

To coordinate these efforts, the Foundation, in cooperation with the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce,

formed the Riverfront Attractions Committee, to explore ways to revitalize the urban waterfront's economic and recreational potential. Supported by grants from the state and the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, the group - by now called the French Broad Riverfront Planning Committee - assumed the arduous task of developing a master plan for the riverfront. In April, 1989, this work culminated in an intensive four-day design workshop, which produced the Riverfront Plan.

1989 was a landmark year for the river. After the workshop, the Riverfront Planning Committee was reorganized as **PowerLink**, a separate nonprofit group dedicated to implementing the masterplan. At the same time, the French Broad River Foundation conducted a major program reassess-

ment, and decided to discontinue Riverfest. Although this was a successful tool for boosting the public awareness, the challenge of staging the festival had grown into a year-round effort that prevented the organization from pursuing other projects.

Instead the Foundation chose to **focus** on two new programs, which it believes will more directly benefit the river. The success of Jean Webb River Park led to the board's decision to develop the more ambitious River Access Program, which seeks to develop similar facilities at conveniently spaced intervals along the entire 117 miles of the river in North Carolina.

And in response to increased environmental pressures and concerns, the Foundation developed the Volunteer's Water Information Network, which enlists

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citizens to monitor water quality on the river and its tributaries. The VWIN program is an innovative, multi-faceted, cost-effective effort that helps safeguard water resources in the French Broad River Basin, while educating the public about water quality concerns.

These complimentary initiatives protect water quality, promote recreational use of the river, and encourage stewardship at the local level. River parks invite more individuals to discover the river's special charms, enhancing their desire to protect it. The monitoring program helps ensure that we will still have a river worth caring about, and gives people a tangible outlet for their concern.

In addition to these two major programs, the Foundation still sponsors or cosponsors various special

projects, such as Clean Streams Day, River Week, timely public forums on river issues, county chapter activities, and, starting this year, a series of river races.

The 57 mile, four county Tahkeestee Marathon Race, a "Take It Easy" Raft Race (in which the last finisher wins), and a Corporate Friends Race for foundation supporters will all help focus attention on this vital

resource.

Over the past seven years, the French Broad River Foundation has evolved from a small group of dedicated volunteers doing river cleanups, into a **professionally** staffed, broad-based, multi-faceted regional organization with a 21 person Board of Directors and a diverse and growing membership. Much has been accomplished, but a great

deal remains to be done. Interested individuals are encouraged to join the Foundation and to support the French Broad River Renaissance.

More information is available from the Foundation at 70 **Woodfin** Place, Suite 327, Asheville, North Carolina 28801, or by calling (704) 252-1097.

Idaho activists fight Falls River project

A group of river activists are fighting a proposed **hydroelectric project** on the Falls River, which flows out of Yellowstone National Park southwest into the Henry's Fork of the Snake. The project, proposed by Environmental Energy Company of Driggs, Idaho, would dewater the scenic, five mile long.

class III Falls Canyon section of the river.

All but 200 d s would be diverted through an existing irrigation canal. The activists maintain that a minimum of 350 d s is needed to safely negotiate the Canyon. They also question the recreational use survey

conducted by the energy company which suggested that over 21 days only eighteen anglers and four boaters used the river.

Environmental Energy Company has been granted a licence by FERC for the project but the activists are petitioning FERC

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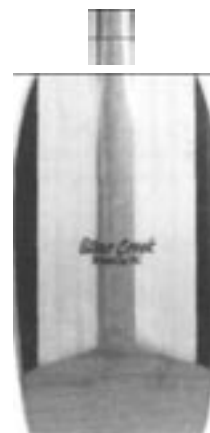
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CONSERVATION

to reopen the licensing hearings. This request will be based on a survey to be completed by boaters who have used or plan to use this section of the river.

Any boater familiar with the Falls Canyon should request a survey form immediately from: Jon R. Ochl, 275 Chamberlain Ave., Idaho Falls, Idaho 83402, 208-523-8143; or Scott Hansen, 240 South Ridge, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401, 208-522-9491.

Coordinator staff boosted

Doug Ammons, Jerry Hargrave and Wendy Wilson were recently named as AWA Regional Coordinators. A full list of coordinators with areas interest appears on page 9.

North Fork of Snoqualmie project contested by Washington paddlers

Whitewater enthusiasts in the Pacific Northwest have banded together to oppose the placement of a hydro dam on the North Fork of the Snoqualmie River by **Weyerhaeuser/Pacific Hydro**. The final design for the project calls for diverting up to 810 cfs out of the river, with only 53 cfs to remain as minimum design flow.

The project would essentially dewater Ernie's canyon, a class 5 whitewater run which has recently gained popularity among the area's expert boaters. 300-600 cfs are required to safely negotiate the stream. The

canyon is also popular with fisherman and hikers who are disturbed by the prospect of an essentially dry stream bed if the project is completed.

Opponents to the project argue that the construction of the dam, pipeline, access roads, generating stations and transmission lines will permanently damage the natural character of the area.

Opposition to the project, known as the **McCloud Ridge Project**, is being spearheaded by two groups. The recently organized Friends of the Snoqualmie Rivers has the

broad objective of gaining state Wild and Scenic status to protect the Snoqualmie Rivers and their tributaries, the Taylor and the **Pratt** Rivers, from dam building and uncontrolled development. Additional information is available from Friends of the Snoqualmie Rivers, p.o. box 882, Snoqualmie, Washington 98065.

The Northwest Rivers Council has also intervened in the preliminary FERC permitting process. Their address is p.o. box 88, Seattle, Washington 98105.

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Hydro industry proposal suggests second-billing for recreational uses of Corps of Engineers projects

A proposal to give lower priority to recreation on many Corps of Engineers projects has made it all the way to a House-Senate Conference Committee.

However, opposition is growing in the House to the Senate passed provision.

The proposal, drafted by the hydropower industry, would require the Corps to follow the original intent of Congress in managing projects, and make any change in that intent difficult to achieve. Since the original intent of Congress in building most reservoirs was hydropower, more recent uses such as rafting and fishing

would get second billing.

The proposal is included in the version of the biennial Corps of Engineers projects authorization bill approved by the Senate August 1. The House approved its own version of a Corps bill September 26.

Before the House acted, conservationists mounted a campaign against a twin to the controversial Senate provision that Rep. Tim Valentine of North Carolina wanted to add on the floor. That campaign succeeded because Valentine backed off from his amendment.

The House did ap-

prove a noncontroversial procedure for changing uses of the 400 some reservoirs managed by the Corps. It would simply require a public notice and comment when the Corps wanted to change operations in a reservoir.

The hydropower industry drafted its provision after the Corps held back water flow from several southern reservoirs in recent droughts, to the benefit of lake recreation. The withholding of flow deprived the hydroprojects of power.

The Senate provision in effect tells the Corps to stick to reservoir uses originally intended by Con-

gress- hydropower. To vary from these uses, the Corps would have to provide elaborate justification to Congress. If Congress did not act on the justification, the Corps could proceed.

A Corps official said the hydropower industry argument about original intent is "legally accurate" because "recreation has not been part of the original cost-benefit analyses for facilities."

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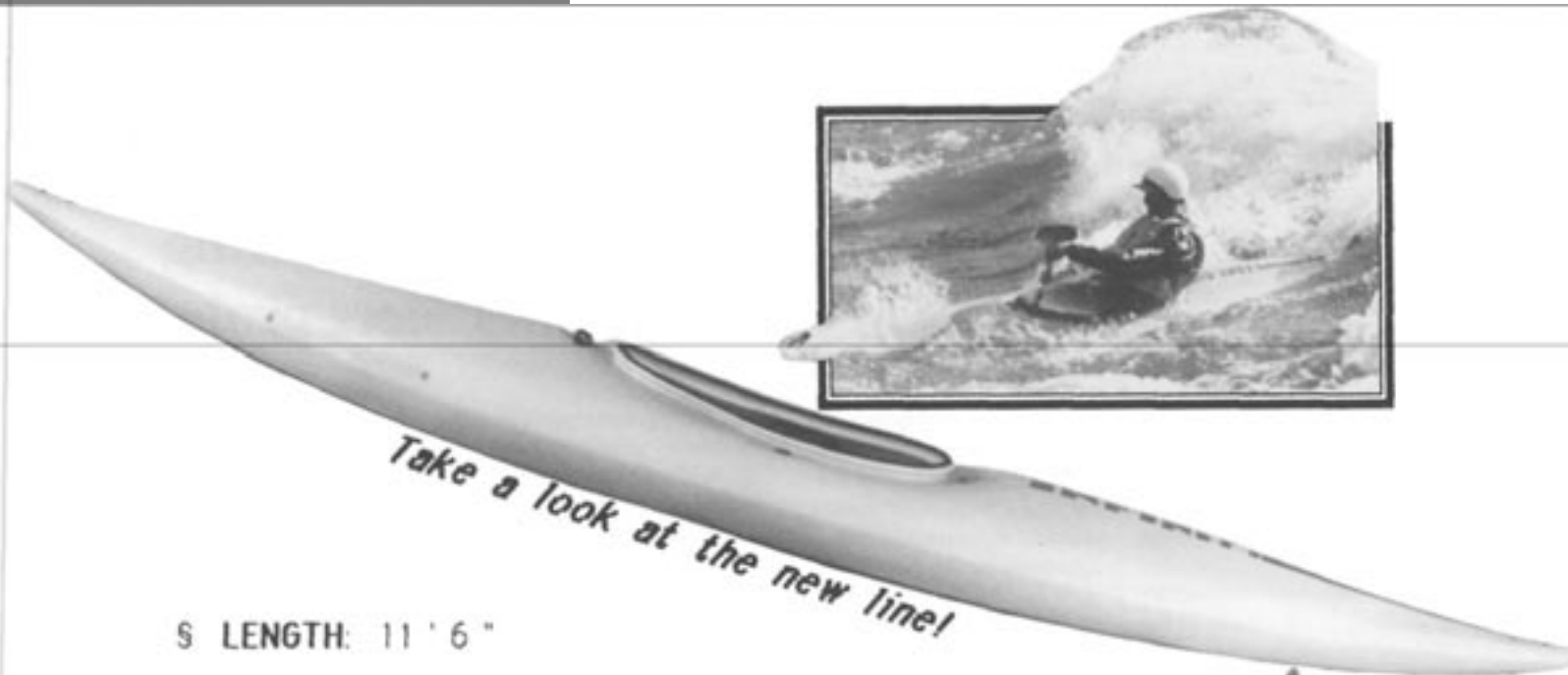
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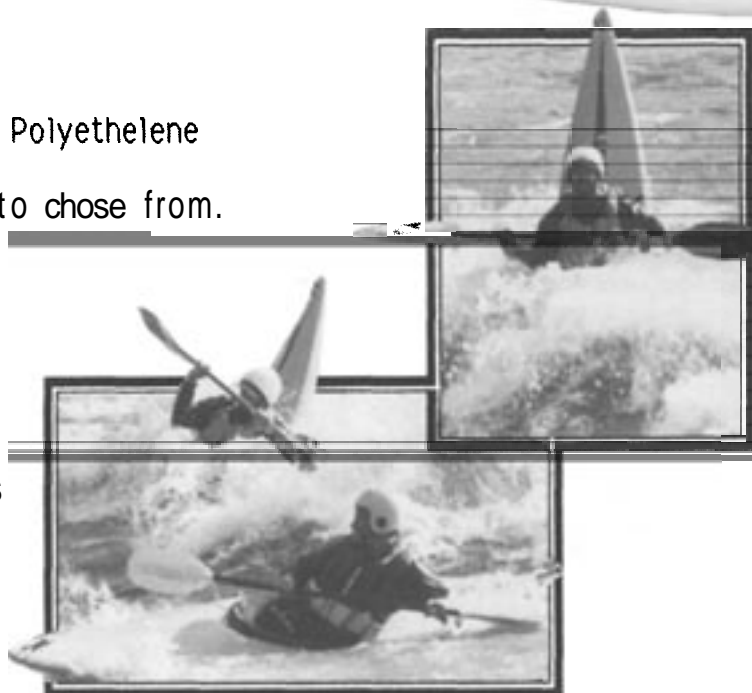
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BWA hosts annual film festival

The Eighth Annual National Paddling Film Festival will be held on Friday and Saturday, February 22 and 23 at the University of Kentucky Health Science Learning Center in Lexington. The format of the Festival will remain the same as in previous years, with a reception Friday night from 7-10 p.m., competition and viewing on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and the finale party and awards presentation on Saturday evening from 8 until ???

The Festival, sponsored by the Bluegrass Wildwater Association, has a well deserved reputation as one of the nation's premiere whitewater events, providing an exciting kick-off to the upcoming boating season. The indoor pool party, held Saturday night, often features surprise appearances by BWA's own Women in Rubber, and always features class VI revelry.

Last year's Festival attracted several hundred whitewater enthusiasts from around the country. \$1000 raised at the 1990 Festival was donated to the AWA and American Rivers for river conservation.

The Festival features the best and latest paddlesport films, slides and videos in both amateur and professional competition. Last year several hundred dollars worth of prizes were distributed to the winners and two boats were given away as raffle prizes.

Amateur categories include rec-

reational/scenic, racing, humor, safety/instructional, hair, dub entry, conservation and best paddling slide. The professional category includes all entries in which professional media labor has been used during production.

Festival Coordinator Barry Grimes has announced a February 15 deadline for entries but is advising those planning to

participate to contact the BWA sooner since viewing times are allotted on a first come- first serve basis. Last year 98% of the allotted time for presentation was reserved.

Additional information and entry blanks are available from The National Paddling Film Festival, c/o BWA, p.o. box 4231, Lexington, Kentucky, 40504.

AWA Regional Coordinators

<u>name</u>	<u>address</u>	<u>area of interest</u>
Doug Ammons	415 Keith Ave. Missoula, MT 59801	Boundary Creek, Smith Creek, N. ID/MT
Ric Alesch	8718 West Floyd Drive Lakewood, CO 80227	Rocky Mtn. States
Jane Allinson	375 Erieview Sheffield Lake, OH 44054	Northern WV
Chase Ambler	Route 4 Box 74 Banner Elk, NC 28604	Northwestern NC
Lee Belknap	1400 Severn Rd. Richmond, VA 23229	Southeast Safety issues Contoocook R.
Roger Belson	Box 526 Henniker, NH 03242	
David Brown	5423 Marilyn Dr. Knoxville, TN 37914	Western NC E. Tenn.
Ann Fairhurst	11968 Taylor Wells Road Chardon, OH 44024	OH/PA
John Frachella	103 Texas Ave. Bangor, ME 04401	North Central ME Penobscot
Jim Greenleaf	2616 242nd Ave. SE Issaquah, WA 98027	Cascades Western WA
Jerry Hargrave	47 Thorpe Crescent Rochester, NY 14616	Salmon River Lechworth Gorge
Bill Hildreth	78 Beechwood, ST. Cohasset, MA 02025	MA Deerfield River
Chuck Hines	5 Holly Hill Ct. Asheville, NC 28806	French Broad R.
E.J. McCarthy	RR 380-A West Cornwall, CT 06796	Western CT
Ron Stewart	Baylor School P.O. Box 1337 Chattanooga, TN 33401	SW Mass. Little R. TN N. Chickamauga
John Tansil	704 Normal Ave. Cape Girardeau, MP 63701	MO
Barry Tuscano	RD 1 Box 32 Bolivar, PA 15923	Western MD
Carol Volk	4930 Geiger Rd. Port Orchard, WA 98366	Olympic Penninsula
Andy Warshaw	P.O. Box 941755 Atlanta, GA 30341	Northern GA
Wendy Wilson	PO Box 633 Boise, ID 83701	Idaho Payette River

Noah rises from ashes

Aeroquatic kayaks are back in production according to designer and corporate manager Vladimir Vanha. Previously produced by Noah International of Bryson City, North Carolina, their production was interrupted by a devastating fire last year.

A new company, Designs Vanha, p.o. box 1236, Etowah, N.C. 28729, is producing the Aeroquatics, with preproduction commitments for the Japan and Europe to be honored first.

Grassroots river conservation groups receive project development grants

The National Rivers Coalition has announced that it is awarding fourteen seed grants to grassroots conservation organizations across the country for their river protection work. The grants will help protect rivers in Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Oregon, Vermont, Washington and Wisconsin. The grants were made at the third meeting of the year as part of a 1990 program.

"REI (Recreational Equipment, Inc.) has underwritten the National Rivers Campaign for the third year in a row. Their commitment to river work by citizens is vital to this local work across the country," said Suzanne Wilkins, the Coalition Chairperson. REI is a nationwide retailer of outdoor gear and clothing.

The National Rivers Coalition includes several national conservation groups: the American Whitewater Affiliation, American Rivers, American Canoe Association, National Audubon Society, Sierra Club, National Wildlife Foundation and Wilderness Society.

The National Rivers Coalition considers applications for grassroots work that adds rivers for study or designation into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; improves state river programs through changing legislation, regulations and/or implementation of a statewide regional assessment; promotes the passage of federal legislation that would facilitate state and local river protection; or supports increased funding of the National Park Service's Technical Assistance Program for Fiscal Year 1991.

The grant recipients are:

*Arizona: Friends of Arizona Rivers, for its work in spearheading the effort to develop and promote the passage of federal Wild and Scenic River legislation to protect several outstanding Arizona rivers. Contact person: Gail Peters 602-242-8478

*California: Klamath Forest Alliance, to add 12 rivers in the Klamath National Forest to the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers System, by working on management plans for the National Forest. Contact person: Felice Pace 916-467-5405

California: Dinkey Alliance, for

the completion of an environmental assessment of Dinkey Creek (near Fresno), which would help insure the protection of this river through adequate inclusion in the final draft of the Sierra National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. Contact person: Bev Browne 209-868-3507

*Colorado: Colorado Whitewater Association, to print newsletters and action alerts to help protect free-flowing rivers in Colorado. Contact person: Richard Alesch 303-985-8620

*Georgia: Campaign for a Prosperous Georgia, a non-profit group dedicated to economically and environmentally sound growth and policy solutions for Georgia, to educate the public about the River Corridor Protection Act, to be introduced in the state legislature in January, 1991. Contact person: Doug Oetter 912-

745-6553

*Georgia: Wildlife Action, Inc, to insure citizen participation in the recently approved Congressional National Wild and Scenic study for the St. Marys River, which serves as the border between Georgia and Florida. Contact person: David Amos, 912-264-4106

*Maine: Penobscot River Coalition, to support citizen work to stop the Basin Mills hydropower proposal on the Penobscot, the number one salmon restoration river in the East. Contact person: Don Shields 207-942-7183

*Massachusetts: Nashua River Watershed Association, to assist the Massachusetts Watershed Coalition with passage of the Massachusetts River Protection Act, which includes provisions for land preservation and water quality. Local contact: Ed Himlan 508-342-3506

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***Michigan:** Michigan United Conservation Clubs, to continue its work on the Michigan Omnibus Wild and Scenic Bill currently in Congress. This bill would add 15 rivers to the national rivers system. Contact person: Rich Jameson 517-371-1041

***Minnesota:** St. Croix Watershed Research Station of the Science Museum of Minnesota, to help publicize its report on protection options for the river, one of the nation's original Wild and Scenic Rivers. Contact person: Ron Lawrenz 612-221-9488

***Oregon:** Friends of the Sandy River, for its work to secure federal Wild and Scenic River protection for 30 miles of the Sandy, including the spectacular Sandy River Gorge, which lie between two already protected river segments. If protected the Sandy will be the first river in the United States to be declared Wild and Scenic from its source to its mouth. Contact person: Robert Galasso 503-622-5506

***Vermont:** Connecticut River Watershed Council, Inc., to participate in the legislative initiatives/proposals to protect minimum in-stream flows in Vermont,

particularly in the Black River, which is threatened by proposals which would overdraw the water and threaten fish spawning areas.

Contact person: Peter Richardson 802-649-5250

***Washington:** Northwest Rivers Council, to assist with sponsorship of its 1990 annual rivers conference, which will focus on the natural processes, recrea-

tional opportunities and legal aspects of river conservation. Contact person: Sandie Nelson 206-547-7886

***Wisconsin:** Lake Michigan Federation, to urge a remedial action plan for cleaning up and protecting the Menominee River from multiple sources of pollution and habitat damage, and to investigate protection options for the river. Contact person: Rebecca Leighton 414-432-0881

AWA seeks volunteer to head 1991 Gauley Festival planning

After two years of hard work as Gauley Festival organizer, AWA Director Anita Adams deserves a rest. She has done a stupendous job, as anyone attending either the 1989 or 1990 events at the New River Gorge Campground can attest. Anita has also made tremendous strides in laying the groundwork for future Gauley festivals and has indicated a willingness to act as a consultant in this regard.

AWA is currently seeking a new Gauley Festival coordinator for 1991 from its membership. This individual would be

primarily responsible for finalizing site details (insurance, equipment, band, food vendors, etc.), staffing the Festival and advance publicity. Proximity to the Festival site is also a plus, especially immediately preceding the event.

Fret not, you would not be alone in this undertaking! Plenty of support is available from a highly experienced crew. But we need you to tie things together. Please indicate your interest and qualifications to: AWA, p.o. box 85, Phoenicia, N.Y. 12464.

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Gauley Festival draws record crowd

A record attendance of over 1,200 whitewater enthusiasts packed the grounds of the New River Gorge Campground for the 1990 AWA Gauley River Festival.

A combination of unusual fair weather along with the superlative planning of Gauley Festival coordinator Anita Adams contributed to the heavy atten-

dance making the 1990 event the most successful in history.

Gate receipts combined with revenue from the AWA Silent Auction, raffle proceeds, t-shirt sales and income from the AWA marketplace netted the AWA over \$15,000 in a single day--making the event also the most profitable in history.

Adams was forced to contend with a number of last-minute emergencies including cancellation of the scheduled band, the need to find a new insurance carrier and a change in the host campground's beer sales policy--but after a week of cool maneuvering by Adams--the Festival came off effortlessly.

"The Festival was our most successful in every respect," said AWA executive director Phyllis Horowitz. "Our intent is to provide a quality experience for the paddling community while raising money

for our conservation efforts and we succeeded in both regards."

Horowitz cited the enthusiasm of AWA volunteers as the key behind the Festival's smooth operation.

"Obviously, most of the credit needs to be given to Anita," Horowitz said. "Organizing the Festival is a monumental feat with dozens of frustrating difficulties that require attention. Her positive attitude was a tremendous plus in solving those problems."

"In addition to Anita, we benefited from a virtual army of volunteers on the day of the festival that enabled us to stage a well-run event."

The record throng enjoyed the music of the fine last-minute replacement band as well as varied displays at the Gauley Festival Marketplace. But throughout the evening, the most popular activity proved to be meeting with fellow paddlers.

AWA alters dues structure

During recent years AWA has been growing as a strong national organization. As our membership base expands, so do our programs and goals. And naturally, our needs follow suit.

In order to keep pace of AWA's growth and to accommodate and reward the desire of our individual members to become involved at various levels, we are introducing the following membership categories and incentives beginning with January 1991 renewals.

Individual- \$20 Single person, basic membership. Includes subscription to American Whitewater magazine. New Individual members also receive a copy of the AWA Safety Code and AWA decal. (Foreign, \$30; Canadian, \$25)

Family- \$30 Category includes membership for all household members. The annual benefits are otherwise the same as basic Individual membership. (Foreign, \$40; Canadian, \$35)

Attainers- \$50 In addition to the basic annual benefits described above, Attainers making an annual donation of \$50-\$90 will receive an attractive enamel cloisonne AWA lapel pin.

Ender Club- \$100 All Ender Club members donating \$100 or more at renewal time will receive a specially designed AWA Ender Club T-shirt in addition to the basic annual benefits.

Affiliate Club- \$50 Affiliate Clubs will receive a subscription to American Whitewater magazine and five AWA Safety Codes and five AWA decals at the time of renewal.

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American Whitewater welcomes submissions from its readers. Proposed articles should relate in some way to whitewater...river conservation...expeditionary boating...safety...interviews with river personalities...paddling techniques. Our readers are most interested in new rivers, not previously described in well-known guidebooks. Most of our readers are intermediate to advanced boaters, they do not need instruction on how to brace or roll, but they are interested in innovative designs and styles. We try to be receptive to any and all ideas.

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

Submissions should be double spaced and neat. Correct spelling and

grammar are appreciated.

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

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

Story length should rarely exceed 3000 words...twelve typed pages..double spaced. The best stories have a distinct focus or slant. This aspect of the story should make it unique and should catch

the readers' interest. The focus should be introduced in a clear way at the beginning of the article.

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

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

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



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Nine fatalities reported

Tragedy mars 1990 boating season



By CHARLIE WALBRIDGE
AWA Safety Coordinator

The second half of the 1990 paddling season was a tough one from a river safety standpoint. Five fatal accidents among experienced kayakers and canoeists were reported to me during this period. Three occurred in Colorado during a spate of early June high water. The remaining accidents occurred on the Chatoga and Gauley rivers back East. When added to the four spring fatalities the total becomes nine for the year, one of the heaviest tolls in recent memory. This does not count commercial rafting fatalities or incidents not brought to my attention. I was also informed of several serious injuries and near-misses.

For the Colorado accidents I have relied heavily on "A Sad Look Back", a synopsis prepared by Colorado White Water Association safety director Ron Judkoff and published in their journal "Spray". Quoted material is excerpted from his report. His work is an excellent example of how club safety chairs can clear the air of rumors and educate their membership after a rash of fatalities in their usual boating area.

On June 10 Steven Schaub of Vermont was kayaking the Crystal River near Redstone, Colorado. Steven was 50 years old, an expert kayaker accompanied by four other strong paddlers. The accident occurred at a culvert which spanned the river in the midst of a class III stretch. After scouting, one person ran the culvert successfully while three other paddlers portaged the bridge. Schaub attempted the run, broaching on a pillar located about six feet inside the culvert. His fiberglass boat folded, pinning him in place. Initially the situation seemed stable, and the victim was able to communicate with his rescuers. A throw rope was gotten to him quickly but he eventually weakened and lost his hold on the rope. The boat was released by county rescue squad personnel a half hour later.

Man-made obstacles are always dangerous. They serve as collection points for debris and often have hidden hazards.

"The Floater's Guide to Colorado" recommends portaging this place, but it is often run. We don't know if Schaub knew about the pillar, but greater care in scouting might have helped. Judkoff suggested lowering a kayak to the victim for support; a good idea, but one which takes time to set up.

On June 16 Ted Graff, an expert paddler, was running the Black Rock section of Clear Creek with two friends. The river was running high, about 900 cfs, creating continuous class IV and V rapids. Ted flipped in an eddy just above Black Rock and was carried into the main current. He caught the flip "on an extended brace, the kind which doesn't get you all the way back up and doesn't allow you to go all the way over for a proper roll." After numerous such attempts he finally went all the way over, tried a few weak rolls, and exited the boat. One of his companions got to him immediately, and got him close to shore several times. But Ted, although conscious, was too weak to help himself and each time washed back into the current. Eventually he was carried through the crux of the rapid, a large hole. His companions picked him up just below here. By this time, unfortunately, he was unconscious. CPR began at once, and was continued for over an hour until help arrived.

Flush-drowning of life-jacketed boaters is not an uncommon occurrence in the Rockies, which have many stretches of continuously difficult whitewater. There have been at least two others during the past three years, usually during periods of high water. A good roll is the paddler's first line of defense, and the victim's roll was reported to be "rusty" by paddlers with whom he had made the same run the previous week. Somewhere along the line he probably inhaled some water with debilitating effects. The intensity of the rapids at this spot made fast rescue of a helpless man an iffy proposition even for a strong group.

Several pieces of his equipment were suspect. He had installed a seat belt in his kayak which had to be released separately. This may have compromised his ability to leave his boat quickly. Such a handicap cannot be tolerated by advanced to expert boaters, since they "seldom

consider exiting unless extremely low on air." The victim's life jacket "was deteriorated and of a low flotation design"; not a good choice for a run of this difficulty. A full-sized life jacket in good repair floats you higher so you get more air, making self-rescue easier.

On June 9 Larry Heidemann was running the "Below the Numbers/Frog Rock" section of the Arkansas with his brother. The run is nominally a Class III, but the river was running at a very high level (3800 cfs; 4.5') which added significantly to the difficulty. The victim apparently capsized suddenly. His brother gave chase, but broached on a small boulder and swam. The brother was able to swim to safety, but Heidemann was swept downriver. His body was recovered some distance downstream.

The pair, though properly equipped, may have underestimated the water level and thus the difficulty of the run. They would have been better off on an easier run or in the company of more experienced paddlers. One report to me mentioned a head injury, but I'm unable to confirm this.

Over Memorial Day weekend an

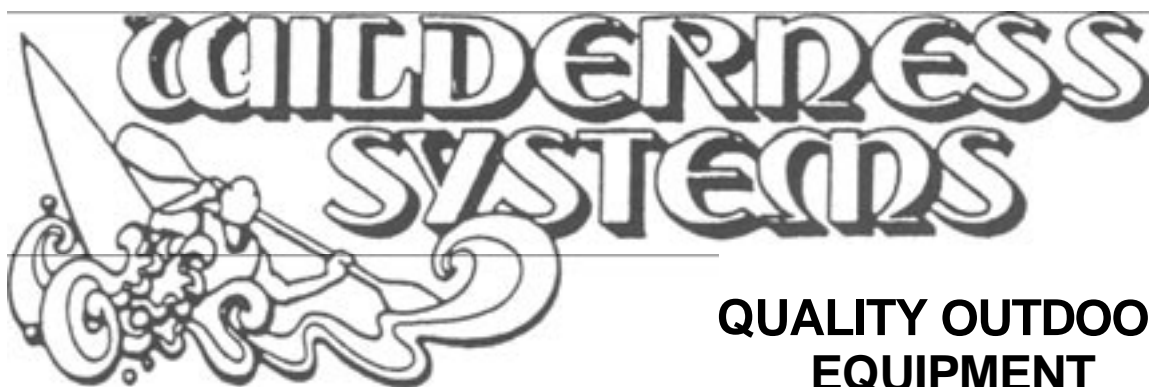
inexpensive raft with four young children inside was moored to a vehicle bumper in an eddy between drops I and II on the Numbers section of the Arkansas. The raft broke loose, heading for class IV water. The children, who were wearing life vests, were rescued in short order by kayakers. Rebecca Martin, a bystander who was not wearing a PFD, dove into the water to swim the raft to shore. She drowned. This underscores the importance of PFD's in swift water and the poor judgement often shown by non-paddlers who are not familiar with river safety.

It was during this same period, June 7, that RMOC guide Lincoln Williams narrowly escaped death after becoming entangled in a derelict throw line on the "Numbers" section of the Arkansas. The rescue, described in a previous report, ultimately resulted in a full recovery with no brain damage despite five minutes under water and forty-five minutes of CPR. He is currently back working on the river, living motivation for all of us to learn CPR and not to give up under similar circumstances.

On Saturday June 28 a family of three began a trip down Section III of the

Chatooga at I, a very low flow. This run is all intermediate whitewater except for Bull Sluice, which is often carried. Father and daughter were paddling tandem canoe; the victim, the man's 13 year old son, was in C-1. Reaching the Narrows, the open canoe team ran through successfully. The son flipped, swam, attempted to stand, and caught his foot under a ledge. This was a fatal error; the current knocked him over and forced him beneath the surface. His father attempted rescue and apparently reached the boy, but after several attempts only succeeded in pulling off his life vest. The body may have been dislodged by this; however, since it was found downstream some time later.

The weekend of the Gauley Festival was once again the scene of a drowning. On Sunday, September 22 Brian Brodin, an experienced paddler from Washington, D.C., pinned while running a steep side chute in Conestoga Rapid. This drop, which is not well-known, lies a short distance above House Rock on the Upper Gauley. Brian and his squirt boat pinned vertically and submerged deeply, but an air pocket formed in front of his head which gave rescuers time to work. Two



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SAFETY

rescue lines, one from each side of the chute, were thrown to the victim. As he held on, an attempt was made to pull him upstream. When this failed, the boat settled deeper into the chute. At this point the current suddenly took Brodin's helmet off, eliminating the air pocket.

As the situation turned desperate, guides from a Class VI River Runners joined the group, lending their considerable strength and experience to the rescue. They first attempted to reach Brian by paddling a raft upstream, assisted by ropes from the upstream rocks. When this failed, they worked to cut off water to the chute by swamping a raft in the opening. On the second try this worked, and the flow was cut to the point that they could attach a rope to the victim's stern and pull it free. CPR was started at once; the victim was rafted to House Rock then evacuated by helicopter to the hospital. His heart was restarted at this point, but he passed away early the next morning.

The victim, though a strong paddler, was just beginning the difficult transition to squirt boating. The Gauley was his first run in this boat outside the protected confines of the Potomac Gorge. While

his runs down the big rapids were sharp and clean, Brian was seeking out and running obscure side chutes in the easier rapids in between. Many of these drops are extremely obstructed, and some of the chutes are far more difficult and dangerous than the rest of the run. To do so was certainly a lapse in judgement. I know from switching between boats that you have to continually remind yourself that a new boat may not perform like the one you are most comfortable in. Although expert squirtists could doubtless run the drop cleanly, even they must contend with added risk.

The limitations of squirt boats in steep, technical whitewater has been well-documented over the years. The 5' drop had been run moments earlier by a group in cruising boats without a mishap. Although a conventional kayak was pinned there a few years ago, its added length and buoyancy made the extrication routine. A low volume stern, so necessary for squirt moves, is a liability in vertical pins because it tends to dive until it is flattened against the ledge. Rescuers reported that as soon as the stern could be lifted up the entire boat floated free. Added bow volume does

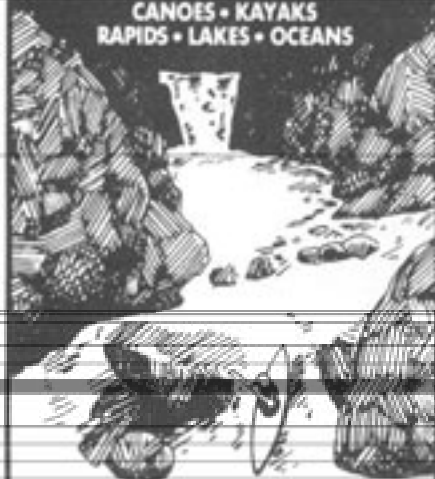
not eliminate this problem, and I suspect that this might have been a factor in Whitney Shields' death last year. Judging from the rescue description, two rescue bags could have been linked together to form a snag line. This would have offered more support without requiring any effort from the victim, giving the rescuers additional time to work.

Several near-misses are worthy of note. Tragedy was narrowly averted in this year's Savage River Races on forth of July weekend when Kathy Bolyn, one of the country's most experienced woman kayakists, became pinned against a downed tree below Memorial Rock. Bolyn, who was making her second pre-race practice run, knew of the obstacle but continued to run the main slot rather than the slower, but safer, left-hand sneak her boat broached against the tree, crushed sideways, and wrapped. Kathy was left in a precarious heads-up position, holding on to the tree while facing upstream.

Her companions reacted quickly. Jeff Huey and Bern Collins supported Kathy with a rope while Paul Grabow headed ashore to borrow a saw from a nearby house. Before the tree was cut to release

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the boat a second rope was passed to Kathy which allowed her to swing safely to shore. Despite serious knee injuries she was able to paddle a kayak across the river to safety. With the help of many competitors she was taken to an ambulance, and from there to Cumberland by helicopter. She was found to have badly torn and stretched ligaments in one knee. She was operated on some time later and as of this writing is making a slow, steady recovery.

Whitewater racers must never forget that despite the challenge of pursuing other competitors the river itself remains a formidable adversary. While Kathy miscalculated in attempting to sneak past the tree, she survived because of her coolness in the face of pain and fear and because of the sensible precautions she and her group took. She herself was wearing a wetsuit vest and a drytop which offered protection from the icy waters of the Savage. Because of the tree several in her group were carrying ropes. Despite the pressures of competition, racers need to maintain a respect for the river. The essence of whitewater competition lies in trading reasonable risks for increased speed. When danger is ignored, trouble is sure to

follow.

This past year there were an unprecedented number of neck injuries. The first involved a rafting client who apparently dove into a rapid on Maryland's Upper Yough. There is permanent paralysis connected with this one. On September 21 Dr. Steve Barron, a kayaker, hit his head while running the left side of the second drop of Lost Paddle on the upper Gauley. The impact cracked his Seda helmet and pushed his head forward, fracturing one of the vertebral processes. Although painful, this is apparently not a serious injury. He was able to walk out to Carnifax Ferry Battlefield Park at the canyon rim where his group called an ambulance. He was then taken to the hospital where he was treated and released.

Noted squirtist Jeff Snyder was injured the following day. He was holding a squirt clinic on the nearby New River when he turned over while doing a wave move in Double Z rapid. The river was running 6" below zero, and he hit a rock hard after flipping. His helmet was deeply scratched, but the damage was done by shoving his head forward. This cracked his fifth cervical vertebrae. He was badly

dazed, and remained upside-down in his boat. After being rolled upright by one of his students, he was helped to shore. Jeff was in considerable pain, and had tingling sensations in one arm. He was evacuated by raft without any back support, and was evacuated from the takeout on a backboard to a local hospital where his injury was stabilized. He was then flown from West Virginia to Ohio and operated on soon after, and at this writing is up and around and seems well on the way to a complete recovery.

I expect to see more spinal injuries given the steeper rapids which are now commonly run. It is vitally important that persons suspected of having spinal injuries not be moved unnecessarily, since careless handling can cause permanent damage. In the absence of a backboard they should be made comfortable until one can be obtained. Symptoms to watch for: severe back pain, and sensations of tingling or numbness which indicate the potential for nerve damage.

All of these events point to the need for continued care when running difficult whitewater. We will never eliminate risk from our sport, and even experts

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make errors which have serious consequences. The fun and freedom which accompanies river running must always be tempered by a sense of respect and fear for dangerous situations which may develop in moving water. Only continued vigilance will keep us safe. Please continue to send reports and clippings to me at 230 Penllyn Pike, Penllyn, PA 19422.

ERRATA: A previous column identified Dean Middleditch, a victim of a drowning on New York's Salmon River, as a member of the Adirondac Mountain Club. Although the other members of the trip were affiliated with ADK, the victim was not. Nor was this a scheduled ADK trip. My apologies to the ADK.

Brodin Fund set

A memorial fund in memory of Brian Brodin has been established for his one-year old son Gage. Brodin drowned after pinning on the Gauley in September. Paddlers wishing to contribute can mail checks to:

Thomas Brodin Benefit for Gage Brodin
C/O Meritor Savings, FA
Springfield, VA 22151.

AWA initiates comprehensive river safety survey

For the second year in a row a kayaker drowned on the day following the Gauley Festival on the Gauley drainage. Nationally, for the second year in a row, eight whitewater paddlers have died in the United States.

In spite of AWA's river safety education efforts and paddling accident reports, an unacceptable number of boaters are dying on the river.

No single factor can explain all of these fatalities. Lack of expertise, low or high water flows, equipment design, the expansion of the sport into class VI rivers and just plain bad luck have all been cited. Although the AWA has been collecting data on fatalities for years, the underlying patterns remain unclear.

Sad and important as each one of these fatalities is, reviewing nine incidents in a year does not give the AWA enough data to establish patterns that will help refocus our safety efforts.

Waiting until there are enough fatalities to identify trends would be irresponsible. Not while boaters of all ability levels, friends and boating partners, are dying.

And so, in order to expand its data base, the AWA have decided to collect information on the "close calls" that you or your friends may have had during the past three boating seasons. This additional information should allow identification of any patterns that might explain the increase in unfortunate incidents on the rivers.

An AWA committee of Charlie Walbridge, Lee Belknap and Peter Skinner has created and will soon be distributing a very important questionnaire. Please fill it out honestly and return it immediately. Think of this task as something **you** would do for someone in trouble on the river - react fast and effectively. The answers needed will only become clear if you par-

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ticipate.

Remember, your reports are the key which may save the lives of you or your friends. The sooner the AWA receives data, the sooner a report can be prepared and programs developed which will address significant risk factors that lead to river deaths.

The AWA already produces the Whitewater Safety Code, the leading authority on whitewater safety. We are the only organization with the background to produce this ambitious report.

Class VI guides lauded for rescue efforts

To the Guides of Class VI... Particularly Jerry Drennen:

I am writing to you on behalf of the American Whitewater Association. We are composed of 1800 whitewater lovers, dedicated to the incomparable fun of our sport, as well as to the enhancement of safety and the preservation of whitewater rivers.

Kayaking down Tumblehome last Sunday, I saw a Medevac helicopter clearing the rim of the Gauley Canyon. At the time I had no idea that it contained Brian Brodin, a paddling friend I had spent much time with this summer. I am still struggling with his death—the loss of a friend in circumstances which haunt every advanced paddler, at least at some level.

I am not familiar with the details of how Brian died—I find the topic too painful to contemplate. However, I have spoken to several AWA members who witnessed all or part of the rescue effort mounted by several of you. The universal opinion of these knowledgeable paddlers is that your efforts were nothing short of heroic. You exhibited a calm but speedy response, quickly evaluating an extremely difficult situation and executing as good an attempt as humanly possible. We are aware that one of you, Jerry Drennen, was seriously injured in the course of the rescue.

All of us in AWA are grateful for your selfless efforts to save a paddler in desperate trouble. Thank you.

Mac Thornton
AWA Vice President

Gauley paddler killed after vertical pin

excerpted from a preliminary report by Steve Taylor

On September 23, the day after the Gauley Festival, Brian Brodin of Centerville, Virginia died as the result of a vertical pin in Conestoga Rapid on the Gauley.

The victim's squirt boat was vertically pinned in a narrow (6 to 8 feet wide), steep (4 to 5 feet vertical) slot in the last drop on the right side of Conestoga Rapids, just upstream of Ship Rock Rapid. Downstream of the slot a rock just under the water surface deflected the water to the right and left with more water flowing to the left. The victim's boat was pinned upstream of this rock.

The slot's downward flow pushed the boat onto the river bottom and pushed on the Brodin's back. Preliminary calculations suggest a force of 100 to 300 pounds could have been exerted on the victim's upper body, which was in the smooth, clear fast water at the base of the slot.

Immediately after the pin both outfitter's guides and private boaters climbed onto the rocks forming the slot and onto the downstream rock, but none could reach the victim. Shortly after the pin, at 1:25 PM, the victim had handholds on ropes strung between the rocks forming the slot. With the rope handholds, Brodin's head was just under the water surface with an air pocket in front of his face.

Brodin tried to pull on the ropes but with little effect. After a short time, the victim released the ropes and his upper body was pushed forward, resulting in the loss of the air pocket. His helmet washed off.

A raft was maneuvered into the left side of the slot. Ropes extended from the right rock forming the slot were used to pull the raft close enough to reach the victim. After a struggle to move the raft close to the victim, the victim's life jacket and paddle jacket were grabbed, but came off.

In the meantime, in an effort to block the flow into the slot, a raft was being

maneuvered upstream. In the process of preparing the upstream raft, a raft guide broke his ankle. The raft was eventually broached across the top of the slot. Some air was released from the upstream tube and 3 to 4 people sat on the tube blocking some flow.

The victim's left hand was then grabbed from the downstream raft. A rope was attached. With the attached rope, on the second or third try, the victim and boat together were pulled out by 3 to 4 people in the upstream raft.

Brodin's skin was described as "blue ashen".

CPR was started immediately at 1:45. The victim's squirt boat was tied to a raft and the victim was placed on top of the squirt boat with CPR continuing. Brodin was rafted to Ship Rock with CPR uninterrupted. A helicopter landed on Ship Rock and the victim was hoisted to top of the rock. The helicopter took off about 2:40.

The raft guide with the broken ankle was later evacuated.

At the hospital, Brodin's heart was started and functioned until 1 AM the following morning. Before his heart stopped doctors were preparing to pronounce the victim brain dead.

This tragic accident raises a number of safety issues, many of which have been controversial in previous AWA journals. For this reason AWA would like to construct a more detailed summary including reader insights, views, comments and suggestions concerning any safety issues raised by this accident.

Many boaters witnessed this accident and their input is welcomed. Please provide this material to Steve Taylor, 721 Boundary Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910. If you would like to help prepare this report by commenting on the article's draft(s), please also send a self addressed, stamped envelope. Taylor's home phone is 301-587-1204.

AWA Board of Directors election

Risa Shimoda **Callaway**
Sherrills Ford, North Carolina

For the last twelve years I have maniacally weekend-boated my way around the east, and have settled in the southeast.

I love squirt boating in deep water, big-boating when gradient becomes significant, and relentlessly try to live up to the skill and wisdom of an old friend, Julie Wood, who always reminded me about how much my river reading skills sucked. I therefore feel I can represent the orientation of many types of boaters, novice to expert. I was the first Executive Director of the AWA (12187-3/90), giving me good grounding on how this wonderful band of dedicated renegades works.

As a new director, I plan to develop the awareness of AWA and its significant accomplishments with a public relations effort that actively lets people (e.g. readers of major periodicals, outdoor industry retailers and manufacturers) know that we are out there and doing great things. Activity ranging from simple press releases to more complex programs with specific stores, organizations etc. will be involved.

Additionally, I have already initiated an organization called the National Organization of Whitewater Rodeos. This group, consisting of volunteers from around the country, will be working together to enhance the awareness of and participation in over fourteen annual whitewater rodeos and festivals.

Effective and more efficient solicitation of major sponsorship, event insurance, manufacturer prize donations, etc. will be projects for us to tackle. The result over time, we hope, will be significant recognition for the events, their organizers, and the part AWA plays in the whole thing. Not to mention great participation, attendance and recognition for rodeo athletes.

Being an active member of the whitewater community has and will always be extremely important to me. I feel capable of making contributions that will help the organization continue to grow, and I hope that you as members will give me that opportunity.



Voting procedure	
A slate of notable candidates	fill the ballot for approval as members of the American Whitewater Board of Directors.
Members are asked to approve or disapprove of each candidate. Every nomination that receives an affirmative vote on 50% of the ballots received will be introduced to the Board.	
Members are encouraged to complete and mail the attached ballot by December 31, 1990.	

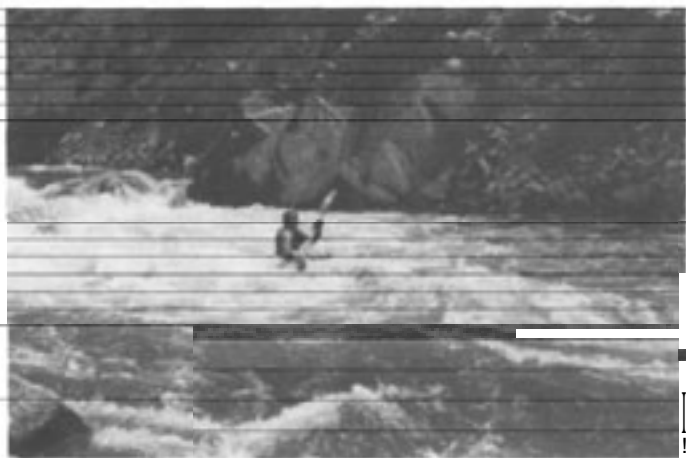
Jim Scott
Washington, D.C.

I have been an active paddler of canoes and kayaks since 1978. While most of my river running has been concentrated in the mid-Atlantic region, it includes several trips to Colorado, Idaho, Montana and the Grand Canyon. I served as a representative to the ACA National Slalom and Wildwater Committee during 1984-86, and was an active member of American Rivers during the same period. I am currently employed as Vice President for Operations of the American Forestry Association, which is a

national citizens organization established in 1875 for more and better trees and forests.

As the AWA moves into the 90's - the decade of the environment - we have an opportunity to expand our current mission of preserving, protecting and defending American Whitewater to include reclaiming whitewater through aggressive implementation of AWA's Relicensing Project. This is a unique opportunity but will require expanded resources from AWA, including members, volunteers and money.

As an AWA director, my contribution would be to help expand those resources by building revenues through grants, fundraising and increased membership. While AWA is currently a very effective organization, we can be significantly more effective with additional resources. We can't let the opportunity to make the 90's the decade of whitewater pass us by.



Charlie Walbridge
Penllyn, Pennsylvania

I started paddling open canoes in college in 1967, progressing to C-1 and messing around with kayaks occasionally. At one time I was an active racer, but river running has always been my first love and I get on the water frequently. I've watched the sport make the transition from a band of eccentrics using mostly homemade gear into the full fledged sport we know today.

Appointed American Canoe Association Safety Chair in 1977, I have always believed that the sport depends on the

concept that paddling should be limited only by the skill and judgement of its participants, not by a rigid set of rules. I have consistently opposed regulations which would set certain rivers or gear as "off limits" to skilled and capable river runners.

Believing in education, not **regulation**, I have written numerous books and articles on the subject, run rescue training classes, and worked with government agencies in an effort to promote this philosophy. My regular boating accident reports have been a regular feature in the AWA Journal since the mid-seventies. I was also the Chairman of the most recent AWA Safety Code revision.

I currently run Wildwater Designs, a mail-order canoe and kayak supply company.



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An Eastern boater explores brave, new Western worlds

A fact of life of whitewater boating in the eastern U.S. is that almost all of the rivers are familiar. Over the years the knowledge base within the eastern paddling community has developed to a point where even on a boater's first descent of a river he, or somebody in the group, will probably have detailed knowledge of the rapids and their consequences.

This greatly reduces boater strain and allows paddlers to make steep ascents up the river learning curve. But what happens when you are intimately familiar with your neighborhood? Boredom? Apathy? Or a need to get out and explore brave new worlds?

Some say that familiarity breeds contempt, but with eastern boaters it has bred innovation. Some paddlers have adapted high performance race designs so that they may run tighter slots, boof over large drops, and enjoy the thrills of speed and maneuverability. Others have gone down under and use squirt boats to explore the river's third dimension. Still

Exploring wilderness areas by kayaks yields rewards beyond the wildest dreams of any backpacker. The first major ingredient ... adrenaline.

others are out exploring hot, new steep creeks.

No, you do not have to leave your neighborhood to find new experiences, but what happens when you do?

Earlier this year I loaded my vehicle with a squirt, race, and... for the first time in seven years... a plastic boat and headed west.

From earlier trips I knew that boating in the west has several features that differentiate it from the east. Rivers are younger and steeper, the rock is sharper, and the water velocity higher. I expected to be, and was, challenged by the white-

water. However, I discovered the most gratifying feature of the west was exploring its wilderness areas. So I loaded my kayak as a hiker would his backpack. Sometimes to explore the scenery, other times for the whitewater.

But a kayak is much more versatile than a backpack, for it forces you to interact with your surroundings and sensitizes you. Besides, you can get yourself into a whole lot more trouble.

Bald Rock Canyon, Middle Fork of the Feather River, California

Arriving at the Silly Bar Rodeo in California after two days of nonstop driving I am greeted by the usual voices of doom that echo in a low water year. "Go home. There's no water. Runoff peaked a month ago. Head north to Oregon. Go home..."

However, a little networking reveals that Lars Holbeck is planning to run Bald Rock Canyon later in the



Opposite: Mike Price careens over the edge of an edge of a steep ledge in a gorge on the Clarks Fork. Above: Mike Price drives shuttle on the South Fork of the Shoshone River--but how did he mount those racks without rain gutters? Both shots courtesy of Save Pennington.

week. Introducing myself, he says I am welcome to tag along if I am "comfortable running class V and portaging." I answer no, but Lars moves on. I read the description in Lars' and Chuck Stanley's A Guide to the Best Whitewater in the State of California and wonder if this trip is an intelligent choice for my first self-contained kayaking trip.

"Bald Rock Canyon is one of the most spectacular canyons in California. Granite walls tower to the sky; awesome rapids dwell in the crotch of the canyon

floor. Only real men need apply for passage..." Also described are waterfall rapids, death ferries, and eddy catching at the lip of class V and VI drops. Average gradient run is 108 feet per mile with one stretch at 195 fpm. But still, how can 6.5 miles of river warrant an overnight stay?

Storing gear for my first self-contained kayak trip, I decide to go light - food, dry polypro, sleeping bag, thermarest. Our party is rounded out by a group of guides which will attempt the second raft descent of Bald Rock. As river decorum

dictates, they are the party barge.

However, soon the raft is overloaded and I am stuffing a twelve pack into my cockpit. East...west...I understand this type of boating.

We warm up in the first mile and at the first class V rapid we get out to scout. I ask Lars what the rapid is named. He answers "first big rapid," and moves on. A novel idea for an eastern boy, a river on which every drop and rock is not labeled. But so it is in Bald Rock Canyon.

Over the next two days we run numerous tight, technical class IV and V drops, plunge over the edge of 30 foot Curtain Falls and scream down the Superslide.

We camp overnight at the Bald Rock Hilton, a shelf of rock forty feet above the water and only half way down the portage of Atom Bomb Falls. Exploring the pile of rocks that make up Atom Bomb, I am seduced by the forces that have sculpted the white granite of this steep canyon.

Soon Hilton Happy Hour begins and, as day turns to night, the canyon become iridescent under the light of the full moon. The celebration of the river is in full swing. Yes, it can be run in a day, but Bald Rock is an experience that is meant to be savored.

South Fork of the Shoshone River, Wyoming

Have you ever had to beg your shuttle vehicle to go?

I am negotiating with my shuttle horse. Sometimes he wants to go fast and strikes me kidney blows with the ends of the kayaks he has been forced to carry. Other times he will not move at all. I would say that he is a stubborn ass, but everybody knows that donkeys are smarter than horses and I do not want to compliment him.

We are headed over 10,000 foot Shoshone pass to get to the headwaters of the South Fork of the Shoshone River. Previously known only to horsepacking hunters and fishermen, this drainage holds some of the prettiest scenery in the state.

In July of 1989 Gregg Lawley, Dave Pennington and Anne Ford made the original descent of this wilderness river. Gregg had been studying maps of the greater Yellowstone area for months exploring new runs for his and Dave's forthcoming guide book. While other river explorations had yielded mild rewards or the infamous "Lawley's Folly" designa-



Tim Shanahan photo

Mark White plunges through frothy drop on the Clarks Fork.

***Two runs at Curtain Falls:** In the photo below, Tim Shanahan captures kayaker in midflight at one of the premier drops in the Bald Rock Canyon. On the right, a group of guides attempt the same drop in a self-bailingraft.*



tion, Gregg came out with a gem of a find with this run.

After a fifteen mile, full day hike we finally get to the put-in, a high alpine meadow, where several forks come together giving the river aflow rate of about 50 cfs. On the way we have seen deer, elk, and luckily no bears. This is grizzly country and knowing that I am more or less a city boy, our horsepacker, Wayne, has

taken glee in pointing out scores of bear tracks along the hike.

Bears, bears, bears,... The folks in this part of the country have great respect for these creatures, but we abandon caution and have no worries cooking salmon steaks for dinner. The boys from Jackson have learned how to treat themselves well on self-support boating trips, especially when they have a beast of burden to carry

the fun.

The next morning we hike up to a ridge for a better view of what lies ahead and are greeted by the sights and sounds of the summer snow melt. Numerous small waterfalls paint the sides of the canyon and above treeline the brightly colored rock gives off feelings of warmth.

As we put-on it is late morning and the river is rising from the day's snow

melt. We float through Bliss Meadows, which lives up to the imagery of its name. The five mile trip is all too short. Yellow, purple, and blue wildflowers abound and we scare up more wildlife.

I want it to last longer, but the gravel bars through the meadow drop at over 50 feet per mile. There is no going slow.

At the end of Bliss Meadow the river enters into a gorge that is a tangled mess of ugly rock and log-jams. The following one mile portage makes me wish that the horse had not departed. The boys waste no time teaching me the fine art of plastic boat dragging. Although it violates my morals I finally succumb.

Camp is found and more deer and elk come to visit as dusk sets in.

Day three dawns and I am ready for some whitewater. Continuous eating and drinking have allowed my boat to shed a few unwanted pounds. A day full of class IV boating fun. Several mini-gorges are run with some interesting rapids. As the river volume multiplies from 400 to 2000+ cfs, play spots open up and boats are soon jumping into the air in intentional, and unintentional, ends.

Towards the end of the run we are greeted by a sixty foot waterfall spilling vertically into the river. The rainbows that dance off of it reflect my mood as the canyon opens up to reveal majestic views of Absaroka mountains, which form the eastern boundary of Yellowstone National Park.

Three days of tracking the river from its headwaters to its outwash in the plains have given our group a cohesive, happy glow. In awe of the beauty and peacefulness of this remote wilderness we load the shuttle vehicle with boats. Already plans are being laid for next year's return. A longer trip with time for side hikes and fishing.

When you have found something this special you always want it to last.

Wounded Man Run...the Upper Stillwater River, Montana

Chuck Stanley once wrote "to name a rapid is an awesome responsibility, for all those that follow in your footsteps will be forced to utter those hallowed words you have chosen." What Chuck did not describe was the naming process. Usually it takes place in serendipitous surroundings of a beer swilling, river-lie session.

And so it was with the "Wounded

Man." Sitting in the Grizzly Bar in Nye, Montana, we are feeling the glow of a successfully completed two day descent of the upper Stillwater River. We are also feeling the glow of a good meal and numerous beers.

As we feel the pain in our lower extremities from the last two days portaging and the pain in our upper bodies from a solid week of paddling in the Beartooth mountains, Gregg Lawley mentions Wounded Man Creek, a tributary of the upper Stillwater. The phrase describes us, so we attach the name to the run we have just completed.

As chronicled in a 1983 AWA Journal, the first attempt of the upper Stillwater from its headwaters to the mouth of the canyon at Woodbine campground had to be aborted. Attempting a one day assault of this 29 mile section, these pioneers realized that they were too ambitious. They hiked the last half of the run, earning themselves the distinction of being "first wounded."

Our group of Gregg, Dave Pennington, and myself had planned a little better. Loaded with topos and supplies for two days we arrived at the put-in near Lake Abundance late in the evening. We are promptly greeted by the howling of coyotes. At 8500 feet sound carries and several times during the evening I start at their clamour.

The next morning we backtrack to where the trail crosses the Stillwater and begin walking our boats down the river. At this point the flow is about 25 cubic spoonfuls per second. Following the stream to where it precipitously drops off the edge of the plateau and begins its plunge towards the plains below, the scenery abruptly changes as we enter into the burn area from the 1988 Yellowstone complex of fires.

The fires were hot enough to shatter rock outcrops. The entire valley has been scorched. Trees are stripped and the ground is blackened. Small saplings have been burned to just above ground level, transforming them into puny sticks which are soon wounding my feet. But all is not lost, for with the clearing of competition, wildflowers have taken over the valley, painting sections of mountainside bright yellow and purple.

After a couple of miles of hiking downstream the river, though bony, has enough flow to start paddling. Steep, unrunnable mini-gorges alternate with meandering meadows that are clogged with logs, so we are forced to do numerous portages. With each mile descended, the

river picks up volume and by the end of the day good whitewater is encountered.

As dusk descends we are able to run one of the small gorges and with thoughts of ~~barrier whitewater~~ downstream we camp on a sandbar just below the infamous Wounded Man Creek.

I awake the next morning to two moose standing 20 feet away on the sandbar. Other moose are in the small clearing behind us. Their presence surprises us since the surrounding valley is still heavily fire damaged. Just like us, they must see promising times ahead in the valley.

Not 200 yards downstream of camp we encounter the day's first gorge and soon we are making decisions to run or to portage sections of river. The action is constant for the next six hours. My nerves become frayed as the stress of numerous rapids and the lack of knowledge of what lies downstream takes its toll. Floating down Sioux Charlie Lake I am lulled and approach the next rapid in a relaxed manner. I leisurely go for an eddy at the bottom of the first drop and, sliding out the back, I feel my boat being tractor-beamed downstream by a fifteen foot ledge-drop that ends in a sharp reversal. I make the eddy realizing my brain is wounded.

We complete the remainder of the run, but by the time we reach the final section above Woodbine campground, we are spent. Before terminating in a waterfall which marks the put-in for the lower Stillwater, the river provides about 300 yards of classic California class V whitewater. But we are the wounded and opt for the trail.

Yes, Mr. Stanley was correct when he said that naming a rapid or run is an awesome responsibility. And it is much worse when the name chosen describes the damage the river has imposed on one's self. My only solace is that we did not have to name this run "Pinhead" or "Balls in a Vise."

Box Canyon, Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River, Wyoming

The top of Daisy / Lulu Pass above Cooke City, Montana is a point of great contemplation for any kayaker. For at this location three great wilderness river drainages meet. To the north is the Stillwater. To the east Soda Butte Creek, which eventually dumps into the Lamar and Yellowstone Rivers. Rivers that would be highly rated if not made illegal by the authorities of Yellowstone National Park. To the west is the highly revered Clarks



Mike Fentress in Bald Rock Canyon.

Tim Shanahan photo

Fork of the Yellowstone.

Looking down the Clarks Fork drainage you are confronted with 11,000 foot peaks rimming both sides of a wide valley. Where is the river? Closer inspection reveals that there is a scar, looking like the claw mark of the devil, running down the valley. Here, within the sheer walls of this scar, at points 1000 feet straight down, runs the Clarks Fork.

First pioneered in the seventies, it has not been until the last several years that the Clarks Fork has been "regularly" run. Still only a couple dozen paddlers have attempted it. This run is designed for boaters who like to cross-train. For within the walls of this canyon you will test your boating skills and portaging abilities, your lower body will work just as hard as your upper body, and, above all, your mind will work to solve problems with minimum risk.

The Clarks Fork is best described by the fact that rapids like Great Falls of the Potomac are a dime a dozen here. Varying river levels sometimes yield these drops runnable, other times impassable. Several of the portages are borderline rock climbing. Exposed routes over the granite domes are not fun for anybody and are downright terrifying for those with a fear of heights.

This is the place your mother

warned you about. Class V+ whitewater with a boat full of gear.

Rivers of this magnitude make comedians out of the most serious boater. Paddle flailing cartwheels and allstar hole-rides are done for the enjoyment of those checking out your line. The rapid that you tell everybody "look easy, just float down the center" ends up ending everybody in the group. Boaters imitate rodeo cowboys as they lasso partners from holes.

And as the canyon wall oppresses for hour after hour, we all laugh in a style that would make Jack Nicholson proud. It is all black comedy.

I don't know if this trip is enjoyable at all. Three days, 23 miles, and 2100 vertical feet from the put-in, I know I was very happy and today I know I hunger to go back.

The Clarks Fork is to boaters what Everest is to climbers. You are isolated into a team that has no chance of outside assistance in totally awesome surroundings, and the drugs of exploration, challenge, adrenaline, teamwork, and faith are addicting.

My 1990 western kayaking tour has ended. I was seduced by the dance through Bald Rock, marveled at the scenery on the South Fork of the Shoshone, enjoyed tripping down uncharted terri-

tory on the Stillwater, and was amazed by the power of the Clarks' Fork Box.

Self-contained trips are enjoyable for their simplicity. They allow you to spend more time focusing on the river and its surroundings, and give you the ability to penetrate areas where you will not find another soul. And above all, they relieve you of the burdensome task of running shuttle everyday.

I now have dreams, some delightful, some crazy. The Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne, Middle Fork of the Kings, Linville,...

Will I portage a lot? Yes. Will I run a lot of good whitewater? Yes.

But above all, I will gain insights into special places that few will ever enjoy.

Authors Note: Detailed river descriptions of the Stillwater, Shoshone, Clarks Fork, and other Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana rivers can be found in Rivers of the Greater Yellowstone Country by Dave Pennington and Gregg Lawley, Class VI Publications. Bald Rock and other California rivers are detailed in A Guide to the Best Whitewater in the State of California by Lars Holbeck and Chuck Stanley, Friends of the River Books.

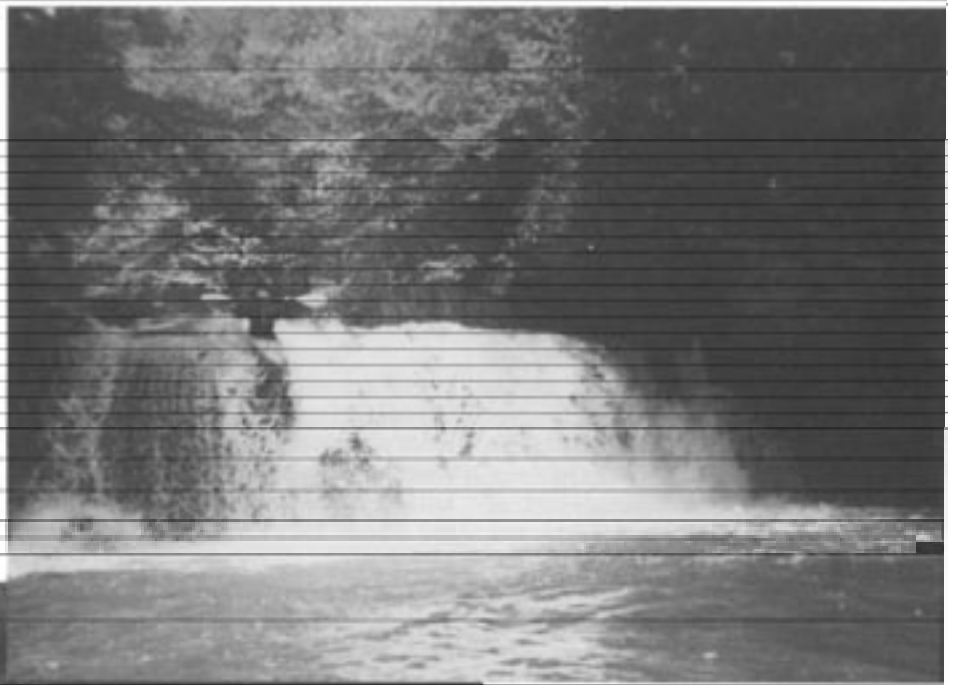
NORTH FORK OF THE BLACKWATER

By MARK FAIR

I panicked as I slipped over the edge and began to plunge through the helical waterfall.

"Where's the bottom? I can't see the bottom!"

I tossed, turned and...fortunately...woke up before impacting. Shaken, I lay in bed mulling over this experience. The nightmare was obviously some subconscious response to my paddling adventure of the previous day. For although I hadn't actually plummeted over a bottomless falls, my friends and I had tackled the North Fork of the Blackwater, a steep creek that drops off the face of the earth more quickly than any we had run before.



.....
Above: Flying off "Double Indemnity" falls. Left: Looking back upstream at the runnable "Double Indemnity" section.

On our second descent, a month and a half later, my dream flashed through my brain as Wade Zinter and I cautiously approached the imposing horizon line in front of us. After beaching our boats on a rock shelf, we stared at the impressive waterfall while secretly wondering if we dared run it. The water plunged over a precipitous drop and crashed onto the rocks on the right. We had portaged this cataract on our first descent.

"It's definitely higher than the Big Sandy Falls," Wade commented to break the silence. "Let's measure it with a throw rope."

We concluded that the drop was over 25 feet, an intimidating, but not outrageous, height. Wade was tempted, perhaps by the thought that it would be disappointing for someone else to be the first to run this falls after we had pioneered the descent.

"It sure would be nice to try it."

Still uncertain, I replied, "Let's look at it from the bottom again."

Wade agreed, so we followed our old portage route down to the pool below. The jumbled rocks on the right and the rock shelf on the left would surely annihilate both boat and boater. The middle looked clean, though we wouldn't know for sure without actually probing it.

After climbing to the top, Wade decided to be that probe and run the falls by projecting off a rock protruding through the curtain of water a few feet below the lip. He ran the small ledge above the falls and hit his intended line despite the shallow approach. I watched anxiously as he narrowly averted the menacing rocks on the right and disappeared into the white maw at the base. To my relief he surfaced and paddled across the small pool to the river bank. But I sensed that something was wrong when he failed to acknowledge his apparent success.

"Nice run, dude. Are you okay?", I shouted above the roar of the crashing water.

"I'm not sure. My left cheek is killing me!" After climbing out of his boat he continued, "I hit something really hard on the way down. If you run it, try a different line."

Taking a different line to avoid the protruding rock meant that I would have to probe another spot at the base of the falls. Adrenaline surged through my body as I paddled toward the brink of no return several feet to the left of Wade's line. Once over the edge, my mind raced, "When am I going to land?"

The plunge seemed like a reenactment of my dream until impact with the

water brought me back to reality. I pencilled into the froth without hitting any rocks and popped vertically back to the surface. After a brace and a few determined strokes I found myself in a small pool looking back up at the falls.

"Awesome!"

Despite his sore posterior, Wade concurred with my description. We couldn't decide, however, whether to call it Screaming Left Cheek or Gluteal Mash.

Reaching a consensus on whether

water when we saw the creek paralleling the road known as the North Fork of the Blackwater.

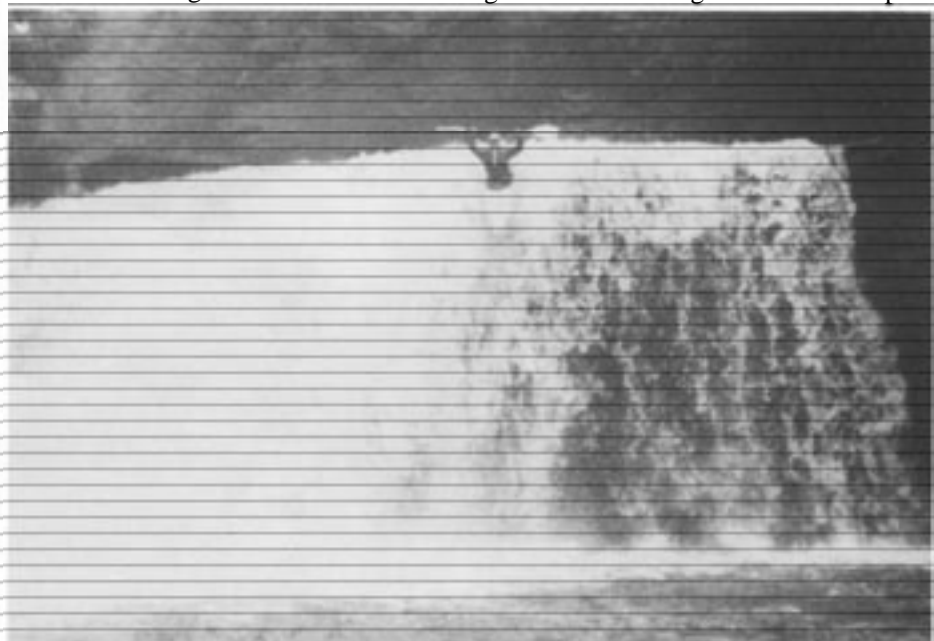
"That creek looks like it has enough water to paddle!"

"Yeah, and it must be steep if it drops down to the Lower Blackwater put-in."

"What do you think?"

"Let's paddle!"

Thus, while changing into our gear and munching our traditional pre-



Catching flight time at "Gluteal Mash" requires the correct approach to avoid the submerged rock within the drop.

to paddle this creek at all the first time had been an easier decision, even though it wasn't in our original plans. On that April Saturday, Wade, Marquet Anderson and I decided to paddle the Lower Blackwater in West Virginia after our ritual of calling the gauges. Wade had done the Blackwater once before and Marquet and I were anxious to try it after reading an article by Chris Koll entitled "I'd Walk a Mile for the Blackwater" (May/June 1989 American Whitewater). Armed with a copy of Wildwater West Virginia, a road map and several photocopies of topographical maps for the area, we headed for the take-out at Hendricks to leave a car and to check the water level.

After a futile search for the gauge, we decided that the Blackwater must be runnable since the level upstream of the bridge seemed to match the description given in the guide book. Though the trees were still leafless, we enjoyed the view from mountaintop on our way to the put-in. Along the road into Douglas our attention turned from the mountains to white-

paddling snack, generic fig bars, we decided to do some "steep creek'n" on the North Fork to its junction with the Blackwater. Outfitted with extra webbing and carabiners in addition to our usual gear, we trekked down the railroad grade toward the base of the unrunnable waterfall just below Douglas. We knew we were in for a steep descent, but not much more. At the time none of us recalled three important comments about this section of the North Fork mentioned in Koll's article: (I) it drops off the face of the earth in a series of 20 foot falls (a fairly accurate description), (II) it had never been run, and (III) it drops 600 feet in the mile from Douglas to the confluence with the Upper Blackwater to form the Lower Blackwater. This proved somewhat of an exaggeration since it actually drops a mere 400 feet in this mile long section. Still, by comparison, the Upper Blackwater, once described as an "impossible" run, has a maximum gradient of 270 feet per mile.

After confirming our initial impression that the first falls was

unrunnable...it drops thirty feet onto boulders...we turned our attention downstream. The first boulder choked rapid didn't look too promising either.

"Can we really paddle this creek? Are there any more falls like this?" These were cause for concern as we slid down the embankment below the falls. We bypassed the first rapid (although we ran it on our second descent) and prepared to put on. Marquet provided visible evidence of our apprehension as he quivered

width of a boat, threads its way over the ledge without flowing into one of the undercuts.

After some study I had the chance to declare, "I think it's runnable if we line up on that curler and aim to just miss that boulder."

Lining up the approach was tricky, but we all survived the Gauntlet.

Another drop, about 10 feet high, also required a careful approach. We had to fly off a small tongue at the proper angle

the opposite direction. What fun to utilize all aspects of the river environment while paddling: water air and rock.

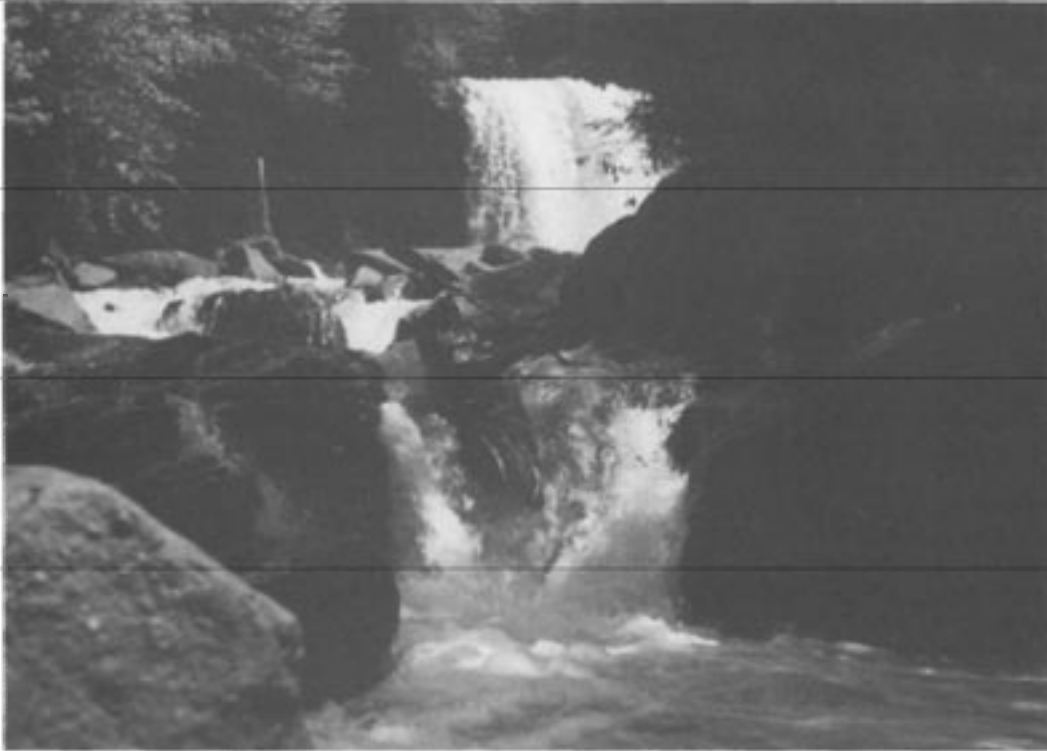
Sometimes sliding off a rock wasn't always the best move. At one rapid the river split into two channels for a short distance. The nasty undercut rock in the left channel looked menacing and we couldn't see the right channel from our vantagepoint. Wade volunteered to scout it from amidstream rock. He attempted to land his boat on the rock, but unfortunately he slid off backwards down the left channel.

With some skillful paddling and neck stretching he ran the left side backwards, and, more importantly, upright. Not to be undone, Marquet caught the nose of his boat, spun around, and also negotiated the left side backwards. Though they had set a precedence, I used prudence and ran it in a more conventional manner, facing forward.

Since we had no idea how long it would take to paddle this creek, we couldn't waste much time. Often only one person would scout a rapid, then direct or lead the others through. We would sometimes leap-frog past one another, with the first man down scouting the next rapid.

At one point it was my turn to lead through a twisting drop/slot combination after having only heard a description of the line. My elbow connected solidly with a rock while bracing to prevent a flip. The consequences of flip here...as in most of the other rapids...would have been nasty to say the least. Since Wade and Marquet also hit their elbows on the rock; we now affectionately refer to this rapid as Elbow Basher. On our second trip I managed to avoid this painful experience by holding my elbows high.

Remembering individual rapids and their order is difficult since the run is so continuous, but several are quite distinct and deserve mention. Immediately after Elbow Basher is a sloping ledge followed by a four foot drop. Nothing to worry about...except the large, severely undercut boulder on the left bank that blocks half of the flow (mighty ugly) and the ominous undercut on the right which accepts most of the remaining current. Only a small amount of water, just a little wider than the



The hole at the bottom of this narrow sluice mystery moves even a plastic boat.

in his boat before rock launching into an eddy.

Our concerns about waterfalls were quickly confirmed as we appeared to be on the brink of another after running only a couple of closely spaced, boat-scoutable rapids. After jumping out of our boats, we saw a 25 foot high cascade composed of a sloping washboard followed by an abrupt 10 foot drop with splat rocks at the bottom. It was certainly no place for glass boats, but we had plastic to separate us from the rocks.

Undaunted, Wade said, "We can run it by dropping over the last part sideways, angled to the right to avoid a pin."

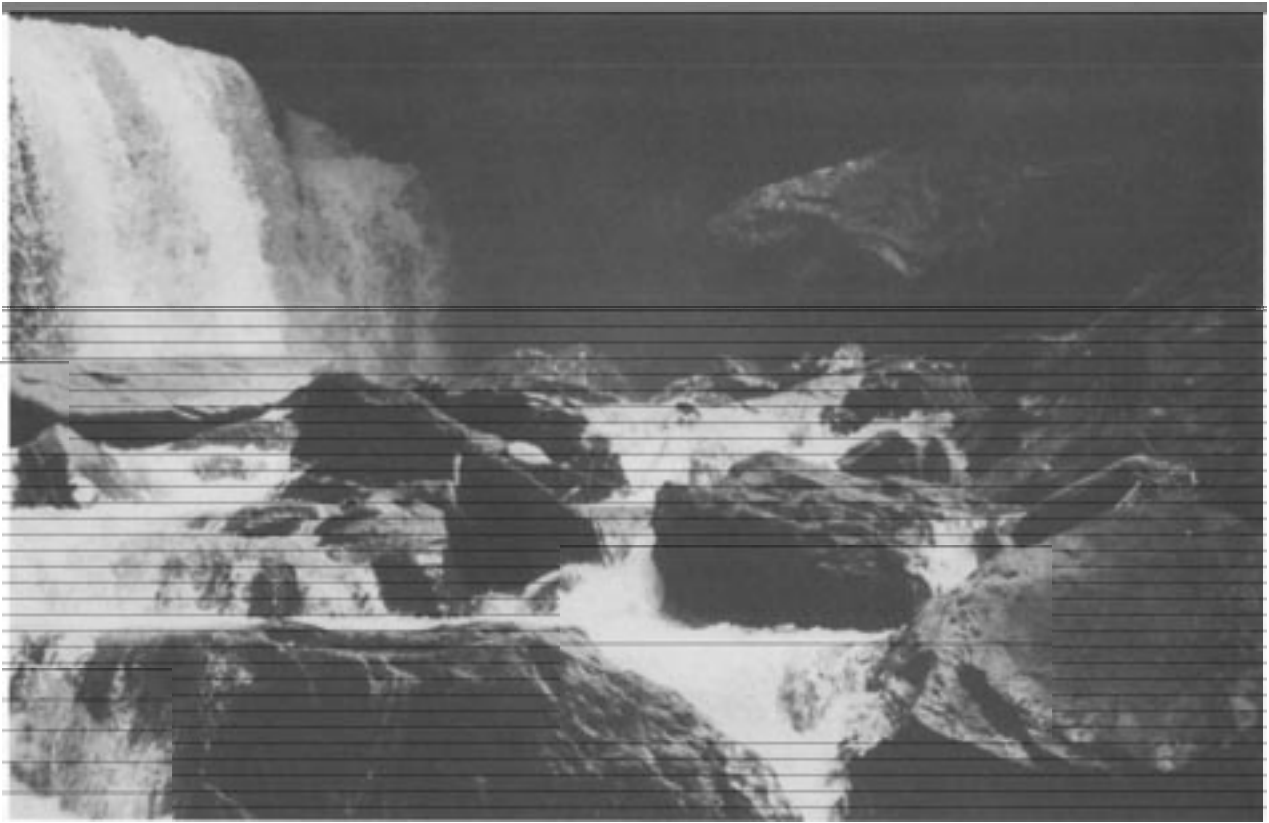
After watching Wade disappear over the edge, Marquet and I reluctantly took the plunge. What an exciting way to start a descent on an unknown creek!

And the excitement never stopped. As we began to make progress down this

amazing creek we developed a sort of rhythm-run a technical rapid requiring a lot of precise maneuvering- catch a tiny eddy at the bottom- and scout the next waterfall or big drop...many higher than 10 feet. We lost count of the number of times someone yelled, "Eddy out, waterfall ahead!"

Other rapids were extremely tight. In one a steep drop led to a left turn which proved impossible. We ran directly into what appeared to be bouldery trap, hit a pillow of water, backed out, then either ran the rest of the rapid backwards or carefully spun around.

To run other rapids we had to execute maneuvers we call "rock moves", which we had practiced on less difficult rivers. These stunts involve intentionally sliding over, off, or around boulders or intentionally running the kayak onto a rock and spinning around to slide off in



Just below an unrunnable falls at the start of the section, action picks up immediately with a technical rapid.

to land in a narrow break in the rock ledge at its base. While scouting this one we saw another rapid immediately downstream with no eddy in between.

"What about the rapid below the drop?"

"We can wing it."

And that's exactly what we did as we all successfully bounced down through the rocky, turbulent water.

Not every rapid could be run by choosing the proper line and summoning sufficient courage. But besides the first falls and one log jam, only one other rapid forced us to shoulder our boats on the second trip. We named it Molars since it certainly would macerate a boat. Here a five foot drop through a tight slot is followed by three large, rocky teeth aligned with the river and under which most of the water flows. For a moment on our second descent we considered the possibility of trying to fly off the drop, land on a rock, and slide off past the teeth, but we finally concluded it wasn't worth the risk...especially after our iffy plunge over Gluteal Mash.

One of the most impressive sections of the North Fork of the Blackwater begins with a small pool from which we found ourselves staring at yet another horizon line.

"Wow! It looks like the edge of the world."

"Time to scout."

Wade and I scrambled out of our boats while Marquet remained catatonic in his. Later he confided that he sometimes felt better running some drops by following Wade or me without first seeing what he was getting into. Scouting this drop was almost impossible due to the thick undergrowth of laurel and rhododendron which choked the sides of the canyon from the edge of the creek to the bottom of the cliffs towering overhead. Soon after entering this jungle I found myself alone and nearly hopelessly entangled. In my predicament I began to wonder what snakes might be active in the middle of April. After considering that possibility, I carefully returned to our boats.

Wade was already there, having also concluded that the vegetation was impenetrable. "We can run the first part at least. We'll find out about the rest when we get there."

With those encouraging words Wade, and then Marquet, paddled away, before I was even back in my boat. I caught them just as Wade disappeared over the edge.

A 10 foot cascade led immediately to a plunge off a 15 foot waterfall.

The small pool at the base was followed by another tight, steep rapid. We all managed to negotiate the sequence, though Marquet was a little too close to the center at the falls and hit some submerged rocks. The view of the cascades we had just negotiated from the bottom was incredible. The top of the first drop was at least forty feet overhead.

Wade named this tonar (totally gnarly) sequence Double Indemnity, probably because the thrill of running it made all our efforts worthwhile.

On our first descent it had taken two and one-half hours to paddle a mile and lose 400 feet of elevation. But at least we didn't have to "Walk a Mile for the Blackwater". Amazingly, none of us had pinned on the North Fork. In a bit more than two hours we arrived in Hendricks after paddling the Lower Blackwater.

We had fun on the Lower Blackwater, our original objective for the day, though somehow it seemed just a little anticlimactic.

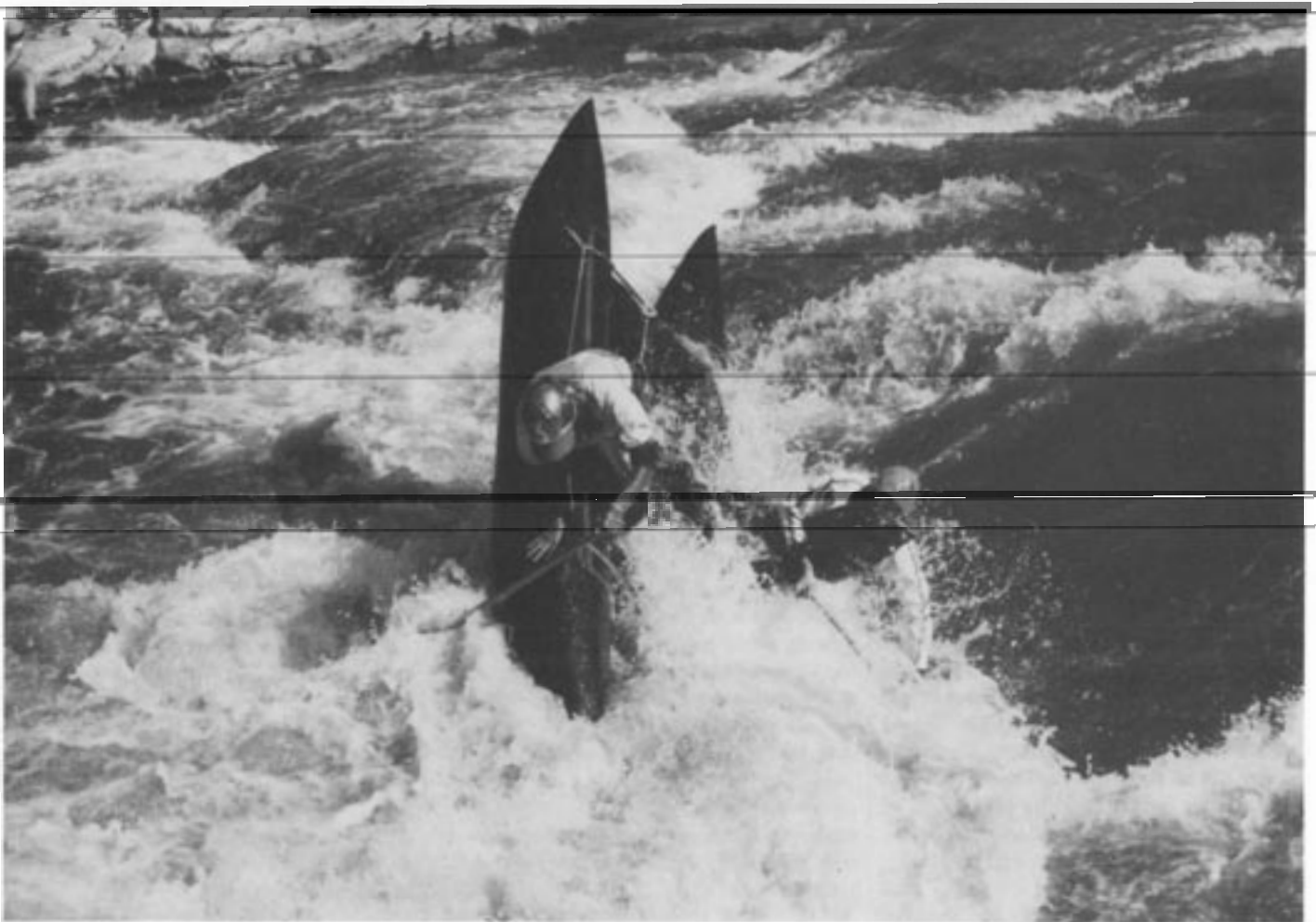
Were we crazy for having attempting this creek? We're not sure, but we all concur that the descent involves some very intense paddling.

And crazy or not, we know that the next time the river runs high, we'll be back for another frolic on the North Fork.



*Two whitewater photographers
offer practical advice for camera-
carrying boaters who wish to.....*

Capture the moment!



*Terry Peterson of Upper Yough Photos used a fast film
and fast shutter speed to catch this two-man Shredder
trashed in a hole below El Horrendo on the Russell Fork.*

compiled by *BOB GEDEKOH*

Sooner or later almost every whitewater boater succumbs to the urge to try to "capture the moment" on film. To immortalize the pristine beauty of some wilderness river or that instant when daring-do overpowers common sense. But all too often the results are disappointing. In search of the perfect picture, American Whitewater asked a couple of talented whitewater photographers to share some of their secrets.

Terry Peterson is an accomplished whitewater kayaker and guide, working most frequently on the Upper Youghiogheny and Cheat rivers. She also provides professional photographic services to several commercial outfitters.

Jim Goddard is an engineer and amateur whitewater photographer whose pictures have appeared in several guidebooks, American Whitewater, River Runner and Pittsburgh magazine. He is a former Easterner who now does his boating in the Pacific Northwest.

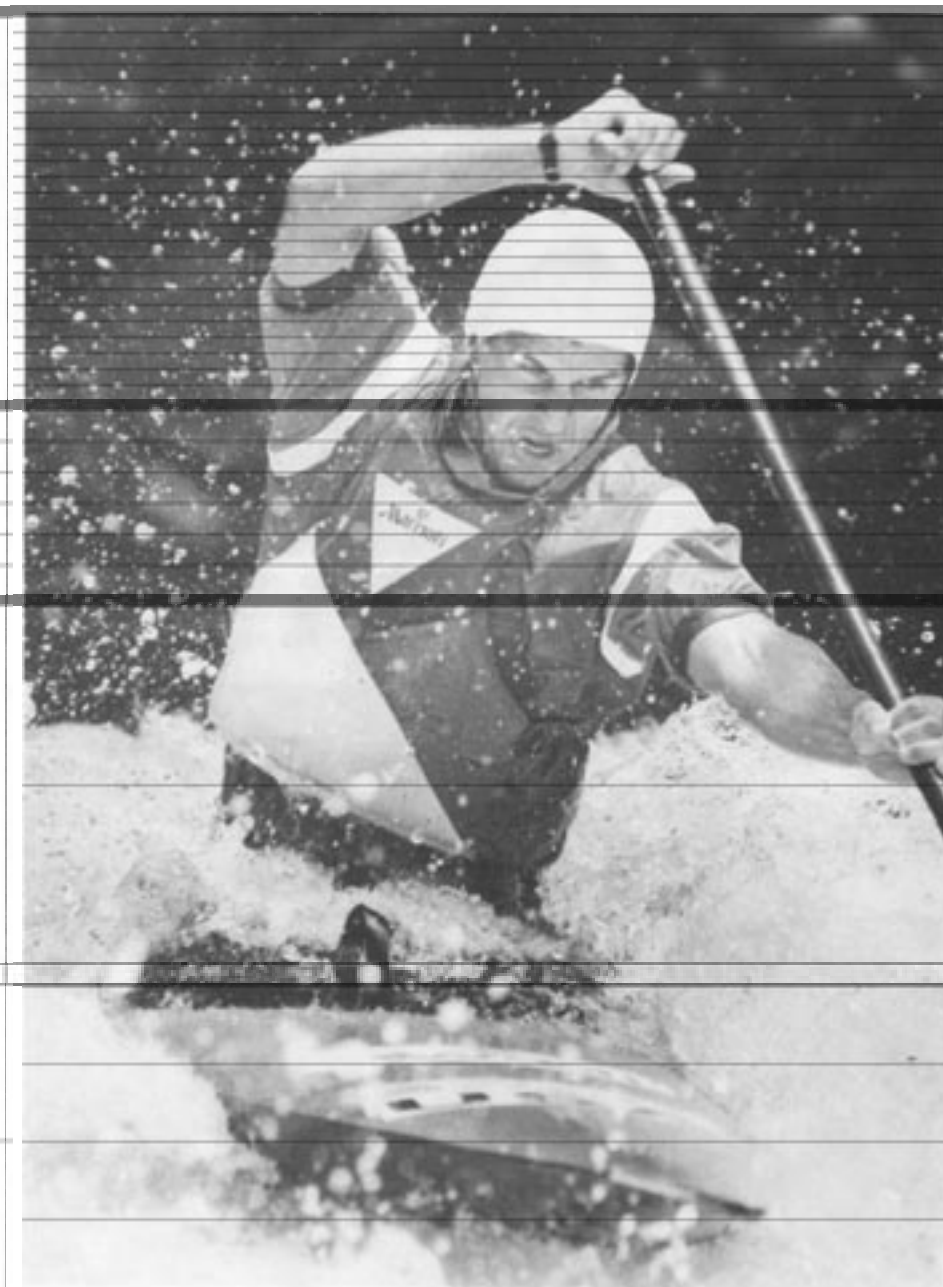
A.W. (American Whitewater) Let's start at the beginning...with equipment. Waterproof (underwater) cameras would seem to be the way to go. An expensive investment initially, but one that could save lot of heartache down the road.

J.G. (Jim Goddard) I have used both waterproof 35mm cameras and conventional cameras on the river. The underwater cameras seemed the logical choice to use in soggy conditions. They allowed me to take pictures without getting out my boat and that was a plus. But there are disadvantages. These photos are usually rushed because of the photographer's unstable platform and often they are blurred by motion.

Not uncommonly a drop of water or some mist on the lens ruins the shot, or the blade of a paddle or the nose of your boat intrudes into the picture. Getting water or mist off the lens is not an easy proposition, especially on a humid day.

Shooting from your boat rarely gives you a very desirable perspective. Usually you wind up with too much eddy and runoff and not enough rapid.

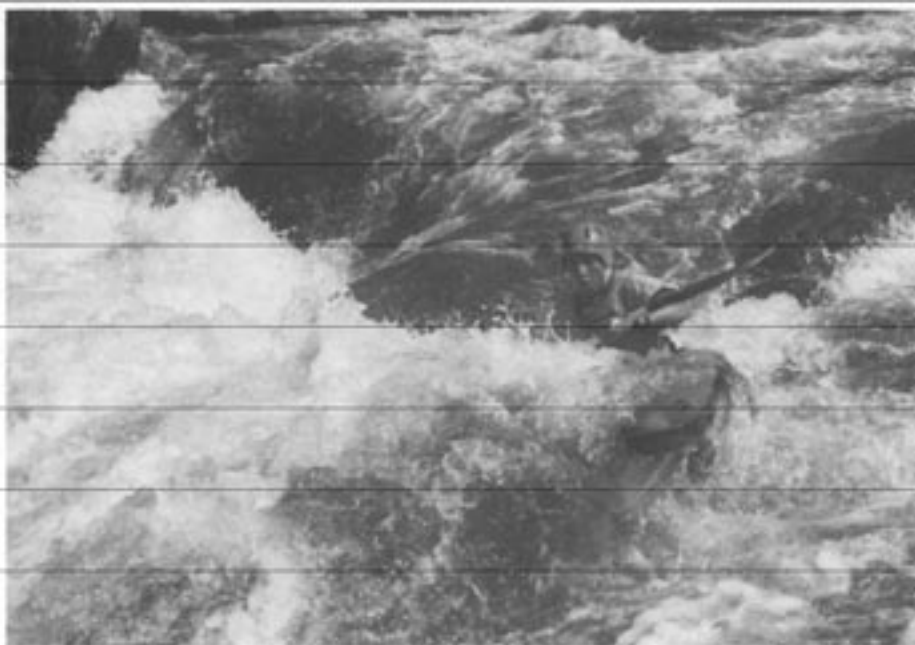
But the biggest disadvantage is that most waterproof systems limit your choice of lenses. Most come with a wide angle lens and with some you can buy a telephoto lens. But some of these require



Jim Swedberg of James Swedberg, Photography positioned himself perfectly to capture all of the drama and action of Jon Lugbill's winning performance during the 1990 World Cup Race at the Savage River,



A rapid shutter speed was needed to freeze kayaker Brian Homberg on the Russell Fork's El Horrendo in this shot by Terry Peterson.



Get as close to your subject as possible...catch the facial expression as Terry Peterson has accomplished in this shot of a kayaker at Cheeseburger Falls on the Upper Yough.

a special viewfinder, they are **bulky**, and obviously they are difficult to change on the water.

I just don't think the large investment required for a waterproof system is necessary. Besides, you have a lot more flexibility with a conventional camera.

A.W. It seems like most professional photographers we see on the river are using conventional systems, not waferproofones. But isn't it awfully hard to protect a camera from water and from being jarred and broken?

J.G. Waterproof camera bags work fairly well to keep water out but they don't do much to protect a camera from bouncing about in the boat. Wrapping the camera in a chamois cloth gives some additional security and it can be used to remove drops of water from the camera body.

But the best bet is to use the dry boxes on the market and to custom fit the padding for your system. Of course you must find one that will fit your boat. I always carry two lenses with me in my box, a wide angle and a telephoto zoom.

Using a non waterproof camera means you will have to get out of your boat and take your time setting up before you shoot. This is a disadvantage...but also an advantage. You take fewer pictures, but the ones you take will be of better quality. The delays may annoy your boating companions and slow down the trip...but most whitewater boaters are hams and so are willing to put up with it.

A.W. We've seen photos taken in class three rapids that are terrifying, while other photos of class six runs are boring. Perspective...where you take the picture from...is clearly an important issue.

T.P. (Terry Peterson) Absolutely. One of the nicest attributes of photography is the ability to **express** yourself creatively through perspective. Shooting from unusual **angles** can be effective in adding depth and proportion to your shots. Getting close to your subject allows you catch **smiles**, gaping mouths, fear and intense concentration on the part of the boater.

Lying down or sitting close to water level can give a "**bigger**" effect to the rapid and the boater. Shooting from behind the boater can give the perspective of how the rapid looked to him.

When trying to document a river trip remember that the shuttle, put-in, take-out, lunch, scouting and portaging are **all** part of the trip too, and can make for some interesting photos.

J.G. Unfortunately with whitewater you can't always get as close as you might like. That's when a telephoto lens comes in handy. A zoom telephoto is particularly useful, since it allows you to zoom in on your subject so that it fills the frame. Unfortunately zoom telephotos are more easily damaged and their image quality isn't quite as good as fixed telephoto lenses.

A.W. *Identifying the subject and sticking to that vision seems to be tough problem for a lot of beginners. It is hard sometimes to fill the frame with a boater when the surrounding landscape is so spectacular. But you can't always have your cake and eat it too. If your picture includes the sky, the cliffs, the forest and the whole rapid from top to bottom, the boater is likely to look fairly insignificant. Sometimes that may be the effect you want...but most often not.*

J.G. Some of my best shots were of a common subject taken from a different perspective. This may require some difficult eddy hopping, awkward boat exits and treacherous rock climbing. I have stood midstream at the lip of a waterfall, jumped out of my kayak in a minuscule eddy in the midst of a class IV rapid, climbed trees that hung over the river and crawled along riverbanks clutching exposed roots, just to get into position for a shot.

Since I spend a lot of time setting up for each picture, I usually try to take pictures at only a few rapids on a given day. If I know the river I try to decide what I want to photograph ahead of time. I tell my subjects where I'm going to be and then I try to paddle on ahead and get ready.

On a difficult river I take my camera with me when we scout, so that I'm ready to photograph the first brave soul to attempt the rapid. Of course it's a good idea to carry a throw bag with you too, since any spot that provides a good perspective for a photo will often provide a good perspective for a rescue.

A.W. *Which brings us to the subject of hitting a moving target. All too often this results in a blurred picture. Why?*

T.P. A steady hand, sharp focus and fast shutter speed are all keys to achieving crisp pictures. When you are scrambling around on the rocks a steady hand may be difficult to manage. Faster shutter speeds can do a lot to accommodate for camera or subject motion. I have found that shutter



A power winder increases the odds of obtaining a good shot when the action is fast and furious. Above, Jim Swedberg catches Josh Parker at the peak of an ender on the Ottawa River.

speeds greater than or equal to 1/250 second produce the best results.

A.W. *Unfortunately it may be impossible to shoot at these high speeds with some films (ASA 64), especially on overcast days. One way to get around this is to use film that is more light sensitive (ASA 100, 200 or 400). Sadly, there is some compromise in color quality with these films and they tend to give a grainy image. Also, they are more expensive.*

T.P. Sometimes having the subject or the background blurred can create an interesting image. If you follow the boater through the viewfinder as she moves through the rapid, the way a hunter follows a running deer, you can shoot with the camera mov-

ing. In this case the subject (the boater) will be in focus, while the surroundings (rocks, trees, etc.) will be blurred. This can be a fascinating effect, one which conveys the feeling of speed. Of course it isn't an easy technique to master.

A different effect can be achieved by focusing the camera on one spot and allowing the boater to move through the frame while you shoot. In this case the rapid will be in focus while the boater will be a blur. Potentially another desirable effect.

A.W. *Those are fancy techniques. But most of the time we would like everything to be in focus.*



Shoot from unusual perspectives for interesting results as Jim Goddard demonstrates in this image of **Bob** Gedekoh shooting **Big** Sandy Falls.

T.P. Well, another way to increase the likelihood that your subject and its surroundings will be in focus is to try for a wider depth of field. When you have a wide depth of field objects close to you and objects far from you will both be in focus. When the depth of field is narrow, only one or the other will be in focus.

Depth of field is controlled by aperture...how wide the lens opens. The

higher the f stop number, the smaller the aperture. High f stop numbers give you wide depth of field ...more of the picture will be in focus. Low f stop numbers yield a narrow depth of field...if the subject is in focus its surroundings may not be.

A.W. Of course you can't always shoot at a high f stop number...especially when light is limited...since this would require a slower

shutter speed. Sometimes you just can't win.

J.G. That's when a roll of 200 or 400 ASA (more light sensitive) film comes in handy. But remember, a narrow depth of field isn't always a bad thing. Used correctly, it can blur details in the surroundings that would otherwise distract from your subject.

A.W. All of this gets pretty confusing. With a manual camera you have to set the ASA number (depending on what film you buy), focus the camera, select an f stop and select a shutter speed.

All before you take a picture. Some of the new automatic cameras do all of this for you. Unfortunately, there is a trade off. With automation you lose control...and the ability to achieve special effects. Casual photographers may be satisfied with totally automated cameras, but more sophisticated photographers still seem to prefer manual features.

One thing holds true for automated and manual cameras when it comes to taking pictures on water. Exposure always seems to be a problem, particularly on sunny days. How do you deal with this?

T.P. One problem may be reflected light, and it is most evident on bright, sunny days. The light bounces off the water and your camera meters accordingly. But if you allow the camera to meter off the water your subject will be dark...underexposed. The same thing happens when you take pictures of skiers against a sunny, snowy background.

Some pros get around this by carrying a grey card which they point their camera at to get their light reading. Most of us don't carry a big, grey card with us, but a sunny, convenient, neutral grey rock will do as well. Just make sure that the rock completely fills the viewfinder when you take the reading. Use this reading to select your f stop and/or shutter speed. But remember, any stray whitewater in the viewfinder will effect the reading.

A.W. Run this by us again.

T.P. Okay. You're getting ready to take a picture of a raft coming through a sunny rapid. You know that reflected light from around the subject is going to be a problem. You point your camera at a large grey rock (one in the same light as your subject) and choose the f stop (aperture) and shutter speed. Then you point your camera at the subject coming through the rapid. Notice that the meter will tell you that there is too much light...that you need to use a higher

f stop. However, the amount of light from your subject...the raft...will be correct.

A.W. *In practical terms this means you will probably be shooting at one-half to one f stop lower than what your meter suggests when the camera is pointed into the rapid. The aperture will be wider and more light from the subject will hit the film...so that it won't be underexposed.*

J.G. Most automatic cameras have some mechanism which allows you to do the same thing...that is, decrease the f stop a bit to accommodate reflected light. Check your manual.

T.P. It is also a good idea to bracket your important shots. Shoot the same picture with the aperture set one-half f stop above and one-half f stop below the setting you think is correct. If your initial plan was right, you'll get one perfectly exposed picture, one that is overexposed and one that is underexposed. If you were off, one of the bracketed shots may be your best picture.

A.W. *There are all kinds of filters on the market that can be useful. Everyone should at least be using a skylight or ultraviolet filter. They clarify the image a little, but, more importantly, they offer cheap protection to your lens. One of the most useful filters around is a polarizing filter. On hazy days, when light is bouncing around in all directions, these can work wonders. They reduce the amount of indirect light hitting the film and yield a much sharper image.*

J.G. Another useful feature is a power winder. This allows you to take a series of pictures in rapid succession...when the action is fast, furious and unpredictable...without manual winding. With a power winder you can keep your eye at the viewfinder and follow the subject without distraction. By shooting a sequence of pictures, for instance, of a kayaker running a falls, you can really tell a story.

A.W. *Many new cameras are equipped with autofocus systems. These can be useful, but some of them do not work well when the subject is moving. Before you purchase a new camera with autofocus ask about this.*

Any other hints?

J.G. Maybe one. Take time to look away from the river. Many of the rivers we run are inaccessible by other means and they present beautiful and diverse landscapes.



Many novice photographers labor under the misconception that they must capture the entire boat in the frame. Here Jim Swedberg focuses in on only Jed Prentice at the 1990 World Cup to produce a superior photo.

Many professional photographers would kill for the chance to shoot some of the places we visit regularly. Some of my favorite river pictures aren't really of the river at all, but of the river environment.

T.P. My advice is to experiment. Don't get discouraged if you only get a few good pictures from each roll of film.

And don't hesitate to ask questions. I haven't met a whitewater photographer yet who wasn't happy to answer any of my questions...even the geeky ones. We're all in this together.

A.W. *There's no doubt that experience is the best teacher. Learning can be frustrating, but every once in a while you get that picture that is just right. It's important to remember that for every picture that appears in a magazine, hundreds were rejected.*

Admittedly, this discussion is not likely to turn you into Ansel Adams or Galen Rowell overnight. Just don't get frustrated. Remember, if you give a camera and enough film to a monkey, sooner or later he's bound to take at least one great picture.

Imaginative solutions for equipment failure

By LEE BELKNAP

It was the Metolius River in Oregon. The 4X4 drive to the take-out had taken almost as long as the mountain bike ride back. At the put-in, Julie had waited an hour and a half for my return. She informed me that her **spray skirt** was still in the trunk.

Although this **was** our first visit to the area, we knew that this would be an easy run. Julie offered to bike along the road while I paddled, but I told her she didn't need to. I would make a **sprayskirt**.

I begged two **small** plastic bags from a fisherman, pulled out some duct tape and the string from my polypro, and, in no time, I had a new spray skirt for my boat.

We made it down the river in great shape. Dodging the larger waves was **kind of** challenging. The beauty and character of the river, along with the fall colors, made my improvisation worthwhile.

It is not uncommon to find oneself wishing for an expensive piece of equipment that either didn't find its way onto a trip, or abandoned ship at an inopportune time. These situations typically lead to some sort of inconvenience, discomfort and/or added **risk**. Getting around these difficulties can be...challenging.

There are many recirculating stories about interesting solutions to interesting problems. I remember, early in my paddling career, a home movie of a paddler on the Lower Youghiogheny in Pennsylvania using a pine branch instead of a paddle to negotiate the river.

More recently, I heard of an absent minded paddler who, half way down a moderately difficult, but remote, river, stuffed **styrofoam** litter from the riverbanks into his paddling jacket. His life jacket was **basking** in the warm car at the put-in.

On many occasions I have used my rolled up sweater, tied around my waist, to make an impromptu daypack while **hiking**.

And the magical properties of duct tape are known to **any** one who has ever paddled a glass boat.

Probably the gear that we most often wish we had along is **warm** clothing. Too often boaters find themselves getting



Lee Belknap models the improvised spray skirt fashioned from plastic bags, dict tape and fishing line. The piece of temporary gear allowed the author to finish a run after his regular skirt was left behind in the shuttle vehicle.

.....
caught by sudden storms or darkness...facing hypothermia. Here opportunities to improvise abound.

Keeping warm is no big secret. The two most important components of protective clothing are insulation and **wind/** water resistance. With an adequate source of these two components, you can stay dry anywhere.

Insulation is nothing more than trapped air. It's the foam in your wetsuit and life jacket, the loft in your pile or wool sweaters and the fill in your sleeping bag.

Natural substances, such as leaves, pine straw and grass, can also trap air between your body and the environment, thus providing insulation.

Wind/water protection can be found in any waterproof material. Of course, these are almost all man made. For this reason it is a good idea to carry a compact space blanket and some large plastic trash or leaf bags in your **drybag**. Before warned though, replace these items in your emergency kit every year or two. Once, in an hour of need, I discovered that

time and heat had taken its toll on my old space blanket...and that it was hopelessly stuck together.

The effectiveness of most insulation is severely reduced when wet. This is because water displaces air and because the much greater density of water allows it to conduct heat away much faster than air. Wind saps heat because it replaces the warm air in the insulation with cooler air. It also causes evaporative cooling.

The combination of wet and cold weather is the most frequent cause of hypothermia in the field.

How can you improvise using insulation and waterproof materials to stay warm? Here are some examples.

For wet feet: Booties don't have to be made of neoprene. Thick wool socks lined with bread bags are equally effective...though admittedly less durable. An extra sock on the outside will keep the old tennis shoes from wearing a hole through the bag too soon. This arrangement will typically last for a couple of trips, and, with extra thick wool socks, can actually be warmer than old neoprene booties.

Once I was on a winter hike high in the Smokies. It was just warm enough so that several inches of ice on the trail had started to melt, producing pools of icewater a couple of inches deep. One person in the group was hiking in tennis shoes and her feet got dangerously cold.

After overcoming the skepticism of another group member, we wrapped her feet with pieces of a trash bag that I carry with me. Soon the hiker's feet were comfortably warm and the hike continued without further delay.

For cool days: I usually carry one more pile or wool sweater than I plan to use in my boat...like most boaters I prefer to wear as little as is comfortable. But sometimes the extra sweater may not be enough. On these occasions I put my paddling jacket on over my life preserver.

The life jacket, being made of foam, is just another source of trapped air. This arrangement is as effective as donning another sleeveless pile or wool sweater.

Remember, life jackets have three purposes: floatation, padding and warmth.

For unexpected layovers: Occasionally boaters have to spend an unplanned night on the river. It's best to start looking

or a place to camp before darkness falls. A compact space blanket is a helpful thing to have along. Life jackets, drybags, spray-kirts and other software can be used to

There are many recirculating stories about interesting solutions to interesting problems. I remember, early in my paddling career, a home movie of a paddler on the Lower Youghiogheny in Pennsylvania using a pine branch instead of a paddle to negotiate the river.

ashion a crude ground pad to insulate your body from the cold earth.

A hefty pile of leaves, pine straw and/or grass, held down by small branches, can insulate the top. A space blanket or garbage bags can be used to separate the boater from these scratchy materials, or from the damp items in the ground pad. Try not to roll around too much, or you will lose your cover.

In the case of rain, try to find an overhang. These are frequently not visible from the river, but can be found on nearby hillsides. More than one person in a shelter can enhance the warmth (among other things).

Removing your arms from the sleeves will also reduce heat loss and concentrate your body heat into a smaller area.

There are a million ways to keep warm in the woods. Anybody can improvise clothing and shelter out of materials at hand...given enough ingenuity and patience.

It doesn't matter what it looks like. After all, it's only a stopgap measure. And sometimes the effect can be quite humorous.

So next time, when disloyal gear tries to get you down, show it who's boss.

Replace it on the spot.

Lee Belknap is an AWA Coordinator involved with safety issues.

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The One-Dollar Swim

By MIKE FENTRESS

It was March, 1985. A little early for running Cherry Creek on the Upper Tuolumne River in California, but the weather was decent.

Cherry Creek drops an average of 112 feet per mile for about eight miles. Even at an average summer flow of 1500 cfs there are a number of class five drops. That day it was running 2500 cfs... a pushy level even for Cherry Creek regulars. The holes that day were not small.

I was with Chuck Stanley and Lyn Meyers, both regulars. I was paddling with a breakdown paddle while my regular paddle was in the process of being retipped. I hoped that someone else would have a spare.

Everything went fine for the first couple of miles, until we reached Mushroom Rock. This is regarded to be toughest rapid on the run and it comes complete with penalties. The entrance drop is tricky; it does everything possible to mess up your alignment for the following must move to the left. A miss here and you could wind end up on the right side, a sieve just right for kayak-sized particles.

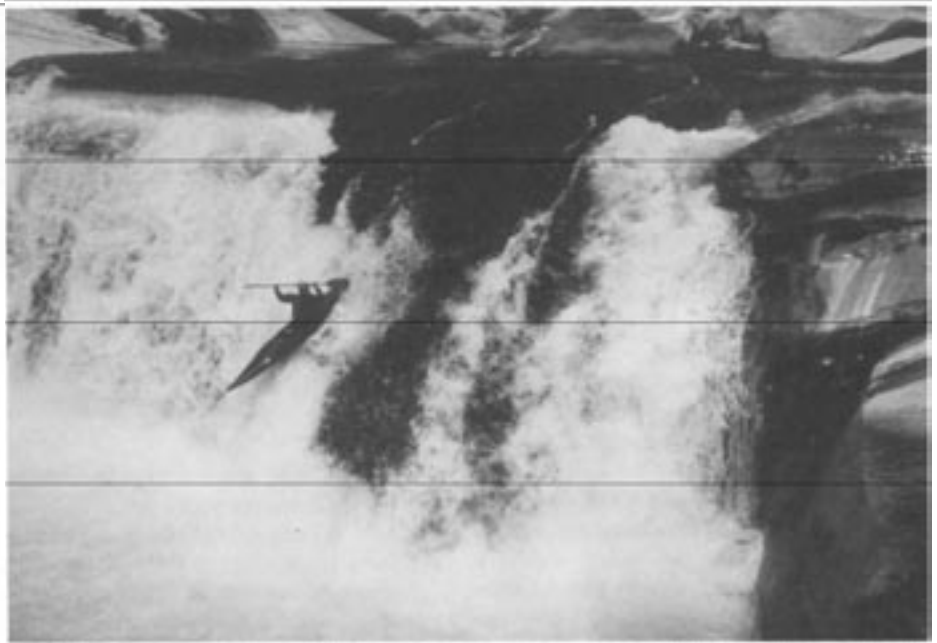
Following the must move to the left is an immediate right turn and scramble to the middle of the river, so as not to encounter the name inspiring fan rock on the bottom left. A wild and ominous spray of water shoots into the air from this rock.

With Chuck and Lyn observing from shore, I negotiated the top, sprinted left, made an adrenalin inspired sweep to the right...and observed that my paddle was now in two pieces. The boys on shore told me later that I looked a bit upset.

Anyway, I tossed half of the paddle towards shore and prepared to do battle. I proceeded to wash right over Mushroom Rock backwards, bounced through the hole below, then was drawn back into it, still upright.

I got recycled, flipped, and fought to roll with half a paddle. After a while, when I ran out of air, I gave up and went for a swim.

At the level the river was running I couldn't get to shore in time so I got washed down into the next rapid, Freight



Mike Fentress successfully challenges some of California's toughest whitewater...but in another instance, equipment failure resulted in a hazardous swim.

Train...also well named. Instead of getting washed down the S-turn flume in the main channel, I got pushed over to the rocky channel on the right. I managed to get my legs in front in time to go over a six foot drop onto a flat rock just under the water. I landed feet first and forward rolled back into the water. Another hundred yards of class five and I got myself out on a rock in the pool at the bottom.

Chuck and Lyn wisely portaged and showed up shortly; they had even found my boat. However, neither half of my paddle was to be found and no one had a spare breakdown.

The fun was not over. We couldn't find the one trail out because of the spring growth, so while the others paddled away, I tried to climb straight up with my boat. I gave up on this route when the brush became impenetrable.

I stashed my boat, then climbed back upstream for over a mile. I crawled for about an hour up a very steep hillside that had burned during the preceding year. I finally found a dirt road at dark, and about an hour later came onto the shuttle road above the canyon.

I had been walking and scrambling for several hours now. I saw some headlights about 400 yards away, then some backup lights, and I realized they

were going to leave me deep in the Tuolumne Canyon. I sprinted after them, and after a while they came back for one last look. I emphatically explained what a good decision they had made.

But this is still not quite the end of the story. About a week later, while enjoying the killer poison oak I had contracted, I discovered that the paddle had not just come apart, but that it had failed longitudinally near the point where the halves joined.

The maker (no longer in business) told me that the problem had been fixed on newer models by adding a reinforcing ring... at a cost of one dollar.

And so, for the lack of a lousy one dollar part, I took the toughest and most dangerous swim of my nineteen year paddling career.

Editors Note: Mike Fentress has long been one of California's finest hair boaters.

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NORS
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The Big Harpoon Syndrome

By CARLA GARRISON

Not too long ago I met a guy on the river who had a nickname I couldn't even pronounce.

I had to ask. "How the hell did you ever come up with a handle like that?"

He sat erect in his boat, sucked in his gut, threw back his shoulders and set his jaw. "It means Big Harpoon in the language of the ancient Nastatobi tribe."

Really! I'm not kidding you. Big Harpoon!

I mean this guy wasn't even that good. In his boat, I mean. Strictly class IV. If there were any Nastatobis left they could sue him for defamation.

But this scenario provided me with a name for something that I have long been aware of. The problem of the male boater's ego. Henceforth known as the Big Harpoon Syndrome (BHS). Every woman boater out there knows what I'm talking about.

You show me a man running whitewater and I'll show you a man with an attitude.

Some of them are shockingly up front about it. "A woman's place is in the shuttle car," they sneer. Or, "Let's go run the Loop (or the Numbers or Section 3 or Chili Bar) and check out the rock rabbits." You know the type... God's Gift to Fluffballs. They cruise put-ins, unscathed, flashy squirt boats on their roof racks and 2 Live Crew blaring from their tape decks.

Some are more subtle. Sensitive, 90's kind of guys. They drive 4 Runners, paddle old slalom boats and listen to Sting, or, worse yet, Dan Fogelberg.

"I really think you can handle the Gauley, Jill, if you really want to try. I really won't mind waiting if you decide to carry Pillow and Iron Ring and, really, you'll do fine on the rest of the river as long as you stay right behind me." This guy has his sights set on bigger game than rock rabbits.

I'd like to take that sucker down the Green. "Really, you'll be just fine as long as you do what I say, Jack," I'd say. "And if you really don't want to run Gorrilla or Sunshine, you won't have to carry your boat. I'll hike back up and paddle it down through."

Now those of you who read his column in this magazine know that no male boater in the world has a bigger case of the BHS than my second cousin, Gary Carlson. Not that he's a woman hater... far from it.

He's come on to practically every female boater in the country. The only reasons I've been spared is because I'm related to him and he's afraid I'll tell his mother. That and the fact that I'm bigger.

But I shouldn't be too hard on poor old Gary. After all, he taught me to boat. It's just a shame that he can't come to terms with the fact that I've gotten so much better than he.

You show me a man running whitewater, and I'll show you a man with an attitude.

I'm afraid it's going to get him hurt. Anymore I don't like to paddle class V+ water if Gary's along, because if I run something, he feels like he has to run it too. It's pathetic. He stands there, sniveling, white knuckled, knowing full well he doesn't have the ability or confidence to run Double Undercut or Bodysnatcher or Big Splat. But just because I, a woman, have done it, he has to try.

If he were just a little bit more mature he'd be content to run shuttle when I do the hard stuff. But no, not Gary!

When a guy has BHS, and believe me, they all do, their egos are very big and very fragile. Just like great big pinatas.

Maybe that's why it's so hard to keep from whacking them with a stick.

Okay. I can just imagine what all you male readers are saying now. "A stick! She wishes she had a stick! How phallic. This broad's got a classic case of penis envy."

Wrong. Don't lay that Freudian crap on me. Freud had BHS too, you know. Besides, I can pee in the woods just fine, thank you. And I never get poison ivy on me the way that Gary did.

No, I don't want a stick. All I want is just a little respect. Is that too much to ask?

So, don't offer to load my boat onto the car, buddy. I paddled it down the river. I'm sure I can lift it onto the rack.

Don't exclude me from shop talk about building boats. I can handle my vinyl ester as well as any man.

Don't tell me I'm not good enough to paddle Bald Rock Canyon. I'll decide that for myself.

And don't let me catch you trying to slip float bags into my boat. I'll shove them some place the sun don't shine.

After all, I'm already better than 97% of the male boaters out there. I just want these guys to admit it.

And I want the other 3% to acknowledge that I'm closing in on them fast. They might as well. Because the day is coming, and it won't be long, when I, Cargala, the Nastatobi River Queen of Humongous Hogans, am going to make them lick my dirty booties!

Editors note: We didn't really want to run this, but none of us had the nerve to tell Carla... she knows where we live.

Take
me
to

Ye
river...

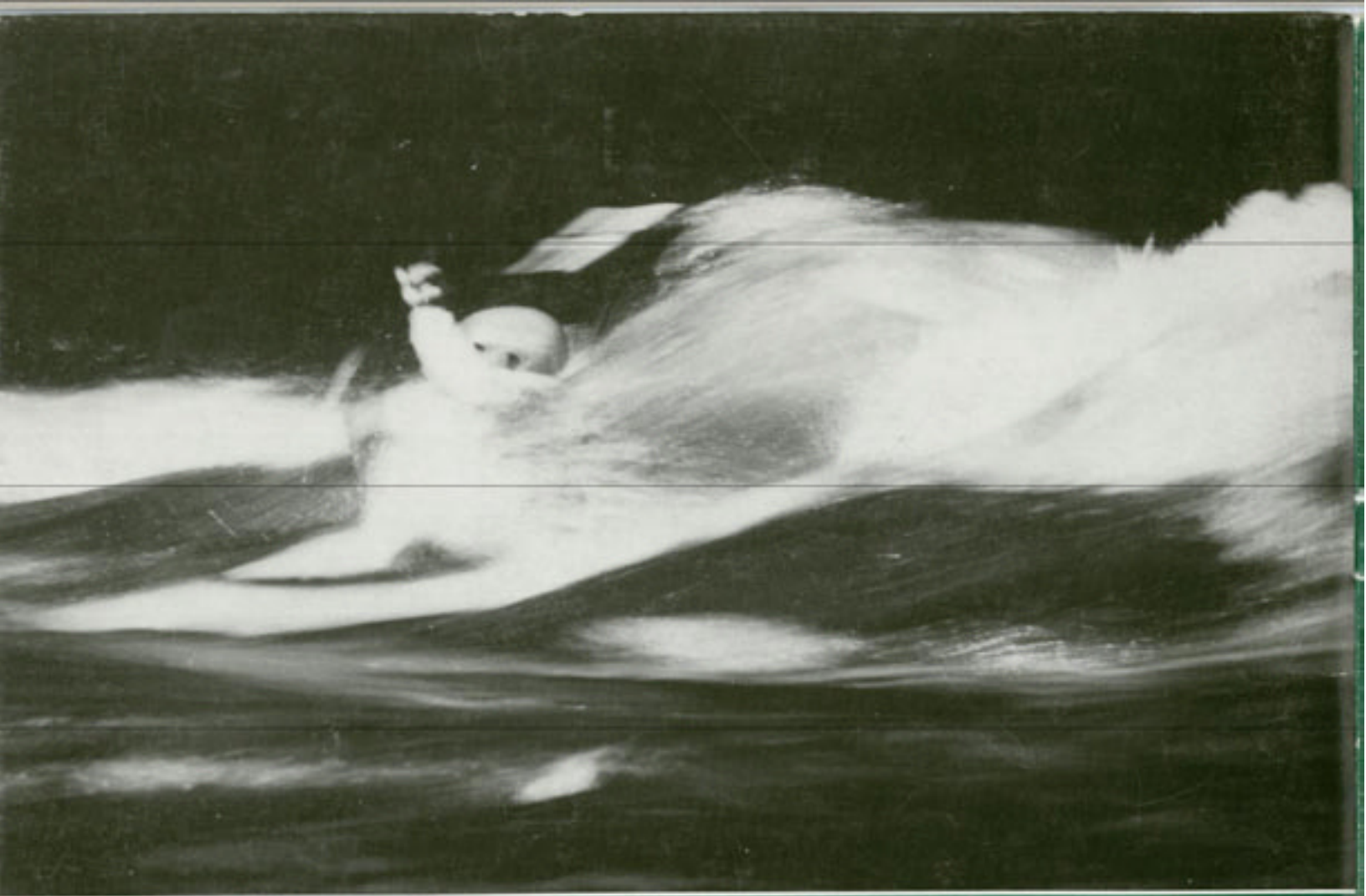
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