

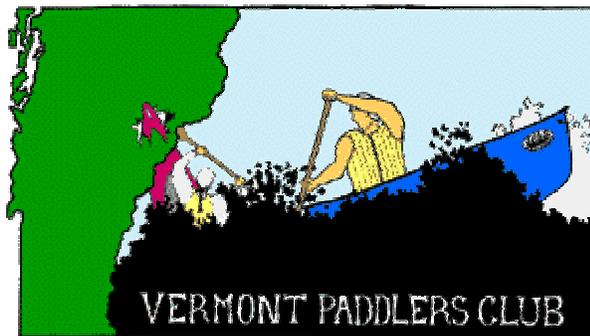
# Bow and Stern



Newsletter of the Vermont Paddlers Club  
in Partnership with the American Canoe Association

Volume XXXVII No. 2

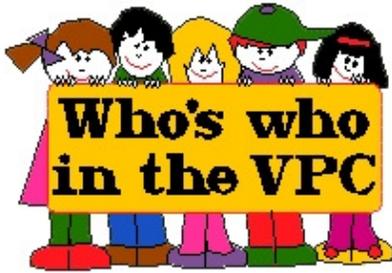
July 24, 2011



Go with the flow...

VPC c/o Rich Larsen  
11 Discovery Road  
Essex Junction, VT 05452

## Who's Who in the VPC



### Directors:

- Activities Dir: [Chris Weed](#) 802-863-2149
- Communication Dir: [A J Seibel](#) 274-3920
- Safety and Education Dir: [Mark Lienau](#) 822-5291

### Appointed/Volunteers:

- Paddling School: [Mark Lienau](#) 822-5291
- Publicity Chair: [Peggy Pelckmann](#) 802-272-5275
- Conservation Chair: [Ryan McCall](#) 223-5986
- Webmaster: [Tony Shaw](#) 879-1655

### Resources:

- Website: <http://www.vtpaddlers.net>
- National Weather Service: 862-2475

### Officers:

- President: [Paul Carlile](#) 658-6657
- Vice President: [Brock Richardson](#) 802-899-5563
- Treasurer: [Richard Larsen](#) 878-6828
- Secretary: [Ryan McCall](#) 223-5986

## Part I: Creekboat Preventative Maintenance

(adapted from a NBMB post)

By: [Ryan McCall](#)

For goodness sake – give your creekboat some love - actually all of your boats! Since you live in VT it is safe to consider all of your boats creekboats. Because in reality, playboating is non-existent except when you need a must make surf across a wave at the lip above a class V death drop or you have now squarely planted yourself in the most retentive hole you have been in your entire life on a river that drops in excess of 300 feet per mile and a swim may hurt more than getting run over by a Mack Truck. This is where VT playboating lives... Sorry for the digression folks.....

Those of you that spend your time bouncing, grinding, sliding, boofing and hucking your meat down the numerous options we have in VT that boaters call navigable rivers – you are all too aware that over time your trusty steed will wear thin, crack and/or catastrophically disintegrate at some point. Knowing how to weld plastic (part 2) becomes a necessity unless you are able to lay down some coin for a new pool toy to go beat the bejesus out of.

Before you get to that point though, knowing your boat and taking some time to take it apart can go a long way. The following narrative can provide some pointers for how to take precautions against premature creekboat breakage.

Creekboats break because of stress risers created by an edge on a seat or reinforcing bar - a much bigger concern than the all too often discussed "oil canning". Oil canning looks bad but is not actually as bad as it seems unless the deformation is great and can snag on rock or ledge edges.

Durability of a creekboat is really a question of if the plastic hull can have a little bit of give (foam) to it to spread the impact of the rock, or if it comes up against something hard (a

seat) and all the energy is transferred to that point. This is always a balancing act; and one that designers argue all the time.

Stiffer hulls hold shape and initial performance well (good for a play boat), but can have a higher potential for catastrophic failure depending on the plastic.

More flexible hulls start to deform early but ultimately can take more hits down the road showing obvious signs of wear and tear earlier and needing timely T.L.C. on oil-canning evidence.

Everyone should make sure there is at least a very thin foam layer (min 1/4") between any seat edges and the hull.

Also, get into the sides of the seat and block them out against the hull with foam. Even if the seat is stable (side to side) when it is new, with time it will have a bit of wiggle and will put extra stress on the mounting bolts (and might also add to the sandpaper effect on the interior of the hull with any grit that gets caught under the seat).

Fewer and fewer people know how to work with mini-cell and contact cement each year. It's a trend that needs to be reversed. Manufacturers put the boats together better these days than 10 or 15 years ago, but they still need some T.L.C. when you first get them to make sure everything fits tight and is customized for you.

As your boat gets older, take note where deformations are happening. Slight oil canning can be remedied with some carefully cut foam in the right place, usually under the seat.

A thing to be aware of is the size of your bow/stern pillar. They are all cut the same size (per manufacturer), but each boat is slightly different in size, so the perfect fit takes the custom touch. Also, with time, the mini-cell foam pillars will crush down and loosen up. This is easily remedied by removing it and adding a 1/4" strip (more or less depending) and reinstalling it in your boat.

All of this can be done with a can of contact cement, a cheapo bread knife and a variety of mini-cell foam pieces. Any of the boat shops in VT can supply you with the foam and your local hardware store has a plethora of contact cements that will work.

Next time we are in a drought and nothing is running, get your supplies, a 6 pack of your favorite beverage and disassemble your boat in a well ventilated area. See what is up with the guts of the boat and if anything is loose...add foam where needed. Again make sure you have good ventilation as the contact cement gasses off some pretty potent methel-ethel-bad-stuff. Have fun and get that creeker all sussed out...While you are at it you could probably clean up your outfitting for a better fit in that boat to so you won't fall out of it during your beat-down in the hole on the 300 feet per mile creek.

Stay tuned for Part II: Creek Boat Repair.....

# Join the VPC Board of Directors for 2012-2013

First, unequivocally, hats off to the current VPC board, which has accomplished a great deal since January 2010 (winter pool sessions, 2 film festivals, New Haven Race/Festival, Mad River Access, Green River relicensing, picnics, novice/class II/rescue clinics, and more).

Now, 2011 is an election year – for the VPC that is - and in November we will meet to vote some new members onto the Board of Directors for 2 year terms. Please give some consideration to how much you enjoy paddling, and how you could translate that energy into something that can/will benefit the entire local paddling community... A good way for you to “test the waters” would be to attend one or more of the monthly VPC Board meetings during summer/fall 2011. If you are even modestly interested, please PLEASE get in touch with President Paul Carlile (658-6657) – don’t delay. The VPC website contains a list of elected board positions + typical tasks by position <http://vtpaddlers.net/join/leadership/offices.php>

## Didymo for Idiots – (reprinted from July 2009)

By Ryan McCall

### **What precautions should everyone take to avoid spreading Didymo?**

As recreational or professional users of Vermont’s aquatic resources, we all have the potential to spread aquatic invasive species and fish and wildlife pathogens from stream to stream and watershed to watershed. Responsible stewards of our state waters take precautions to minimize the spread of these threats.

Follow these ‘Best Practices’ and Disinfection Procedures to minimize the spread of aquatic invasive species and fish and wildlife pathogens. This approach is modeled after New Zealand’s widely-used ‘Check, Clean, Dry’ strategy. While designed to address the spread of Didymo, these practices will help to minimize the spread of other aquatic invasive species and fish and wildlife pathogens as well.

**BEST PRACTICES** for minimizing the spread of Didymo, other aquatic invasive species, and fish and wildlife pathogens while using Vermont’s waters:

- Disinfect your gear and boat before traveling between different bodies of water or watersheds (see below).
- If you move around to boat construct and use a simple, portable disinfection kit.
- When possible boat in a single water body in a single day, rather than traveling between multiple watersheds without appropriate precautions.
- Visually inspect your boat, gear and equipment before entering and leaving the water. Remove all plants, plant fragments, animals, mud or other debris and discard in the trash.
- Always remove drain plug and drain any water prior to leaving boat loading/unloading area. Don’t move water between water bodies.

### **How can I properly disinfect my recreational equipment?**

#### **DISINFECTATION PROCEDURES – Disinfect prior to moving to another water body, watershed, or upstream site**

There are a number of disinfection techniques that will kill most aquatic invasive species and fish and wildlife pathogens, including Didymo. Solutions of bleach, saltwater, various

household cleaners with quaternary ammonia (benzalkonium) or dishwashing detergent products are suggested as they provide the best combination of availability, cost AND effectiveness against Didymo as well as other aquatic invasive species and fish and wildlife pathogens, such as whirling disease. Choose the appropriate agent based on the actual items requiring disinfection (i.e. bleach solutions will destroy some items). It is recommended that all disinfected equipment be rinsed on dry land, away from state waters. It is preferable to drain used solutions into treated wastewater (e.g. pour down a sink drain).

Non-absorbent items (boats, canoes, rubber waders, 'hard-sided' objects)

- **Dishwashing Detergent:** soak and scrub for at least one minute in 5% solution (add 6.5oz of detergent with water to make one gallon). 'Green' products are less effective and not recommended for disinfecting.
- **Saltwater:** Soak for 20 minutes in a 5% saltwater solution (2/3 cup per gallon of water)
- **Bleach:** soak or spray all surfaces for at least one minute in 2% household bleach (2.5oz with water added to make one gallon). Bleach solutions must be replaced daily to remain effective.
- **Quaternary Ammonium:** This can be found in common household cleaners and listed as benzalkonium on the label. It has been found that this is less harsh on neoprene items and doesn't become ineffective such as bleach solutions. If using this for disinfection, follow the instruction on the label, especially if it is in a concentrated form.
- **Hot Water:** soak for at least one minute in very hot water (above 140°F – hotter than most tap water) OR for at least 20 minutes in hot water kept above 120°F (hot tap water, uncomfortable to touch).
- **Drying:** Drying will kill Didymo, but slightly moist environments will support some organisms for months. This approach should only be used for gear that can be left in the sun for extended periods of time (i.e. a canoe that's left in the yard for several days between uses).

Absorbent items require longer soaking times to allow thorough penetration into the materials. Felt-soled waders, for example, are difficult and take time to properly disinfect. Other absorbent items include clothing, wetsuits, sandals with fabric straps, or anything else that takes time to dry out. The thicker and denser a material, the longer it will require for adequate disinfection. Err on the side of caution. Bleach solutions are not recommended for absorbent materials.

- **Hot Water:** Soak items for at least 40 minutes in very hot water kept above 140°F (hotter than most tap water).
- **Dishwashing Detergent and hot water:** ('Green' products are less effective and not recommended for disinfecting): soak for 30 minutes in a hot 5% detergent/water solution kept above 120°F.
- **Saltwater:** Soak for 20 minutes in a 5% saltwater solution (2/3 cup per gallon of water)
- **Quaternary Ammonium:** This can be found in common household cleaners and listed as benzalkonium on the label. It has been found that this is less harsh on neoprene items and doesn't become inert such as bleach solutions. If using this for disinfection follow the instruction on the label, especially if it is in a concentrated form.
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# GREEN RIVER RELICENSING UPDATE – JULY 2011

The Green River is a 3 mile dam-controlled stretch of class III-V whitewater, flowing out of the Green River Reservoir and into the Lamoille River in Morrisville, VT. The dam is owned and operated by Morrisville Water and Light (MWL), and is currently up for relicensing through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). FERC licenses are usually issued for a 30 to 40 year period.

During the past spring with the surfeit of water we had, first descents and subsequent descents of the Green have gone into the books, despite a ton of wood that remains in the river making passage treacherous in spots (see trip reports section, below).

VPC members Ryan McCall and Bill Hildreth have attended FERC hearings and MWL has been extremely cooperative with requests to provide flows this coming fall for a whitewater boating feasibility study, much like the one that American Whitewater coordinated for the Ausable Chasm in 2005. If you think you want to participate in the feasibility study, get in touch with Ryan or Bill ASAP. AW and VPC will continue to work together on this project. As flow studies go forward, we hope to learn a great deal about the operation of the dam and availability of flows, culminating in the whitewater feasibility study this fall. It looks like this will be an exciting year for paddlers who are interested in enjoying yet another wonderful Vermont steep creek/river. News on the process will continue to be published here.

Tony Shaw

## CLASS II CLINIC 2011

This year the VPC hosted it's annual class II clinic on the Deerfield River near Charlemont, MA. The class consisted of 6 kayak (K-1) students and 1 open canoe (OC-1). Both days focused on boat control, stroke concepts, water reading and (occasionally) self-rescue skills. The class started out timid on day one, shaky in their boats but determined to learn and grow. By the end of the first day multiple students ran the class III+ Zoar Gap rapid at the end of the run to many hoots and hollers. Day two saw a drastic improvement from the entire class! Students caught their first surfs, aggressively ferried swift currents, caught numerous eddies, and began identifying their own lines through rapids. What a day! The nights saw good camaraderie around the campfire at Woodford State Park back in VT, and multiple visits by a very loud pair of Bard Owls. All in all, a fantastic weekend! We'll see the graduates on the water!

## MULTI-DAY TRIPPING ASSISTANT

A Multi-Day Trip Assistant to help groups publicize, coordinate, budget for, shop for, and pack for extended paddling trips is the newest feature of the VPC website. The tool also will serve as a historical record of multi-day trips organized by/for members of the VPC, and as such we hope it will inspire others to follow in our 'footsteps'. Here's the URL: <http://vtpaddlers.net/paddle/tripping/> FYI a trip for the fall of 2011 is brewing..

# TREASURER'S REPORT – JANUARY 2011

INCOME AND EXPENSES	YEAR 2007	YEAR 2008	YEAR 2009	Year 2010
<b>INITIAL BALANCE</b>	<b>\$2012.38</b>	<b>\$2321.26</b>	<b>\$3037.11</b>	<b>\$2994.50</b>
DUES	\$1009.00	\$1230.00	\$970.00	\$931.00
EVENTS SPONSORSHIP	(\$200.00)	(\$200.00)	(\$250.00)	(\$1150.00)
SCHOLARSHIPS	(\$200.00)	(\$100.00)	\$0.00	\$0.00
WEBSITE	(\$327.95)	(\$360.00)	(\$208.25)	(\$90.00)
INTEREST / BANK FEES	(\$28.95)	(\$35.10)	\$9.50	\$13.28
MEETINGS / MAILINGS	(\$276.63)	(\$99.05)	(\$709.90)	(\$500.22)
ROLLING SESSIONS	\$204.39	\$41.17	(\$112.41)	\$85.00
SAFETY GEAR	(\$142.98)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
RESCUE CLINIC	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
NOVICE CLINIC	\$255.00	\$540.00	\$585.70	\$995.00
CLASS 2 CLINIC	\$17.00	(\$48.17)	\$0.00	\$0.00
T-SHIRTS	\$0.00	(\$220.00)	\$0.00	\$0.00
BANNER	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
NET ACA COST	\$0.00	(\$85.00)	(\$120.25)	(\$205.00)
BROCHURES	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
WHITEWATER FUND (book sale)		\$52.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
REEL PADDLING FILM FEST			(\$207.00)	\$92.37
<b>FINAL BALANCE</b>	<b>\$2321.26</b>	<b>\$3037.11</b>	<b>\$2994.50</b>	<b>\$3165.93</b>

In 2010 we made a major donation of \$1,000 to Vermont Rivers Conservancy, to help secure Mad River Access\*. The \$552 previously in 'Special Projects' (Whitewater Fund) was used as a portion of this amount.

Our finances are very solid. I view our year-end need as \$1500 to avoid cash flow issues, and we are well over that.

Memberships, member retention, and a robust set of activities should be the focus of VPC.

Richard Larsen – January 13, 2011

\* The new Lower Mad take-out is on the Winooski River, river left just downstream of the US2 bridge, where parking is plentiful. Watch out for poison ivy, though!!

# Events Calendar

WW = whitewater // FW = flatwater // Vt area code: 802

Date	Trip	Organizer	Level	Contact
9-3 to 9-5-11	<i>Ottawa River, Labor Day wknd</i>	Jim Poulin	Int-Adv. WW	802-355-4591
9-24-11	West River Dam Release	Tony Shaw	Int-Adv WW	802-879-1655

  
**TRIP DIFFICULTY RATINGS ARE ONLY A GUIDE.**  
**READ THE [SAFETY CODE OF AMERICAN WHITEWATER](#). STAY ASHORE WHEN CONDITIONS ON A GIVEN DAY EXCEED YOUR COMFORT LEVEL!!!**

## SCHEDULE NOTES

Trips/events with the ACA logo at left, , are American Canoe Association sanctioned events. THESE ARE THE ONLY LISTINGS THAT ARE SANCTIONED BY THE ACA AND VPC.

- nov = max Class II, int = max Class III, adv = max Class IV, exp = Class IV+  
See International River Rating Scale
- [Winter pool sessions](#) continue until March 27th (space limited, fee charged). Signup online.
- Contact the trip organizer for information about each trip.
- Listed events and trips may be changed or canceled as water, weather, or interest dictates.
- Plans for impromptu trips can be relayed thru the trip organizer or online.
- Please give 1-2 weeks notice for far-flung t trips to have a say in pre-planning.
- Car-pooling on long (and short) trips is encouraged!
- The [AROUND VERMONT IN 30 RIVERS](#) promotion is underway!!!

### Disclaimer:

Danger exists for participants in canoeing, kayaking, tubing, and other activities organized or advertised by the Vermont Paddlers Club. Such participation may result in illness or injury due to accidents, the forces of nature, or other causes not foreseeable. Such illness and injury may include disease, strains, sprains, fractures, dislocations, paralysis, and/or death. Possible injuries may cause serious and permanent disability.

By your participation in any Vermont Paddlers Club activity you knowingly assume the risks arising out of that activity. In so doing you release, hold harmless and indemnify the Vermont Paddlers Club and its agents, officers and employees from any and all claims and suits for bodily injury, property damage, wrongful death, loss of services or otherwise which may arise out of your participation in canoeing, kayaking, tubing and other activities, whether or not such claims or suits arise from negligent acts or omissions by the organizers and conductors of this activity, their employees or volunteers, another participant, any other person or from any other cause.

## Upper Mad Saturday Mar 19, 2011

Character: nov-int WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: John Atherton

Participants: (K1): Jamie Soroachak

Paul Carlile

John Atherton; (OC1): Tony Shaw

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 1100 cfs; USGS Station: Moretown

The four of us started out just below the bridge in Warren. Before we could actually start paddling we first had to get our boats and gear down to the river. We lowered the boats down the snow covered bank by rope and caught the them before they floated down the river. Paul was the pitcher and I was the catcher. We did stop and look at how we might seal launch off the bank into the 33 degree water. We did not think long before that idea was discarded.

Two of us had never paddled this upper section so Tony led the way. It was not long after we started that Jamie wanted to get wet by playing in the first wave. It definitely was cold for him but he came up smiling and went right back for more play time.

It was really a nice day even though I do not think the temp got much above freezing. This section of river has no serious drops or rapids just a few play waves. We stopped at a bend in the river and Jamie put on a show for the kids looking out their windows. I am sure that the kid's parents had a few comments about those crazy people out there on the river and make sure you stay away from the water. On we went after Jamie made the comment that he did not know that his eyebrows could freeze.

A little further down the river Paul decided that it was his time to put on a show. I do not believe he planned it but a nice side surf turned into a roll that sucked him over into the only retentive hole on the river. He held his side surf when we all thought he was going to get window shaded and paddled out. Nice move Paul!

We finally came to punch bowl and we all decided that the left drop was the most desirable way to go.

Comments were made that we did not expect to see any nude bathers today. The last and probably most challenging section is at Butternut. I did a scout and was satisfied that I remembered the best way thru. Tony led the way and Paul followed. Jamie, after getting near the drop, realized that he did not remember the best route and just after the first pour over he decided to see the Butternut underworld. Jamie some how made it all

the way down the last drop without hitting anything and made his usual styled roll in the bottom pool. I was the last one and I made it all the way thru until the last drop into the pool that decided it needed some new bait. My roll was not good so a short swim, rescue, and boat rescue was needed.

We proceeded to probably the best surf wave on this section of the river. Jamie, Paul and Tony were making it look fun so I decided to join in. I decide to see the underworld again but this time I hit my roll on the second attempt. More surfing and we were heading for the take out. Well not Tony, he decided to surf that OC1 a little longer. Not very often do you find three kayakers waiting for and watching an OC1 paddler surfing. Of course Tony is no ordinary paddler.

We all made it to the take out and agreed that it was a nice day on the river and looked forward to more spring paddles.

- John atherton

## Lower (not Upper) Mad Sunday Apr 3, 2011

Character: nov-int WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Tony Shaw

Participants: (K1): John Atherton, Dan Beideck, Josh Conway, Jamie Dolan, Tim Farr, Ken Emery, David Hathaway, Ryan McCall, Francis McGuire, Dave Packie, Jamie Soroachak, Chris Weed; (OC1): Mike Smorgans; (C1): Tony Shaw

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 3.33 ft.; USGS Flow: 304 cfs; USGS Station: Moretown VT



Although the upper Mad had been run two weeks earlier by several of us (TR above) at a dandy level, we knew the flow today was going to be too low to run the upper Mad as planned. But we had no idea just how low it would be until we launched below the power dam on the lower - a mere 25 cfs ... per paddler! Then within moments it fell further, to less than 22 cfs (pp), when Ryan and Dave joined up with our group after paddling down from the Moretown Gorge. I can't recall another time when I've seen 14 boats together on the Mad, the Sugarbush Triathlon notwithstanding. It's always nice to meet a few new folks on a river trip, in this instance including Josh and Tim from Johnson State College.

Speaking of the Triathlon, the reason for our late start (2pm) was to permit club members who volunteered to help with Triathlon river safety to finish their assignments and then drop down for a late-day paddle. Peg was the only one to bow out at the last minute with some lame excuse ("broken wrist"), but she did show up at the "double drop" with a camera to take pictures - redeeming herself!

All but one of the day's swims took place at the Horseshoe, where some underestimated how forcefully the redirected flow at the crux tries to flip your boat upstream. Or, in John's case, I think maybe he was just still too blissed out from the Yanni concert he attended in Montreal on Friday night with Elvia. He swam out of that hole looking as poised and confident as a synchronized swimmer at the summer Olympics - turning down the throw rope that we offered!

It was reasonably warm, 45 degrees, with clear skies, aside from the momentary downpour as we passed beneath the barricaded Lovers' Lane Bridge (where a

winter's worth of accumulated snow was melting fast in the sun). Although more water would have been welcomed, there was always a line down through every rapid, plus this level boosted the confidence of those new to the lower Mad, like Ken, who paddled super.

At the last drop, where Dave and Ryan carried back up several times as part of a contest to see who could catch the most eddies coming through (4...or 5...depending on who you believe), a snowball fight broke out. Or actually, it was more like a snowball shelling, since most of the targets were in their boats and trying to paddle. The rest of us also were carrying back up here as well, trying various routes, including the far left channel.

Parking adjacent US 2 at the start of Lovers' Lane is much improved since they replaced the old bridge across the Winooski, and will be even better when the new boat/fishing access on the Winooski is completed on river right (later this year??). Overall, it was a quick trip on a nice early April afternoon.

- Tony Shaw

### **New Haven Race** Saturday Apr 9, 2011

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: New Haven Race Committee

Participants: (K1): 58 Creek Boaters; (C1): Alden Bird

The New Haven Race yesterday was a great success! With 60 racers, warm temperatures, blue skies, and the banks lined with spectators, it was an awesome way to celebrate the community that has grown up around that river!!

First, some unofficial results:

1st: Hugh Pritchard (Montpelier, VT)

2nd: Joel Kowalski (Quebec)

3rd: Patrick Gagne (Valleyfield, QC)

The fastest lap of the day was submitted by Justin Crannell. Past champions Justin Beckwith and Scott Gilbert both advanced to the semi-

finals. By my count, there were 56 men's kayaks, one junior men's kayak, two women's kayaks, and one C-1. There were boaters on hand from Maine, NH, VT, NY, Quebec, Maryland, MA, and CT. There were at least three or four swims, in Roostertail Rapid, and below Toaster Falls.



Next -- a big thanks to all the companies that donated money, or gear -- especially Bliss-Stick Kayaks for donating the cash prize money. There is nothing like seeing a guy get presented with a stack of \$1,000 -- in singles! For their sakes, I hope that Joel and Patrick were able to get back across the border with that stack of bills without having to explain where they got it!

Also, a big thanks is due to Rustic River Adventures for providing free shuttles to racers and their boats throughout the day.

Finally, a big thanks to the race organizers and the volunteers! Dave Packie, Ryan McCall, Dan Siger, Ben Guttridge, Eric Adsit, Paul Carlile, all the safety boaters, the UVM folks, and everyone else!!

There was a TON of free stuff raffled off and given out to competitors. In just the small area where I was standing during the awards ceremony, folks were winning new paddles, a full-face helmet, sleeping bags, waterproof I-Pod speakers, camp chairs, and drytops.

Given that this race has only been held for two years, and only about twenty people have actually competed in total, I think the sheer volume of companies willing to step up, donate, and publicize 2011's race comes as a direct result not of the race's fame, but of the organizers' hard work and persuasion. I can only imagine how

much work and time this has taken . . . I just hope that Ryan's and Dave's marriages have survived the last few weeks intact!

From the put in at Eagle Park yesterday, one could see the snow-covered Mt. Abe way up in the headwaters. There is still a lot of snow up in the mountains. I think the rivers are going to be running for a while . . . and it's going to be a great season!

Cheers!

Alden

- Alden Bird

### **Lower Mad** Saturday Apr 9, 2011

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Jamie D

Participants: (K1): Dave H, Dan D, Grant L  
Greg P, Jamie D, Heidi M, Frank W, Ken E;  
(OC1): Mike S

We substituted the lower Mad for the Huntington when it became clear that the Huntington would not have enough water in it. We stepped up the class level based on who was signing up. The level was great starting at 543 CFS and ending at 627cfs, with loads of sunshine.

It was the first time on a river this year for about half the group. And, it turned out that we had three people who had not been on the lower Mad yet (is that possible?). Yeah, we ferried a bit at the put in to see how many cobwebs there were (maybe more than a few). The first rapid went very smoothly with no issues. Double drop could also be called double trouble. Two rolls and a swim. It was reported the water is cold. The next class II stretch was great, as everyone took their time surfing and ferrying. Horseshoe had no takers but five of us did the left chute. Dan looked like he was about to do the horseshoe (unwillingly) but managed a few power strokes that got him to the left chute. Then he aced the rest of it. Dave graciously showed us why it is important NOT to point your bow river right (towards the horseshoe)

when dropping over. It ended well, but those visuals will stay with us for awhile.

I had the opportunity to practice (successfully) my offside roll in washing machine. No one else deigned join me. We boat scouted the last drop which went great for all but one. We had spent over two hours on the water and no one was up much for playing anymore.

Another fantastic day on the water with an excellent group. Thanks.

- Jamie D

### Huntington - Audubon to Jonesville Sunday Apr 10, 2011

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: high

Organizer: Tony Shaw

Participants: (K1): Dan Beideck, Paul Carlile, , Jamie Dolan, James Fecteau, Sue Strang, Frank Wells; (OC2):

Meg ?? and Noah Pollock; (C1): Tony Shaw

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 5 ft.; USGS Flow: 1500 cfs; USGS Station: Mad @ Moretown

Before telling 8 other paddlers the runout for the Huntington River beyond the lower gorge to Jonesville was "flat", maybe I should have looked at my 1971 AMC River Guide. It advises quite unequivocally to take-out at Huntington gorge, since "the river drops 200 ft. in the next 3 miles through the gorge and should not be attempted at any stage." Even my updated 1989 AMC River Guide demurs: "Although the river is potentially runnable for another 1.5 miles below the lower gorge, it is difficult to reach and first-hand reports are not available."

But today was not the day to let discretion be the better part of valor, so what started out at the Audubon Center put-in as a relaxing, warm, sunny, sandal-clad class I-II float down the Huntington turned into something more closely resembling a northwoods "Deliverance".

It got rainy and cold. We dripped onward. Curtains of fog made the lethal lower gorge entrance imperceptible. We muddled onward. One kayaker had a cold, confidence-shaking swim - above the lower gorge. We inched onward. The snow over the hogback and down into the lower gorge on river right was up to our shins if not our thighs. We slogged onward. The river cranked and swirled through the erstwhile taciturn lower gorge.

We flushed onward. The tandem boat flipped. We gurgled onward. It got dark. And we pulled off...at 7:30 pm. The most amazing part of it all was what good spirits everyone was in as conditions steadily deteriorated, and on a river reach whose challenges I had quite obviously under-rated.

This was the day in 2011 when rivers statewide really started to pop. As evidence, within 48 hours the Winooski in Essex Jct. was cresting over 28,000 CFS, a level higher than any Chris Weed had observed in his 15+ years of monitoring its flows. Eric and Barb Bishop/Frankowski, who live off of the Essex River Rd. concurred.

I can't say exactly how much the river rose while we paddled, since darkness had taken hold by the time we drove cars back upstream to retrieve cars at the put-in. Needless to say, there were a few anxious spouses left at home wondering where the hell their honeys were. And it's a good thing John Atherton wasn't along. I'm not sure even a Yanni Concert "glow" would have been enough to overcome the deep, dark foreboding of the lower Huntington Gorge on this trip which Frank Wells later called: "a great surprise adventure...well worth the cold, dark, wet, muddy ending!".

- Tony Shaw

### Lower New Haven Wednesday Apr 13, 2011

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Paul Carlile

Participants: (K1): Paul Carlile

Noah Pollock

Dan Beideck

John Atherton

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 1000 cfs; USGS Station: New Haven

It's not often you can tell the exact flow of the New Haven but the gauge was flat at 1000 cfs for 5 hours Wed evening. When we met at the put-in John discovered that he had forgotten his PFD. Francis came to paddle but was feeling uncomfortable with his roll and decided not to

so he loaned his PFD to John. In the first rapid John flipped and swam because his paddle had snapped in half. Noah and I retrieved his boat around the corner and luckily Dan had a breakdown paddle so we were able to continue. We had a fun paddle down to the iron bridge where Francis met us. Unfortunately, John's boat got away from him and Dan and I chased it through the iron bridge rapid and caught up a little way down. We had a great time down the last section and had an easy shuttle back thanks to Francis's help.

- Paul Carlile

### Green River Garfield to Lamoille Friday Apr 15, 2011

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Ryan

Participants: (K1): Dave, Mic, Art, Brenton, Hippie, Ryan

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 127.40 cfs; USGS Station: MWL

The PA crew (Mic, Hippie, Brenton & Art) was in town on their annual pilgrimage to The Green Mountain State. This would be the 4th year in a row the core of them has made the trip up to paddle VT's snow melt in the prime of the creek boating season. The first day of the trip each year is usually started at the Coffee Corner in Downtown Montpelier with me meeting up with them and setting plans for the day. This year was no different than any other with a hearty breakfast and some creek names thrown around, the goal for this year was to hit as many micro creeks as possible. The flows on the smaller drainages were marginal though.

Off we went to check Nasmith Brook in Marshfield. It was at a bare bones level that left most of the guys turning their noses up at it. This was fine by me because with more flow this is an unfinished gem. So we headed up over the ridge through East Montpelier to the North Branch Winooski where flows the preceding days were especially high filling Wrightsville Reservoir. I love this run and will poke down it at just about any level, extreme low to meaty high. A few in the group are also of that mind set... However; we had a voice of reason with us this day. As much as I am willing to point my plastic down any lubed stretch of rock, Dave Packie was with us that day and for the most part is of the mindset that the boating is much better if there is less

chance of rubbing rock – true enough.

Especially if there are options that would make it silly to bang down something more terra-firma than aqua.

Driving past the outflow to Wrightsville, Dave came up with a rather logical idea....All of the reservoirs are full around here and are struggling to get the levels down to a reasonable elevation...In other words what a great day for a release river and the best and closest one was the Green River in Wolcott. Just so happens that Dave and I have been trying to get on this river for the better part of 2 years and are actively working with a local group and American Whitewater to secure whitewater recreational releases through the FERC relicensing process with Morrisville Water and Light, the owner and operators of the hydropower facility that dams up the Green River to great the Green River Reservoir. It is really easy to see if it is flowing by driving over the river on route 15 next to Morrisville Auto. If it looks like you can float a boat then it is boatable. So we headed to the power transfer station that is about 200 yards west of the river to set shuttle, change into boating gear and park the return vehicle(great designated parking area btw).

Once loaded up we headed up Garfield road to the ghost village of Garfield where the road crosses the Green River. One time in the distant past this area was supposed to be a thriving village center during the logging boom period...working mills, school house, general store, etc... Now it is a rapid flowing into a culvert where the river drops in excess in 40 feet on to a jumble of road rock and rip-wrap to dissipate the power of the river when it falls from the "tube". Getting geared up some of us looked at the culvert drop and it's unrealistic line. However, there is always one crazy in the group. Surprising no one the youngest and most talented boater in the group decided it was a runnable drop. We all were kind of in shock and set safety. While at the bottom ready to pick up the pieces, I was sick to my stomach that I was going to witness a very serious injury at best and quite possibly a death at the other end of the spectrum. On the upper end he took off and was

almost flipped in the class V lead in rapid to the culvert. A trip through the culvert upside down would assure some form of bodily harm. Brenton righted himself and was on his way through the culvert like a shot. When he exploded out the downstream side he was air-borne for close to 20 feet before he landed flat and bounced another 20 feet to the bottom where he landed flat and his skirt imploded. The sounds of both landings were harsh and we were sure the boat was broken. Brenton struggled to get his bearings and couldn't make the simple eddy I was in and seemed dazed as he floated by flailing in his boat, very uncharacteristic of him missing multiple eddies on his way to a nasty strainer. I ran down stream as fast as I could to watch him suck under the strainer and come up on a rock without his boat and paddle, head in hands. He was OK or so it seemed. I think all of us witnessed one of the most committing things we had ever seen someone do in a boat. I am not a solid class V boater but will boat some class V rapids from time to time when posed with the right conditions. But boat on enough creeks with class V rapids to know what they look like and what they entail to paddle successfully. The drop through the culvert is not class V, I am not sure it is class VI and someone that paddles that class VI water would most likely walk away from a drop like that looking at the jumble of junk in the bottom of it saying it was more or less a boat breaking man-made mess not worth the potential outcome. Young and full of gusto were definitely the drivers behind Brenton running to which he very quickly admitted was a HUGE MISTAKE and an unnecessary risk, putting himself, the boaters he was with and any future potential recreational releases in jeopardy.

After everyone got their stuff together and we made sure Brenton was all set we boated a few hundred yards downstream to the first horizon line. What is nice about walking this river first is you know where the rapids are and cues of where to get out. Both Dave and I have walked this river to scout it out during releases and in dry weather. This first drop is a ledge that the water falls off of, approximately 12 feet in height. It is a tricky drop because the water is all sliding from right to left and the left corner of the drop is messy. The move from what we could make of it is a MONSTER boof going left to right into the pool where the river drops off of the ledge into the river right pool. There was some potential wood that may have come into play in the pool in addition you absolutely had to boof and land flat or risk a HUGE piton. We all walked to just below

the ledge and put in the pool just below for a series of smaller ledges ending in a constriction with an undercut boulder. Before we headed down stream Brenton chose to walk off leaving Dave, Art, Mic, Hippie and myself to work on down the river. The double bounce Brenton had survived had done a number on his back and he thought it best he walk off the river before he stiffened up or worse...

From the first Big 12 ft ledge the river is in a tight gorge with beautiful geology, mostly ledge rapids with large sized boulders mixed in the rapids. This goes on for more or less  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile with quality III/IV- rapids. Everyone was smiling at this point enjoying the rhythm of moving down a river in your boat. One ledge in particular did a good job of tricking two of us into riding a beautiful curlier up and over to the right side only to end in a vicious piton. Out of the two of us that hit that line, I was lucky enough to stop dead on pour over and get a good long surf in the hole while waiting for someone to pull my bow loop and yank me out of the hole. No such luck I was sucked deeper into the hole and ended up with a great hole ride and a silly swim into calm pool - Doh!!!! A few more rapids later and we were to the inner section of the run floating through the flatwater portion where both otters and beavers have been spotted.

At the end of the inner flatwater reprieve the Lower action starts in earnest with what I could consider the most committing "runnable" rapid on the river, a class V gorged in rapid that has several vertical drops/ledges and sculpted rock and for good measure potholes that actually don't have bottoms, forming sieves. This rapid constricts the average width of the river 25-30' down to 8-10 feet in width as well. There are several large pieces of wood in this rapid rendering it unrunnable at this time, but some minimal woodworking would open this gem up. It is easily portageable on river left and advised until the wood is yanked. At this point Dave was on a time schedule and need to get off the river...best move was to paddle down ahead of the group and portage quickly the drops that were class IV or higher...He made quick work

of the river and was off in time for daycare pickup. This left our group with 4 remaining boaters on the river, Art, Mic, Hippie and myself.

The river opens up directly below the rapid and next short stretch is fun class III boogie water until the river constricts again. This is a fun sluice onto a beautiful fanned out waterfall. The sluice has a piece of wood along the left side but can be paddled past into the drop. The waterfall plops you in a deep pool with the right side of the pool containing a downed hemlock tree leaving you with an urgency to roll up immediately after you plug the drop. One of the more cleanly runnable waterfalls I've seen. Art fired it up and plugged it going REALLY deep followed by a speedy roll. The rest of us portaged on river left, again, an easy portage. We put in, in the pool and were immediately presented with a 5 foot ledge drop and then the best stretch of class III/IV continuous rapids on the river for about a ¼ mile. It was non-stop ledgy fast read and run action definitely having great rhythm to it. As this action settled out we started to get into more of a pool drop nature to the river with ledges that were larger and spaced out.

The next note worthy feature was the Green Logging bridge. This is the first sign of anything manmade in along the river you will encounter until the take out. This bridge also demarcates that the river is picking up in amplitude again with more stout rapids. The next rapid below the bridge is worth a look see. The river necks down (surprise), and separates into two distinct channels around a rock island. The rapid is also choked with wood but can be run in the left channel, albeit a log slide and two limbo moves. Two of our group chose to probe the river left line. Looking like an easy line to fire up but also one that didn't leave a margin for error if you messed up, so two of us hit the river right portage trail. Art cleanly ran the drop making it look easy, Jason on the other hand slid off the log slide and flipped hooking his skirt on something submerged and snagging up. After a few terse moments and an abusive swim through this rapid he was on shore with his boat, separated from his torn skirt and paddle. This rapid is easily portaged on river right but better scouted on river left. There is some work that needs to be done in this rapid as well. Both sides of the island would go cleanly with less wood and more water.

Following this rapid there is a funky little drop that can

be sticky and tricky. We all ran it on the left to avoid the slotty/seivey part on the right. At the flow this day it was fairly benign. With a higher release it would be one to see before running it blindly.

The action keeps up with class III/IV rapids and a couple more substantial drops leading to the last of the big drops.

This final drop is easily recognized by the river banking off the left wall and charging right. Get out well above the right hand turn in the river on river right and scout. As soon as the river has made the turn there is a 6 foot ledge that has several locations where you could piton or worse. On the day we ran it Art ran it way right with a huge boof into the eddy. The lead in is messy with several reactionary waves and holes so setting up for a good line is crucial.

Below this drop the river has a few more class III-ish rapids and then settles down to swift water before it goes under Route 15 on its way to the Lamoille River. You can take out at Route 15 and walk west to the power transfer station or float to the Lamoille and get out below the junk yard and walk up the hill to the transfer station.

Thoughts on the run in general... It was at about as low as I would like to run it. The rocks are very sharp and the rapids could use more flow to either lube them up or pad them out. A call to the hydro project manager the following Monday revealed that they were producing 750kw at the power plant. I did a rough correlation. The max power generation at the plant is 1.7mw and the max outflow for the state permit is 288cfs through the penstock. So do the math if  $1.7\text{mw} = 288\text{cfs}$ , then  $750\text{kw} = 127.4\text{cfs}$ . It is a fun run and when cleaned up and a little more flow it will be a full on classic creek boat run. At the 127.4 cfs it was a little manky but definitely boatable. I, for one am looking forward the flow studies on this river to see how the boating is at different levels. Having boated it at what I would consider the lowest level I'd want to run it at and having walked it at the max 288 cfs and seen that flow,

I think there are a lot of levels in-between that would make for a great VT creeking experience.

Pix at links -

<https://picasaweb.google.com/danmayer175>

<http://artbarket.smugmug.com/Whitewater-Kayaking>

- Ryan

### **Browns River Afternoon** Friday Apr 15, 2011

Character: nov-int WW

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: Tony Shaw

Participants: (K1): John A., Ken E.; (OC1): Tony S.

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 7.50 ft.; USGS Flow: 6000 cfs; USGS Station: Lamoille (E. Georgia)

A mid-forties sunny day with light winds prompted Tony to dust off his trusty river alchemy and algebra books for some extrapolations on the Browns flow, coming up with, "it could be good." Sure enough, a moderate flow (Lamoille - E. Georgia was reading around 6,000 when we started) made for an active run with plenty of water. The flow was roughly level with the footing of the cement bridge on the far side of the river at the put-in just south of Westford.

We could tell immediately there was a nice flow under the Rt 128 bridge and around the bends on the way into the village where we scouted the dam pulling out, river left, just after the covered bridge. Then we all ran the very left short slide that presented a little roller-derby bump at the bottom. Tony led the way for John and I, giving us a refresher on how to do a slow smooth roll. We took the same slide/hip-check line but opted to practice our roll a little later.

The S-turn rapid with the sentinel rock above the small exit ledge reminded John and I to work harder on our boat control in twisting current, as both of us careened off the pillowed guardian but managed to stay upright.

We again scouted from river left and each decided to sample different lines over the river-wide ledge. Tony took a line on the far right and stepped neatly down with a carve left. John chose the far left straight drop burying his nose pretty deeply but clean. I ran left of the center rock, upon which Tony had managed to balance his canoe and take up position with safety rope.

The last drop was also scouted river left before we all elected to run the center where there was enough water to consider alternatives and make adjustments before completing the second drop. Shortly after the double ledge we came to the island where the main channel goes river left. Tony and John river-scouted the right hand channel that needs at least the level of flow we had to run it, and before counting to ten Tony dropped in and neatly eddied out. John followed next. Learning a lesson about the-one-you-don't-scout and giving way to what-the-heck moments, I followed but choose a poor line hard left and bounced down through the small rock-garden allowing myself a brief cool-off at the bottom, learning that John had also taken some brief refreshment there.

What often becomes a slow paddle out from that point on was more lively today requiring only occasional paddling while enjoying the sunshine and taking in the early spring scene including a brown furry mammal (Otter?) and evidence of the recent high water along the banks.

We pulled out at Rt. 128 and traded grins and comments about each getting an opportunity to practice our roll and how I'm still at the duckling stage in the whitewater world.

- Ken Emery

### **Saranac River (NYS) to Redford** Sunday Apr 17, 2011

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: Tony Shaw

Participants: (K1): Paul Carlile, Noah Pollock, Chris Weed; (C1): Tony Shaw

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 6.50 ft.; USGS Flow: 3700 cfs; USGS Station: Plattsburgh NY (Saranac R)

The Joe's Brook trip fell through, suspecting too little water with the GMP generators out-of-commission and the river-stopping cold weather leading up to 4/17/11. Perhaps the rain Saturday night actually raised Joe's to a runnable level - but we'll never know.

With huge lakes in the headwaters to buffer its flow, the Saranac in NYS seemed a reasonable alternative, although I had never run it this high before. The drive from the Milton park-and-ride wasn't bad. Including the ferry ride, it took a little over an hour. We met Noah at the take-out in Clayburg at 1 pm. Gas over there was \$4.05 and up (get used to it...).

The last part of the drive upstream to find the put-in was making me nervous as the snow pack on the obviously unplowed Casey Road grew deeper and deeper and Paul's Outback slid from side to side. I was telling the guys about the put-in I've used in the past - where Casey Road ends at Union Falls dam. It features easy parking and launching at the powerhouse, and the option to run the flume between the dam and powerhouse (a short creekly III-IV at medium flows if you can handle a seal launch into the current...and dig starting off with a bang). From there, though, the Saranac is pretty (sluggish) for nearly 3 miles...to where we actually did put-in this day.

I didn't mind the sloppy and at times snowy 100 yard carry on NYS conservation lands down to our put-in, although the handful of downed trees blocking the path should really be cut-out by someone with a chainsaw. **Finding** the trail in the first place was another story. But AW's online River Info has the right coordinates. Pull-off and park the car exactly 0.9 miles from the Silver Lake Road junction, and walk upstream until you see the faint footpath marked by yellow trail markers nailed to trees (and/or surveyor's tape). The good news is that, up to this point at least, they do seem to plow Casey Road in the winter.

This area is home to deer (lots of 'em), osprey, and countless other critters. Besides the deer and osprey, we saw/heard Canada geese, ducks, mink (or maybe otter), and some hawks. At times it felt like we'd found ourselves in the Bambi Movie. The run opened with close to a mile of substantial fast-moving class II, passing under the Silver Lake Road bridge, and then flattened out for a mile and a half before narrowing down abruptly at the threshold of Tefft Pond Falls. We carried it on river right, deeming it a huge cascade - class IV+ or V - with some wood in bad places.

The remainder of the run at this level was very reminiscent of the Indian during a release, but with a couple of steeper pitches, and without the hypalon or

crowds. The first of these came up fairly quickly below Tefft Pond Falls - a wide class III-IV ledges section. The center and river-right entry options looked intimidating, so we focused our attention on river-left. Paul picked a line near the left bank - left of a small island, and found himself in a hole for a while before breaking free and working right to negotiate the ledges. For the most part we were thankful to Paul for willingly acting as the "probe" and finding a sporty line through each of the many rapids we encountered. In this case, though, Noah picked a line somewhat farther to the right - splitting the island - and Chris and I both followed him, resulting in an interesting set of maneuvers through an extended series of staggered ledge holes.



After that came a couple miles of continuous class II-III, culminating in a big class III+ drop — a run-in to a large slide/tongue/foam pile, with a very large hole to be avoided on the right (formed by the big river-right ledge from which we scouted the drop). I posted a few pictures of this section on Paddle Pix after the trip (<http://bit.ly/gqBhPf>). The kayakers handled the big foam pile deftly, but it flipped the C1 - leading to my first brisk and successful combat roll in the converted Phat. After that came some more continuous class II-III (more II than III here), all the way to the takeout. The current is so swift in this section at 6.5 feet that the play waves/holes - so numerous and inviting at, say, 5 feet - are hard to catch. But then again,

punching through them and boofing over well-covered boulders made for a different kind of fun at 6.5 feet. At the Clayburg take-out, Chris and I gave Paul and Noah the option to continue downstream to a big ledge rapid we had seen from the road, while the two of us retrieved the Outback. We picked them up close to an hour later at the Maplefields convenience store, a mile and a half further downstream.

The entire run is 7-8 miles, around 3 hours, depending on your tailwind, how much you play, and where you finish. I briefly tried to entice the group to try instead the untested North Branch of the Saranac which is flat at the confluence but which AW says upstream holds 10.5 miles of class III-IV rapids, with a side-road option for accessing the midpoint. We took a peek at least, and could tell that very recently it had been over its banks and covering roads in the vicinity. At today's level there would have been no shortage of water to run the North Branch. Something to keep in mind...

- Tony Shaw

### Lower New Haven Wednesday Apr 20, 2011

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: high

Organizer: Jim Poulin

Participants: (K1): JamieD, JimF, PaulC, JimP

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 1800 cfs; USGS Station: New Haven Gauge

I woke up Wednesday morning to a significant thunder and lightning show. The downpour outside my window and New Haven level of 450 on my computer screen led me to believe that we may actually get to run this flashy section of river. Even more amazing is that we predicted this would happen – this trip was put on the events calendar two months ago!

Thus started Gauge Watch 2011.

Through the morning as the gauge went from 450 through 745 and onto 1,140 I was pretty stoked that we would have decent water.

By noon when it was 2,320 I was thinking “Whoa Nelly”!

When it crested at 2,660 at 1:30 I was crest fallen (nice pun eh?). I had never run this stretch at anything above

1,100 and was not sure I wanted to bite off more than double the volume.

Then the strangest thing happened. The level started dropping. And dropping fast! By mid afternoon it was dropping at a rate of more than 200cfs per hour.

By 4:30 it was down to 2,050 and by our put in time at 5:30 the level was at 1,860. This trip was a go!

The only thing I can think of is the rain came down so fast this morning that it did not have time to soak into the ground. It went straight to the river and drained off fast. I have not seen the New Haven drop this much in past water events. It usually has a more gradual decline after peaking.

Only Jamie had run at this level and that was a bunch of years ago. His recollection was that the lines are the same, just the water is bigger and faster.

And that is exactly as it was. All the traditional lines were the same. It's just things moved more quickly and if you got off line, the holes that were there to munch you were that much bigger. As an added bonus, new lines opened up on most of the rapids allowing for choices not available at lower levels.

The only minor bit of excitement came when Paul hit “the meat” and got flipped in the hole in the third rapid (the one after Baldwin Creek comes in). That woke us all up as the water is cold and none of us wanted to be upside down – even if for only a few seconds like Paul. Game on boys!

Even the normally slack middle section moved along and there were a few larger holes to dodge.

We took multiple lines through the bridge rapid to the delight of a local watching from the bridge.

At the island we took the left most slot – which

I had never run before – since it had a good amount of water.

There were multiple lines through the next set of rapids and we explored most of them. Then, at the take out bridge, I ran the right of center line. Note to self – at these levels if you run the right of center line you will not be able to make the take out at the bridge! The river is just moving too fast at that point. I meandered downstream and took in the last bit of rapids. Paul, not wanting me to have all this fun by myself joined in. We then walked our boats back up to the waiting cars and compadres. The take out was full of smiles and excitement of the run just had. It was like running a new river for the first time.

At these flows it's a quick run. We did the whole thing in an hour and that includes a few minutes scouting the bridge rapid. The next time the New Haven goes big (did someone say 3,000?!?) look for me to post a trip on the Lower. It's a hoot!

JimP

- Jim Poulin

### Mill Brook, Brownsville, VT Friday Apr 22, 2011

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: Berggren

Participants: (K1): Allan Berggren, Wes Nelson, Noah Pollock

Miles of Smiles--off the paddling map

Wes Nelson and Burlington, Vermont paddler Noah Pollock and I paddled the Mill Brook from 2 miles north of the intersection of Vt 106 and 44

(Hammondsville) ten miles down to the pass under I-91 leading into Kennedy Pond in Windsor. We shuttled around 3 miles of flatwater west of Brownsville.

At the outset, I wondered whether my old Dagger CFS--high rocker, rounded bottom--would hang on every rock in the 10-15ft wide stream, but we found some nice mossy banks and ledge drops in the two mile run down to Hwy 44. Our optimism was rewarded by rising level as the day warmed, snow was melting on the banks, and we were joined by feeder streams. Easy II to full III features followed to our bypass takeout a mile down Hwy 44.

We put in again below Brownsville. A log above the

12-ft slide/falls made us boogie far right. Falls itself was a bump-bump-bump-ersplash, but the works below were intense and had several holes. Below the arch bridge was three miles of very steady 2+ rapids, sometimes triple the width where we started, with a few boof logs and lovely mossy stone banks. Takeout alongside Hwy 44 below the I-91 overpass is a sandy beach with generous parking.

Mill Brook is not in the AMC or creeks literature, and there is no gauge, though it will be reflected in levels of the nearby Black (whose gauge is WAY downstream in Springfield). It has a narrow watershed, so drops off quickly. But we felt affirmed by our journey to keep it on our watch list.

Kay, Allan Berggren  
2berggrens@gmail.com

- Berggren

### White River Sunday Apr 24, 2011

Character: nov-int WW

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: Richard Larsen

Participants: (K1): Francis McGuire, David Hathaway, Craig Carline, Brian Crane; (OC1): Richard Larsen

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 4300 cfs; USGS

Station: West Hartford

We met at the Tweed River put-in at 10AM, and shuttled cars to the takeout on Route 107 a few miles below Gaysville. (The Tweed put-in is located on Route 100 in the short stretch between the Stockbridge bridge and the intersection with Route 107. A run of about 200 yards on the Tweed gets you to the White. The takeout is shortly after Route 107 enters Bethel.) The water level was pretty much ideal, being clear, green and lively. The weather was fine for people already dressed in wetsuits / dry suits - there was a short period of inconsequential drizzle - but the rest of the time it was cloudy with the sun trying to come out.

There were no problems on the river, and we reached the takeout about 2.5 hours after going onto the river.

The rapid at the old trestle supports at Stony Creek continues to move upstream, following the collapse of the left bank 4-5 years ago. And,

there had been a major collapse of the right bank recently a bit below the Gaysville Campground. Neither of these were problems, but they do continue to drop trees (strainers) into the water, and so require attention to upcoming drops as one heads down the river.

- Richard Larsen

**Upper Mad** Wednesday Apr 27, 2011

Character: nov-int WW

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: John Atherton

Participants: (K1): Dan B

Francis M

John A; (OC1): Welker T

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 2450 cfs; USGS Station: Moretown

We started out just below the Warren bridge. The over the guard rail and down the bank was a test for our newest paddler Welker. It was a test for all of us. The evening was warm and the river was higher than I had ever paddled it before. The higher level was really nice and made the river and paddle more interesting. The real action began at "Punch Bowl" we had two nice runs by Dan, an ok run by John, a swim by Francis and a walk around by Welker. The swim/rescue/re-rescue and boat rescue was definitely the most interesting part of the evening. We were not done yet. the next rapid is at Butternut road under the bridge. Dan was the only taker and he hit the line perfectly. By this point it was starting to get dark and that was my excuse for not giving it a try. we all paddled straight to the finish line and pulled out at dark. nice run for everyone. thanks guys

- John Atherton

**Lower Mad** Saturday Apr 30, 2011

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: David Hathaway

Participants: (K1): David Hathaway, Francis McGuire, John Atherton, Jim Poulin, EJ Bartlett, Woody ??, Chris Weed

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 4.33 ft.; USGS Flow: 943 cfs; USGS Station: Mad River near Moretown

Everyone but Woody (who we didn't know was coming) met at the Lover's Lane take out at 11 AM and headed up in two cars. At the put in we found Woody's front wheels mired in the ditch (looked solid, but

wasn't), but John had a towing strap and managed to pull him out. We warmed up ferrying back and forth at the put in, and then started down, with Jim in the lead and Chris running sweep. John flipped and swam near the bottom of the entry rapid and lost hold of his boat and paddle. David grabbed the paddle and clipped it to his tether, but then ended up misaligned on Double Drop and ran through the big curling wave on the right, and flipped and swam (but held on to his boat and both paddles). Meanwhile Jim was chasing John's boat and managed to bring it to shore below the bridge. After watching all this, Francis decided to walk around Double Drop. On one of the next rapids David managed to flip again, but this time pulled off a successful roll. We all got out above Horseshoe, and only John decided to try running it. With four throw ropes at the ready, John bumped along the far left and was in almost perfect position as he took the drop. It looked like he took the drop well, but didn't have quite enough speed, and disappeared into the froth. Both Jim and EJ threw ropes, and John, his boat, and his paddle were all pulled to shore. John said he didn't have to wet exit, as the turbulence sucked him right out of his boat. Francis decided to walk Washing Machine as well as Horseshoe, but the rest of us proceeded through it. John took a swim crossing the eddy line out into the turbulent pool below horseshoe, but managed to get out before being flushed through Washing Machine, and EJ rounded up his boat at the bottom. I didn't see it, but since I saw him draining his boat on the shore, I think Woody also swam in Washing Machine. Somewhere along the way the strap holding EJ's seat back managed to come loose. She had the pin that linked the back strap to the ratchet strip, but the back to it was missing. A jury rigged repair with an old piece of duck tape wrapped and tied around it held for the rest of the trip. From there on down the trip was pretty uneventful. We all took the right side of the island for the final rapid, and John went back up and ran the left side as well. Then a flat water paddle with a stiff headwind back to the take out, getting there a little before 2, I think.

- David Hathaway

**North Branch of the Lamoille** Sunday May 1, 2011

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: Paul Carlile

Participants: (K1): Jim Poulin

Paul Carlile; (C1): Tony Shaw

Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: 2 ft. (Takeout bridge (Montgomery Rd))

In the aftermath of the huge rain on Wed. the NBL was down to a low level today but you could see how high it had been and it must have been huge. We talked to the guy in the house river left just below Rt 109. He said the river was the highest he had seen it in the 15 years he's lived there. The Lamoille gauge at Johnson was 1680 and falling.

It was a beautiful, sunny day with no clouds at all when we put in. All 3 of us ran the right slide at the put in. I started out and got pushed further left than I wanted to be dropping into the slot but just got flushed. Tony was a little further right and Jim (having the benefit of 2 probes) styled it. We had a great run down through the gorge enjoying the crystal clear water, sunny sky and good company.

When we got the Waterville ledges, Tony and Jim felt they'd had great run already but didn't want to push their luck. It's been a while since I'd run the ledges but it was a beautiful day and when Tony and Jim said they'd cover me with a rope for the big drops I went for it. The only issue was when I had to work a little bit to get into the sneak slot on the second drop. Otherwise it was a clean run and great end to a beautiful day.

- Paul Carlile

**Little River** Friday May 6, 2011

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: high

Organizer: Dan Beideck

Participants: (K1): Dan Beideck

Chris Weed

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 1600 cfs; USGS Station: Little River

The Little river had been running higher than normal and I had been scouting the infamous weir for the past

couple of days. American Whitewater lists it as "unrunnable". However, I was convinced it could be done at this level, 1600 cfs. I posted a couple of pictures on the VPC website showing a tongue on river right that goes around the nasty low head dam portion. Speaking of which, a few more hundred cfs and that nasty dam MIGHT just become a really sweet play hole! That will have to wait for another day, as that didn't look to be the case yet.

Chris and I scouted the weir and decided to give it a go. However, we decided to go up river a bit for a warm up and put in just below the big dam forming the Little River Reservoir. The spill gates were wide open up top resulting in an impressive waterfall over the rocks before hitting the bottom and adding to the high flow in the river. I was first to put in and decided to paddle upstream a bit while Chris was getting ready. I must have been out of sight when Chris put in because he was nowhere to be seen when I floated back down. My guess was that he assumed I went downstream while waiting for him. So, I heading down hoping that was the case. We finally caught back up just above the weir. Not a good start, but we decided to keep on after taking one last look at the weir.

We were both comfortable that the low head dam wouldn't be an issue. The tongue was big and clearly defined. At a normal summer release level, the tongue isn't really there in enough force. But it appeared to be a clean sneak at 1600 cfs. The bigger issue was that there were some nasty hydraulics forming on river right along the gorge walls. The move seemed to be to take the tongue on the right and move to the center immediately after the weir. There were two big waves that had to be punched after this. This was where the real action was going to be, but was beyond the most dangerous parts. After that, it was a big turbulent flush down the gorge.

I had brought my playboat in hopes that there would be some great play wave down river at this level. I was second guessing that decision at this point and would have much rather have had my bigger boat to punch those two waves that were coming up. Too late now. I was the first to

go. The tongue got me around the weir just as expected, and I was on line when I crashed the first wave. It knocked me off balance a bit and the second wave came up a just a second or two later. I'd like to say I decided to go for style points and intentionally did a stern squirt, but the truth is that just sort of happened on it's own. I somehow managed to get my bow back down without flipping. I was against the gorge wall at this point and quickly paddled back to the center and on down the rest of the gorge. I caught a glimpse of Chris coming down. He was smart enough to bring a bigger volume boat and made it down clean right behind me.

The rest of the trip was pretty uneventful. The great play wave that I had hoped for, never appeared. Should have taken the big boat. Next time the water is this high, I'll know. Definitely, would do it again. However, the level has to be right. American Whitewater is probably right in that this is unrunnable, or at least shouldn't be run, at normal release levels.

- Dan Beideck

### **Black River** Saturday May 7, 2011

Character: nov-int WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Jim Poulin

Participants: (K1): JimP, JohnA, ChuckM, CraigC, BrianC, MicheleM, RandalS, ChrisW, RichR, JimF, PegP, DanB, FrancisM

Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: 1.50 ft.

(Perkinsville)

A lucky thirteen souls came out on Saturday for a run or two down the Black river in beautiful downtown Perkinsville.

This was a logistical masterpiece with meeting spots set up for the Richmond Park & Ride, Waterbury Park & Ride and the (closed) Sharon Rest Stop on I-89. And this was just for the Northern Vermont paddlers! Who knows what coordination went into getting the Central Vermont paddlers to the take out!

Kelly from BRAT (Black River Action Team) was there to video the happenings. Their goal is to capture various users of the Black River in action. I am sure this adventure will be the next You Tube sensation. Keep an eye out...

After some quick hellos and changing into our gear we were ready to head to the put in. Does anyone know where the put in is? Apparently not. The group split into two caravans and neither headed to the right put in. CJ finally got us all together and we were ready to go.

The water level was low but boatable. The slack sections got a little boney but the rapids tend to channelize so there was good flow. Everyone was hopping around the rivers into eddies, small surfing waves and green slimy boof rocks. There were a couple of swims. One was by Brian but that was due to being egged on to perform a roll in water that was too shallow. After dragging his head across the bottom he pulled the rip cord. I am not sure this really counts as a swim.

The gorge section provided the best rapids on this section. The river pinches a bit and the gradient increases for about a quarter of a mile. This stretch would be quite impressive with a foot or two more water! After some more fast moving water we arrived at the take out covered bridge. How Vermont!

At the take out Francis proclaimed this was his best run on the Black! A number of the Northern Vermont contingent had to agree as it was our first run and therefore our best also (I guess you could counter it was our worst run too). We decided to see if we could top that by taking another run. A couple of boaters had prior commitments so we were down to eleven boaters for the second run. Still a formidable flotilla!

We cut off a little bit of the first part of the run in order to save some time and get to the gorge section more quickly. Having learned from the first run, we had one caravan and all made it to the correct put in together. And it is said that kayakers are lower on the evolution scale. Ha, showed them! The second lap came off without a hitch and everyone seemed to be in their own whitewater world exploring different lines, eddies and play spots.

By the time we got to the take out everyone had

their fill. Some goodbyes and promises to meet up on the river again soon finished off the day. Then it was to reverse the pick up process on the way home to get everyone, their boats and their gear to the correct places.

- Jim Poulin

### Lower Mad River Wednesday May 11, 2011

Character: nov-int WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: JimP

Participants: (K1): JimP, JohnA, KenE, FrancisM, JamieD, TomR, RichR, PaulC, PeterC, DanB, NoahP, ChrisW; (OC2): TonyS, EmilyS

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 3.40 ft.; USGS Flow: 340 cfs; USGS Station: Moretown

Ah, Spring. The weather starts to get warm; the trees start to bud out. Wait a second! That sounds like the end of paddling season!!! This was the refrain of about a dozen boaters around noon on Wednesday, May 11. And it was motivation to get them all on the Mad River – all at the same time!

And thus started Spring's Last Hurrah 2011.

The VPC posting was set: meet at the takeout at 5:30. Then someone posts a "warm up" run at 3:30. Amazing to me how many paddlers don't work for a living!

Six hearty souls (John, Ken, Francis, Jamie, Rich and Jim) met at the takeout for an early run. It did not take too long to get ready and consolidate boats on a couple of cars. The level was low but boatable. All the rapids had enough juice to get through. We moved down river slowly but steadily. We did have to be at the takeout by 5:30! There was a quick scout at Horseshoe and those that chose to run styled it. (all on the left channel) There was a quick swim at Washing Machine but that did not stop the group for long. We paddled the last couple of rapids, joined up with the Winooski and made it to the takeout with time to spare. (OK, maybe 5 minutes)

Waiting at the takeout were a few more paddlers. Actually, it was A LOT more paddlers. We figured out a way to not have to run an intermediate shuttle to get the two cars from the first run back to the takeout. We just loaded everyone up and headed to the put in! Thanks Dan for the pickup truck that can hold ten or

fifteen boats! Or so it seemed...

Once at the put in we meet up with a couple of more paddlers and found it hard to find a parking spot. Were we paddling on the Mad River or skiing a power day at Mad River??? Hard to tell by the number of cars.

So here's the math: 6 paddlers on the first run. Minus 1 for the second run (Francis). Plus 8 paddlers for the second run equals 13! But wait there's more! Another private trip picked the unfortunate time to put on at the same time. Plus 3 more boaters. We were a flotilla of 16 paddlers in 15 boats! Yowza, that's a lot of plastic on a small river like the Mad! As trip leader I needed to keep counting heads. No small feat as the group bobbed down river.

But we managed. We poked our way down the river and spread out so that we didn't get in each other's way. We congregated at the larger eddies so we could count heads and recount stories.

At Horseshoe almost the whole group ran the left channel. Each run was clean! (nice job all!) Paul popped into Tony's open boat as an understudy to Emily (Paul – do you like the theatre reference?!?) and the two went over the drop to everyone's cheers and whistles! Sweet run!



Then the real action began. A number of folks walked back up to give the right side of

Horseshoe a go. I would like to say that every run was as clean as the left, but sadly that wasn't the case. First an orange play boat could not escape the froth. Then a certain green Fluid kayak hit the right slot a bit off line and went deep. Both events causing some rope throwing practice. Nice rescues guys!

From there we poked down to the last rapid - including another quick swim at Washing Machine. A few people took multiple runs on the final rapid as the sun set and darkness started to settle in. We arrived at the put in at 8:15 with still a bit of daylight to spare.

Packing all the drivers (and there were plenty) into a couple of rigs for the ride to the put in was challenging but not insurmountable for this adventurous bunch. Once everyone was reunited with their cars and equipment we said our goodbyes and headed home with smiles on our faces.

Now we are all looking to the skies for signs of clouds and rain. It's amazing how quickly we forget one of the wettest springs in recent history and are once again dusting off our best rain dances to get our favorite rivers to pop just once more before the heat of summer really kicks in!

SYOTR

jimp

- JimP

### Poultney Sunday May 15, 2011

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Jamie Dolan

Participants: (K1): Francis M, Jim P, Adam, Brian, Jamie; (C1): Tom M

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 350 cfs; USGS Station: Poultney

Three boaters signed up for the Poultney trip, so you can imagine the surprise when I saw 6 boats at the Welcome Center. Two more boaters then showed up. It turns out that Poultney was just very popular that Sunday. Three women (E.J., Sarah, and Becky) were running the Poultney independent of the VPC trip. We did end up running the river with them in various sections. Adam and Brian also had decided to run the

Poultney and joined the VPC contingent. Though it rained fairly steady for the better part of the trip the water stayed at a low, but boatable, 350 cfs (or so). We scouted the first, second, and last rapids. There was some swimming but not too much. The last rapid was fairly straight-forward at this low water level, as long as you avoided the mess in the middle. Everyone who ran it did so river right (to some degree) without issue. It looked more intimidating then it was (but isn't that always the case when everyone styles it?). We were off the river by 2:00 pm. So three of us went on to do a fast run down the lower New Haven.

- Jamie Dolan

### Gihon River May 15th, 2011 Sunday May 15, 2011

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Dave Packie

Participants: (K1): Dave, Ryan, Marshal, Noah, Paul, Alden, Trip, and Bill.

Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: 2 ft.

(Covered bridge); USGS Gauge Height: 452 ft.;

USGS Flow: 1200 cfs; USGS Station: Johnson

After no measurable precipitation in May, we got a nice soaker. It brought the rivers up to medium levels just in time for a club Gihon trip. We put on at the bridge on Whitcomb Island Rd that is still closed from the big flood from a few weeks back. It was the first time on this stretch of the Gihon for 5 of the 8 boaters and the Dam loomed large at the end of the flat water. The major high water event has changed the hole at the bottom of the dam making it a more fitting feature for a drop of this size. Now the 35 foot, 70 degree slide ends in a formidable hit at medium levels. Staying forward is much more important if staying upright is at all a concern. From the eddy below I got a great show. One by one I watched faces light up at the horizon, and one by one I watched the lemmings torpedo thru the hole at the bottom with dramatic results. A few capsizes, a couple swims and 7 stern squirts later we were back in formation and moving down towards the sweet boof above Balls. All but 2 gave a quick scout, and this fun, dynamic

rapid was fairly kind to the group. We moved down towards the 4th drop where most ran left and left again. There were 2 more swims here but rescue was swift and no gear was lost. Mustang was up next and I was eager to settle the score after getting roped out of the bottom hole last week. This feature also change slightly from the floods and has become more retentive. I hit the hole at the bottom more left and was flushed through swiftly, and upright. No one who got out to look at the hole felt like taking their medicine today and we were back in below the gorge and paddling the flats towards BedHead and the Lower Gihon. Bill and I both ran BedHead with the standard line, far left boof, punching the lower hole dead center. We both ended up in the eddy on the left. We boogied on down to Powerhouse with a few rolls thrown in here and there. A few scouted Powerhouse, and multiple lines were run. Sunset went smoothly and I think everyone was stoked. Good trip.  
Dave Packie

- D. Packie

**After work NBW - Sooo Schweet** Tuesday May 17, 2011

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Ryan

Participants: (K1): Paul C. & Ryan M

So it is hard to find a better vertical run in Vermont. If you open the dictionary and look up pool/drop whitewater - the North Branch Winooski is in the picture.

Lots of water this week (really no different than any other week this year thus far). I get an email from Paul asking what's up...no pun intended. I needed to stay close to my stomping grounds and why go elsewhere anyways with this 12 miles from my abode. NBW it was - I knew it would be on the low side but definitely runnable....hell I've been on it lower (not recommended).

We got to the take out at 5:30 and got our stuff together and headed up into Elmore to the put in and got on water at 6pm on the money. This was Paul's virgin run on the NBW so it was going to take a little longer than a normal race run but we had at least 2 hours of daylight to get down it. Also the river was at a level that

it didn't push or stuff you but you had to be on line not to piton. That being said we boogied through it in just over 2 hours.

So starting off on this run you get lulled into a beautiful dance...maybe a waltz? of weaving bobbing and popping off of micro ledges. It is hypnotic as you work through the forest and gorge, all the while looking for Moose. Then blammo - you hit the first drop (broken drop). At this level it is easy and straight forward with a solid right boof stroke into the seam and eddy. This is where I got the pleasure of seeing the first expression on Paul's face. The saucer eyed look of surprise continued on each and every drop down through the river. After broken drop there are two really fun ledges both between 5-6 feet and require precise angle and boof strokes. Paul launched them both with skill in his Mamba.

Next up was the first of the substantial drops... On this trip there really was only one line on river right down the face of the 12 foot falls. It is a jumbly sort of affair and this is where the dance changes from waltz to foxtrot, knowing the ante has just upped its self. I had a decent line with a classic side-boof off the bottom lip. Paul styled it, even if his eyeballs looked like they were going pop out on the way down.

Below this things gorge up a little dumping you into Manky Mank. A deceivingly steep section of undefined rapids (boogie water between the defined stuff - to relate to a discussion a bunch of geeks are carrying on, on the message board). In my opinion one of the harder sections on the river though. Again today there was only one option and you needed to make it happen. Through Manky Mank we looked back up stream to really see how steep the two tiered multi faceted rapid actually is. Not to be taken lightly - especially with more water in it!

This brings us to the Big Bouncy...We walked down to look at it but knew we wouldn't be running it today with the low flow. Just not padded out enough.... But worth a look at the three lead in rapids that we would paddle to avoid the heinous portage on river right. So off

we went down the three ledges snagging the last eddy above Big Bouncy and portaging river left on the bedrock shelves. This allows you a fun seal-launch into the bottom half of Big Bouncy and give you perspective of the magnitude of this beast - when you add in the lead in it is over 45 feet in height. A MONSTER.

Below this are some more ledges and roadside rubble leading into the tube under Route 12. Always good for a few whoops and hollers in the echo chamber.

Popping out the other side we had 8 notable drops between 4 feet and 35 feet left in our run and about 1/3 the distance left of the river. It was about 7:20 at that point so we needed to make haste and get to Flat Falls...Usually an easy right to left driving boof off the center prow in-between the two piton slabs at the bottom. This is not trivial but not hard either. You need to be precise because an 8 foot piton is never good for the boat or you. Both of us fired it up cleanly and we were on our way to Sliding Board. A fun curling sculpted banked right hand turn over a ledge drop. One of the two holes on the river that you really just don't want to mess with. Stay left and you are golden, go right and you are going to get a good surf at best and maybe some time with Elvis at worse. I learned my lesson on a run a few weeks prior...not a fun place to swim either because it is above the 35'er Double Drop. Both Paul and I cleaned Sliding Board with Paul having a few terse moments being sucked back towards the hole....STAY LEFT!

Portage #2 Double Drop definitely went today, however we opted out and boogied down the portage to put in at its base. What a great rapid and amazing waterfall. Go see it to believe me.

Starting to run out of light we needed to book it on down to Cave Falls. Definitely the worst hole on the river. You can see the cave behind the falls curtain - disgusting! Better have a whopper of a boof to clear the back tow of the falls, oh yea and it is a completely walled in gorge too. BUT.....The option to make it a really fun rapid is the slide on the right, next to the falls. With just enough water to lube up the slide we both powered up onto the slide and rocketed down into the gorge with a great seal launch in. In all the falls are probably 10-12 feet in height. An awesome place to practice a boof but a horrible place to not make it! The outside of the gorge is a really fun hole/wave thing that

you need to punch. Below that is a nice 5 foot ledge followed by another 4 foot ledge and then the slack water leading to the Final Stage.

Final Stage is a river wide slide that loses close to 10 feet in elevation and ends in a river wide ledge that is approx. 12-15 feet high. We were officially out of light so pulled the pool toys out of the water and carried up to look at the drop and be on our way. Definitely two clean lines can be had at the level we were on the river at yesterday. Center goes fast with fury and River left, directly against the mid-river buttress was about as good as it gets.

Paul and I were all set and walked south on Route 12 to the shuttle. It was a great way to spend a Tuesday Evening....

Boating.... the ever entertaining NBW.

If you like waterfalls and hucking your meat - this is your run.

- Ryan

### **Boreas River / Adirondacks** Sunday May 22, 2011

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Tony Shaw

Participants: (K1): Paul Carlile, John Guerriere, Jim Poulin; (OC1): Tony Shaw

Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: -0.5 ft.

(Northwoods Club Rd. Bridge footing - downstream R); USGS Gauge Height: 6.70 ft.; USGS Flow: 6700 cfs; USGS Station: Hudson @ North Creek

If there is a whitewater park in heaven, I hope it is like the Boreas in NYS!

A day before this trip I had sheepishly pulled the plug on the Hudson Gorge trip because it had been raining all week (heck, all month) in the central Adirondacks and the Hudson was running more than a foot and a half higher than I had ever run it in my OC1 (6.7 feet). But the trees over there were all budding out and getting their summer leaves, so the Boreas was actually on the low side by Sunday am.

Running the Boreas is something everyone should do at some point or other. It doesn't take all that long to drive there from Burlington and it is 7 miles of wilderness boating. We saw no big game but no people either - except one family camped at the take-out, where there are several marked campsites ready for use.

The Boreas would be pretty intimidating if not dangerous in high water, but for us it was 2 inches below the lowest painted marking on the bridge footing at the take-out (the Northwoods Club Rd. off 28N) - reading just under -0.5 feet. The rain held off and it was in the 60's - very pleasant with just enough black flies to make you glad you weren't that family...camping. It was a new river for both Paul and Jim. As for John, he was evasive on this point.

Below the 28N put-in there are a couple of cool features in the first half mile that led to one flip/hole-roll (nice recovery BTW, Paul) and one short carry for 1/2 our group (river right). Then a series of straight-forward easy rapids brought us to one long stretch of flatwater where we enjoyed the solitude and green grandeur of the Adirondacks in late May. Once sufficiently bored on Hewitt Eddy the river started dropping again, through easy rapids for a while and finally culminating in continuous Deerfield Dryway size features for the last 2.2 miles, with no one else around to compromise the wilderness feeling. The low water conditions made each of the rapids "busy", but the boulders in the streambed are mostly all rounded and there always seemed to be one+ good clean route through. Everyone was grinning ear to ear when we reached the take-out bridge.



While Jim and John ran shuttle, Paul and I walked up

the defunct rail line that parallels the steepest part of the river on the right bank, and contemplated how we might someday utilize the tracks and a homemade "handcar/shuttle vehicle" to run carbon-neutral laps on the tumultuous middle/lower Boreas. This could be a really fun camping/paddling/fishing weekend, when the water is up and the black flies die off (fall 2011??).

We spent about 3 hours total to complete a leisurely run, wishing we had had found it with a bit more water. The trip can be lengthened, too, by A) starting higher on the road to Newcomb and/or B) paddling to the Hudson River confluence and down the runout to North Creek.

A few pictures were uploaded to [Paddle Pix](http://bit.ly/k5B12t) ( <http://bit.ly/k5B12t> ) and our new [FaceBook](http://on.fb.me/iPtVKr) page ( <http://on.fb.me/iPtVKr> ).

- [Tony Shaw](#)

### **Lower Lamoille** Wednesday Jun 8, 2011

Character: novice WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Chris Weed

Participants: (K1): Chris Weed, John Atherton, Rich Reynolds, Ken Emery, Peg Pelckmann, Justin Worth, Rod MacIver, Doug Roszman; (OC1): Brock Richardson; (C1): Tony Shaw  
Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 3.92 ft.; USGS Flow: 900 cfs; USGS Station: East Georgia, VT (@ Five Chutes)

As usual, this early June trip on the Lamoille was planned months ago knowing that the flow might be very low by late spring. And low it was, but this spring one could say that was somewhat surprising! Fortunately for denizens of the Lake Champlain shoreline we have been getting less rain and more sun and warmth over the past 10 days. This Wednesday the air temperature was about 90, and the water temperature was in the mid-60s.

A few days after VPC's Novice Clinic, it was a good opportunity for some participants to get more practice—a preview of the Class II Clinic in July. Doug, Rod, and Justin all made the trip. It lacked challenge for Justin, who is an

advanced novice with the beginnings of a combat roll, but it was perfect for Doug and Rod. The rest of us got relief from the heat and some late day relaxation. The weather turned ominous about two-thirds of the way down the river, as the first signs of impending thunderstorms arrived—thickening cloud cover and a **strong** west wind. We made it to the takeout before anything more happened. As it turned out, the storms didn't hit northwest Vermont until much later, but most of us weren't inclined to press our luck. (Besides, I was hoping to make an 8:30 pm performance at the Flynn. It didn't quite work out that way.)

All in all, it was a very pleasant way to spend a muggy workday evening before nightfall.

- Chris Weed

### Class II Clinic - Fife Brook Deerfield Saturday-

Sunday Jul 9-10, 2011

Character: nov-int WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: John Atherton

Participants: (K1): AJ, Paul C, John A, Dave H, Brock, Rich R, Kerry W, Nick R, Adrienne R, Nick C, Rod M, Jim D; (OC1): Mark L, Ben

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 800 cfs; USGS Station: Fife Brook

Class II Clinic

Fife Brook Deerfield

Instructors: AJ Seibel, Paul Carlile, Mark Lienau

Safety: John A, Brock, Rich R, Dave H

Students: Kerry W, Nick M, Adrienne R, Nick R, Rod M, Jim D, Ben

A small contingent arrived Friday morning and paddled the Fife Brook section to scout out the teaching spots and enjoy the river. We camped at Woodford State Park just East of Bennington, VT. After some scattered showers that soaked the campsite on Friday night for the early arrivers, we had clear skies and sunshine for the rest of the weekend.

After meeting up with the rest of the group Saturday morning we put on the river just below the dam about

10:30. The release was from 10 to 4 at 800 cfs , so we had plenty of time. After spending a little warm-up time on the flats we headed down to the Class II Hangover Helper for some ferry and peel out practice in the fast current and some more stroke work in the large eddy. After a few swims from some people pushing their envelopes we headed down river stopping a couple of spots along the way. The students were somewhat tentative going through Pinball caught several eddies along the way as their skills and confidence were clearly improving as the day went on. Four of the students were ready to challenge Class III Zoar Gap by the end of the day and although there was a little fish counting, all had a pretty nice run and were looking forward to the next day. Had a great meal at Madison Brewing Co. in Bennington that night.

Sunday was supposed to be 1000 cfs release but we all decided that it was probably the same as Saturday. Everyone pushed themselves harder at Hangover Helper working in the faster and it was clear that they had made a lot of progress the day before. By the time we got to Pinball, the students were choosing their own routes and catching most of the larger eddies in spite of a crowd of paddlers that arrived at the same time. At Zoar Gap, the students caught the eddy right above the first drop and made the clutch peel out cleanly. It was incredible to see the progress all of the students made. They are a great bunch that worked hard and had super attitudes. I look forward to paddling with everyone in the future.

- Paul Carlile

### Hot Times in the Hudson Gorge Sunday Jul 17, 2011

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Jim Poulin

Participants: (K1): RodW, ChrisW, RichR, JamieD, JimP; (Inflatable): EricB, BarbB

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 3.60 ft.; USGS Flow: 1150 cfs; USGS Station: North Creek

Say what?!? The words Hudson and Hot do not normally appear in the same sentence. Usually Hudson runs are cold, tiring, long, wet and cold. Yeah I mentioned cold twice but this run is always freakin' freezin'! But not so on this Sunday in mid July. Depending upon which automotive thermometer you checked is was at least 88 degrees with a high end reading of 91. Now that makes for Hot Times in the Hudson Gorge!

This one started out like so many before. Meet up in Addison by the county store (mmmm, bear claws), coordinate cars, gear and riders and head over to New York. Maybe it should have been an indication of a good day when we arrived at the ferry and they held the boat just long enough for all three of our vehicles to climb on board before they shoved off.

After a quick stop at the take out we arrived at the put in right at 10am. What timing. We noticed the Indian was running lower than normal. Various reports ranged from 33% to 50% less than normal.

Another thing we noticed was getting hit by the waves was so refreshing. Not the bitter cold, bone chilling type, but the warm fluffy type. Made us hit all those many holes on the Indian with gusto!

After a quick confluence break, we worked our way down the Hudson to the Blue Ledge rapid. It was decidedly lower than any of us had every run. We had out run the bubble! We ran the "creek version" of Blue Ledge – boofs and slots but not many fluid lines. Then we arrived at the "always there" surfing wave above the Narrows to find it wasn't there. Then it was on to the Narrows. Not quite the creek version but the three drops in the Narrows were quite distinct, with significant slack water between each drop. Nothing like any of us had ever seen. That's saying something! Check the participant's list. This wasn't a group of wet behind the ears (sorry, couldn't help myself) paddlers. This was a full on gray beard contingent with countless runs on this stretch of river.

So here's the scoop on the levels. Without the bubble the Hudson was running 2.7 feet or 410 cfs. With the bubble the levels skyrocketed to 3.6 feet or 1150 cfs. During this run we witnessed both extremes!

At the bottom of the Narrows it was time for a break

and for the water to catch us. Lunch is served! Like all Hudson runs you lunch on the sunny side of the river. Mistake! We should have definitely sought shade. It is hot in the sun! It wasn't too much longer that we noticed the water rising. The fact that Chris' boat started to float away was another key. Then came the rafts. Oh yeah, we passed all the rafts in the first few miles on the Hudson. There was our hint that the raft guides knew what we finally figured out – don't get ahead of the bubble! Live and learn.

After lunch the Hudson was much more fluid and the action continued right on down to Greyhound Bus Stopper. Only today it was more like Radio Flyer Wagon stopper. There was a ledge but not much water coming over. We had outrun the bubble again! What, are we stupid?!? Apparently so. Another break allowed us to watch the feature progress through Schwinn Bike Stopper to Toyota Prius Stopper. It never quite made it to Bus Stopper levels.

Ran into MarkL pushing rubber down the river. He had a client that was bandaged up in his raft. Looked to be some type of shoulder injury. Ouch! I guess Mark got to practice his wilderness First Aid!

Then began the slow float out. The water was low but we scraped along. As usual we were greeted with a head wind. But at least this time is was more like a blast furnace than a cold arctic blast.

All in all a very good day. No one even flipped over today (not counting any cool off rolls of which there were many). Definitely a couple of firsts for this paddler. Never been on the Hudson when it was this hot and have never seen Blue Ledge, The Narrows and Bus Stopper with so little water.

I'll try to recall this HOT day on future spring trips on the Hudson...

jimp

- Jim Poulin