

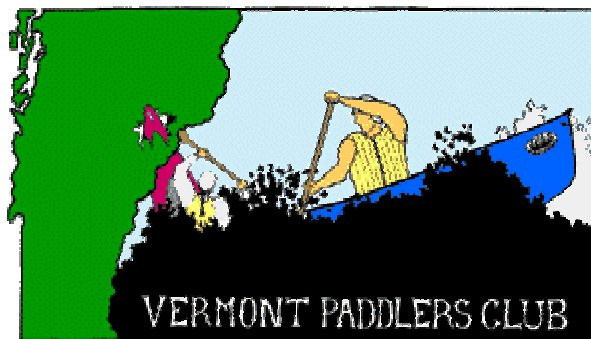
Bow and Stern



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

Volume XXXIII No. 2

September 15, 2007



Go with the flow...

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

Hello Paddlers,

Labor Day Weekend has come and gone, and the end of summer is here according to popular opinion. And what a summer it was, unless you are a whitewater paddler who likes to paddle locally. Mother Nature did not bless us with a good water year in 2007 to date locally. Many Club members took advantage of some releases and big river Natural flows and got in some good fun on the water out of Vermont this summer. The West River festival is coming up this month, so Vermont will be the place to be for at least one more weekend of the 2007 paddling season.

The end of summer also means that the election season for the club is fast approaching. The two-year terms of the current VPC board of Directors are ending at the end of 2007, and we will be having a member general election this November. The club desperately needs some members to join the board of directors for this upcoming election.

My time as President has been a very enjoyable experience, but family and pursuing other interests has led me to decide not to run again for the position of club President. Several others on the board of directors have also expressed similar statements about running again for the club. We are seeking anyone who would like to ensure the club remains a strong and viable resource for local paddlers, to join the board of directors.

The Vermont Paddlers Club is in very good shape financially, with a solid operating budget and a pretty good number of club members. We just need some motivated people to take the club forward.

Thank you for all the good times out on the rivers with all of you. Thanks to all of the 2005 - 2007 VPC board of directors, who all put great effort into their positions for the club and put on great pool sessions, novice clinics, trips, and maintain a great website. Also special thanks to Rich Larsen for all the years of excellent financial reports he has done. He may even be talked into continuing on, so invite him out paddling, and make sure it's a sunny day.

Hope to see many of you in November at the election meeting. Come out and have some food and share some laughs, and elect next terms club leaders.

James Raboin - president

November 2007 - Vermont Paddlers Club Elections!

When: November 4th, 2007, 5:30 - 9pm

Where: Williston Federated Church, [44 North Williston Rd., Williston, VT*](#)

What: VPC Election meeting, potluck dinner

Please Bring: A-G (side dish) H-N (main dish) O-Z (dessert)

The club election season is coming soon! The end of 2007 means an end to the two-year terms of the current board of directors. The door is wide open for some new people to step up and volunteer to serve on the VPC board of directors. Elections will be held for the following positions:

President
Vice President
Secretary

Treasurer
Communications
Director

Safety & Education Director
Activities Director

We are having a nomination period until October 1st, where you can submit names of people who would make good candidates for any of the clubs needs (including yourself) on our website -(www.vtpaddlers.net/join/nominations/), or give any of us a phone call. Only those people who agree to be nominated will be on the ballot for the November election.

On November 4th, we will be having a potluck dinner, and then a general member election will follow. Come out and support the club, and ensure it continues to be the best resource available for local paddlers.

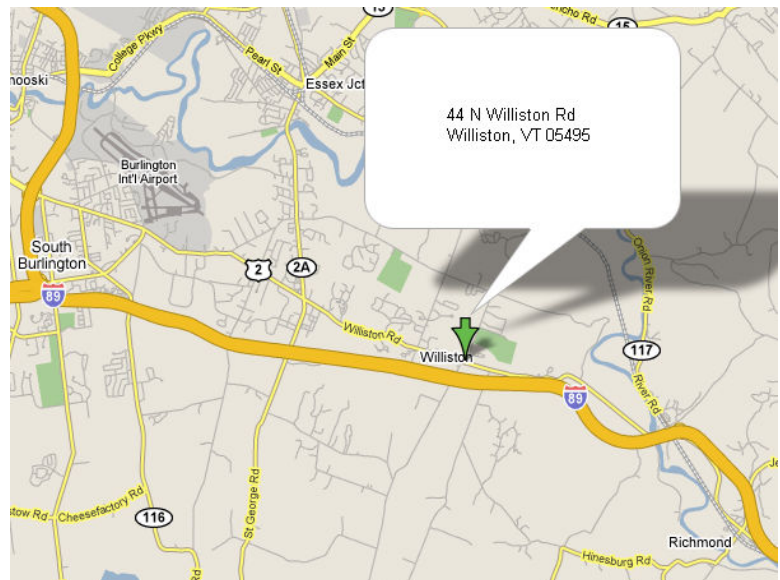
In the event that anyone who would like to vote cannot make it to the election meeting, we will have absentee ballots available after October 16th. Contact [Dan Beideck](#) (655-3980), who will be serving as the election commissioner, to get an absentee ballot.

Get those nominations going and help us keep the club strong!

The church is located at 44 North Williston Road in Williston Village (see map at right).

From Burlington and points north, take Interstate 89 south to Exit 12, proceed north on Rte. 2A until you reach Rte. 2 (Williston Road). Turn right (east) onto Rte. 2. The church is approximately 2 miles east on Rte. 2, at a four-way stop, at the intersection of North Williston Road and Oak Hill Road.

From the east take Interstate 89 to Exit 11, proceed west on Rte. 2 (Williston Road). The church is at a four-way stop, at the intersection of North Williston Road and Oak Hill Road.



Letter from the Activities Director

It is mid summer as I write this submission for the Bow and Stern. This has been a bit of a quiet time for the club the past couple of years. That's understandable given the unreliable water levels and people's busy summer schedules. I'm hopeful that we can still squeeze in some time for paddling, however. I would encourage everyone to try and join fellow club members for some time on the water before the season gets away from us. Let me know if you have an idea for a club trip that you would like to lead, or post something on the message board when the rivers come up. The one trip currently on the calendar is the annual Fall release on the West. I'm leading that trip and plan on having a nearby ski lodge available for anyone wanting to come down Friday night. The plan is to have trips on the upper and lower sections. So, there should be something there for everyone.

I'm hopeful that we'll have a number of clinic grads and new members interested in joining us. A number of them seemed pretty interested in continuing with the sport after completing the novice and class II clinics with us this year. Please make them feel welcome to the club and any trip that might be level appropriate.

Speaking of our clinics, it was very gratifying to see the club come together to put these clinics together after a couple of last minute challenges arose. The number of students was a bit lower than the past couple of years, but the enthusiasm of this year's crop more than made up for that. In many ways, this past June may have been the best month for me personally with the club. There was a real club spirit on the clinic weekends, and on top of that, we had 19 members join a trip on the Hudson on a weekend between the clinics (see the trip report in this issue). Now that's what a paddling club ought to be!

On that note, I am somewhat sadden to report that I will not be running for re-election as the club's activities director. I anticipate having some extra curricular activities in the next couple years that will make devoting the amount of time the club deserves in this position nearly impossible. So if you have some energy and enthusiasm for the club, I would strongly encourage you to consider volunteering to become the next activities director, or another member of the board. Much of my time commitment will likely occur in the second year of the term, and I'm more than happy to help the next director transition to the position.

Dan Beideck

The Club Hosted its Annual Instructional Program Earlier this Summer



The first weekend of June provided pristine weather for the club's novice clinic. 11 students participated in the 2-day event which began with a morning of flatwater instruction on Waterbury Reservoir. Everyone quickly mastered the dreaded "wet-exit" and we soon went on to learn everything from the forward stroke to the proper way to stand so as to look like a kayaker. A hearty lunch was followed by an introduction to moving water during a run down the Winooski River below Middlesex Dam

through Hugo and Junkyard Rapids. Day 2 was spent exploring eddies and downstream V's along the class II stretch of the Winooski below Bolton Dam (Okay, we did some Yoga, too...). We had great support from club members with whopping 12 people showing up during the weekend to help instruct and provide logistical support. Thanks to everyone's help and enthusiasm, the students were able to progress quickly and a number of the novice clinic graduates joined in on the fun during the Class II clinic later in June.

The Class II clinic, traditionally held on the Fife Brook section of the Deerfield River in western MA, was timed perfectly to coincide with this year's Zoar Demofest. Both instructors and students took advantage of the opportunity to demo some of the newest whitewater equipment prior to our runs down the river. The instructors' goals for the students were to teach them how to comfortably participate in a group paddle from beginning to end. This included the logistics of shuttling boats and people, scouting unfamiliar rapids, practicing different strategies of river running, and learning to be self-sufficient. I think it's fair to say that both instructors and students alike learned a lot and had a great time. Since graduating, the class II clinic students have been spotted throughout the state with boats on their cars and have even begun to post on the message boards and organize their own paddle trips. Although we occasionally heard the sound of a shoulder popping, or heard about someone's life flashing before their eyes during a capsize, and even had to go back to Zoar Gap with diving equipment in order to recover a lost paddle (I'm still in disbelief that it was found!), taken together, this year's instructional program was a big success. The camaraderie of the club was contagious and the progress made by the students is a real testament to the strength our paddling community. I look forward to seeing both new and familiar faces and next year's clinics.

Brent Osborne



TREASURER'S REPORT - JULY 31, 2007


INCOME AND EXPENSES	YEAR 2005	YEAR 2006	2007 AS OF 07/31
INITIAL BALANCE	\$1,428.95	\$1,324.18	\$2012.38
DUES	\$1,056.00	\$1,253.00	\$989.00
SPONSORSHIP / SCHOLARSHIP	(\$100.00)	(\$200.00)	(\$100.00)
WEBSITE	(\$327.95)	(\$300.00)	(\$300.00)
INTEREST / BANK FEES	(\$47.75)	(\$36.25)	(\$18.66)
MEETINGS / MAILINGS	(\$815.76)	(\$847.39)	(\$256.63)
ROLLING SESSIONS	(\$150.00)	\$275.67	\$214.39
SAFETY GEAR	(\$103.52)	(\$35.06)	(\$127.20)
RESCUE CLINIC	\$180.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
NOVICE CLINIC	\$534.21	\$678.00	\$255.00
CLASS 2 CLINIC	\$0.00	\$125.00	\$17.00
T-SHIRTS	\$30.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
BANNER	\$0.00	(\$180.20)	\$0.00
NET ACA COST	(\$110.00)	\$0.00	\$0.00
BROCHURES	\$0.00	(\$44.57)	\$0.00
LITTLE RIVER WEIR	(\$250.00)	\$0.00	\$0.00
FINAL BALANCE	\$1,324.18	\$2,012.38	\$2,685.28

The club is in good shape financially. In general, the club has no need of a large amount in the treasury - we just need about \$1,500 to avoid cash-flow problems, and to buffer us for a year of big (negative) surprises, should that occur.

The outlook is that the treasury will end 2007 about where it started, maybe a little higher. We have a number of known expenditures in 2H07, and minimal expected income.

Membership payments (dues) are down somewhat, and will probably end 2007 about 15-20% below 2006. That is a more worrisome fact than the status of the treasury.

Submitted by Richard Larsen

SANCTIONED	DATE	DAY	EVENT	CONTACT	PHONE	EXPECT	COMMENTS
	Sep 22nd	Sat	West	Dan Beideck	655-3980	nov-int WW	Upper and lower sections???
	Sep 30th	Sun	Hudson Gorge	Jim Poulin	802-434-2708	int-adv WW	Fall Foliage Run
	Nov 4 th	Sun	Election Mtg and Potluck	James Raboin	802-527-8328	Food and merriment	Williston Federated Church, 5:30pm


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



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. Any other events/trips above are listed ONLY as a convenience to paddlers looking for compatible paddle partners.

- nov = max Class II, int = max Class III, adv = max Class IV, exp = Class IV+
- [Winter pool sessions](#) begin after the holidays (space limited, fee charged). Call 802-655-3980 (Dan Beideck) or 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.
- Car-pooling on long (and short) trips is encouraged!
- The [AROUND VERMONT IN 30 RIVERS](#) promotion is underway!!!

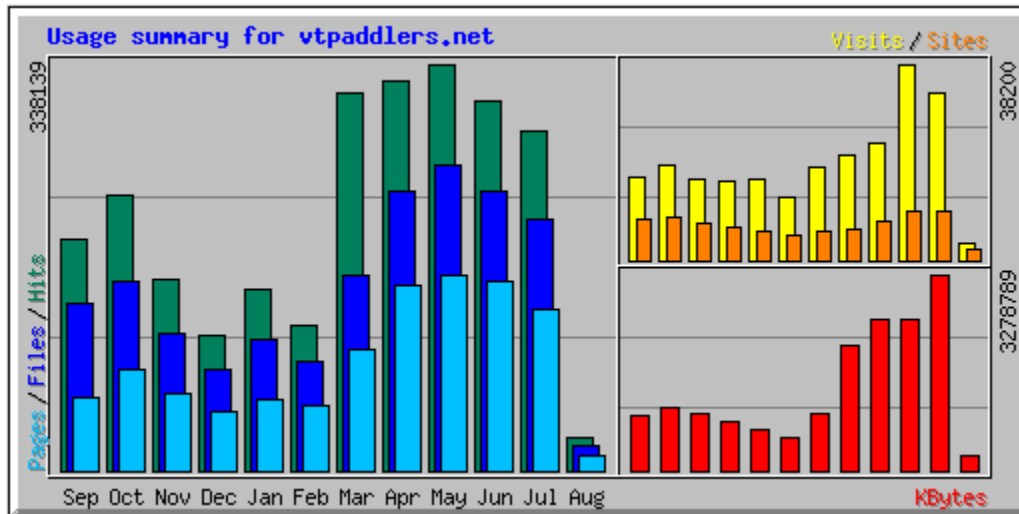
Disclaimer:

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.

Website - What's New

The bulk of the year-long VPC website redesign project is complete. There always will be wrinkles that need ironing out, but for the most part the feedback I am getting is that the website is capable and "slick".



Expansion - The website's popularity has grown to the point where we've needed to increase our server space to 250 mb this year, increasing the cost of our web-hosting package by 50%, but it still feels like money well-spent for a club that does so much of its communication electronically. The rainy June/July we "enjoyed" kept web-site traffic at springtime levels, and increasingly we have members posting photos of their adventures to the Paddle Pix section of the site. Lots of great trip reports are getting posted to the website as well (a sampling of which appear below).

Outreach - Dan Beideck has been a big help editing and publishing VPCNews (electronically) on a ~weekly basis the past several months, and I think this has helped boost participation at clinics and other events - Thanks Dan! Thanks also to Chris Weed (and others) who take the time to spot buggy website features (and report them). And... I still am seeking an apprentice or accomplice with an interest in website design/management. Give me a call - 879-1655.

Protection - A good number of the content submission pages on the website are now members-only, and this seems to be keeping spammers at bay for the most part. For the time being we've been able to keep the 4 message boards open to the general public, meaning that any scurrilous messages must be pulled off manually. For 2008, please be sure to pay your dues when the announcements go out after Christmas, so you continue to have access to ALL website content.

This fall I will stay busy with minor website debugging, further automating VPCNews, and enhancing the member profile section of the website so that we can each have a photo or two gracing our profiles. A goal is to empower members to search the member database seeking members with interests that complement your own.

Tony Shaw - webmaster

TRIP REPORTS

[Ottawa River](#) Thursday-Sunday Aug 9-12, 2007

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Jim Poulin

Participants: (K1): Jim, Dawn, John, Kristy (aka Pink), Simone, Will, Grayson, Rod, Dan, Shawn, Amos and Kelly

Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: -1.75 ft. (Owl)

Twelve paddling souls (OK, technically 11 and a shuttle bunny/hiker/video technician/yoga instructor) headed nord to test the warm, warm waters of the Ottawa River near Beachburg Ontario. It was a two, three or four day trip as some folks headed up as early as Thursday while everyone was there for the weekend. The water levels were perfect for play (between -1.5 and -1.75) and the weather couldn't have been better, sunny and warm without any liquid sunshine whatsoever.

Thursday paddling consisted of a park and play at McCoy's rapid later in the day by Amos, Kelly and Simone.

Friday was a big day with a morning park & play, a Middle Channel run and a Main Channel run with almost the whole crew.

Saturday consisted of an early morning park & play, back to camp for breakfast/naps and then a Main Channel run by everyone as now John and Shawn had finally made their way to camp.

By Sunday both energy levels and adrenal glands were depleted. Most opted for park and play and just a few did a full Main Channel run.

Some random stories that come to mind:

The Thursday night caravan made a few stops and dealt with some traffic issues at the normal spots. Leaving Burlington at 5:30 and arriving at River Run at 12:30 in the morning – a 7 hour trip. John coming up Friday evening, missing traffic and juiced on Red Bull made it in a Canadian land speed record of 4.5 hours!

A tip of my hat goes to those that paddled a full twelve hours – 7am to 7pm - on Friday (I think the list included Dan, Simone, Grayson and Kristy). That was a long day of hard play! The rest of us got in nine to ten hours but felt like slackers compared to the "Iron Kayakers". Probably explains why no

one was up past 9pm Friday night.

A taste of Phil: All the first timers (and even a few of the Ottawa veterans) got introduced to Phil on their first ever run through McCoy's.

Both horseshoe holes (left and right) in McCoy's got to munch on some Vermont boater meat on the very same run!

From my point of view the paddling crowd seems smaller than in past years. The wait for the key play spots were long because we were such a big crowd! But there is always the raft traffic to contend with. Not too bad on Friday or Sunday but Saturday was full on rubber.

Any multi day paddle will have its share of bumps and bruises. This trip had a few paddlers on the Injured Reserve list: Jim (shoulder), Amos (neck) and Will (flu). Didn't keep them from paddling but maybe slowed them down a bit. Luckily at camp we had Dawn's Massage Therapy and Johnny's Chiropractic Services. Plus I did notice a few very large bottles of Ibuprofen kicking around.

Will invented a new move at Garburator that he modestly named "The Will". I have heard rumors that it is the "must make" move for the upcoming Ottawa Rodeo on Labor Day weekend!

While only Kristy and Jim made use of the hot tub after Friday's final run, the full crew piled into that thing on Saturday spilling out most of the water. Beers provided by Grayson and Will made for a warm and wet cocktail hour at River Run.



We all showed our Canadian heritage on Saturday night/Sunday by sporting maple leaf or Canadian flag tattoos. Some went for multiples!

Every night the Canadian Camp Cleaning Network

(i.e. raccoons) paid a visit and made sure there were no scraps of food lying around when we woke up. They need to work more quietly as they can make quite a racket when tossing the pots and pans off the tables.

And speaking of tables! What class we had! Simone brought tablecloths and we lined up three picnic tables to create a family dining experience and general hang out spot.

We set a trap one night for the raccoons (Simone's boat held up by a paddle with an ear of corn dangling as bait. The only thing it caught all night was Jim stumbling back to his tent.

Dawn was the winner of the first annual Ottawa River golf tournament. We won't mention the fact that she was the only entrant.

On Saturday's Main Channel run we stopped and looked at Coliseum (a prudent thing to do). While some scouted, others ran to show the two most common lines (left or right). While waiting at the bottom for Shawn and Will we realized that neither of them had run the rapid before and we did not have a guide/probe boat to lead them down. There was a discussion in the eddy if they would take the right line or the left line. Pretty soon we were all shouting our preferred line as they headed into the maw. We were all confident that our personal line was very best and these Coliseum rookies would follow said line. Well they showed us, Shawn went right and Will went left. They are now veterans.

Saturday night the campsite was filled with music as Johnny G was accompanied by vocals, bongos, a djembe, a tambourine and other percussion instruments. There were also a few pig poems and groover stories to round out the evening. I think a few adult beverages were also consumed. We must have sounded like we were having a good time as a number of other campers came by to join the fire circle.

Most of the paddlers partook of the official food of the Ottawa River – Poutine.

Jim had trouble finding his tent every time he came back from paddling. Someone, maybe the larger raccoons, made it into a mobile home, moving it about the campsite. (note to readers: the word "about" is pronounced "aboot" in Ottawa-River-speak)

Even though we left at different times there was an

impromptu reunion at the Highgate border crossing as John, Dawn, Jim, Kristy, Grayson, Will and Rod all managed to get to the border at roughly the same time. The thirty minute wait went quicker with a few tired hugs and some Ginger-O cookies.

Anyone ready to sign up for next year???

- Jim Poulin

[Rouge River, Quebec](#) Sunday Jul 29, 2007

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: Will

Participants: (K1): Will, Scott, Ryan, Eric, Grayson, Matt

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 1850 cfs; USGS Station:

www.canot-kayak.qc.ca/info_debit/index.html



Well, I guess somebody ought to submit a report for this trip because it was a good one! Six of us met for a run (or two) on the Rouge River in Quebec on Sunday. It's about a 3-hour drive from Burlington, and has a great mix of significant drops and fun play features. All the big drops are discrete, and can be easily scouted or portaged. Best of all, it runs all summer long! The section we paddled is only a 3 or 4 mile run, so most of us ran it twice Sunday. The level when we ran it was 52.5cms (about 1850cfs), which is a medium-low-ish flow.

Editor's note: See Grayson's trip report online for detailed descriptions of all the Rouge Drops, driving/parking directions, and link to pix and vids. vtpaddlers.net/talk/reports/index.php?reportid=175

- Grayson King

Missisquoi NWR Saturday Jun 16, 2007

Character: flatwater

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: Ricky Battistoni

Participants: (K1): Ricky Battistoni; (OC2): Dick & Lucille Allen, Mike White, & Janet Brunet



We got on the water at 8:30 (while the Larsen's were all snug in their bed). We headed downstream and as we approached Metcalf Is. we saw a few rare Black Terns, a few Great Blue Herons (though we didn't see any nests on Shad Is. - they seemed to all be on the far side of the island). We then made our way across the two bays - the wind picked up a little... and as always seems to be the case in paddling - it was a head wind. On our way across I spotted an Otter, which was a nice surprise to the wildlife viewing. We then after a little searching found the entrance to Dead Creek and began working upstream.



We stopped for lunch (complete with a tablecloth - thanks to Janet). Note: open boaters are overpackers... but as a kayaker - we take advantage of this fact - and appreciate it very much.

We finished the 10 mile journey uneventfully on a glorious day of paddling. Total trip time approx. 5 hours.

- Ricky Battistoni

Hudson Gorge - If you release it, they will come... Sunday Jun 10, 2007

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Jim Poulin

Participants: (K1): Jim, Dan, Brent, Kristy, Julie, Frank, Mike, Rod, Jamie, Ty, Grayson, Chris, Amos, Kelly, Billy, Simone, Richard; (C1): Steve; (Raft): Mark

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 3.80 ft.; USGS Flow: 1400 cfs; USGS Station: North Creek

You know how the usual river trip goes: you have five folks signed up on Monday for the upcoming weekend trip. By Wednesday you are down to three. Friday you lose another one and then Saturday morning you steadfast paddling partner bags and you end up paddling the river with a local guy named Homer in which you spend the whole run fishing him out of the river. Well folks, THIS WAS NOT ONE OF THOSE TRIPS! In some weird sort of inverse energy (bizaro-world for you Seinfeld fans) it turned out totally different. Yes indeed I had five boaters signed up on Monday. By Wednesday a few more jump on. When I checked my e-mail late Saturday to see who bagged out I found three more paddlers were coming along. Then you add an unexpected paddler at one of the meeting points and two more at the put in and you end with a very large group. Nineteen hardy paddlers to be exact!

And then there was the timing. We had paddlers coming from various sections of Vermont, from New Hampshire and from just outside New York City. One would figure we would be waiting around at the take out/put-in for quite some time. Jamie offered his rule of thumb: 5 additional minutes for each additional paddler. Well NOT true to form, everyone arrived at the takeout early and all within 5 minutes! We packed up and on our way to the put-in by 9:30 (which was the planned meeting time) placing us at the put-in exactly as the water started releasing on the Indian.

With this many paddlers we needed to split up the group. The Old Schoolers (or Grey Beards, take your pick) led the way. With the group spread out there was lots of room to hit eddies, jump on waves, get stuck in holes and generally enjoy the warm temperatures and WARM WATER (yes indeed, everything was working in our favor).



The group reconvened at the confluence of the Hudson and then we paddled as one very large group. Smiles all around (especially for the first timers) as the Indian never fails to provide the goods. It was constantly amazing to me to look around and see this parade of paddlers!

At one point early in the trip, Julie took a quick break on Mark's raft. The other paddlers gave her major amounts of grief for being lazy so she scrambled up on mid-river rock and performed a perfect belly flop from about twelve feet up! Hoots and hollers followed and no more mention of her being a slacker.



The Hudson was low, just under 4 feet with the bubble) but still fun. There were holes to dodge and rocks to hit. The surf wave just above the Narrows entertained all. The Narrows provided some of the biggest water fun of the day and everyone was

smiling after that one. For a number of paddlers this was their first trip down the Hudson and not knowing what to expect, they were pleasantly surprised.

We stopped for lunch right after Soup Strainer, Harris Riff or whatever that rapid is called. At this point we lost the bubble of water but no one seemed to care.

We continued down through the last few rapids. Some play was had at Greyhound but everyone was pretty tired. Even the flat water paddle out didn't seem so bad.

To continue what was turning out to be the perfect paddling day, there was not a single swimmer. I don't think there were more than a couple of unplanned fish counting experiences. There were a couple of scraped knuckles from our play at Greyhound but that was about it. (short of a few sore muscles I imagine)

There were good byes at the take out, a few adult beverages were consumed, pictures were taken and promises made to recreate this experience at the Ottawa on August 11/12 (shameless plug). To steal a quote from Grayson, everyone left with a perma-grin firmly attached to their face. I am sure there was some good sleep had that evening – or maybe even on the ride home!

Wildlife sightings. A few critters also shared their day with us. On the way to the Hudson a wayward goose tried to attack Jim's car/boats. Some evasive maneuvers kept the goose from being impaled on the kayaks. There was also a mean looking snapping turtle on the road that we made a wide swath around. We even were entertained on river by a beaver.

But the story doesn't end there. A couple of us needed some caffinated beverages for the ride home. A quick stop in North Creek lasted a bit longer than expected as there was a bluegrass band playing on the porch of the Old County Store. Some of us were lounging in the Adirondack chairs for a bit before heading on. Then there was the sudden flashing of headlights in my rear view. When I looked ahead I knew the reason – this was a full on creamie alert! Once satiated with various dairy products it was truly time to say good bye and put this trip firmly in our memory banks.

- Jim Poulin

Sacandaga Monday May 28, 2007

Character: nov-int WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Kristy Hart

Participants: (K1): Amos, Kelly, Billy, Mike, Grayson, Kristy

Six of us rallied to get to water on this gorgeous Memorial day, suffering through parade traffic we met up at the Sacandaga Outdoor Center around 11:45 to set shuttle. All of the group were sporting play boats and ready to hit the few play spots at the top of the run. After some good surfing we headed down to plod through the flatwater section where everyone tried back deck rolls and bow stalls. We tried to hit more waves heading into the last feature.

Those familiar with the work in progress at the SOC will be disappointed to hear no progress has been made with the feature/play section, is the same as last summer. Word from the SOC folks is that they have new engineers, but need to wait until March to work on it when the lake is drained and it is dry.

We continued past the confluence and up the Hudson a little to play in another wave, do stern squirts and swap boats out for fun. Amos sure looked fine sporting my new PINK Jackson!

A second run was had by most of the group and Amos filled in as camera guy at the last feature-see photos section. The afternoon was not without more parades with the group pulling up the rear of the Lake Lazure parade...see photos of how Grayson and I added a 'float'!



A great day had by all!

- Kristy Hart

Lamoille Saturday May 19, 2007

Character: novice WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: Kristy Hart

Participants: (K1): Jim P, Dave, Roger, Jake, Frank, Kristy; (OC1): Deb

After organizing shuttle with the assistance of our lovely shuttle bunny, Dawn, we put on around 1pm. The level was low but easily boatable and fun for eddying and small wave play. A few swims were had by some new to the sport, but self/assisted rescues were swift and smooth and recovery was quick.

Smiley's wave was friendly and enjoyed by a few in the group as the rest waited graciously. The run was overall very mellow with play spots throughout. 5 chutes had some good play in the center, although Jim found his own spot in a slot on river right.

We got off the river around 3:30 safe and sound, a good time had by all. Special thanks to Ann Smith for the loaner boat until mine arrives!

- Kristy Hart

Mill Brook, Jericho Thursday May 17, 2007

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Paul Dawson

Participants: (K1): Austin Prichard

Check from 117 for water levels- ALL rocks visible upstream must be covered. We ran it 24hrs after a heavy rain and although most rocks were covered, it was a bare minimum level. Quite a few fallen trees mean portages- more of a nuisance than a danger, though. Ran the Hydro dam on the left side- very clean run- no signs of a danger of a vertical pin as described in a previous post. I'm open to going in with a chainsaw if someone is willing to help.

- Paul Dawson

Mad River Wednesday May 16, 2007

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Jim Poulin

Participants: (K1): Tyler, Dave, Paul, Kristy, Marshall, John, Shawn, Chris, Jim

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 1300 cfs; USGS Station: Moretown

Nine hardy souls came out to run the Mad on a cool and rainy night. The river Gods blessed us with

about 2 inches of rain in the past 36 hours. I estimate the river was around 800cfs when we put on and about 1300 when we took out.

We had something old (big long old school boat), something new (cute little play boats), something borrowed (an old school play boat) and something blue (again, the long boat).

There were a few mishaps along the way. The number of boaters made rescue and equipment pickup a quick process and we continued our progress downstream.

One scary moment occurred near the last rapid when one of our group was upside down for quite some time. A hand of god was needed to get him upright and it took a minute for him to come to his senses. (I spoke with him the morning after via e-mail and he is OK) It reminded everyone in the group the need for safety and alertness on the river.

Of note: there is a big tree at horseshoe. It does not interfere with the run but makes scouting a bit tricky. There is also a tree hanging down on the right wall in the next rapid after horseshoe (one I call alleyway and I have heard others call washing machine). It is avoidable and even if you hit it you just end up with small branches scraping along your helmet.

- Jim Poulin

[Poultney](#) Saturday May 12, 2007

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Eve and Dan B.

Participants: (K1): Dan Beideck, Chris Weed, Kristy Hart, Eve Soutiere

Originally posted as a Black or a White trip, we did neither and decided to find some water to boat in. Dan and I settled on the Poultney the day before the trip. Four of us showed up at the reasonable hour of 10:15 am and got ready for the sunny, yet chilly day.

The first obstacle was to put in without clipping ourselves on the submerged fencepost or the cement weighing it down. All were successful. We ran each drop, except the last and the slide, twice. Each of us took three runs down the slide and were able to find creative lines/methods for running it. Dan intentionally ran it backwards, Chris eddied out and ran the right side, Kristy tried really hard to launch her demo Jackson Fun off the rock itself, and I (not quite intentionally) tried to sidesurf the

bottom hole. The last drop only got one run off each of us. Everyone else took the far left line, I chose the far right, at the top, and all of us ran left of center to the bottom. Although there were a few combat rolls, no one swam, lost gear, or even pouted!

All in all, it was simply a gorgeous day. The flat water intervals between the drops offered great bird viewing, the sun shined brightly all day. A good day for me to say goodbye to Vermont! Thank you VPC for everything!

- Eve Soutiere

[The Mighty Nulhegan](#) Saturday May 5, 2007

Character: nov-int WW . low boatable

Organizer: Ryan

Participants: (K1): Ryan, Dave (JD)

Oh the mighty Nully.... Should be a song title...I can see it now Gordon Lightfoot singing it - HA!

Anyways - the day started off with a debate about what to drive to to run, the Nulhegan at about 1.5 hours drive time or the Clarendon Gorge with roughly the same time in the car. It was a nice day so why the heck not head out on an epic....

To start off with the only thing epic about the Nulhegan other than the drive to get there was the flatwater sections inbetween the two class III gorges (with more water Class IV for sure). Lucky for us (and lucky for them) we ran into Martin and Bernard. They had come down from Sherbrook to paddle the Nully as well and didn't have a shuttle ride.

We snagged Martin and he gave us the low down on the creek as we ran him up to his car and then he helped us set shuttle so we didn't have to endure the 4 mile hike back up to the put in. They had put in up river of the Stone Dam road put in to snag a gorge that us usually not run and suggested we do the same. (Thanks for the tip on that one Martin) Probably the best section of water on the entire run.

So for beta on the run. We put in a good mile above the regular Stone Dam Road put-in (Silvie O Conte Preserve area). Found a good area to park and bushwacked down to the river. There was decent read and run rapids through here up to the initiation gorge. On thing to take note of was the beauty of the river. This is a true northern VT float with multiple moose crossings, the spires of cedars all around and just an abundance of wildlife.



Hudson River Gorge Saturday May 5, 2007

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Rod Wentworth

Participants: (K1): Jamie Dolan, Jim Poulin, and Rod Wentworth

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 5.50 ft.; USGS Station: North Creek

I have been doing a Hudson gorge trip the first Saturday in May for a number of years now. The weather can vary from 80° with lots of black flies to downright cold. In fact, I almost feel cheated if the weather isn't a little miserable.....it is a rite of spring. This year it was the cinco de mayo trip, and our group was small – 3 kayaks: Jamie Dolan, Jim Poulin, and Rod Wentworth. We got on the river in time to beat the rafts and stayed ahead of them much of the way. With this year's late spring, there was not a black fly to be found. The day started out cloudy but eventually grew sunny and warmer.....not hot but very comfortable. The level was about 5.5 feet with the bubble. There were few other boats on the river, which had us speculating about why, when the Hudson some years back could get a bit crowded. Was it the race being held further downstream? Or is it just that river running has gone out of style? Whatever the reason, we enjoyed having the river almost to ourselves. The sometimes terrible paddle out at the end was the best I can remember – water moving along well plus a tail wind to make things almost effortless. I hope to see a few more paddlers in 2008!

- Rod Wentworth

The first gorge/rapid is worth a look when the river is pumping. There were several ledges through here and most of them were boofable and the holes on the back-sides were pretty benign, but again at higher water would serve as a good class IV test piece. We ran it twice to get some photo ops. Both Dave and I agreed it was a little more fun the first time through just sort of going with the flow instead of trying to be so precise on the second run. Heck I had to roll on the first run at the bottom because I got flipped. From this gorge it was flat water to the Stone Dam Road put in. Below the Bridge on Route 105 the Nully begins a pretty consistent drop (I think Mark L. said it was around 80 ft/mi) and this continues on for the better part of a mile. This was a fun rapid that I would say was at the low end of a III on the day we ran it, but at a higher level would be very pushy and I would bet you could give it a solid IV between the holes and ledges. After this long rapid the river mellows in its last couple of miles to the confluence/take-out with the Connecticut.

Both Dave and I agreed it had a good vibe to it and would give a novice/budding intermediate paddler a chance to feel like they were on a wilderness run and see some bigger rapids while they were at it. At higher levels the two gorge sections would be fun to catch enroute to another river elsewhere - but an extended day trip just for the paddler looking to snag class IV on the Nully would be bummed about the drive time if it was more than 30 minutes....just my impression.

All in all, it was a beautiful day to try a new river and go for a scenic drive. Got to enjoy a couple of good brews & excellent burger too at the Pub Outback in East Burke for an added bonus.

- Ryan McCall

While everyone was at the West (the Top Mad)...

Sunday Apr 29, 2007

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Dave Gurtman

Participants: Ty S., Dave G., Chris W., Ryan M.

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 750 cfs; USGS Station: Moretown gauge

An easy Sunday probe session (or not).....



Dave was looking for a crew to get on the water. He rounded up Chris Weed and myself and I brought Ty into the fray. Instead of the usual suspects we thought it would be a fine idea to poke around on something new and Friday I had walked some of the drops on the Top Mad. They looked pretty channelized and would go even with dropping water levels. So we met at the Warren General Store at 12:30 and after some messing around there, some scouts to the put in and running shuttle we were on the water about an hour later (give or take). The run started off with a great little drop into a mellow pool to set you up for a 4 tiered drop with the third tier waiting to flip you. The water slams into a ledge at a 90 degree angle and piles up so you really need the proper orientation and brace. Ty aced it Dave and I flipped but got our roll in time for the last drop there. Hard to tell, but a little more water might have eased the abruptness of the drop. There was some boogie water and smallish ledges and then the next significant drop was a fun slidish right to left move. It was a must make because if you fell off the slide you were going to be hammered in a slot. After this move you needed to be quick to get river right because the main flow of the current was headed under a pretty substantial undercut. All ran it cleanly... After this drop there is lots of boogie water and minor drops and waves. The valley is really beautiful up this high and my guess is it is seldom seen from the seat of a boat. This

continues on with two passes under Rt 100. When you get back to the west side of 100 Stetson Brook joins to double the flow of the Mad and not too further below this you come into more bedrock ledges and some small gorges. One we all walked was very undercut and had a nasty stopper in it...More flow very well might have allowed safer passage, but we weren't going to chance it yesterday. We threw in a good deal of sticks to see what the water was doing and lost all the sticks...So if they didn't get through none of us wanted to be in there with the sticks if we got stuck...With another mile or so of class II water and Illish drops we came to the Warren Falls. What a spectacular place. It looks like it would be a fairly clean drop (actually 3 major ones) , but the entry drop and the exit drop were wood choked which means we will be back some day to give it a go when the wood moves on. Below Warren Falls a short bit is a slot drop of about 4 feet. It spills into small chasm that is severely undercut on the right side and the bottom of the drop is highly retentive. This was the sight of our only carnage of the day (me). Every drop that day we got out to look it over carefully. This one we paddled up to and boat scouted. I thought it was good to go dead center. NOT!!!! Anyways, I found out how sticky the hole is and how undercut the right wall is. The guys went to school on my fiasco and ran it on the left side and all aced it no prob. I've paid homage to the water gods...hope the don't need anymore for a while. Below this is more mellowish boogie water and the final substantial drop. It is a two tiered ledgey thing that was run to the right on the first ledge and then to the left of a large boulder for the second ledge. From there to town it was more of the same boogie stuff. We took out above the Dam in Warren.

All in all it was a great day on the river. We spent a good deal of time setting up safety and scouting unknowns. I think everyone agreed with another couple hundred CFS it would step up the difficulty, but the level it was at let us get a good feel for what this gem can offer up. If you decide to give it a go at a higher level beware of potential strainers as there were a few did the limbo under that would come into play at a higher level.

Check the pix in the gallery.

- Ryan McCall

Ammonoosuc Sunday Apr 29, 2007

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: Richard Larsen

Participants: (K1): Shawn Enterline; (OC1): Richard Larsen, Mike Smorgens; (C1): Tony Shaw

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 4.05 ft.; USGS

Station: Bethlehem Junction, NH

The day was supposed to be the better of the weekend days, but it was really fairly miserable. On and off light rain was the staple of the day, on the river and during the drive over and back. The water, of course, was recently melted snow, probably 35 degrees, and the air temperature on the river was at best 50 degrees. As the rain continued, Sheri Larsen, being wiser than the rest of us, decided not to paddle, and met us at each bridge to provide logistical support - and brownies at the end. Because of time constraints, one boat took out at the first bridge (Pierce Bridge). The other boats continued past the dam, and took out two bridges downstream.



The water level was a quite wonderful 4.05' at the Bethlehem Junction gauge. At this level, nothing is rocky or scratchy - there are big chutes through every rapid. Of course, the water is a lot pushier, and the waves a lot bigger, but there is nothing overwhelming. All of the major rapids required attention to features 40 and more feet downstream, and strategic maneuvering to get away from the worst places. There were fewer obstructions, but you would be in real trouble if you waited until you were almost upon some of them before reacting. Boat Breaker Rapid had an added feature - a tree trunk that extended 6 feet out into the main left-side channel about 2 1/2 feet above the water, right across where we normally make the entrance move. But, at this level there was a big-wave route just beyond the tip of the tree, so we ran the waves

with the tree tip grazing the left side of our helmets. Powerhouse Rapid seemed in some ways easier than when the river is lower, because of the higher water covering some rocks. The waves were big and powerful, but with good, strategic boat placement even the open canoes could get through without taking a lot of water. It would have been a nasty place to swim, but no one had any trouble. We pretty much cruised down the river, with no stops to 'play'. From the put-in at 'The Big Pine Tree' to Pierce Bridge took just over 1 hour. There was another hour of on-water time to the next bridge, plus 30 minutes for the portage around the dam and lunch. From that bridge to the take-out bridge was about 35 minutes of on-water time.

- Richard Larsen

Winhall Brook during West Fest

Sunday Apr 29, 2007

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: Brent Osborne

Participants: (K1): Brent, Eve S, Matt Cat (from RI)

After a full day on the West River the previous day, we were feeling adventurous and decided to scout some of the tributaries of the west which seemed to be running @ low-medium levels. While Ball Mtn. Brook looked enticing, especially with the light turquoise/metallic color of the water, we decided it was a bit above our group's skill level. We opted instead for Winhall Brook, a class II-III run just north of Jamaica. The level seemed to be a bit above low-boatable. We looked for the gauge that is mentioned in Lessels' AMC guide book, but were unable to find it, even once we were on the river. With butterflies in our stomachs, we put on the river at the Lower Taylor Hill Rd bridge, parking at the old school house on the corner. The run was mostly continuous class II with a bit of rock dodging (but surprisingly little hull scraping on the riverbed), & 3 easy class IIIs, the first of which we got out and scouted. The guide book recommends taking out just before a class IV rapid in S. Londonderry cleverly named Londonderry Rapids, but our scheduled take-out was at the confluence with the West River another mile or so downstream. We eddied out just above Londonderry Rapids (Caution: This rapid comes up quick, the eddies are small and this rapid must be scouted!) and scouted from the undercut ledges on river right. There are several options for running this rapid, even in low water, but as the guidebook says, the best approach is from either the extreme left or extreme right. Those running the rapid chose their lines, while those who were portaging set up safety on

the river right. Ok...that math doesn't add up...We paddled through or portaged around Londonderry Rapids without incident and floated the rest of the way to our campground at the confluence with the West River at Winhall Brook Campgrounds. The 4.5+ miles we paddled took 1.5 hours with 2 rapids scouted and paddling conservatively so as to properly boat scout the rest of the river. This is a great continuous run for an intermediate group of boaters and provides a sense of solitude and adventure that is tough to get as a veteran of the West.

- Brent Osborne

Speaking of the West... Saturday Apr 28, 2007

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Brent Osborne

Participants: (K1): James R, Amos, Kelly, Eve S, Geoff, Fe, CJ, Brent and Matt Cat (from RI)

What was forecasted to be a miserable & rainy Saturday, turned out to be one of the sunniest days on the West River that I can remember. Nine paddlers met at the school field in Jamaica, VT at 9:30a. After gearing up, shuttling vehicles and introducing ourselves, we put on the lower west shortly after 10:00a. The lower west quickly splits into left (main) and right (narrow) channels. We opted for the right channel which provided continuous class II paddling. A classic VT covered bridge was still holding onto a few tree limbs: signs that flows were much higher in previous weeks. The scheduled 1500 CFS release was augmented with a medium-flowing Ball Mountain Brook depositing its flow to the west just below the put-in for the lower section. We all took turns catching surfs on-the-fly and playing in the last rapid before the take-out at the new route 100 bridge. Geoff, Fe & CJ planned on running the lower section again, while the remaining 6 of us made the trek to Ball Mountain Dam. We carried up and over, then down the switchbacks (it's really not that bad), and then briefly scouted the first rapid, Initiation. We all agreed that the river looked lower than we had paddled it in the past, bringing a few more rocks into play. After an easily fixed equipment malfunction on a demo boat, we all successfully ran Initiation without even a roll, let alone a swim. The rest of our paddle was uneventful – a typical April paddle on the West River. There was plenty of surfing and play to be had. Some hit boof rock, while others were content to float by it, catching a water-level view of boaters launching off the feature. We eddied out above the dumplings and refreshed our memories as to the best line. All ran it

without a hitch. We were off the river and back in the school field shortly before 3:00p, at which point Brent, Eve & Kelly decided to carry over the dam and run the upper west again. On this second run, all three of us ponied up, faced our fear and hit boof rock head on. Matt and Amos were on shore to photo-document the event.

Three runs on the West River in a single day can really work up an appetite and the volunteers at the community church in Jamaica came through BIG TIME! For \$8 we were over-fed with all-you-can-eat rigatoni, homemade marinara & meatballs, garlic bread and salad. A local bluegrass band jammed in the corner and we celebrated Elwood's 78th(?) birthday with a grand assortment of pies in the Pie Room. While it didn't seem too many paddlers took advantage of the pasta supper, the local residents were gracious hosts and I'd certainly recommend this event to future West Festers.

- Brent Osborne

White River Sunday Apr 22, 2007

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: very high

Organizer: Richard Larsen

Participants: (K1): Ricky Battistoni, Josh Mannheimer; (OC1): Richard Larsen, Sheri Larsen, Mike Smorgens, Len Carpenter

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 8500 cfs; USGS Station: West Hartford, VT

The Moose was the scheduled trip, but was deemed to be too high. The White was very high as well, but Craig Carline, Paul Savard and others had run it the day before and reported it to be enjoyable - so, we went. Craig and Paul were correct - it was really at a fun level, as long as we avoided a few nasty spots. The temperature was in the 70s, and the day was gorgeous. We put in on the Tweed River, and paddled to the White and down through the waves to the first bridge. Below that, things picked up some, culminating in the rapid near the old abutment at Stoney Brook. The left bank collapsed here 4-5 years ago, and the rapid straightened and moved to the left of the abutment. The main drop also migrated upstream 150 yards. This was just a really fun and wavy drop. Below that, there was a pourover that we intended to avoid, but one boat wallowed through it by mistake, but stayed upright. One kayak flipped above the pourover, and went over the rock and through the hole upside down - but then rolled up, and all was well. Below that, at the lunch ledge, the center and right sides were a continuous and fairly enormous wave / hole, so we all stayed left and avoided any carnage. At the Gaysville Bridge, we met Chris

Weed, who had car trouble, and he floated the rest of the way with us. One kayaker took out at the next place we came to route 107 - body sore from being in the boat too long - and walked back to the cars. We all made it to the takeout on route 107 about three hours after put-in, including the time for the lunch stop. Since the river was flowing so fast, we moved downstream faster than normal.

- Richard Larsen

Joe's Brook - One Perfect Day

Saturday Apr 21, 2007

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: Tony Shaw

Participants: (K1): Dan Beideck, John Bungard,

Jamie Dolan, Eve Soutiere; (C1): Tony Shaw;

(Inflatable): Eric Bishop (in the Shredder)

April 21 seemed early for a scheduled Joe's Brook trip, but the fickle spring weather was decidedly in our favor on this magnificent Saturday. We worried a bit about how many downed trees we would find blocking our route after the April 16th Nor'easter howled through upper New England 5 days before, but thankfully almost all the potential strainers were duck-able. One huge and potentially lethal tree remains lodged near the bottom of the class IV Covered Bridge Rapid, and a portage is (for the time-being) prudent. A carry on either side is feasible. As we've seen in the past on early outings here, occasional thick ice shelves extending from the banks out a few feet and over-hanging the swift current were the more prevalent hazard.

Across Vermont this particular day was so sunny, so warm, so splendidly spring-like, that Ruth Page on VPR actually penned a story about it a few weeks later. It was a huge treat to spend a day like this on Joe's Brook...one of the most naturally lovely and sparsely developed watersheds in all Vermont!

The day started with some mis-communication around the meeting spot. This seems to happen more often than it should, and in this case I take full responsibility for proceeding with only 1/2 the group down to the Powerhouse Road put-in before the others had arrived at the West Danville wayside where we agreed to meet. It's always windy and chilly first thing in the morning at the pull-off beside the ice-covered Joe's Pond, while the powerhouse put-in is private, sheltered from the wind, and equally sunny.

We got on the water about 10:30am, and did not finish until ~4:30pm, as Joe's is long and some of it's blind corners and steeper pitches require scouting, especially on the first run of the season.

Tina Scharf helped with the shuttle, which was greatly appreciated!

It was Eve's introduction to Joe's, and the playboat she paddles lacked sufficient volume to pop easily out of some of the holes she found herself side-surfing in, including a sticky one half-way down Corkscrew - the opening class IV pitch.



Confidence was bolstered when we all hit our landings at Dew Drop Inn, and John showed us the zig-zag sneak route (if you can call it that) through Pinball. Eric and I managed to FLIP the inflatable Shredder when we failed to skirt the monster hole at Great Escape (where a tree trunk partially blocks the entrance), and I am still a bit battered from the epic swim that followed.

Eve paddled extremely well, but shortly after our lunch stop at the covered bridge she decided she'd "had enough" and dragged her boat down a rutted former logging road to the car we spotted at Morse's Mills. I came to the same decision about 10 minutes after Eve, and the two of us towed our vessels trudging through a dense knee-deep spring snowpack where moose tracks were plentiful 20 or 30 minutes out to Morse's Mills. It was exhausting. Meanwhile, Jamie, John, Dan, and Eric were having a super run down through the most continuous and steep section of the river at a really playful medium-high level. Apparently a couple of the holes were grabby, even for those in creek boats, and there was some window-shading to reminisce about while we changed into our dry clothes at the take-out.

Energy levels were sagging and it was past 4pm as the foursome still paddling took out below the bridge at Morse's Mills, but it wasn't very hard to persuade them to get back on the water and finish the trip. We had scouted The Gorge from the right bank during the am car shuttle, so we knew we wouldn't need to stop and scout there. The rest of the drops in this section, 2 of which are III-IV's, were all free of strainers, and we made our way very quickly to the take-out where Eve and Tina

were waiting. It was heartening to see Jamie, Dan, Eve, and Eric paddle with such aplomb - all apparently getting better with experience (and age?). As for John, the group never quit praising his boat-handling expertise, his river-reading skill, and his gift for teaching. Having him along on this trip gave everyone else a boost of confidence in class IV waters, and made the trip safer as well. At medium-high levels Joe's Brook is a 7 course meal for solid class III-IV boaters who are ready for a bonafide class IV experience. On top of which it is spectacular in its beauty and remoteness. With all the talk about small-scale hydro-dam construction to help curtail global warming, it might be time to nominate Joe's Brook for Wild and Scenic River status, to be sure it stays open for recreational uses. Creekers (and others) should think seriously about writing letters to our elected officials in opposition to any such development on gems like Joe's Brook.

- Tony Shaw

[Lower Mad 4/18/2007](#) Wednesday Apr 18, 2007

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: Norm Staunton

Participants: (K1): Woody, Kirk, Tyler, Eve, Norm

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 1500 cfs; USGS Station: Mad River at Last Hydro Dam

Sweet run. Level was higher than we estimated when we put on, but a great time was had by all. Gauge was at about 1500 when we checked it after the run. Everyone walked Horseshoe, though a bunch of us gave it a good look. Eve, back from AK, had a clean run. Tyler, the new guy from Baltimore, came to play and should be a great addition to the VT boating scene. Woody and Kirk, solid as always. One swimmer, not mentioning any names, but a safe and quick rescue and we were on our way again. Washing machine was BEEFY but tons of fun. RT 100B wave was washed out, and Bottom Drop was pretty much one wave. But, we had a great time, it's a fun, clean level and everyone left happy, wet, and satisfied.

- Norm Staunton

[Missisquoi River @ Sheldon Springs - Darn Low](#)

Saturday Apr 14, 2007

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Tony Shaw

Participants: (K1): Dan Beideck, Brent Osborne;

(C1): Tony Shaw

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 1260 cfs; USGS Station: East Bershire, VT

Only once in the past week did the temperature top 40 degrees, and so the snow that fell on and off all week was not making it into the rivers. The only familiar III-IV run that was certain to be running was the Poultney in Fairhaven, but noone seemed too interested in doing this long-ish run on such a cold day, or driving all the way to Fairhaven. Brent suggested that we try the steep stretch of the Missisquoi that has been a mill site for over a century. This seemed like a superlative idea. Back in the 1980's the VPC (then called the Northern Vermont Canoe Cruisers) joined forces with the AMC to lobby for recreational releases from the dam at Sheldon Springs, and described this stretch as "by far the largest most difficult rapid in Vermont ... ranging from class 3 to 5 in the range of normal runnable flow levels".



The Sheldon Springs dam (about 10 miles northeast of St. Albans off Rt. 105) has the ability to release water, but it doesn't have much of an impoundment upstream. We had precious little water for the first half of the run, and then the outflow from the Rock-Tenn Mill probably tripled the flow.

We never noticed the parking area and carry trail to the river below the dam on river left. Instead we lowered boats down the class V put-in (after ignoring "no trespassing" signs on river right). We encountered lots of BIG rocks and itsy bitsy drops in the 1/2 mile below the dam (at this level). At high water, these rocks would look smaller, and the drops would be gnarlier.

The East Bershire realtime USGS gauge (miles and miles upstream from Sheldon Springs) read 1260 cfs, and a good part of that water was diverted by the Sheldon Springs dam for power generation and mill use, leaving the main channel immediately below the dam seriously de-watered. Still, we were

happy to be out paddling; we all agreed it's exciting to paddle ANY river for the first time. The temperature surpassed 40 degrees (air...not water), the sun actually made an appearance, noone swam, and a good time was had by all... At this level, it is a class III run.

- Tony Shaw

[Lower Lamoille](#) Sunday Apr 1, 2007

Character: nov-int WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Richard Larsen

Participants: (K1): Lou Whittier, Frank Wells, Dan Beideck, Brent Osborne; (OC1): Richard Larsen, Sheri Larsen, Mike Smorgens; (C1): Tony Shaw
Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 5.70 ft.; USGS Flow: 2700 cfs; USGS Station: East Georgia



We had a paddling day that is as good as it gets on April 1 in Vermont. The temperature was in the mid-50s, with sun early, but clouds moving in. Water flow was almost exactly at the median for the date. The icebergs and churning brown water of a few days previous had disappeared. We put in below the dam at Fairfax, and spent about 2 hours 45 minutes on the river. The first part was floating and leisurely paddling, and then we had the decent but non-threatening run through the rapids. Some did some surfing, a few practiced their rolls, and one swam a short way, but we had no real problems. We saw mergansers, geese, and other assorted waterfowl. The biggest obstacle was at the end, where we had to negotiate a Vermont version of the Khumbu icefall. The river had tiled the shores with 6-8' high ice from ice-out, and we had to work our way over the slippery walls to get up to our cars.

- Richard Larsen

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