

eddy out

June 2004

paddling events, safety awareness, and environmentalism



Five Beginner Philosophies

Stuff to think about when learning how to paddle

Trey Coleman

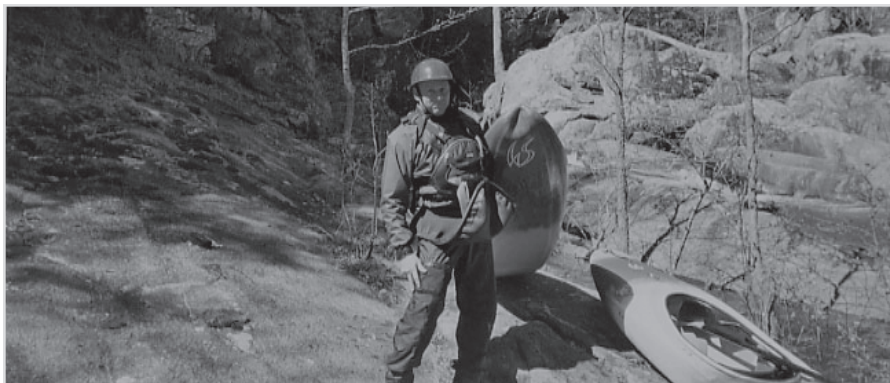
1. Learning to kayak or canoe is not a race, but a journey. There will be times when you need to push yourself to learn certain skills, but mostly it should be fun. If it's not fun then you need to rethink your frustrations and expectations. Remember, if you want to wear comfortable clothes, be dry, and near food, there is always bowling.

2. As humans, we use our hands more than our feet. We don't think of our lower body as an integral part of what we do. Sure, it gets us around and is useful in fighting ninjas, but we think more about our head and hands for solving problems. Start using your lower body to be the force when rolling and you've grasped the essence of boating: it's about the lower body.

3. The most stable position in a canoe or kayak is leaning forward, not backward. If you feel unstable, lean forward before doing anything else.

4. Throwing or snapping your hips is the secret to the roll. Your hands and paddle do very little in righting the boat. Handrolling pretty much proves it's all in the hips. The roll is a simple set of actions in a complex environment. A good roll is in both your hips and your head.

5. Realize everyone has to work on being comfortable upside down and underwater. If it freaks you out, you aren't the only one to feel this way, but the sooner you get comfortable with it the better. It's the first step in teaching your mind to distinguish between discomfort and danger as both are a constant in paddling; however, discomfort usually isn't worth freaking out about.



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Water, taken in moderation, cannot hurt anybody.

—Mark Twain

2004 Officers

President

Trey Coleman, 865-691-0222
roscoepwavetrain@yahoo.com

Vice President

Kirk Eddleman, 865-766-0705
bankfull1@yahoo.com

Secretary

Renee Harwell, 865-573-9732
reeneharwell@bellsouth.net

Treasurer

Andrew Schneider
865-671-9967
tenschneider@aol.com

Newsletter Editor

Todd Duren, 865-525-8296
tduren@fireflygraphics.com

Here Come da Pres

Trey Coleman

Howdy,

As of this writing, Canoe/Kayak school is right around the corner and should be a lot of fun. I hope many of those reading this newsletter for the first time came to the club through our paddling school. If you are in this category, let me be the first one to welcome you and encourage you to get involved with things: this is your club and we need your input!

This summer we will be having beginner/intermediate trips each

weekend. Many of these will be on the Hiwassee and will require those wanting to go on the trips to contact the trip leader. If you want to get out and learn to paddle, this is the summer. If you want to get back into paddling, this is the summer. Because having so many trips is demanding on volunteer leaders, please, please, please contact the trip leaders a week in advance to let them know you are coming.

Hope everyone has a great summer!!

Trey

Editor's Eddy

Todd Duren

Hey Kids: Welcome to the June edition of *Eddy Out*, Chota's monthly newsletter. This little rag keeps your river juices flowing even when you can't be on the river. This should be coming out a week or so before canoe School so let me get *yet another plug* in here: Get involved in Canoe and Kayak School. Doug and Jason are working their butts off getting auction swag, musicians, instructors, and a warehouse big enough to store the beer kegs. You owe it to yourself and your friends to sign up and get the word out.

As for this issue, it's chock full of **Real Chota Goodness**®. Don't miss the summer trip and event calendar. Stay tuned to the Web site for more trips as the weather warms and roof racks grow boats.

Check out the story about John Bayless I swiped from the email list. If you've ever wondered about the *real* Frank Bell of Frank Bell's Rapid, he gets a mention here, along with some cool 1970s kayak lore. I promised Trey I'd print the membership form and remind you folks to renew your membership. Memberships run from June to June now, so the well will run dry if you don't send in your checks.

David Luinstra's trip report from the Colorado last year puts you right in the mud and silt, and Gary Kilpatrick's cold-weather trip on the French Broad is, uh, *chilling*. I also scavenged another big water trip report from Cross Mountain out west. Finally, check out Kirk's latest top ten safety article. Smart ideas from a guy who paddles crazy stuff.

That's about it from my placid little eddy. See y'all behind a brew on the Hiwassee in a few weeks.

Cover photo: Doug Klaras custom countours the bow of his Wavesport Y at Last Step Rapid on Tallulah. Check out his trip report in last month's issue.

Calendar

JUNE

July 9: Ohio River Way Paddlefest in Cincinnati on the Ohio River. 7 am–12 noon. 6 mi. downriver run, amateur and pro races, finish line party. Largest paddle party in the Midwest. www.ohioriverway.org.

No June Meeting!

June 10–19 Alpine Whitewater Francaise Advanced I Trip. Paddle in France! Contact: Bruce Berman: ybberman@earthlink.net, phone: (412) 661-3872.

June 11–13 ACA K1 Instructor Certification Class May 21–23 at Ocoee. Lake and flatwater. See www.paddletsra.org

June 17: Pre-Canoe School pool roll practice at pool in Andrew Schneider's subdivision.

June 19, 20: Chota Canoe School. Contact Doug Klaras: footer4omph@msn.com or (865) 983-3753

June 20–29 Alpine Whitewater Francaise Intermediate Trip. Paddle in France! Contact: Bruce Berman: ybberman@earthlink.net, phone (412) 661-3872.

JULY

July 8 Student & Instructor Appreciation Picnic and Meeting

July 10: Hiwassee River. Class II. Kirk Eddlemon: 865-522-9534. Please call to verify meeting location.

July 17: Hiwassee River. Class II. Trey Coleman: 865-983-3753, roscoepwavetr

ain@yahoo.com. Please email to verify meeting location.

July 24: Nantahala River. Class II (III). Doug Klaras: 865-983-3753. footer4omph@msn.com. Please call to verify meeting location.

July 31: Hiwassee River. Class II. Jason Purcell: 865-776-2595, jason.purcell@CTIMI.com Please call to verify meeting location.

July 30–August 9 Alpine Whitewater Francaise Advanced II Trip. Paddle in France! Contact: Bruce Berman: ybberman@earthlink.net, phone (412) 661-3872.

AUGUST

August 7: Hiwassee River, Class II Laura Raymer: 865-522-9534. kayakinkashka@yahoo.com. Please call to verify meeting location.

August 14: Hiwassee River. Class II. Carl Keane: 865-556-6624. carl@hwimail.com. Please call to verify meeting location.

August 12 General & Board Meeting 6:30 pm Board, 7:30 pm General. Location TBA.

SEPTEMBER

September 25 Gauley Festival

OCTOBER

NOC Guest Appreciation Festival at the Nantahalla River

NOVEMBER

November 6 First Fall release of Tallulah

Conservation Officer

Jomo MacDermott
865-558-9628
MacDermott@mindspring.com

Safety Officer

Laura Raymer, 865-522-9534
[rivrunner@bellsouth.net](mailto:rivrrunner@bellsouth.net)

Trip Chairperson

Carl Keane, 865-556-6624
carl@hwimail.com

Canoe & Kayak School

Doug Klaras, 865-983-3753
footer4omph@msn.com

Canoe & Kayak School Elect

Jason Purcell, 776-2595

Member at Large

Michael Kline, 865-300-4347
mkline@teamhealth.com

Webmaster

Russell deCastongrene
865-966-5918
RusselldeC@CharterTN.net

Past President

Doug Johnstone, 865-966-3391
canoeone@chartertn.net

Old School Tales: John Bayless

From the May 24, 2004
Hendersonville Times-News

Harrison Metzger

“Trees were hitting the bridge and she wanted to make sure she was on the right side in case it collapsed,” Bayless said.

John Bayless remembers one trip to West Virginia where he and his white-water kayaking companions were sure they had gotten in over their heads.

The group of boaters, mostly engineers at the former DuPont X-ray film plant near Brevard, had driven for hours as they often did to run wild rapids in the Mountain State. They had started down a tributary of the Tygart River only to have the creek flood beneath their boats.

“It kept getting bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger,” Bayless, 72, said of the trip more than a decade ago. “By the time we got down to the main Tygart River it was like the Colorado only 10 times bigger.”

Bayless had gotten out in front of his group and was fighting to stay upright in the exploding brown waves. He wanted to get out of the water, but the river was flushing through trees on its banks making that impossible. Finally he climbed out on a railroad track, only to see the kayaks of the other members of his group, some separated from their frantically swimming owners, come flushing down 20 minutes later.

The group was late to meet Bayless’ wife, Nancy, who was waiting for them downstream where the river crosses under a covered bridge at the town of Philippe.

“Trees were hitting the bridge and she wanted to make sure she was on the right side in case it collapsed,” Bayless said.

Mrs. Bayless, who frequently went along on the trips to help shuttle vehicles, had the same thought she had when she had seen her husband kayak Lava Falls on the Grand Canyon of the Colorado: “I thought, well am I going to be a widow or not?”

Early paddlers

Looking back, Bayless said the flood on the Tygart was probably the worst, most frightening experience he had in running rivers from the Appalachians to the Rockies.

But many more times, the close-knit group of friends from the Brevard/Hendersonville area created happy memories as they pushed themselves and learned to paddle kayaks on what were considered the most challenging rivers of the day.

Bayless and a few friends at the DuPont plant started kayaking together in the late 1970s, years before the sport gained mass appeal. During their heyday, they traveled all over the East Coast and made several trips out West, meeting and paddling with many of the top kayak and canoe paddlers.

“At one time I went on 55 trips in one year,” Bayless said. “That’s when I was throwing away my paddle and hands rolling (righting the kayak without a paddle), and started going on the big rivers out west and in Costa Rica.”

Bayless and his wife moved to Hendersonville in 1976 from New Jersey, where he had worked for DuPont and raised two children. At DuPont, he met a fellow engineer, research chemist Preston Brown, who had taken up kayaking while at

Clemson University.

“Preston Brown needed guys to paddle with. He talked a bunch of us into buying kayaks from Perception (a South Carolina kayak company),” he said.

Brown knew how to Eskimo-roll his kayak to right it after flips, but wasn't sure how to teach the other engineers. So they figured it out themselves.

“We were basically self-taught,” Bayless said. “I don't know how many times I swam before I learned. In those days there weren't too many people who knew how to do it. In this region we were some of the beginners of this thing.”

Whitewater kayaking was still pretty much in its infancy. Earlier pioneers in the sport, such as Frank Bell Sr., founder of Henderson County's Camp Mondamin, and Ramone Eaton had paddled canoes. Kayaks in those days were made of fiberglass and often from homemade kits or designs passed from boater to boater.

Challenging whitewater

Bayless had done some canoeing in whitewater in Delaware. He and fellow engineers Clyde Stahl and his wife, Patty, Jim Andrus, Al Bennett and Bob Bennett (not related,) Rich Maggi, William Graham and Jim Sheppard started kayaking with Brown on the easy rapids of the Green River Cove in Polk County. Later joined by DuPont engineers such as Al Balcewicz, Jim Fortune and Joe Roark, they progressed to more difficult rivers: the Chattooga, French Broad and Ocoee.

The Ocoee in Tennessee is where their skills took off. Before long, they were traveling to West Virginia to run huge whitewater rivers such as the Gauley, New and Cheat. They also

traveled out west to run the Grand Canyon, a trip Bayless made three times, and ran even more challenging rivers such as the North and South Forks of the Payette in Idaho.

“We had 10 or 12 of us who were going all over the place,” Bayless said.

The DuPont kayakers practiced rolling their kayaks at the Asheville YMCA, where they made friends with Chuck Hines, then aquatics director. He got them to start teaching others to kayak, and before long a youth kayaking program and a regional paddling club, the Western Carolina Paddlers, were born.

Bayless was the senior member of the group. He was 46 when he started kayaking, while most of the others were in their late 20s or early 30s. By the early 1990s, Bayless started backing off from more difficult and dangerous whitewater rivers. But his friend Sheppard, who was in his early 50s, was pushing the limits more and more. Sheppard was running the Green River Narrows, a stretch of brutally steep and powerful rapids where the river drops from Henderson into Polk county.

Today the Green attracts hundreds or thousands of expert kayakers from all over the country. Back then it was the domain of only a handful of elite boaters.

In November 1995, heavy rains hit the mountains of Western North Carolina. Sheppard, a senior research engineer at DuPont and 53-year-old father of three grown children, called his friends to go kayaking. Bayless declined. He later learned his friend drowned while kayaking with another boater on the West Fork of the French Broad near Lake Toxaway.
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Kayaks in those days were made of fiberglass and often from homemade kits or designs passed from boater to boater.

Chota by e-mail

Can't wait till the next newsletter to find out what's going on with Chota? Want more email? Join the Chota listserve and get updates about happenings with the club (trips, classes and meeting info) as well as information about conservation issues impacting the paddling community. Joining is easy and free, check out the following to get on the list: <http://www.korrnet.org/mailman/listinfo/chotalist>

Re-up Now!

It's that time of year folks—time to renew your Chota membership. For a paltry sum you can insure another year of *Eddy Out*, events and meetings, and best of all: tons of email. Wahoo! Mail in the form below or go to the website to download. Keep it Chota!

Promote community paddle sport activities, safety awareness and techniques, while being actively environmentally responsible.



New Member

Renewal

Change of address

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Membership Form

Please enclose \$20 dues (one year from date of joining or renewal date)

Head of Household: _____

Others in Household: _____

Street: _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code** _____

Phone Numbers: Home: () _____ - _____ **Work:** () _____ - _____

E-mail Address: _____

Boats paddled: _____ **Paddling activity interests:**

Skill Level:	Beginner <input type="checkbox"/>	Flatwater/touring <input type="checkbox"/>	Whitewater <input type="checkbox"/>
	Novice <input type="checkbox"/>	overnight paddling trips <input type="checkbox"/>	Hairless <input type="checkbox"/>
	Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/>	day trips <input type="checkbox"/>	Hair <input type="checkbox"/>
	Advanced <input type="checkbox"/>	evening trips <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Expert <input type="checkbox"/>	Coastal Sea Kayaking Trips: <input type="checkbox"/>	

I am willing to coordinate club trips

Can you help at canoe school?

Instruct	OC1	OC2	K1
whitewater	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
touring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Youth Activities: Whitewater
Flatwater

Western Trips: Whitewater
Flatwater

Other: _____ **other:** _____

Conservation activities: River Cleanups Letter writing campaigns Volunteer for groups

Other _____

Safety activities: Safety clinic, mentor Safety clinic, student

Other _____

Waiver:

Chota Canoe Club activities may involve risk to persons or property. I agree to hold harmless from any liability the Chota Canoe Club, its officers and its members, collectively or as individuals, for any damage or loss of property or any personal injury or death to myself, anyone in my boat, or any member of my family covered by this membership while at any Chota Canoe Club function or on the way to it or from it.

Send to:

Chota Canoe Club
P.O. Box 8270, University Station
Knoxville, TN 37996

Date / Signature(s) / (Parent or Guardian if under 18)

Trip Report

Hance Rapid: Maneuver As Necessary

David Luinstra

October 6, 2003, about 3:30 pm, day 3 of a 5-day sprint to Phantom. We are racing toward a two-person exchange on Day 5 of a 14-day trip. The river is running about 5000 CFS. We are trying to make 80 miles in 4 river days.

The river has been muddy since passing the Paria. As we passed the Little Colorado earlier today, the river became even muddier, though still not approaching the 20% sediment load it carried prior to the Glen Canyon Dam. However, as the water dried it left a silt film on everything. Rocks have been hiding just under water in rapids, often visible only at the last minute.

Tired and hungry we stand above Hance Rapid (the most technical Grand Canyon rapid and it is low water) scouting. The debate team of Grand Canyon Virgins (GCV) is going strong. Finally, each boatman has decided on his preferred route and options should he miss the entry. Tension is high, as we are leaving the scouting eddy, here comes Mike wanting to tie his IK on and ride a raft. Another delay, and my stress factor is moving ever higher. I am ready to run Hance, not wait above the rapid while others dally. Finally we start down river. My 14-foot cataraft, and 4 yellow 18 foot rafts following. I skirted just to the right of the top hole as planned and pulled into the slack water as planned. The slack water killed all my planned momentum to the left, and I was now moving slowly downstream toward the huge wave I had planned to avoid.

Too late now, time for just a couple of good forward strokes on the oars, then I'm smacked by the wave, thin mud spraying high overhead, ("too thick to drink, too thin to plow") the boat almost stalling. From the top of the wave, I can see downstream a hole (BFH) I missed when scouting and now wanted no part of. I was not going to be able to avoid it. Good strokes and line up for the hit.

I never believed a 14' loaded cataraft could boof, but I land *flat* in that hole. Both oars are instantly jerked from my grip, and the boat is doing 360's in the hole as I high side it back and forth, back and forth. The river finally tires of playing with me, and we settle in surfing, at least of foot of the bow tubes stuck into the upstream side of the hole. I grab the left oar with both hands pulling hard, but I can barely move it against the backwash. At least now we are slowly backing out of the hole. I gain control of both oars, settle into the seat, and spin the boat sideways, looking downstream. No #@%\$, there is a flat rock the size of a billiard table with water flowing over it, nothing pushing around it and an *even bigger hole* behind. I try to moving to the right until finally the current catches and boat slides around the rock.

Just below are 3 rocks forming "must make" slalom gates. This is getting tiring. Finally the rapid relents and I backstroke for the river left eddy. I see three yellow rafts in the rapid and wonder how long my adventure was.

The report from the other boaters was "you just disappeared, and we expected to see your head bobbing down river when we finished our runs."

Nolichucky Clean-up

The Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts are hosting the annual Nolichucky River cleanup at The Big Rock Campground Saturday, June 19th. Registration starts at 11:00 in the Gazebo. Sign in and receive trash bags and gloves donated by TVA. We have support from Cherokee Adventures, USA Rafting Co., and Carolina Canoe Club. Participants will be assigned to Clean Teams and provided maps. There are clean-up opportunities for non-boaters as well as individuals with their own boats or rafts. For those who want to cleanup, by 10:00 am to make shuttle arrangements. Collected trash will be deposited at the Chestoa and Big Rock Area, and our friends with the U.S. Forest Service will once again haul it off.

Afterwards, chow down on Texas style, hickory smoked Bar-B-Q and the fixin's. Stay and enjoy music from Stormy Monday. Bring a lawn chair, kick back with a cold one, and know that you did something good for the river. Win prizes from sponsors. Participants get free camping and parking Saturday night at Big Rock Campground and there are non-smoking rooms available for rent in the lodge. Please make reservations if possible. Call (423) 753-6670.

Trip Report

French Broad

Gary Kilpatrick

We started putting on our cold weather paddling clothes. This was not the kind of morning you just strip and change. We were all very careful how much we exposed at a time.

November 30, 2003. This was a great trip with both the Marshal and Newport Gauges at 3500 CFS. The trip consisted of Doug Johnstone (OPEN BOAT), Aaron Hiscock (K-1), and of course, myself (OPEN BOAT).

For sometime Doug and I had been saying that we needed to paddle something if we were going to be members of a Paddling (Canoe) Club. The last river I paddled, in March, was the Nolichucky. Doug had paddled the Hiawasse and Nantahala a few times, so we really hadn't been "real" boaters.

On Saturday, we had just finished the Autumfest 8K, and were feeling pretty good that we were still able to breathe. So on Sunday we decided to paddle the French Broad. Both of us had paddled this river more times than we had fingers and toes. In other words, we had lost count and knew that this one was in the bag. Doug put out one of those "spam" things for anyone interested to meet at Hot Springs at 10:00 a.m. By way of one of my favorite pig paths, I drove over from Kingsport. Good thing I left early, I had forgotten the path and made a few wrong turns. However, I finally made it to Hot Springs with time for a quick breakfast. When Doug and I arrived, Aaron was the only other person for the trip who was waiting at the take out. To be honest, at 33 degrees I'm not sure if I would have been there if I had not already committed. We started putting on our cold weather paddling clothes. This was not the kind of morning you just strip and change.

We were all *very* careful how much we exposed at a time. Finally changed, we loaded the boats and started off for the put in at Walnut. Hoping for warmer weather, we drove slowly and stopped at the Big Laurel gauge, wasting as much time as possible. At the put in, it was "showtime." No time to mess around. Too cold—had to stay moving. Prior to putting on, the last known temperature was 37 degrees with sun. During the trip, the temperature probably got into the low 40's. Between the sun and moving, it turned out to be really good paddling weather, but not such good swimming weather.

Once on the river we moved pretty fast. A lot of the eddies we were familiar with were gone and it was too cold to play anyway. This was the first time in quite a while that we'd been on the river when the small shoals near the beginning were completely covered. We worked our way down the river and finally made it to Stackhouse. The wind was blowing fiercely. We just knew that the Class V Windy Flats was going to kill us. As it turned out, there was no wind and plenty of water. So Windy Flats had no teeth.

When we got to Kayak Ledge, it was time to stretch our legs and see what was there. It was really not bad at all. We had successful runs and proceeded to Frank Bell.

Trying to scout Frank Bell is a waste of time and really no fun unless the temperature is reasonable. We decided to run with me leading, Doug, and then Aaron. I have never run this rapid the same way twice. When you drop over the edge, each time is a new adventure. Today, we had big waves and

wave holes. In addition to this, Frank was huge and the hole on the right was nothing to be taken lightly. In the past, Doug and I had both run this rapid at 7,000 and 13,000 CFS. But today may have been a more difficult level. Both Doug and I had successful runs—not real pretty, but upright. Aaron was just behind Doug and at the bottom he got pushed back into the hole on the right. *Yes, Hiscock got stuck in the hole.* (sorry Aaron, couldn't let it go.)

After several roll attempts and getting his paddle pulled out of his hands, Aaron decided to bail. Not an easy swim. Doug and I collected all of Aaron's toys and everyone got back in their boats and headed to the take out. It was getting colder, so there was no wasting time. At the take out, we put on warm clothes and loaded boats. It was a great trip for "real" boaters and those other "pointy" things.

Remember, OPEN BOAT ... OPEN MIND.

Catch a Wave

Here's an interesting one. Doug got a call from Dollywood, who wants to know if we'd be interested in using their Splash Country "Wave" pool for roll clinics during their off season.

He has negotiated a free trial session with them and would like to hear back from any of you that would be interested in participating, any of you that think you may regularly attend a roll session down there, and how much you think would be a fair price for each session.

Their motivation is mostly to draw interest and exposure through Chota, and they pretty much only want to cover their costs for running the wave machine. Yes, they intend to let us practice rolls and flatwater play moves, with the waves machine running. They can also alter the size of the waves.

Please contact
Doug Klaras:
Footer40mph@msn.com

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"I was very shocked. He was a very close friend of mine, he and his wife and family," Bayless said. "Probably one of the closest relationships one could have with a friend."

He added: "Jim was the catalyst. It (the group) kind of fell apart when he died."

Bayless gave up kayaking about five years ago, although he and his wife traveled to Costa Rica three years ago and rafted some of the same rivers. Many of the DuPont paddlers moved away after the film plant closed in 2002 or curtailed their kayaking to meet the demands of marriage and family.

The name Bayless, however, lives on along the Green River in Henderson

County.

Not long before he died, Sheppard contacted Bob and David Benner, authors of the whitewater paddling guide *Carolina Whitewater*. Sheppard convinced the Benners to name a large drop on the Green in Henderson County after his friend. It's called "Bayless' Boof," after the maneuver to paddle off a drop so that the boat lands flat instead of nose diving.

Today, Bayless' Boof is the first major rapid encountered by boaters running the Upper Green above the Narrows.

"Jim said, why don't you name one of those after a friend of mine. I didn't know it until it was done," Bayless said. "I got a copy of the new book in the

Trip Report

We were swept sideways toward the van-sized boulders where we would certainly hit a boulder and flip. The only choice was to go between the boulders. We were screwed.

Cross Mountain, Utah

David Delagarza

May 2nd at 2700cfs

After running a 4-day Yampa/Green last weekend and Westwater the weekend before everyone wanted to get out and run something big, so we decided on Cross Mountain. We ended up with 5 people for a paddle raft (David C, SJ, Aaron, Eric, and myself) and one kayaker (Newman).

The next day we set up shuttle and launched at about 10. No one on the trip had ever seen Cross Mountain before, so we were taking it cautiously. Within half an hour, we scouting Mammoth Falls (the Osterizer).

This was one of the the worst looking single hole/hydraulics I have ever seen. The whole river—all 2700 cfs—was feeding directly into it. The left side of the hole was the worst. Water entering on the left slammed against a rock face on the left bank forming a deep pocket of crashing water with no visible escape.

The right side looked bad too. Water sped down a steep chute into a large hydraulic. Below the main hole was another ledge hole that must be run right. Above that, a large lateral wave pushes you left. You'd have to sneak behind the lateral wave, punch the hole, and immediately move right to miss the next hole. A small but runnable pourover on far river right above the hole made this line possible.

I hemmed and hawed a good half-hour. This was not a place for a swim. If you were lucky you'd get recirculated a few times. If not you'd come out bleeding, with broken bones, or worse.

After talking to everyone we decided to run it.

Entering the rapid, we moved right to go over the pourover, then aimed straight at the middle Mammoth Falls. We broke through the hole with no problem, then easily made the move river right to miss the next hole. It was almost anti-climatic—a clean 30-second run and we hardly got wet.

After regrouping, we scouted the next rapid. A relatively easy line down the right of the next rapid took us to Snake Pit. This was a big one. In the top middle a huge rock formed a nasty looking vertical pourover. On the left was a tiny chute. The only way through was river right through a wider chute, but the current all went straight into a boulder seive, and to miss that required a strong ferry left (I've heard it called the death ferry) into a large unavoidable hole, then another ferry back to the right to miss an ugly boat-wrapping rock.

We worked our way to the right side and took the right chute. Clearing the rock, we started the left ferry. We never even came close. We were swept sideways toward the van-sized boulders where we would certainly hit a boulder and flip. The only choice was to go between the boulders. We were screwed. I called "RIGHT BACK!!" and the paddlers responded. Instantly we slammed against the left boulder; high-sided off and plunged into the chute.

A few more rock hits and one more highside and we were spat out of the downstream side of the boulder jam. Well, we didn't have to make the second ferry river right—we were there!!

Safety First

Ten Points for Group Paddling

Kirk Eddlemon

1. Learn river communication techniques. Make sure these are always congruent and implemented.

2. Boat with people you trust. Know who should be watching your back and who isn't worthy.

3. Don't get ahead of your group. It's better to spend the night in a gorge than under a rock or tree. Break up large groups to avoid getting bunched up in the eddies.

4. Have clear leadership. Have an official lead and sweep, and consider rotating this position among all the eligible paddlers in the group. Pick out the weaker paddlers and assign more competent partners.

5. Use good "Eddy-qette." Signal entry and exit from eddies. Wait until motioned into the next eddy by the person already there before coming over. Poor communication and eddy etiquette can result in collisions, multiboat pins, running of class 6, social tension and possibly death.

6. Give paddlers room. Yes, downstream always has the right of way, but

give less experienced paddler space and time to get in and out of eddies for serious move.

7. Pass safely. Pass slower groups at a safe spot, not on the bigger rapids. It's just like golf. If you are being passed, grab an eddy and wait for the whole group to pass by before resuming. If groups do get intermingled, grab an eddy.

8. Show the lines. Offer to show others down if they don't know the way. Ask for guidance if you are unsure yourself.

9. Respect the group you are with. Know its limits and skills, and make your decisions based on the success, safety and ultimately the quality of experience, of the group. Remember that paddling is a group sport!

10. Answer to yourself. Don't base your decisions on other people's judgment. Make your own choices.

Kirk's series of top ten safety articles is continuing through July. Be sure to check out "Ten Points on Gear" in the last issue and "Ten Points for Individual Paddling" in the next. —TD

Boat with people you trust. Know who should be watching your back and who isn't worthy.

After Snake Pit, things eased up considerably. We had a good time riding wave trains, plowing through holes, and finding our way through mazes of house-sized boulders. About 30 minutes after leaving Snake Pit we were at the takeout. Cross Mountain is short, but sweet.

It's worth the long drive from well, anywhere. The only casualty of the trip was a digital camera which is now somewhere on the bottom of Mammoth Falls. Speaking of which, if anyone happens to find it, we'd really like the pictures off the memory card. I am sure the camera itself is toast.

Chota Meetings

Chota meets on the second Thursday of each month in locations announced on the website and in Eddy Out. Officers at 6:30, General members at 7:30. Visitors are always welcome.



Chota Canoe Club
P.O. Box 8270 University
Station
Knoxville, TN 37996

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Deadline for July issue is Saturday June 19. Email photos, articles, announcements, and trip reports to Todd Duren: tduren@fieglygraphics.com. Include subject line "Chota Newsletter."