

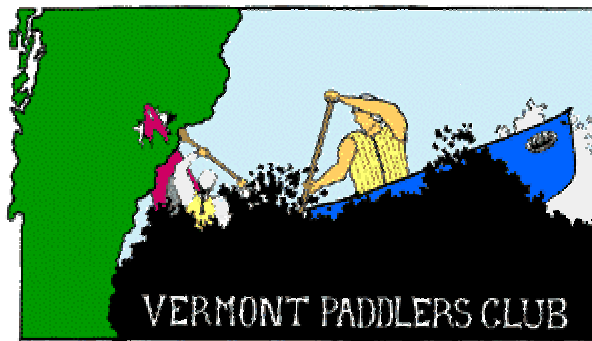
Bow and Stern



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

Volume XXXVII No. 1

March 13, 2011



Go with the flow...

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

Fellow paddlers,

It's been a beautiful winter for outdoor activities. Hopefully everyone has gotten to enjoy what Vermont has to offer. With all the snow that's fallen this winter we should be looking forward to a great spring whitewater season.

There are a lot of things happening in the club. The website has been updated to allow editing of message board postings, significant updates to the Rivers/Lakes Almanac and new communications with Facebook and Twitter. The club continues to work on conservation and access issues with the Green River at the top of the list. Be sure to check out the New Haven Festival April 1-3, including a down river race and film showing at the UVM Davis Center. Read about these things and more inside.

We have another great line up of trips ranging from novice to expert that has just been posted to the website. There are the regular rivers which are a must for every paddling season with a few new opportunities thrown in. Planning is underway for the Novice and Class II Whitewater Clinics, and this year promises to be another great success.

As we head into the paddling season we could all use a reminder to be safe in our paddling. Make sure your equipment is in good shape and that you have all you need. Be sure to scout what you can't see or are unsure of remembering that rapids can change dramatically at different water levels. Use good judgment in your own abilities and help your paddling partners make good choices.

This fall we will be electing new club officers. While we have an active group in the club leadership there is always room for a fresh look. If you are interested in helping please contact me or any of the other VPC Board members.

I look forward to talking and paddling with many of you this year. I hope you all have a safe and active paddling season.

See you on the river,
Paul Carlile

Who's Who in the VPC



Officers:

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

Directors:

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

Appointed/Volunteers:

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

Resources:

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

How Do you Me, Now?

With Facebook and Twitter links atop each page on the VPC website, now it is a cinch to share almost anything you spot there with your FaceBook friends. Our brand new Vermont Paddlers Club Facebook page and Twitter Account will increase our visibility and reach, as we leverage this brave new world of high-tech word-of-mouth affinity, particularly as we expand the content and functionality there. So please do start "Like"ing us. And many thanks to Peg Pelckmann for leading this effort!

Back on the website, the VPC Rivers and Lakes Almanac (<http://vtpaddlers.net/paddle/almanac/>) for 2011 is morphing into the online focal point for lake and river paddlers in VT and nearby areas. When completed, it will integrate formerly isolated content existing on the website – posted by our visitors and members over the years – in "What's Up, Doc?", "Picture This!", "Trips Reports", the "Events Calendar", and "Around VT in 30 Rivers". It will link to American Whitewater's River Pages and USGS Realtime Gauges where available. And, like AW, we will be inviting members to publicly identify with their favorite river and lake reaches – as guardians/stewards/keepers/fans – beckoning others to "come out to play".

A big motivator in this effort to integrate the website around the lakes and rivers we paddle is the state's "existing use" doctrine, which basically says state regulators must take into account how actively/commonly a river or lake is being used for recreational purposes when considering a proposal to alter – did someone say "DAM"? – it. These days, none of our steepest and most navigable rivers and creeks are immune from the dam-building pressures that will surely mount as the closing of Vermont Yankee approaches. So please PLEASE do write trip reports on the VPC website whenever you get out to paddle, and make full use of the other neat/new Almanac features, as they come online.

Tony Shaw - webmaster

Didymo for Idiots – (reprinted from July 2009)

By Ryan McCall

What precautions should everyone take to avoid spreading Didymo?

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

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

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

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

How can I properly disinfect my recreational equipment?

DISINFECTION PROCEDURES – Disinfect prior to moving to another waterbody, watershed, or upstream site

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

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

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

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

- **Hot Water:** Soak items for at least 40 minutes in very hot water kept above 140°F (hotter than most tap water).
- **Dishwashing Detergent and hot water:** ('Green' products are less effective and not recommended for disinfecting): soak for 30 minutes in a hot 5% detergent/water solution kept above 120°F.
- **Saltwater:** Soak for 20 minutes in a 5% saltwater solution (2/3 cup per gallon of water)
- **Quaternary Ammonium:** This can be found in common household cleaners and listed as benzalkonium on the label. It has been found that this is less harsh on neoprene items and doesn't become inert such as bleach solutions. If using this for disinfection follow the instruction on the label, especially if it is in a concentrated form.
- **Hot Water:** soak for at least one minute in very hot water (above 140°F – hotter than most tap water) OR for at least 20 minutes in hot water kept above 120°F (hot tap water, uncomfortable to touch).
- **Drying:** Drying will kill Didymo, but slightly moist environments will support some organisms for months. This approach should only be used for gear that can be left in the sun for extended periods of time (i.e. a canoe that's left in the yard for several days between uses).

West River Status....

With all of the confusion of if there "will or will not" be a scheduled recreational release on the West River due to conflicts with the Atlantic Salmon Smolt migration schedule... the latest development at the Ball Mountain Army Corps of Engineers Dam has trumped both the fish and the boaters. Upon recent inspection of the Dam's foundation it has been detected that there are leaks and they will need to be addressed sooner than later. This predicament requires the pool behind the dam to be kept at a minimum operable level; enough to keep excess sediment from being discharged out of the gates but not nearly enough to provide a recreational release for whitewater. This is a shame because the 2009 September recreational release saw numbers of whitewater participants greater than in years of recent memory. Now to put a twist in the mix - there has been an application submitted for a Hydro-plant to be placed on the dam, the last of the big dams in Vermont that isn't producing electricity. This may or may not be to the benefit of boaters, but if the application is approved the gates that are currently in operation on the dam will need to be modified or replaced to allow for a much more refined release rate...maybe making the ramping rates for the fish and river below more reasonable for everyone. For more information check into the [Ball Mountain ACoE](http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/recreati/bml/bmlrec.htm) website.

Update: There will be no Spring 2011 Release as repairs on the foundation continue.

Link: <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/recreati/bml/bmlrec.htm>

New Public Access to Be Established On the Winooski River in Moretown

The Vermont River Conservancy, a generous landowner and the town of Moretown have combined to provide boaters and anglers with a major new public access on the Winooski River in central Vermont.

When the paddling season rolls around, river users will have a new way to reach the Winooski at an official put-in off Route 2 in Moretown, just across the Middlesex line and downstream of the Route 2 highway bridge, near where the Mad River enters the Winooski.

The 4.25-acre site, which will have ample parking when completed this summer, is a prime spot for use by boaters who want to get onto the river to float downstream toward Waterbury or paddle upstream to the rapid below the Middlesex power dam. The property is also strategically located for whitewater paddlers who put in on the Mad River and descend the rapids to the Winooski. And it is an excellent fishing area.

Landowner Jonathan Larsen offered the property to the Vermont River Conservancy as a public river access. Larsen, who has owned the land and lived near both rivers since the mid-1960s, had seen steep banks on the Mad River eroded as paddlers struggled up and down them with their boats. There is a put-in below the Middlesex power dam, but it is a fairly steep climb.

"The land that I gave is a much better place to put in and take out," Larsen said.

He donated the property to the River Conservancy, which will convey it to the town of Moretown with a conservation easement designed to assure permanent public access to the river.

This spring and summer the Vermont River Conservancy will oversee site improvements designed to improve access via a loop road for cars. There will also be signs and a trail to the river, part of a VRC initiative to build a Winooski River Paddlers' Trail.

"We are indebted to Jonathan Larsen for his gift of a beautiful parcel," said Vermont River Conservancy founder Stephan Syz.

Syz also cited many donations to the VRC that helped pay for the project and he noted the support of Moretown officials and volunteers such as the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, Friends of the Mad River, Friends of the Winooski, Winterset Construction Company of Lyndonville, and the Vermont Paddlers Club.

"We think it's great that we will have that piece of property," said Moretown selectboard chairman John Hoogenboom.

A public hearing on a town permit for the site will be held in March.

The Vermont River Conservancy is a Montpelier-based nonprofit created to help protect and provide public access to waters of Vermont. The VRC is working on paddlers' trails on the Connecticut, Winooski and other rivers. Information is at www.vermontriverconservancy.org or call VRC at 802-229-0820.

Green River Relicensing Update – March 2011

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

This past summer, some of our VPC members hiked the stretch at minimum flow, and were excited to find beautiful scenery and a variety of interesting drops. After that, there was a turbine test during which some VPCers had the opportunity to paddle the river, and their reports (and smiles!) confirmed that it's a real whitewater gem. Access to both the put-in and the take-out is reasonable, but some refinements are in order.

Up until now, there have been no scheduled recreational releases on the Green River, and no readily available information about its flow. Getting involved in the relicensing process is our opportunity to work with the power company to change that.

American Whitewater (AW) was contacted this past summer, and after reviewing the situation with them and obtaining the approval of the VPC board, it was agreed that AW and VPC would work together on this project. At this point, FERC and MWL are planning a flow study, and as a result, we hope to learn a great deal about the operation of the dam and availability of flows. In addition, a Whitewater Feasibility Study has been approved. Details are yet to be determined, but the hope is that this study will be completed sometime during the summer of 2011 (with the help of VPC members). It looks like this will be an exciting year for paddlers who are interested in enjoying yet another wonderful Vermont river. Updates on the process will follow.

-Bill Hildreth



2011 New Haven River Festival

We are very excited to announce that Bliss-Stick US will be the head sponsor of the 2011 New Haven Festival's creek race with the following prize support:

- 1st Place - \$1,000
- 2nd Place - \$500
- 3rd Place - \$250
- top local boater prize*: a whole bunch of really cool other prizes

2011 New Haven River Festival (cont.)

Saturday, April 2nd at 10:00 AM
The New Haven Ledges
Bristol, Vermont

Format: We've settled on head to head as the sole format for this years event - as it is the most level playing field we can create. Locals will be at the same risk of getting bumped off line as those who are travelling from far away. There will be as many heats as necessary to narrow the field down to 3 finalists and the winner of the losers' bracket. Everyone who gets eliminated from their first heat will still have a chance to get back into the Final 4 through the losers' bracket.

Course: Each heat of 4 boaters start behind a line in the pool below Secret Compartment and end with a bump of the finish buoy in the pool below **Toaster**. This race course gives you the best of the ledges with multiple lines through Class IV rapids like the Ledges proper, **By The Way**, **Rooster Tail** and off of **Toaster**.

Boat Length: In an effort to make this race about the paddler, not the boat, we're only allowing conventional whitewater boats 8'6" long or shorter.

Rules: No nastiness! Slashing, elbowing, biting, kicking, etc. will lead to disqualification. All of our safety crew will be on the look out and will DQ any offenders - lets keep it family friendly.

Fees and Logistics: \$25 entry fee which includes the \$5 insurance coverage. We will provide shuttle, and a Safety crew set up at common hazard spots. We hope to have Bristol Bakery back to sell warm yummys on race day.

*** In the event that pros sweep the top 3, we'll be giving out some great gear to the top local boater . . . otherwise they'll just be distributed out to the runners up . . .**

We're going to have dozens of prizes to give out so don't think that only the top 3 win big.

Get excited!

See the event website:

<http://sites.google.com/site/newhavenextremerace2009/>

Treasurer's Report – January 2011

INCOME AND EXPENSES	YEAR 2007	YEAR 2008	YEAR 2009	Year 2010
INITIAL BALANCE	\$2012.38	\$2321.26	\$3037.11	\$2994.50
DUES	\$1009.00	\$1230.00	\$970.00	\$931.00
EVENTS SPONSORSHIP	(\$200.00)	(\$200.00)	(\$250.00)	(\$1150.00)
SCHOLARSHIPS	(\$200.00)	(\$100.00)	\$0.00	\$0.00
WEBSITE	(\$327.95)	(\$360.00)	(\$208.25)	(\$90.00)
INTEREST / BANK FEES	(\$28.95)	(\$35.10)	\$9.50	\$13.28
MEETINGS / MAILINGS	(\$276.63)	(\$99.05)	(\$709.90)	(\$500.22)
ROLLING SESSIONS	\$204.39	\$41.17	(\$112.41)	\$85.00
SAFETY GEAR	(\$142.98)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
RESCUE CLINIC	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
NOVICE CLINIC	\$255.00	\$540.00	\$585.70	\$995.00
CLASS 2 CLINIC	\$17..00	(\$48.17)	\$0.00	\$0.00
T-SHIRTS	\$0.00	(\$220.00)	\$0.00	\$0.00
BANNER	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
NET ACA COST	\$0.00	(\$85.00)	(\$120.25)	(\$205.00)
BROCHURES	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
WHITEWATER FUND (book sale)		\$52.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
REEL PADDLING FILM FEST			(\$207.00)	\$92.37
FINAL BALANCE	\$2321.26	\$3037.11	\$2994.50	\$3165.93

We made a major donation of \$1,000 to Vermont Rivers Conservancy, to help secure a lower Mad River and "Hugo" takeout, on the Winooski in Moretown.

The \$552 previously in 'Special Projects' (Whitewater Fund) was used as a portion of this amount.

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

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

Richard Larsen – January 13, 2011

Creek Boat Safety Kit Recommendations

by [Ryan McCall](#)

A few years ago I saw an article on a blog that described the safety items that were personally carried in a creek-boat. It encouraged me to evaluate what I was toting around in my boat as I was more and more pushing the limits of what I (and the crew I paddle with) were pointing down. Over the last 5 years I have repeatedly gone back to an initial list of safety gear I drafted for what I need in my boat from the basics to "everything but the kitchen sink". It has seen multiple revisions from trial and error and experience. A few high caliber swift water rescue courses and judgment calls on what I am willing to sacrifice for weight and simplicity play in to the contents as well.

Below is a narrative of what I am confident is my best and most effective safety kit I've compiled. I can modify it quickly if necessary (trip pending) and can fit it in all of my boats. Obviously, it isn't the end all to safety equipment lists, but works for me. Take it at face value and maybe as a starting point when you are looking to construct your own kit.

Basic Safety Gear

Pictured:

1. Astral rescue vest 300,
2. NRS rescue knife,
3. Fox-40 whistle,
4. Astral Webtow-tether,
5. Astral throw bag (50'),
6. 6 feet of hose.



For the basics you need a PFD. When you creek you should have a PFD with a rescue belt and ring at the least . A cow tail is nice if you need to tow but even better if you need to perform a rescue or be rescued yourself. I have found that the Astral 300 rescue vest has served me well for a few years, fits me well, holds essentials that I want close at hand, and provides some protection to my ribcage and spine. The tow-tether has it's own pocket so it isn't dangling as a snag hazard and most importantly there is a front pocket to hold an small throw rope. We all know that having a rope on us whenever we are out of the boat is mandatory - how many of us leave it in the boat behind the seat when we are making a quick scout...I know I do if it isn't on me already. The tube in the picture under the throw bag is safety insurance. Most pins where someone is under water are rarely more than inches from the surface. If there was a way to get them air for even an extra minute, you may be able to get them out. This tube, although never used in my bag, may be a bit of saving grace.

Pin and Rescue Kit

Clockwise from left:

1. NRS Rescue Pro (80 ft of spectrum line),
2. 2 locking carabineers: one with two pulleys,
3. one with a figure-8 belay device,
4. 2- 4' dyneema slings,
5. 10 ft of 1" tubular webbing,
6. AW Safety Cards,
7. mesh bag to hold pin kit contents,
8. 3 prussic loops,
9. two smaller 1' slings,
10. 3 non-locking carabineers.



For starters, before you put a pin kit in your safety kit make sure you understand how and where to use one. They are for use in serious rescue scenarios where there may be need for mechanical advantage. This is usually as a last resort but it is good to know you have the tools to perform a pin rescue if needed. In this picture I have the makings of a basic pin kit. Most creeks I paddle are small and a lot of spots you can wade out into to perform a rescue but there is the off chance that a boat is lodged and can be budged, or you need a sling to set an anchor to belay or provide a safety point to rope down into a steep slippery gorge. The 10 feet of 1" tubular webbing can serve as a belay harness among a number of other uses. Pulleys help and put less stress on the rope but aren't essential. The AW safety cards are for quick reference. In all, the kit fits in a mesh bag that lets water drain out and the equipment dry. I like spectrum rope for it's strength, weight and float-ability.

In this picture are a handful of loose items that could come in hand for repair or stabilization of a paddling partner. The SAM splint is self-explanatory, The ratchet strap is universal and I've seen a few of these break on the river, rendering a backband useless. Zip ties fix everything. The light stick has tons of purpose and can work as a beacon or light your way on

Clockwise from left:

1. Sam splint
2. ratchet strap
3. zip ties
4. light stick
5. pact owl
6. Felco folding saw
7. bag to store items.



late hike out. The Pac towel is super absorbent - dries hands when handling electronics, and can be used to absorb blood in a first aid scenario. The most valuable tool in this picture is the Felco folding saw, I have probably used this more than any other item in my safety kit. The obvious trimming out limbs to open up a run is standard, but how about a broken kayak that needs hauled out, a backboard out of a kayak hull, for making a fire to warm your soul or a shelter for someone to injured to haul out.

First Aid Kit

Clockwise from top:

1. first aid bag,
2. emergency bivy,
3. Advil,
4. med tape,
5. absorbent gauze,
6. assorted band aids,
7. large gauze pads and absorbent pads,
8. sterile wipes and sting wipes,
9. tweezers,
10. folding scissors,
11. safety pins,
12. waterproof matches,
13. benadryl,
14. saline tabs,
15. CPR mask.



In this picture is my first aid kit and my emergency bivy-sack. The first aid kit is self explanatory for the most part, but I have a few items in it that a standard kit doesn't. Benadryl for the errant bee nest over the river and having someone on hand that is allergic to bee stings - you just never know. Also there are some saline tabs to rinse out an eye that may have gotten something nasty in it. In addition I carry a film case of advil. From an anti-inflammatory perspective it works for me. Another important item is a CPR shield - "I luv ya man but don't want to swap spit with ya".

Tools

Clockwise from left:

1. Hotties,
2. duck tape,
3. dry box,
4. pencil and waterproof paper,
5. Petzl elite,
6. energy shot in a bottle,
7. Leatherman multi-tool,
8. windmill lighter,
9. wing nut and SS bolt,
10. tube of superglue (missing from picture).



This picture holds other miscellaneous items that come in handy more than not. The dry box, for no other reason than convenience, holds the items in one place and organized. You should always have a pencil and waterproof paper to record notes of an incident. Hot hand packets - we are in New England - 50% of our creek boating is performed when there

is snow on the ground. Duct tape is self explanatory. The Petzl e-lite is a no brainer - it lasts for 10 years and has several modes to signal and light your way. The energy shot in a bottle can make a difference in a bonking team member on the river. The wing nut and SS bolt can fix a broken bulkhead on my boat in minutes. The Windmill waterproof, windproof lighter can make the difference in an overnighter. The Leatherman multi-tool can address most of your knife, plyer, screwdriver and McGuyver needs.

Breakdown Paddle

Last but not least: I always have a breakdown paddle with me in my creek boat. It makes sense when you think about the abuse you put your paddle through on the creeks here in Vermont and the Northeast. A broken paddle could be the end of your day or worse, a long lonely walk out. More common than a broken paddle is a lost paddle in a swim. I have had to pull my break down out of my boat on more than one occasion.

Friends that have borrowed it have always been glad that I have had it with me. Always make sure you have it secured in your boat either in a bag clipped in or bungeed to your pillar in the stern of your boat.



Summary and Conclusion

In summary - you ultimately choose where to paddle and who to paddle with and what safety gear to have in your boat. This may be over kill for some boaters, admittedly most of the crew I boat with think I am nutz, but it is a piece of mind knowing I have it on hand...at least for me. I justify it with the fact that I can fit it all into a 10L drybag behind my seat. Again like I said at the beginning of this article, take this at face value and build your own kit that you are comfortable with but in the sage words from the blog I got this idea from:

We put ourselves at risk every time we put on a creek. The more prepared we are the more we can prevent, treat, and manage properly the accidents that do happen to us on the water. Creek boats are not that large so minimizing what we carry and using everything we can turns a small kit into a very practical kit. From cutting limbs for a splints, using a kayak hull for a backboard, or using a drytop for a sling, there are many ways to improvise to make a bad situation much, much better.

Online, go to: <http://bit.ly/fh8DkU>, or http://vtpaddlers.net/paddle/safety/creek_boat_safety_kit.php and click the smaller image versions to see Ryan's kit pictured in hi-res, full-size, full-color.

Events Calendar – Page 1

ACA	DATE	DAY	PLANNED EVENT	CONTACT	PHONE	EXPECT	COMMENTS
Y	Mar 19th	Sat	<u>UVM Pool Session</u>	<u>Chris Weed</u>	802-264-3141	pool	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
	Mar 25th- Mar 27th	Fri-Sun	Advanced Whitewater Weekend	<u>Ryan McCall</u>	802-223-5986	adv WW	
Y	Mar 26th	Sat	<u>UVM Pool Session</u>	<u>Chris Weed</u>	802-264-3141	pool	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Y	Apr 1st- Apr 3rd	Fri-Sun	<u>NEW HAVEN RIVER FESTIVAL</u>	<u>Ryan McCall</u>	802-223-5986	adv WW	see writeup
	Apr 3rd	Sun	Upper Mad River	<u>Tony Shaw</u>	802-879-1655	nov-int WW	
	Apr 9th	Sat	North Branch Winooski	<u>Ryan McCall</u>	802-223-5986	adv WW	
	Apr 9th	Sat	Huntington R.	<u>Jamie Dolan</u>	802-453-4658	nov-int WW	
	Apr 10th	Sun	New Haven Ledges	<u>Ben Guttridge</u>	914-475-7810	adv WW	
	Apr 13th	Wed	Lower Mad River	<u>Paul Carlile</u>	802-658-6657	int WW	
	Apr 16th	Sat	Lower Lamoille	<u>Rich Larsen</u>	802-878-6828	nov-int WW	
	Apr 17th	Sun	Joe's Brook	<u>Tony Shaw</u>	802-879-1655	adv WW	
	Apr 20th	Wed	Lower New Haven	<u>Jim Poulin</u>	802-355-4591	int-adv WW	
	Apr 23rd	Sat	SWIFTWATER RESCUE CLINIC	<u>Mark Lienau</u>	802-822-5291	int WW	for trip organizers only
	Apr 24th	Sun	Patterson Brook	<u>Ryan McCall</u>	802-223-5986	adv WW	
	Apr 24th	Sun	White River	<u>Rich Larsen</u>	802-878-6828	nov-int WW	
	Apr 27th	Wed	Upper Mad River	<u>John Atherton</u>	802-985-9970	nov-int WW	
	Apr 30th	Sat	Lower Mad River	<u>Dave Hathaway</u>	802-373-3454	int WW	
	May 1st	Sun	Lower Hudson	<u>Rich Larsen</u>	802-878-6828	nov-int WW	
	May 1st	Sun	North Branch Lamoille	<u>Paul Carlile</u>	802-658-6657	adv WW	
	May 4th	Wed	Lewis Creek	<u>John Atherton</u>	802-985-9970	nov-int WW	
	May 7th	Sat	Black River (southern Vermont)	<u>Jim Poulin</u>	802-355-4591	nov-int WW	
	May 8th	Sun	Lower Mad River	<u>Eric Hillmuth</u>	802-872-8611	int WW	
	May 11th	Wed	Lower Mad River	<u>Jim Poulin</u>	802-355-4591	int WW	
	May 14th	Sat	Browns River	<u>John Atherton</u>	802-985-9970	nov-int WW	
	May 14th	Sat	Gihon River	<u>Dave Packie</u>	802-371-9339	adv WW	
	May 15th	Sun	Poultney River	<u>Jamie Dolan</u>	802-453-4658	int-adv WW	
	May 18th	Wed	Lower Lamoille	<u>Chris Weed</u>	802-264-3141	nov-int WW	
	May 21st	Sat	Sterling Brook	<u>Dave Packie</u>	802-371-9339	adv WW	
	May 21st	Sat	Reentry for the Rusty (class II TBD)	<u>Dan Beideck</u>	802-999-1470	nov-int WW	
	May 22nd	Sun	Hudson Gorge	<u>Tony Shaw</u>	802-879-1655	int-adv WW	
	May 25th	Wed	Lower New Haven	<u>John Atherton</u>	802-985-9970	int-adv WW	
	May 28th	Sat	LC: Shelburne Bay to Juniper Island	<u>Dave Hathaway</u>	802-373-3454	flatwater	
	May 29th	Sun	Lower Mad River	<u>Eric Hillmuth</u>	802-872-8611	int WW	
	Jun 4-5	Sat-Sun	NOVICE CLINIC	<u>Mark Lienau</u>	802-822-5291	nov-int WW	see vtpaddlers.net
	Jun 8th	Wed	Lower Lamoille	<u>Chris Weed</u>	802-264-3141	nov-int WW	
	Jun 11th- Jun 12th	Sat-Sun	Maine Weekend: Dead and Kennebec	<u>A. J. Seibel</u> <u>w/ Mark Lienau</u>	802-274-3920 802-822-5291	int-adv WW	

Events Calendar – Page 2

	Jun 11th-Jun 12th	Sat-Sun	White River Weekend	Craig Carline	802-236-7459	nov-int WW	
	Jun 15th	Wed	Lower Mad River	Chris Weed	802-264-3141	int WW	
	Jun 18th-Jun 19th	Sat-Sun	Deerfield Dryway, ZIPLINE Adventure	Tony Shaw	802-879-1655	adv WW	
	Jun 21st-Jun 26th	Tue-Sun	Winooski Sojourn	Friends of the Winooski River	866-683-7197	nov WW	
Y	Jul 9th-Jul 10th	Sat-Sun	VPC Class 2 Clinic	Mark Lienau	802-822-5291	nov-int WW	see vtpaddlers.net
	Jul 17th	Sun	Hudson Gorge	Jim Poulin	802-355-4591	int-adv WW	
	Sep 3rd-Sep 5th	Sat-Mon	Ottawa - Labor Day Weekend	Jim Poulin	802-355-4591	int-adv WW	
	Sep 24th	Sat	West River Dam Release	Tony Shaw	879-1655	int-adv WW	Great Class II reach, too!

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.

- nov = max Class II, int = max Class III, adv = max Class IV, exp = Class IV+
See the International River Rating Scale
- [Winter pool sessions](#) continue until March 26th (space limited, fee charged). Signup online.
- Contact the trip organizer for information about each trip.
- Listed events and trips may be changed or canceled as water, weather, or interest dictates.
- Plans for impromptu trips can be relayed thru the trip organizer or online.
- Please give 1-2 weeks notice for far-flung trips to have a say in pre-planning.
- Car-pooling on long (and short) trips is encouraged!
- The [AROUND VERMONT IN 30 RIVERS](#) promotion is underway!!!

Disclaimer:

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

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

First week of August Floods Tuesday Aug 3, 2010

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: Mother Nature

Participants: (K1): Jason, Chris, AJ, Jamie, Simone, Clay, Scott, Gerard, Marshall, Nick...

Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: 2 ft. (Covered Bridge); USGS Gauge Height: 449.00 ft.; USGS Flow: 4000 cfs; USGS Station: Johnson

Most Summers it happens. The Jet Stream puts us in the slot for everything coming east to train over the Green Mtns for some period of time. Reminiscent of the summer of 2006, multiple smaller systems pushed thru this last week and rail-roaded northern VT's higher terrain. Rain totals from Waterbury North were impressive. 2-3 day totals near 6 inches in spots with widespread areas getting over 2 inches of rain resulted in some huge levels, but the stability of the jet kept things tight and most of Vermont stayed dryish. "Head North!" my labor-stricken comrades mailed...and working outdoors this summer, I was rained out for Tuesday. Jamie's teaching gig lets him out to play on summer days. Tanner is visiting from Utah, getting married next week and has been working on the family farm so his schedule is open as well. AJ is just a slacker and bailed in his life obligations to come boat, and I got to show 3 newbies down the Gihon at the perfect level. When I got out to scout the dam, the bank was only a few inches above the water level. A thick green slab bent over the weir boards, but the hole looked manageable. I slid back in to the tepid water and led the three lemmings over the lip blind, for their first dam run, as is Gihon tradition. One capsized with a quick roll found us all grinning in our respective eddies. We rambled down to the boof above Balls to the wall. A well-lube hummock of rock practically auto-boofed all 4 of us with little effort and much joy. The sound of pancake-flat landing boomed above the din of "Balls" just down stream. Feeling the group would follow me off Niagara at this point, and for the sake of the rhythm of the run, we ran Balls with no scout. AJ showed off his side stoke in the eddy below, and one other checked for trout in the run out but decided to stay with the plan and paddle into the eddy. We ran the next 2 ledges left, avoiding bad wood in the right slot just above the scout for Mustang. The level was really great for this big 5. The first sneak was somewhat fluid, the slide was easy to get to and the hole at the bottom was surging and churning, but pushing thru hard. I decided to give it a

go. Tanner is so solid, I knew he was in and with 2 more for a live bait set up above the crux, I was feeling well prepared for this rapid that I haven't run in a coupla few years. It went without consequence...I don't think Tanner got his head wet. After the flat water I showed everyone the line at Bed Head, which had some punch at this level, unfortunately I showed everyone the wrong line. 2 feet too far right. Squirted right after the first boof, into the corner, off the pillow, out via a quick side-surf in the bottom hole put Tanner and I in the bottom eddy. Jamie was not so lucky. A quick beatdown in the top hole, a timely roll just above the second drop, and another out of the bottom hole found him in the eddy. AJ watched all this and carried right, the more difficult line for sure. There is bad wood in the left side of the next rapid which makes this sequence pretty legit. We ran down the rest of the run to Powerhouse at a great level. At Powerhouse, Jamie decided to see why the runout is called "cheese grater" and demonstrated amazing patience while boating inverted and donated some flesh for his efforts. Great run at what I think is the perfect level. At the takeout, everyone who actually has real jobs showed up and as we left, they made haste towards NBL which was at 2.5. They got poured on during that run and the area got hammered again overnight. Both rivers flooded the next morning, but by the time we got over there at 5, they had dropped to runnable levels. We did a NBL gorge run, scouted the ledges and found them gnarly. Attempting to hook up with Scott who went to Joe's without telling anyone except Gerard left us without shuttle, a theme for VT boaters that night. After hitching the shuttle we got to the lower gihon and it was still on the high side of medium. After the portage of the Bed Head/El Dorado sequence, we ran the rest of the lower in the dark. Even a better level for these rapids than the day before. At the top of the chute for Powerhouse the tongue was black as oil and the pillow popped in the light coming out the covered bridge window. Stellar moment I won't soon forget. Reports from Joe's were a medium level, with wood still in the big slide. Most of the boating up there was done in the dark and the short shuttle back to Green Banks

Hollow was also done on foot....making for a very late night for the local jonesers. Summer boating rules.....Great runs on great rivers at great levels in great temps with great crews...only 1 swim, and light carnage. Until next time.

- Dave Packie

Ottawa River Saturday Sep 4, 2010

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: Jim Poulin

Participants: (K1): PaulC, JohnA, GraysonK, MattS, JimP; (OC1): BrockR

Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: -2.75 ft. (Owl Gauge)

The Bet: Even before we start packing for the weekend the trash talking begins! This comes from a discussion with Brock and Jim on which way is the best route to the river. Jim maintains sucking it up and drive right through Montreal at rush hour. Brock wanted to experiment with the northern New York route slipping by lakes and casinos. Jim and Brock formulate a bet that whichever vehicle arrives last, the loser will fetch beers for the winner for the entire weekend. As it was, Jim and Paul did arrive after Brock and John. But after much arguing, negotiating and a few beers, it was determined that both routes took five and a half hours. Stay tuned for a rematch.

Weather: The weekend was not your usual hot and sunny Ottawa weekends. It was generally cool and rainy. The temps during the day struggled to 60 unless the sun popped out for more than a few minutes (not a common occurrence). Night temperatures were right around 50. The rain came and went all weekend. On a positive note, the weather gods did allow for periods of non-rainy dryness for breakfast, cocktail hour, dinner and evening festivities focusing the rain on sleeping and river time.

Where are my friggin' tent poles: Upon arrival Paul realizes he has a tent. And tent poles. Nice. The only problem they were not a matching set. Not so nice. After some pondering (and another beer or two), the engineering skills of this group came out. Up went the folding canopy (the ones used to protect picnic tables). Then came a whole bunch of rope. The pole-less tent

was hung from the bottom of the canopy and was good to go. The canopy even doubled as a fly! The only thing that could have made this better (or more of a kludge) would have been to use a throw rope. See visual evidence in the Paddle Pix section.



River levels: All three days had the gauge at -2.75. This is a fun level but could have been a bit higher to make Baby Face and Garburator reach their full potential. Otherwise all river features and rapids were full on fun!

Day 1: As a warm up the group ran the Middle channel on our first day. Of course this also includes running (or not) McCoys. To give scale, only in Canada do the rapids have so many named features within the rapid! McCoys rapid contains Phils Hole, Sattlers, Corner Wave, Horseshoe (two of 'em) and of course, Baby Face. Extra points goes to paddlers that manage to hit all of them in a single run! After some time on Baby Face our trusty group headed down the Middle. Successful runs of Iron Ring, S-Turn, Butterfly, a walk around Garvins, Upper No Name, Lower No Name and Black Velvet. (see John, it does have a name!)

Day 1B: Not joining us for the daytime fun, Grayson and Matt roll into town late in the day. A quick set up of camp and they were off to park & play at McCoys/Baby Face. They come back tired, hungry and happy well after dark.

Day 2: Up and at 'em early today! At the put in before 8am (yup, you read that right). We went straight to Baby Face and surfed until we puked

(OK, just shy of that ugly mark). At about 9:30 the rafts and paddlers started showing up in force so we headed back to camp for a nice leisurely brunch! After a good feeding and relaxing session we headed back to the put in for a full run of the Main channel. This run included less time on Baby Face but more on Garburator, Push Button and Brain Douche. We scouted most of the big stuff so that everyone knew what they were getting into. Everybody ran everything with various degrees of success. There were a few swims, but none of consequence and everyone had a grand time.

King of Clubs: This year the second annual battle of the Ontario paddling clubs was happening while we were there. We camped right in the middle of these clubs so had a firsthand view of the goings on. While we missed most of the on river events (McCoy Relay, Cardboard Boat Race, Boater Cross and Tug of War) we had a front row seat for the land events (Boat Toss, Zed Drag and Rope Throw) plus a friendly water balloon war. Of course then it kicked into a campfire party with most of the 125 participants ringing the fire. We met many good Ontario friends. They were strongly encouraging us to field a Vermont team next year (we are considering it). One particularly notable character was our buddy Clive. He had a wonderful weekend. While Clive did not once dip his paddle in the Ottawa whitewater, he did manage to consume a creek boat's volume worth of fine Canadian suds!

Day 3: Split up day. Matt and Grayson decided on a park & play at Pushbutton and heading back early. Brock ran through McCoys and then headed back to his truck to start his journey to Kansas (I did not check MapQuest but I did not realize the fastest way to Kansas from Vermont was through the Ottawa whitewater region). Paul, John and Jim took on another trip down at the Middle channel. Since we were all veterans of this run, there was no scouting, just running. There was one side trip to scramble around the rocks that form Little Trickle. At these levels it is dry but comes into play at higher spring levels.

Ottawa Biathlon: The astute VPC trip report reader will remember that last year's trip included a Triathlon for Brock – Run, Walk & Swim. This year Brock upgraded to a Biathlon – Run and Swim. He did not walk any rapids this year on the Middle or the Main. Way to go Brock!

Best(?) Swim: Ottawa rapids are big and a swim usually ends up in the large flat water pools at the end of the rapid. For Brock's run through McCoys we set up safety mid way. He was pulled in right after a Phil's Hole swim, repackaged in his boat and sent downstream only to get munched by Horseshoe. Two swims in one Ottawa rapid, now that's a feat!

Wildlife Sightings: A Bald Eagle, a few deer and countless fish viewings! And this list does not include the crazy Canadians around the campfire on Sunday night.

Vitamin I: The person who invented Ibuprofen should get a Nobel prize in medicine.

Where's John gonna fit: With Brock off to Kansas it was up to Paul and Jim to find room for John and his gear for the ride back to Vermont. After seriously considering tying John on the roof rack we found ways to stuff as much gear as possible into our boats and make a small bit of room for John in the back of the Magnum. He didn't complain too loudly. (or at least we didn't hear him over the road noise)

%\$#@ Sunday drivers: After three days of paddling the last thing one wants to encounter on the ride home is a 90 minute traffic jam! But so it was from pretty much the time we turned east on 17 until we cleared Arnprior.

Home again: As always these three day weekends go too fast and there are too many memories to put into these few words. Why don't you consider joining us next year? Same time (Labor Day Weekend), same channel (River Run on the Ottawa River). We'll save ya a camping spot...

- Jim Poulin

First Decent - Green River Friday Oct 1, 2010

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: high

Organizer: Christian Woodard

Participants: (K1): see body of report

Taken from a NPMB post

Got to the NBW about 7:30 to find ten cars, fifteen bleary kayakers, and a river that was patently unrunnable. Some folks headed down for ultra high water Mad runs, and the rest of us drove up to the Green River Reservoir, hoping to find the only river in the state that was “low.” With no drainage area and the whole river stopped up by a huge impoundment, the Green River is the perfect option when everything else is out of its banks. It might even still be too low.

We put in just downstream of the culvert, portaging two logjams right out of the gate. Soon, we came to the first drop, which is shaped a bit like the turning boof on the East Branch Pis, but with a far less obvious line. The main flow appears to land on an angled shelf, so the only options are a hard drive left or a turning boof to the right. All of us that ran this drop ran it on the right, off a shallow flake into a shallow pool. Tripp fired it up first with a beautiful line, and we followed with slight variations on a slightly more center route. Alan pitoned really hard off this drop – 15ish feet into three feet of water. Be careful here. There may also be an easier line driving hard left, but you’d have to fight some powerful boils to break back into the main current. The runout of this rapid has a nice boof followed by an undercut chute where you want to stay left.

A few more trees and easy rapids, including a fairly steep river-wide hole. Then a mile-ish of foggy flatwater with turning leaves and heavy rain. A few trees in this section, but it went quickly.

Got out to scout the “teacups” in a large eddy on the right. This is the only drop we didn’t run because of wood. The line is a straightforward boof on the left, followed by a boily runout in a mini-gorge. A few more easy rapids brought us to another of the standout drops of the run. This rapid has an easy class II entry followed by a sloping fan 10-12 feet high. There’s wood in the entrance that forces you right, and there’s a huge pine down in the pool, right where you’d resurface on the boil. I ran a left to right line, boofing into the right eddy above the wood and finishing in a side channel. Tripp, Alan and Mike all attempted the late boof in the center. Mike got violently backendered and swam right into the

strainer, where Tripp executed a characteristically speedy and effective rescue. Downstream, some boat-scout-able water, mixed with larger rapids, including a fun steep sequence curving around two corners. A small ledge with an obvious boof flake, and we were at the logging bridge (which is an easy 15 minute hike out or in). Just downstream of the bridge we carried one river-wide log, then got out to scout an interesting drop jam packed with wood. I ran it down the left (I went under one of the logs, but had to pass my paddle over the top), but when the wood is out, the main line will be down the right.

A nice set with a stronger hole than we’d anticipated at the end, then “piton” drop to finish the river. Stay center on this one – more than half of us got too far right and smacked some rocks right good. One more timber portage, and you’re out to the bridge.

We parked at the electric transfer station, but this required us to walk out boats along the road for a few hundred yards. If there’s a convenient parking lot or pull off on the Lamoille, it might make sense to continue into the main river and paddle down from there. Be sure to look right and see the junkyard fully underwater if you do this.

Based on my previous walk of the river bed, and some photos of the 288 cfs release, I think that we had slightly less than that, maybe closer to 200. Everything was runnable, but everyone on the river agreed that a little more water would smooth the run out. Especially the first drop, which was essentially a speedy seal-launch with a midair 180. It needs some wood to be cut out (which may not be terribly popular with the fishermen who use this river far more than we do), but this has the potential to be a really prime dam release river. Everything is runnable, and the drops have a good bedrock character, though it is potholed under there. The run took us two hours, with eight people and a fair amount of scouting. If you knew this river and the wood were cut out you could route it in a half hour.

- Christian Woodard

Fire'n it up... in the Devil's Washbowl Friday Oct 1, 2010

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: Dave Packie

Participants: (K1): Dave Packie, Russ Kelly, Sean Linsky, Ryan McCall

Let's set the stage here....

We just received 5+ inches of rain in the Winooski River Basin and its tributaries over the last 12 hours. You do one of 3 things - You get to a high point in the landscape, build an Ark or load your creek boat on your vehicle and head to the smallest, steepest runnable stretch of brook you have dreamt of running for the last 2 years.

The latter is exactly what happened. The Devil's Washbowl is a never run ribbon of love that streams down from the Northfield Mountains to converge with Cox Brook along Moretown Gap. It has been getting tweezed for the last couple of years and poked and prodded at various levels but never has it seen a full complete descent until October 1st 2010.

The day started as it usually does when boating is on the agenda...A check of the USGS gauges a drive to Putnamville to see what the NBW is doing and then back to make a few calls starting with Dave. Knowing he was also off of work for the day took the urgency of jumping on it out of the equation. A mellow conversation about possibilities for the day, that he was going to hop in his truck and get a visual...and then I was off the phone and back to breakfast with my kids. About 30 minutes later he called and said everything was huge and it was a Devil's day, get down to Northfield! Scott Gilbert walked away from the NBW and stuff was going off huge. Yup - the online gauges were spiking with no ceiling in sight. I couldn't make it down at the moment though as I was working on my coffee and a bagel sandwich sitting in between a 2 year old and a 4 year old watching Elmo converse with Mr. Noodle...Scott and Dave fired up a partial run at flood stage with out me, walking most of the meat because of the waves and holes.

Once I had my fill of Oscar, Big Bird and the rest of the gang on Sesame, I loaded up my gear and headed down to meet Dave at his house and wait for Russ to get out

of class at Norwich. Noon and the three of us are on point ready to get on the river flows still pumping and rain coming down. We get about 1/2 way there and I look in the back of the truck and there is only one paddle, helmet and PDF for two boaters - back to Dave's house to get the rest of his gear...Nice when you only live 5 minutes from the river. As we are headed back up, Sean calls and says he is on his way over. Yes! a 4 man crew...this is good, as it takes the crazy JuJu that seems to hang over the Dave, Russ and Ryan show (I always get hammered in some hole or rapid when I am with those two). We set shuttle at the take out and head up to the draw where the creek flows, don our gear and hike down into the put in.

Dave wants to make sure Sean can find us so he runs back up and waits as I can feel my stomach flopping and all moisture leaving my mouth as I look at the creek. As I turn to Russ to say I want to see some of this on foot, he grins and says it is all boogie with some horizons. Yea whatever, as I start down the creek knowing I am on a time limit of scouting. We scout down to the confluence with Bean creek (another that is on the shortlist) and get back as Sean is working into his boat at the put in. HERE WE GO!

I am such a pokey bastard and always the last on the water. Probably a bad thing to sweep as I am the weakest paddler in the group, but I do a lot of watching and learning as I see all of them taking their own lines and eddys. About 400 yards into the torrent I am bopping in and out of the action like a dance and really feeling the rhythm. I look up and see Russ and Sean moving out of their boats in an urgent fashion. Dave has pinned in a strainer but is upright and stable. The current is trying to pull him under but quick action and a shallow stream bed allow Russ and Sean to grab Dave and his boat and pull him out of the situation. I had boofed the log and was down stream to pick up any loose pieces. Dave is out safe and already pulling a saw out of his boat to strip the strainer. One less piece of wood to deal with later (Dave and Scott paddled over this at higher flows earlier without knowing - scary). Wood cleaned up we are off on our way to the confluence with Bean Brook

and the first major rapid and gorge on the creek. Russ, Dave and Sean are running things in Blue Angles style and I am again alone but want to see the drop...Dancing around trying to see the line Sean pops from behind a rock and says just stay right and over the pillow. OK and I fire it off and it is as smooth as it gets...down in a sweet little gorge with a limbo log to get under - gotta get that one out some other day.

At this point we are all regrouped and feeling good in our boats. Dave has had two partial runs of this creek at this point and Russ one. They boat it as read and run down to the next side creek on the right...MAKE SURE TO EDDY OUT THERE! OK I can follow directions and besides you guys are going to be there - right. We run what feels like another several hundred yards of some of the most rhythmic boating I have ever done and I see Dave out of his boat standing in the eddy smiling from ear to ear ready to snag my bow as I peel into the eddy. He shoulders his boat immediately as I am getting out. Both Sean and Russ leave their boats. I carry mine up to where Dave has his and then walk down a path to see the rapid. It is a right handed turn into a falls dropping you into a beautiful gorge. The move doesn't look hard but more than I want to bite off. Sean is confident in his line and fires it up, getting sucked down upon landing and almost flipping...He cleans it though and is through grinning. Russ was taking speed shots with his camera the entire time. As Russ and Dave are discussing the possibility of following Sean's line, Russ decides to look at his sequence of pictures...He doesn't like what he sees of Sean's run and bags it. Sean nailed the first D of this drop and named it after his daughter Aspen...great name for the drop!

We get in the river below the drop to join Sean and make our way down though more amazing rapids that are now starting to shape up to be fun little boof ledges. All too quickly the action halts as the crew bangs into an eddy and we all scamper up the bank to look at what is around the bend. The Triple Drop....Wow what a pretty drop. There is much deliberation, scouting and an unintentional ghost probe run by Sean's boat - must have slid back into the river and ran the drop cleanly and upright even boofing the ~10ft falls. I have now gotten my boat down to where I am putting in (not running triple) and have scouted the drops below so I know where and what I am doing going on down river. Russ has me set up to take pictures and I am ready with

a rope. In all reality Dave has been working this run for a couple of years - he gets the first go at this one. He styles the falls and runs a great line on the slide into the pool where I am at. Russ fires it up next and the Sean. Both Dave and Russ carry back up for a second go and make it look easy again.



Now that we are all back in our boats and working the river eddy to eddy you notice that it is definitely steeper than at the beginning and it is mostly 4ft ledges one after another...total boof fest - except for one that has a rooster tail that looks like a rocket launcher. Again Dave and Russ fire it up as I make the easy boof. Looked like a sweet launch (check the pix). We come to the last ledge and all run it cleanly, eddy out and hike back to the car set for shuttle.

Once at the car we find Russ has left his keys up in my truck at the put-in. Sean and I thumb back up and we are quickly back at the take out. With so much water it is tuff to call it a day but Dave and I have to head back. Russ and Sean are off to bomb a quick Stony run only to find it has already flushed out as we suspect Devil's Washbowl has too behind us. At the bottom of Cox Brook Road in Northfield Falls is the Rustic Inn and not ready to totally call it quits and it being a tradition of mine after paddling in the Northfield vicinity, Dave and I belly up for a couple of pints to recap the day's events and toast the rain gods for serving up such beautiful liquid madness before heading back to our respective abodes.

So the long winded version of the Devil's Washbowl first descent...Get when you can!

- Ryan McCall

Upper Browns River - Underhill Friday Oct 1, 2010

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: high

Organizer: Tony Shaw

Participants: (K1): Paul Carlile; (OC1): Tony Shaw

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 3.50 ft.; USGS Flow: 150 cfs; USGS Station: 04290335 ALLEN BROOK AT VT 2A

Mill Brook was too high for open boating (and for most sane kayakers probably too). Everything was that way October 1st, it seems. So Paul and I drove up to Underhill and ran the upper Browns, putting in below the culvert on Stevensville Rd. in Underhill Center and taking out at Mills River Park in Underhill Flats. There was a lot of water, obliterating all of the cobbly islands that characterize the upper Browns, but it was clearly on the way down by ~5pm when we put in.

It has only one constriction 1/2 way down beneath a farm bridge that produced a pretty massive hole/wave, and the rest is a riffing class I-II in medium/high water. But the high water made the upper 1/2 of the run a strong II with just a few of strainers and one ~log jam to keep it interesting. The high water actually made the strainers easier to get around, but a beginner could easily have gotten into trouble here. There are a couple of barbed wire fences to be watching for, too.

It took 1 1/4 hours or less, with things moving along at a good clip when not strategizing how to skirt the log jam. Lots of locals seemed to be impressed by our intrepidity on a day when flash flood warnings were all over the airwaves.

- Tony Shaw

The Upper Moose Saturday Oct 2, 2010

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: AJ Seibel

Participants: (K1): Ryan McCall, Jamie S., Paul Dawson, Doug Piatt, Russ Kelly, AJ Seibel, Paul Carlile, Gerard Ganey; (OC1): Tony Shaw; (C1): Alden Bird

The second full descent of the Upper Moose in Victory, VT.

If most folks had this run in their back yard, they would be stoked every time it came in. But, I'm the only

person whose backyard this run seems to be in, and though I'm stoked to run it whenever I can, it is certainly a haul for anyone who lives near any major population center... Only in VT would Montpelier be considered a major population center, and then only by a country dweller from the NEK. But, I digress...

We had run Joe's Brook the day before at what would later be realized as flood stage. We pulled off at the covered bridge and wanted to come back a day later to catch it at more manageable flows. Well, we arrived the next day to find that the river had in fact not dropped at all! The flashiest run in VT was somehow holding water, and so it was time for plan B. I grabbed a saw and Gerard and the two of us led the pack, speeding, to the NEK. I had scouted for wood but a few days before to find some of the best rapids absolutely choked with wood. Well, to my surprise the upper moose is a self-cleaning river. The huge flows from the previous few days of rain had cleared all of the wood from all but one of the drops. A short wait for the group and we were all at the top, gearing up and putting on at the huge culvert at the junction of Radar Rd. and Radar Rd. (confusing!)

Our huge group peeled off and around the corner to find and smooth the first drop, a beautiful sloping 5 foot plunge into a short pool surrounded by bedrock walls. It was at this moment we began to spread out, making use of the single boat eddies on this smaller than average creek... We continued downstream across some fun quick and steep boulder rapids, and began to wind through ledge rapids, slides and cobbly stuff enjoying every bump. Seriously, the water was low, there was much boat scraping... We shortly arrived at the largest drop on the run, a 7' ledge where all the water funnels to the right, down a slide and off of an auto-boof rock. Russ was the first to descend, making it look easy and fun, which it was. With the group fighting for shore space to scout the rapid, Russ was prompted to name the drop as it was a first D. The mess of boaters and good humor of the group led to the name Fustercluck (move letters as necessary). A fitting name with

our group that day! With the drop behind us and photos taken we were off to explore the rest of the river. We soon arrived at Sideways Waterfall That Lands on Rock and all portaged the drop. At higher water it looks to go off the right, but for now it's a portage with a big tree stuck in the LZ. Some more fun ledges and generally easy class III creeking continued beneath the bridge and around the first of the class II bump-fests. After an old concrete structure appears on the right bank and the river bends 90 degrees to the left, get ready! Once you round the bend you're in the Moose Cooch. This gorged up rapid contains 7 back to back drops, all fun and boat scoutable by our group



this day. The middle drop that plops you in a big pool has changed with the recent rains, now hosting a double drop staircase which was formerly a smooth 6 footer. That last manky boulder field was tight, and had recently been dubbed a name that reflects that. We'll save that for another non-family post! The turnover ledge at the bottom claimed one swim from this guy who used to packraft, I think his name is Magnum, but a quick self rescue brought everything back to safety.

The class II bump fest resumed after this sweet sequence, and we were all able to zone out, enjoying the foliage, remarking at the high water mark and chatting about the day. Larger rocks begin to appear as you come in to Victory proper, soon passing beneath the Victory Rd. bridge and in to the last great sequence. A small gorge rapid shows its face for the grand finale, and Ryan stated that it looks like something out of Quebec, and that hell, we're practically in Canada in the NEK! So, I've decided to call this last drop Quebecois. The entrance features a nice 3 foot ledge followed by a slide on the right wall, leading right in to a cross current that slammed many boats directly in to the gorge wall. Then comes a hundred feet of fun boogie leading to the 4' plunge in to the take-out pool at the end.

Some warm Long Trail IPA's in the back of Alden's van on the way back to the put-in made for a good cap to a fun low-water run in my backyard. Some cold PBR pounders waiting at the put-in surely topped off the day.

This run would be fantastic as an intro to creeking run, and with more water may hold up as a good option for anyone looking for some fun class III-IV creeking.

- AJ Seibel

New Haven and Middlebury Monday Oct 4, 2010

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Alden Bird

Participants: (K1): Ed Clark, Morgan, Christian Woodard; (C1): Alden Bird

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 400 cfs; USGS

Station: New Haven at Brooksville

With almost five inches of rain having fallen late last week, and with the New Haven gauge having soared above 10,000 cfs, today's runs down the New Haven Ledges and the Middlebury Gorge -- both notoriously malleable riverbeds -- were an opportunity both for nostalgia and for exploration. It was my first time back in five years.

The most significant change to the New Haven seemed to be a large, inconvenient rock now balanced on the lip of Secret Compartment, necessitating a precise set of moves: first a worried expression, then a panicked sprint away, followed lastly by an awkward brace or possibly, capsize, finished off with a look of cool indifference at the bottom.

The other significant change to the river was that the infamous Playpen sieve's time has apparently come and gone in the short space of my five years away: the sieve is now much easier to avoid, if not completely defanged.

And so we took one fast, sweet run down the New Haven, and ten minutes later, we were at the bottom.

From there it was off to the Middlebury Gorge, where inside, the gorge was as beautiful as ever. The upper gorge seemed relatively unchanged, but the inner gorge, the Birth Canal, was quite altered from my last run in 2005. And in my opinion -- for the better. The lip of the waterfall, in particular, seemed to afford an easier launch than previous incarnations.

At the end of the run, I relished being able to run the now-clear second-to-last rapid (once the site of a horrible sieve), which I had never before gotten to paddle.

A no-portage descent of the Middlebury! Finally!

(I must admit that I was most happy about this not out of pride, but instead because it means that I no longer have to wake up my feet [which have always fallen asleep by this point in the run] to make the portage -- or to endure the ensuing taunts from kayakers about my choice of craft as I hobble out of my boat on the portage trail.

All in all, a great day of boating!

- Alden Bird

Upper/Lower Mad Saturday Oct 9, 2010

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Peg/John A

Participants: (K1): John Atherton, Rich Reynolds, Tom Moye, Francis McGuire, Peg Pelckmann, Jamie Dolan,

Jamie S

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 3.79 ft.;
USGS Flow: 650 cfs; USGS Station: Moretown, VT

Beautiful weather, great company. John A, Rich, Francis and Peg paddled the Upper Mad. The day started off with a blast when Peg led the gang on a mysterious road trip having driven past Flatbread, (where the heck is she going???). Tom then put his wetsuit on backwards, (quite a fashion statement) and Peg followed suit by putting her dry top on backwards. It didn't finish there, although I thought John would hurt himself the way he was laughing, Tom tried to put his skirt on upside down (he was concerned about his underwear being on correctly, but we really didn't want to find out). This was the beginning. About 3 feet after the put in, Peg tips over in 1.5 feet of water. (darned Shark hit the bottom of my boat). Getting towards Punch Bowl, Peg chickened out and portaged, everyone went thru fine except John, who did a little roll to show off in the pool below (it WAS planned right John). Then onward to Butter Cup (nut)?? John's first attempt was messy ending in an upside down John, boat and swimming paddle. All were quickly brought to shore by the keen throwing ability of Rich, who even roped the paddle. Tom, even in a "real" kayak, did amazingly well coming down, bounced off a few ledges but landed safely and upright. Francis gave the river a piece of his mind and paddled thru like a warrior. John, not to be outdone, re-paddled this feature and nailed it. At the pullout, we quickly changed into something more comfortable, ok, we towel dried ourselves, and met Jamie D and Jamie S and the Lower Mad. Upon the approach to the put in, we scouted the river and Peg quietly asked John if Chris W had been intoxicated when he mentioned that I should paddle the Lower. NOT!!!. Rich, Jamie, Jamie, Tom and Francis all gave the Lower a "what for" and kicked some butt. Naturally Jamie and Jamie had a sleeve full of tricks to show us all, which we quite enjoyed watching as we salivated wanting to be able to do the same. Tom was quite comfortable in his yak, however, we were confused having only seen him being 4 feet

taller in his C-1. He rolled his yak, which left us somewhat dumbfounded, (as we have never seen him roll before) and we were exceptionally proud. John and myself paddled the Winooski, and John taught me a few tricks. To show off, I decided to roll twice for John, and found out that an ice cream headache is not always caused by cold ice cream, cold water has the same affect. Upon meeting at the take out (after John tried to make "goat like" climbing part of the kayaking experience) we met with the rest of the gang. Rumor has it that Rich swam a little but nothing compared to John's marathon swims earlier in the year. Tom got all his gear off successfully, but John had to blow it by trying to pull his skirt over the back of his head with his drytop. Ahh John! But at least he had his keys and no surgery was required on his car, by our very own "car breaking into surgeon", Rich. All in all, a wonderful albeit, chilly day was had by all. I am thinking of starting a collection to buy Jamie S some long pants. (I was freezing looking at him)

- Peg

Hudson River Gorge Sunday Oct 10, 2010

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Jim Poulin

Participants: (K1): RichardA, JohnA, JimP

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 5.00 ft.; USGS

Station: North Creek

A gorgeous fall day on the Hudson.

With only three of us it was a fast job of organizing and we were on the river right at 10am. Well in front of all the rafts and other riff raff. It was still cool when we put on – maybe 50 but the sun was out and warming things up fast. It eventually hit the mid 60s.

Speaking of fast. The Indian. What a hoot. Read and run and as always, and over much too soon. Everyone had a great time on the Indian, especially John as this was his first run down this Adirondack classic.

With the recent rain and the bubble we were running on a 5.0 gauge reading – or about 3,000cfs. A nice level with much more water than the normal summer/fall levels.

Everyone had fun splashing down the warm up rapids and then on to Blue Ledge and The Narrows. Clean runs by all.

We then dropped into One Mile, which saw the first fish counting incident of the day. John got munched by a hole and powered up such a fast roll that he went right

over again. The next attempts were not as successful and we had our first swim of the day. After a few minutes gathering all the pieces parts, we were heading back downstream. The next bit of fun happened at Soup Strainer where Richard had his turn looking at the watery world from within. He was near the bottom anyway so the swim was of little consequence. It was time for lunch and we stopped on the river left shore right after Soup Strainer. Full warm sun and plenty of entertainment – the rafts and other kayakers had finally caught up to us by this time.

We powered down the rest of the river. Even the flat water section went along pretty well with the extra juice in the river today. We were at the take out before 3!

A quick shuttle by John and Richard allowed Jim to catch a few zzzzz's. Then it was pack up and head back to the Green Mountain State all satisfied with another Hudson run.

- JimP

Eeking out the last bit of light....Martin's

Brook, Blue Angels Style Friday Oct 15, 2010

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Ryan

Participants: (K1): Ben G, Danny S, Mike M, Rogan, Russ K, Ryan M

After a hair-raising experience on Hancock (with my hair on fire), our group being dealt two substantial beat-downs and a broken boat, something a smidge mellower was of order. Ben was supposed to meet up with some of his old UVM club-mates at the NBW so he and Russ raced off to check the take out for them. I jetted over to Minister to get a look at the old breached dam drop at the bottom of the run and to meet them over there. No one liked the looks of the drop or the hole at the bottom. It's not very often you see a recirculating hole at the bottom of a horsetail spout waterfall; there was one there though. We all loaded up in the cars and boogied over to Martin's to get in a run before the sun set — the biggest and easiest of the trips to the NBW and definitely the cleanest. After the UVM guys got suited up and were ready to get wet we loaded up and headed up to the put-

in off of Macy's Road. We probably didn't put in until 5:45 and it was more or less dusk making the initial gorge pretty dark. The flow was good but definitely dropping so we were lucky to be catching this run at a medium level. Any lower and Russ would have added more than just the one additional crack to his multi-welded Jefe.

Martin's Brook is a pretty mountain stream that gathers the water from Patterson, Martin's and further down; Herrick streams off of the slopes of White Rocks, Hunger, Putnam and a few others in the Hogback range in Middlesex. We put in on Patterson above where Martin's comes in. There are a handful of mild class 3 rapids above a boulder choked Big Branch-esque rapid that with more flow pushes class 4+. Today it was a 3+ with broach potential. Below this rapid things pick up to the confluence with Martin's Brook. We all found ourselves in line like ducks with either Russ or me in the lead. We bombed down through the continuous class 3 action from the confluence of Martin's and Patterson to Shady Rill and one of the bigger drops on the river that you can catch a decent boof off of — this is where Herrick comes in as well boosting the flow some. Once you cross under Shady Rill Bridge, you enter the ledge drop section straight away. It has holes and ledges to avoid or crash, and plenty of boof moves to make if you choose. At this point the group was loose and paddling cleanly. Danny, Mike, and Rogan were fresh and making crisp moves. Russ, Ben, and myself were enjoying low stress creeking after the freight train ride we had just been on over at Hancock Brook. From the straightaway you run down to a few vertical drops that require some precise maneuvering to run cleanly and a confident line to avoid excessive bracing. The group of 6 ran this section cleanly, Blue Angel style, except for me; I flopped the last rapid and had to throw a HUGE brace on my left side in the landing pool...no harm, no foul though. From there it is a couple of more class 2+ rapids to the take out at the Shady Rill Park. Everyone was happy to be off the river as we were out of daylight! We all had huge smiles and were pleased with the run to wrap up another epic October 2010 Friday.

Fun stuff...

- Ryan

Mach 7 With Your Hair On Fire - Hancock Brook (NBW) Friday Oct 15, 2010

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: high

Organizer: Team effort

Participants: (K1): Dave P, Russ K, Ben G & Ryan M

Ever been shot out of a cannon or at least felt like it? From the moment my bow hit the water to the premature end of the run, I am pretty sure I had a Concorde jet engine attached to the stern of my kayak. That should set the stage for this TR....

It was noon on Friday, almost a mirror of the Friday 2 weeks prior. Stuff took it's time to pop but when it did, everything was too damn big. Believe it or not the NBW was too friggin' big again!!!! Having a good hook on the local beta (living 10 minutes from the NBW and its tribs) I had a couple of options up my sleeve. When Dave rolled in from scouting the upper part of the NBW he said he wasn't comfortable with the level and I definitely wasn't just looking at the **last drop** and knowing what the flow there translated to on the bigger, more convoluted ones upstream. The decision was easy; let's check out a rarely run tributary to the NBW. Fortunately Dave and I had done some woodworking on said drainage at one point with Chris Weed a few years prior and the wood situation was much better than you would expect. Ben and Russ were all for checking out the roadside romp and had heard of the infamous teacup gorge at the bottom.

Off we headed to Hancock Brook.... We parked and scouted the meaty sections with the majority of the vertical drops near the bottom. I knew from first look I was out for any of these. The undercut slide looked like death and the usually calm pool above the teacups had a concave hole in it of about 3 feet and was actually looking more like the inside of a toilet bowl than a pool with a whirlpool forming....forget about it! So we headed upriver to scout along as we went. Above the vertical drops the river looked much more manageable but still balls to the wall! I was really impressed

with how fast the water looked to be moving. Everything looked clean up to what was thought would be a decent put-in except for a small log just downstream. We dislodged it and the current swept it away downstream to who knows where; man that floated away really fast!!! When we got back up to the vehicles we decided to drive up further. The run looked too good not to keep checking up to the last major culvert before it becomes a true mountain brook coming off of Mt. Worcester. Right below this culvert there was a pretty good sized log jam that we all thought putting in below would be the best move. IF we were to run from this spot to just above the waterfall section it would be close to a 2 mile run. Not bad and at the speed the river was moving it may take 30 minutes if all went well.

Speaking for myself, as I was gearing up my stomach was in my throat. Ben, Dave, and Russ were pretty calm compared to how I was feeling. Dave was first in the water and ferried to the other side of the river into one of only about 3 eddies on the entire river that was big enough for 4 boats. Did I mention there were barely any eddies and most were 1 boat in size? Instantly we had to make a decision of which way to go at an island. I led the right side and we all bopped down a-ways to where we knew there was a limbo log and a right hand turn in the river that was the start of the first real rapid. It was a long class 4 and relatively steep with holes and waves all over. The ironic thing is it really wasn't much different than what we had just boated through. Dave led, and Russ followed with Ben and me in sweep. As I rounded the corner and ducked the birch tree I saw Russ stopped river right — stopped in a hole and surfing like mad to get out. Ben eddied out river left and I met Dave below in a slightly larger eddy. As soon as I peeled in I heard Ben's whistle and saw the boat. Russ was out of his boat and it was on its way to us. Dave and I quickly jumped out of our boats and grabbed the Jefe and pulled it ashore. Russ was out of the river and his paddle was pinned on river left. Russ was okay but a bit winded and eyes like saucers. We reacquainted him with his gear and we scouted the next drop that had a decent eddy behind it and then the flush on under Hancock Brook Road.

From this point things eased up a bit and I caught the eddy behind abandoned bridge abutments, where we initially thought we would put in. It was a good place to regroup and get the team on the same page. Just below

here is where we had dislodged the river-wide strainer and let it take off. I knew we had one significant rapid and then a 5 foot high sloping ledge that quite possibly had a retentive hole at the bottom. As Ben and I peeled out and headed downriver Dave and Russ followed. We passed the place where we let the log go and then you could see the horizon line for the rapid. Definitely a class 4/4+ with a center to left move over two distinct drops both forming broken holes. Ben did a good job of navigating them so I followed his line to some success on the first part and basically just throwing two huge back-to-back boof strokes on the second part to bridge the two holes. Little did I know Dave was more or less under my stern on the first drop and was off line to the right in the first part of this rapid. He stopped in the first hole and never made it out of the second hole so he was getting recirculated in the top part of this drop with two substantial holes below him. He came out of his boat to be pulled back into the hole now having an “out of boat experience”....his first ever. I caught an eddy and saw the boat go by me, then the paddle. Russ got the paddle out of the river but the boat was headed to the ledge drop below. Dave was out of the river and safe on shore — road side. I had been sitting in the eddy assessing what was next and if I should chase the boat down. As I peeled out Ben and Russ were screaming that I need to eddy out. Just as I was headed into the eddy where they were Russ pulled out and I missed my move. I was just going to run the drop and deal with it when Ben bellowed that I needed to eddy out above the drop...Not much of an eddy but I jetted my bow up on a shallow bench, launched my paddle on shore and jumped out of my boat about a foot from the lip. At that moment something red caught my eye; Dave's boat was vertically pinned below the drop in the main channel on the exact log that we had dislodged earlier. At this point Dave, Russ, and Ben were on river left and I was on river right — good thing because I could wade the river right channel and get a line on the boat from the island. The boat didn't have any water in it and was light. Stupid me; I got the line on the boat and to the guys on shore. No big deal — I can just lift it up and out. Sure enough the

log cut loose and I almost was caught up in it, the boat, and the rope. It had snagged my leg on its release; I got lucky and the log took off. They reeled Dave's boat in and realized it had split on the stern again. Dave's day was over, leaving him with all of his gear and another weld job. Ben and I decided to pull the plug on the run and I headed downriver to a small bridge to join up with the guys.

We gathered up the vehicles, Dave headed home, and Ben, Russ and I met up with some UVM Kayak Club members to run Martin's. In hindsight we could have paddled downriver a good bit in more or less class III/IV boogie but we had made a decision and called it a day on Hancock with our parts intact in spite of a couple of severe beat-downs on a full-on steep creek. We'll be back for more of what Hancock dishes out!

- Ryan

West Br. Ompompanoosuc Saturday Oct 16, 2010

Character: nov-int WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: Tony Shaw

Participants: (K1): John Atherton; (OC1): Eric Bishop, Tony Shaw

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 1.80 ft.; USGS Flow: 50 cfs; USGS Station: USGS 01139800 EAST ORANGE BRANCH AT EAST ORANGE, VT

This was the closest thing we've had to a day of spring paddling since, well, spring! Snowfall records for Oct. 14th and 15th were smashed atop Mt. Mansfield (17") and cold rain fell almost everywhere else in VT - especially west of the Green Mts (3.5" in my rain gauge in Williston).

I was looking for class II/III water (trying to nurse back to health a shoulder I bruised falling off my bike 10/10/10), as well as something in Orange County (to officially complete my 'Around VT in 30 Rivers' list). We settled on the W. Br. Omp, from South Strafford to where it passes beneath Rt. 132 below Rices Mills - 4.4 miles total. A respectable 2" of rain had fallen there the day before, giving us medium-low conditions (~275 cfs) with the sun peeking out occasionally to fire up the remaining fall foliage.

Peg and Jon showed up on the roadside just in time to watch us scout and run the class III staircase at Rices Mills, where we each took a different line but all

"styled" it. The rest of this run is attractive and ~continuous class II, with lots of rock dodging at lower levels. John seemingly felt obligated to broach his kayak on the one river-wide strainer, where (adding insult to injury) he was rescued by two open boaters!!

The only other VPC/NVCC account I could find of running this stretch was from a 1978 Bow and Stern - several tandem couples. I hope we don't wait another 30+ years to run it again!

The paddling wasn't over when we took off the water at 1:15pm, as Peg and Jon lured us to the upper White for some more fine paddling and a double (OMG it's SO beautiful!!!) rainbow. See Peg's trip report for details.

By Monday morning my lame shoulder was starting to feel better for the first time in a week, so don't let anyone tell you that paddling isn't therapeutic.

- Tony Shaw

Upper White Stockbridge to Gaysville

Saturday Oct 16, 2010

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: Tony Shaw

Participants: (K1): John Atherton, Jon Deerfield, Peg Pelckmann; (OC1): Tony Shaw, Eric Bishop

Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: 9 ft. (Hartford); USGS Gauge Height: 7.90 ft.; USGS Flow: 5650 cfs; USGS Station: Hartford

WOW. What a fun trip. Tony, Eric and John had already paddled the W. Br. Ompompanoosuc River but were up for another trip. Jon D and I traveled well over 3 hours to find some paddlers, and we did. Tony suggested we do the Upper White in Stockbridge to Gaysville. It was a great run. Of course, from where I was sitting (in my boat) the waves were about 10 feet high, but they were not. John A estimates waves of about 4 feet. There were a bunch of curls, drops, holes all kinds of fun stuff. The entire trip was done with huge smiles on all our faces, (no wonder I have more wrinkles today). For once I had NO idea how many fish were in the river.

Jon D graciously took that task in hand. Not only did he check once, but then double checked the fish count a little ways further down. Still not satisfied with the totals, he checked it a third time until he was totally satisfied that, yes there were fish in there. Eric lost his bailer somewhere along the way (silly open canoe). At one point I found myself in the middle of a huge wave, not being able to see anything but water in front of me. Was very cool, cool indeed when the water then soaked me by going right over me as I punched through. Tony and I had a minor fender bender on the river, when I rammed in to the side of him (sorry bout that). Those darned big boats are hard to get around. As always, John A HAD to be off the water at 3:30 to meet his poor, ever forgiving wife (you're a trooper Elv) for dinner. We got off the river at 4:15 and John was on his way by 4:45. Ahhhh John. (But he had his keys this time)

- Peg

New Haven Ledges at a boat breaking low level

Saturday Oct 23, 2010

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Ryan

Participants: (K1): AJ, Russ, Jamie, Jim, Ryan, Ben;
(Raft): Gerard

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 320 cfs; USGS Station:
Brookville VT

Everyone had the bug to get wet...The ledges were at a low boatable level yesterday so why not. Everyone was game so the plan was made. We met over at Rocky Dale 11am - closer to noon actually. The river looked really low but what the heck, would be a good way to see what all the hype was about with the new changes to some of the rapids that took place from the flood high waters of October 1st.

Doing a little roadside scouting as a group and me taking my grand old time up at Eagle Park we finally got on the river as a unit at about 12:45. I threw a couple of quick braces to get wet and loosen up and ended up upside down the last man back and now needing to roll right off the bat in way too shallow water...SHEESH!

Around the bend and into Rick's Phu\$K Up. It actually wasn't nearly as bad as I was expecting at this level. The main flow of water was relatively fluid. We all met

Russ just below this rapid as Russ has about 5 cracks in his boat that have been welded in some form or another, but others just keep on coming. It may be reaching the brittle point now. Off to Road Side Rapid we went with Russ leading the way we all had varying lines of success. It was bumpier than I ever remember but then again, I have never run this river at such a low level.

Next up is Secret Compartment...Definitely has changed with a PIA boulder in the normal line/boof move and what seems like a sure fire piton in the left channel you either had to make a pretty fast move right or eddy out above the drop and then jet across and peel into the drop to smooth it out. Again, I am pretty sure everyone had their own rendition with two capsizes to quick rolls, a backwards go at it, A hip check on the middle rock, and one raft making the left line look way smoother than it was! Nice Gerard!

Now the river opens up a few lines down to the Ledges proper. Fun ELF boating. Everyone was bobbing and weaving through the various slots...some more fluid than others. The river right line at the ledges wasn't an option today with the low flow so you had to run down and get left for the longer slide and then work back right and left again to set up for By The Way. This rapid has changed as well. It is a funky slide into a heaved up ledge on the left and an actual 4 foot vertical drop on the right up against the bank. Very substantial change. We all took the slide on the left and it was relatively violent slam-bam - one party member had a rather substantial piton and gave us all the standard grimace.

Below we boogied on down to Toaster but not before smashing into what used to be a nice pillow on rooster tail transformed in to another piton rock. Remind me not to hit this next time! Toaster time - everyone styled toaster that ran it - including Gerard in his pack-raft...he even banged out a beautiful roll at the bottom.



Off to Playpen...Seemed to be to be much easier than the last couple of years. The sieve in the lead in rapid is now a non issue. The FU rock at the entry to the actually playpen is gone now too leaving a really nice jet of flow up against the river right wall that you can hop on and shoot down on through. Everyone cleaned it nicely.

All American Boof - clean and purrrdy... Same for Mamma Tried and we styled the next few ledges and were out above the bridge.

Two had to hit the road and two had broken their boats....We ended the day with a couple of Genny Cream Ales and got on our way...

Nice to be in the river under blue skies with a great crew of paddlers and friends alike.

- Ryan

Lower Mad Call in Sick run Tuesday Oct 26, 2010

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: Peg

Participants: (K1): Rich R, Jim P, Noah C, Jon D, Peg P

Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: 3.75 ft.

(Moretown); USGS Gauge Height: 3.60 ft.; USGS

Flow: 580 cfs; USGS Station: Moretown

WHAT A RUSH!! Five of us bit the bullet and left work early, to come paddling. It started out with Jim P, Rich R and myself, and then grew with some quick text messages to Noah and Jon. Gathering at the Lower Mad

take out, we spent some time discussing wardrobe. I told the boys they were "jibberjabbering" (a term stolen from Jim F) and we should move on. We put in at bout 4:15 and were off and running. Jim P made sure he had a tight leash on me as we started our run. After some ferrying, eddying and deep breathing, we made it down the first chute into the double drop. A quick scout of the area left me portaging and the boys running the shoot. (I just didn't want to show them up). Under the bridge we went, after a minor 4 kayak pileup. Jim had drawn a clear line for me to follow, which of course I did not. I chose my own eddy approximately 50 feet further down. After an incredible save off my back deck (ok pure luck), we hit the flatwater. (Where was John A when we needed him, the flatwater King). We continued down this way until we reached Horseshoe, where Rich and I were given the very important task of holding rescue ropes (ok we portaged around it but we DID have ropes in our hands). Rich and I walked for what seemed like 5 miles and put in under Washing Machine. After getting back in our boats, Noah and I were in a neck and neck race for this little set of rapids, playing a quick game of chicken. He won and I ended up beached on the wrong side of some rocks. Again, I walked for miles, (well maybe 75 feet) until Jon came to get me (thanks Jon). Back in the water we were, heading for the second bridge, when Jon decided this would be a good time to get a fish count. Well he must have greased his boat prior to put in because that little bugger would not wait for him and took off down the river, with Jim chasing it. A few tries and giggles later, Jon was on his way. After ramming Rich under the bridge we eddied in to look for the ledge. Well, they did...I kept on going and found myself balanced precariously on top of the ledge, with no choice but to go down. After some expletives, the rest of the crew made it down and enjoyed a good chuckle at my white knuckle paddling. In the eddy we discussed the last feature of the Mad before the Winooski. Jim told me what to do and where to go, and he told me to follow him down. Now did I? NO! That rather large rock he told me to go AROUND...well I went right into it. With a loud crack that left my teeth rattling,

we punched through the rest of the holes and high fives were shared all around. AHHH! The sweet taste of victory. Paddling back to the take out, discussions were had all around about this being the last trip of the season.....well.....maybe....ok, the last trip of the day seemed more realistic. Crawling up some goat path, we made it to the cars and headed home full of plans for the next trip down the Mad. Thanks guys, I had such a great time and could not have done it without you!

- Peg

Poultney Saturday Oct 30, 2010

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium high

Organizer: Brock and John A.

Participants: (K1): John A, Jim P, Jamie D; (OC1): Brock R

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 5.40 ft.; USGS Flow: 720 cfs; USGS Station: from AW website

A first run for all but Jamie down the Poultney. Really a great river very enjoyable trip. This river starts with a bang; a ledge drop about 100yds beyond the put in. We scouted river left. Fairly straight forward although two of us still managed a swim.

The next significant drop is a long slide. Jamie ran it while the rest of us watched and walked. It has a tricky entrance and a very long curling wave. Jamie said it was a tricky run.

The last big rapid I think is called Triple Drop. Jamie boat scouted the first drop and eddied out river left while we took out and scouted river right. The river divides below the first drop. A big slide with a nasty curling wave at the entrance and a massive hole in the middle below the last drop is the river left choice. A fairly benign slide with a bit of a tricky entrance is the river right choice.

Jim and John carried the first drop and then put in above the split and ran river right. Jamie ran from an eddie on the opposite shore down the river right chute caroming off the curling wave to miss the big hole by going way left. I elected to run far right. Run away far right might be more accurate as I was far enough right to be out of the water entirely.

Lots of nice class II and III ledge drops with two III + but both are easily walkable. Took us about 3 hours to

run with not much playing and a fair amount of scouting. Big pools to collect yourself if things go bad. This river is fun, runs a lot is 1.5 hours from Burlington and should be on everyone's list of classic Vermont runs.

- Brock Richardson

Lower Paul Stream - Episode III Saturday

Nov 6, 2010

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: AJ Seibel

Participants: (K1): Ryan McCall, Gerard Q Ganey, Jamie Sorojcak(?), AJ Seibel; (Raft): Mark Lieneau, Cynthia

Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: 4 ft. (VT 102 Bridge, # of blocks showing)

So this day was lined up to be eventful before the clock even struck midnight. I got a call from mark telling me that the East Branch of the Nulhegan was ripping. That's all I needed to hear... I quickly got on the horn and rounded up some kayakers to be raft-bait and we all met the next morning at 10am boater time, so 11am for the rest of the world. To our dismay the EB Nully had dropped over 2 feet overnight. We'll keep that in mind in the future, she's a flashy giant. So, the runs are now up for debate: a quickie on the true Nully, or over to Paul Stream. Well, Mark was stuck with a bunch of creek-boaters, and we wanted to get on Paul's at a respectable flow. Mark was down, and off we went.

We were pleased to find the run had about another 8" of water at the takeout than our previous spring descents, and pleasantly surprised to find the flow in the rapids to be sublime. We all walked Seam's Easy, the first drop at the put-in bridge. That Seam didn't seem so easy today... Triple drop, or Puma Pounder, or Mamba Muncher - whichever name it ends up being - housed a large flat recycle on the last drop today, and the photos of Mark's side surf show just how fun it was. There aren't any photos of Jamie's insta-backender and subsequent trashing. I guess Ryan grabbed the rope instead of documenting the carnage. Either way, a quick throw bag got the swimmer out.

The sneak line was in on far river right today and provided a class II-III sneak to the hole.



So, gear in hand we're back on the river. Headed downstream and enjoying the flow, we come to the next drop, which was a large curler/hole. No problem, but those pesky rocks in the outflow provided the second swim of the day - nice form Ryan! Boat rescued, javelined paddle recovered, we're off once again through the mellower section before the river tilts downhill and picks up steam. We all did a quick scout of the first section to check for wood, and didn't find any. So from there we were off - picking through the boulder gardens and numerous micro eddies. Ryan and I led around the corner and waited. And waited. And waited. Ryan was already downstream checking the lines on the meat of the rapid, a little doozy called Log Jam. I headed upstream just in time to see a rope go out and a swimmer come down. Mark had pinned his raft on the shallow rocks and tossed Cynthia overboard to free up some draft. No, just kidding - I don't know how she ended up in the river, but Gerard was the hero with the throw-bag to get her to shore. Mark swam it in with official "VPC Safety Coordinator" style, and got ready to hightail it back to the truck to warm up Cynthia and avoid any complications.

So now we're there - 4 kayaks and an empty raft. What to do with the raft?

- A) Ghost float it and hope it doesn't pin.
- B) Line it and hope we're all still friends at the bottom of the rapid
- C) Leave the damn thing there and get it when the

water drops

D) Hop in and hold on

Well, being the smart kids we are, Jamie and I chose D and hopped in the raft after Gerard and Ryan had some ropes ready to go near some rather large holes. We get in, asking "who wants oars, who wants the paddle?" and "Have you ever been in a raft before?" Well, I grabbed oars, Jamie grabbed the paddle, and neither of us had ever paddled a raft, let alone in a creek. Turns out that beast will go where it wants and keep going. We were completely off line, almost falling out at the top of the rapid, then off line for the second part, hitting the big hole we didn't want to hit (which in hindsight wasn't so bad, the raft slipped right through). And to finish it off we were sort of on-line at the end (see Ryan's Photos) but lost an oar that got sucked right out of the oar-lock. We got the oar back after eddying up a few hundred feet downstream. So much for the first time in a raft!

After that ordeal, Ryan and Gerard decided to take the Class VI sneak line on a 50 degree bank, and Jamie and I, once again being smart, decided to run the rapid rather than carry. It looked fun, and the portage actually looked harder than paddling. Off we went. The entrance was smooth - a sweet boof over a medium sized hole. Then down the slide, missing the big hole halfway down, and around the pillow at the bottom. Eddying up to high fives, huzzahs and general class IV excitement. An excellent rapid, approached in multiple craft, on an excellent creek.

The remainder of the run has one more nice drop, then some mellower action to the take-out, where Mark met us just in time to lug his raft out of the river.

All was well, and this is surely one of my favorite local runs.

For Photo and Video links, see TR online.

- AJ Seibel

Brown Paddle Saturday Nov 13, 2010

Character: nov-int WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: John A

Participants: (K1): John, Chris, Ken, Peg

Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: 2 ft. (Westford);

USGS Gauge Height: 2 ft.; USGS Flow: 1500 cfs;

USGS Station: Westford

What a beautiful day for a paddle. Not a cloud in the sky, warm weather good friends. Too bad the water wasn't quite as warm as I thought it would be. There was one fish counter this trip and it was me. I used the excuse that I was paddling a strange boat (Paul C's Mamba), but that only went so far. The first feature we encounter was the dam. We got out to scout and John took the first run. Straight for the rooster tail, bounce off a rock and into the pool below. Easy right? I put in my boat and planned to follow John's path. NOT! I went too far to the left, got forced right, into a rock and finally ending up upside down. BRRRRR!. Ken was up next with a beautiful execution followed by Chris who nailed it. After waiting for me to empty my boat, we were on our way again. (did I mention how cold the water was?). Paddled through some fun little rapids, even though there were a lot of rocks. (John thought it was fun to BOOF off rocks) Silly John. Got to a little S turn where we were supposed to go Left then Right then Left and into an eddy. (thus avoiding the big rock in the middle) Chris was clean as always, then it was Ken's turn. Left, Right, Left, oops, flip, roll, then eddy. (ice cream type headache). My turn. Left, Right, Right, Right, bounce off the rock I was supposed to avoid, and over the little ledge I went. (I had planned the whole thing) Into an eddy I went, followed by Chris, Ken then John. Off again to paddle some more rocks. After a few bumps and boofs we reached the falls. Out to scout a line. Another plan of Right, Left, Eddy, Left. Or so I thought. I got the Right Left Right down, but then beached on a rock. Watching Chris roll his eyes, I lunged forward into the eddy. PHEW! John came after me and decided to forgo the eddy and head right down the slide on the falls. Ken was on his heels, who picked a much more graceful line than John. Ok, my turn. Heading for the slide...oops, change of plans. Just shy of the slide, I bounced off the rock, spun around and found myself going backwards down the falls. Leave it to me. With one last look at John and Ken, over I go. Guess who gets their stern stuck in the falls. ME! Trying to push off the rock behind the falls, the water

grabs my paddle and I am left on my own. I guess the scene was quite amusing to watch, according to John, as I kept pushing off the rocks with my hands and then going right back where I was. I even tried to dog paddle my boat out, but to no avail. Eventually I went to reach for the rock to push off, only to discover it was not there, and over I went. In what felt like an eternity, but only a few seconds, the water pushed me down under my boat. Finally surfacing, John and Ken brought me to shore, all the while maintaining a straight face. We turn around in time to watch Chris head down. Well in the biggest moment of flattery ever, Chris decides to take the same line I did. Spinning around and about to go over the wrong part, backwards, he paddles like a maniac and gets back into the eddy. (I think he wanted to be cool like me). And down he comes, in the right place, and nails it. While emptying my boat again, I am wondering if blue is the right color for my fingers. I decide it is not. Back in the river we go. Bouncing and boofing off rocks, we head to the beaver dam. Luckily John had his handy dandy saw, and manages to chew through the big log blocking the way. Chris roped it and pulled it free and we were ready to go. John first. Oops, hit that rock, oops, there is another, but he lands gracefully into the pool below. Chris is next, and of course nails the line and drops into the pool, as Ken and I watch. Umm did I mention that I chose to NOT go over this feature, but walked around. Hearing hoots and hollers from the river, I assume that Ken made it down without a hitch. Would have been kinda nice of the boys had told me where to put back in, but instead I walked and walked until I could find a place to drop in. And off we were again. John tells us that there is another feature coming up and before we know it, we are there. (this is where Chris advised me NOT to go right, thanks Chris) Chris, Ken and I are down and go around the corner to see the bottom of where we didn't want to go right. Nice slide, complicated. Chris's words of wisdom to John was "yes but if you end up upside down, it could be messy" Messy Chris? I thought very painful and possible drowning was more likely. Back to the river. (it is only then that John tells us that if we would have encouraged him, he would have

gone right....sure John). Oh wait, I didn't mention that in the beginning of the trip, John told us he had found a new take out, "just a little ways after the bridge". Apparently we need to get John an odometer for his kayak as his "little ways down" turned into almost ending up in the Lamoille. ALL FLAT WATER! Thanks John. When we finally get the the bridge at the take out, there is a small wave train, where John tried to redeem himself stating we would have missed "all this" if we had taken out earlier. (about 3 inches of water for the wave train, how could we have turned that up John). By this time, I am frozen and decide that I am going to take out before the bridge. And through a cow field I go, complete with burdocks, water and poop. The boys play somemore under the bridge, and we meet at John's truck. (thank you John for parking in the swamp) John shows us his new key fob that is attached to his PFD, so we knew we were ok. (guess he learned Rich) The boys took pity on me as I shivered so hard the road shook, put me in the car and loaded my boat for me. :) Back to the put in we go. Wet clothes stripped off, boats loaded, heading for home). So the moral of this story is....the next time John says he is buying.....HE LIES! Thanks for the last paddle of the year for me guys. You are awesome. See you all on the water in the pool.

- Peg P

Wood Removal Saturday Nov 27, 2010

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: John Atherton

Participants: (K1): John A, Jamie D, Peg P

Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: 5 ft. (Lincoln);

USGS Gauge Height: 5 ft.; USGS Flow: 5 cfs; USGS

Station: Lincoln

Ok, so not really a "paddling trip report" but a report, none the less. A cold and frosty day was off to a great start, when I showed up by myself. Oh BTW John, NHL is NOT on route 17. Whatever, we met up at Toaster. Umm AJ...I think I will wait a bit on that one, but thanks. John redeemed himself by bringing me my Latte...YUM! Headed over to the church and scouted the "log jam". By this time, the snow had begun to fall lightly. Met Jamie in the woods, and John and I headed out to get the tools needed to become lumberjacks. Out of John's truck came a chainsaw, a little saw, a smaller saw, some rope, more rope and some gas. Then the fun stuff came out. The WADERS!!! John said that he had never used them before and was not sure if they had

holes in or not. One way to find out, I say, if they fill up with water and you go floating down the river, then we know we have a problem. (yunno me, always have a solution). So there goes John hiking up his pants, and off we go....."ummm hey John?" "Yes Peg?" "Umm John, your pants are falling down." "Yes Peg I was wondering how they were going to stay up." "Umm John, those things hitting you in the knees would be the suspenders." "Oh why yes they are Peg, thanks", as he buttons himself up. We meet Jamie on the path who simply rolls his eyes at yet another moment from the class of 2010 clowns. Off we go again to tackle the trees. John immediately tests his waders and finds no holes. My boots are too short so I stay on dry land, (that's my excuse and I am sticking to it) and Jamie suits up in his dry suit and quite gracefully skitters across the log. The chainsaw fires up and the boys are just a cutting. Now picture this, these logs are about 8-10 feet in the air and OVER the river. Got it? So here goes John with the saw above his head cutting wood, until he can't reach any further. After some managerial discussions, they decide to move to the other side of the river, where I am. Again Jamie shows his cat like grace and swings up over the water onto land. John however, seems to be having trouble. Umm John.....your vest goes on THE OTHER WAY....IT'S UPSIDE DOWN. After Jamie and I dry our tears, John makes it over to the other side. Back to cutting. Now John decides he has to stand on the side of the hill and Jamie (I can hold ya there John) lends a hand. Cut after cut, the tree slowly disappears and the channel is now open again. By this time, the snow has really started to fall and we call it a day. Snip off some more pesky limbs and head back to the vehicles. Then out for a tour of NHL with our nimble guide, Jamie. John, yes pretty nimble, Peg....ya not so much. After a grueling trek up trails for goats, we are able to see some features and pick out our lines. Well for next year anyways. NHL watch out! 2011 here we come.

- Peg