

The Bow and Stern

In partnership with the American Canoe Association

Newsletter of the Vermont Paddlers Club

"Go With the Flow . . ."

September 2012
Volume XXXVIV

Who's Who in the Vermont Paddlers Club

Officers

President:	Ryan McCall	223-5986
Vice President:	A J Seibel	473-0280
Treasurer:	Hugh Pritchard	522-8403
Secretary:	Paul Carlile	658-6657

Directors

Activities:	Chris Weed	264-3141
Communication:	Alden Bird	301-908-1126
Safety:	Mark Lienau	822-5291

Appointed/Volunteers

Paddling School:	Mark Lienau	
Publicity:	Peggy Pelckmann	272-5275
Conservation:	Ryan McCall	
Webmaster:	Tony Shaw	879-1655

Resources

Website:	vtpaddlers.net
National Weather Service:	862-2475

Cover Photos:

Top: Erik Debbink in the Terrill Gorge, Morristown, Vermont (Scott Gilbert)

Left: Dave Packie on the Big Branch, Danby, Vermont (Danny Siger)

Right: Justin Crannell running Milton Falls, Milton, Vermont (Erik Debbink)

Letter From the President

Howdy folks,

It's that time of the year again when we start getting amped up for the fall boating season. If you are anything like me, you've looked at the dust gathering on your gear in the back of the barn or garage or maybe even in your basement. What the heck happened to our usual stormy summers (like the last 4 or so) where you could get in some great boating in a shorty or no shirt at all? Well, this summer had different plans and if you didn't travel you didn't paddle whitewater. In some areas, VT's rivers were all but dried up. None the less, I know I am looking over the dusty gear and seeing what needs repaired, re-outfitted or updated.

However, even without our usual storm cycle that we see in August contributing to my personal lack of boating, the club itself has had a rather prolific summer of boating. Our two clinics, novice in June and level II in July, were highly successful thanks to a good group of students and an even better crew of volunteer members who ran the instruction, planned the logistics and kept the bread and butter of our club a success again this year. We also put on a well attended creek boating clinic in late May that drew in boaters from all over New England. In addition to our clinics, folks were traveling to far flung locales to get their boating in, check our latest trip reports to see the exploits of your fellow members and what they were up to. There are some good ones.

With the changing of seasons we are coming into a "boat load" of recreational releases. For us here in VT we look to the West River release in Jamaica to truly kick off our fall paddling season. The good news is it is scheduled to currently happen (YEA!) and with any luck we may see a couple of releases on the Green River....but those aren't the only rivers releasing in the greater Northeast Region. Check out our web page for a list of scheduled releases that AJ Seibel has compiled for us.

Speaking of releases, without American Whitewater a vast majority of our nation's recreational whitewater releases wouldn't exist.



Ryan McCall running Humble Pie on the Green River, Morrisville, Vermont. (Brian Murphy)

To that end, American Whitewater has been slowly bolstering their staff to deal with stewardship issues. I am sure that most, if not all, of you have heard about the tragic loss that our Vermont boating community suffered on September 19th. Alan Panebaker was the newly appointed Northeast Stewardship Director for American Whitewater. During a morning run with two of his regular boating partners Alan perished while running a rapid on the Upper Pemi. Although I didn't know Alan well as some, I had boated with him a couple of times and was working closely with him in his new tenure to increase boating opportunities through out VT. He was a vibrant young man that was just getting his feet under him in a career which he was so well suited for. The positive impact Alan had on the people around him can't be understated and his absence in the VT boating community and the greater New England paddling scene will be felt.

Paddle Hard,

Ryan McCall
Fellow boater....

In Memory: Alan Panebaker

Our friend and partner in adventure, Alan Panebaker, died on September 19th, 2012 on the upper section of the Pemigewasset River, in Franconia Notch, New Hampshire. Panebaker, 29, was boating with Toby Bucsesu and Adam Herzog when, entering third at the top of the Sentinel Pine Covered Bridge rapid, Panebaker's boat became lodged in a sieve, where he drowned despite his teammates' best efforts.

Panebaker had lived in a variety of places while growing up, including Alaska, the Great Smoky Mountains of western North Carolina, and Steamboat Springs, Colorado, where he graduated from high school in 2001. After graduation, Panebaker earned a degree from the University of Montana, before attending Vermont Law School and passing the Vermont bar in 2011. After law school, Panebaker worked as a reporter for VTDigger.com before taking a job as the first Northeast Stewardship Director for American Whitewater, a national river advocacy organization. In this capacity, Panebaker was working to facilitate whitewater releases, river restoration, and river access efforts across the region.

Alan leaves behind his girlfriend, Vermont Paddlers Club member Magdalena Dale of Montpelier, and a significant number of friends – boaters and non-boaters alike – across the United States. Few who met Alan can forget his smile and his warm, friendly nature. Just as hard to forget were his keen intellect, his deep-rooted passion for the outdoors, his wonderful sense of

humor, and his effortless grace on challenging whitewater.

I first met Alan in 2010 when I had just moved back to Vermont. I was living in South Royalton. Alan was in his final year of law school in the same town, and we shared adventures, on water and on snow, over the next two years. I would like to go on record as saying that in addition to being one of the best paddlers and skiers I knew, Alan might also have been the funniest person I knew. I often reflected that should his career efforts in the fields of law, journalism, or river advocacy fail him, he should at least have stand-up comedy on which to fall back.

One night last year Alan and I were having beers in Montpelier. Even as Alan joked in his self-deprecating way about not knowing anybody in town, it seemed that everyone who walked into the bar, everyone in Montpelier, knew Alan Panebaker. So I was sort of surprised to read Governor Shumlin's comment on Alan's passing, but not too surprised, really.

Alan Panebaker leaves behind a legacy of service to the whitewater community, a spirit of friendship, and an affinity for shared adventures in wild places.

He was a wonderful friend, and I will miss him. So will many of us.

- Alden



Alan Panebaker (Ryan Mooney)

TREASURER'S REPORT – Part-Year 2012

INCOME AND EXPENSES	YEAR 2008	YEAR 2009	YEAR 2010	YEAR 2011	To 9/8/2012
Initial Balance	\$2,321.26	\$3,037.11	\$2,994.50	\$3,163.93	\$2,652.44
Dues	\$1,230.00	\$970.00	\$931.00	\$818.00	\$644.00
Events Sponsorship	-\$200.00	-\$250.00	-\$1,150.00	-\$650.00	-\$100.00
Scholarships	-\$100.00				
Website	-\$360.00	-\$208.25	-\$90.00	-\$41.94	-\$60.69
Interest & Bank Fees	-\$35.10	\$9.50	\$13.28	\$4.72	-\$12.67
Meetings & Mailings	-\$99.05	-\$709.90	-\$500.22	-\$771.00	-\$292.51
Rolling Sessions	\$41.17	-\$112.41	\$85.00	-\$126.00	-\$317.00
Novice Clinic	\$540.00	\$585.70	\$995.00	\$679.72	\$425.84
Class 2 Clinic	-\$48.17			\$5.00	-\$16.64
Creeking Clinic					\$34.50
T-Shirts	-\$220.00				
Banner/Canopy				-\$106.99	
Net ACA Cost	-\$85.00	-\$120.25	-\$205.00	-\$325.00	-\$242.50
Whitewater Fund	\$52.00				
Reel Paddling Filmfest		-\$207.00	\$92.37		
Net Income/Expenditure	\$715.85	-\$42.61	\$171.43	-\$513.49	\$62.33
Final Balance	\$3,037.11	\$2,994.50	\$3,165.93	\$2,652.44	\$2,714.77

Our finances remain solid. To maintain our ability to operate we should keep a minimum cash balance of about \$1,500, and we are well over that.

Membership dues continue to decline.

The creeking clinic was a new activity for 2012.

Hugh Pritchard
Treasurer
September 8, 2012



Hugh Pritchard on his way to winning the New Haven Ledges Race, 2011. (Patrick Rogers)

Whitewater Releases and Festivals, Fall 2012

Please double check all release levels, times and river ratings before attempting any of these rivers to be sure they are within your ability level, and if they're actually happening. If you'd like to lead a trip for one of the releases mentioned below, please get in touch with Chris Weed to set up a trip date.

River	Class	Length	Flow	Town	State	Date of release
Deerfield (Fife Brook)	II-III	4.8	at least 700cfs	Charlemont	MA	August: 22-26, 30-31
Deerfield (Fife Brook)			at least 700cfs		MA	September: 1-3, 5-9, 12-16, 19-22
Deerfield (Fife Brook)			at least 700cfs		MA	October: 3-8, 10-14
Deerfield (Dryway)	III-IV	2.65	900-1100 cfs	Monroe Bridge	MA	August: 24, 25, 26, 31
Deerfield (Dryway)					MA	September: 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 15, 16
Farmington @ New Boston	II	2.25	~200 cfs	Otis	MA	October: 13, 14, 20, 21
Fall Creek	V	.9 mi.	150 cfs	Otis	MA	October 13, 14, 20, 21
Upper Yough	IV-V	9.9 mi.	750 cfs	Friendsville	MD	Sept. 1, 3, 7, 8, 10-13, 14, 17, 21, 24, 28; Oct. 1, 5, 6, 8, 12, 15
Magalloway	III (V)	2 mi.	1200cfs	Wilsons Mills	ME	August: 25, 26
Magalloway	III (V)	2 mi.	900 cfs	Wilsons Mills	ME	September: 1, 2
Penobscot, SB (Canada Falls)	III-IV+	3.5 mi.	750cfs	Pittston Farm	ME	September: 1, 2
Penobscot, SB (Canada Falls)			600cfs		ME	September: 8, 9
Penobscot, SB (Canada Falls)			550cfs		ME	September: 15, 16
Penobscot, WB (Seboomook)	III	2.5 mi.	1500cfs	Pittston Farm	ME	September 1
Dead	III-IV	16 mi	3500 cfs	The Forks	ME	September 15
Dead	III-IV	16 mi	6000 cfs	The Forks	ME	October 6
Kennebec	III+	12 mi	8000 cfs	The Forks	ME	September 22
Connecticut	III-IV (V)	1 mi	500-1500cfs	Pittsburg	NH	TBD
Suncook (upper)	II	2.3 mi		Center Barnstead	NH	TBD
Suncook	I-II+	6 mi		Pittsfield	NH	TBD
Piscataquag	I-II	5 mi		New Boston	NH	TBD
NB Piscataquag	II-IV	7.2 mi	250cfs	Weare	NH	TBD
Little Suncook	IV	3.1 mi		Northwood	NH	TBD
Sprite Creek	III-IV (V)	4.55 mi		Stewarts Lndg	NY	Oct. 15-21
Raquette	IV-V	3 mi	720-900cfs	Colton	NY	September 1, 3
Hudson River	III-IV	14 mi		Indian Lake	NY	Sept-Oct 3rd weekends
Mongaup	II+			Port Jervis	NY	September 2, 15, 30
Mongaup				Port Jervis	NY	October 14, 27
Lehigh	II-III	9 miles		White Haven	PA	Aug 25, 26 and Sept 1
West River	III	2.8 mi	1500cfs	Jamaica	VT	September 29
Festivals						
Moose River (MooseFest)	II-V			Old Forge	NY	October 19, 20, 21
Moose (Bottom)	V			Lyons Falls	NY	October 7, 12-14, 20, 21, 28, 29
Beaver (Eagle)	V	1 mi	200 cfs	Lowville	NY	September 2, 3, 8, 22, 23
Beaver (Moshier)	IV-V	3 mi	400 cfs	Lowville	NY	September 2
Beaver (Taylorville)	IV-V	.8 mi	400 cfs	Lowville	NY	September 1, 3, 8, 22, 23

Trip Reports:

Lower Mad

Early spring run Sunday Mar 11, 2012

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Jamie Dolan

Participants: (K1): Jamie Dolan, Chris Weed

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 3.54 ft.; USGS

Flow: 423 cfs; USGS Station: Moretown, VT

The weekend was looking pleasant, albeit with slightly subfreezing temperatures on Saturday, but a high above 50 possible on Sunday (at least in Burlington). An exchange started on the message board, and a plan for a 1:30 pm Sunday meeting at the VRC takeout was settled on.

As it turned out, only Jamie and Chris showed up. (John Atherton had hoped to participate, but Sunday was a no-go for him.)

It was a nice medium flow, and the river was completely free of ice, with just a few slabs perched high on ledge outcroppings near the final drop (from last week's spike over 1,000 cfs). The snow on the banks is patchy at this point, even in the shade—indicative of the lack of snow this winter. We ran the left side of Horseshoe without a scout. All drops are free of wood.

The climb up the bank at the new VRC takeout is mostly free of ice, except for a patch located at a bad spot where the trail steepens just before it attains level ground. Chris spent at least a minute traversing this treacherous little stretch in order to prevent a fall. A bit of work with a small sledgehammer or a garden spade could remove this hazard (hint, hint).

With highs in Burlington pushing 60 for the entire upcoming week, and rain in the forecast, one can say that the paddling season is officially underway in northern Vermont!

- Chris Weed

NBW Season Opener - SOLO

Saturday Mar 17, 2012

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: Ryan

Participants: (K1): Ryan M

Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: 3.75 ft. (Putnamville Bridge)

The NBW is open for business. In the 10 or so years I have been poking around the North Branch Winooski, I have never seen it clear of ice before April 1st. This year I bagged my opening run on it on St. Patty's day. It has been one WEIRD winter with the warm temps and lack of snow. Sort of sucked for skiing, but is serving up a nice early Kayak season....I digress

So being early in the boating season, a trip down the NBW is nerve racking enough, now do it solo in an Eskimo TOPOLINO and you can barely get your skirt on at the put in from the nerves. That damn boat paddles as good backwards as it does forwards as it does sideways. I think a good translation from the german name of Topolino is "Safety Potato" Actually Topolino I think is a translation for Micky Mouse in Italian, but again I am digressing.

So sitting at the put in on my tailgate soaking in the solace, sunshine and just getting my berings straight for the season, I catch a really pungent smell. I look over the snow plow piles and on the other side is a heap of no fewer than 8 dead coyotes. YUCK! And now it is time to put on my gear and get moving down stream. The Topo paddles as it always does - unstable and corky. It doesn't track for squat and takes me a little while to settle in. Good think the NBW starts off rather mellow and then builds in amplitude.

The first few drops I plug and come up laughing like a little kid. I can tell it is early in the season - my lines are very wide and variable with no precision what so ever. I am going to blame it on the boat. Anyways - I bobble on down the river toward the broken drop. I know the move and where to locate myself at the lip and how to crank a big righthand boof to keep the nose up. Yea - I was in the right

spot (sort of) but missed my boof again!!!! Didn't matter that Topo smoothed it all out. It did the same thing on the next three drops.....Almost to say "boofing is overrated anyways"

I finally get to the first of the larger drops and again know the line and what to do. I hit my line and fired on down the white ramp launching into the river right wall....."WHAT THE....." That was a first! Crazy how I just jetted into air and slammed into the wall with the nose of the Topo. Meh, didn't seem any worse for the wear. The basketball sized nose on this thing is built like a battering ram!

Next up is Manky-mank. I bounce and grind down it not needing a single brace. This boat eats this stuff up. Next is the lead in to the Big Bouncy... same thing - stay centered and the boat does the rest. It eats up rock slides (the way left line at big bouncy) and seems to shrug off impact.

Flat falls seems to always give me trouble with my boof so I set up carefully and grabbed the lip and pulled a huge boof (the TOPO sounds really weird when you land a solid boof).

Double Drop, Cave Falls Drop and the Last drop (Three of the big four) went without issue....

I'd like to say I had a successful two laps today because I am an off the couch class IV/V boater, but I know better. The Topo took good care of me this afternoon. Nothing like a 19 year old boat that knows the ropes to keep you laughing.....

The NBW - go get some when it's in!

- Ryan

NBW and Lower Hancock

Monday Mar 19, 2012

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Dave Packie

Participants: (K1): Dave Packie, Mike Mainer, Ben Schott; Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: 3 ft. (Putnamville); USGS Gauge Height: 800 ft.; USGS Flow: 800 cfs; USGS Station: winooski

Record high temps the last couple days finally got a respectable snow melt for us on Sunday. With reports the North Branch Winooski had been up the afternoon prior, I exploited my social media contacts and Ben and Mike were on board for an afternoon in the north Worcester mtns. As I passed the bridge in Putnamville, I pulled in for a look. 3 feet. Low. As I rolled along Rt. 12 on this incredible early spring afternoon my spirits were lifted when the tributaries coming in to the NBW were, in fact, juiced. NBW is notoriously flashy, so I knew she was quickly rising.

"How's it look?" said Ben as he pulled up.

"Low, but I think we're in." I told him.

Shuttle set for 2 laps, we all chose our own Seal Slide from the snowbank. As we passed the rivulet at the old put in I was stoked to see it really flowing. Level was good. Several great boofs later, I portaged Big Bouncy and watched to boys come on through. Big and bouncy, and upright. At this point I noticed that the water was up significantly. Everything else was nice and fluid, we all ran the slide at the Cave and I finally liked the looks of the middle line on the last waterfall, a PFD for me.

The second lap was an even better level. All the ledges were soft. Mike and Ben ran center on the first big one getting huge boofs off the knuckle. The right side boof off the next ledge at this level was particularly stellar as well. Down to Big Bouncy and Mike took the high line with me. We watched as Ben Bounced, then headed off. By the time we got to Double Drop the river was again noticeably higher. The recirculating eddy on the wall ride style rapid gets real bad at higher flows, but the sneak was not quite in yet. We all rode the wall and congregated in the eddy above Double Drop. I always get amped floating there. One of my favorite places for sure. So soft — an 8 foot vertical boof onto a giant upwelling, then a couple pillows to the face before you melt down into an areated pool. The total drop is probably 20 feet. I got flipped at the bottom on this lap and managed not to think about the hemlock sweeper waiting some feet away on the right. Rolled up quick to watch the boys come down through. All smiles at the bottom, we booked it out at an optimal level on

a sweet creek, in the sun and near 80 degree air temps. The slide on the last waterfall was fast and fluid. Really had a good line, but did notice it's a hard landing. Not much aeration where you land, and not so deep you could risk a softer angle. After struggling through the worst take out ever (until we run Flint Brook), we had daylight to burn. Last year I got destroyed up on a NBW tributary and I wanted to finish that run off. We hadn't even gotten to the good stuff before we were scared off by some swims and high water.

We found Hancock to be just on the good side of low, and I was surprised at how much the Teacups clean up with water but there's deadly wood in there for now so we didn't contemplate for too long. The steep lower section of this run looked really nice. We put on at the old bridge abutments and ran down low angle boulder garden that was a bit boney. The few bigger ledges through here could have used more water for sure, but once we got down to the last 5 runnable drops, things channelized and felt more padded. Also worth noting, the Heinous Under is very runnable, and a great rapid. The Split Ledge above it was a spectacular boof in the left channel. One of the best days I can remember spending in my kayak. Looking forward to more.

- Dave Packie

Lower Mad

Saturday Mar 24, 2012

Character: nov-int WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: John Atherton

Participants: (K1): Jamie Dolan, Chris Weed, Ken Emery, John Atherton

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 275 cfs; USGS Station: Moretown

This was planned as a Upper Mad paddle but low water conditions caused us to change and paddle the Lower section below the Moretown Dam. At double drop or S turn rapid John decided to try and side surf the first drop. Getting out of that drop was easier than getting in but a little change

in edge solved the problem and a quick roll was needed.

We spent a fair amount of time trying to catch every eddie and every wave possible as we headed for Horseshoe. Jamie first no problem, John decided to get hung up on a small rock at the edge of the drop proceeded to try and paddle up into the eddie with out success and then decided to run the drop stern first(I have to make this interesting for my fellow paddlers or it would not be as much fun). Another quick roll all was well. Both Chris and Ken made it look easy. John had to run it again to show everyone that bow first is the preferred way. Jamie decided to give the right side a go. His approach was off a little and the not so forgiving flow decided to flip him and try to hold him down. Jamie was successful getting upright even though the pushy water and ledge tried to keep him down.

Ken Emery running Horseshoe Falls, lower Mad River.



The rest of the way was more surfing and catching eddies. Ken was happy that he ran a clean run, Chris was happy that his elbow was not causing him problems, John was happy not to have any more unintentional rolls and Jamie is just happy to be out playing. Thanks for the fun trip and I know we will be back on the Mad many more times this season. John

- John Atherton

Doing Time on the Jail Branch

Saturday Mar 24, 2012

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Our low water spring

Participants: (K1): Ryan McCall, Tripp Burwell, Daphnee Tuzlak, Aliye Tuzlak, Nick Gottlieb, Ben Schott; (C1): Alden Bird

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 1132.50 ft.;
USGS Station: East Barre Detention Reservoir

With late March's 80 degree temperatures already having melted 2012's historically low snowpack, and with our favorite Vermont and New Hampshire creeks having run off during a depressingly short period, on March 24th seven of us put on the Jail Branch in Barre, Vermont, with just enough water – just enough – for an adventure.

The “Jail” Branch? Flowing from the East Barre “Detention” Reservoir? It didn't sound auspicious.

Nor did our pre-paddling scout, which revealed we'd been sentenced to low water. That none of us had run an oft-navigable, roadside creek in one of Vermont's largest towns tells one that we'd done our best to stay out of trouble and avoid the Jail Branch. Having done hard time myself, bank scouting down loose shale along Route 302 – I knew what life was going to be like on the inside: blasted rock, fallen trees, all manner of junk car parts.

But just a half-mile into our incarceration, we found the Jail Branch to be less of a corrective measure than we thought. Our scout had not convinced us that the ten-foot breached dam below the Route 110 bridge did not land on a piton rock. Fortunately we had not yet become hardened inmates, and found ourselves still considering. Then Nick – the only free-boat-receiving paddler in our group (and proof that even Ivy League graduates end up in the Jail

Branch sometimes), paddled off the edge. He barely hit, and as subsequent runs confirmed the bad-looking dam little more than a fun waterslide, barely a boof required.

It was then that we entered the most violent period of our sentencing. With reasonable water, below the dam would have been pushy; at our flow, it was jarring. After the Route 302 bridge we portaged around a long rapid fipped with trees fallen from the spectacularly eroding bank. It was here that I boofed the rusted remains of a whole car's front end, then stepped on a discarded granite tombstone while scouting. I did not doubt that I would emerge from the Jail Branch a changed man.

A mile-long shallows brought us to the edge -- of great cursing, and to Spaulding Falls. We found ourselves imprisoned in a walled gorge through which the creek dropped steeply ahead over an impressive cascade. None in our party had heard anything of such a large, marginally runnable cascade before, except the all-knowing Ryan. Ben ran the cascade not once, but twice, hiking back after an unsatisfactory run for a second.

Having been deemed fit to return to society,

Ben Schott running Spaulding Falls, Jail Branch of the Winooski River. (Alden Bird)



Ryan and I lowered our boats to the base of the falls and finished the remaining half-mile with Ben over wide ledges to Spaulding High School. The others, hiking down the road in brightly colored drysuits, looked like the Jail Branch's own prison work crew.

Now that I'm out, I'm trying to hold myself on the straight and narrow to avoid a return to the Jail Branch. That said, temptations abound, and I'm not naïve enough to doubt that with the combination of more water, fewer trees, and the wrong crowd, I might not just find myself back in the Jail Branch.

- Alden Bird

Lower Lamoille

Sunday Apr 1, 2012

Character: novice WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Jamie Dolan

Participants: (K1): Christopher Weed, Mr. John Atherton, Jim Delp, Rod MacIver, Jamie Dolan; (OC1): Alan Coulter

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 1050 cfs; USGS Station: E Georgia

Is this an April Fools joke? Golly Gee, Where's the water? Not in the Huntington and not in the Lamoille (so much). Yes, some plastic was left behind, but still a great first run of the season for half of the group. I think over half of us had rescue life vests but they were not called into service. No swims, no rolls (other than practice), though Rod felt it was necessary to check the water temperature at the end.. It was low water at about 1050 with scrapping and rock bracing. Smiley disappeared, however there were still a few places that you could stick a nose into and have more than a little fun. Especially river left at five chutes. The pickings were slim. But it did not rain, the company was fabulous, and hey, we were on the water.

- Jamie Dolan

A Mad Flotilla...

Tuesday Apr 10, 2012

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Ryan

Participants: (K1): Ryan M, John A, Hugh P, AJ S, Danny S, Dave P, Damon B, Davis, John, Rogan, Alden B, Ken E, Jordan, More...; (OC1): Tony Shaw and another...; (Inflatable): Dan S

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 625 cfs; USGS Station: Moretown

Finally we have some flow and it seems to be all in only one river....The Mad! What started out as a pre-meeting group, grew to 18 deep. Yes you read that correctly - we had 18 boaters on the river. I was late to arrive so walking down the put in path it was absolutely amazing seeing all of the boaters popping in and out of the eddies above Elevator Shaft (the first rapid of the Lower Mad).

It was a really fun night because all boaters were solid and everyone was pretty loose (even the swimmers were having fun). Every eddy was worked by our resident slalom expert Hugh Pritchard, Other studs were playing features up like they hadn't been on water in years and my not be again. I think everyone got two rides on the wave below 100b!

On to Horseshoe Falls....Most everyone ran the right side, some multiple times. There was lots of the eddy game on the lower rapid tons of play inbetween.

The Mad is a really good option when nothing else is running - I think all of us that are local and paddle it regularly take it for granted. IT is amazing the number of boater days it actually has a year.

Considering we put on at 4:30 and wrapped up shortly after 7pm I'd say there were 18 boaters that got off the river with perma-grins!

Lets hope for many many more days of flow this spring.....

- Ryan

Browns River P.M. Paddle

Wednesday Apr 11, 2012

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: John Atherton

Participants: (K1): John Atherton; Jim Poulin; Jim Delp; Chris Weed; Ken Emery; (OC1): Brock Richardson; Morley Flynn; (Inflatable): Dan Sherbrook

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 3300 cfs; USGS Station: East Georgia Lamoille



John Atherton on the Browns River. (Jamie Dolan)

[A comment about the Browns River flow... The Lower Lamoille cfs flow figure on the East Georgia gauge is regarded as a poor indicator of the paddle conditions on the Browns so that figure on the AW website can be misleading. However, you can get a better estimate by looking at the level of change per hour. If the Lamoille is climbing the Browns will likely be proportionately higher and vice-versa if the Lamoille gauge is dropping it will likely be proportionately lower.]

The after-work 4:30 p.m. Browns River flotilla consisted of two canoes, 5 kayaks and 1 pack raft. This VPC scheduled trip was organized by John Atherton, paddling his snub-nose Fuse. The other kayaks were of the mid-size and chunkier

variety. An otter launch at the excellent put-in kept most of the paddlers out of the river's edge muck. The group paddled around below the opening ledge pour-overs waiting for our VPC ambassador visiting with a couple paddlers just returning from an earlier run on this 3-3/4 mile section.

Some of the group eddied out to shore scout at the dam after passing under the covered bridge in Westford Village. All but one paddler then picked a line from river-right to left around and over the lead-in ledge pour-overs to negotiate the slide on the far left at the collapsed dam. A few rolls and braces were required by the tilted ledge at the foot of the tongue but the canoes and pack raft thumbed their noses as they passed by the toilet bowl swirl that has evolved there.

One paddler portaged and displayed some early signs of difficulty eddying out and negotiating the ledge portage and again while re-launching. There was some question about the challenges ahead for this paddler and some extra time was necessary there before continuing on. The next feature, sometimes referred to as the S-turn Rapid, which is the liveliest (and arguably the only) rapid on the run, led to a couple swims resulting from an encounter between the same kayaker and the Sentinel Rock that guards the main flow as well as the trip leader trying to keep a watchful eye on the capsize. In the sorting out of these swims a decision was made by the paddler to stash his gear and walk out on the nearby road, given the reality that the Browns run becomes more inaccessible from that point on.

The remaining group paddled on as Brock's demure voice (not) and contagious laughter introduced the other open boater, Morley Flynn, a new paddler to VPC, to highlights of last Labor Day's Ottawa River trip. Everyone cleanly ran river-center at the next ledge drop feature, 6-10' left of the large rock (Bare-rock Obama?). A short distance later, the group again chose center-river lines between the tree and island ledge in the 2-step, slide-drop section of this 3-4' drop, that is also river wide. There were a few light scrapping sounds through the shallower section that followed but it was all reasonably fluid. The final double-island feature came up after 1-1/2 mile of flat water

and a progressive class I-II lead-in rapid. Some river scouted from an eddy overlooking the river-right slide, and then everyone elected to bounce down through that option rather than paddle the center or left channel alternatives [there remains a tree in the left (main) channel but it is negotiable on river-right].

The take-out bridge came into view, after another 3/4 mile section of flat water, with plenty of light left. The walk-out paddler showed up in his truck so the rest of the group knew he was accounted for. As the group clustered around Morley's van to visit and replace some fluids, Jim Poulin expressed his pleasant surprise at the Browns personality - this being his first run on that section. It was solid dusk by the time vehicles were all heading home. Morley appears to be a new prospective protege of the venerable T. Shaw.

- Ken Emery

Winooski Falls

Wednesday Apr 18, 2012

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Paul Carlile

Participants: (K1): Paul C; (OC1): Tony S;

(Inflatable): Dan S

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 1500 cfs; USGS

Station: Essex

High temps on Monday had me hoping there might be just enough water for the scheduled Lower Mad Trip this week but the bottom dropped out. Little River was releasing, and a possible option, when Chris Weed suggested Winooski Falls between Burlington and Winooski. Tony and I hadn't paddled there in a number of years and I've been looking for a chance to have Chris show me around his back yard. Based on the signs below Chace Mill [northwest parking lot] on river left threatening death to kayaker (ok fine - no river access especially for kayakers) we decided to put in off the river walk on river right. [Don't worry about those signs by the northwest lot. The property manager who put them up is long gone. — Chris]

It was a beautiful evening for paddling. Tony and I were changed and scouting when Dan showed up around 5:30 - still no Chris. We opted for a far left route sneaking the first ledge almost against the shore and cutting back right to run the main drop. At higher water the first ledge sneak would have been dangerous but at this level there was not the much water going into the mill race. After a clean run we carried up over the rocks toward the right side of the river. Dan was changed and opted for a class II sneak route along the right. As Tony and I were getting ready to go Chris showed up and approved of our route but suggested following the main left flow over both drops. Tony repeated our first line and I followed Chris' suggestions. It was a very clean line, straightforward but definitely exciting. Tony and Dan did a quick carry and ran a bumpy slot left of the horseshoe before we did our third run. On this pass, I ran Chris' line again and Dan followed Tony down our original line. It's short but some very nice water and certainly an easy shuttle and short commute for me. I'll definitely be running this one again soon.

- Paul Carlile

Annual PA Crew to VT Outting

Saturday-Monday Apr 28-30, 2012

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: Ryan

Participants: (K1): Ryan, Mic (Jason) and Hippie (Dan)

Year #5 for the road trippers to make the pilgrimage north to get after the goods in New England, specifically VT.

This year the crew was whittled down to just Jason and Dan driving up and for a change it was low key, low pressure. In addition it meant that I didn't have to drive around by myself as the other 1/2 of the shuttle carried on in the PA-party mobile. This year we were set. I had a small shuttle rig 125cc enduro that I could mount on the back of my truck and we all hauled around together for 3 days getting after what water was left of the measly

runoff the lack-luster winter provided us with.

Day One... We got an alpine start, NOT!!!, and headed out the door around 11am to Warner New Hampshire. Neither Dan nor Jason had been in their boats since 2010 and wanted to get some warm-up action. The Warner was one of the only things running that they could get their "mellow" on. Blar - low manky and down-right pitiful. None the less we headed down it and left it littered with lots of little pretty, colorful plastic shavings..

Quickly we regrouped and headed north up I-91 to get in a lap on the Wells.... fun low risk creeking and even more fun when one of the guys has no idea what is over each horizon line but is more than willing to follow you off of them. Needless to say we bombed this run and had a blast - for the entire 20 minutes it took to get down it. Back to Monty-P and then on to Waterbury and the Prohibition Pig for some quality drafts.

Day Two..... Dan is one of those weirdo squirt boaters. A few years ago we hit the stuff up in NVT like the NBL, Gihon, Waterman and others at Amazing levels. However, the only thing Dan could talk about was this AWESOME seam he saw on the Lamoille at Ithiel Falls. So back to Ithiel we went for a few hours for Dan to get is down-time in before we headed over to only real thing that was running this weekend.....the Green River.... Yea we had convinced Morrisville Water and Light to give us a minimum, one tube release for the weekend. So after packing up Dan's Squirt Boat and gear, off to Wolcott we went for some amazingly fun creeking on a warm spring afternoon. Those of you that know the Green, know it starts with a bang no matter if you run the meat or the sneak. I didn't fail to entertain by running the meat of the sneak (Huh - wtf is Ryan talking about again). The left side of the sneak is a sure fire way to put a crease in the nose of your boat so that it looks a little like the backside of a super model. Makes for some really weird water dynamics too with that butt crack in there (resurfacing after Humble Pie). None the less it was caught on film and is pretty funny to watch. After that the run went without incident with Jason running all of the drops, Me walking the gorge and Dan walking Humble Pie. The run was as good as always and having the Moto Shuttle makes it just

that much more fun to buzz up the back roads to get the Truck... Getting back in time to Monty-P for some killer Positive Pie Pizza and good local company.

Day Three... Off we went in a southerly direction...I was hoping that maybe by some chance there would be some flow in the New Haven... NOPE, then we headed on town to the Midd and it was BONE DRY. Further south we went - looking at BB - Nothing and finally we headed out of Danby in an easternly direction toward the Mettawee.... A first for me but getting the guys headed in the right direction toward home. We ran all of the drops on the Mettawee except #2... Why mess with a rapid that is a known to be potentially lethal. I especially enjoyed triple drop - very cool feel to that rapid with the way it is walled in and the holes you must skirt. The last one was a blast too with the big spout/boof on the right side. Anyways - we wrapped it up and got moving in opposite directions. Jason and Dan to PA and I, back north to Monty-P.

It was a fun weekend even though it was the worst water we had seen in the 5 years we had been doing this. I am sure we'll be looking to hit the goods again in 2013.... Stay tuned - hope to have better stories for the PA to VT creek weekend then!

- Ryan McCall

Missisquoi, North Troy

Saturday Apr 28, 2012

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Dave Stanley

Participants: (K1): Dave Stanley, Jim Poulin;

(OC1): Tony Shaw

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 520 cfs; USGS Station: N Troy takeout-Big Falls

As we had welcome rain Th-Fri and the gauge went up into the 800's, it was nice to see I would have a medium flow for my first trip on the Upper Miss without the Hildreths to guide. We had done it Wed at 400cfs with no sun which always subtracts from the having fun factor. Now to find a few boaters

as the Green had a weekend release, more on that later! Tony, Jim and myself met at the Jay General Store at 11 am on 242 near 101/105 and noted at least 30 out of state Porsche enthusiasts spending money helping the economy.

It is a 5 minute drive to the Vielleux Covered Bridge where you make a left and go downstream about 1.5 miles to the takeout at Big Falls where the gauge is located, as you exit the river note it is a must make eddy! After the short drive upstream to the takeout 2 miles upstream of the Vielleux covered bridge we put in at the first spot where the road and river come together, the first rapid Raven's Perch is read and run down the middle, there is house overlooking the rapid. You can see from the top of this rapid at 800 cfs the mist rising from the 2nd drop John Little Falls, get to the right for the slide, can be run down the middle at lower levels. John is a teacher at North Country, you may have seen him at a Telly Festival in his retro 80's gear!

A short ways and you come to scout worthy Ironing Board, another geologic feature where the river has broken through, over 800 cfs you want to scout from the right side, at the top you will see a brook come in river left coming in from a downstream angle. When you see this rapid over 1500 cfs on the scout looking down into the drop have some TP handy. It is an easy 100 yard Cl 2 approach to get to the right cliff side and down the 15 foot wide Ironing Board chute but it offers lots of exposure for newbies. It was a good level to see the features of both of these rapids without the high water consequences.

After a short stretch of flatwater water the next rapid is usually run down the left which ends in a bounce over an irregular pourover. I have been wanting to do CanAm, a route that I've seen Bill do which is a left to right chute that is lined on the upstream side by a 5 foot rock wall in the middle of the river ending at the bottom right of the drop. On my approach from above I ended up grounding out in the low water and had to get out and direct traffic for Jim and Tony. Thanks Tony for not taking any pics of me hauling my boat and body thru the bony approach. Jim aced

the move I wanted and Tony did the Turnstile Boof as he exited CanAm halfway down and cut left in a 360 spin move off a boof rock. Both nice moves that I have had my eyes on for a few years, they one upped the guide. After several more drops and flatwater we came to the Vielleux Covered Bridge, off to the west loomed the upper runs of Jay Peak which had a covering of an overnight 6" of snow. There then was about a mile of flatwater before 4 more drops, all of which we boat scouted and had peeked at from the shuttle road just upstream of the takeout. The gauge station on river right is the must takeout. All in all a nice day and thanks to the sun, almost warm. On Sunday I filled Bill in on the trip as we did the Green at 2.4 finding only Dos e Dos pretty wanting for more water to smooth it out. Two good days of boating in a dry spring.

- Dave Stanley

2012 Creeking Clinic

Saturday May 5, 2012

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: AJ Seibel, Ryan McCall, Alden Bird

Participants: (K1): Alex, Wade, Bill, John, Paul, Ryan, Justin, AJ; (C1): Alden, Tony, Sam, Josh

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 245 cfs; USGS Station: Wells River @ Wells River, VT

Practicing a boof during the Creeking Clinic. (Alden Bird)



This marked the first time the VPC has hosted a clinic specializing in creek boating. The clinic turned out to be a great success, minus one cracked boat. Students learned the basics of steep creeking, advanced stroke concepts, and capped the day with a special treat, courtesy of the O-Face hole!

Rain brought the river up to a fluid 240 or so CFS for the clinic, and Mother Nature graced us with sunshine that got better and better as the day went on. The class began with stroke technique for draw strokes and a few slalom-inspired draw stroke drills courtesy of Alden Bird. Students then ran the first drop, Brett's Mom, with no paddle stroke to get a feel for entry speed and angle on a drop and how to interact with the various currents. Then, we all hiked back up to try it again! The second attempt taught the basics of the "Boof" stroke, and completing the drop with a strong forward stroke at the bottom. Then, we ran it again!! The 3rd time down the drop worked across the current, and had students catching the RL eddy as though it was a "last chance" eddy on a tight creek. Everyone handled these three exercises very well!

Next up was our first run of "The Sweetness". This drop introduced hydraulics, cross currents, and boof ledges. A few folks didn't navigate the cross current very well, and John decided that the drop was so easy to run forwards that he did a rock spin and attempted a back boof. A snappy roll finished off his freestyle approach to class IV!

One of the main topics for the day was about slowing down the river, catching eddies, and having strong entrances to the drops. In "Labyrinth", the class practiced eddy catches and navigated the exit slide to thread between a couple of sticky holes. Shortly after this drop comes "Elevator Shaft" and all students got to practice their boof technique again on a clean 3' drop towards river left. Another run of the same rapid bounced students down a fun slide on RR.

Then came the fun... El Salto Falls. This is a chunky 12' cascade on river right, and we had all students approach it as a slide. Entry angle, loose hips and a neutral body position were emphasized. A few folks were spun sideways while dropping down the cascade, but all rolled up at the bottom. Most folks had better lines than expected, and it was the biggest drop to date for many of the



*Paul Carlile boofing during the Creeking Clinic, 2012.
(Alden Bird)*

participants. Alden showed us how awesome the river left line can be. Twice.

With everyone upright and smiling, we headed downstream through the boogie and eddied out at the top of "Tantra", the final rapid in this beautiful stretch of river. Tantra has two lines, one RR and one RL. The RR is more straightforward, simply requiring a point and shoot (and some balance) to get down the two-pitched slot. The RL line is more involved, requiring a boof over a seam, and a hard charge to river center or a big hit in the O-Face hole at the bottom. The RR line was, once again, not sporting enough for John and he decided to do yet another rock spin and run that drop backwards as well! Paul blurted some profanities while pitoning on the RR line, and folks who chose to run the RL line did so very smoothly, or with some fun-for-spectators carnage.

This concluded the morning session, and we all



Ryan McCall demonstrates waterfall technique for the class. Creeking Clinic, 2012. (Alden Bird)

headed back to the put-in for a quick lunch.

After lunch we got back on the river to continue exercising the participant's newfound skills - changing the lines on the first drop, and working on turning boofs in the second drop. A fun little boof was introduced in labyrinth, with a RR exit over the "race line" to avoid the hole at the bottom. Everyone styled El Salto again - some ironing out the kinks from their morning attempts of the run. Downstream we went through the boogie towards Tantra, and then the fun began!

For the last run of tantra for the day, everyone chose to run the more difficult RL line. The seam/hole at the top served up a nice helping of roll practice, and the hole at the bottom (the O-Face hole) provided multiple (close to 70% of the class!!) swiftwater rescue training moments. The hole (and eddy that so kindly feeds you back into the hole) can be very sticky - at any level. It was a fine finish to an otherwise perfect day - reminding everyone that creeks can be intense, and the river is not always on your side.

With gear recovered and smiles still on everyone's faces, we concluded the day with a BBQ and some fine Vermont ales.

Personally, I can't wait to be part of the next creeking clinic. Its awesome seeing class III/IV boaters step it up and learning how to work

with the river to make class IV fun and manageable. Thanks to all of the participants and instructors, and to all of the photo/video hounds that documented our every move!

Until next time... boof!

- AJ Seibel

Lower Lamoille

Sunday May 6, 2012

Character: novice WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: Richard Larsen

Participants: (K1): Chris Weed, Rich Reynolds;
(OC1): Eric Bishop, Len Carpenter, Richard Larsen

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 1400 cfs; USGS
Station: East Georgia

The trip was scheduled for the Lower Hudson, but there was confusion about Saturday vs Sunday - and little interest in driving to the Hudson - so we moved it to the Lower Lamoille for Sunday May 6. None of the open boaters had been on the river this year, so we all had to find our gear and hope we did not forget anything. We had minor problems - one guy's car rolled down his hill before he was in it, and had to get a tow truck before coming to the river. Another person, who will not be named, managed to show up with his wife's wetsuit, his wife being 8" shorter and 80 pounds lighter. (Was able to get it on to about mid-butt, but there was a lot of neoprene binding in some positions.)

So, the preparation was more exciting than the river. The flow was acceptable for late May, but pretty low for May 6. The temperature was pleasant, and we had a good float down the river - except for the wind gusting upstream. The long flat sections were hard on the open boats, with their higher profiles, and we sometimes found ourselves heading upstream in a gust. We got to the rapids, negotiated them without problems, stopped for lunch, and got to the takeout between the bridges after about 2.5 hours on the river.

- Richard Larsen

The NBW After Work, in the Dark, Grinning Ear to Ear....

Tuesday May 8, 2012

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Ryan

Participants: (K1): Ryan, M. Mike M, Jordan V,
Davis B, Brian (Davis's friend); (C1): Alden B,
Gauge Info: Painted Gauge Height: 3.50 ft.
(Putnamville Bridge)

Yea I know - Not another NBW trip report from Ryan. Too Bad - here it comes and it was a good one!

So it's dumping cats and dogs. Alden and I touch base really early in the day and post to the various message boards. Trying to get back from Winooski after work to get in a run is nutz but you do what ya gotta do to get on the river. I show up to see Mike, Davis, Brian and Jordan looking to get a run in. Alden, Mike and I grin knowing we have limited day light, know how long this run takes to run with NBW virgins and that the three other guys are solid boaters.....With the level of the river and this crew, it's gonna be a fun float!

I am geeked up because I have finally re-acquired a Bliss Stick Huka. Not that I don't luv my Mystic or Scud, I just really feel comfortable in a Huka - seems to be built to my style of boating and size...feeling at home on my home river.

The decomposing stinky coyotes are still on the bank so no one lingers and we get it on down the river. With three newbies - you can mess with them a wee bit on the run, beefing up what lies ahead. The reality is when you get to the drop you give them the best beta you have and shove off. If they want to get out to have a peek then that is what you do. To be honest there isn't any real reason to get out to have a look until the first big drop where you run the snakey boof on the right. Which everyone ran cleanly...below in the Manky stuff, a couple of guys got snagged by under the undercut on the island but it flushes and no one got chewed up....

Off to Big Bouncy which everyone got a look at.

Mike quickly picks his line to the right - ugly and messy, but he manages to make it look smooth and clean (not the norm). Alden runs the center left line and smooths it as well with a clean eddy above the last drop. Very Nice. At the top Jordan and I discuss what we are thinking. I am pretty sure I am going to paddle to the top eddy and carry the bottom of it. Change of plans - As I was bobbing in the eddy, I changed my mind and peeled out and ran the same line as Alden...It went fast and clean. Jordan bombed right down after me. Brian and Davis felt that they didn't want to damage their boats for one drop so carried on left.

On down to Flat falls - pretty clean with only a one piton and the slide/wall rapid was run cleanly by all. Mike fired up double drop first and set safety on the hemlock - Alden was next and then Jordan. I clean it up lastly and Brian and Davis carried on the left.

Next up was Cave Drop - I ran first down the Slide on the right. Alden boofed the vertical falls part and Davis penciled it - I think everyone held their breath for a split second when he missed his boof and went deep. Amazingly he drifted right on out and away from the hole and curtain. Now we were headed to the final drop.....

Alden, Mike and I knew the line on the left- 1, 2, 3 we went corkscrewing down the slide, watching he light fade away - Jordan and his yellow boat popped over the horizon first with Brian Second. Davis ran it lastly in the dark and although not pretty, he got it done and stayed up right with a HUGE grin...

We popped a few NBW virgin's cherries.... and they luv'd it!!!

Post work NBW runs can't be beat!

- Ryan McCall

Upper Moose

Tuesday May 8, 2012

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: AJ Seibel

Participants: (K1): Noah P, AJ S.

With good rain in the forecast, I started attempting to rally folks for an Upper Moose adventure after I caught wind that the gate was open early this year. Noah was the only one that took the bait, but it was all good regardless.

Normally this is a fall paddle, the gate typically remains closed until Memorial Day weekend. For whatever reason it's open early this year, most likely due to the fact that mud season has come and gone.

We arrived and I quickly checked my gauge, a midstream rock that is just upstream of the bridge at River Rd./Victory Rd. The water was slightly below the rock, which normally indicates a passable but potentially bony run. We headed up the road towards the put-in and parked one vehicle at our somewhat established takeout just above the last good rapid, the Moose Cooch. It was here that I realized I forgot my drysuit. Damn! Luckily, Noah had an extra drytop and a brand new set of dry pants for me to squeeze in to (literally - he's a small guy!) Crisis averted, we headed upstream and got on the river in the pool below the confluence of the East and West Branches of the Moose River.

The first drop went beautifully, with both of us sticking a great boof off of the rolling 5-footer that starts the run. From here we cleanly navigated a number of boulder rapids and ledge drops until our arrival at FusterCluck - a small slot/slide that constricts the rivers flow into a 3 foot wide channel. We scouted and I got back in to my boat to demo the line for Noah. I have no idea what happened from there! I dropped onto the slide, and the left side of the world felt as though it fell out from beneath me. I was upside down as I flailed towards the bottom of the drop - losing my paddle and quickly wet-exiting to avoid some of the undercuts in the bottom of the drop. I swam down the slide and after my boat, recovering myself and my gear

about 75 yds downstream. Phew!

From there down the rapids were fun and we had no mishaps. We styled through rapids with emerging names such as "The Slides", "Little Squirt" and "Lost Ring". It was at about this point that we realized the level was coming up as things weren't as bony as expected. The run was coming into a good medium flow... As we ran the approach rapid for "Sideways Waterfall that lands on rock", we discovered a log next to the last chance eddy for the drop. If you choose to run the waterfall, have your bow pointed HARD to the right or you'll piton and possibly have a vertical pin. Noah and I seal-launched in next to the waterfall to avoid any more mishaps. Ledges continue downstream, and after passing beneath the Radar Rd. Bridge things mellow out for a short while before another sequence of fun class III-ish rapids, again mellowing to class II before the grand finale - the Moose Cooch!

We scouted this class IV gorge from the RR rim, going over lines and hazards along the way. Back at our boats we slipped back into the river and started the gorge through the river left slot - a fun turbulent slot with a few foam piles to punch. From there you boogie down the right side down a slide, punch another few holes, and land in a nice pool with vertical slate walls on each side. Really, a beautiful spot to be on any river. Leaving this pool leads the boater into a boulder garden that finishes with a diagonal ledge that sports a folding hole on the right that has caused many rolls and even more braces! A few more cool down rapids lead to a large boulder on river right that signals the takeout. We hiked up and out and called it a day.

I've said it before... This run is spectacular! While not overwhelming, the drops are satisfying, the river remote, and all in all a "Class FUN" type of creek. Hit me up if you ever want to get on it!

- AJ Seibel

Lower New Haven

Wednesday May 9, 2012

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: Jamie Dolan

Participants: (K1): Chris Weed; John Atherton; Ken Emery; Rich Reynolds; Jim Poulin; Jamie Dolan; (OC1): Eric Bishop

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 788 cfs; USGS Station: Brooksville, VT

Who'd a thunk? Planning a lower New Haven trip for early May that actually went? The water was at a lowish level but definitely runnable. The last rapid above the take out bridge was fairly fluid and the rock dodging wasn't as bad as I expected it would be. (A half dozen people were on the ledges as well.) Our group of seven had an interesting mix of experience both in boating in general, and on the lower New Haven specifically. Which, as it turned out was good.

After the entrance rapid we took a hard left through a tight wood pile to stay in the flow rather than walk to the confluence with Baldwin Creek. Rich R got caught, by the downed tree root on RR, but managed a tasty hand roll out from under. Unfortunately, his paddle remained under the log. With two safety people, Rich was able to retrieve the paddle but not without some difficulties. That corner can be tricky.

All but Chris and Eric opted for the center line on the South St bridge rapid. Which went well for all of us. Chris styled his line down the RR side really nicely.

There were three swims by some of the old timers (though, I don't think anyone is under 50 in the group, Jim?). One swim was above the South St bridge at the end of the rapid leading to it, one was at the entrance to the South St Bridge rapid and the last was on the last hole at the take out bridge (UGH!). It turns out that rocks can hurt just as much as names, if not more. Jim P was the lead navigator for a couple of the less experienced and did a great job showing the lines to avoid rocks and holes (mostly).



Above and below: May 9th lower New Haven trip. (J. Dolan)



The trip took us about 2 to 2 1/2 hours of river time (including scouting the South St Bridge rapid and boat retrieval) and we finished shortly before it started to rain again and get dark. A good bunch of people on a fun river, at an okay level. That's good.

- Jamie Dolan

NBL Gorge and Slides

Sunday May 13, 2012

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: Chris Ingram

Participants: (K1): John Atherton, Chris Weed, Jonathan Gilbert, Jim Poulin, Jim, Jamie Dolan, Jay Kinecht, Paul, Chris Ingram

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

After a fickle spring, and doubts about boatable flows, a quick regional rain brought the north branch up to a fun low level for a club trip. It was a suprisingly good showing with eight people ready to go. We met at the gauge bridge in Waterville, figured out shuttles and got on the river just behind the Waterville Elementary School.

With a range of experience on the run, and one newcomer, we entered the gorge under sunny skies and a good low flow. Everyone had a chance to warm up with mellow boogie water before the first rapid, making it through unscathed. With a roll here, a bump off-line there, we worked through great boulder gardens that kept everyone smiling and busy chosing lines. At the biggest rapid in the gorge, the main rock in the middle kept the challenge high, forcing a left or right move to end it. The first swim of the trip came here, with a quick cleanup in the pools below.

We all spent some time side surfing the ledge holes below the Coddington Hollow Bridge before running the drop below and on to the take out bridge. Once there, everyone decided they wanted more, and the whole group headed on for the ledges in Waterville. Three of the boaters had never run the slides, and it was a good level to take a first look. We all got out above the mill slide and scouted the first and second drop. It was smooth paddling until the fourth drop, where we had two swims and a big stern ender. Again, we chased down boats and gathered up to run the rest of the slides.

Everyone seemed stoked to have seen this stretch of river, and agreed it was a great way to wrap up a day on the river.

- Chris Ingram

Novice Clinic

Waterbury Reservoir / Winooski

Saturday-Sunday June 2-3, 2012

Organizer: John Atherton

Instructors: (K1): Paul C, Jim P, John A, Chris W , Ken E, Rich R, (OC): Mark L, Tony S, Alden B

Students: (K1):Anu A, Ingrid C, Leonardo C, Rob C, Heidi C, Christie S, Karen W, Carol W (OC2): Nathan L, Erika M.

Saturday started with rain which we normally greet enthusiastically but when you are teaching a group of novices it's nice to have some sunshine. Luckily our students all came with great attitudes and the rain did not dampen anyone's spirits. We quickly had our students outfitted in cool weather gear and a great variety of loaner boats from Clearwater, Umiaks and some club member loaners. As we started our wet exits one potential student watched from the shore. After seeing the other participants' success we soon had an additional student.

The group was smaller than we've had in years past and the kayaks decided to stay together as a single group. We spent the morning working on balance and strokes as our novices gained skill and confidence. Ingrid had taken roll lessons a few years ago and cranked off a nice roll on her first attempt. We had great game of keep away using just our hands to paddle the boats. It's funny how a little competition and a goal can distract us from what apprehension we have. The canoeists spent the morning in solo open boats so that they could learn all of the strokes.

A great lunch by Barb and Erik was enjoyed huddled under rain flies as we shared the morning experience and the instructors regaled the students with paddling stories.

The afternoon was spent on the Winooski from Middlesex Dam to the new VRC takeout just below Rt. 2. We spent a little while getting used to current in the outflow of the dam. A nice class I rapid was formed by the Irene flooding just below the put in which proved to be a nice instruction spot. We worked on the usual ferries, peel outs

and eddy turns. Hugo proved again to be a nice spot for our novices to experience a bigger drop and faster water. Most of the group took out at the VRC takeout at 4:00 but since Ingrid was not able to join us on Sunday, we took Leo and her down to Junkyard rapid to finish the day there. The canoeists clearly had not had their fill and the joined in for that run.

Sunday was the sunny day we'd looked for on Saturday. We spent the day running the Bolton Dam section of the Winooski. The water had risen a bit from the previous day's rain and was a nice level as we started down. We eddy hopped down the first rapid and had a few swimmers as the instructors got to practice the boat rescue skills. Quite a bit of time was spent the corner eddy ferrying out to the big rock mid-stream and then down through junkyard. Another great lunch from Erik and Barb, this time spread out under the sunshine. Only 2 students decided not to paddle in the afternoon. We taught the students the T rescue after lunch and Leo made good use of it showing amazing poise with 3 rescues in the afternoon. The water was started rising a bit more in the afternoon and the trestle section was bit beefier but everyone navigated it well.

Thanks to all of the participants, organizers and instructors for another successful Novice Clinic.

- Paul Carlile

Hudson River Gorge

Sunday Jun 10, 2012

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Jamie Dolan

Participants: (K1): Jamie Dolan, Johnathan

Gilbert, Jim Poulin, Derek; (Raft): Tom Rogers

Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 4.82 ft.; USGS

Flow: 2540 cfs; USGS Station: Hudson River @

North Creek, NY

The weather report was in for a great run down the Hudson. And we were not disappointed. Mainly sunny and temperatures approaching 80. Though one paddler still felt the need for a dry suit!



Derek in the Hudson Gorge. (Jamie Dolan)

Interestingly, we were the only car in the lot at the put in. One more arrived and "Derek" asked to join our group. By 10:15 or so we were in rafters bay where we met Tom guiding a commercial raft down the rivers.

The level was real nice peaking at just under 5 feet. We were with the bubble for the most part of the day, This was Jonathan's first trip down and he handled it most excellently. The Indian was maybe a little less than you would expect at 5' but a lot of fun (as usual).

The Narrows had some big waves and I saw Johnathan at one point airborne flying off of one of them. He handled it with aplomb. At Giveny's / Soupstrainer / whatever / it was a little different. Derek said there is a line from center right to left but we took the traditional left side down, Midway, Johnathan went over, rolled up and down a couple of times then went over and into a hole so he was doing an ender. I thought he was doing some rodeo moves but it turned out he wasn't. It looked real impressive until the swim. He came out of it fine. Of course by the time of Bus stop none of us had much energy left to play considering the paddle out.

A good day with good people.

- Jamie Dolan

Taureau section, Jacques-Cartier River

Saturday Jun 23, 2012

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: low boatable

Organizer: The River Gods

Participants: (K1): Nate Warren, Cam Fearey, Ben Schott, Danny Siger, Mike Mainer; (C1): Alden Bird

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 353 cfs; USGS

Station: Jacques-Cartier River (St. Catherine approximation)

On the night of Friday, June 22nd, 2012, six Americans and one Canadian met at a truckstop parking lot an hour north of Quebec City late in the night, having driven up from the United States in three cars with the intention of paddling one of eastern North America's longest, most challenging day-long stretches of river: the uppermost section of Quebec's Jacques-Cartier River.

This stretch, dubbed the Taureau (the Bull), is 15 miles long and contains somewhere in the range of 100 rapids. Put in and take out are reached by long dirt roads; otherwise, the river is entirely shrouded in wild, boreal forest within the Parc National de la Jacques-Cartier. The truckstop where we met is at the entrance of the park. At 7am in the morning, we paid a per-person entrance fee at the park gate, and drove 33 km to the outermost road reach of the park, Camp 3, the take out for the Taureau. From there, we turned around and drove back through the park, up the highway, and down another dirt road to the barren put in for the Taureau. The shuttle took about 1.5 hours. Fortunately, our lone Canadian participant, Catherine Hull, Ben's girlfriend, had offered to drive shuttle for us, saving us the same trip at the end of the adventure. We put on at 11:30.

The gauge at the put in -- the famous Taureau put in rock -- was reading -7" -- a low level. Only two of us had run the river before. Cam, Mike, Danny and Ben are all well-traveled New England boaters who'd been waiting to get on the Taureau for years, and this was their chance. Recent UVM graduate Danny had driven all the way up from his summer job at the Yough River in Pennsylvania to join us for the adventure.

The river built smoothly in difficulty, and soon we were running long class IV sections. This upper section contained several larger holes than I remembered -- even at low water -- including Alan's Hole (named after Alan Panebaker), and La Corrida (the Bullfight) -- located directly above the first class V rapid, Double Drop. Double Drop and Triple Drop come back to back and are two of the day's hardest rapids. For my part, I was anxious in the lead-in rapids, wondering how I would do in the thick of it. When Double Drop and Triple Drop both went smoothly, I felt myself relax and began to drink in the remarkable scenery of the Taureau. I was actually back here -- again.



Into the Wild: Approaching Double Drop on the Taureau section of the Jacques-Cartier. North of Quebec City. (Alden Bird)

The section between the waterfall portage and the Launiere Confluence is one of my favorite parts of the Taureau. With continuous, boat-scoutable class IV and V rapids and with cliffs on the left and huge pine-covered walls on the right, this part reminds me of the lower Middlebury Gorge in Vermont.

Below the confluence, the river bends south and begins its second half with countless rapids back-to-back. It was a lot of fun. We portaged the Sieve Rapid. Here Danny lost his drain plug and improvised a new one out of a stick and some duct tape. We had lunch at the Boyce Greer lunch spot at Cohasset. Mike and I choose to portage, while the others ran with good results. Below Cohasset, the Taureau enters a sustained class V section. By this point I had great confidence in our group. Everyone was paddling well and seemed confident. So I in turn felt confident that things would go smoothly. We ran down through the wonderful S-Turn rapid of Hump and Pump and then boat-scouted down Logjam. Once everyone made it through that long rapid okay, I breathed a sigh of relief. One of my favorite moments of the day was when I heard Ben come through the final move and call out, "That was awesome!" We paddled through several more good class V rapids and a number of steep class IVs and soon enough arrived above Coming Home Muhammad, marked by a huge mid-stream boulder that reminds me of the huge rock above Lava Falls on the Grand Canyon. Coming Home Muhammad (named, my guess, in homage to the famous Coming Home Sweet Jesus on West Virginia's Lower Meadow River) is the final class V rapid on the Taureau and one of the most difficult. I have always run the far left sneak line, but today it was too low to attempt. There was a tough but runnable line down the main flow, but a strainer in the bottom right exit of the rapid made my decision to portage easy. Ben, Danny, and Cam ran, and all made it through okay. Cam and Danny both took turns climbing out to a rock to set safety next to the strainer.

I was determined not to make the same mistake I had previously in the next rapid, a steep, powerful boulder garden. On my last Taureau trip, I'd led my group down the appealing-looking center chute, only to lodge all three of us into successive pins

in the main slot. We all managed to escape, but in 2012 I was determined to avoid this. Fortunately I remembered Boyce Greer's notes -- approach this rapid on the right -- and on the right side we found one of the best boofs of the day: big, powerful, and without a pin spot.

Below there, we went left down the turbulent Island Rapid and then we paddled for at least another hour down the remaining miles, first of solid class IV, then class III, and down. The mountains pull back from the river as the gorge grows bigger, and cliffs that towered straight overhead now tower above in majestic distance. This is my favorite section: your adrenaline, which has been most likely going for days in anticipation, is finally winding down, and you start to notice how tired you are, and you appreciate the chance to float and to talk about the day with the others. My knees are usually hurting too, so I enjoy the chance to unclip my thigh straps and sometimes run the last few rapids sitting on top of my boat, like a kayak. Here you are finally able to appreciate the accomplishment of completing such an adventure.

In my opinion, the Taureau is matched only by one other commonly run river in the East (North Carolina's Linville Gorge) in the sheer number of logistics involved in pulling off a successful trip. The long shuttle, remoteness, foreign surroundings, and many and challenging rapids all bring a group of boaters together in the Taureau as on no other river in the Northeast.

At the take out, I had stashed two bottles of Le Maudite and Fin du Mond beer in the cool river for celebration. One of them had a cork, and I suggested to Mike (who had a champagne cork for his drain plug) that he should replace his cork with this cork as a memento. Unfortunately, in my excitement and distraction I accidentally shot the cork high in the air and far into the woods where I couldn't find it, startling the parking lot full of boaters and hikers. But a fitting end it was to a great day of paddling in Quebec.

On the drive out through the park, we saw two moose in the road ahead of us. At the exit of the park, we parted ways. The others drove to the

Malbaie, where they camped and on Sunday ran another great river. I drove home to Vermont on Saturday night in the old Greg Hanlon and Boyce Greer tradition of one-day Taureau trips. I sometimes look back at Boyce's old spreadsheet he sent me that details the participants and water levels of his and Greg's Taureau trips, dating back to the early 1990s when both men were my age and first running the Taureau. They ran this river at least once every year through last season. I know that if I am still fortunate enough to be running the Taureau in twenty years when I am 50, I will consider myself a very lucky man.

Vive Le Taureau!

- Alden Bird

Summer Rolling

Sunday-Thursday Jul 1-Aug 30, 2012

Character: flatwater

Water Level: too low

Organizer: many

Participants: (K1): Karen, Beth, Mary, Brock, Rod, Silas, Gary, Jim

We conducted several summer rolling sessions for new kayakers and some trying to improve their existing roll. Sessions were held at different locations (Sandbar, Waterbury Reservoir, Shelburne beach and a few attempts on the Winooski).

Many different instructors participated- Thanks Rich, Ken, Paul, Chris, Jamie. At each session people improved and many learned their roll. Combat roll will be the next step for many of them. All the instructors improved their own roll adding offside and back deck rolls to their solid combat rolls.

I really enjoyed these informal sessions especially this summer with so few paddling opportunities. Getting in the water on hot evenings was a pleasure. Always fun getting together with great friends.

- John Atherton



*Paul Carlile instructing during the 2012 Class II Clinic.
(Jamie Dolan)*

Ottawa River

Friday-Monday Aug 31-Sep 3, 2012

Character: int-adv WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: Jim Poulin

Participants: (K1): JimP, DawnD, JohnA, BrockR, KenE, LeanneE, JonathanG, PaulC, SueS, SilasP

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

Friday, August 31: At various times during the day, all ten of our weekend participants head north. Destination: River Run in Beachburg Ontario.

Jim and Dawn take the route through Montreal which turns out to be a mistake. Construction on the west side of town ties things up in knots. Those coming through Cornwall do not run into such hassles.

Even so, Jim and Dawn are the first in camp. A quick set up and Jim is headed off to park and play at Baby Face. I have been going up to the Ottawa for going on twenty five years now, but there is always room for a first. I got to Baby Face and I was the only one there! Never happened before. It was a tad eerie.

On the paddle out I run into John, Brock, Silas and sunset. Even though it is pretty dark, they are

headed out for a quick tour. Luckily the almost-full moon guided them back to the put in.

Meanwhile, back at camp everyone starts arriving – Ken and Leanne, Paul and Sue and last but not least, Jonathon. Just as Paul and Jim muster the search party for our wayward park and players, John, Brock and Silas get to camp.

Campfires and big inflated Ottawa tales rule the evening.

Saturday, September 1: We awoke to a glorious Canadian morning. Clear with nary a cloud in the sky. The group was not in a big hurry but there were three Ottawa rookies that want to get going to see what they had signed up for!

The levels for the weekend were hovering around -2.75. But even at that level McCoys does more for your morning guts than coffee!

Some of the stories of last evening included the sneak around McCoys called the Zoom Flume. Sue had dreams in the night about Zoom Zoom complete with huge crashing waves and boat eating holes. Much to her surprise (and relief), the Zoom Flume is barely class I and is a good lesson in hydrology – on one side of the island is a massive rapid with no less than a dozen named features looking to violently separate you from your boat. On the other side lies Zoom Flume. A trickle of water that would not even get the VPC novice class worried.

The group split with some running Zoom Flume and others running the normal lines through McCoys.

The usual Ottawa crowds had assembled at the bottom of McCoys so our intrepid group continued downstream. Today's menu choice – the Middle Channel.

First up was Iron Ring, which at these levels is pretty straightforward. Then came S-Turn and a lunch break. The play boaters in the group exhausted themselves and put on quite a show!

Next was Butterfly, which is always a fun drop – especially when run without scouting! John

decided to head back up for a second run down the right channel. He ended up getting caught in a hole and the subsequent roll tweaked his already injured left shoulder. Ouch!

A “quick” walk around Garvens led us to the next couple of rapids – Little No Name and Big No Name. The surf wave in Little No Name was small but still in. A couple of paddlers gave it a go. Various lines were taken through Big No Name – all successful – with Jim and Paul taking multiple runs.

The last rapid of the day was Velvet (a.k.a Waterfall of Death!). At lower levels it actually is a rapid! In the past when water levels were a bit higher this rapid is a short ledge drop.

*Paul Carlile surfing Babyface wave, Ottawa River.
(James Poulin)*



It was a quick run and we were back at camp by 2:30. Some sort of Ottawa record for us! There was all sorts of talk about another run, a park and play, something, anything since it was so early. But then that common sound of de-motivation came through loud and clear – pfsst. And that was all she wrote.

Dawn did her magic on John's shoulder and Brock's calf and both announced that they were ready to paddle tomorrow! As a bunch of grey

beards paddlers (sans 16 year old Silas of course), it's nice having a camp massage therapist!

Various dinner plans came together before we all hung out around the campfire and marveled at the full Canadian moon. There seemed to be much debate about the best way to build and maintain the campfire. If anyone offered an opposing view the refrain from the crowd was f...f...f...Feel Free!

Tomorrow: The Main Channel!

Sunday, September 2: Something that always sounds better the night before – the early morning park and play. We did manage to get up and be out the door (OK, there are no doors but you get the drift) by 8am. Paul and Jonathon opted for the early morning run through McCoys. The more sane, came around the bottom side of the rapid. We were the first ones at Baby Face. Not sure if that was a benefit or a curse. Within a couple of hours the crowd starting building. First the King of Clubs competition and then the rafts finally drove us out.

Back to camp for Brunch!

Around the crack of noon everyone started to get antsy. The King of Clubs were holding their cardboard boat race through the Laurens and we all thought that could be a humorous debacle to watch. By the time we got there, the race was over so we just headed to the put in.

The Main run has its classic rapids – The Laurens (Upper and Lower), Pushbutton, Butcher's Knife, The Swirlies (a.k.a. Brain Douche), Normans, Coliseum, Dog Leg and Blacks. The group had various degrees of success through all of these – most run blind without even a scout! These guys really put their trust in the trip leader. Pure foolishness, I say...

On the flat water paddle between McCoys and Upper Lauren we were joined by a couple of boaters. One, Scott, had a hearty British accent – for a minute I thought Simon had once again joined us! When asked where he was from he proudly stated "Buffalo"! Hmmm.

Well, Scott and Rob were indeed from Buffalo and had never run the Ottawa and were looking

to join us. Now, I would like to say that when they saw us style our way through McCoys and then rip it up on Baby Face, Rob and Scott proclaimed "those are the guys we want to paddle with!". But that would be a lie.

What Rob and Scott saw was a multi-swim run of McCoys followed by a few feeble attempts to surf Baby Face. Then they declared "those are the guys we want to paddle with!".

Dawn, Leanne and Sue waited for us at Upper Lauren and cheered our (mostly) successful lines. They even captured a video which has gone wildly viral on YouTube! They then hoofed it back to camp to await our arrival.

The Normans has the ability to provide excitement – for those upright and those not. Unlike all other Ottawa rapids The Normans is followed pretty quickly by Coliseum. Any yard sales need to be cleaned up post haste. Nine boaters started the run upright. Six made it through upright (not saying there weren't any rolls for this group however). So the tally was Boaters 6; The Normans 3. Could have easily been 0 to 9! We managed to get boaters and boats back together before a lengthy scout of Coliseum. Jim ran a probe boat run to demonstrate one of the lines. Brock, the newly minted kayaker, then led the entire group through the run. I need to point out this was Brock's first dry run of Coliseum! Nice job!

We again needed to reacquaint a couple of boaters with their boats and then it was on to Dog Leg. A fun little drop that includes a blind screaming left turn, a quick line up and a narrow slot over a three footer. Good fun.

By the time we hit Blacks most were done, but a few of the play boaters needed to get their loops on. So arrival time at camp was elongated between the first arrival and the last. But we all had smiles on our faces!

Last year you may remember the Pasta Feed debacle. Well this year we scaled the expectations way back and did a much better job of communication. This year: community apps! And everyone jumped it with vigor. There were

so many and varied apps that the idea of dinner was setting about as rapidly as the sun. Or maybe it was due to the visit of el jimador and his three cousins: patron, el charo and el sauza.

We watched the kayak tossing competition (one of the final events of the King of Clubs) and again spent some quality hours around the campfire exaggerating the events of the day. We ALL agreed that boaters do not average 132 outings per year (or at least that's how I remember it). Finally, once everyone decided to pack it in, Paul and Jim did their best imitation of Smokey the Bear and made sure the campfire was extinguished.

Monday, September 3: On Labor Day we awoke to yet another sunny and glorious morning. After copious amounts of coffee and Ibuprofen we were ready to face the day. Ken decided his close encounter with Phil the previous day was enough fun for two entire days and decided to opt out of the Monday paddle. Jonathon felt that an hour on Pushbutton was about all the time and energy he had left in the tank.

We did not spend much time (OK, none) at McCoys and blasted down to the Laurens. Brock had his first completely dry run of these two rapids and decided he would end his long weekend on that note. We ran into Jonathon as he was wrapping up his play session. One more round of goodbyes and the remaining paddlers (John, Paul, Silas and Jim) headed downstream.

The Normans decided to mess with Paul. After launching him airborne it held his paddle for a good ten minutes. Long enough to begin the consideration of Paul's hand paddling skills through Coliseum.

Another thing to point out about this daring duo of rapids; only one boater made it upright through both Normans and Coliseum. And it wasn't Paul, Jim or John. Nice job Silas showing the old guys how it's done!

Then it was the long slog back to camp (after Dog Leg, Blacks and Waterfall of Death II). Pack it up and hit the road. There were goodbyes and promises of repeating this again next year. And as

always, thoughts of more than one trip up here in 2013. Yeah, we always say that and never "git 'er done"! Maybe we can pull it off? Who knows. Until then, happy fluffy whitewater dreams all!

jimp (a.k.a. el jimador)

- Jim Poulin

Moose River

Wednesday Sep 5, 2012

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: AJ; Participants: (K1): Jamie S., AJ. S
Gauge Info: USGS Gauge Height: 6.16 ft.; USGS
Flow: 531 cfs; USGS Station: Moose River @
Victory VT

We were shooting for the flashier, creekier, coveted stretch of the Moose above the bog off of Radar Rd., but arrived to find it had already run off. Fortunately, the bog backs up the water for awhile, and the river reach below the bog was just beginning to crest - most other rivers in the area had crested during the early part of the day. The bog works nicely when it coordinates with daylight, aka paddleable hours of the day!

The river really hasn't changed much since the floods of Irene last season, save for a few rocks moved a little bit. Some of the surfing features have changed ever so slightly, but it seems that no damage was done to this playful stretch of class II-III water.

We had some great surfs, good laughs, and fun moments with eff-yew rocks just beneath the surface. Overall, not a bad plan B!

If you like to surf on the fly and enjoy some wild boreal scenery, try to catch this river when the online gauge reads between 6 and 7 feet (500-750cfs) for the best waves and fun. Even better is during the summer months, where it doesn't feel as though its draining the arctic.

- AJ Seibel