

GEORGIA CANOEING ASSOCIATION, INC.



P. O. Box 7023, Atlanta, Georgia 30309

February 1979

NEWSLETTER

VOL. XIV No. 2

March newsletter deadline is Feb. 15. Send material to Gary DeBacher, 1191 Conway Rd., Decatur, GA 30030. We can print most good-contrast illustrations, but not slides.

FEND OFF THOSE CREDITORS AND PAY YOUR DUES or you won't be getting these reminders in the mail much longer. Send \$7.50 (plus \$2 if you want GWF affiliation) to Wanda Gunter, 3015 Butler Creek Rd., Kennesaw, GA 30144. Wanda also processes all changes of address and newsletter delivery problems. Call her at home at 424-0850. **Dues deadline Jan. 31!**

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING Friday, Feb. 9th, 7 to 9:30 PM at Cathedral of St. Philip, 2744 Peachtree Rd. NW. Pot luck dinner--- bring a main course plus a vegetable, salad or dessert. Please bring serving spoons. A 50 cent charge to cover soft drinks and coffee. **NO BOOZE.** Please remember to help with cleanup; the church can't be expected to do this for us. Doug Woodward will narrate a slide show of his trip on the Noatak River in Alaska, and we may also have a professionally done film of decked boaters running the Grand Canyon. A simple method for making good quality wood paddles will be demonstrated. For information call Norm Reynolds, 455-3498.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING Wednesday Feb. 7, 7:30 PM, Fernbank Science Center. Any interested members are welcome to attend.

TRIP SCHEDULE

NOTE: Because of cold water, typically higher water levels, and colder or more variable weather, this is not the time for beginners to learn by doing. There are no "easy" trips this month; even the Okefenokee paddlers may face wind, rain and cold. If you have not yet received formal instruction in whitewater paddling skills, wait for warmer weather. ALSO trip leaders will expect every paddler to be equipped at least with waterproof paddle jacket and pants over wool or polyester knits, and for cold weather may require full wet suits.

February	4	Fightingtown Creek Class II	Allen Lewis	427-6155
	10	Okefenokee Swamp	Jimmy Gunter	424-0850
	10	Cartecay Class III	Jimmy Gunter*	424-0850
	17	East Fork Little R. Class II+, long	Gary DeBacher	288-1773
	18	Little River Canyon Class III-IV	Jack Weems	938-5263 (H) 321-7544 (O)
	24	Chattooga III Class III- IV	Jimmy Gunter*	424-0850
	25	Glacier Races at Nantahala		

*NEED A TRIP LEADER FOR THESE TRIPS.

SORRY- No arrangements for rolling practice yet, but we are still working on several possibilities. If you have a suggestion, call Jack Weems at 321-7544 or 938-5263.

AWA MEMBERSHIP DRIVE. As an affiliate member of the American Whitewater affiliation, GCA is being asked to help with a membership drive, and as an AWA board member, I would like to endorse this effort, and share my thoughts on what AWA means to me. The best part of whitewater canoeing for me is the camaraderie around a campfire, discussing the details of the day's run, rehashing previous runs and anticipating tomorrow's and tomorrow's. Since I started boating in 1971, AWA has been the only national organization through which I felt this camaraderie with whitewater paddlers everywhere, and the AWA Journal (6 issues per year) has been the key in extolling its virtues. There have been many facets of canoeing promoted by AWA--- equipment design innovations, river rights, conservation of free-flowing streams, some racing activities, important safety reforms and the nationally recognized AWA river difficulty rating system and safety code. All this has been accomplished by volunteers, and output is directly proportional to input. Currently AWA has some 2000 members from all parts of the country. Though I am moving to Oregon, I will be able to represent the Southeast and its canoeing interests on the AWA board for the next two years. Again I endorse the AWA membership drive, and really wish all whitewater paddlers had the feeling of camaraderie I have experienced in AWA.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the friendships made within GCA, and offer an invitation for any number of super runs if you come visit in Oregon!

SINCERELY, MURRAY JOHNSON, AWA Board of Directors 1977-80.

[Editor's note: So having served his purgatory in Heflin, Alabama, Murray has transferred to the heavenly regions of Oregon. Having lived there myself, I am green with envy. As for AWA, I have always enjoyed their journal, with its high proportion of useful, funny, or important articles and an absence of the hype which afflicts the commercial canoeing mags. A recent issue included a seam-splittingly funny article by Art Block on the Organic Kayak, grown from a hybrid seed cross of the banana plant and the mahogany tree. GCA executive committee has given AWA special permission to use our mailing list in an appeal for new members, in recognition of the important work this group has done for all paddlers in past years. You will probably receive an invitation to join in the mail, but if you are in a hurry, send \$7.00 with your name, address and zip code to WHITEWATER, PO Box 1483, Hagerstown, MD 21740.]

WINTER PADDLING, or CONFESSIONS OF A FROSTBITE JUNKIE
by Dave Garrity, GCA Safety Chairman

After watching rock piles grow on my favorite rivers this past year, I am hoping (and burning incense) for a relatively warm and wet winter like we had in the good old days way back in '75 and '76. In the Southeast we are fortunate in having many winter days warm enough for canoeing with proper precautions. Daytime temperatures often climb into the 50's and 60's. Some thin-skinned hot dogs will object that any air or water temperature less than 70 degrees is not "warm," and we all find ourselves wondering at times why we bother to canoe when it is "cold."

The first answer to this question is that water levels are best in the winter months; peak rainfalls normally occur in January, February and March. Many streams that are unpleasant or downright unrunnable in summer can become really exciting runs. In addition, crowds are gone. When else can you paddle Section III of the Chattooga and not see another group of boaters, to say nothing of those noisome and pitiable creatures, rafters? Paddling on days with crisp air temperatures, crystal blue skies, and icy clear cold water is one of the most invigorating experiences imaginable. Some of my fondest memories derive from winter trips, like sunbathing on the rocks in 35 degrees at Eye of the Needle--- you don't tan very well through neoprene! The aftermath is also memorable, for example the vision of Dale Bergen in full wetsuit regalia ignoring strange looks from other customers while ordering burgers and fries in MacDonalds one Saturday night in late December. (See, even canoeists eat junk food.)

However, the very conditions which make winter paddling fun and exciting also make it much more dangerous. I have seen class I's become fun class III's after heavy rains; I have also seen class III's grow into class IV++ with extremely fast currents, huge standing waves, powerful southe holes and few pools and eddies left in which to recover. In addition, logs and debris are picked up and moved around in flood surges, leaving deadly strainers in rapids we thought we knew

well. Water levels are hard to judge at access points. Most bridges and gauges are located at relatively wide, flat places in the river, while the best rapids are found in constricted gorge sections often less than 1/5 as wide. Three additional inches of water at the gauge may mean up to a foot of additional water in the difficult, narrow sections. Under such conditions, open boaters swamp easily; decked boat paddlers miss braces and flip in unexpected turbulence. Swims of 1/4 mile and more are not uncommon.

The notion of long swims in cold water immediately raises the specter of hypothermia. What, you may ask, in the name of broached canoes is hypo whatchamacallit? Nonscientifically, hypothermia means that the body's heat regulating mechanisms are overwhelmed by heat loss to the environment, and core temperature in the brain and vital organs begins to drop. Left uncorrected, hypothermia will result in unconsciousness and death. While medical science does not totally understand hypothermia, it appears that some temperature regulating mechanisms run amuck. Normally, if a person is exposed to cold, skin pores contract and blood vessels in the extremities contract to restrict heat loss and conserve body core temperature. In hypothermia the pores open and blood vessels expand, allowing catastrophic heat loss throughout the body.

The first signs of so-called Stage I hypothermia include cold skin (even in some areas protected by clothes), blue lips, pallor, frequent shivering and chattering of teeth, dazed or incoherent behavior, clumsiness, and slurred speech. Even one or two of these signs should be taken seriously, since it is easier by far to prevent hypothermia than to reverse it. One of the most dangerous effects is the loss of judgement and coordination on the part of the victim. He climbs right back in the boat and paddles away, hoping dimly to warm himself up and avoid delaying others, only to flip and swim again, thus aggravating the problem. Thus whenever you or a companion finish a swim in cold water, check for signs of hypothermia and take immediate preventive steps. It is true that a slight feeling of chill can be overcome by resuming activity, but once the signs of hypothermia are evident, it cannot be corrected by paddling harder or other physical exercise, so the hypothermia victim should not get back in his boat until the condition is corrected. It does not have to be terribly cold for hypothermia to strike. I have seen it occur when the temperature is in the mid-fifties with sunshine and a gentle breeze. Recently the rangers fished a hypothermia victim out of his innertube on the Hiwassee on a 90 degree day. There is some potential for hypothermia whenever air, wind, or water conditions are such that you wouldn't consider swimming for pleasure.

Once hypothermia or the possibility of hypothermia is evident, it is critical that prompt action be taken to warm the victim. First, get the victim out of the water as quickly as possible. In some cases he may be already so weak that he needs help getting out. Heat loss in cold running water is much greater than in air. When water temperature is below 40 degrees, a person can be rendered unconscious after 10-15 minutes in the water. As soon as the victim is out of the water, get out a space blanket to cut heat loss while immediately assessing the seriousness of his condition and planning ways to apply external heat if necessary. If the victim is alert, still speaking clearly and shivering is not too serious, check out his clothing. Ordinary wet clothes should be replaced. But if he is wearing a wet suit or paddle jacket and pants over wool or similar insulation, it may be best not to remove these, just seeing that accumulations of cold water are induced to drain out properly. Keep him wrapped in the space blanket and give hot soup or similar substantial food.

Serious cases, with obvious clumsiness, slurred speech, uncontrollable shivering, or degrees of outright loss of consciousness, can no longer be relied on to rewarm themselves. They must be stripped and sandwiched by warmer bodies within the space blanket. The point of stripping everyone down is to permit rapid heat transfer. A paddler who has gotten so badly off may not recover sufficiently to paddle competently, so make plans to get him out to civilization if necessary.

[Editor's note] Obviously it is better to avoid getting hypothermia or wrapping yourself around a downed tree in the first place. In the next issue, Dave will discuss in detail how to

plan and equip yourself for winter trips. So that you don't go out and die of exposure before that issue arrives, I have summarized his recommendations as follows:

1. Get in shape before you paddle to help prevent overfatigue on the river.
2. Eat plenty of good food before and during cold weather trips. Take some hot soup in a thermos.
3. Avoid dehydration and overheating, which leave you more vulnerable when a long swim occurs.
4. Insulate your hands, head and feet to cut heat loss through these regions.
5. Avoid garments that don't protect when wet, like cotton jeans or goose down insulation.
6. Wear a wet suit, or bulky knits of wool or polyester covered by paddle jacket and pants.
7. Carry along extra insulating garments for unanticipated weather or emergencies. Even if you don't need them, someone else might.
8. Check weather forecasts carefully, but be ready for the unexpected. Weather in north Georgia is unpredictable. Sudden movement of a front can bring rain, wind, cold, sleet, or snow.
9. Make allowances for early darkness and unanticipated delays.
10. Take winter trips with strong parties only. Don't start down the river with paddlers of questionable ability.
11. Be ready and equipped to walk out or to withstand an overnight if necessary. Carry extra food and emergency fire starter.
12. Don't adopt a paddle-come-what-may attitude. When organizing the trip, see that everyone is mentally ready to leave the put-in and drive back home if conditions are bad.

Exploration Trip: Ellijay River- May 13, 1978. The Ellijay River flows out of the Swag of the Blue Ridge southwest to Ellijay, where it joins the Cartecay River to form the Coosawattee. Near Ellijay it flows in a broad valley and is quite flat. Consequently when Dr. Tom Brown, my wife Beth and I canoed the Ellijay, we tried to find a good takeout a few miles upstream, rather than use the hwy 5 or 52 bridges in Ellijay. We located and left my car at a point about 2 miles upstream on an old public road which leads to a washed out bridge. The vegetation was thick at this point, so we marked the takeout with a pile of sticks. Nevertheless we later paddled past it, so that I had to hitchhike back from Ellijay. I happened to get a ride from the man who owned the land next to the takeout, who said he had no objection to my taking out at the old bridge site which, from the discarded beer cans, also seems to be a popular lover's lane, etc.

Our intended run was about 7 miles, the largest part of which has an average gradient of 20 ft./mile and contains evenly distributed class I and occasional easy class II rapids. The river is narrow and winding and flows through mature, dense forest. It is rather like a narrower version of the second half of the Cartecay. This day the copious mountain laurel was in bloom amidst the wild azalea and rhododendron. Although the rapids were gentle, they were often rather technical; moreover the current was never slow until the end of the run; thus the intimate and lovely scenery was constantly changing. Round one bend we surprised a doe. On the day we paddled the Cartecay gauge read 2.2; 2.5 would have been better. Nevertheless the only spot which really needed more water to be decently runnable was a two foot ledge just past the only building on the run, an attractive cottage. The water, muddy after a rain, seemed equal in quality to that of the Cartecay. This lovely little river is a good one for trained beginners and for every paddler who enjoys variety and can be satisfied with primarily class I water.

Directions: Take hwy 5 north from Ellijay and bear left on a wide gravel road just past the 5th bridge from Ellijay. This turn is about 1.5 miles past Turniptown Creek. Go another 1.5 miles to the put-in (steep) on the northeast corner of the bridge. To get to the takeout, go 1/2 mile west from Ellijay on hwy 52 and continue straight onto a good county road to the right (as 52 turns sharply left) another 1.5 miles. You'll see the old bridge site on the right below the road and about 50 yds. from it. The takeout would be easy except for briars and bushes clogging the overgrown path to the river.

After our run we took in the buffet at the Top 'o Ellijay Restaurant, an economical and tasty "eat as much as you dare" affair (for hungry river rats- four stars).

Note: anyone with a Georgia river we could explore or that he would like to share with the membership, please contact me at Stephens Circle, Gainesville, GA 30501 (office- 404-532-5410; home - 404-536-6923).

---Roger Nott, Exploration

[Editor's note: Whitewater literature is full of information and advice, but sadly lacking in inspirational tracts. You know, like the ones thoughtful folks ring your doorbell to deliver on Saturday mornings when you're sleeping late instead of paddling. To help meet this need, I am reproducing the following homily. I found it while passing an old church. Noticing an aged kayak stored beneath the back steps, I saw the following inscribed on a stone nearby. I regret that my WT/78 word processor cannot reproduce the handsome lettering of the original.]

DESIDERWATER

Keep your head amidst the noise and haste, remembering what peace you might have found on an easier river. But be not caught on family floats. Attend church on Sundays, unless the rivers are full. Stretch your yarns not overmuch; and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive kayakers, they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself to others, you may become vain and bitter; for there will always be greater and lesser turkeys than yourself. On the other hand, you might learn something. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans; after all, few swim Five Falls at 2.9 and live to tell about it. Keep interested in your career, however humble; how else can you pay for your van? Exercise caution when following others, for their paths are full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; most boaters try to improve, and everywhere holes have swallowed heroism. Be yourself. Especially do not feign bravado when everyone else thinks you should portage. Neither joke about fear, for in the face of floodwater and stupidity it is as perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth: low volume boats, three- river weekends, pop-ups and enders. Even with bursitis you can crutch along on a low brace.

You are a child of the universe; though less than the fish and the ducks, you have a right to be here. That is, if you didn't con the trip leader. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt you'll reach your car eventually. Therefore be at peace with the River Trolls, remembering that they flip every nth boat at random no matter what you do. Roll up. Well at least hang on to your paddle.

WANT ADS

Wet suit top and bottom, Large men's \$25
 Wet suit boots, for 8 1/2 Or 9 foot \$4
 Especially good neoprene wet suit gloves \$8
 Norse paddle, nearly new \$30
 Stuart coffin paddle \$20
 Windproof paddling jacket \$3

HIPP kayak- built from kit. Very good condition. Kober paddle, helmet, skirt, float bags. \$300
 call Ralph Sikes, 993-4715

For items listed at left, call

Ross Wilson B: 255-1012 or H: 256-9256.

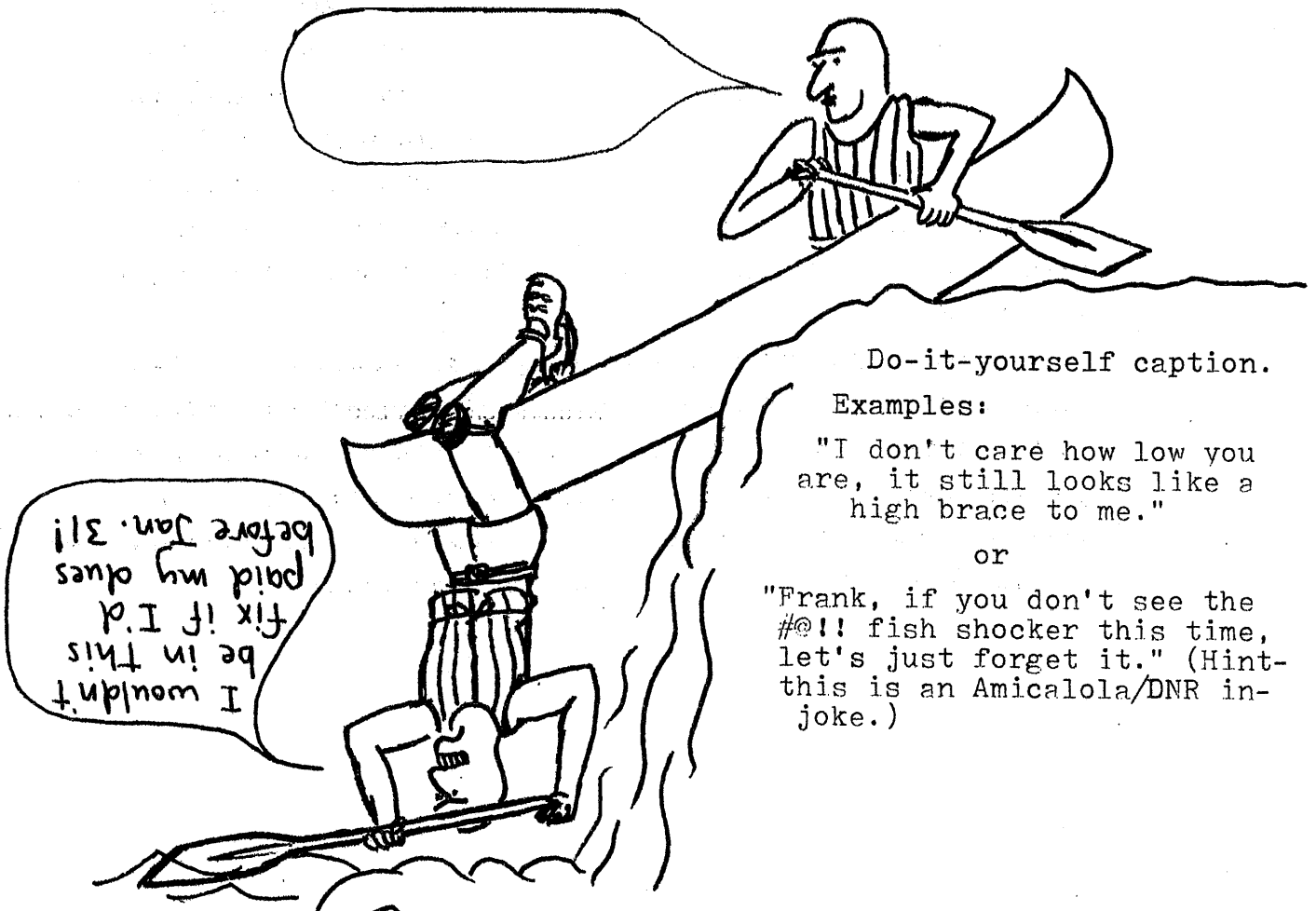
For Sale: 1977 Grumman 15 ft. lightweight canoe with float block. Excellent condition. Call George Neill at 482-2951 (office), or 294-9736 (home).

FOR SALE: Kayak mold similar to Phoenix Cascade. Mold fits in a wooden frame which prevents distortion. \$150. Call Wayne Owens, 885-5870, 436-5621, or 636-4121.

FOR SALE: Hollowform kayak, never used, with sprayskirt. \$300. Contact John Lucas, 528 Park Street, Gainesville, GA 30501. (404) 532-1627 home or 532-4341 ext. 278, office.

YOUR NEWSLETTER IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT. IF YOU LEAVE IT TO Ed., HE'S SURE TO FAKE IT! help! help!

TVA Toll Free Number--- 800-251-9242. This number may be used during office hours for information on TVA controlled rivers.



1979 TENTATIVE SCHEDULE
OF GCA RIVER TRIPS

	TRAINED BEGINNER	JUNIOR INTERMEDIATE	SENIOR INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED EXPERT	OTHER ACTIVITIES
February			Fightingtown Creek Class II		
	10	Okefenokee Swamp Stephen C. Foster	Cartecay Class III		
	17		Little River East Fork Class III		
	18			Little River Canyon Class III-IV	
	24			Chatooga III Class III-IV	
	25				Glacier Races at Nantahala
March	3		Conasauga Class III		
	4		Chauga Class III-IV	Tellico Class III-V	
	10	Okefenokee Swamp Suwannee Canal	Upper Chattahoochee Class III	*Upper Chauga Class IV	
	11	Okefenokee Swamp Suwannee Canal	Mountaintown Creek Class II		
	17		Talking Rock Creek Class II		Tellico Races
	18	Flint River Spewrell Bluff - Hwy. 36 Class II	Flint River Hwy. 36 - Robiddy Rd. Class III		
	24		Middle Chestattee Class III		Nantahala Spring Races
	25	Coosawattee Class II	Tesnatee Creek Class III		
	31			Chatooga III Class III-IV	Dixie Division Championship at Ocoee
April	1	Etowah Class II		Chatooga IV Class V	
	7		Fightingtown Creek Class II	Little River Canyon Class II-IV	Helen Trialath
	8	Talking Rock Creek Class II	Cartecay Class III	Ocoee Class IV	

	TRAINED BEGINNER	JUNIOR INTERMEDIATE	SENIOR INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED EXPERT	OTHER ACTIVITIES
April					
12			TSRA Obed Weekend 12-15 Intermediate to Advanced Expert		
14	Nacoochee Section Chattahoochee Class II				Beginner Slalom Clinic at Helen
15	Chattahoochee Duncan Bridge - Lake Lanier Class II		Upper Chattahoochee Class III		
21			Locust Fork Class III		Helen Races
22		Coosawattee Class II		*Tellico Class III-IV	
28		Hiwassee Class II		*Obed Class III-IV	Dixie Division Open Canoe Championships at Nantahala 28 & 29
29	Alcovy Class II		Chauga Class IV		
May					
4					Helen to Atlanta Marathon
5	Hudson Class II	Toccoa Class II	Little River East Fork Class III	Chatooga III Class III-IV	
6		Broad Class II-III		Little River Canyon Class III-IV	
12	Flint River Rt. 18 - Spewrell Bluff Class I			Amicalola Class IV	
13	Flint River Spewrell Bluff - Hwy. 36 Class II		Flint River Hwy. 36 - Pobiddy Rd. Class III		
18					
19					GCA Canoe Training Clinic
20					
26		Little Tennessee Class II		*Tellico Class III-IV	
27	Ocmulgee Class I		Cartecay Class III		
June					
2	Sequatchie Class II		Conasauga Class III		

	TRAINED BEGINNER	JUNIOR INTERMEIATE	SENIOR INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED EXPERT	OTHER ACTIVITIES
June					
	3	Mountaintown Creek Class II		*Amicalola Class IV	
	9	Coosawatte Class II		Ocoee Class IV	
	10	Oconee Class I	Nantahala Class III		
	16 17				Southeastern U. S. Canoe & Kayak Championsh Races
	23	Chattahoochee Nacoochee Section Class II		*Nolichucky Class III-IV	
	24		Upper Chattahoochee Class III	*French Broad Class III-IV	
	30	Flint River Rt. 18-Spewrell Class I	Etowah Class II	Chatooga IV Class V	
July					
	1	Flint River Spewrell Bluff - Hwy. 36 Class II	Flint River Hwy. 36 - Pobiddy Rd. Class III		
	7	Hudson Class II	Nantahala Weekend Class III		
	8		Broad Class II	Ocoee Class IV	
	14		Toccoa Class II	Chatooga III Class III-IV	
	15	Chatooga II Class II		Chatooga IV Class V	
	21		Hiwassee Weekend Class II	Ocoee Weekend Class IV	
	22				
	28		Broad Class II	Chauga Class III	
	29	Ocmulgee Class I			
August					
	4		Nantahala		
	5	Etowah Class II	Weekend Class III		

	TRAINED BEGINNER	JUNIOR INTERMEDIATE	SENIOR INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED EXPERT	OTHER ACTIVITIES
August 11		Toccoa Class II		Chatooga III Class III-IV	
12	Oconee Class I			Chatooga IV Class V	
18		Hiwassee Weekend		Ocoee Weekend	
19		Class II		Class IV	
25	Hudson Class II		Nantahala Weekend		
26		Broad Class II	Class III		

RIVERS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR TO BE SELECTED BY THE TRIP LEADERS
DEPENDING ON WEATHER AND WATER CONDITIONS.

September 2					Hiwassee Races
29					Nantahala
30					Trialathon
October 7					Advanced Slalom Clinic TBA
13					Intermediate Canoe Clinic TBA
14					Second Beginner Canoe Clinic TBA

* THESE TRIPS SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION OR BEING CHANGED TO DIFFERENT RIVERS
DUE TO UNFAVORABLE WEATHER OR WATER CONDITIONS.