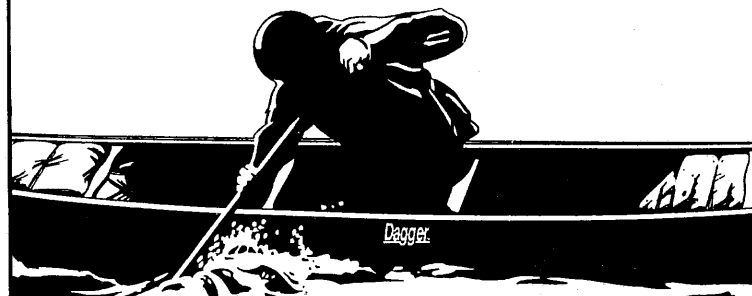


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The EDDY LINE

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Vol. 24, No. 7

July, 1989

ADDRESS CHANGE? SUBSCRIPTION PROBLEM? Write to GCA Membership Chairperson, P.O. Box 7023, Atlanta, GA 30357. The editor does not do these things. Deadline for the next newsletter is the 15th! Send material to Gary DeBacher, 614 N. Superior, Decatur, GA 30033. Please use a decent ribbon and type border-to-border (zero margins) with indented paragraphs, and don't skip a line between paragraphs. This saves valuable space. Photos, cartoons, artwork, and clippings of interest to paddlers are also welcome. Ads are free for members selling used paddling equipment only. NEXT EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING WILL BE THE FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH AT 7:30 PM, at the Atlanta Jewish Community Center at 1745 Peachtree Rd NE, Atlanta, just north of Brookwood Station next to an Int. House of Pancakes. Members and interested persons are invited to attend. If you wish to submit any matters for discussion or vote, call President Allen Hedden, 252-6167, so he can plan time on the agenda. EDDYLINE LATE? If your Eddyline has not arrived by the 15th, call GCA Treasurer Ed Schultz, 266-3734, so he can mail a replacement copy. Please make full use of the extended trip list from the previous month before you hit the panic switch, but if the schedule runs out before you get the latest copy, you can call the editor Gary DeBacher, 634-4651, for interim info to tide you over. Or you can just plan to work on the yard.....

July	1 Etowah	Class 1-2, trained beginner	Nancy Barker	874-8897
	Nantahala	2-3, intermediate	Barry Hahn	252-9538
	2 Hiwassee	1-2+, easy intermediate	Brenda Burnette	425-9671
	Cartecay	2-3, intermediate	Dick Hurd	664-4770
	4 Upper Hooch	2-3, intern.	Oreon Mann	522-3469
	6 Thursday GCA Board Meeting. All Welcome. See above for details.			
	8 Etowah	1-2, trained beginner	Polly Heyward	237-4503
	Middle Hiwassee	1-2, trained beginner	Gary DeBacher	634-4651
	Nantahala	2-3, intermediate	Roger Salas	1-673-6392
	Chattooga 3	3-4, advanced	Scott Wilhelm	449-3835
	8-9 Women's Canoe Clinic			
	9 Toccoa	1-2, trained beginner	Dick Hurd	664-4770
	Upper Hooch	2-3, intermediate	Jimmy Gunter	974-3843
	Ocoee	3-4, very advanced	Greg Grant	1-615-344-2573
	15 Nantahala	2-3, intern.	Dave Bowman	923-0954
	Lower Amicalola	3-4, advanced	Rob Kerr	1-889-6566
	15-16 Beginner's Canoe & Kayak Clinics			
	16 Upper Amicalola	1-3, easy intermediate	Bill McLendon	973-5864
	Chattooga 4	3-5, expert	Roger Nott	1-536-6923
	22 Nantahala	2-3, intermediate	Lee Miles	321-5065
	Chattooga 3	3-4, advanced.	Gary DeBacher	634-4651
	22-23 Hiwassee Weekend	1-2+, easy intermediate	Jimmy Gunter	974-3843
	23 Flint (Yellowjacket)	2-3, intermediate	Dan & Elise MacIntyre	252-9513
	29 Hiwassee	1-2+, easy intermediate	Jim Silavent	587-1172
	Nantahala	2-3, intern.	Alicia Rezak	296-8179 after 8 PM
	Ocoee	3-4, very advanced	John & Tee Brower,	1-912-754-6457 after 8
	29-30 Women's Kayak Clinic			
	30 Nantahala	2-3, intern.	Rett Smith	493-6472
	Ocoee	3-4, very advanced	Oreon Mann	522-3469

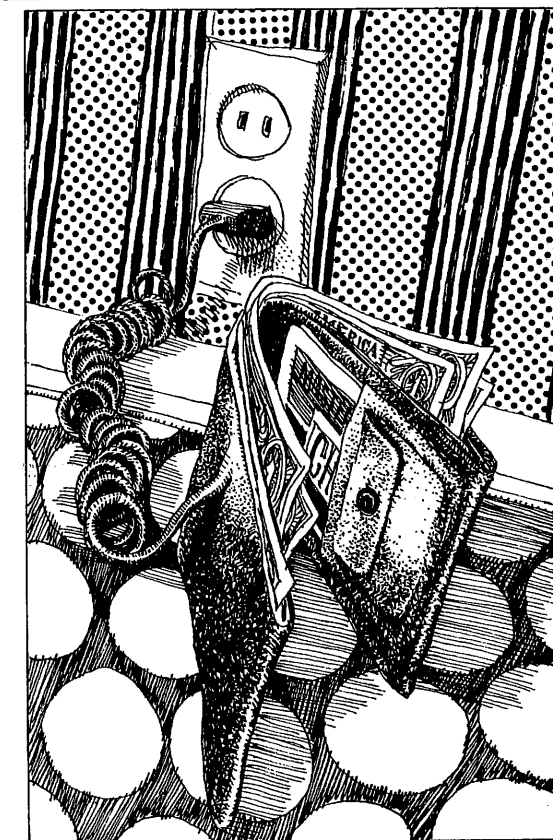
August 3 GCA Board Meeting— All welcome. See above for details.

5 Etowah	1-2, trained beginner	Stewart Stokes	393-9746
5-6 Nantahala weekend	2-3, intern.	Tom & Jean McCormick	1-912-653-2012
6 Chattooga 4	3-5, expert	John Bell	H:499-2168 W: 422-1250

12-13 GALA CANOEING AFFAIR— just when you thought it was safe to get back on the water... See flyer for details.

Call Carol to coordinate* trips— 373-6683. After July 15 you can call Greg Grant for weekday Ocoee trips— 1-615-3442573.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS. TVA WILL AGAIN RUN RECREATIONAL WATER ON THE MIDDLE HIWASSEE on selected Saturdays, specifically from 9 AM to 3PM on July 8 and August 12. The flow release of 500 cfs is about half normal generating levels, so that the class 1 rapids on this section will not be washed out. You can launch on the Hiwassee at the TVA access area on Chatuge Dam Reservation just upstream of Barnard Bridge. A public take out is about 10 miles down at Shallowford Bridge on hwy 1302, about one mile north of hwy 64. Note that I have scheduled a trip on July 8, a rare opportunity to run this easy section on a weekend. TVA tried to get this started last summer, but the drought left them with too little water in Lake Chatuge to share. Should be no problem this summer, but if they don't release, I will move the trip to the lower Ocoee, below Parksville Dam, an even easier run. (More announcements on page 2.)



"We have manipulated costs to sustain the illusion that energy is very cheap and can be used extravagantly."

THE NOC CITIZENS' RACES will be taking place on Saturday afternoons through July. These are short slalom races with no penalties for touching poles. You get two runs and a T-shirt for about \$6, plus a chance to win some big prizes later in the summer at a drawing. You can get in an early morning run on the Ocoee or Nantahala, watch the crowds from the bank in mid afternoon, register for the Citizens' Race around 4 PM, practice a bit, and get in your runs on a first-come, first-served basis starting around 5 PM. The inimitable C-1 racer Kent Ford usually presides, and he knows how to turn your arms to rubber with about 15 gates.

THE 1989 OCOEE RODEO, including the National Squirting Championship, will be held at Double Trouble on August 5th and 6th, sponsored by American Whitewater Affiliation and Watauga Laminates. After prelims on Saturday, there will be a cookout and raffle at Wildwater Ltd. All race, cookout and rodeo proceeds will go to the conservation efforts of the AWA. Pre-registration is encouraged. Contact Risa Shimoda Callaway, American Whitewater Affiliation, P.O. Box 375, Denver, North Carolina 28037, 704-483-5049. If Risa is out squirting, you can also call Brent Cochran at Watauga Laminates, Rt 4 Box 74, Banner Elk, NC 28604, 704-963-4093. —Ed.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Anyone in Dixie Division interested in car pooling or getting together to haul boats to the OPEN BOAT DOWNRIVER NATIONALS in Maine in July, please call Walt Hodge H: 205-553-3986 or Larry Castillo H: 933-9416 or W: 1-800-426-6705. USCA members can register to race without having to join the ACA.

BWCA, Fall '89

I will again be taking an informal group into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in September. The trip is not full (max. 6 people). The itinerary includes 12 days on the water, 125 miles, 46 lakes, 3 rivers, 80 portages, bisecting one of the most interesting and wildest sections of this wilderness paradise. Call Russ Koester at 233-4093 (night) or 750-7405 (day).

Saturday, April 8th dawned cold and rainy, "perfect" paddling weather. At least we knew we'd have plenty of water. The Tellico was crystal clear and running a solid 1,100 cfs. Nine of us had a wonderful trip. We put in at the bridge below Jared's Knee and ran down to the Forest Service pullout. Beth Rolle, John Coneely, and Rhett Smith paddled kayaks; Brent Fulghum was in a C-1; and the rest of us (Dave Richardson, Allen Hedden, Susan McGilvary, Mary Trauner and I) paddled OC-1s. Allen "if you ain't got a red boat you ain't ----" Hedden was paddling a brand new green Whitesell which still had a mind of its own. It liked to run rapids by itself when Allen didn't keep a hold on it. We did lots of hole surfing, and there were only a couple of short swims. Beth got her first pip-up (she didn't get quite high enough to call it a pop-up), and Mary's duck only got away once. It was a great trip. Doug Klaucke.

CONASAUGA, Sunday, May 14. We ran the section which begins at the junction of the Conasauga and Jacks Rivers, on the northern edge of the Cohutta Wilderness Area. We caught the river about five days after some fairly heavy rains, and the water was still up at a good level. The river was playful, but never too demanding. The group was all canoes. The three solo boats included Hank Baudet, Don Luce, and myself. The two tandem teams were Mike and Connie Smith, and Owen Kingman and Diane Linder. All seemed to enjoy the beautiful unspoiled scenery of this clear mountain stream. Thanks to Hank for leading us through the rapids. -- Brannen Proctor.

June 3 - Etowah River Cleanup Trip. Our crew arrived on schedule and began clearing the put-in area of trash. Soon we noticed big black clouds gathering all around the sky. By the time the shuttle returned, the rain began coming down by the bucketsfull. The storm let up after about 30 minutes, and we went down to the river to bail our boats! The rain cooled us off nicely. The mountain laurel was still pretty and the rhododendron buds were fat, promising new flowers soon. By lunchtime at the falls, the sun was out and it was a beautiful day. Most of the group attempted the little drop below the falls. We had one backwards run and swim, several runs that ended on the rocks below, and one clean run by Jeff and Cayenne Eng[e]. We were glad Cayenne could show her dad the right way to do it. At the takeout we found enough trash to fill a dumpster. We left the river areas much cleaner than we found them, but there is still a lot of trash to be picked up. As a reward for our labors we enjoyed strawberries and whipped cream, homemade chocolate chip cookies, assorted M and M candies, and iced soft drinks. Thank you to Polly, Barry, Marty and Kathy for sharing lead and sweep. In OC1s: Jason Maddox, Polly Heyward, Barry Hahn, Becky Engel, and me. In OC2s: Jeff and Cayenne Engel, Marty Dyche and Kathy Overby. In OC3: Jim, Kristin, and Sarah Patsios. Nancy Barker-Trip Leader.

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Rafters relive attack: 'We couldn't believe it was happening'

By SUSAN WARREN
Houston Chronicle

It was their second day rafting the river, and the weather couldn't have been better: sunny, 80 degrees, with a cool breeze lightly blowing.

By late afternoon, the three young

■ Mexican police officials said they have identified two suspects in the sniper attack: Page 21A

Texas professionals had drifted into a rugged, isolated part of the Rio Grande River in Big Bend National Park — an area surrounded by

mountains, desert and cliffs. It was about 4 p.m. Wednesday, time to begin scouting for a place to camp before heading their raft into the San Vicente canyon Thursday morning.

Within minutes, the men's peaceful sojourn down the Rio Grande was to turn into a desperate race from death. The three friends — an accountant, a teacher and a chemist — would become the innocent prey of two gunmen determined to chase them down and kill them.

The ordeal began with an uneasy feeling about a man waving to them from the Mexican bank.

Ben Saage, 29, of Alpine, his cousin Jim Gentry, 29, of Houston, and Russ Alexander, 30, of Waco, had rafted the Rio Grande before. The sight of men, even armed men, wandering the Mexican bank was not uncommon.

But this man, who had first whistled at them, then returned their wave, was behaving suspiciously. They first glimpsed him as they rounded a sharp horseshoe bend, then noticed him again when he began following them along the bank.

It looked as if the young Mexican, perhaps in his mid-20s, was holding a rifle alongside his leg, as if he were trying to hide it.

"We still weren't really worried," Saage said, but Alexander urged his friends to paddle more quickly and outdistance the stranger. Within a few minutes they thought they'd left him behind.

Then they heard a shot. Alexander remembers the feel of the bullet passing next to his chest.

"I felt it go by my shirt," he said. "I fell off the raft backward and looked down into the water to see if I was bleeding. I wasn't. There was just a hole in my shirt pocket."

The three men bailed out of the boat at the same instant, huddling behind it in the water so that the rubber raft shielded them from the rifleman.

"At this point we figured, well, this is sort of serious," Saage said.

A second shot splashed into the water inches in front of them, and the friends began discussing their options.

Their first thought was of the guns they had carried in their packs for protection in the remote wilderness. Alexander had brought along a Colt .45, and Saage had a Walther 9mm. Carefully reaching into the raft, they dragged out the packs.

"We couldn't believe it was happening," Saage said.

All three knew that snipers had shot and killed a man and wounded two other people rafting the Rio Grande last November, but they felt it was an isolated incident.

Feeling vulnerable in the water, Alexander, Saage and Gentry decided to make for the American-side river bank at a bend where they

thought they would be out of the gunman's sight. The landing they chose was a slippery slope leading to a rock terrace about 30 feet up.

It was a long climb with a rifleman at their backs.

"It was real hard, muddy and sandy and real slick. We slipped down it a couple of times. We were deathly afraid we were going to get shot," Saage said.

Alexander said he felt sure they would be safe when they reached the shore: "I didn't think he'd come across the river and hunt us. But he did."

The three lay in the tall grass behind a slight mound. Behind them, a cliff wall rose about 75 feet. After a few minutes, Gentry made his way about 20 yards down river to hide behind a boulder. Soon Alexander joined him.

"He kind of crawled on his stomach toward Jim, and then he jumped up and started running real fast," Saage said. Another shot shattered the rock Gentry was hiding behind. A fragment ricocheted off Gentry's back, and for a moment, he thought he'd been shot.

Unnerved by the knowledge they were well within the gunman's sight, Saage stayed where he was. But Gentry heard a noise somewhere above them.

"I started thinking, if it was me, I may try to cross the river and try to get above us," Gentry said. He took Alexander's Colt .45 and crept up the slope toward the top of the cliff. Halfway there, he saw the rifleman stick his head over the ledge directly over where Saage still hid.

Gentry froze, knowing he was an open target if spotted.

"But he didn't see me. He saw Ben," Gentry said.

He watched in horror as the rifleman stood and took aim at Saage, who was unaware of what was happening.

"I wasn't even really thinking," Gentry said. "I took the gun and I took a real quick aim and I fired."

The gunman jerked back from the cliff. Saage made a dash for the boulder where Alexander was still hiding. The three friends regrouped there, staggered by the knowledge that the Mexican had chased them across the river.

"I knew he was going to kill us if he could," Alexander said.

"Speaking for myself," Gentry said, "I was at the point where I kind of felt I could easily slip off into panic and lose control. There's just a real fine line between panic and maintaining control when you know that at any minute you can be shot and you'd be dead."

The three friends decided to work their way toward the top of the mountain that bordered the river, staying above and in front of the gunman.

They began a pattern of 20- and 30-yard rushes, dashing across open spaces from boulder to gully to rock pile.

Before they moved, Gentry said, they fired off a couple of shots toward where they believed the gunman hid, to force him into cover. Then they ran, sometimes together, sometimes alone. They dove for cover across cactus and rocks and shrubbery. Many times bullets ricocheted past them, shattering rocks.

They soon figured that two gunmen were after them. Some of the shots sounded different and seemed to come from farther away.

By 6 p.m., they had traveled about 250 yards up the mountain and about 300 yards downriver. Saage estimated. The men thought that when night fell, they could escape over the mountain under cover of darkness.

Their plan worked. Before the full moon rose, they made their way to the top of the mountain, then descended and followed an animal trail through the desert.

With a map from Saage's pack, the men determined that a creek bed would take them to a dirt road, then to a paved road leading to Rio Grande Village. Temperatures fell rapidly. Exhaustion made them consider stopping several times, but the cold — and fear they might still be followed — kept them going.

Saage estimates they walked about 15 miles before they hit the paved road. Within 20 minutes, they'd caught a ride to Rio Grande Village and reported their ordeal to park rangers.

The trio spent Thursday and Friday with Border Patrol agents reviewing the scene of the shooting. Trackers discovered that, just as the three friends feared, they had been followed by two horsemen during part of their trek through the desert.

Cut, bruised, scratched and sore, the three men said they plan to drive home Sunday after filing a complaint in Mexico today.

Alexander said he figures three things saved their lives: "The good Lord, sheer luck, and the Mexican was a bad shot."



FOR SALE: WABASH VALLEY DOWNRIVER SOLO BOAT. Reinforced Kevlar layup, adjustable sliding seat, splash guards, floatation cells at ends. Length 16'6". \$375. J.M. SOLO PLAYBOAT. Kevlar with reinforced bottom, floatation, knee pads, adj. thigh straps, foot brace and skid plates. \$400. Call Larry Castillo, home 933-9416, work 1-800-426-6705.

NEW AD POLICY: Untyped want ads will be edited to one line and printed in this eye-catching typeface. I don't like typing ads. -Ed.

A reminder: WANT ADS ARE FREE TO PAID-UP GCA MEMBERS SELLING USED PADDLING-RELATED EQUIPMENT ONLY. Ads for "new" equipment or things like cabins, lots, rentals, bikes, sailboats, cars etc., must include \$5 for up to 2 lines, \$10 for up to 5 lines. If you're not in the membership directory, call me or clip and send your newsletter address. Type your ad if possible. Keep it short, single-spaced, across the full width of the page. Please include all that you're selling in a single ad. Mail your ad before the 15th of the month to: Gary DeBacher, 659 Scott Circle, Decatur, GA 30033. Sorry, no ads taken on the phone. FREE ADS THAT DON'T FIT THIS FORMAT (5 lines or 7/8 inch vertically) WILL NOT BE RUN.

Why Knot?

The Clove Hitch

by Bart Lee

The true measure of the addictive power of paddling is not in the number of weekends or hours the newcomer spends in the boat or on the water. It is more clearly observed in the rate of speed at which novices learn to camp out. Of course, there are people who come to paddling who have much camping experience and it is consequently difficult to judge their dependency. But those who come from the more civilized regions of modern recreation to the Friday night crash-camp routine of whitewater, and come with facility and regularity, are addicted, clearly. One hears grumbles about having to camp and hears fond memories of huts, inns, fireplaces and lodges in other games in other places. But here the speaker sits, on the ground, free to leave, eating a miserable breakfast from a cranky stove, listening to the barely audible background noise of the first drop, trying to control the onset of adrenaline anxiety. "Next weekend..."

Some tips for the "only-camp-to-paddle" camper.

1. Try to set up your new tent at least once for practice in the good light before the Friday midnight beviouac.
2. If the river is seriously low and needs rain just throw your sleeping bag right on a ground cloth under the stars, don't set up the tent.
3. Assume, in the dark, that any vegetation under four feet tall is poison ivy. (24 feet in selected southern Appalachian river valleys.)
4. Avoid the temptation to sleep on the car seat. You'll wake up stiff and consequently miss rolls all day.
5. Don't waste too much time looking for a level tent site. If the river is good enough for all the trouble

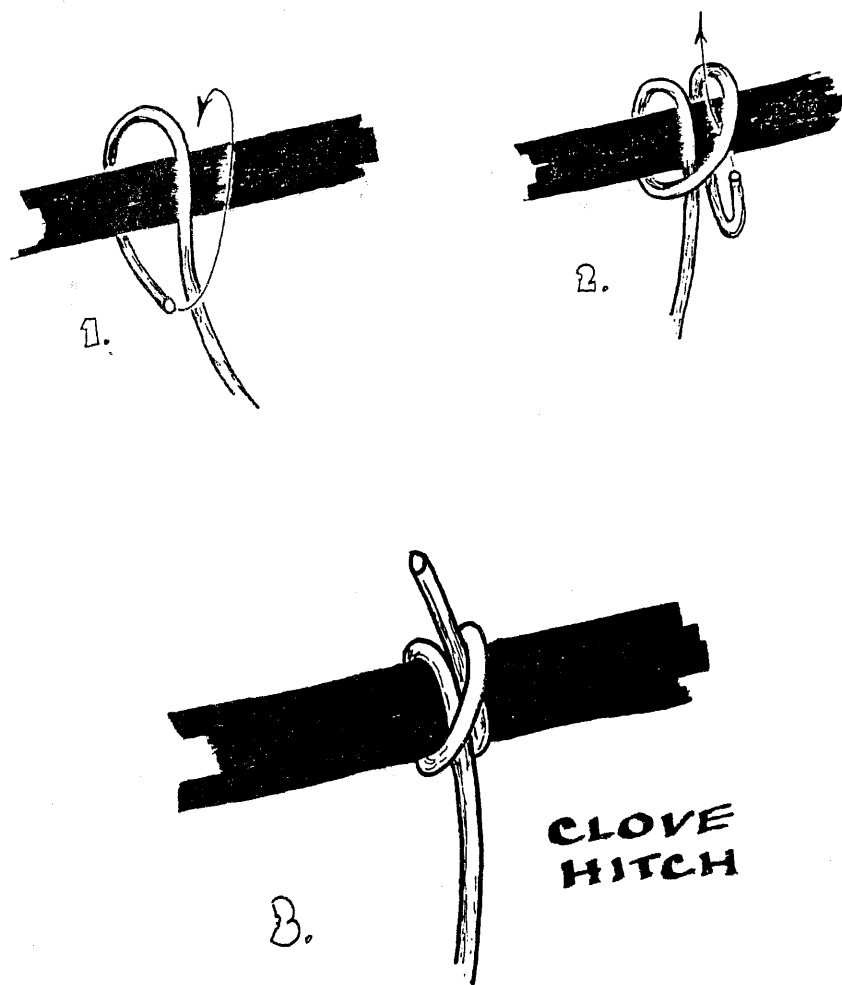
there will be no level ground. If you do arrive to find a good camp site, there are two possible explanations. A. You have been misled as to the quality of the river. B. You are lost.

6. Never, never cook yourself a fatty bacon and eggs breakfast and then take a long shuttle ride in the back of a pickup truck over a long and crooked, occasionally rough mountain road. You will not want to paddle when the ride is over. You may want to die.
7. Learn to tie a couple of campers' knots. They still have their uses.

A clove hitch is the knot to use for fastening a rope to some other object, the diameter or sectional size

of which ranges from near that of the rope to 20 or 40 time larger. It will grip the object tightly and will resist sliding along the length of the object around which it is tied. Rope to tree, rope to tent pole, rope to roof rack, to tent stake, to another rope. There are many ways to tie a clove hitch depending on the object tied to. The illustrated method works pretty much everywhere. If it is not tied around something else it is not a clove hitch. If it is tied around itself it is two half hitches. If it is tied in air it is two underhand loops. And a clove hitch is frequently finished off by tying a half hitch on top of it. A clove hitch is a little like English "be" verbs -- absolutely indispensable and hopelessly irregular in use.

Another in the excellent series from the TSRA Newsletter



Chattooga Section III JUNE 10, 1989 Guage Reading: 1.8' start/ 1.6' finish

The calls Wednesday night asking about the Chattooga III trip on Saturday let me know that either: A) Gwen Bergen's eye infection had become worse so she was calling in one of several IOU's from me; B) old age had finally caught up with her; *or C) Gwen had wisely realized that paddling/leading trips is manly work not meant for the weaker, fairer sex.** Fifteen boats (the maximum allowed on GCA's permit) eventually showed up for the trip although four boats chose to form a private group and put in at Earl's Ford. Two other boaters were delayed by gremlins/ angry paddling gods but were able to catch the main group at second ledge after obtaining a private permit. The long walk in to Sandy Ford was rewarded by clearskies, mountain laurel in bloom, and a guage reading of 1.8'. The group took a fairly leisurely pace down the river, stopping to scout at major rapids. Several groups of private boaters plus a few rafts were also enjoying the near perfect conditions. A few swims occurred at Second Ledge but the remainder of the trip to Bull Sluice was fairly "dry". Unfortunately the legions of Boulder Bunnies Gwen had promised at Bull Sluice failed to materialize. After the standard "running Bull Sluice is not part of this GCA trip" lecture, half the group took the intelligent route (read portage) while the remaining brave (perhaps foolish??) souls ran The Bull with only a few swims. Paddling K-1 were Jim Biasco and Matt Camp. OC-1 paddlers were Ron Towe, Hank Baudet, Brian Boyd, Dirk Bietrand, Sherry Spurr, Barney Spurr, Dave Richardson, and Brannen Proctor. Paddling OC-2 were Julie Keller and Francis whose last name I forgot (they were a good tandem team) Thanks go to Brannen Proctor for running sweep and to Jim Biasco for setting up a safety boat at major rapids. Special thanks go to Ron Towe for running lead and his coaching on route selection at major rapids. Trip coordinator- Dave Richardson * Happy 30th Birthday Gwen and welcome to the over-the-hill crowd!

**As my funeral is imminent after Gwen reads these chauvinistic remarks, the author requests that donations be made to your favorite river conservation fund in lieu of flowers.

ETOWAH May 27, Trip Coordinator - Barry Hahn

It was a beautiful holiday week-end. It was made even more wonderful than the gorgeous mountain laurel which were in full-bloom by the GCA friends who opted for this trip. In short we had a good group and I for one had a wonderful time.

I thought this would be a very large group because I received more than a dozen telephone calls from people on MONDAY. That is unheard of as the other trips are not committed to until at least Wednesday or Thursday. And then, they wait to see what the weather report is expected to be. What I'm saying is what our crew may have lacked in experience we more than made up for in enthusiasm. Our crew. Who were we? We were some of GCA's finest: OC2- Nancy Barker and her granddaughter Karen Maddox, Ed and Marcie Schultz, Cathy Overby and Marty Dyches; Myrtie and Mel Schoychild; OC3 Jim Patsios with daughter Sarah and son George; K1 Steve Kramer (that is right K1 a turncoat from OC1); and in OC1 were Joan Mc Nab, Doug Pratt (that is right a convert from K1) and myself. Thanks to Jim for running shuttle, Ed for leading and I swept. Thanks to several who helped cut limbs from the dead-fall. I believe it was Ed and Jim. Others might have also helped, but I was too tired to notice.

Anyway we ran from Highway 9E to Castleberry Bridge on what some call the "Hightower River" and some call it "Rio del Oro" (River of Gold) and I call it a most enjoyable float. We found the minutes and hours and friendships to be golden. I got to better know many of those on the trip. Folks whom I consider 24 carat. Whether on this river or others. Nancy and Ed were early mentors of mine three years ago when I was introduced to canoeing. I have a special spot in my heart for such folks. I only hope that I can be as helpful to introduce others to our sport and wonderful club.

Doug asked me, "how many other 56 year old guys go canoeing?" I said "only the smart ones." Doug, I want to change my remarks upon reflection to "only the lucky ones." Thanks to my GCA friends I have had over two hundred golden experiences on trips during these past three years. Thanks! Thank you all very, very much!

FOR SALE: 18' Wenonah Sundowner. Kevlar, PVC core, padded ash yoke, sliding bow seat and adjustable foot brace. New condition! \$1300.00 Call 421-1849. If no answer - leave message. --Marietta.

FOR SALE: 17' Michicraft aluminum canoe with lake keel. Very good condition. \$300.00. Call evenings (404) 472-3733 for Christy, Thomaston, GA.

WEST VIRGINIA WEEK OF RIVERS -- MAY 15-19, 1989 -- Dewey Tate

Each year since taking up white-water paddling four years ago, I have taken an N.O.C. clinic of some type. I consider these clinics to be inexpensive vacations which have dramatically improved my paddling, plus they are a lot of fun and provide a safe introduction to new rivers. This year I did the West Virginia "Week of Rivers." It was a great week!

I have talked to a lot of people about West Virginia paddling, and the rivers always talked about are the **NEW** and the **GAULEY**. I learned there are several other excellent rivers there of which I had never heard. There had been a lot of recent rain in the area so all the rivers were up, including some streams which are hard to catch with adequate water.

We started the week on the **WILLIAMS**, which was a great warm-up. This is a continuous Class II, III stream with over 15 runnable miles. A good Forest Service road runs the length of the river so you can run as much as you like. We did 11 miles with a lot of playing. When I say continuous, I mean mile after mile of non-stop rapids, with as many eddies and play spots as you will ever see. It is not a difficult stream, but pretty, and a lot of fun.

My favorite stream was the **CRANBERRY**, which we ran on Tuesday. This was a step up in difficulty from the **WILLIAMS**, and the prettiest river I've ever seen. It was absolutely beautiful, with non-stop action for 8 or more miles. My best description of the **CRANBERRY** is a longer, prettier, more technical Tellico, with miles of huge boulders, mid-size drops, and tight turns. Any good Nantahala paddler can handle this river, but it is tight and technical. We all elected to walk one rapid where there were a number of ways to screw up and be swept into or under a badly undercut rock. Jim Holcomb of the N.O.C. gave this advice: "We will tell you how to run it, but if you make a mistake here, you have to realize you may drown, and there will be nothing Masha and I can do to save you." 'Nuff said for me, and apparently for everyone else. There was an easy carry around this spot, so if you ever get to West Virginia, I highly recommend this beautiful river -- it alone was worth my week, and I intend to go back and do it again. At the water level we caught, this is a great river.

On day three we moved up another notch in difficulty by paddling the upper **MEADOW**. The volume of water and size of holes and waves reminded me of the Ocoee, but more technical. The bad part of this river was a 7-8 mile flat water paddle to get to the white water, but once there it was a good run. The white-water section is about 4-5 miles of continuous technical paddling. If you can paddle the Ocoee, you can handle this OK. We had a good group of paddlers but there were a few swims on this river.

Thursday was intimidation time. The lower **GAULEY!** At Gauley Festival time in the fall when Summerville Lake level is lowered for the winter, 2 of 3 tubes are usually opened, plus the volume entering the river from the Meadow, for total CFS of about 2400. On the day of our run the lake was full, so all three tubes were open, plus the Meadow was over a thousand CFS, for total volume of 3600+ CFS. Three times the normal volume of the Ocoee! Jim and Dave were concerned, but decided to give it a try. This is a big river with big volume -- by far the biggest water I have paddled. Immediately upon putting onto the river you feel the power of the water. Even in the eddies! It is very pushy. The first rapid, immediately below the put in, is normally not much of a rapid according to those who had paddled the river before (most of the group had paddled the Gauley several times). At 3600 CFS it made Double Trouble on the Ocoee look like a ripple! Was I intimidated? You bet your ass! Through the first two rapids I was so tight I squeaked, but I made it through them upright -- not too gracefully but upright. At the third rapid, by far the biggest yet, I started scouting a sneak route while Jim talked to the group about possible routes. Dave Masha then ran one of these routes cleanly, but with some obvious effort. I'm thinking, "no way can I do that!" Then Jim makes an even tougher looking run on a tougher route. Now I'm thinking, "What am I doing here? No way am I gonna try that!" Then one of the group tries Jim's route and makes it through with one good low brace. Then another makes it with no problem. Now I'm thinking that if I sneak it I'm going to be a wimp. But a live wimp!

About this time another guy tries it, wipes out, and has a long nasty swim, including a "to hell with boat and paddle," desperate overhand stroking swim around an undercut rock. I finally convince myself to give the Jim Holcomb route a try, and with much trepidation, have a clean run with about a gallon of water in the boat -- what a confidence builder!

As we moved on down river, I quickly got over the intimidation, started to paddle confidently, and enjoyed myself. I ran every rapid cleanly and found that all the hours spent playing on the Ocoee had prepared me quite well!

The last major rapid is "Gate to Hell," "Hell's Gate," or some such name -- whatever, a scarey sucker! At this point the river is wider than the Ocoee at its widest

point, and makes a big sweeping downhill turn to the left. On the right side near the bottom it crashes into, through, under, and around a huge pile of house-sized boulders, most of which are undercut and most of the openings filled with trees. After scouting several possible routes, it was decided there were no sneak routes, and the best route was to eddy hop half way down the right side, then ferry across to river left and finish the run down river left. All the while avoiding huge waves, holes, rocks, and ledges. No problem -- screw up and you're dead!

While eddy hopping down the right side, three people swam, including a C boater who missed the only roll he missed all week -- probably because he was scared! After a desperate swim we drug him out just before the rock garden. Boat and paddle are gone! We made it to the last eddy, and now we have to make the toughest, longest ferry I've ever seen. At this point I don't want to sit around getting nervous; I want to go, so I'm the first to give it a try. Talk about adrenaline! I went across that river so fast I could have towed a skier! Once again a clean run! I paddled the Gauley without flipping once! Do I feel good about it? Yeah!

On the last day we were scheduled to paddle the **NEW**, which was running over 3 feet. Jim and Dave felt at the start of the week the upper limit for the group would be 2.2 feet, but decided by Friday they were willing to try it at 3 feet if we were. The group took a vote and decided to go for a shorter run due to a long drive home of 8+ hours after getting off the river; so we ran the middle **MEADOW**. This is a pretty run with lots of class 3 rapids through boulder gardens. A Nantahala paddler can handle it if you can catch it with enough water. However, don't underestimate it -- we had 3 or 4 swimmers out of a good group of paddlers. There is also a Class 5 takeout!

In total this was a great week, like all the N.O.C. clinics I've taken. Good food, good people, and good paddling! If you haven't paddled in West Virginia, I recommend this clinic as a great way to go. I came away from the week feeling great about my paddling -- a full week of some tough rivers which I hadn't paddled before, and didn't swim a single time! (I flipped once the first day while side surfing at a small ledge.) Much, much better than I ever thought I would, or could, do. All those body surfs of the Ocoee paid off. A tip of the hat to the N.O.C. staff for a great trip and a fun week.

NEXT YEAR -- THE COLORADO!

"MILDCARD CLEANUP"

JUNE 17, 1989

As of early Friday evening, zero people had called for this trip so it was time to go to Plan B. Several experienced paddlers who had agreed to help with a class I-II cleanup/beginners trip were more than happy to take advantage of the previous week's rain for an informal, impromptu jump trip. The net result was a run on Lower Amicalola Creek at 1.1' (Ga. 53 gage). A large number of people showed up, and the put in which made it convenient to split into two groups. This water level made the first several miles of rapids a lot of fun and made the five+ miles of flatwater at the end almost bearable, even in whitewater boats not accustomed to going in a straight line. Paddling with the impromptu cleanup crew were oc-1: Tom Burkiewicz, Susan McGilvary, and Dave Richardson; K-1: John Connally, Jim Biasco, Flip Hampton (?? club affiliation unknown), and Fred Borchuck & Rick Woodford of AWC who had earlier graciously agreed to help with a beginner/intermediate/cleanup trip. We managed to fill up a couple of trash bags at the takeout and a few more at the put in before the supply of trash bags ran out. Most of the creek is fairly clean due to the limited use the creek receives (except near bridges).

My regrets to the few people who called later Friday night asking about the scheduled trip and a suggestion that the trip leader be contacted a little earlier in the week (this especially applies to the person who called after 11pm). Next trip I'll follow Allen Hedden's suggestion and list a specific river.

non-trip, non-coordinator: Dave Richardson

Foursome on the Cartecay, Memorial Day, 1989

John Heis and Mary M^CKean, OC2, Ted and Lissa Jackson, K1. Fortunately Mary called us and we had a trip group for our Cartecay run. The level was 1.9', a pleasant not-too-scrapey level for a lazy day. We met the usual horde of rafters and inner tubers but didn't see too much drunkenness. Mary and John tried twice to conquer the Seagill Mill rapid but the River Trolls got to show off by turning their canoe over. A double whammy. The rest of the river was fun after looking at the rapid (is it named?) with a double hole, one a mild keeper, and the l-o-n-g flatwater section at the end. Despite the ever increasing population riverside, the Cartecay is still a prime intermediate river. Try it sometime.