

*The Tennessee Eastman*

# **HIKING & CANOEING NEWS**

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*December 1993*

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## **HIKING**

### **WHITETOP MOUNTAIN TO VIRGINIA CREEPER TRAIL (Scheduled for Saturday, 4 December 93)**

*Leader: G. S. Luttrell, (Phone 615.239.9854)*

*Rating: Moderate*

We will spot a car at the Va. 728 access point to the Virginia Creeper Trail then drive to Va. 600 at Elk Garden to begin a 10 mile hike crossing Whitetop Mountain. We will meet at the parking lot between Burger King and McDonald's in Colonial Heights at 7:30 AM. Since weather could be a problem, contact the hike leader if you are interested.

### **DECEMBER 2ND SATURDAY MAINTENANCE (Scheduled for Saturday, 11 December 93)**

*(Ted Malone reporting)*

No, its not a typo. Our 3rd Saturday Maintenance has been moved to the 2nd Saturday for the month of December. This is to keep some of our members from anguishing over a decision between going on the maintenance trip or visiting relatives for the holidays. Plans are (weather permitting) to install a bridge on Jones Branch above the Nolichucky Expeditions. The drive is not far and the project should really be interesting. We'll build/assemble the bridge offsite prior to the 11th and then take it apart. On the 11th we'll haul the bridge (in pieces) to the site and put it together. This is the same way we do the picnic tables at our shelters. If you want to help on either part of the project or both contact me in the J.C. area at 477.2222 or Ed Oliver in the Kpt. area at 349.6668.

### **RED CROSS ADULT CPR CLASS (Scheduled for Wednesday, 15 December 93)**

*Leader: Steve Gubser (615.245.8849)*

A Red Cross Adult CPR class has been scheduled for 6-10 PM, 15 December 93 at the Red

Cross Building, 501 S. Wilcox, Kingsport. The cost for the course will be \$17. We must have at least 6 people registered to hold a class. If you are interested in participating, contact Steve Gubser at 245.8849. The deadline for registering and picking up a manual at Red Cross is 7 December.

**POND MOUNTAIN LOOP  
(Scheduled for Saturday, 18 December 93)**

*Leader: Ted Malone (615.477.2222)*

*Rating: Easy-Moderate*

This will be a steep climb from the Hampton side up to the top of Pond Mountain and then back down to Watauga Lake. This hike will provide an opportunity for those unfamiliar with the new relocation to see what the Club had been working on for the past 5 years. It's a tremendous improvement over the old Trail. With the leaves gone we should have some good views. Call for meeting place and time so I can get your name and number in case the weather is questionable or we have to cancel.

**NON-EASTMAN ACTIVITY RELEASE FORM**

*(Becky Bellamy reporting)*

The following form should be completed and provided to TEHCC activity leaders by TEHCC activity participants who are not employees of Eastman Chemical Company. (Note: Completion of the form does not result in your name being added to the TEHCC mailing list. Please contact Becky Bellamy at 615.229.5147 if you have questions.)

<b>TEHCC ACTIVITY RELEASE FORM</b>
Name: _____
Address: _____
City: State: Zip: _____
Home Phone Work: _____
Participation in TERC hiking and canoeing activities is voluntary. By my signature below, I acknowledge that neither Eastman Chemical Company, ERC, nor the activity leaders assume responsibility for accidents to myself or a member of my family or property while an active participant in club activities. This applies to accidents on or off company property.
Date: _____ Signature: _____
The signature of a parent or guardian is required if family participants are under 18 years of age.

**1994 STEERING COMMITTEE ELECTIONS**

November is when the voting for the 94 Hiking & Canoeing Club Steering Committee begins. Three people will be elected to serve on the Steering Committee in 1994 and 1995; one of the three will be Steering Committee Chair in 1995. Please vote for no more than three of the six nominees listed below and return the ballot to BECKY BELLAMY, Eastman Chemical Company, PO Box 511, B-89, Kingsport, Tennessee 37662. by 15 December 1993.

**TEHCC 1994 STEERING COMMITTEE BALLOT**

PLEASE VOTE FOR NO MORE THAN THREE:

Linda Bauer \_\_\_\_\_

Collins Chew \_\_\_\_\_

Brad Dayvolt \_\_\_\_\_

Rick Lott \_\_\_\_\_

Bob Tonnies \_\_\_\_\_

Elizabeth West-Oliver \_\_\_\_\_

**HIKE AND CANOE TRIP LEADERS NEEDED**

*(Steve Banks reporting)*

It's time to prepare the TEHC schedule of hikes and canoe trips for the first half of 1994. To continue our long tradition of offering a wide variety of outings, we need volunteer leaders. Send your list of hikes to Steve Banks, B-284, and your list of canoe trips to Dewey Fuller, B-150B. Include the name of the trip, date, rating (easy, moderate, or difficult), and your name and phone number. It's not difficult to lead an outing - contact Steve or any member of the Steering Committee if you have any questions

**FOR THE RECORD**

**WELCOME NEW TRAIL ADOPTER**

*(Ted Malone reporting)*

Steve Banks is our newest Trail Adopter. His section will be from mile marker 10.9 at McQueens Gap south to the spring at the stone wall and marker 12.3. Adopter June Collins is Trail north of Steve and Tim McClain is Trail south. Total miles adopted by Club members is 41.6 which comes to 33%. Call 477.2222 if interested in adopting a section or for more information.

**A NOTE FROM THE OUTGOING STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIR**

*(Joe DeLoach reporting)*

Here at year's end, I would like to summarize some of the things that have happened and give some encouragement for next year. We've had a super year in activities related to

management of the Appalachian Trail. We have smashed our old record for the amount of maintenance spent on the Trail, with a total number of hours for 1993 which will be about 75% higher than our previous best. We have participated as a host club in the most successful Appalachian Trail Conference national meeting ever. However, in recent years the number of recreational trips has diminished, particularly hikes. Our recreational program is the backbone of our Club in that fun paddling trips and hikes are what attract people who may then become more involved in other areas like trail maintenance or as Club officers. To encourage more recreational trips, we have asked Steve Banks to serve as our Recreational Coordinator. Please consider leading a trip or two in 1994. It could be a strenuous hike to one of the highest mountains in the Eastern United States, or a casual stroll through a flower-carpeted valley to a waterfall. It could be an exhilarating plunge through a steep gorge with Class IV whitewater or a gentle paddle along pastoral farmland. You can do all these things in East Tennessee - but someone has to lead the trip!

I want to thank everyone for the support they have given me as 1993 Steering Committee Chair and I hope that you will do the same for Steve Perri, the 1994 Chair.

## **HIWASSEE RIVER TRIP**

**25-26 September 93**

*(Ed Montgomery reporting)*

We arrived at Gee Creek campground on Friday afternoon to find hundreds of people dressed in tights riding high-tech two wheelers through out the area. We just happened to pick the same weekend as the BRAT (Bike Ride Across Tennessee). We were lucky to get camp sites for our group due to all the BRATs, other boaters and campers. We had to settle for four spots away from the river, but we felt fortunate to get our group together. Dale and I had to do some creative camp spot reserving in order to hold these spots until the rest of our group arrived.

The Hiwassee River originates on the northwest slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains along the Appalachian Trail in northern Georgia and flows into North Carolina before turning west through Tennessee. Our put-in is very close to the N.C. - Tenn. border directly below the TVA powerhouse. When we arrived at the put-in we found a full parking lot with a wide assortment of plastic boats and colorful gear. Our group was composed of four kayaks, five solo canoes, two funyaks (one solo and one tandem) and enough gear to outfit several hundred boaters.

The water was very cold as usual, but the weather was much better than our Spring run. We had one fisherman (Paul) with us and he caught a small trout on his first cast which turned out not to be typical for the day. Our first few rapids were run without incident until we came upon Thread the Needle. Mike decided to run this one upside down which proved to be very difficult. Tom Pridgen threaded the needle four times and now has a new nickname "T the Tailor". We continued on down playing at every rapid in sight which included the Three Bears. We saw Goldie Locks in the area and she was paddling a green yak. Dale has plans to interview Goldie during his next trip and Brad plans on seeing her on the Ocoee real soon. This group is very big on playing and has adopted the motto of "Play till you pay" which

usually results in a cold swim and a boat over boat rescue by Brad.

We got in a little playing time at Stairstep and stopped for a lunch break where the trip leader almost lost his paddle. Tom Loveless rescued my paddle and saved me from being rode hard by my paddling cronies. I think Tom and Frank Loveless enjoyed watching all these so called grown ups playing at every rapid. We stopped at Funnel Rapid, but it was packed with boaters and we moved on. Our last rapid was Devil Shoals and we all enjoyed swimming this one a time or two. We then proceeded to the take out and back to the campground to enjoy a deluxe campfire, primo food and more river stories.

The Sunday run was not very crowded and provided a chance for the kayakers to catch some ENDERS, it was GREAT! Bad weather was experienced at the take-out and camp spot which required some quick packing of wet gear. Paddlers enjoying the trip were F and T Loveless, M and D Mathis, T Pridgen, B Dayvolt, C Hoopingarner, J & D Scott, P Savarese, M Morrow and E Montgomery.

## **STAMPING GROUND RIDGE**

**9 October 93**

*(Joe DeLoach reporting)*

Eight hikers set out in beautiful fall weather for the Stamping Ground on the shoulder of Unaka Mountain. We ascended on the old route of the Appalachian Trail, now known as the Stamping Ground Ridge Trail. This trail is somewhat hard to find; it starts up a driveway across the highway in Limestone Cove. There are several no trespassing signs in the vicinity but the trail cuts off into the woods before reaching the houses. The ascent was steady but moderate to the ridge, at which point it became a very easy walk through a beautiful spruce forest. Finally, we broke out into the rhododendron and blueberry bushes to see spectacular high country fall color and great views from Roan Mountain to Mt. Rogers. We returned on the less notable Rocky Branch Trail to Limestone Cove Campground, driving back to get our cars and to return the dog that accompanied us all the way. Human participants in this highly recommended hike were G Watts, D Sawyer, K McKean, J Hackett, E Dougherty, K Dorko, C DeLoach, and J DeLoach.

## **JAMES RIVER FACE BACKPACK TRIP**

**22-24 October**

*(G. S. Luttrell reporting)*

Oh what a lovely weekend to be enjoying the beauty of nature! Blue sky, sunshine, no wind, 60s during the day, 30s at night, peak Fall colors, good hiking companions - what more could you ask for? In a roundabout way we completed the 34 mile section of the A.T. from Bearwallow Gap to James River: On Fri, we started at Petite's Gap, hiked south to Bearwallow Gap, spending two nights on the trail; then, re-spotted cars for a Sunday hike from Petite's Gap to the James River. One drawback of this trip was the lack of water along the trail, at Thunder Hill Shelter, and at Cove Mountain Shelter. I made some new friends from Pearisburg, Va. on this trip and hope to hike with them again. Bob and Mary Scott Coffey prepared some nice dinners utilizing chicken breasts on the first night and steak on the second night - they'll be responsible for dinner meals on the next hike. Susan Greenwood, from Pearisburg, Va., had previously lived in Bristol, Tennessee, and had been on several

TEHC hikes, including one of my hikes across Bald Mountain to Spivey Gap about 13 years ago. Susan prepared some real oatmeal (not that instant stuff) with various nuts and fruit that was very good; and, promised to bring some homemade raspberry jam on the next trip. This section of the A.T. offers a lot of variety in scenery, panoramic views, interesting features, and is not that strenuous, as a three day trip.

### **A.T. HIKE - GROSECLOSE, VIRGINIA TO HIGHWAY 42 13 November 93**

*(G. S. Luttrell reporting)*

This 12 mile section of the A.T. was a pleasant surprise for me since I had visualized some road walking (based on my older Southern Virginia Guidebook) and limited views. The relocation routes on both ends provide very nice walking through pastures and along streams, and views from the ridges were good since most of the leaves are now on the ground. Partly sunny skies and mild temperatures made this a great day for a hike. During lunch we were startled by a hunter not more than 100 yds away firing his muzzle loader at a deer - fortunately he missed - us. And, he missed the deer, telling us that his gun misfired. We finished the day by having dinner at Oby's Steakhouse in Marion. Once again enjoying one of my hikes were my good friends from Pearisburg, Va. S Greenwood, M Scott Coffey and B Coffey.

### **WET, WILD AND WONDERFUL 22-25 April 93**

*(Michael Bullard reporting)*

Usually when I think about "Wild, Wet and Wonderful", memories of springtime paddling on West Virginia's great creek runs come to mind. However, following this spring, paddling on the Lewis and Hood Rivers and Canyon Creek will be vying for equal attention. These fine river runs are located in southern Washington and northern Oregon within 1 to 1-1/2 hours of Portland in the shadows of Pacific Northwest's volcanic peaks, Mt. Saint Helens and Mt. Hood.

22-April-1993: East Fork of the Lewis (about 30 miles south of Mt. Saint Helens). Paddlers: Doug Smith, David Jordan, John Daffrion, Brent ?, and Michael Bullard.

This run was unusual compared to our later runs, in that much of the land adjacent to the river is privately held and houses occasionally dotted the stream bank. From the put-in, a low volume ender spot, the river progressed several miles through an endless series of Class III drops to the brink of Sunshine Falls. Following a scouting stop on river left, John reentered his boat and demonstrated the proper way to negotiate the tricky wave/hole entrance and boof the vertical 12-foot drop with a strong right to left angle into the pool. Dave followed as Doug and I watched from the scouting point at the lip of the main drop. Dave's line, about 1-1/2 feet to the right of John's, didn't provide quite enough left position at the final drop to hit the clear part of the pool and resulted in a few anxious moments on the boil below the drop. Brent's line was about a foot further to the right of Dave's, but the penalty (punishment) was brutal as Brent got stuffed into an L-shaped hole in the backwash. I had seen enough from the scouting rock and decided to portage on the right and join the group below the drop. Doug ran the drop while I was walking and appeared to have about the same line as Dave, including

some interesting bracing on the boil.

Another mile of III-III+ rapids and we came to an interesting double drop combination which required the successful paddler to run a tight chute against the right bank to avoid a large hole, and then work against a strong downstream current to river left over a 10-15 yard space and successfully negotiate a narrow slot to avoid a midstream pinning rock and a river right boulder sieve through which carried about 70 percent of the river volume. Dave, Brent, John, and I ran this rapid without difficulty, but Doug found a piton rock in the river left chute at the last drop which stopped his Corsica and mildly injured his ankle.

Some more III-III+ rapids (sound familiar) and we came to an even more challenging triple drop rapid. The top drop of this rapid challenges the paddler to skirt a guardian hole and find an eddy along the river right bank from which a peel-out to river right and a drop over a 2-foot ledge is required to avoid a midstream pinning rock, or while avoiding the top hole the paddler is asked to thread a 24-inch wide kayak through a 30-inch wide slot between the previously mentioned pinning rock and the rock cliff forming the right bank. The second drop asks the paddler to execute a "boof eddy move" across a rock extending from the river right bank, or thread boat down a narrow tongue executing a 90-degree midstream turn while dropping over a 4-foot ledge to avoid a large hole across the river from the left bank. In final part of this rapid the river narrows to less than 15-foot width with sheer rock walls on both banks creating a about 30-yards of squirrely Class II-III water. The real kicker, however, was the large log sloped at a 45-degree angle into the water on river left at the very bottom. Here the paddler wants to be pointed straight downstream along the right bank when passing below the log. After scouting this drop we all had successful runs.

One of this run's real highlights was not even on the East Fork, but in getting out to look at the last five drops on Copper Creek. These last five drops cover 200-250 yards with a 60-foot total vertical drop (about 480-500 fpm gradient!!!). These impressive drops consisted of a 15-foot sloping ledge (about 60-75 degrees) into a hole and moving pool (40 yards long), which fed a 15-foot vertical waterfall with a very small landing pool (10-15 yards), that promptly dropped over another 15-foot vertical falls into a fast moving pool about 100 yards long which terminated in a double drop ledge with two back-to-back holes that make Woodall and Hydro look like riffles. Group consensus was that IF you made it this far you would probably part company with your boat in the first hole and every thing else you were wearing in the second. Incidentally, I forgot to mention the 60-80 foot high vertical rock walls forming both the right and left banks below the first drop which make portaging a non-option once the first drop is run.

On returning from our hike up Copper Creek Brent noticed a 6-inch gash in the bottom of his boat and decided to take-out at this point. We regrouped and proceeded downstream through a couple more miles III- III+ drops with the additional flow from Copper Creek almost doubling the river volume to the full 400-500 cfs noted above. Horseshoe Falls, the other highlight of this run, awaited our arrival as the last of the major drops. We quickly scouted this drop from river left as John mumbled something about a crazy landowner and threats of violence directed at previous groups scouting the drop. This drop totals about 25-feet and consists of a narrow entrance slot (about a boat width wide) feeding a large sloped fan, which

drops about 8-feet, before the final 17-foot vertical plunge. Following successful runs here, we paddled the remaining mile to the takeout in anticipation for what the next few days had to offer which could top this jewel.

24-April-1993

West Fork of the Hood (about 20 miles north of Mt. Hood), Branch Creek to Punchbowl Falls. Rating: Class III-IV, with one drop at Class IV+ and one at Class VI, gradient 60-70 fpm. Cool, low 60's, rain/drizzle alternating with sunshine, estimated 600-800 cfs, water temperature 50's. Paddlers: Doug Smith, David Jordan, John Daffrion, and Michael Bullard.

The drive from Portland to this Oregon jewel is up the Columbia River Gorge, one of the Pacific Northwest's scenic landmarks -- to just imagine what those early river rats Lewis and Clark thought when they first passed this way. The countless waterfalls, rock outcroppings, spruce forests --- WOW!!!!

After exiting the interstate at Hood River, we navigated to our objective for the day, the West Fork of the Hood River. Our trip into the headwaters area took us by a Class III-IV section of the Main Hood, which according to the guide book is a great run in its own right (too many rivers, not enough time). From the takeout bridge, about 80-100 feet above the river, we scouted Punchbowl Falls per the guidebook's recommendation, and quickly went searching for the "last eddy" and the land route out of the narrow canyon above this mean looking drop. I believe the "Soggy Sneakers" guidebook says something to the effect that "many good paddlers have had difficulty here" --- an accurate assessment of the hole below this Class V+ 10-foot high riverwide ledge.

After doing the boat and equipment shuffle we were off to the put-in. At the first river crossing we noticed another group of boaters unloading equipment and decided to pull in even though the guidebook indicated the put-in was located about a mile further upstream. By electing to put on the river at Branch Creek, we avoided about a mile of Class III water and started directly above the narrow basalt gorge described in the guidebook. Branch Creek effectively doubled the flow volume and looked like a rip-snorter in its own right, though it was not described in the guidebook.

In the gorge section the river narrows at places to 15-20 feet in width with 30-40 foot high cliffs dropping straight down to rivers edge. The moss covered logs and rocks lining the river made the delicate transition from the deep blue-green water to the luscious green bank seem like a color palette prepared by a master painter. The narrow gorge, while not clogged with huge view obstructing boulders like the Watauga, did weave a serpentine course through a continuous series of Class III-IV boat scoutable drops with moving pools leading from one drop to the next. For a paddler with a dependable eddy turn, ferry and excellent boat control this made for an exciting first couple miles.

Following the narrow gorge, river width increased while maintaining the same overall gradient and the river's character changed to a shallower continuous Class III-IV boulder garden very similar to the Ocoee between Broken Nose and Slice-and-Dice. It was on this



section that we encountered our first "limbo log". A limbo log spans the entire river above the water level and the boater negotiating the log must either bend forward or lay back on their boat deck to pass under the log. About 10-yards` downstream of this log a nasty surprise in the form of a BIG HOLE awaited the paddler still focusing on the log instead of the business at hand.

About half way through the run, we rounded a gentle bend to find a distinct horizon line warning of the Class VI drop described in the guidebook. The Class VI rapid is actually a fish ladder consisting of 8 (or is that 9, Dave) consecutive manmade death traps dropping 13-15 vertical feet over 50-60 yards. Any one of these drops alone could be run with good downstream speed and a boof over the backwash, but with a string of multiple drops like this the probability for success was noticeably diminished. I would rank running this drop equivalent to playing Russian Roulette with a fully-loaded pistol and hoping for misfires.

After the fish ladder the river's geology returned to a narrow basalt gorge for the remaining four mile run to the take-out. One rapid of note in this section is the Class IV+ "Rockgarden", a 100-150 yard long technical boulder garden which requires to the paddler to effectively maneuver across the river from eddy-to-eddy in very heavy water to avoid numerous pinning opportunities, holes and other river hazards. We were going to bank scout this drop, but decided that we could eddy scout the whole thing after looking at it from river level at the top. Thus, the stage was set for some of our most exciting moments on this run. Dave and John ran ahead as the first pair through the course, as Doug and I waited in eddies upstream of the rapid. I started down before Doug and about half way through the rapid missed a midstream microeddy and ended up far right in this very picky, heavy water pinball machine. I recovered after about 10-20 yards and managed to work my way back on-line for the final drop missing a pretty nasty hole that would have eaten me for lunch had I stayed on the right side. Doug's run, from what I observed, was also pretty good except for a slight miscalculation along the river right side that resulted in a momentary pin, from which Doug recovered and after some hard work finished in style on the final drop.

Following Rockgarden the run returned to the nameless series of class III-IV drops preceding the final plunge into Punchbowl. At this point I decided to skip the last runnable drop underneath the takeout bridge, a long heavy water class III+ wave train, and the small takeout eddy and subsequent scramble up a rather steep cliff not more than 10-15 yards above Punchbowl Falls. My route consisted of a scramble up a steep bank and a 100-yard carry through a depression between a Forest Service Road and the river bank that in places was swampy. Doug, David and John decided to run the drop below the bridge and had little difficulty in making the eddy and scrambling up the steep cliff back to the take-out.

As we concluded our run the clouds parted and while John and Doug ran the shuttle Dave and I enjoyed the sunshine and reflected on the beauty of the mountains and rivers in this part of the country and agreed that we would have to return. This brief respite from the rain also gave us an opportunity to see Mt. Hood in all of her splendor towering above the local landscape. This provided one of those "Kodak moments" that demands burning off 10-15 pictures at various shutter speeds and f-stops to make sure you get at least one good exposure. An additional stop on the way home was at the Columbia River's Bonneville Dam

to visit the famous fish ladders and powerhouse. We were a little late to make the powerhouse tour, but we did get to see a few large salmon negotiate the fish ladder -- talk about "elevator moves" and "power upstream ferries"!!!!

25-April-1993

Canyon Creek (tributary to the North Fork of the Lewis in Lake Merwin, south of Mt. Saint Helens, WA), Upper Section from Twin Falls put-in to 1/4-mile above "Final Exam" rapid. Rating: Class IV+/V, several drops at Class IV+/V with Class VI consequences, gradient 80-100 fpm. Cool, low 50's, rain/drizzle, estimated 1000-1500 cfs, water temperature 50's. Paddlers: Doug Smith, David Jordan, John Daffrion, and Michael Bullard.

Following our trip to the West Fork of the Hood, we returned to Portland and discussed paddling options for our last day in the area. Consultations with the guidebook identified Canyon Creek as the preferred creek run to top off our adventure in the Pacific Northwest. The guidebook identifies two sections for this stream, the upper section which we ran and is described herein, and the lower "Waterfalls" section which we looked at and decided to pass on at this water level after scouting several drops from a bridge located about 200 feet above the river canyon. Even from the bridge it was easy to see that the lower section at this water level was an endless series of back-to-back Class IV+ and V/V+ rapids with small eddies, restricted river level vision, big waves, big drops and bigger holes that would be impossible or extremely difficult to portage. In short, the lower section didn't appear to offer the kind of experience we were looking for on our last day in the Northwest. We also had determined, based on the flow being at the top of the recommended guidebook range, that the upper section would likely be more demanding than the guidebook described and more attuned to our paddling goals.

While at the takeout the rain intensified and temperatures cooled as I was thinking about ways to gracefully decline the run and spend a comfortable afternoon curled in my sleeping bag in the back of Doug's truck camper. Several good (valid) excuses came to mind such as:

A. "The additional rain will to make the river rise to levels above the recommended maximum and the guidebook cautions that this run's difficulty increases significantly at levels greater than the recommended maximum.....", or

B. "I was reading the River Safety Task Force Newsletter for 1989- 1991 and did you know that some of the leading factors contributing to white water accidents are paddling unfamiliar streams, high flows, cold water, cold weather, limited access for rescue .....", or

C. "If I don't boat, then we'll have the shuttle done at the end of the day and you can have dry clothes at the take out and we can get home sooner since we have to pack tonight ....."

On the way to the put in we stopped to scout Final Exam, located about 1/2 mile upstream of the take out, from an overlook about 250-300 feet above the river. The guidebook at normal levels calls this a solid class IV, but at this waterlevel the rapid was clearly a 1/4 mile long class V+ with a couple hard to dodge offset holes that would easily hold multiple rafts and

kayaks. It took me about 30 seconds to "scout" this and determine that the best route was to run the first drop to get past the entrance cliff, eddy behind an old car on river right, get out scramble up the steep bank and carry the last 375 yards of this monster to avoid a swim to the takeout. Doug, Dave and John took a little bit longer, but came to the same general conclusion.

After a short shuttle we arrived at a low bridge put-in for this run located just downstream of the Twin Falls drop. This drop consists of a 4-5 foot ledge and a 15-foot plunge into a big hole. The guide book indicated this drop had been pioneered in a raft at somewhat lower water levels, but we decided to pass and get on with our trip. I almost pulled one of the previously mentioned excuses out since the rain intensity had increased and the temperature was still quite cool, but Dave calmly looked me in the eye and said "you'll really regret it on the way home tomorrow if you don't run this river". So I saddled up and off we went.....

Within 100 yards of the put-in the river canyon narrowed significantly and the feeling of isolation from the world was more intense than that I experienced the day before on the Hood. The first mile and a half of this run consisted of Class III-III+ drops all boat scutable, for a paddler with a dependable eddy turn. By the first major drop, Wrap Rock, we had refined the "one boat in, one boat out" creek boater's protocol into a delicate ballet as we happily danced down the river. Wrap Rock, a 50-75 yard long technical Class IV, is preceded by a sharp bend to the right and the river's already steep gradient takes a noticeable downward turn. The steepened gradient and the river's bend severely restrict the view of the rapid and did not allow us to spot the next downstream eddy from the eddy above the entrance. We scouted this drop by walking down a 4-foot diameter fallen spruce tree on river left and identified the crux move located about three quarters of the way down the drop --- the "wrap rock". This projection was located smack in the middle of an already narrow slot that all the river funnelled through. The guidebook, I remembered, had not offered any suggestions other than advising the paddler to be ready to make a quick choice, but did not specify a side. Between the four of us, we tested the 4-5 foot width slots on both sides without difficulty. This is definitely not a place to be sideways in any craft.

The river gradient continued at the steepened rate and the rapids changed from Class III-III+ to constant Class III+-IV drops in a very constricted river bed with "edge effect" currents resulting from the 20-30 foot high basalt cliffs that ran to the river's edge. About 2- miles of intense paddling brought us to Marble Steps, a solid Class V+/VI double drop with a terminal hole at the base of the last drop awaiting the paddler successful enough to negotiate the first ledge. We scouted this drop and then portaged by skidding our boats along the top of a well worn 4-foot diameter moss covered spruce which guarded the river left bank. We decided at lower water levels this drop would be runnable by cheating the top ledge on a strong right to left move and boofing over the hole on the left side of the lower ledge, but today the current was so swift the right to left cheat on the top ledge would likely end the paddler in the bottom hole sideways with no hope of escape....not a fun run!

The guide book had warned of a log jam located several hundred yards downstream of Marble Steps. With the river's serpentine course and the steep gradient this hazard was not visible from our portage vantage point, so we proceeded downstream with care through several Class

III-IV drops until we spotted the debris dam. At this water level the log jam, consisting of three large logs reminded me of a clothes wringer on an old fashioned washing machine, in that the water flowed over the first log as a weir and then UNDER the second log and then back over the third log. A death trap, to be certain for the unsuspecting paddler. To make matters worse the river right eddy was only big enough for four boats and the cliffs on the river's edge gave us postage stamp areas on each side of the log jam from which to stage our portage. We formed an assembly line to work the boats over and through the accumulated debris to a staging area from which we could hand the boats over the final log mass to a paddler waiting on a small ledge several feet above the river. The paddler would then have to get in his boat while balanced on a two foot wide ledge and then roll off into the river. Needless to say this portage, while only about 30 yards long, was a major undertaking and took our group of four about 45 minutes to complete.

Once underway, we continued through about a mile and a half section of solid Class IV whitewater that required the paddler to boat scout all the major drops due to the vertical cliffs entering from river's edge. It was along this section that Dave noted the significant number of waterfalls that had entered the river from the cliffs doubling the river's flow from that at the put-in. The increased volume and the unrelenting gradient had made this section as challenging as the "Bastard to Lost-and-Found" section of the Upper Yough at 2.4 to 2.5 feet. As we were picking our way downstream from eddy to eddy I noticed Dave and John in a frantic upstream ferry to an eddy on river left. Figuring that something was wrong, I also started to move toward the left bank. It was good, because they had spotted a log (strainer) all the way across the river blocking downstream progress. The river left side of the log was partially submerged with about an inch of water for 10-feet of its length before becoming fully exposed again as it spanned to the right bank. The scary part of this log was that along the right bank about 95% of the river's flow formed a huge suckhole that swirled under the log before bubbling up downstream. This must have been the drop that some paddlers at the take-out referred to as the "Limbo Log" which could be run at lower water levels on the right.

We were in a big mess now, because the "last chance" eddy we had chosen was located right above this strainer and the 20-foot riverside cliff was going to prevent a portage without doing some 5.10 climbing in wetsuit booties on a moss covered rock face. While Dave, John and I sat in this eddy pondering our fate, Doug came careening around the bend almost oblivious to the hazard downstream. Our yelling and waving though caught his eye, but in the progress of making an upstream ferry above the suckhole his boat became stuck on a rock. Ever composed, Doug managed to maneuver off the rock and dig into the low end of our small eddy as I grabbed his bow loop and pulled him into safety. After several minutes of pondering our fate, Dave suggested to "just boof it" and off he went over the partially submerged part of the strainer and BINGO!, obstacle negotiated. Doug was next out but he started with a lower position and was not able to develop good speed prior to the log and stuck on the shallow spot with the suckhole's current tugging at his Corsica's stern. I thought he was going under and was already trying to figure out how we would conduct an extraction, but Doug literally clawed himself up onto the log and over into the pool below. With that example, John and I made sure we had good speed and a straight line when we boofed the log. We were fortunate here, had the flow been a little lower the boof move would not have been available and with 100% of the river's flow through the suckhole the cliffs stretching for

several hundred yards downstream would have made any portage extremely difficult.

Following another mile of Class IV pool and drop rapids the river widened and the cliffs receded from river's edge. The river changed into a run very similar to the Ocoee at 1600-1800 cfs. By now the river's flow had increased threefold from that at the put-in and the power of the holes and waves had increased proportionately. The cold water and intensity of the upper section had taken its toll and the group consensus was to take out about 300 yards above Final Exam and carry out to the road and hike the last 3/4-mile to the take-out and get our shuttle vehicle. Another two miles of fun Class III-IV paddling and we called it a day.

Looking back, Dave was right, I would have regretted not paddling this fine river -- not because of its difficulty, but for the isolated beauty of paddling through a basalt canyon surrounded by old growth spruce and fir forests, and of course the camaraderie that comes from paddling with a small group of friends. In retrospect, the whole trip was like this; in that, I could find whitewater boating in the Southeast of comparable difficulty, but the newness of the runs, the scenery and the camaraderie might be hard to match.

Dave, what about that return trip we were talking about.....?

*To contribute an article or hike notice to the TEHCC News, contact the editor, Bob Tonnies, B.65, TED (Home Phone: 615.477.8126). All contributions should be received by the 15th of the month to be included in the following month's newsletter.*

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