

FLOWlines

Newsletter of the Finger Lakes-Ontario
Watershed Paddlers' Club, Rochester NY

Volume 4 Issue 12

December 1999



FLOW Party (if the world doesn't end...)

Save the date-Thursday, January 20, 2000. The first social event of the millennium. Join FLOW for it's annual "off the water (but not dry) party " at McGinnity's. More details to follow in the January issue of FLOWlines.

Salmon Release 2000

The Following are the year 2000 Salmon River Releases, as established at the Salmon River Flow Management Advisory Committee meeting on October 14, 1999. Hopefully the draught years are past and we can anticipate full five weekend releases in 2000.

You have 9 months lead-time, so mark your schedules, plan your vacations, make your reservations, and pass on this information to fellow paddlers.

Year 2000 Salmon River Releases	
June 24 - 25	400 CFS
July 8 - 9	750 CFS
July 22 - 23	750 CFS
August 5 - 6	750 CFS
September 2 - 3	750 CFS

Many thanks to the hard work by Jerry Hargrave and Bill Kuipers. Without their diligent efforts, we'd be "up the creek without the water....."

December Steering Committee Meeting

Time: Thursday, December 2nd - 7 P.M.
Place: Stevie K's International House of Happiness at 160 Penarrow Rd. Call him for easy to follow directions at 442-6138

December General Meeting


Time: Not this Millenium
Place: Nowhere

There will be no Genereal Metting in December. We hope to see you all at the big party in January (see articale). Have a safe and wet holiday season!!!

Clip Art...

Here is a great URL for the canoe/kayak clip art from the computer whiz of Mike Shafer. Some examples are found throughout the newsletter.....

<http://www.jacksonville.net/~dldecke/r/fska'sclipart.htm>



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Trips & Events	Ivan Rezanka 716 381-7475
Communications	Dan Bogaard 716 442-6634 Helen Cherniack 716 461-3233
Education/Instruction	Ardie Shaffer 716 334-4487

Newsletter submissions

Send us trip reports, articles, letters to the editor, ads for our classified section, or anything else you'd like to see in FLOWlines.

If you have e-mail:

Send articles in the form of a text file to:
Helen.Cherniack@usa.xerox.com

Written submissions:

Preferably typed in a 10-point font or larger, double-spaced.

Hand-written submissions must be reasonably legible, or great editorial license may be invoked.

Mail to:

Helen Cherniack
480 Benton St.
Rochester, NY 14620

Contacts

FLOW Paddlers' Club(716) 442-6138
Seayaker Outfitters(315) 524-9295
.http://www.netacc.net/~seayaker
Pack, Paddle, and Ski(716) 346-5597
Endless Adventures(315) 536-0522
Adirondack MountainClub(ADK)(716) 987-1717
Ardie Shaffer(716) 334-4487
Oak Orchard Canoe1-800-4-KAYAKS
BayCreek Paddling Center (716) 288-2830
. baycreek@cwix.com

FLOW HotLine: 716 234-3893

To access the FLOW HotLine:

1. Dial 716 234-3893 from a touch-tone phone.
2. To listen to messages left by other paddlers, **press the remote access code** any time **during the greeting**. After entering the remote access code, listen to instructions for how to access messages.
3. To leave a message for other paddlers, listen to the greeting and leave a brief message after the tone.

The FLOW HotLine is sponsored by FLOW Paddlers' Club for FLOW members. The FLOW HotLine is hosted by Bay Creek Paddling Center.

Membership and Mailing List

To join FLOW, send name, address, telephone, paddling interests, and \$30 (\$35 family rate) membership papers and updated member lists will be sent to you. Call 716-227-9291 for more information.

Mike Shafer
Re: FLOW Paddlers' Club
89 Dorsetwood Dr
Rochester, NY 14612

Upcoming trips/events

Contact Ivan Rezanka (716) 381-7475 for Whitewater Trips. Contact Harry Weidman (315) 524-9295 for Flatwater Trips. Refer to insert for the latest version of the trip lists.

Gauge numbers

Genesee River (Letchworth)716-468-2303
Cattaraugus River716-532-5454
Salmon River1-800-452-1742 #365123
Keuka Outlet716-234-0090

Web Pages

http://www.rit.edu/~dsbpph/flow
http://www.netacc.net/~seayaker
http://www.awa.org

The Gauley, By Golly!

By Mike Shafer

Ya know, it's never really about what happens on the river. All of the stuff we all talk about (ah well, most of the stuff) is what goes on the rest of the time. Think about it....messed up shuttles, messed up travel plans before we even get there, what happened at breakfast...or , whoa boy, what happened around the campfire. So when I suggested to Steve Kittleberger that it was time we went to the Gauley, he should have known this would happen. This kind of trip report I mean.

Neither one of us had it in us to leave home late Friday and be to Summersville in time to paddle early Saturday, so we did the only logical thing. We went as far as the Yough, and stopped there. Now there wasn't much water (it was 1.3), but it was there, and so were we. After a good night of classic camping at Riversport, we got up and took a look at Ramcat rapid behind the woods there. Of course this means playing "fetch-stick" with one of Bob Ruppel's many dogs (who I believe really run that camp for him). A few tosses and Steve thought it was time to go. Course he couldn't, as one wet dog would not let go of Steve's pant leg at all. She was yanking on it real hard, determined to keep him right there. Geez, they usually only do that to me at the Riversport store, where they are trained for such antics if you don't drop a little cash. But get away we finally did. We paddled the loop, and headed for Summersville, a la plan.

Now we were supposed to meet Frank at one of two camps there. We needed him; we haven't done this Gauley before, and he has. Should be easy right? Ahh, but we were in West Virginia. I tried the tricks I learned in business school to find him, but it was not going to be that easy. At the prescribed camp, I asked the lady who looked like the camp owner (she was grilling 4 steaks for her and her boyfriend, and kind of busy with him at the same time). She seemed a bit confused that a dude from New York showed up looking for a guy from Philadelphia, so I just asked to look at who was signed in (the registry???). OK, so they don't work that way. "Well...what does he look like?" she asks. Ever try to find someone in the state of West Virginia that way?

So we give up on that. Jump back in the truck, and hope for something to go right. "Come on Steve", I say. "Let's go look for Summersville Dam". Now you can only



appreciate this if you know these guys, but we were no longer in a bad way when we found the dam. It was no other than Paul Houndt and Rick Harrington! Now they don't know we were looking, but I swear it was them on those dam flumes! Just look at the picture and you tell me!

Continued on next page...

So with Frank or without him, I tell Steve we have to paddle this river in the morning. Ya got bit by a dog. We had to sleep on a farm by some horses and roosters (they wake up early you know), and we lose our guide to get down the river by. So what else could go wrong anyway? So paddle it we did. I mean, lots of what we talk about IS what goes on at the river too, right? From Koontz Flume to Gateway to Heaven, and Lower Mash to Pure Screaming Hell, we did what we came to do, and had a great time doing it. Just ask the Lucky Dog...he found the hero's route at Koontz...and did it well. He has a great pic he can show you to prove it...really.

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And I know he'll show you if you ask; I drove him into Fayetteville so he could pick it up.

It was a great day. Fantastic weather, a great river, and a great personal run. Only one of us swam, 'course I cannot tell you who. You'll have to ask Steve, but I'm not sure he'll say. The next day we drove to the New River Gorge. We were both a little mellow, and the weather had gone foul, but still wanted to paddle. So we selected a class 2/3 section, from Prince to Thurmond. The New River Gorge is a scenic place throughout, and we both agreed to go back again to see more of what's there. There is a lot of water in West Virginia, and I am going to spend some more time there. So next year give us a call...I'm anxious to go back!

-Mike Shafer

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*A Blast from the Past...
Can you name any of these Old-Timers?*

Paddling the South Branch of the Grasse River

By Ben Bramlage

Thanks to New York's negotiation of easements and outright purchase of lands owned by Champion International Paper Company in the northwest part of the Adirondack Park, hundreds of miles of lakes and rivers that were formerly closed to public access are now open. This includes the North, South, and Main Branches of the Grasse River. I've wanted to explore this fairly remote area for some time, and on 10/19/99, I got a run in on the South Branch of the Grasse. It's been touted as one of the premier expert whitewater runs in the area and locals that have "poached" the run in the past confirmed this.

Our run was from just above Rainbow Falls to the Village of Degrasse. Tooley Pond Road runs more or less along the river from Cranberry Lake to near Degrasse. There are several possible put-ins. We parked at a small state parking area above Rainbow Falls (the falls are not marked or visible from the road). Our takeout was just below the bridge at Degrasse, but we parked on Tooley Pond Road, away from a couple of houses. I'm not sure of the legality of the takeout, and we figured it was better to carry the boats a little than park right across from somebody's house. We could have started a run further up, catching three more big drops, but several miles of flatwater separate these drops (Copper Falls being the last one) from Rainbow Falls. Our group was Erin O'Conner, from Tupper Lake NY, Bruce Reiger, from Beachburg Ontario (of Wilderness Tours fame), and myself. Only Erin had run it before, this being about his 5th time down. We got lucky with a crystal clear late fall day, air temperature around 50 degrees and the water temperature about the same. There is no gauge on the river, but the Moose was at 3.4 on the McKeever gauge. This was a low level, very scrapy in between the drops. Erin has run it lower, but I think that this would be as low as I would want to run it. Several of the ledge drops were also pretty scrapy.

The first drop is Rainbow Falls and, yes; there was a rainbow in the mist. There is almost no warm up, perhaps 200 yards of class 2 and flatwater. Scout from the right. Rainbow is about 35' high, the last 20' being vertical. There is a class 3 lead in that adds about 7' more to the total drop. I found my line right away; about 30' up the bank with my boat on my shoulder. Bruce opted for the same line. Erin ran, starting a little left of center and finishing in a vertical fold towards the left side of the base of the drop. The outflow tends to push the boater into the river right wall, which looked a little undercut. Erin claims that although the drop looks bumpy, it's all water and is actually quite soft, especially the landing. Erin believes that this drop is deserves a 5.3 rating, even at the low level. Actually, I've seen plenty of commercial video with far easier drops being run. Below Rainbow Falls, we got into 2 short box canyon type rapids that had no major difficulties. The second one ends with a huge pyramid shaped rock on the right constricting the flow towards the left wall with a 6' drop into a hole. According to Erin, this hole gets big and very sticky with more water. The only way to run it is straight on, and the walls block both corners. Thus, it's either punch it, or get pummeled. Unfortunately, since you're in a box canyon, the only scouting is from an eddy about 50 yards above and carrying around it is pretty much impossible.

The next falls is called Flatrock Falls. It's a slide about 20-25' high. There are 3 chutes side by side across the top, followed by a river wide left hand bend (on the slide itself), and a meaty hole at the bottom. There is a narrow tongue on the far-left corner of the hole and some weak spots on the right side of the hole. There is also a really bad vertical pinning spot in a crack to the right of the center chute at the top. We chose to run the center chute and move across to the left corner of the hole, after we removed the

Continued on next page...

tree branches stuck in the chute. Both Erin and Bruce ran clean. I almost flipped at the bottom of the chute (major rock brace, since that would be a really lousy spot to be upside down!), then hit a knob of rock and spun to the right. Instead of making the left turn, I was able to move across the face of the slide enough to punch the hole towards the right. Not pretty, but it worked.

The next big drop is Adrenaline Falls. We boat scouted this one from the plentiful eddies in the lead in ledges. There are 2 or 3 lead in ledges, from 3-5' in height. The main drop involves a sharp right hand bend onto a 12' high slide. The slide is totally invisible from the scouting eddies above. The main current flows to the left side of the ledge, and a slab of rock throw up a rooster tail all the way across the right 2/3 of the ledge. The idea is to round the corner, line up so your right shoulder is just off the rooster tail as you drop down the slide, and take a stroke or two to punch the hole at the bottom. There's a strong eddy recirculating into the hole on the left at the bottom, but wasn't a problem this time through. Sooner or later I'll learn not to let Erin talk me into running horizon lines following his line without scouting! Below Adrenaline are several river wide ledges with zigzag lines through them. Though they weren't a problem today, they can get sticky with more water.

After a long pool is Twin Falls, the granddaddy of them all. It is about 55' tall, starting as a slide and ending with about 15' of vertical. The slide is steep too, probably close to 70 degrees. The line is about 1/3 of the way across on the right and the idea is simply to keep the boat straight and right side up. The horizon line is almost absolutely smooth and featureless. There are actually 3 big steps on the way down, the last two throwing up rooster tails. You **MUST** get your weight forward on both rooster tails to keep the nose of the boat down. This is to keep from auto-boofing off the steps. By the time you hit the bottom step, you have so much speed that boofing off the step will cause a very hard, flat landing. People have actually landed stern first off this one. The water at the bottom is not all that aerated either, making a flat landing painful or dangerous. Both Erin and Bruce ran cleanly, though Bruce had a little trouble finding his launch point on the flat horizon line and landed flatter than he wanted. Once again, I decided that discretion was the better part of valor and walked. Erin calls this one a 5.0 or 5.1 at this level. Although the line is simple, screwing up would really suck!

Several smaller ledge drops follow, none too significant at this level. Once again though, with more water, they could get exciting. Just under a green steel bridge is Sinclair Falls. Here the river



'Peanut Boy' Bramlage Srufin' the Big one... Costa Rica '98

bends left about 45 degrees as it passes over two ledges with a total drop of about 20-25'. The water is funneled into a turbulent hole in the center of the first ledge, then turns left and drops into a river wide hole at the base of the second ledge. We looked at a possible line on the left side of the second ledge, but it looks like a lot of water dumps into a horizontal crack near the top of the ledge, about 1 boat width wide, creating a potentially evil sideways pin. With more water, the crack would probably be totally submerged, and this might be a possible high water sneak, right over the top. All three of us punched the first hole and dropped off different spots of the second ledge without a problem. In a medium/high run recently, Sinclair was the only drop Erin walked since the holes became really strong.

The last major drop is Basford Falls, also known as Lights Out, since some local paddlers have had to run this in the dark after running out of daylight. Again, we boat scouted this one. After a class 3 lead in, we were able to set up for the main drop from an eddy on river left. The river does a big S turn through several diagonal ledges, dropping around 15'. The main current flows into a jumble of rocks off the left hand wall at the base. It looks like part of that wall collapsed into the river many years ago. Because of this, the move is to start in the main current, then make a strong right hand turn and finish away from the wall. The whole bottom of the drop is bony, and all 3 of us got bounced around a bit.

We also ran the drop right under the bridge at the takeout. The river drops over some small ledges, then narrows to about 15' wide and slams into the left wall in a sharp right hand turn. Just below the pillow against the wall, the whole river feeds into a strong hole. Though not a problem at low water, this hole has held and cartwheeled boaters at higher water. Also, the river left wall below the hole looks like it could be slightly undercut.

Those are just the highlights of this section. In between the drops are a lot of easy rapids. At this level, it was a pain bumping into rocks constantly, but with more water, this would be some fun class 2-3 action. There are also several long sections of flatwater between the drops. At the low water level, I would call the drops class 4, 4+, and 5-, with the exceptions of Rainbow and Twin Falls. With more water, most of the run would increase to a class 5 because the holes seem like they could get really sticky, and several are unavoidable. Even at this level, several of the large slide drops were very shallow. Not only is swimming not an option, neither is being flipped. I wouldn't recommend this run to anyone who doesn't have a 100% roll, and isn't used to keeping a boat stable and upright. This is a creek run and experience with creeking is necessary to deal with the tight turns, diagonal holes, and steep ledges. Choosing a boat with forgiving chines is also a must (we paddled a Y, a Gradient, and a Freefall LT).

The run seems similar in feel to the Taylorville section of the Beaver, only steeper, narrower, and more technical. I feel that the drops are easily as technical or more so than those on the Bottom Moose. It's also an incredibly beautiful section of river.



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Lock 32 Pictures

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<http://www.rit.edu/~dsbp/h/flow>

Deadline for next newsletter

The deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is Friday, December 17th. Send submissions to Helen Cherniack .

FLOW Paddlers' Club
89 Dorsetwood Dr
Rochester, NY 14612

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