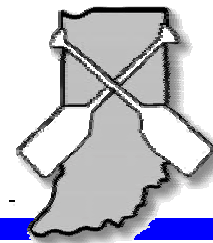


# The Hoosier Paddler



Volume 46, Issue 4

<http://www.hoosiercanoecub.org/>

May 2008

## Bobbing down New Rivers

Jacob Vos

There has been a significant amount of discussion in the club, both online and in the real world, about how fast paddlers in the HCC should advance and who should decide how fast club member should advance. To ease the semantics of the debate, we'll call this hypothetical, fairly novice, paddler Bob (since if he gets in over his head he may be swimming). Allocating this decision—whether Bob should run a certain river—is a bit of a high-wire act.

Generally speaking, there are two ways to do it. The first is to adopt a sort of control system, where a trip leader, generally an experienced boater, decides if Bob can go on a certain trip. The second option is to adopt a relatively *laissez-faire* approach, allowing individual paddlers to decide whether they're ready for a particular river, and leaving the decision to Bob. On one hand, we have safety as a consideration. If boaters get in over their heads, they become a danger to themselves and to the group. On the other hand, paddling is a fairly individualistic sport, and many of us are uncomfortable with the idea of giving one person veto power over our decisions to run a particular river.

Once all of the dust settles, the control system looks like an untenable option. Placing the bulk of the responsibility of the safety of a trip on one leader puts a heavy burden on that person's shoulders, and could result in depleting an already small group of trip leaders. Moreover, adopting a control system approach undermines the all-for-one, one-for-all approach cohesive teams use when approaching paddling safety.

We need to leave the decision of whether Bob runs a certain river with that paddler. However, we still need to keep safety in mind when putting together paddling trips, and safety must always, always take priority over the worry that we might step on someone's toes. If anyone, trip leader or otherwise, familiar with Bob's abilities doesn't think he's ready for a river, that concern should be voiced.

In the end, it is the responsibility of each paddler to appraise their skills and decide whether they are ready for a new run. It may be difficult for some new boaters to know if they have the skills for a certain run, and if that's the case, they need to start asking questions. What is the character of the run? Big water? Creeky and technical? Are there a few big drops that garner a Class IV rating, or is the entire run made up of continuous Class IV maneuvering? What is the hardest move on the run? Answers to these questions should give Bob an idea of whether he has the skills to approach a particular run, and should allow him to improve his skills at his own pace while paddling new rivers.

None of this is to say that groups as a whole don't retain a sort of veto power. If Bob is paddling with six people, four of whom don't think he should run the Upper Gauley, he should probably rethink his decision to run the river.

I would suggest that, generally speaking, the following skills are required for safely paddling the following classes:

- **Class I-II**
  - Wet exit
  - Forward stroke
  - Sweep stroke
- **Class III**
  - Reliable eddy turns
  - Reliable roll
  - Decent draw strokes
  - Rope use
  - Ability to boat-scout Class II
  - Proficiency in basic hand and whistle signals
- **Class IV**
  - Bombproof roll
  - Boof
  - Accomplished boat handling, including compound strokes and ability to catch small eddies
- Rescue skills
  - Throw rope
  - Pin extraction
  - Basic CPR
  - Boat-based rescues
- Ability to read water
- Ability to boat-scout Class III
- **Class V**
  - Ability to run continuous, demanding rapids
  - Significant physical endurance
  - Expert level boat-handling skills
  - Ability to catch micro-eddies
  - Ability to maintain control in steep, confused water
  - Expert water-reading skills
  - Expert rescue skills
  - Ability to work as a cohesive, interdependent team

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*The Newsletter of the Hoosier Canoe Club*

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## Whitewater Moving Water Clinic — May 17, 2008 (Note Date Change)

Thirteen students attended the two *Introduction to Paddling* session at Thatcher Pool in March and April. Terry Busch designed these classes to give recreational and whitewater kayakers the basics of paddling to prepare them for the Moving Waters Clinics. On April 26, Reggie Baker led the Moving Water clinic for recreational kayakers on the White River south of Indianapolis.

Sharon Schierling will teach the Moving Water Clinic for Whitewater Kayaks on May 17, 2008. If you are interested, be sure to sign up early since enrollment is limited to 10 students.

**Intended for:** Beginners interested in eventually running whitewater who have taken the Thatcher Pool "Introduction to Paddling" session or (at instructor's discretion) can show equivalent experience.

**Meeting Time and Place:** A central Indiana river. Most Indiana streams are "rain dependent," and the best available location will have to be determined in the days before the clinic. In the past, we've used Wildcat Creek at Adams Mill, the Flatrock River near St. Paul, and the White River near the Broad Ripple Arts Center. Check the HCC bulletin board and/or contact the instructor for more information.

**Lead Instructor:** Sharon Schierling (contact—E-Mail: [sschierl\(at\)nd.edu](mailto:sschierl(at)nd.edu))

**Class content:** The pre-whitewater clinic starts with a bank-side talk but spends most of the day in on-water teaching. The instructor promotes a "safety first" approach to paddling, with a focus on preparation, accident prevention and teamwork on the water. The chalk talk will cover key hazards and their solutions. On the water, students will review and practice self-rescue (safe swimming), teamwork to assist swimmers, and Eskimo rescue technique.

The central focus of the clinic is on understanding river features and moving water dynamics and how to use them in running the river. Students will learn the "parts of a rapid" and the key concepts in entering and leaving the current. On the water, students will apply and build on the skills they learned in pool session. The focus will be on boat control in the basic river maneuvers of entering and exiting the current (moves known as "peel-outs," "eddy turns," and "ferrying.")

This clinic follows the American Canoe Association (ACA) course outline for "Essentials of River Kayak." A syllabus is available online: <http://www.americancanoe.org/PDF/2007%20RKERK.pdf>

By the end of the class, students should be ready to run easy whitewater (Class I-II) with the support and guidance of more experienced paddlers. If there's sufficient interest and favorable river conditions, Sharon will lead such a trip in Central Indiana on May 18. Others will be scheduled periodically throughout the season.

**Equipment needed:** Unlike the pool session, students should expect to bring their own gear. Those who contact the instructor early may be able to borrow boats or other components, but availability will be limited. Everyone must have the "five essentials" for whitewater paddling – boat, paddle, PFD (life vest), sprayskirt and helmet. Boats MUST have floatation – i.e., air bags in stern. Also strongly recommend — water shoes (make sure they fit in your boat), water bottle(s), sunscreen, and lunch. Weather may be warm but dress for cold water – wear paddle-specific top and pants if you have them. Polypro or fleece under layers are best, wool marginal, cotton is bad. If you have a drytop, bring it. A coated nylon or gore-tex splash top is a good alternative. Again, if you lack suitable gear, let the instructor know well in advance – many of us have some "spare parts" we can loan.

**Expenses:** Since this will be an ACA-registered course (Sharon is an ACA-certified instructor), insured through the ACA rather than the HCC, it is open to both HCC members and non-members. All participants will be required to sign the standard ACA waiver and pay a nominal fee. Waivers are available online:

[http://www.americancanoe.org/PDF/ACA\\_waiver\\_2008.adult.pdf](http://www.americancanoe.org/PDF/ACA_waiver_2008.adult.pdf)

[http://www.americancanoe.org/PDF/ACA\\_waiver\\_2008.minor.pdf](http://www.americancanoe.org/PDF/ACA_waiver_2008.minor.pdf)

The course fee for ACA members with a valid membership card is \$15. The fee for non-members is \$20. (Regular ACA membership is \$40.) Please be prepared to pay by cash or check prior to the start of the clinic or you will not be allowed to participate due to insurance liability reasons. (The fees cover ACA insurance, registration/reporting of the course, and materials. None of the volunteer instructors profit from these fees.)



*Students at March Learn to Paddle Pool Session*



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# Hoosier Canoe Club

This Pass is good for  
free admission to  
Eagle Creek Park  
Tuesday Evenings  
3:00 pm till dark  
May 6th to September 30th, 2008



## Eagle Creek—Tuesday Evening Paddles

HCC members will be able to paddle together at Eagle Creek park on Tuesday evenings again this year. Group paddles will start at 6:00 pm and meet at the Eagle Creek marina. Paddlers must leave the park by closing time and should always check the sign at the park entrance to see when the park closes. The pass allows HCC members to enter the park as early as 3:00 pm if they want to paddle on their own before the group paddle.

In exchange for this privilege, the HCC will train the leaders of Eagle Creek's Sunset Trip series, will provide safety boats for this series, and will help clean up Eagle Creek's shoreline. If you would like to help with these activities, please contact Shirley Gates at (317) 852-9809.

Moonlight paddles, training sessions, and "burger" nights will be held at Eagle Creek during the summer. The dates for these will be announced in the next newsletter.



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## Calling HCC Safety Boaters! — 2008 Triathlon Schedule

The HCC is again serving as safety boat supplier to the Eagle Creek Triathlons this summer. The Club receives financial compensation for providing boats and boaters. But in order to get the money, we need you to volunteer!

Below are the dates for the Eagle Creek events this summer:

Saturday, June 21

Saturday, July 19

Saturday, August 23

All events start at 8:00 am (remember that we now observe daylight savings time!). Safety boaters should gather by 7:15 to receive instructions and T-shirts and to get boats in the water.

Volunteers will follow waves of swimmers and allow struggling swimmers to hang on to their boats. You would then signal to the motorized safety boat, which would swoop in to collect the exhausted swimmers. Safety boaters are not expected to take swimmers to shore. Total swim distance in these events is 500 meters.

For more information about these events, please visit: <http://www.tuxbro.com/triathlon%20updates.htm>

This is a great opportunity to get in an early morning paddle, watch amazing athletes compete, and regular people tackle a challenge!

If you would like to volunteer to safety boat for one of these events, please contact Jan Sneddon at 317-257-1740 or [jan\\_hosier@yahoo.com](mailto:jan_hosier@yahoo.com). Come on, you know you want to!



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## Flatwater Trips

### What to Bring on a Flatwater Trip

- PFD (Personal Floatation Device) with attached whistle
  - Spare Paddle: your preference
  - Rescue gear: paddle float, throw rope, first aid kit
  - Bilge pump or bailing device (small bucket, sponge, etc.)
  - Personal medications: Be sure to inform your trip sponsor of medical conditions.
  - **Cold Weather Protocol:** Change of clothes, gloves, and hat in a Dry Bag. No cotton clothing. (See "Cool Paddling", February Newsletter)
  - Sunglasses, sun/bug spray
  - Lunch, snacks, drinks (hot or cold) plus water!
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### Pigeon / Fawn Fish Fry

**Saturday, May 3 and Sunday, May 4, 2008**

**Trip Sponsors: Dan Valleskey** (317-257-9837, danpaddles@gmail.com)

The Hoosier Canoe Club will once again descend on two of my favorite streams in Northern Indiana. We will paddle the Pigeon and the Fawn on May 3rd and 4th, respectively.

We will meet at the Pigeon put-in on Hwy 327, (North of Kendallville, just a bit North of US 20) same as last year. We will aim for a 10:00 a.m. meeting time (in case you want to drive up from Indy that morning).

I call this the Pigeon/ Fawn Fish Fry, because your trip leader likes to sample (sample?!? I eat a ton of the stuff!) the fish at Turkey Lake Tavern, I expect on Saturday evening.

We will camp Friday and Saturday nights at the Pigeon River DNR Fish and Wildlife Area at Mongo. Find Mongo on the Map. Just North of Kendallville. Not quite into Michigan. Look again. Now do you see it?? Only one road goes East out of Mongo, take it down a half mile to the Pigeon River DNR Fish and Wildlife Area. Big Brown sign on the right. Drive all the way back, you'll find us.

If you need more info or directions, drop me a note. Otherwise, no need to RSVP, the river will be there, I will be there, and hopefully Turkey Lake tavern will still be there.

Not sure what section of the Fawn we will do on Sunday, better call later and ask, if you can only make it the one day.

Hope to see another great turnout!

**Contact Information:** Danny Valleskey 317-413-0324 (cell), 317 257-9837 (home), danpaddles@gmail.com

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### Two on the Blue—Blue River Paddle

**Saturday, May 17 and Sunday, May 18**

**Trip Sponsors: Sue Foxx** (317-363-4074 Cell, sufoxx@doe.in.gov), **Linda Smith. Rick Turney**

Come for one or two days of beautiful paddling. Bends, rapids, bluffs, canyons, and springs comprise much of the scenery along this scenic part of the Blue River. Plan to camp at the Stage-stop Campground in the Harrison Crawford State Forest.

The State Park entry fee is \$5 per vehicle and each campsite is \$8 divided by whoever stays (maximum is 6 people)—approximately \$2 per person. They only allow two tents per site. Primitive camping at Stage-Stop campgrounds is on a first come basis. Reservations are only available for sites that have electricity but these cost \$25 per night and they still only allow 2 tents per site.

#### Meeting Place:

*Saturday Meeting Place*—Milltown Public Access site by the Cave Country Canoe and Kayak Livery, 112 Main Street, Milltown, IN 47145 ( 812-365-2705).

Driving Directions from Indianapolis- Go south on I-65 to Clarksville. Then go west on I-265. Take I-265 west becomes I-64 to SR 64. Go west on SR 64 to Milltown into downtown and look for the public access site by the Cave Country Canoe and Kayak Livery. Drive time approximately 2 ½ hours.

*Sunday Meeting Place*—Milltown Public Access site by the Cave Country Canoe and Kayak Livery, 112 Main Street, Milltown, IN 47145 ( 812-365-2705). Driving directions same as above from Indy.

**Put-In:** Saturday—Milltown Public Access Site  
Sunday—Rothrock Mill Dam Public Access Site

**Take-Out:** Saturday—Rothrock Mill Dam Public Access Site  
Sunday—Old Iron Bridge Public Access Site in Wyandotte Woods by the Ohio River



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**Trip Length:** Saturday — 14 miles/6 hours including lunch break  
Sunday — 15 miles/6 hours including lunch break

**Expected Water Conditions:** Flatwater

**Saturday and Sunday Schedule:**

10:00 am	Gather at meeting place in Milltown
10:15 am	Shuttle leaves
11:00 am	Start Paddling
5:00 pm	Landing at the Take-Out

**Trip Requirements:** No special skills, equipment, or physical conditioning required for this trip.

Bring your own lunch and drinks.

Two grills will be at the campsite if you want to use them to cook a burger or hot dog.

**Contact Information:**

*For paddling info:* Call Sue Foxx at 317-363-4074 (Cell), 317-253-0222 (Home) or email her at [sufoxx@doe.in.gov](mailto:sufoxx@doe.in.gov) by Friday, May 16 if you plan to participate on either day. If you want to be part of our campsites, let me know ASAP.

*For camping info:* Call Rick Turney at 317-254-2087 (home).

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## Whitewater Trips

### Cheat River Festival (Class II-IV)

May 2-4, 2008

**Trip Sponsors:** Bob Heckler (219-662-6330), Bob McCormick (765-426-1254)

The Cheat River Festival is an annual event sponsored by Friends of the Cheat featuring music, food, gear vendors, an art market, and of course paddling. (See <http://cheat.org/festival/> for more info.) Camping is available at 2 different campgrounds (lately we've preferred Teeters) adjacent to the festival site, which is located on the right bank of the Cheat River about 1 mile north of Albright, WV.

In addition to the Cheat Canyon (III-IV), which some HCC boaters always runs, other local paddling options include the Cheat Narrows (II-III), Big Sandy (III-IV), various Forks of the Cheat (if they're running) and for those who want to drive a bit further, the Upper Yough (IV-V). For those who run the Cheat Canyon, Glen Miller's Shuttle Service (IV-V) is an added adventure. At the campground after the fest, entertainment is provided for all at the HCC campsite by Piano Man Bob Heckler. This trip is always a good time so come join the fun! Check the whitewater section of the bulletin board for more information as the date approaches.

**Important:** If you are going to want to use the Glen Miller Shuttle Service on Saturday, please contact Bob Heckler or post to the Bulletin Board ASAP (by April 25) so that he can call in reservations.

**Trip Requirements:** Springtime temps in WV are variable. Check the weather and come prepared with appropriate cold-weather paddling (and camping) gear.

**Contact Information:** Contact the trip sponsors before the trip or check in on the Bulletin Board.

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## Muscatuck River Events

### 2008 Wayne Durbin / Dan Shade Memorial Rendezvous

Saturday, May 3, 2008

Fellow paddlers, please plan to gather with friends to honor the memories of Dan Shade and Wayne Durbin. Please join us at the Rendezvous to keep their memories alive.

Camp sites 14 & 15 in Muscatuck Park have been reserved for Friday and Saturday nights. Additional sites can be reserved by calling 1-800-928-3667 or 812-346-2953. Additional info is available at [www.muscatatuckpark.com](http://www.muscatatuckpark.com).

**Schedule:**

7-8 am	Breakfast at Log Cabin Inn
9:30 am	First shuttle from campground. We will determine what creek at that time
12-12:45 pm	Return to camp for lunch
1pm	Second float shuttle
Dark	Pitch in dinner at Shelter house # 5. Please bring a covered dish

After dinner there will be an auction to raise money for the Friends of the Muscatatuck River Society. Please bring any items you would like to donate.

**Contact Information:** For more info, call Bill Suhre at 812-346-7253 or Roger Robinette at 812-392-3091 or visit their web site at [www.fomrs.org](http://www.fomrs.org).  
*(Muscatuck River Events continue on next page)*



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## Muscatuck River Events (continued)

### 2008 Orlo Blomquist Memorial Canoe Race

Sunday, May 4, 2008, 1:00 pm

This race will be held Sunday, May 4th at 1:00 PM at the Commons Park in Old Vernon, Indiana. The course will be on the Muscatuck river and may be altered due to water level

Contestants should meet at 12:00 at the Commons for pre-race information. Shuttles will be run until 12:45. Classes will be determined by entrees received

There is a \$10.00 fee for each per participant.. Proceeds go to Friends of the Muscatuck River Society.

**Contact Information:** For more info, call Bill Suhre at 812-346-7253 or Roger Robinette at 812-392-3091

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## Trip Report— Sand Creek, April 12, 2008

Richard Tekulve



*Entrance to Upper Mill Race  
Cuts off 3/4 mille loop of Sand Creek*

On Saturday April 12th, five paddlers from the HCC floated a trip on Sand Creek in the Southeastern counties of Decatur and Jennings. A few inches of rainfall on the preceding day made for a swift current of 3-4 mph. A forecasted rainfall never surfaced but the 20 to 30 mph wind gusts (with temperatures in the mid-40s) made drytops worthwhile.

Almost all of the stream's islands and channels were submerged but the consistent rock ledges never disappointed.

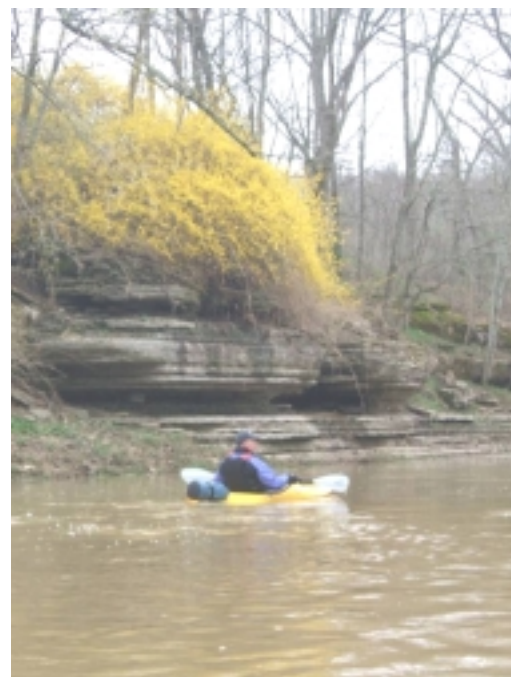
The creek offers not one but two unique mill races unusual by Indiana standards. Both inlets and outlets are ¾ mile "loops" – literally creating an island effect. Logs prevented clear openings on the usually run- nable water tunnels.

Local legend has it that in the late 1800s a Brewersville man offered a challenge to any "outsiders" who would race him in this area. After years of profitable gains from Sand Creek, a gent from Kentucky accepted the challenge. Little did the local man know that the Kentuckian had previously scouted the area and had discovered the two decisive "shortcuts" or "cheat holes" that had given the locals a clear advantage all of these years. When the event was staged, the outsider tripled the purse – drawing a huge crowd of curious onlookers. As the race unfolded, the Brewersville man did as he normally did by letting the opponent streak ahead just out of sight enough to sneak his way through both channels – setting up his guaranteed element of surprise victory dash. Only this time, the Kentuckian had already claimed victory, grasped the triple wager, and headed back to the Bluegrass state never to be heard or seen from again. This was the last known race on Sand Creek and none were ever run fairly.

Our put-in was at the Westport Dam (public access and parking). The take-out was a small landing near my old log cabin (private) just west of Brewersville for a total of 13.8 miles, paddle time approximately 3 ½ hours, average 3.8 mph. The group took lunch and explored the "first Mill Race".

This creek has been a long-time favorite of the club for decades but it is traditionally run above the dam at Westport. A gradient of over five feet per mile usually provides enough spring time current for easy paddling. Summer levels are a relatively different story. Only about half of the expected group showed up due to the weather situation prognosticated.

The five satisfied HCC members who participated were Jim Sprandel – Indianapolis, John Delashmit – Fairland, Mike Lough – Trafalgar, Garry "Muskrat" Hill – Greentown, and Richard Tekulve – North Vernon. All agreed that Sand Creek successfully fulfilled their appetite for a weekend gathering.



*Floating down Sand Creek*



## Trip Report—"A Valley Filled With Smiles"

Garry Hill

### Muskrat's April Fools on Big Pine Cruise, April 5, 2008

On Saturday April 5th, one of the largest crowds of Paddlers in over 30 years gathered in Pine Village to enjoy Muskrat's April Fools On Big Pine Cruise. Canoe and Kayak laden vehicles overwhelmed that tiny town on the morning of the event. Paddlers of all ages stood in the middle of a state highway, impeding traffic, while listening to Muskrat's admonitions. The locals seem to realize we are harmless and will soon be gone.

Weather and Water Flow are always the factors which decide the attendance for this event. Really low water, high flows, or rough weather can cause many people to stay away. This year, the water flow was much the same as it was in 2006 and 2007; just enough to make the Creek fun for everyone, without being intimidating to anyone.

But it was the "Weather" that drew this crowd of Paddlers to Big Pine Creek for 2008. Saturday April 5th was the "Warmest Day of the Year" and the sky was nothing but "Blue". There were 63 Paddlers in 51 Boats: 12 Tandems, 17 Solo Canoes, and 22 Kayaks—the 3rd largest April Fools gathering in its 31 year history.

Rainsville to Twin Bridges—7.6-miles  
4-hrs 30-min (11:00 AM to 3:30 PM)  
-1" On The Chuck Weis Gauge  
Sunny All Day!!  
48° On The Shuttle; 63° Going Home



*Passing through Rocky Ford  
Linda Smith and Davie Ellis up Front*

The attendance list is long and "spotty" (LOL). There were many names on the Trip Log that I just could not read. Muskrat is really glad you folks have more skill with a Paddle than you do a pencil, or a lot of you would be in trouble on Big Pine Creek (LMAO). I recognized some only from seeing your "scribbles" in the past (LOL). I'll go through the membership list at a later date and send out the full "Correct List".

Trips like this one always bring up the question of Large Group vs Small Group. Which is best? Which is more fun? Is one safer than the other? etc, etc. For me, I just don't care!!! "Any group of 1 or more gathered for the enjoyment of the River is a Good Group!!" Big and Small, I like 'em all.



*"Killer Falls" at "Lunch Island"*

Large groups on small streams are destined to dissolve into small groups anyway. The narrow channels and riffles of Big Pine caused our group to quickly "string-out". And the "Play Spots" on Big Pine are great facilitators of this break up. Every good wave claimed its share of players, while other Paddlers continued on.

"Lunch Island" has a special play spot known as "Killer Falls". While dozens of Paddlers regrouped and chowed-down on the Island, others took turns playing the waves. Laughter filled the air. Smiles were everywhere. A beautiful Creek, dozens of friends—old & new, and Perfect Weather.

In fact, the weather was so nice that several Paddlers turned it into a "Swimming Event". How many of you took a dip? I lost count!! Besides Muskrat, the swimmer-list contains the names of Jim Anderson, Tanya Lodics, Nick Harby, Greg Jones, and several others.

Big Pine Creek has become such a valuable asset to our Paddling Community. We all love it!!!! But, how do you describe this Creek to someone who has never seen it?? We can say that it's one of "Our Favorite Springtime Creeks". We can say it has "The Best Whitewater In Indiana".

We can tell them it is "Unique", "Beautiful", "Fun", "Natural". We can describe it many ways. After enjoying Big Pine for more than 30-years, and especially after this most recent experience, Muskrat has a new way to illustrate our passion for Big Pine.

Sometimes Big Pine Creek is

*"A Valley Filled With Smiles"*

Wildcat Paddler Tim Criswell has prepared a slide show of this year's April Fools Cruise; over 100 great photos. To view it, copy & paste the following address into your browser:

<http://www.photoshow.net/view/vpoWsFDfh>





## Trip Report — Big Walnut Creek, March 29, 2008

Dave Ellis

My style of sponsoring an HCC trip involves a lot of worrying. Will the weather be reasonable? Will the water level be in the Goldie Locks range? Not too low and not too high but just right. Will the participants enjoy themselves? Will they behave? Will I avoid embarrassing and troublesome senior moments? Well, occasionally everything works out fine ... as it did on the Big Walnut.

We paddled the section from McCloud Nature Park to Pine Bluff Covered bridge – about 8.5 miles at 320 cfs on the Roachdale gauge which is near mile 5 of this section. In the ten days prior to March 29<sup>th</sup>, the flow ranged from 3500 to 125 to 900 to 320 on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Jim Sprandel and I did a scouting run on the 25<sup>th</sup> at 147 cfs with sleet. We still found it a pleasant paddle. On the 29<sup>th</sup>, we enjoyed hazy bright skies with temperatures getting into the lower 50's. We did notice icicles on roots on river left, the shaded side, left over from the previous night's temperatures in the 20's.

All 15 participants were in good sprits and paddled competently ... including me. There were even a couple clowns who entertained us with semi-swims. Neither, who shall remain unnamed here, got anything wet above their waist. One drifted his kayak sideways into a rock while chatting with another boater. The other claimed to have had trouble wind as he re-launched after a rest stop.

Even though I watched closely, I saw no blooming wild flowers. Finally, on Garry Hill's Big Pine trip April 5<sup>th</sup>, I found some snow trillium. I think I've found them blooming around March 15th in past years.

Participants included Linda Smith, George - The Taller - Flexman (I've enjoyed paddling with George Jr. since 1970 or so), Theresa Kulczak, Joel DeLashmit, Mike Lough, Kevin & Jacob Ayres, Jim Sprandel, Dan Valleskey, Rich Howard, Dwayne James, Ellen Popodi, Skipper Reg Baker, and Garry Hill. Let's see. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Ahhh? Doh! I was there too.

Come paddle with us.

**Dave Ellis**, aka The Creek Freak

*Editor's Note:* Links to additional photographs are available in the Trip Reports section of the HCC Bulletin Board at: <http://www.hccbulletinboard.org/forums/showthread.php?t=2412>





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## Boat Buying For Beginners — Part II

Terry Busch

### Some Recommendations for Whitewater Kayaks

There is a saying that you don't sit in a kayak—you wear it. This is true and it has important implications for buying a boat. Getting a boat that really works for you is not simply a matter of picking a good design. You need to find a size that is right for you and then adjust the outfitting so that the boat truly fits you.

Eric Jackson wrote a terrific post on this topic for Boatertalk not long ago. Here's what The Man had to say about the fine points of a good fit:

1. "River Running Playboats (EZ, Fun, Inazone, etc.) For any easy-to-paddle boats that are also playable the performance goes like this:

A. As your weight increases the waterline rises on the hull and the amount of freeboard decreases causing the "edges" or parting line to be underwater more often. This simply allows the water to go over your deck when trying to peel out or eddy out or anytime you hit a current differential and try to flip you. So the river running characteristics get worse as you get heavier. Also, the bow and stern are more likely to go underwater causing issues in making your line.

Every boat has an ideal weight range for river running and it is much lighter than the "published" weights 99% of the time. For example if a boat says it is good for 120-210 pounds, it is probably only a good river runner from 120-160 pounds.

Keep in mind that many boats have terrible river running characteristics at any weight! Vertical sidewalls are terrible, low rocker causing the ends to catch are bad, etc.

B. The playability of a boat increases as you increase in weight. Your ability to make the boat go vertical is much easier the heavier you are.

2. For long boats, creek boats, and river running creek boats: here the paddlers weight range is a little broader since the boats are longer and the effect of adding weight is not as noticeable, HOWEVER!

Most long boats are too narrow and as you get heavier (usually more weight up top too), you get much less stable than a lighter person in the same boat. A 200 pounder in a 25" wide boat is WAY less stable than a 150 pounder. If they lean over just a tad the boat goes over without a brace. Most bigger people don't realize just how handicapped they are in their boats compared to a smaller person. The comment I hear from "big guys" most when on a river is, "wow that kid has great balance, or that woman has great balance." If they had the same amount of stability proportionately, they would also have "great balance." Simply try this test, see how far you can lean your body over until it falls, then ask a small person to do the same, you will be amazed.

That is why my designs tend to be wider on the top end- The Super EZ was 26.5" while many bigger boats don't every go wider than 26" The T4 was 27" For somebody over 210 pounds that extra stability goes a long way!

#### Outfitting:

- **Seat:** Your upper body is actually over the stern of a boat and your legs over the bow. Your center of longitudinal buoyancy is about 9" in front of your crotch on average, so there are two opposite body types that determine where your seat should be:

**Long and lanky** — Move the seat back since your legs are way up front and your upper body is too light to over compensate for that. In the neutral position, with a properly designed boat, you will be sitting bow down in the water until you move the seat back. This means: Bow will dive easily, your boat will be hard to control when it is going fast (the bow will want to spin out and the energy to correct is much more.) Squirted is harder, etc.

**Stocky** — Your upper body is heavier and your legs are shorter so your stern is low in the water and bow up—move the seat forward to trim it out. You will catch your stern edges easily if you don't and the bow will be hard to get down on a playable boat.

Typically you can adjust the backband and foot system enough to trim yourself out temporarily until you get the right spot, then you can adjust the seat when you get the right spot figured out.

Hip pads, thigh braces, etc. Being snug but comfortable is ideal. Watch the hip pads not to over do them and get



Jackson 2 Fun Kayak

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*the circulation cut off in your legs!  
I hope this helps.*

EJ”

If you buy an older model (more than five years old), you may find that the outfitting is in bad shape or was never really very good to begin with. Here are some further thoughts from pro paddler Heath Cowart, who taught me many valuable lessons when he ran a kayak school out of Asheville, NC. I had written to ask him about fixing the outfitting in an older boat and this is what he told me. It could come in handy if some of you need to rebuild your outfitting:

*"The advent of ready made outfitting is probably diminishing the art of custom outfitting. A lot of the paddlers that have been around for a while, especially freestyle pros who really want great performance rip all of the factory padding out as soon as they get their kayak and start from scratch. Those cool looking LL hip pads are not the greatest for actually holding you in the kayak. Nor are anyone else's. The giveaway is the fact that they are shaped like the LL logo, not like your hip. For the best possible fit, pull the pads out, get some 3" minicell to shape your hip pads, and maybe some 1/2 inch mini or less for your seat. Get a little extra, it is easy to over sand. The proper shape for a hip pad is hard to describe but here is a tip. It should taper from top to bottom so the top wraps over your thigh but does not put too much pressure on your hip. Some times grippy material on the seat or wrapping up onto the hip pads helps too. I have used really thin neoprene for this but it is hard to find. You can actually glue the neoprene to the cockpit rim so it keeps your pads from ripping when you get in and out. Go really slowly and shave out the hips pads a little at a time with the initial goal of being able to just get inside the kayak. Once you can get inside then you can shave a little at a time to get maximum contact with out pressure points. It helps to make the hip pad go all the way up to the cockpit rim. This can be hard if you have to bridge over a strap but it can usually be done. I have had kayaks with such great outfitting that I carefully pulled it out when I sold it so I could put it inside my new kayak. Also remember, If you glue the minicell well then the bond is stronger than the foam so if you shave too much or otherwise need to add some foam just glue on some more and shave it into shape. I have had outfitting that looked like a jigsaw puzzle of little pieces all glued together that lasted for years and worked really well.*

*The clothes you wear also make a big difference. Neoprene shorts will grip the outfitting better than fleece.*

*I actually rarely outfit my kayaks any more. At some point, I got in the habit of pushing on my toes when I roll to lock in my knees. I paddled for years in kayaks without back bands, too. Talk about a stomach workout. Maybe that's when I learned to hold my self in when upside down. Back bands only became popular as outfitting in the last 7 years.*

*And one last thing. Being able to get out of you kayak is much more important than being able to stay in. Don't over do it."*

Good advice from great paddlers.

Terry

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## HCC Stickers

Dave Ellis still has a supply of HCC stickers available for \$1 each. You can usually pick these up from Dave at the Wednesday night pool sessions or at other club events.

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## The Senior Flexman's 65th Anniversary

Dave Ellis

It was brought to my attention recently that George and Juanita Flexman are celebrating their 65th wedding anniversary this year. George and Juanita and their five children were active in the club in 1969 when I joined. And I knew that any trip that included the Flexman's was going to be fun.

January 1st is George's birthday. Many years, he celebrated by hosting HCC's New Year's Day paddle. I have a slide of him standing on Eagle Creek – about 40 feet from shore – whacking the ice with his paddle just to make sure that we weren't going to be able to paddle that year. I have another slide of Lil' George, aka George the younger, aka George the Taller, sitting on the bow of his dad's canoe with his leg's wrapped around the bow-plate giggling through a small drop on the Little Miami in Ohio. The Flexman's produced the club's newsletter for 80 straight issues, retiring from that service just before his 80th birthday. We thank them for their years of service and wish them the best.



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## Course Announcement—Safety and Rescue Workshop

The IU Outdoor Adventure group is offering this workshop to introduce participants to situations and rescues that may be encountered in a coastal kayaking environment. Off water, the class will cover general effects of wind and weather, hypothermia, group awareness, and communication with swimmers and other group members. The class will be on the water to practice:

**Date:** Saturday, June 28, 2008

**Start:** 10:00 am

**End:** Between 5:00 and 6:00 pm

**Location:** Lake Monroe, Bloomington, Indiana

**Cost:** \$135 with HCC membership, minimum class size is 8 participants, maximum is 17 participants

**Registration Deadline:** Please register by Monday June 21st.

### Course Outline —

#### Assisted Rescues

- T-rescue
- H-rescue
- Eskimo rescue bow and paddle presentation

#### Solo Rescues

- Paddle float
- Cowboy/scramble
- Re-enter and roll

#### Towing

- Contact tow
- Simple tow using a towline
- Towing an injured or incapacitated paddler

#### Swimmers

- Rescuing a swimmer who has been separated from his boat
- Swimming with and without your boat in tow

Participants must be able to swim and have basic paddling skills. Participants must have a suitable boat (touring/sea kayak), paddle, personal flotation device, appropriate clothing for conditions, spare dry clothing, sunscreen, plenty of water, lunch, and a good attitude. Optional items are anything else you normally take when paddling, such as a spare paddle, signaling device, towline, first aid kit etc.

For more information, contact David Frost — IU Outdoor Adventures, 812-856-4092 [ocustom@indiana.edu](mailto:ocustom@indiana.edu).

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## 2008 Membership List

I mailed out a paper version of our current Membership List on or about March 22, 2008. Those who still want a paper newsletter were mailed a paper list. Those who are reading The Hoosier Paddler on-line were mailed a single sheet explaining our Communication Vehicles and listing the new password for the hoosiercanoecub.org version of the listing. That version will be updated every couple months or so. I had one paper listing returned having lost its address label. Was it yours?

Dave Ellis ( [riverpapaw@aol.com](mailto:riverpapaw@aol.com) )



*Blue Hole Canoe—For Sale*

### For Sale

16' Blue Hole Canoe, solo saddle & tandem seats, thigh straps & floatation, paddles. \$400.00. Contact at 317-915-7432 - [greenerk@yahoo.com](mailto:greenerk@yahoo.com)

**Note:** More pictures are in the Gear Swap section of the HCC Bulletin Board.

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*Photo Credits:* Jim Sprandel—Pages 2, 6, and 8. Muskrat's Wildcat Creek Expedition Newsletter—Page 7.  
Ben Swain—Page 9.



## Upcoming Events

Wednesday Evenings	<b>Pool Sessions</b> —Thatcher Pool, Indianapolis, IN	April Newsletter, Page 1
Tuesday Evenings	<b>Paddling at Eagle Creek</b> (starting May 6)	Page 3
May 2-4	<b>Cheat Fest, (Class II-IV)</b> Cheat River, WV	Page 5
May 5-6	<b>IU Wilderness First Aid Course - Bloomington, IN</b> <i>David Calvin: dcalvin@indiana.edu</i>	March, Page 11
May 3-4	<b>Flatwater Trip</b> —Fish Fry, Pigeon/Fawn	Page 4
May 3	<b>Wayne Durbin / Dan Shade Memorial Rendezvous</b> <i>Muscatatuck River</i>	Page 5
May 4	<b>Orlo Blomquist Memorial Canoe Race</b> <i>Muscatatuck River</i>	Page 6
May 17	<b>Moving Water Training for Whitewater Kayaks</b>	Page 2
May 18	<b>Beginner River Trip (Class I-II)</b>	Page 2
May 18	<b>Flatwater Trip</b> —Blue River	Page 4
May 24-26	<b>Whitewater Trip</b> —Wisconsin Whitewater (Class II-IV) Wolf, Red, Peshtigo, Menominee	Bulletin Board
June 7-8	<b>East Race Opening Weekend</b>	Bulletin Board

**June Newsletter Deadline:** Please submit articles for the June Newsletter to Jim Sprandel by May 15. Please E-Mail articles to merlin-3d@sbcglobal.net or call him at 317-257-2063.

