

PPWC

Pikes Peak Whitewater Club

Welcome to the new newsletter. March 2005. This is a work in progress. I have added two new sections. The first is called "Our voices", which are interviews with club members. For this edition I chose Don Grall. The other section I call "Beyond the Ark". River stories of rivers other than our home river. Last year I only paddled the Royal Gorge and the Numbers, I thought maybe there were other rivers out there.

I hope you enjoy

Chris Brobin

Pikes Peak White Water Club

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SnowPack

Kurt Schroeder

Best Snow Year in Recent Memory Upon Us!

Yowza! Things are looking pretty darn good State wide with a couple basins doing extremely well and the others hovering right around average. If the mountains get their typical March and April snows we'll be in great shape, but we'll just have to wait and see. Long range predictions I've seen are predicting a wetter than normal spring that hopefully translates into wet, heavy March and April snows. Predicting the weather is no easy task, but like they say, weathermen and quarterbacks are the only two professions that are paid to be 50% right! Even without a killer spring snow season I think we already have reason to be optimistic about our water outlook. Maybe even the South Platte will run this year for our beginners! So, pray for snow and keep your fingers crossed that an Albuquerque low is headed our way!

Basin % of avg. % of last year % of peak accum.

Arkansas	124	149	81
S. Platte	85	125	53
Colorado	99	116	64
Dolores	157	156	104
Yampa	84	90	56
Gunnison	146	145	93
Rio Grande	152	147	101
N. Platte	87	107	56

Statewide Avg. 110 121 73

The above numbers are NRCS statistics as of February 10, 2005

Pueblos New Water Park

Gordon Stringer

A cigar touting Groucho Marx greets you as you huff down the bike path with boat on shoulder, "Those are my principles. If you don't like them I have others." Groucho quips. You may be tempted to call this the Pueblo WW Hike & Play, but try not to gripe too much, or you'll be out of breath. You're not at work today, and it's not the Chukar trail.

The water March 12, 2005 is 48 degrees and 618cfs. Nice. The sun is shining brilliantly and there are a dozen or so boaters here this afternoon. The main river features are finished, but the landscaping is not in yet, so it is concrete, boulders, earth movers, and dirt for today. The scene is definitely urban and industrial, but the water is clean smelling and fresh. So, crank up the Groove Salad and get in the mood.

Here is a brief description of the features. There is a levy that is dramatically painted with large oversized murals. Each one tells its own story. So, I will describe the features by the major mural close to the drop. You can always count them on your fingers, one, two...

Insane Clown

First feature is where the diversion dam used to be, congratulations to the Corps of Engineers for removing that hideous impediment and replacing it with an

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environmentally friendly fish ladder, which serendipitously serves as a kayaking feature.

The feature is a long green wave. As you approach, a large skull mural greets your descent. Once past the two guardian rock posts, a smashing crescendo of excitement begins. When you roll back up, an insane clown is staring down on you, giggling and laughing like some nightmarish carnival ride.

Marley Hole

The Second feature is a playful, laid back wave with the ganja smile of Bob Marley looking over you. "One Love, one love, let's get together and feel all right." This hole is a feel all right wave. It gives you time to warm up the mind and muscles and feeling all right.

Grim Reaper/Proletariat

You will be sharing the working class third feature with the Grim Reaper and Karl Marx. So wake up and realize who is close by you. Get to work for the masses on this wave. It is fun, retentive, a hint of floral and fruit, and a sweet spot to keep you working all afternoon. Just be sure your boss doesn't see you.

Pueblo Paddlers

The Fourth feature has new mural in the making by the Pueblo Paddlers. The artwork is a photo of two Pueblo Paddlers giving the OK on the drop. Special thanks to Bob Walker, John Zupanic, Gary Lacey, and Pueblo Paddlers Club for their vision, dream, patience, and direction in getting this park completed. A long haul that ended with incredible results. Thanks guys! This wave is a difficult to catch from river right, but easy to hit on the way down the center.

Boyz

The Fifth feature is mild, glassy, and retentive. Long

rides, carving turns, side surf, and spins can be attained here. Above you, as you play, are a faint mural of two young kids. You can't see it from the wave, but on the walk up, it is quite impressive. Take a look.

Mosaic

The Sixth feature is very similar to the Boyz described above. It is near several mosaic type drawings. The fifth and sixth holes may be a place to start if you are new to playboating and surfing. Beware: If you turn off your mind, and float downstream, the seventh hole is a mighty surprise!

Dark Side of the Moon

The Seventh feature is located under various psychedelic paintings. This feature already has a reputation. With several swimmers to its credit, and a broken paddle as well, the feature is fast, narrow, steep and very retentive, enough so to be called "sticky". Hit it river left to check it out first. One swimmer described this run as a long lesson in breathless paddling. While Train Spotting, if you flip and breathe with the fishes, it will let you go, but only after serious psychedelic experience.

Almost Guilty

The Eighth feature is below a long poem on guilt. It is a mellow, Parkdale style, surf wave on either side. Get out before the Union bridge, because after that, it is a long, slow float to the Santa Fe Bridge.

The kayak course is part of 9 miles of river restoration work in the \$8.8 million project called the Arkansas River Corridor Legacy Project. You will be able to float from the dam to the Santa Fe Bridge.



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Directions:

The hardest part is finding the put-in parking lot.

There are some one way streets, so pay attention to the traffic signs.

Take I-25 South to Pueblo, take the 1st Street exit, go west on 1st to Union turn left, follow Union up and across the river (Union Street Bridge) to Corona St. turn right, follow Corona along the course and take the first right (no street sign?), stay right and follow the street around the bend, stay right and then down a hill to a dirt parking lot. Look for kayakers.

You can get there from Fourth Street, but I found it difficult to give direction with all the alleys, curvy roads, and such.

-el gordo



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Our Voices

Interview with Don Grall

CB-You are an original club member. When did it start?

DG-It started in 1975, we met in a shop where doug wheat sold paddling gear. He is still a member. It was the hub around which the club revolved. He wrote the Floaters guide to Colorado rivers.

CB- Are there any original club members still around?

DG-Rick Dukes, Doug Wheat and Dan Dunphy. Original Club member Larry Vermeer Guides in Ecuador through his company Small World Adventures.

CB-What is your favorite River or Section?

DG-In Colorado it's the Royal Gorge on the Arkansas. Out of state it's the Middle Fork of the Salmon in Idaho.

CB-What changes has the club undergone?

DG-it's very similar in many ways. There have always been between 70- and 100 members, rolling sessions, permit parties to get multiple chances at permits and the like.

CB- You told me once that you ran the Royal Gorge at over 6,000 cubic feet per second(cfs). Tell me a little about it.

DG-It was in 1983, a record run-off year, Larry Vermeer and myself ran it. It was a Huge, Huge river, the power was incredible. There were 8-10 foot waves below Sunshine. The narrows above the bridge had waves more than ten feet high. Both of us had to roll. It was a survival test.

The eddy below sunshine was so dynamic we would rise above the level of the waves at times.

CB-Have you done anything more outrageous.

DG-The animas in 84 or 85. It was also a high water year. The week before a group walked back from Elk Park after losing two boats. It took four hours for

what is normally a 6-7 hour trip. My partner swam and lost his paddle, but I saved his boat.

CB-Any runs out there you still want to do.

DG-Cross Mountain Gorge on the Yampa. It's a long drive and a short run.(CB-it's mentioned in Colorado Rivers and Creeks).

CB- Tell me a little about your Photo Website.

DG- I went live with it about a year ago. It's a collection of Nature and Wild life Photos i've taken over the last 30 years. This site is a way of marketing them. I did it in Photoshop and Image ready. I update it frequently. Pictures taken all over the world. Polar Bears in Churchhill, Manitoba, Grand Canyon, Kenya, Ecuador and an and on.(CB- there is a link to Don's site on the club website)

CB-Your site has a picture of The Presqu Isle river in Michigan's Upper Penninsula. Have you paddled it?

DG-No. I did start paddling in Madison, Wisconsin with the Hoofers and then moved to Colorado six weeks later.

(CB-I ran the the PI with Jim Rada author of Northwoods whitewater,sadly He died on it last year)

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CKS has Moved!

CKS Nathrop has moved to Historic Main St. Buena Vista! Over 4500 Square feet of retail space featuring the largest selection of whitewater kayaks and paddle sport products in the west.

CKS Buena Vista
PO Box 730
327 East Main Street
Buena Vista CO 81211
719-395-8653
Toll free 888-265-2925

CKS Salida Opening Spring 05
F Street

Salida, Colorado
Headwaters Outdoor Equipment Building
Toll free 888-265-2925

CKS now offering discounts on kayaks for PPWCC
For 2005 CKS will be offering Pikes Peak current club members 10% off retail prices on New Kayaks and all Gear. Excludes special orders or sale items.

Paddle Fest 2005

Save the dates. April 15th- through April 17th 2005.

Join us and experience the Largest Paddle Sport Sale and Expo. In Colorado!

Colorado Kayak Supply and the industry's leading manufacturers have partnered up to provide over 8,000 square feet of paddle sport discounts! All 2004-2005 whitewater, touring and recreational products will be on display and for sale. This is a great opportunity for consumers to check out the new 2005 products, pur-

chase many products at a discount and pick up some blow out, heavily discounted merchandise!!!

When: Friday April 15th- 5pm-10pm. Saturday, April 16th, 9am-7pm & Sunday, April 17th- 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Where: Silverthorne Pavilion. Summit County-Silverthorne, Colorado.

Directions: I-70 to Exit 205-Silverthorne. North on Highway 9 for 1/4 mile. Silverthorne Pavilion is on the right (east) side of the street. Same as last year.
List of Manufacturers:

Wave Sport, Pyranha, Perception, Prijon, Dagger, Liquid Logic, Riot, Wilderness Systems, Seven 2, Immersion Research, AT, NRS, ACG, Stohlquist, Wildwasser, Aqua Bound, Bliss-Stick, Teva, Astral, Aire, Salamander, LVM, Shred Ready, Jackson Kayak, Wener, Woody, and many more...
Other events will include guest speakers and video premieres.

The 7 Rivers Expedition a John Grace Film

LVM-15 Lunch Video Magazine by Penstock Productions.

For further questions or comments, please e-mail earl@coloradokayak.com or call us at 719 395 8653

We can't wait to see you there!
CKS Spring Kayak Swap

Buena Vista, May 7-8th 2005

Buena Vista Colorado

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Buy Sell Trade Swap

Thanks

Earl Richmond

earl@coloradokayak.com

<http://www.coloradokayak.com>

888 265 2925

719 395 8653-direct

CKS's new shop is now open

PO 730

327 E. Main ST

Buena Vista Co. 81211

Beyond the Ark

Vermillion River, Hastings, Minnesota

Chris Brobin

Everything I needed to know about Kayaking I learned on the Vermillion River in Hastings Minnesota. The Vermillion starts in the southern Suburbs of the Twin Cities and meanders through Hastings, a southeastern suburb. Just before it enters the Mississippi, the river drops some 100 feet through the Vermillion Gorge in about a half a mile.

The kayaking run is, of course, in this half mile. After a brutal hiking descent into the gorge itself paddlers typically paddle upstream to the base of the 25-30 foot Vermillion falls (unrunnable because the water lands on a ledge) to start the fun. Starting back down-

stream there is a nice river wide hole at high flows, followed by the main slide. This is close to a 40 foot descent into the main feature, railroad hole. The slide is non-technical. If one can stay upright there is little to fear from the sheets of bedrock underneath, but at high flows a paddler needs to be straight in order to punch railroad hole. At this point the canyon is less than twenty feet wide and some hundred feet deep. The river immediately widens up and then enters the S curves, followed by the donut hole and then the take out.

Most of the paddling is done at railroad hole. Back before there were boats that could do somersaults, it was a great spot for side surfing and doing "donuts". I just read an article by Jed Selby in the recent CKS catalog about the benefits of play boating and he could have been talking about railroad hole. Playing this hole compressed time. We were able to get months of creeking in just hours on the hole. Go in surf, surf, surf, get flipped, roll up and try again. The donut hole further down was similar in concept but had a ledge twenty metres downstream. When you flipped in the hole you had seconds to roll before being swept over the ledge. All you would have to do is get out and haul your boat over the ledge if you missed, but it was great to simulate a dangerous situation. Again surf, surf, surf, flip, roll NOW, return.

Between 1982 and 1997 when I moved west I did the run some 300 times, making me the number one user of the river over that span. I went from a beginner who could hardly roll to a half-way decent paddler to old school in that time.

The Vermillion was not without its detractors. Some found it too shallow. It was. Some found the water disgusting. Yes it seemed like an open sewer at times and I hope that was a dead muskrat I saw once. Kids

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would throw rocks at us from the railroad bridge above the hole and worse. But I still liked it. And I was never hospitalized from the severe poison ivy cases I picked up hiking down.

As I improved as a paddler I would warm-up on the Vermillion before heading up north to the prime runs. A couple of hours on the donut hole gave me confidence when staring down the top of the Cabin section of the Silver in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan or running the Devil's Track on Minnesota's North Shore of Lake Superior. The lessons learned about surfing, balance and the like have paid many returns. This is the reason I'm excited about the new park in Pueblo. Paddlers of all abilities will be able to push themselves in a safe environment.

As I stated previously I became old school on the Vermillion. In the early eighties there was a gage upstream of the put-in I would check every time I paddled. The optimum flow was 3 feet. A local paddler Farmer John McDonald would drive over the river near the put-in daily and check out the flow and call me if it was running, so I stopped checking the gage. For years it became a bit of a joke when we wanted to know the level of the river John would always say three feet. Well, time passed and the gage got washed away, but John was still able to report the flow of the river at three feet. He finally admitted to me that he looked at a particular blade of grass on the bank and if it was underwater the river was good to go. These days you can go to a web site and get a cfs reading and I have no idea what it means. As long as that blade of grass is underwater that's good enough for me.