

PPWVC

Pikes Peak White Water Club

September 2006

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Introducing the Jackson's



Eric "EJ" Jackson



Emily Jackson

Mike Brown's Pro Clinics

Chris Brobin

Mike told the club quite clearly, "If lots of you join American Whitewater I will get a bunch of top level paddlers to do some clinics for us". Well our AW membership climbed from 27 at the start of the year to 43. This is more than half of the active club members.

Aw is the pre-eminent whitewater kayak organization in the US. Among many other things AW is about access to the rivers we love. We are AW and AW is helping us get to paddle.

Well true to his word Mike set up four clinics:

Downriver Play clinic at PaddleFest with Jed Selby, Andre Spino Smith, Nikki Kelly, Tanya Faux, Eleanor Perry, and Christie Glissmeyer (10 paddlers)

Strokes and Concepts with Eric Jackson, Emily Jackson, Dane Jackson, and Jason Craig from Team Jackson Kayak (24 Paddlers, this is the largest group of PPWC members I've ever seen on river)

Class 5 and creeking skills with Tommy Hilleke (12

paddlers)

Playboating with Katie Selby and Dustin Urban (9 paddlers)

I only attended The Strokes and Concepts clinic. It was great. Everyone from team Jackson was very approachable. Mr. Jackson taught me a backdeck roll and suggested a new paddle for me (which I bought). Everyone seemed to get a lot out of this. They drove from Telluride for the day since they were attending an outdoor film festival that Emily Jackson had a film in.

Comments on Tommy Hilleke's Creeking class:

"Not only was he down to earth but he was very willing to share any and all info and skills to help us all excel. I really enjoyed it."

"I really got a lot out of the clinic with Tommy. I've just started my second year of paddling, and Tommy is the most gracious and personable pro I could have asked for."

"I appreciate very much that attitude (support for boating conservative), and that encouragement from someone of Tommy's skill and caliber."

"Tommy was full of positive attitude and his



Dane Jackson



Mike Jackson

enthusiasm for the sport is contagious. I'm lucky to have had this opportunity"

"I'm impressed with not just his prowess as a paddler, but especially with his attitude toward others. He is a great representative of the sport"

"It was a fantastic trip. I really learn by watching/doing. So being on the river with someone of that skill level who is so open to showing us the hard lines and giving us insight was an incredible learning experience for me. I still can't believe he attained back up around house rock"

Comments on playboating with Katy Selby and Dustin Urban:

"Katie was great. Even though I had almost no experience playboating, Katie was very encouraging and gave me several helpful tips. By the end of the clinic, I was able to get on the wave and surf."

Katie also got right to the meat of the instructions, she saw my errors and made useful suggestions in oh so encouraging ways."

"It was amazing how quickly Dustin could diagnose any problems I was having. I learned so much in a quick amount of time. Its great to be part of a community where the best of the sport will donate their time to teach a weekend warrior new tricks."

"Dustin was so helpful, he is able to make his instructions clear and understandable."

"I watched our group of students skills increase dramatically. I am so pleased those two (Dustin and Katie) spent that time with us."

"What a great clinic! Dustin and Katie were simply outstanding. Not only did they show us how to perform basic surf and spin moves, they also helped many of us perform cartwheels and loops for the first time. Their exceptional ability as instructors is highlighted by the fact that they seem to be great individuals as well. Thanks!"

Other activities Mike helped set up include:

PPWC volunteer activities helped raise over \$900 donated to AW to support work on Colorado related issues during PaddleFest.

PPWC organized the first AW athlete ambassador presentation held during PaddleFest and provided an article about the presentation that appeared on the AW website.

LVM premiere May 25 with Clay Wright and Jay Kinkaid from team Jackson Kayak

LVM Premiere September 14 with Jed Selby and Andre Spino-Smith

Clear Creek, Golden Colorado

Mike Giffin

I got my first run on Clear Creek today -- the lower section, from just below Rigormortis to Golden. Some thoughts:

For you Numbers and Royal Gorge die-hards (I include myself in that group), this is a really great alternative for a change of pace.

It's class 4 from 400 to 900 cfs.

I had a ton of fun. I found no rapids that were necessarily more difficult than the tougher ones on the Numbers, but it's such a different run. It's continuous, fast water. Definitely not pool-drop, as all the Ark runs are.

Eddies are small and often unavailable when you want one.

This made it a really fun, valuable challenge for me, who runs almost exclusively pool-drop.

Elbow Falls is worth a scout for the first-timer at this level. The hole at the crux was really ugly (think Sunshine).

But at 525 cfs, there was enough water to boof the ledgy rock on extreme river-left, and by doing so my partner and I avoided the hole all together.

You get to Elbow quickly -- when the area around the river starts to become forested as opposed to more open and exposed bare rock, it's time to start being heads-up for Elbow.

Screaming Quarter Mile is a fair ways down from Elbow. The top drop/hole is fairly ugly if you blow the move, and if you get sterned out of that first hole and have to roll, you're in for a wild ride. I rolled twice, high-braced a couple more times and came out the bottom grateful to still be in my boat and not bleeding. But if you grease that top drop, the rapid will set up fairly easily and you need not have the trouble I did.

Not far below Screaming, you'll see a little bridge over the river.

Grab an eddy and look at this -- most people portage, as man-made blasted rocks and crap in the drop make for some ankle- or nose-breaking fun.

Below the footbridge/diversion structure (portage), but just above the Golden Park, the river splits and the left channel looks easier.

But this turns into a diversion structure that will have you scrambling for an eddy. Go around the right side of the island instead, and watch the wood.

With so many great runs on Clear Creek, and it not being that far away, I'll aim to spend some more time there. Lower Clear Creek is a blast.

Hope this was helpful, or interesting.



The First couple
Gordon and Ginger Stringer



Kurt Schroeder Paddling Zoom Flume
Brown's Canyon, Arkansas River, Buena Vista, CO
June 2006



Steven Gleason We hardly knew ya.

Chris Brobin

Steven was with our club for 3 years. He said he had two quality seasons, but what season's! I first paddled with him in the spring on the numbers at 550 cfs . At the time he looked like a guy who belonged on the numbers at low flows. Then he ran Browns Canyon at 2000 cfs and still looked comfortable. He had clean runs of the Royal gorge at 2000 and the numbers at 1800. He seemed to have a chameleon like quality that he could step it up as needed. I'm certainly curious to see what he will be paddling in the future.

Steven was educated in Pennsylvania (poor bastard) and taught fourth grade in the Harrison School District for a few years. He got married this summer to Meg and moved to Bend, Oregon.

We'll miss ya.



EJ's Stroke Clinic
June 2006 Salida Play Park

Athlete Ambassador's presentation at PaddleFest

Mike Brown

CKS first PaddleFest event in Buena Vista Colorado on May 19, 20, and 21st was a river festival with on water instruction, boat demos and an international group of pro paddlers on hand to teach skills and share knowledge with the 1,000 plus in attendance. Jointly celebrating the grand opening of the newest Colorado play park at South Main, this kick off event for the Colorado paddling season provided an opportunity for 4 AW Athlete Ambassadors to talk as a group about American Whitewater to a capacity crowd at the Saturday evening Wet House premiere. Jimmy Blakeney, Tommy Hilleke, Katie Selby, and Clay Wright, used the opportunity to present a convincing case for individual paddlers to join and support American Whitewater.

Their message was clear, concise, and enthusiastically received by the audience. The Ambassadors emphasized, with a consistent message, that access to and water in our nation's rivers is not guaranteed. They illustrated with examples how AW is a prime voice of the paddling community and has a record of many successful negotiations to secure water and access. They stressed that the impact of AW's voice at the table gains strength as the numbers of members represented increases, and on a different note, they gave examples of how they personally use some of the AW website river resources that benefit the paddling community.

This was one of the first times that a group of the new AW Athlete Ambassadors appeared together to appeal to a large audience to support AW and their impact was powerful. It demonstrated how their credibility on river issues along with their ability to command the attention of paddlers make a compelling combination to get the message out to the river community.

Most Improved Paddlers

Chris Brobin

This is difficult to quantify. I paddled with Jeremiah Fowler last year a couple of times at the play park. His development from last year to this year is remarkable. He did the Royal Gorge at 650 cfs in August and seemed very comfortable. But if I had to pick two paddlers it would be Ben Carter and Mike Griffin. They both began the season with runs on Pine Creek at 550 cfs and said it was the hardest run they had ever done. Then a couple of weeks later they both ran the numbers at around 2000 cfs, playing the whole way. Mike had a run on the numbers last year at 1200 and was upside down twice. Ben then did another run on the numbers at 2200 and basically guided a more "experienced" paddler down the run. He was truly impressive. About this time Ben turned his focus to some long multi-day bike rides. Mike G continued paddling aggressively. He is probably the second most experienced Royal Gorge paddler in the club in the last three years behind only Ed Hansen. Last year he took a nasty swim in the narrows at 2000 cfs. This year I was with him as we approached Sunshine at 2700 cfs this year and Mike's only comment was "I think we run this down the center", and he was off (no scouting Mike?). He rolled in the narrows in almost the same spot he swam last year and nailed it. He also did multiple runs on Pine Creek and even showed other paddlers in the club the run.

If you want to paddle with two strong and improving paddlers in our club you could do no better than Mike and Ben.



Ben Carter, Numbers, Arkansas River, Buena Vista, CO
May 2006

7 JUNE 2006 - Royal Gorge - 2700 cfs - put-on time was about 5:00 pm, if I remember correctly.

Boaters:

Ed Hansen, (writer of this trip report)

Chris Brobin

Mike Griffin

Let me first preface this trip report by stating that this trip was not like all the others. This trip I found myself in "the bad place." Some of you may have found a place like this yourself. Mine was between a rock and a hard place, or more precisely, a cliff and a hole. All previous trips this year, (and since), have had better results.

The day was nice with warm air temperature and the water temperature was also warm. Nobody needed to wear gloves or head warming hats. It looked like it may or may not rain, but it never did. The sky blued up as the day progressed.

We met at the Canon City wave take-out and all loaded up for the shuttle to the put-in. As we drove, there was much discussion as to the lines of the major rapids at this level: Pretty much straight down the middle is what I've been running the last 2-3 weeks and this is what I passed on. The Parkdale gauge was reading on the upper side of medium level, approximately 2700cfs.

We quickly arrived to the first rapid of the day, Primero. The usual line, ride waves, get left of the big rock on the bottom right. After that Segundo follows immediately. My line at all level has been to punch through a little wave on the approach and move right, the Rapid is short with a slight left curve. At the point of the curve there is a small pour-over on the right against the cliff with a micro eddy above the lip of the pour-over. I have always penciled down this pour-over as the hole sucks my boat down and shoots me down stream. Sometimes it may pop me into a 2nd micro eddy between the hole and the cliff. I have always had no trouble exiting this eddy in the past. I have

always had a bigger boat in the past. This year I've been boating in my new Wavesport EZG50. I'm still learning what I can and can't get out of in this boat.

Well today, I got popped into that 2nd eddy, upside-down. The eddy is only about 3-4 feet wide. On one side I was getting pushed against the cliff. On the other, was fast current. I would push off the cliff with one hand, grab the paddle to set-up for the roll and get pushed back against the cliff before I could roll. I did manage to get three roll attempts, with the 3rd successful, only to have my tail-end pulled under and turn me around. The hole was pulling me back in. It grabbed my bow, flipped me, and tossed me back against the cliff. After a couple more roll attempts I was too tired to roll up while fighting the cliff. I popped my skirt.

There I was, holding my paddle under my arm, the boat with my left hand, and the cliff with my right hand. I was in the eddy that was pulsing up and down making it hard to hold the boat, now vertical beside me, full of water. Mike and Chris were about 30 feet downstream in a big eddy against the cliff. As my paddle got pulled away, Mike went after it. (Thank-You!) The boat kept trying to pirouette in the water making it difficult to control. I was unable to pull it from the water and up the cliff to a little shelf about 8 feet above the waterline. It finally tore away and got sucked under. I scrambled up to the shelf as it resurfaced below me, got sucked back into the hole a 2nd time, disappeared, and surfaced downstream.. Chris went after it. (Thank-You!)

Now here I am, on the side of a cliff, can't walk downstream, can't walk upstream, the rail-road tracks are on the other side of the river. This is my new reality. I knew I needed to be on the other side and I knew there was only one way. We had put in after 5:00 p.m. so there wouldn't be any raft "shuttle" coming down the river. I backed up a few feet, jumped off and out as far as I could, landing in the middle of the current. Swam to the far side of the current, rested for a moment before I swam hard to break the eddy-line. Success. I was now headed back upstream in the eddy. It was an easy 20 foot swim to the side from here.

When I got up to the rails, I started running downstream. Met up with Mike, he tossed me my paddle and I was off to the races. I was able to see Chris

trying to wrangle the boat to the left side of the river far below. I kept running knowing that there was a few good eddys before we got to Pumphouse rapid.

As I saw my boat floating closer to Pumphouse, I realized that it was farther now than when I had first started running. Evidently the water was flowing faster than I could run along rail-road tracks.

As I ran along pumphouse, I couldn't see my boat anymore, I hoped that it may have washed into an eddy, but no such luck. As I looked back upstream I noted a big log entering the rapid. I kept running down stream. As I approached Sunshine rapid I noted that the same log that I had seen entering Pumphouse was now EXITING Sunshine. It had past me up with ease. This confirmed that my boat was going for a long swim. I also thought of Kathy who would be sitting with Angela at the take-out wave, watching other people surfing. She doesn't like it when I solo the Gorge. Today she know I was with a couple other boaters, not that it would matter after seeing my boat glide past upside down without me. I ignored the side-ache and kept running.

I watched Both Mike and Chris take great lines down Sunshine. I think it was at this point I told both of them to just enjoy the trip and I'd meet them at the bottom of the canyon or when ever one of us found the boat.

They both took great lines in Sledge hammer as well. I was running along side on the left curve approaching the narrows when I caught sight of the boat on river right (other) side of the river out of the main current hung-up on a rock. I pointed it out to Chris and then ran back upstream to the best crossing point. I found it about just below Clark's hole, at the bottom of Sledge hammer rapid. I found the farthest outreaching rock next to the thinnest part of the current with the most/ biggest eddys on river-right. I found my swim-line, hesitated while I wished I had a newer, better PFD, Jumped out, got swept downstream while I swam sideways in the current, again. You may recall I had my paddle back at this point too. I used it to pin-wheel across to the eddy which works very, very well. If you haven't used this technique, try it during your next swim. It's like swimming with 4½ foot arms. You will get tired faster but it's great for getting that big "umph" for short distances, and busting across

powerful eddy lines.

I got back out of the river, climbed up to the pipe-line grade, ran it down-stream toward where I had last seen the boat. As I approached I noticed Chris and his boat, but mine was no longer in place. And it wasn't on the bank. Mike was about 75 yards downstream, so maybe he had caught it. Nope.

I knew I had to swim back across.

The river was much wider at this location, so pin-wheeling would be too exhausting. Chris ferried it across for me as I picked a rock just below bird-drop hole, (A.K.A.: "Hey-diddle-diddle, Don't-go-down-the-middle".) I had a longer swim so I switched back and forth from front-crawl to side-stroke until I was out of the main current. There are no big eddys here, and it's fairly deep so I had to bounce down until I found a climb-able rock. After retrieving the paddle, it was running time again. All along the Narrows me and the other two leap-frogged a few times. The guys in boats looked like they were having more fun than I. Actually, I KNOW they were having more fun than myself.

Just above Wallslammer another group of kayakers pulled up. I just kept running, knowing that the other guys would bring them up to speed, not that it mattered because I was okay and my boat was way downstream, somewhere. I didn't stop to talk, just kept headed down-stream. The other kayakers stopped around Corner pocket because I never saw them after that for the remainder of the day.

I was lucky enough to be along side Mike and Chris at the 1/4 mile wave train that is Lions head at this level. Two waves near the top and one near the bottom are some of the biggest in the Gorge at this level. I think it was the one at the bottom that I watched Mike smash into (or get smashed by?) Stern squirt to the top, and fall backward into oblivion. Chris was right behind him, blue angel style, received the same treatment from the wave, but proved that a creek boat is somewhat more stable than a play boat as he stayed upright.

In the long stretch leading toward Pipe-line rapid they outpaced me and I lost sight of them. As I passed pipe-line, the railroad leaves the river by about 50 feet. I

decided to follow the river and not the tracks. Good thing too because I saw my boat! As I got closer, I saw that Mike and Chris had also seen it and were in the eddy next to me. An 8 foot rock in the middle of the river had stopped it. The boat was vertical against the upstream side of the rock with only about 8-12 inches above water. This is why I long ago decided that all my boats are bright, high visibility colors. It was about 12 feet out, but the main current was on the other side, with a smaller current on our side. After a quick calculation, I decided to have Chris pendulum me on this rope to the side of the rock where I would climb up. That didn't work so well, so I had to let go the rope after I slid along the rock, unable to find a hand-hold. I eddied out behind the rock, swam back up to it, and was able to climb up. After a couple minutes finding the safest way to get to the boat, I caught a rope end thrown by Chris and carabineered the stern end of the boat. I jumped from the rock back in the water, swam across the last 5 feet, grabbed the rope and.....

1 - 2 - 3 !!! We pulled the boat, it instantly got sucked down in front of what must have been an undercut judging from the angle of the boat against the rock, we continued to pull, felt it come our way, and it popped up next to the rock, about 6 feet from where it had been pinned. A little more pulling at I was reunited with my boat! Yeah!

After purging the water, most of the sand and a much needed drink of water from the still-in-place water bottle and downing a power-Gu, I got back in the boat, missing only my sponge, and the front pillar. Oh well. There didn't appear to be any hole, cracks or even major gashes, except a few new ones on the cockpit edge, to be expected.

From here on out it was a very uneventful float to the take-out. Well there was that one rock that Mike boofed and got worked in the hole real good. But other than that it was uneventful!

So basically, I boated the flat water into the Gorge, boated one rapid, swam at the next and boated the flat water at the end.

We've all heard and many of us have even stated: "A bad day on the river beats a good day in the office." Well, I'm not sure I feel that way about this one.

But give it few months. By then I'll forget how my feet and legs ached for 3 days afterward from all the running.

The next day I was back. Same water level. Things worked out MUCH better. I arrived safe and sound at the take-out 66 ½ minutes after putting-on with only two rolls and dry feet.

Editors note: This was probably the funnest run I had all year. At this level everything is huge!! If you are a strong paddler you want to get out when it peaks. I felt badly that I could not corral the boat in two attempts. Then I found out that a rafter died the next day after falling out of his raft in Sledge Hammer. Nobody in our group was hurt and all equipment was returned.

Oh, when Mike and I got to Sunshine he simply said, “I think we run this down the center” and charged.



Lynn Koester
Numbers, Arkansas River, Buena Vista CO
May 2006