

Bike Trip

This was the year that Ken Shoemaker and Malcolm Slaney rode their bikes from Chicago (OHare) to the raft trip. Hooyay! 636 miles in 6 days.

150 miles to W. Lafayette the first day. Raced the thunderstorms and spent the night with Rich Kulawiec.

A late start and 120 miles the second day. Camped in an old schoolyard in Farmland, IN.

60 miles to Dayton OH and Ken's parents. Breakfast was at a donut stand where the counter-person asked (hopefully) "This is to go, isn't it???"

Some wonderful tail winds in a thunderstorm to XXX, OH.

Miles of rednecks down the Kanawa in WVa to the Motel 6 in W. Charleston WVa.

Almost there, finally some mountains. Arrive in camp in mid afternoon.

Steve Higgins was lounging in camp and greeted the bikers with two light-beers. Malcolm replied, "600 miles of biking. We don't need no light beers!". Steve got the message.

Ed Bronson Reports

From: bronson@ecn (Edward C. Bronson)

Date: Fri, 27 Jun 86 11:41:10 EST

Subject: GSP CRAZINESS

GSP Rafting '86 has begun! This morning I met Malcolm and Kds at 6:01 AM at O'Hare airport outside of Chicago. Their bicycles and "baggage" arrived safely! They looked in fairly good shape considering it was the middle of the night! I wanted to say that they were "chipper" but kds insured me that after an all night flight, they were not "chipper." But, they were psyched!

They reassembled their bicycles, changed into their riding clothes, and at approximately 7:12 CDT they rode out of the front doors of the United Terminal in high hopes of finding West Lafayette by nightfall. As they inhaled the Midwestern air, Malcolm exclaimed "OOhhhh, feel that humidity!". (something that doesn't exist in California) And he was very accurate since the weather today is overcast, muggy, and sticky with gusting winds, temperatures in the low 90's, humidity at about 80%, and a 60% chance of thunderstorms all day!

A quick inspection of their 75 lbs of luggage revealed beer offerings from the Thousand Oaks Brewery, the Palo Alto Brewery, and the Anchor Brewery of San Francisco. I will try to remember to bring this beer out to West Virginia with me.

I think that the craziest activity within this newsflash is me getting up early enough to meet them at the airport at 6 AM! Oh, the motivation of beer....

The next newsflash describing trip progress will hopefully originate from West Lafayette.

Ed

From: bronson@ecn (Edward C. Bronson)

Date: Tue, 1 Jul 86 10:37:33 EST

Subject: The Saga Continues

And The Saga Continues....

Malcolm and Ken arrived in West Lafayette on Friday at about sundown. They rode through thunderstorms all day and still traveled 150 miles! After spending the night at Rsk's, they pedalled away with smiles on their faces at about 8:00 AM on Saturday. Saturday night was spent about 15 miles south of Muncie, IN. They arrived at Ken's parents home near Dayton, Ohio at about noon on Sunday. At 8:15 AM Monday morning, they again sped off with hopes of seeing beautiful Jackson, Ohio by nightfall.

Mrs. Shoemaker said that they were in good shape but were "a little sore." Ohio received fairly heavy thunderstorms on Monday so they had another chance to enjoy Midwest weather. When they left the Shoemaker's, their plans were to spend Monday night in Jackson, Ohio, Tuesday night near Charleston, and Wednesday night in Sumerville. We shall see. The hills of West Virginia are yet to come...

For those of you that are traveling out to WV and have not left yet, look out for these two intrepid souls along the way! They certainly will need (and deserve) a beer or ten when they arrive! Or maybe it would be best to hand them a bicycle water bottle filled with beer!

This is your travel reporter,
Ed Bronson,
wishing you pleasant travels
and wishing he was traveling.

Rich Kulawiec Reports

From: rsk

Subject: The end of their travels...

Malcolm and Ken arrived in Jackson, Ohio safely on Monday, and made Charleston on Tuesday evening in spite of nasty rains and crazed truck drivers on US 35. Leaving the Bob Evans in Charleston early Wednesday morning, they arrived in camp late in the afternoon. Malcolm's first words were "We're home!". Ken's were "We ride 500 miles and you give us LITE BEER!!!!"

Their comments were, of course, attributed to hysteria brought on by exhaustion.

[...]

From: rsk
Subject: New/Gauley Rivers 7/86
Newsgroups: net.rec.boat
Keywords: rafting, whitewater, flood

The sixth annual GSP raft trip was held this past weekend near Summersville, West Virginia. We rafted the New River from Thurmond to Hawk's Nest on 7/5 at +4 feet, the optimal level for most of the rapids. Surprise, Upper Keeney, Hook 99, and Fayette Station were especially exciting; Greyhound Bus Stopper was awesome.

Highlights of the trip included Malcolm Slaney and Ken Shoemaker's bicycle ride from Chicago to Summersville; Kirk Smith and Jeff Treece's risky exploration of an old coal tipple; Troy Cauble's near-drowning in Fayette Station the day *before* the trip (he's fine); an improvised presentation on birth control by Don Wegeng, Ken Long, Steve Higgins and your editor; a visit from Mr. Police Officer Sir at the campsite; taste-testing of 41 varieties of beer and Jolt Cola; full moons day and night; story-telling and singing courtesy of Ken Long and Paul Carlile; the selection of Ed Bronson as coordinator for next year's trip; Summersville Dam going full force; and the presence of large numbers of pregnant women. (Well, two...Stef Bean and Michele Andrews; Stacy Bucherl (nee Barnett) didn't make it.)

Tony and Michele deserve large amounts of abuse for wimping out with a fully-equipped van, including a TV. Let's see...the rafting virgins did jes' fine; oh, and single women outnumbered single men for the first time ever, if I've counted correctly. We didn't run out of Wild Turkey; and my car didn't lag behind (for once).

The rains earlier in the week swelled Summersville Lake such that the flood-control dam had to be opened; all three sluices were running wide open on Wednesday and Thursday. The resultant flow (14,000 cfs through the dam) was enough to make the ground shake in the area. The combined flow from the dam, runoff, and the Meadow River swelled the Gauley to a peak of 37,000 cfs (measured near Swiss) early Thursday. Four of us (Don Wegeng, Melora Shultz, Deb Smith and myself) hiked through Carnifex Ferry State Park down to Lost Paddle, which is normally a class VI anyway; Thursday it was near-unrunnable. The standing wave at Pillow Rock was about 25 feet high! We later found out that three expert kayakists ran the Gauley that afternoon from the dam to Wood's Ferry in about 2 1/2 hours; we believe this to be a record level run of the upper Gauley. (For comparison, spring and fall water releases for whitewater rafting/kayaking yield about 2400 cfs peak.) I don't know the names of these three; contact Lenny at Mountain River Tours if you're curious.

After running the New on Saturday, eight of us were crazy enough to test our luck on the lower Gauley on Sunday; we ran it from Wood's Ferry to Swiss safely, thanks to excellent guiding (MRT again). Flow had dropped considerably; estimates were 8000-10000 cfs, and the high-water marks on the foliage were 10 feet over our heads. However, the river still had quite a kick; Canyon Doors, MASH, and Heaven Help You were all running high and fast. Near the end of the day, Pure Screaming Hell (normally a class V) was so big that I believe it was easily a class VI. Hell Hole itself could have swallowed every raft on the trip without a murmur; it nearly swallowed me. (Thanks Kirk!) The lower Gauley is like the New except there's much less flat water, the rapids are nastier, and the water's colder. We took a lot of pictures (two rolls) with Tengdin's waterproof camera; I don't know how many will come out.

Some of our favorite guides, including Lenny and Squirrel, were on the trip; as were several boats of greenies; the screams when we hit the first class III were kind of interesting. Only one swimmer (not Kirk) all day; bumped out in a small surfing hole. I got into a waterfight with one of the guides (Ricky) and I lost. Oh, by the way, the eight of us were Ken Long, Lynn Todd, Bill Klaasen, Alynn Gentry, Kirk Smith, Sam Blanchard, Deb Smith, and myself.

I've decided that the musical analogue of rafting the Gauley is that part in the middle of the Who's "Won't Get Fooled Again" where there's a long organ solo followed by an incredible scream and crash. For some odd reason that came to mind when we were going through the Gates of Heaven and trying not to wrap on the right-side rock.

Those of you who are whitewater enthusiasts will do well to watch weather and river conditions in West Virginia; perhaps, if you can travel on short notice, you'll get a chance to try one of these rivers at high water. It's certainly worth the trip; the experience was incredible!

And a correction from Don Wegeng

From: dw
Date: 10 Jul 86 08:35:26 EDT (Thursday)
Subject: Re: New/Gauley Rivers 7/86

One small correction:

The kayak run on Thursday of the upper Gauley took 1 1/2 hours, not 2 1/2 hours. It boggles my mind...

/Don