

NEWSLETTER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE



September, 2020

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Questions? Want to contribute to the newsletter?

Joy Emshoff at je0987@yahoo.com
Patty Geisinger at pattyjoeg@sbcglobal.net

Membership:

Sandy Yonley & Jill Mulder

Membership for 2020 must be renewed unless you are a lifetime member! Here is the link to the website. Fill out the form and submit at your chosen level and you will be redirected to PayPal. **You will receive 2 vinyl TCKRA stickers and the TCKRA Newsletter before everyone else!** Thank you for supporting Texas paddling sports!

[Join the TCKRA now!](#)

About the TCKRA

The Texas Canoe and Kayak Racing Association is a statewide club for persons interested in paddle sport racing. The primary focus of the club is USCA and ICF class marathon racing, but other disciplines of paddle sports are promoted through [TCKRA Race Calendar](#)

In 1971 a group of canoe paddlers with an interest in canoe and kayak racing joined together and formed the TCRA (which later evolved into the TCKRA). During the past years the organization has grown to one of the largest canoe and kayak clubs in the state. The club is now recognized as the voice for canoe racing in Texas and its members have gained national recognition. Each year the TCKRA participates in approximately 20 canoe races and the TCKRA also organizes and sponsors the Texas State Canoe and Kayak Racing Championship Series. These championship level race events compliment the other annual racing events by recognizing the top competitors in a variety of paddle sport disciplines and classes.

Whether you are a novice paddler, intermediate or seasoned racer, TCKRA is a great way to meet new people, improve your skills and get out on the river. Our membership spans the state and varies widely by age, gender, skill-level and boat type; even our working careers and professions. We also share a great deal in common-the competitive spirit and an enduring love of the water.

Your annual dues help fund events and activities throughout the year and around the state. By joining the TCKRA you enjoy the following benefits:

- 8 championship races, (Unlimited, Aluminum, USCA and ICF, Surfski)
- The Martindale Triathlon
- Spring and fall river cleanups
- Newsletter
- Annual banquet
- Paddling clinics – free to TCKRA members
- 2 TCKRA decals for every member
- A TCKRA membership will give you a voice in the racing community and allow us to continue to promote canoe and kayak racing in Texas.

Our members paddle kayaks and canoes crafted from wood, plastic, aluminum, carbon and Kevlar.

*****Hello 2020 Texas Canoe and Kayak Racing Association Members! It is election season for the 2021 TCKRA board. If you are interested in participating in the future of canoe and kayak racing in Texas, please consider joining the oldest, (and only) canoe and kayak club in Texas. The responsibilities of board members are: attend 2-4 annual meetings and help host races (if you have no prior experience with being a race director, we will help). We also are always interested in help with the newsletter! There are 10 board members and 2 alternates on the TCKRA board. We will be accepting names for the ballot from now until November 14th. Voting will commence from November 15th-20th (a separate email will be sent out with the potential board names). Please consider volunteering! It isn't hard and helps shape racing in Texas now and in the future. You must be a paid member of the TCKRA and then all you have to do to submit your name for the ballot is email me (or call me if you have more questions about being on the board before throwing your hat in). TCKRA President, Sandy Yonley, sandyonley@hotmail.com*****

2020 TCKRA Officers and Board of Directors

Officers

Sandy Yonley (President)
David Kaiser (Vice President)
Grady Hicks (Treasurer)
Patty Geisinger (Secretary)

Board Members

Sandy Yonley
Kaitlin Mynar
Jon Yonley
Jill Mulder
Holly Orr
Jay Daniel
Patty Geisinger
Tommy Yonley
Grady Hicks
David Kaiser

Alternates

Tina Sackett
Matt Murphy

2020 Race Calendar

(Editor's Note: We will continue to update the 2020 Race Calendar as soon as information on the races becomes available.) [Upcoming Races and Event](#)

Oct. 3rd – Open Water State Championship, Stewart Beach, 2pm
Oct. 10th – Downriver State Championship, Staples to Luling 90, 9 am & 10am
Oct. 18th – Rotary Regatta on Clear Creek, Houston, 10am
Oct. 31st – 42nd Annual Martindale Triathlon, Martindale TX, 9am
Nov. 8th – Fall River Clean up
Dec. 5th – December Solo's, course TBD

Letter from the TCKRA President

Sandy Yonley

2020 sure has been a crazy year! Paddling is a great social-distancing and stress reducing activity. Hope you and yours have a safe and healthy remainder of the year and get out on the water! (#MomAdvice) Sandy Yonley, TCKRA President



Paddler Profile

In each edition of the newsletter, we will feature an interesting and accomplished member of the Texas Paddling Community. If you would like to nominate someone to be featured in the Paddler Profile, please email their name and contact info to jle4321@yahoo.com

Virginia Condie

What is your full name?

Virginia - Virginia Parker Condie

Where are you from originally and where do you live now?

Virginia - I'm originally from Austin and spent my weekends and summers in Uvalde. I currently live in Martindale TX.

How and why did you get started in paddling?

Virginia - I've always been in and around the water, but I didn't get into racing until 2010 when one of my best friends and I heard about the Safari simultaneously. We decided it was a bucket list item that we needed to tackle immediately.

How did you get started racing?

Virginia - Natalie and I trained for 6 months to do the Safari in 2010 with the help of Holly Orr who patiently gave us invaluable lessons and taught us about nutrition. We broke our boat in half at the Palmetto State Park bridge 2 weeks before the race, and John Bugge helped us piece it back together. We finished that year and I've been hooked ever since. I had no idea what an impact the Safari would have on my life.



Where do you paddle most frequently?

Virginia - My most favorite (and frequent) river to paddle is the San Marcos River.

What is your favorite race?

Virginia - The Texas Water Safari is my all-time favorite race.



What is the most interesting race you have done?

Virginia - I can't remember the year, maybe 2012, but the City of Laredo hosted a race down the Rio Grande in partnership with Nuevo Laredo to promote tourism. Greg Barton came down and hosted a double-blading class that week which was quite helpful. My husband and I were dating at the time and it was one of our first

races together. The coolest moment was when a herd of wild horses crossed the river in front of us from Texas to Mexico. After the race there was a large group of us that went to eat ice cream and hang out with the Mexican participants- it was such a fun pachanga. The awards ceremony was heartbreaking because the Mexican citizens were not able to cross the border to attend and had to watch from across the river. I'll never forget the race for so many reasons and I hope they bring it back for others to experience!



What kind of boats do you paddle? What kind of paddles do you use?

***Virginia** - My paddle preference is the Zone, but they are hard to come by. The ZRE is my solid backup. The majority of our boats are made by Jack Spencer. My favorites are The Extreme Pro, The Patriot and our lovely new 4 man. We have an ICF that Jerry Cochran made and I'm absolutely in love with it for a tandem Safari boat. Andrew surprised me this past month with a new J190 C1, so we'll see how long I can go without breaking it on the San Marcos River.*



What is your training regimen?

***Virginia** - My training regimen varies. I'm at my peak when I'm cross-training, although that's quite difficult now that we have 2 kids. I feel really confident in my paddling ability when I can get out and do sprints twice a week and a long run over the weekend. I think the shorter races early in the spring help me get up to speed for Safari.*

What type of cross training do you do?

***Virginia** - Again, this is difficult lately, but I like things like jogging, push-ups, pull-ups, and floor exercises. I've never been very good at pushing myself to do weights, but know it would be of great benefit*



What kind of food or supplements do you use during training and racing?

***Virginia** - My #1 source of calories during the race is SPIZ. I mix 50/50 Chocolate & Vanilla and add a bit of oil to include some fat content. Ramen noodles is my favorite "treat" once a day during the race, and chips are another salty favorite. Grapes & applesauce seem to help with the heat. I can't eat bars or peanut butter anymore, although I know a lot of people love this during the race.*



What are your significant accomplishments in paddling?

Virginia - My 2016 solo year is my all-time favorite finish, although this past Safari was a close second. I was on the 4 woman team (The Night Witches) and we finished in 37.5 hours which was incredible. Entering the bay at dusk on Sunday was surreal. I've honestly loved every year for different reasons and learned new things with each race. The Tour De Teche with Sandy & Morgan was incredible, as was the MR340 in 2016 with our 6-girl team. I recently did an OC2 race in Michigan with Mary Schlimmer, and it was so different from any other race I've done that it was pure joy.



What do you enjoy most about paddling?

Virginia - I think the reason I keep paddling is because of the nature along the banks of the river. I especially love the winter because you can see things that the leaves in the springtime conceal. I love to see the changes in and around the river with each passing flood, and the paddling "family" is unlike any group of people I've ever encountered.



Do you have any training or racing goals for the next few years?

Virginia - I've always raced with women, so I'd really like to race with men in a mixed-capacity of some sort.



Do you have any advice or words of wisdom for paddlers just starting out?

Virginia - Learn about the CFS levels and safe paddling conditions. Train how you want to race, and that includes your nutrition. Listen to your body. Push your mind. Talk to people. Come to the smaller races because this is a great way to dip your toes in the water, so to speak, and racers seem to have a higher capacity to give advice when they are not in a high-stakes mentality.

Any final thoughts?

Virginia - I love our community and racing, but most of all I love the San Marcos River. If you love paddling, learn where your water comes from and figure out how to protect it. We need more advocates for water in Texas. It's our #1 natural resource and now is the time to preserve it for future generations to enjoy.

Nominate someone you would like be interviewed for our Paddler profile –email Joy Emshoff at jle0987@yahoo.com

Race Reports

K1 State Championship Sandy Yonley

On June 6th we had a valiant little group of K1 paddlers who came out to compete for the TCKRA ICF Marathon K1 State Championship.



2020 TCKRA ICF Marathon K1 State Championships

Saturday, June 6th, Brooks Lake, Sugar Land, TX

Open, 7 laps

Overall	Category	Name	Age	Boat Make/Model	Finish Time	Average Speed
1st	Men's Champion	Tommy Yonley	41	Kayak Center Boat	1:40:12	7.42 mph
2nd		Don Yonley	30	Kayota Vantage	1:40:40	7.4 mph
3rd		Chris Isendorf	38	Nelo Vanguish III	1:45:19	7.38 mph
4th	Men's Masters Champion	Tim Bask	41	Kayak Center Boat River Elite	1:47:30	6.94 mph
5th		Philip Rask	29	Nelo Cinco	1:56:10	6.42 mph
6th		George Calanillas	47	Epic Legacy K1	2:02:12	6.1 mph

Masters, 6 laps

1st	Men's Masters Champion	Brad Pennington	53	Epic Legacy I	1:29:30	7.13 mph
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Women's Masters, 5 laps

1st	Women's Champion	Duangchai Intalek	40	Kayak Center	1:52:15	4.7 mph
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Just for fun solo unlimited race--no portages (5 laps for women, 6 laps for men)

1st Women's	Danna Kozisek	Surfaki	3:35:18			
1st Men's	Mark Kozisek	Surfaki	3:38:00			

MR 340

Assorted Paddler Perspectives

Patty Geisinger

I reached out to our Texans who went to compete in the MR340 this year to tell us a little snippet about how the race went for them! A few replied with their amended race reports. Enjoy!

Courtney & Ryan Martinez (Texas 2 Step)

The MR340 was a welcoming challenge that gave us a sense of normalcy in the months of constant change. It was a wonderful race on a huge river that puts you in your place. Paddling for hours in fog where you can't see five feet in front of you reminds you that you'll never know if that noise is a barge or a train coming from behind. This race can be like one big waiting game. You see a bridge and then it takes hours to get to it. The sun sets and it takes ages for the moon to rise so you can truly see. It was a different challenge mentally than the Safari in that sense. Of course, the best part was the people Phil Bowden made sure we set off to Missouri prepared. Someone (we think it was Salli) left a bag of snacks at a checkpoint and that one bag of Cheez its definitely saved our race. Dylan showed up just in time to help our TC Ron Henk maneuver through the back country roads. We can't thank you enough to everyone who played a part in our race!



Cecili Bugge (the Single Bladies)

For my first MR340 experience, the first key words I think of is Cold, Foggy, Buoys. It was so much fun though! I was surprised by how different it was from the Safari. It was challenging in such a different way. I loved who I raced with, so that helped tremendously. Seriously couldn't have asked for a more fun group of people!



Melissa James (the Single Bladies)

Key words: Buoy and Fog. To sum it up is hard: our ground crew was clutch. Shout out to Megan (Sam's sister), Pete & Becky – the reason we got to the finish, in a decent time. Racing with Sam, Lydia, Mollie & Cecili through the state of Missouri, and all the fog, was just fantastic! I had a blast!



Sam Binion (the Single Bladies)

I can't think of a single thing we could have done differently that would have improved our race. The team had their body maintenance on lock down. Everyone stayed healthy the entire 340 miles. What's more impressive to me than staying healthy was that we all got along the entire race. Lydia's laugh was just as loud at mile 36 as it was at mile marker 279. Mollie's driving was spot on and it had to be during the hours of ridiculous dense fog. Cecili was so strong the entire trip. I knew this

about her from running the bank for her last year, but to be able to see her in action was beyond impressive. This was also the first time I got to paddle with Melissa. We had run the banks of the MO for the 6 woman boat a few years ago, but getting to paddle with her and see how amazingly steady and level headed she was at all times was the best! I'm so honored I got to do my first MR340 with these ladies. Wouldn't change a thing!



Lydia Huelskamp (the Single Bladies)

I couldn't have asked for a better boat of women to race with. From the very beginning we were on the same page, from barges to fog to songs that we sang and gear that we shared. There was never a doubt we were all pulling our hardest. It was especially special to me to get to race across my home state and have my family at the end of the race! Our TC's were the best too! Also probably one of the coolest sunsets and full moons I have ever seen. Loved getting to race with the Single Bladies and represent Texas as we raced across Missouri!



Mollie Binion (the Single Bladies)

This year's MR340 presented different challenges like thick fog, a few barges, but the real challenge behind the MR340 is the mental highs and lows, in my opinion. Our teammates would lift each other up from our individual lows. We trusted in each other's abilities and strength and you could feel the

camaraderie throughout the race. Meagan, Sam's sister and my parents both gave phenomenal bank support! We couldn't have done it without them.



Mike Gordon (Sloth Racing)

Awesome race and opportunity for our new Texas Paddler Marc Lambert to hammer his first Ultra!!! A beautifully run race in the midst of Covid Crazy! Kudos to the entire MR340 organization and Scott Mansker for working so hard and passionately to enable this race against a lot of head winds!



Marc Lambert (Sloth Racing)

The race was an eye opener for me because it was my 1st race ever! My teammate Mike Gordon and TC Mark Gordon were the best you could ask for. The race was hard but fun at the same time. The MR340 volunteers were great. Mike is an incredible teacher and mentor. I would do it again that is for sure. What an experience. Great friends and the people you meet along the way make for a wonderful adventure.

Trey Golden (Aggie and the Bear)

1st thought: “Man, that was GREAT!” The rain the week before in Kansas giving us great river levels, the near record low temps, the spectacular ground crew support of Ron Popp, Carolyn Popp, and Robin Golden, the way the MR340 accepted the Texans that came up to race, and the tremendous planning and execution pulled off by the MR340 organizers and volunteers all combined to make it a wonderful race. 2nd thought: “Safari in Sept really would’ve been TOUGH.”



Mike Dey (Unfinished Business)

I raced with Jerico Lefort from Columbia, MO. He raced with the 6-person SUP in the 2019 TWS and is the original designer of this year’s MR340 winning boat, the Kraken (a 3 man pedal drive). We were supported by Janet Moreland, who is a true adventurer and was a good addition to our team. For MR340, we raced an aluminum Beaver canoe that was very quick and comfortable. We finished 17th overall in 46:59. There was a lot more fog than normal, and a lot more buoys!



Veronica Sosa (Risky Business)

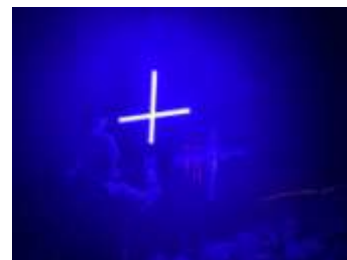
The MR340 was a very personal accomplishment for me. It was the ONLY constant goal that I was able to count on work toward throughout this crazy time of pandemic. The Cap10K was cancelled. The Texas River Marathon; cancelled. Texas Water Safari; postponed and then eventually cancelled.

And this period of time came with so many challenges and stress; recovery from major surgery, my mom’s isolation in a nursing home, her eventual passing, selling a home, having a grandchild born and in NICU for 6 weeks. Goodness. The MR340 became MY ROCK!



Mike Smith (Risky Business)

Bottom line, this “team” came together and accomplished some great things. We shattered our goal of setting a new team 3-4 mixed record. We fell shy of our goal of sub 40. We own all of that as a team. I’m super proud of them all! Yes, Fog was a challenge but I attribute our success in that to John’s courage and driving. Finishing 4th overall out of some 350+ boats...nice! Texas Teams finishing 2, 3, 4.....very nice. We really turned it on from Jeff City to the finish.



John Moore (Risky Business)

Wow what a race! our goals going into this race was 1. Set a Record for Mixed Team 2. Go Sub 40. The race started and we were off, headed downriver and within a mile or two, we were close to the front around 5th boat. We were holding 8.3 mph when we got passed by the Kracken (a 3-man pedal drive) and I thought...ok interesting. Then we got passed by the Single Bladies, then by the “Jefferson’s”; (they were all from Jefferson, MO). Then came the Martinez Boat with Ryan and Courtney, hey...wait a minute, what’s going on here??? My worry about the speed of our hull was confirmed. Last MR340, we were in my super fast C3 and we had a number of competitors blow

themselves out of the race with injuries trying to keep up with us on day 1, I didn't want to make that same mistake keeping up with these faster boats.....it's all about finding the balance, paddle fast, but save some for a fight later in the race and we can be prepared to make a move when it presents itself. The forecast called for overnight temps in the chilly zone.... that would be our chance to make a move. The fog and barge had kept the adrenaline flowing and I was wide awake now, 4 hours in the fog was at times like flying an airplane on instruments. The only way we knew where we were was because we had the MR340 Pro Paddler app running so I could keep us in the fast water and out of the buoys and avoid the wing dams. By day 2, we passed several more teams and by Herman, Larry told us we were now fighting for a top 5 position. 40 hours and 59 minutes. We set a new record for Mixed Team (3-4), 2nd place in our class behind the kraken, 4th overall..... A race to remember.



Sonja St. Clair (Risky Business)

This was my 1st year to compete in the MR340 and it was a great one! The goal of 40 hours or less was set by my teammates and I actually filled in for an injured paddler. It was my TWS teammates, so we were already training together regularly. I kept hearing about how massive the Missouri River was and it didn't disappoint. The timing of the race was perfect from the mild temperatures, to the amazing Orange moon we witnessed at night. Even though the fog was thick, it didn't seem so bad with the beautiful moon shining down on us. We didn't even need to use our lights! I'm super competitive, along with my Risky Business teammates so one of my most favorite moments was making our move near the end of the race and

sprinting on the 2nd evening until our finish of 40:59.

We couldn't have done it without the hard work and encouragement from our team captains and I loved seeing my whole family, Larry Lauren and Tori and all 4 of our dogs waiting on the edge of the river with anticipation of our finish!



Larry St. Clair (TC-Risky Business)

My wife and I had our hearts and minds set for a six-person, "Big Boat" finish this year in the Texas Water Safari (TWS), or "World's Toughest Canoe Race." It was postponed from June to September and then finally canceled like so many events globally. During our training runs prior, there was talk of assembling a co-ed or "mixed" team with four of us to chase down a record finish in the Missouri River 340 mile race (aka MR340). My wife Sonja was approached to be teammates for this goal. When the whistle blew, it was "on." Everyone from the paddlers to the ground support goes into work mode. We leapfrogged to checkpoints with Irene & Cindy. My bank support crew (myself and my daughters) decided to meet up with the other ground support team at their access point to rally, help, and cheer on the paddlers later in the race. I had hoped it would motivate them even more, and I believe it did. We all pushed hard on very little sleep to make sure we could accomplish our goals in this 340-mile race across the state of Missouri. Way to go Team RISKY Business!



St. Clair Family TC's

Ben Duckett (Duckett & Fox)

Race went pretty well. Killer fog the first night! We were just glad to get it over with. A lot more training would have been a good idea.



Constance Harris (TC- Duckett & Fox)

TC wise, weather was awesome, loved no ice socks, no scurrying for ice, but did miss the banquet at the end. It was just different this year, so we are looking forward to next year! Ben didn't mention my dream, but while sleeping in the truck at Hermann, waiting for them to show up, I dreamt that Ben and I did the MR next year. I didn't tell them the dream until Washington, and then Jay literally fell out of the boat laughing. I haven't started training yet, so I am pretty sure it was a dream...



Josh & Jon Blann, Brent Hawkins (The Dudes)

Well, it's finished. My brother, our friend Brent, and I completed the Missouri River 340. Well, we paddled it—slowly. My sister-in-law and nephew did the heavy lifting. Every time we stopped she had a warm meal prepared and ready to hand to us. And in the couple moments we were able to sleep she had prepared for us cots to sleep. She did all of this, while keeping an 8 year-old entertained, and working via her cell phone. She's a legit badass! It's an understatement to say we would not have finished this race without her. Prior to the race, I wouldn't say we did much training (unless you call listening to a handful of Goggin's clips or watching a few episodes of Alone training). But, we stuck it out.

Quitting was never an option. I'm always grateful for what I learn during an endurance event (and, of course, for what the water teaches).

During this race...I learned you cannot control the thoughts and actions of a team member but you can always support them. And you can always do more as a team than as an individual.

I learned that the physical body will adapt if you can go long enough to quiet the mind.

I learned anything can be accomplished when your break it down into small, manageable chunks (I've always heard this, but during this race I experienced it.) I learned that there are likely

Russian submarines in the Missouri River.

And there are for sure living creatures, commonly known as Micro Hippos, in the Missouri River. I learned that true community doesn't have to be about God or about my tribe versus yours but can be as simple as creating an arbitrary race down a river. I learned that there is always someone around you that is an inspiration (I wouldn't call him a hero, 'cause what is a hero?). But, thanks Mark, for being the man!

And I learned that doing shit is always better than talking about it.



Thanks everyone for their contributions to the newsletter. And here are a few pictures of some of our other Texas paddlers we were cheering for along the way!

C1/C2 State Championship

David Kaiser

The USCA C1/C2 State Championship race was one to remember! In light of the pandemic, a time of distancing, it was great to come together safely and do what we love the most.

Howell's Riverfront was kind enough to host the event on this beautiful stretch of the Colorado River. The course started at Howell's and went downstream through one rapid to a beautiful island where the racers turned and came back up the rapid back to Howell's and continued on upstream for a mile for another buoy turn and mad rush back to the finish. It was noted by some (all) that the upstream buoy turn was much further than prior years, but the race director felt like they should probably train more (it seemed fine, but honestly, he didn't paddle it so who knows?).

The day started with Men's C2 paddling two laps with a great show from Issendorf/Mynar and Leonard/Medina. Truitt/DuBois came in not far behind, followed by Sandel/Lau (1st Master's) and Gabehart/Zolnieroski.



Next Women's C1 shot off and as they came back through Howell's, Michigan transplant Gwen Hills had a clear lead and didn't look like she was letting up. She was able to hold off the other competitors until the finish, but Holly Orr, Cecili Bugge, Teddy Gray (1st Master's) and Libby Geisinger didn't make it easy and it was a great race to watch!



Geoff Waters and David Carlson (Who Were Those Masked Men?)



Scottie Trevino



Bruce Beall & Brett Swanstrom (Embrace the Suck)



Kristin Broadus



Kasey Jorgensen & Josh Moeller (Team Checklist)



We only had one SUP racer this year, but Jimmy Mooney (the guy I want to be when I grow up) was happy to easily take the State Champion title (and have the cup to prove it). He paddled the first two miles in 22 minutes which is an incredible pace.

The kids wanted a piece of the action so they got out and raced a shorter course with three buoy turns. They were neck and neck in the first and longest straight-away, but started to separate at the buoy turns when the Orr brothers (in a boat that costs more than my car) made a couple turns that are worthy of an Au Sable qualifier. Issendorf, partnered with Nelson who was much younger (in a boat as old as my car), didn't let a couple tricky turns get him down and did an awesome job coaching his younger bowman. All smiles at the end.



Next up, the C2 Women's launched off the line with an excellent battle between the Issendorf/Hills and Orr/Bugge boats. They stayed grouped through the whole race but after 40 minutes of racing Shannon and Gwen had a 45 second lead.



Welch and Stahl (Parent/Child) also started in this heat with Welch pulling his dad downriver like a champ. Throughout the week I heard multiple stories about this kid at canoe camp and received multiple text messages making sure he was going to be able to race. Give it a few years and I think we'll see these kids' names on the Argosy cup.



Men's C1, the class with the most boats, was next and they took off and ran over a few kids who didn't get out of the way in time. Issendorf was putting so much power behind his paddle that his boat was bobbing like a porpoise, and almost became the first guy to break a boat without hitting anything.



Issendorf/Mynar/Medina battled it out but, in the end, Chris prevailed with Danny, then Logan hot on his heels. Yonley (1st Master's), Leonard, Truitt, Hicks (2nd Master's) and Zolnierosky all came in with 1-2 min separation. Grady Hicks was definitely the smartest racer of the group as he was the only one wearing an ice sock!

The final race, and the best race, was the C2 Mixed class. Throughout the day the boats would separate then hold each other off, but ranking at the halfway point completely changed by the finish meaning there was a lot of jockeying throughout the course. This also was the tightest race with only 3.5min between 1st and 6th place! In the end Bugge/Medina took first, with Hills/Truitt, Gray/Lau (1st Master's; also got stuck on a boulder and had to make up time!), Issendorf/Issendorf, Orr/Leonard and Geisinger/Zolnieroski coming across the line at a rapid pace.



Afterwards we all hung around Howell's, toyed with boats and swapped stories. It was an exciting day of racing and in the context of what is going on in the rest of the world; it was great for the mind, body and soul.

We'll see y'all at the next one! If it's on my birthday again and I will again--flip my cake!



The Neches Wilderness Race

Jill Mulder



Saturday August 1st, 2020 was a beautiful day in Northeast Texas for a one of a kind paddle race called the Neches Wilderness Race aka "the Toughest Little Canoe Race in Texas". It is 20 miles of slick mud, steep banks, sandbars, shallow water, downed trees and log jams galore.

This was the 30th anniversary of the race and I am sure the hardest to see to fruition due to state and local COVID 19 regulations, but the staff and volunteers did an outstanding job. Masks and hand sanitizer was available at the registration area and the 2 checkpoints and social distancing, when possible, was promoted.



There were 120 paddlers who started this year's race in either the Leisure class or Pro class and only 13 boats did not make it to the finish line. There were several divisions within the classes and there were staggered starts for each

The Overall Pro class winner being Will Leeds at 3:36:58 and Trab Seyn winning Leisure class in 4:01:41.





This was my first trip up to this part of Texas and I think I had just as much fun as the paddlers navigating my way around through the beautiful countryside. Big thanks to Neches River Runner president Brad Chaffins and VP Kim Zemer for a great day.

Check out video by Tarek Aly of this year's race... https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=13&v=XyfGlgNIR4w&feature=emb_logo



Neches Race Results: Thank you Kim Zemer!!

PLACED	BOAT#	NAME(S)	START	FINISH	TIME
Andem Youth Class					
1	102	Dustin Feagins, Skylar Feagins	8:24:27	13:11:36	4:37:09
2	101	Kylie Miller, Kirt Feagins	8:34:27	13:32:54	4:58:27
3	104	Windom Hunt	8:34:27	16:34:56	8:00:29
4	103	Monica Hamilton, Keegan Hunt	8:34:27	16:35:20	8:00:53
5	105	Benjamin Edmonson	8:34:27	16:35:20	8:00:53
	106		8:34:27		DNF
Senior Female					
1	202	Grace Hardin	8:33:01	14:21:39	5:48:38
2	203	Pamela Campbell	8:33:01	15:11:00	6:37:59
3	206	Beth McCafferty	8:33:01	15:11:07	6:38:06
4	204	Starlynn Jeffcoat	8:33:01	17:09:09	8:36:08
	201	Diane Tatum	8:33:01		DNF
	205	Jennifer Hart	8:33:01		DNF
Senior Solo Kayak					
1	307	Trab Seyn	8:41:37	12:48:18	4:01:41
2	302	Mike Dunham	8:41:37	12:56:44	4:15:07
3	312	Steve Watson	8:41:37	13:15:22	4:33:45
4	304	Bruce Bodson	8:41:37	13:18:21	4:36:44
5	313	Randy Jones	8:41:37	13:20:32	4:38:55
6	303	Brent Hwang	8:41:37	13:37:51	4:56:14
7	311	Greg Klausmeyer	8:41:37	13:48:58	5:07:21
8	301	David Grothelme	8:41:37	13:51:42	5:10:05
9	308	Dan Gleason	8:41:37	15:03:45	6:22:08
10	305	Douglas Crum	8:41:37	15:31:18	6:49:41
11	306	Bob Wright	8:41:37	16:23:48	7:42:11
12	310	James Engleman	8:41:37	17:09:11	8:27:34
	309	Ken Vickery	8:41:37		DNF
em Canoe Lelsure Class					
1	403	Bruce Abbott, Thu Vo	8:45:08	14:32:04	5:46:56
2	402	Mike Davis, Ronnie Spencer	8:45:08	15:22:26	6:37:18

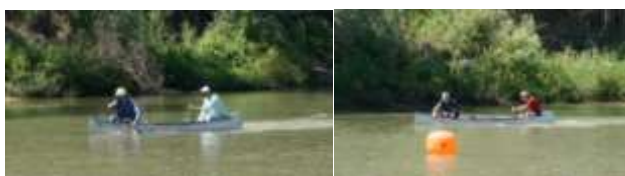
3	401	Mal Abernathy, Don Harbour	8:45:08	15:35:42	6:50:34
4	404	Shannon Beach, Georgina Christopherson			DNF
lo Kayak Lelsure Class					
1	505	Heldi Bailey	8:48:34	15:06:29	6:17:55
2	508	Nikki Thomas	8:48:34	15:10:23	6:21:49
3	511	Jessica Clark	8:48:34	15:24:18	6:35:44
4	506	Castle Severn	8:48:34	15:40:01	6:51:27
5	501	Mary Raum	8:48:34	15:40:02	6:51:28
6	512	Kassie Bohannon	8:48:34	16:01:22	7:12:48
7	507	Amy Tritico	8:48:34	17:13:34	8:25:00
8	503	Cori Conrad	8:48:34	17:17:30	8:28:56
9	510	Courtney Bohannon	8:48:34	17:49:16	9:00:42
10	504	Ashley Tatum	8:48:34		DNF
11	505	Stephanie Baty	8:48:34		DNF
12	502	Kenda Schattel	8:48:34		DNF
em Canoe Lelsure Class					
1	701	Stephanie & Roy Feagins	9:04:37	14:20:04	5:15:27
2	703	Stephanie & George Davis	9:04:37	15:09:58	6:05:21
3	702	Rebecca & David Taylor	9:04:37	15:14:06	6:09:29
4	704	Amber & Justin Tulley	9:04:37	15:20:07	6:15:30
lo Kayak Lelsure Class					
1	630	Joseph Thompson	9:00:37	14:13:25	5:12:48
2	619	Richard Zambrana	8:57:11	14:10:35	5:13:24
3	705	Skai Shadow	9:04:37	14:20:47	5:16:10
4	617	Collin Gillespie	8:57:11	14:29:30	5:32:19
5	618	John Lanham	8:57:11	14:33:39	5:36:28
6	627	Wesley Gibson	9:00:37	14:40:56	5:40:19
7	628	Vernon Morris	9:00:37	15:00:36	5:59:59
8	612	Kevin Hand	8:57:11	15:01:21	6:04:10
9	624	Jacob White	9:00:37	15:06:15	6:05:38
10	629	Kyle Bohannon	9:00:37	15:07:00	6:06:23
11	610	Nolan Howard	8:53:39	15:01:38	6:07:59
12	603	James Foster	8:53:39	15:27:56	6:34:17
13	625	Juan Cornejo	9:00:37	15:45:13	6:44:36
14	631	Armando Brito	9:00:37	15:45:22	6:44:45
15	616	Samuel Tarry	8:57:11	15:45:22	6:45:11
16	606	Richard Harrison	8:53:39	15:42:59	6:49:20
17	622	Charles Allen	9:00:37	16:30:54	7:30:17
18	623	Jason Allen	9:00:37	16:31:08	7:30:31
19	615	Wesley Holcomb	8:57:11	16:31:22	7:34:11
20	609	Dustin Holcomb	8:53:39	16:29:31	7:35:52
21	614	Reece Namanno	8:57:11	16:34:34	7:37:23
22	611	Andrew Link	8:57:11	16:34:40	7:37:29
23	608	Miles Gully	8:53:39	16:32:23	7:38:44
24	607	Michael Gully	8:53:39	16:34:17	7:40:38
25	605	Joseph Tritico	8:53:39	17:13:47	8:20:08
26	626	Billy Webster	9:00:37	17:49:15	8:48:38
	601	Billy Tatum	8:53:39		DNF
	602	Bryant Tatum	8:53:39		DNF
	604	David Sizemore	8:53:39		DNF
	613	Jason Minnis	8:57:11		DNF
	620	Ryan Orlovski	9:00:37		DNF
	621	Shad Coats	9:00:37		DNF
em Canoe Lelsure Class					
1	808	Phil Celli, Cole Huddleston	9:07:40	14:31:37	5:23:57
2	806	Drew Ormsby, Lee Wallace	9:07:40	14:37:48	5:30:08
3	803	Ryan Tedrow, Marcus Monroe	9:07:40	14:39:07	5:31:27
4	805	Matthew & Kelly Lusk	9:07:40	14:47:20	5:39:40
5	802	Cadillac Thomas, Coytu Shartle	9:07:40	15:09:26	6:01:46
6	801	Christopher Heackler X 2	9:07:40	15:30:36	6:22:56
7	807	Randal Setzler, Paul Haygood	9:07:40	15:52:58	6:45:18
8	804	Daniel O'Donnel, Jon Jetter	9:07:40	16:25:02	7:17:22
olo Unlimited Class					
1	907	Willi Leeds	9:11:53	12:48:51	3:36:58
2	902	Brady Lotz	9:11:53	12:57:26	3:45:33
3	905	Chris Bailey	9:11:53	13:00:40	3:48:47
4	903	Joshua Hullin	9:11:53	13:31:42	4:19:49
5	906	Tarek Aly	9:11:53	14:12:23	5:00:30
6	904	Frank Walker	9:11:53	14:15:37	5:03:44
7	901	Ottis Lackey	9:11:53	14:30:44	5:18:51
IA Aluminum Pro Class					
1	1001	Curt Slaten, Joe Gelsinger	9:15:18	13:08:55	3:53:37
2	1002	Luis Briones, Craig Ahlhorn	9:15:18	14:07:24	4:52:06
3	1004	Timothy Odom, Clint Sutherland	9:15:18	15:32:13	6:16:55

2020 TCKRA Aluminum State Championship

Kaitlin Jiral



The Texas Aluminum State Championships were held on the 29th of August this year, travelling the usual course down the Colorado River from the 969 bridge to Fisherman's Park in Bastrop. Paddlers made the 14 mile trip with about 880 CFS of water on a hot day, no surprise there. This is a really fun, beautiful course that helps the race pass by quickly. Equalizing the teams into one race category is always enjoyable to watch.



We saw defending champions Cody Ackermann and Matt Persyn fall to Alex Leonard and Yusef Johnson this year. Men's Master's winners, Roy Tyrone and Joe Geisinger were especially impressive finishing in 2nd place, with Joel Truitt and Eric Whicker coming in 3rd, with Cody & Matt in 4th.



It was an exciting finish with all top 3 teams finishing in about 1 minute of each other. The women's championship pair of Yumi Chen and Gwen Hills finished only 2 minutes and 19 seconds behind 1st place, as you know; the aluminum is a great equalizer.



It was especially fun to watch the sibling team of Mollie Binion and Wade Binion finish in 1st mixed because Wade was sitting about 2 feet too low in the bottom of the boat, his seat broke along the race but they managed to slug it out and finish strong. This year's race was a little different, of course, not being able to offer a meal at the end of the race or hang out and talk shop afterwards but everyone enjoyed getting together and spending what time we could around one another.



2020 TCKRA Aluminum State Championship Race						
Overall Pl. Champs	Team Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	Class Entered
1st	Men's Champions	Alex	Leonard	Yusef	Johnson	Men's 18-49
2nd	Men's Masters	Roy	Tyrone	Joe	Geisinger	Men's Masters 50+
3rd		Joel	Truitt	Eric	Whicker	Men's 18-49
4th		Cody	Ackermann	Matt	Persyn	Men's 18-49
5th	Mixed Champions	Mollie	Binion	Wade	Binion	Mixed
6th	Women's Champions	Gwen	Hills	Yumi	Chen	Women's 18-49
7th		Lisa	Brinson	Brandon	Gabriel	Men's 18-49
8th		Paul	Gibson	Adam	Boon	Men's 18-49
9th		Chris	Bell	Will	Leach	Men's 18-49
10th		Holly	One	Cecilia	Beggs	Women's 18-49
11th	Mixed Masters	Todd	Gray	Stephan	Johnson	Mixed Masters 50+
12th		Jeffrey	Davis	Gray	Penell	Men's 18-49
13th		Brad	Beal	Brad	Myatt	Men's 18-49
14th		Garrett	Collier	Collier	Collier	Men's 18-49
15th		Michael	Moore	Ryan	Tubbs	Men's 18-49
16th	Women's Masters	Tina	Barrett	Debbie	Barrett	Women's Masters 50+
17th		Michelle	Waterman	Mike	Ray	Mixed Masters 50+
18th		Kevin	Boon	Ryan	Manning	Men's 18-49
19th	Adult Mixed Champions	Urban	Polish	Urban	Polish	Adult Mixed

Upcoming Races



3rd Annual Rotary Regatta on Clear Creek

October 18th, 2020

9:30 am

<https://www.rotaryregatta.org/event-info>

A seven mile canoe/kayak down Clear Creek from Friendswood's 1776 Park to League City's countryside Park to raise awareness for the preservation of Clear Creek as a recreational feature and flood drainage for the region, and promote Rotary's Community Awareness. This unique course boasts 23 turns in the first mile that eventually widens and straightens out halfway through the course. The race is perfect for everyone from the recreational paddler to the competitive racer. Finish line festivities include beer, food and music.

\$35 per paddler Pre registration, \$40 per paddler Race- Day

TCKRA Open Water State Championship

October 3rd, 2020

2-4pm

The typical course will be an out and back, short distance laps of approx. ½-1/2 mile out from the beach. 4-6 miles total. We will update the course on Thursday before the race based on anticipated weather forecast. Please check the FB page for updates prior to driving to the race. <http://tckra.org/event/tckra-open-water-state-championships/>

Schedule: Registration begins at 1pm but Online registration is highly preferred (it will be open til 11:59pm Friday).

Race briefing begins at 1:45pm. Liability waivers will be emailed before the race, drop off at registration table.

Classes: The race will have championship classes for Surfski, OC1 and Sup. First place medals will be awarded for winners in each overall category (Surfski, OC1, Sup, Men's, Men's Masters 50+, Women's Masters 50+)

Rules: It is required that you wear a PFD (inflatable's not allowed) and it is suggested you have a safety whistle attached, bringing a leash is required however if you are doing the out and back course, wearing it is not required. There will be no safety boat. It is strongly suggested that all participants know how to remount during the race.

Directions: When driving to Steward Beach, go left of the big building once you've entered, drive onto fishing/kayak/handicap access beach. There are several extra surfski's if you want to try one out. Let us know ahead of time and we'll try to get you set up. Feel free to call/text for questions to Tommy Yonley at 832-443-5194.



42nd Annual TCKRA Martindale Triathlon **(or the 2020 DIY Throwback Tri)**

Patty Geisinger

This year's Tri will be looking quite a bit different than all the other 41 Martindale Tri's of year' past. Kudos to Kaitlin Jiral for terming it a "We're gonna throw this year back cause 2020 & Covid sucks. That being said! Let's try to pull this off?? <http://tckra.org/tckra-home/martindale-triathlon/>

The Martindale Tri is reputed to be the oldest triathlon in Texas. It is brought to you by the Texas Canoe and Kayak Racing Association. It is unique in that the swim leg has replaced by a paddle (canoe, kayak, or SUP) down the beautiful San Marcos River. The Tri kicks off with a 7 mile run through the quaint little town of Martindale, TX. Next up is the bike, which covers 16.5 miles of rolling hills just outside of Martindale and Staples. Finally, a 5.5 mile paddle from Shady Grove Campground (aka Spencer Canoes) down to the 1979 bridge in Staples. Sign up solo, as a two-person team (one person runs, the other bikes, and both paddle) or as a three-person relay (one person per leg).

Covid Updates

The 2020 Martindale Triathlon is going to do everything we can to minimize contact while hosting the race. Here are the changes we know of so far (we may add more):

- Registration for the 2020 Triathlon will be **online only**. There will be no race day registration. Registration will end on Thursday, Oct 29th at midnight.
- The race **briefing** will be held online on **Friday, October 30th at 6pm** on our **Martindale Triathlon facebook page** (we will do a Facebook live—it can also be a q & a if you have questions). There will be no race briefing on the morning of the race. The Facebook live briefing will be posted and can be watched afterwards if for some reason you are unable to watch it at 6pm. Here's the FB page link: <https://www.facebook.com/Martindale-Triathlon-Oct-31-2020-871855829569749>
- There will be no manned water stations on the run (we are very sorry). We will have a couple of tables with small water bottles (And a trash can. We will post their locations in advance. But if you can be self sufficient, that is your best option). Think of it as a DIY Tri. You are welcome to drop off water along the run course prior to the run (you will be responsible for your own trash).
- **There will not be a meal or awards ceremony** following the race. Awards will be passed out at the finish line in Staples. There will be no social gathering—we know that stinks. But hey, we're still having a race.

- We know these are financially stressful times, and since we're doing away with our "normal" perks, we're lowering the registration fee. We may need to cap registration to a certain # of people if the race starts getting too big. So far we don't have plans to do that. Just know we may need to. So register ASAP if possible.
- We are going to need to spread out the run start (we are still going to start everyone at 9am). We are asking the slower/more laid back runners to start towards the back.
- You must wear a **face mask prior to the start** of the race unless you are greater than 6' away from others. This means you must wear one to pick up your race number, t-shirt, and drop off your liability insurance waiver. Spectators, Volunteers also must wear masks and please socially distance.
- We will be **emailing out the liability waivers** the week prior to the race—**you will be responsible for printing, filling it out, and dropping it off the morning of the race.**
- We are requiring you to **check your temperature** the morning before you leave your house for the race (obviously, if you have even a slight fever, we will give you a full refund to stay home). Our group includes high-risk people (we are going to assume you will help keep us safe by assessing your risk for infecting others).



Triathlon Important Dates

Thursday, October 22nd – Last day for early registration (**to guarantee a racer shirt**)

Thursday, October 29th – Last day for late registration

Friday, October 30th: **6pm Facebook Live Race Briefing**

Race Day Schedule – Saturday, October 31st @ Shady Grove Campground

7:00am – 8:45 am Liability Insurance Waiver drop off and Packet pick up (Race Number & shirt)

9:00 am – Race Start (socially distanced)



TCKRA Downriver State Championship

Saturday, October 10th, 2020

We are excited to have a downriver championship race this year! Details may be subject to change a bit.

Online registration encouraged (it will make things much easier on the morning of and also help us social distance). There is the link below to register. Your liability waiver will be emailed to you the week prior to the race (please print, fill out, and drop off at the registration table at the race start).

<http://tckra.org/event/tckra-downriver-unlimited-state-championships/>

Race Details:

Saturday, October 10th, 2020

Cost: \$15/person (covers parking at Staples)

Course: Staples to Luling 90 (~23 miles)--we will probably have a buoy to turn around upstream at Staples, which will add ~1/2-1 mile to the race.

Schedule:

- 11:59pm Friday, October 9th: Online registration ends
- Saturday/Race Day:
 - 8am Registration Table Opens (Online registration highly encouraged)
 - 9am Recreation classes start
 - 10am Competitive classes start

Classes:

- Recreation: Solo and Tandem (aimed for those who are less experienced or racing plastic/slower boats)
- Racing: Championships for Solo Unlimited (Men's and Women's), Tandem Unlimited (Men's, Women's, and Mixed), and Unlimited (Men's and Women's)--there will be special recognition for Masters 50+ in each class.

Rules:

- You must have a PFD/person with you in the boat.
- If you drop out of the race, you must text Tommy Yonley @ 832-443-5194 (Sandy will have his phone)



Fireside Chats with Tom Goynes

Early on during the pandemic, Tom Goynes began sharing some of his Safari stories on his facebook page. With the loss of Safari this year, everyone missed out on the yearly ritual of sharing stories after the race. So with Tom's blessing, we hope to share with everyone some of his legendary Safari stories.

"Well, as the social distancing continues, I am finding more stories I started writing years ago, and never quite finished. Here is a Texas Water Safari story regarding the 1968 race. Hope it provides some relief from the present madness."

The Union Carbide Safari story

First of all, you need to know that rules for the Texas Water Safari (the 260 mile canoe race from San Marcos to Seadrift) evolve with time. I'm reminded of that scene from "Pirates of the Caribbean" where the captain is trying to explain the Pirates Code of Behavior. As I recall, the captain answered something like this: "The code is really more like guidelines."

So back in 1968, during the race briefing, the question arose of what route one could take to get from Tivoli to Seadrift. Tivoli, by the way, is pronounced locally as Tie voh la (it ends with an ah). Also, by the way, Tivoli backwards is I love it (and since it is the last town before reaching Seadrift, lots of racers love to get there).

But I digress. The question about the rule regarding paddling from Tivoli to Seadrift - unfortunately, the race judge, Lawrence Hagan, ruled that a team could take any route they wanted to get from Highway 35 (aka Tivoli bridge) to Seadrift.

That probably seemed reasonable to a race judge who had very few volunteers to watch the course. And, who knew he had someone to man the checkpoint at Hwy 35 at Tivoli, but that was the last spot that would be manned. But he might have mentioned to the novices in the audience that, while it would be legal to paddle to the Union Carbide Plant, such a plan wouldn't really be that stellar an idea.

I was racing with my brother in 1968. I was 17 and he was 18. Two idiots from Houston who had never even considered the thought that it might be a good idea to practice some of the course before the race actually took place. And that it would be a really good idea to know how to get to Seadrift once one left the last "checkpoint" at Tivoli bridge.

I put "checkpoint" in quotation marks, because a checkpoint in 1968 wasn't what a checkpoint is today. There was no team captain (team captains hadn't been invented back in those days). There was no sign in sheet (those hadn't been invented yet either). There was no smorgasbord of food - burgers, ice cream, candy bars. Oh no. There was no ice or water either. There might be an official. And he or she might know the river and he or she might not.

My brother and I did hear a person holler, as we passed in the darkness: "Y'all remember to stay right."

But how were we to interpret that? Didn't we hear, at the briefing, that we could get from Tivoli to Seadrift any dam way we pleased? And who was giving us this advice? Why, it could have been someone waiting for another team. An enemy! That's who it was.

Way back, many years ago, back when we didn't have iPhones, back when the best we could do was land a man on the moon and bring him home again - the mouth of the Guadalupe River (about 7 miles downstream of Tivoli bridge) filled up with water hyacinths. In fact, in the early Safaris, racers were required to drag their canoes from the clogged up river to Hines Bay (it is the bay off to your right as you pass Foster Point). And then the racers would proceed to Austwell.

I'm told that the drag was over a mile. Maybe two. Through swamps with gators and moccasins cleverly placed to horrify the entrants. Think Fire Swamp in "The Princess Bride." Think RUSes (Rodents of Unusual Size). Think huge nutria.

Anyway, probably not because it caused Safari racers discomfort, but for whatever reason (perhaps it was so fishermen could navigate from Tivoli bridge to the open bay?) the US Army Corps of Engineers dug a channel from the river to Mission Lake, which empties into San Antonio Bay (or, at least, this is what I heard somewhere along the way). The cut was named Traylor Cut.

Traylor Cut is sometimes a good alternative to the South Fork of the Guadalupe River (though not often). Whenever the water hyacinths block the south fork, for instance. But generally, if the river is open, only madmen (and by this point in the race there are plenty of them) use it. I am convinced it is a shortcut into Never Never Land - and should be avoided at all cost. In 1987 I spent the night in never never land after taking Traylor Cut. But that is another story altogether.

In 1968, my brother Jim and I took a left turn into Traylor Cut. We both kinda saw a little narrow channel heading to the right as we were taking the broad path to the left (now, I should say right here that, when I started writing this sentence, I intended no religious nor political double entendre - but I will happily admit that it seems to be here - let's leave it at that) and we thought, "Could that be the place of which that voice back at the bridge was talking about - you know - when the voice said to stay to the right? Naw, surely not, it was too narrow and crooked a path - let's take this broad path! What could possibly go wrong?"

We came out into Mission Bay and headed straight for what we were sure had to be Seadrift (we were a couple of city boys from Houston and we just figured Seadrift would look a lot like our home town).

The Union Carbide Plant (well, that was what it was called back then - now it is Invista) was lit up like the City of OZ. Lights everywhere. And us city boys could even make out the Hilton Hotel sign. Wow, what a big town Seadrift turns out to be. What order of women would be there to greet us, the conquering heroes? The amazing teenagers from Houston who were setting the river on fire.

Our biggest concern was, how in the world were we going to find the spot where we were supposed to camp? Back in those days, Seadrift wasn't the finish line. It was only the first stopping point for the bay portion of the race. We entered the bay on Monday night. On Wednesday morning at the crack of dawn the gun would sound and we would be off for Port Lavaca. We would finish the race on Saturday, eating whatever order of freeze dried food we had with us or whatever hardhead catfish we could catch. Have I ever talked about how good a hardhead can taste? Especially when cooked on a stick over a creosote fire. But I digress.

In our deranged state we came up with a great plan. We would ask directions at the Hilton.

It was about then that our problems began.

We hit a land mass (it was actually the shoreline of Mission Lake) but we didn't let that stop us. We took a right to paddle around the land mass so we could get to Seadrift (aka the Union Carbide Plant). At that time we were actually heading toward Seadrift. All we had to do was paddle about 8 miles ahead, around Grassy Point across the barge canal and then follow the shore to the Water Safari encampment. But who would have thought that? Especially in Never Never Land. All we knew was that we were heading away from the Seadrift (Union Carbide) which was off to our left and now behind us.

So we turned our canoe around headed away from Seadrift, heading back in the general direction of Tivoli. Now Seadrift (Union Carbide) was off to our right, and once again, moving to our rear!

Nowadays we have Spot Trackers. These little devices transmit a signal every ten minutes or so to a satellite high above. Then this satellite transmits a signal back to Earth and voila, your team captain, all the judges and officials, and your brother in Florida can clearly see that you are hopelessly lost and out of your mind. I can't tell you the amount of pleasure I have enjoyed while watching the tracks of lost Safari Paddlers. I can't tell you because I know, deep inside that it is a horrible thing in which to take pleasure. Nonetheless, I hope that someday, someone will figure out how to publish a book showing some of the more epic tracks. Often you can tell where a team called a team meeting to discuss their global position and whether or not the magnetic poles had shifted.

I heard about one such meeting that took place somewhere in San Antonio Bay, Perhaps it was on the point from which Seadrift is clearly visible. Perhaps it was on one of the islands directly out from the finish line. It was a six man team. And there was a lot of discussion (probably six different opinions) about which lights were Seadrift and which were not. And then, in a Lloyd Bentsen moment one of the men exclaimed: "Gentlemen, I know Seadrift. And that is not Seadrift!" It was.

There are some great spot tracker tracks of teams lost in Alligator Lake. If only they could be published someday...

So, we are heading away from Seadrift (with the lights of Union Carbide to our right and behind us) and we found a little body of water - a bayou, if you will - that we could explore. It was 1968, I'm not sure if gators were protected yet, back in those days. But there weren't that many of them. So we hadn't had a lot of experience with gators in the Safari like we have now. And maybe gators, especial in this little bayou that empties into Mission Lake, probably hadn't had a lot of experience with canoeists either. At any rate, have you ever hit a really big gator in the nose with the sharp bow of a racing canoe? It wasn't pretty. That is when we decided that, regardless of how beautiful a night it was, and regardless of wherever this bayou might be taking us, we were done exploring. We headed back to open water and determined to reach Seadrift no matter what it took.

So we got directly across from the Union Carbide Plant (with it directly to our left now) and we drug our canoe out of Mission Lake and started an overland portage to Seadrift. It only looked to be a couple of miles away, so it seemed like a reasonable plan at the time. In no time we came to a dike that contained some very stinky water. It was easier to paddle through stinky water than to portage all the way around the reservoir that contained that water. So into the chemical dump we went. Whatever it was, it not only stunk, but it burned our hands and nostrils. The good news is that it was so bad that it didn't have any alligators in it! That, at least was some benefit. I've always wondered if that chemical we paddled through might have affected my brother...

At any rate, after much portaging and gnashing of teeth, we finally made it to the Union Carbide Plant. And, it was apparent, once we arrived, that this wasn't the city of Seadrift. And the Hilton was not really the Hilton. But we had grown up in Houston near the PetroTex Plant, so we figured Seadrift could be very close by.

My brother, by this time, had lost interest in finding someone from whom we might get directions. so that job fell to me (while he guarded the canoe and napped).

Have I mentioned that it was 1968? And do you remember that the Vietnam War was in full swing during that year? And, would you believe that the folks guarding the Union Carbide Plant might be a little concerned (even though we hadn't yet had an incident on US soil) about a terrorist attack? Well, I was deep in Never Never Land, and such thoughts were nowhere near my mind. But perhaps they should have been.

Especially considering what I was wearing. My brother and I were kinda poor. So most of our gear was purchased at a local Army/Navy store in Houston. They sold lots of camo gear, and some really neat used military equipment. My headlight, for instance, was this huge lamp that I wore on my head, over a mosquito net head covering. It had a bunch of wires dangling to a large battery attached to my belt (I recall the battery being slightly smaller than a car battery, but not by much). Lithium Ion batteries where not even a gleam in their inventor's eyes yet.

We used very long paddles back in those days (cause that is what the books told you to use) and I carried my paddle with the same grace that Gandalf carried his staff. With conviction. My camo outfit was covered with mud and blood and smelled an awful lot like the chemicals we had just paddled through. I am sure that I looked all the world like a terrorist, complete with an explosive device attached to my belt.

I found a little white building and heard voices coming from inside. So I knocked on the door.

I remember that the reaction of the guys in that room even scared me. They all kinda jumped back a few feet and fell against the far wall.

Once they had regained their composure I asked them for directions to Seadrift. They told me to get back on the Highway and it would take me straight there. I said I was in a canoe, not a car. Then they told me to get in the barge canal and head south.

I asked them if they meant for us to paddle across those stinking ponds and they said no, **WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T GET INTO THOSE THINGS!**

Anyway, Jim and I paddled and rowed all night, made it out of the barge canal and even made it to the beginning of the seawall before we finally decided to camp for the night. We figured we would have an easier time finding the Safari Camp in the daylight.

We slept for a while and finished feeling great (of course, we had only paddled a few hundred yards that next morning).

The amazing thing was, that a decade or so later, a young team (Steven Pocock and Steve Harvey, I believe) retraced our steps. They even found and paddled across the chemical dumps and visited with the guys in the white building (with similar results).

I guess it just proves that the more things change, the more they remain the same.

Fortunately, it is now illegal to paddle in the barge canal. And probably highly illegal to paddle across the chemical dumps we traversed. So, with any luck at all, no one else will get to retrace our route. But, I'm sure that there are some other interesting places to visit while exploring Never Never Land.

Tom



Tom Geymer (stern) and Red Morley make a quick refueling stop while manager Peter Derrick switches fluid bottles. Note the headlights on their ICF canoe's bow.

An Ode to Safari 2020

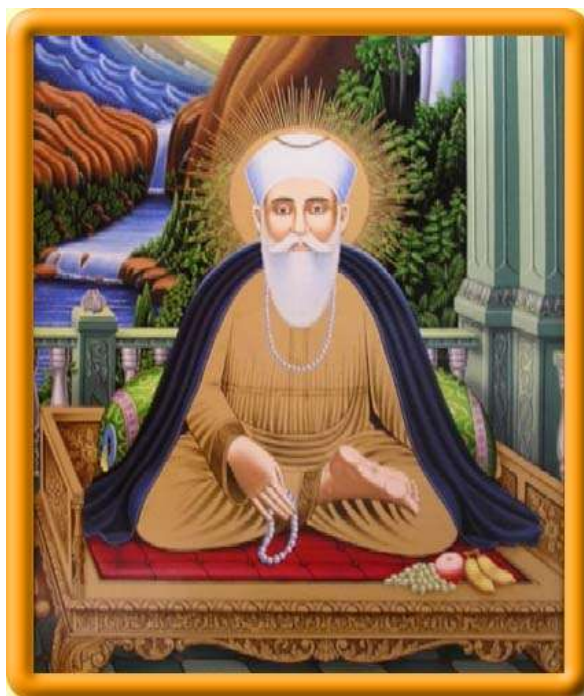
By C.J. Hall

Here is the poem of safari 2020
Normally there would stories a plenty.
Like how someone got cut off at the start
by some very fast "Cantankerous Fart"
Or maybe the time they got beat up in the Jam.
But laugh now about it because they almost drowned, man!
And when you fell off a dam and went splat.
But were so far ahead that no one saw that.
Remember that time when we almost died?
And when it was over, we lost our supplies.
And the observations of all the bank crews
Which without them everyone would be screwed.
Comments that happen when their paddlers pass,
They proudly admit "Yep that's my Dumb Ass".
This year seemed empty for a very good reason.
A totally disrupted paddling season.
Next year will show up with a new river tune.
Looking forward to seeing you in a mud hole soon.

C.J.

Palmetto Hotline

River Guru



Palmetto Hotline

September 2020

Greetings Inferior Racers! The 2020 TWS is only a day away! Just like the rest of 2020, the race is expected to be huge kick in the teeth with record low water and record high heat. We are also expecting record low turnout (just 1 boat I hear). The 2020 TWS will either have the highest finisher rate or lowest finisher rate in the history of the race. Curious about what would have happened if the race were not cancelled by those snowflakes on the TWS board? Good news! In addition to being able to travel through time, I also can travel to alternate dimensions where real racers exist, the Safari is still the world's toughest canoe race (no food, no ice, no worthless SPOT trackers) and the TWS isn't cancelled because someone ate a bat. That being said, I hope you enjoy the official 2020 TWS results.

1st Place – The Yonley's: These 2 cruised to an easy victory over the unlimited boats becoming the 1st team to win overall in a tandem since 1984. Technically, Jon Yon DNF'd and got out at the tip of the spoil islands so he could be the 1st to tell all the long boats to "eat it!"

2nd Place – Fast 4 #1 (Kyle Mynar, Chris Issendorf, William Russell, Nick Walton): The race was close between the 2 leading 4 man boats until Nick Walton ripped his clothes off down to his American Flag Speedo, put on his MAGA hat and got in the bow below Victoria.

3rd Place – Fast 4 #2 (Andrew Condie, Ian Rolls, Logan Mynar, Danny Medina): After a very back and forth race with the other 4 man, it was collectively decided to hang back so they wouldn't have to look at Nick in his thong.

4th place – Phil and the Missouri Boys + Nate Tart: After the 2019 Safari mishap, these boys thought they had this race in the bag. The low water had other plans.

5th Place – The mixed 6: Speaking of low water, this light weight team (**Kaitlin Mynar, Virginia Condie, Morgan Kohut, The Wyatt Bros. and a Schlimmer**) was on the heels of Phil's 6 most of the race. If it weren't for the longest logjam portage in the history of logjam portages, they likely would have gotten 4th.

6th Place – Fred Mynar 3: This boat had the largest crowd at the finish line either waiting to congratulate them or to ask Fred if he wanted to partner up next year.

7th Place – Holly 5 Woman: One of the most trained up teams participating this year after their MR340 2nd place overall finish.

8th Place – Arctic Cowboys: The Cowboys were having a solid race... that is until West pulled out his phone to check Facebook. He spent the Cuero to Victoria stretch policing anyone's opinions that differed from his. No confirmation if any minds were changed.

9th Place – Tim Curry (1st solo unlimited): After having his skill viciously attacked in the last hotline, Tim decided to actually train this year. He was somewhere in the middle of the pack near the San Marcos Guad confluence but was able to pass everyone unseen during the nights.

10th Place – The Martinez's (1st tandem Mixed): Also very well trained up after their 1st place mixed 3rd overall MR 340 Finish

11th Place – Joe Geisinger and John Bugge: Look out... Joe just got a 2nd place finish in the Aluminum state race only losing to a couple of youngins and a few weeks later, earned a top 15 finish, 1st place standard in the TWS.

12th Place – Pete and Wade Binion (1st aluminum): These guys love a long punishing race which is why they chose to race aluminum and why they easily cruised to a top 15 finish.

13th place – 4 man #3 (Mike Tecci, Wayne Thorp, Chris Champion, Zach Elkins): This boat would have finished higher but after the entire team mistakenly ate someone's THC Gummies thinking they were Clif Shot Blocks, they went on one of the longest bay tours in the history of the TWS.

14th Place – Yusef, Alex, Luke: Despite finishing in 80 hours, these guys were showing way too much positivity for me. Someone needs to tell these guys that this isn't supposed to be fun.

15th Place – Erin Magee – The only paddler who can do 40+ mile training runs twice every weekend all year long – the September 2020 TWS was made for her.

DNFS:

Geoff Waters: Went for the record solo, paddled upstream in the log jams, DNF'd

Brian's Bachelor Boat: Wedding cancelled (postponed) so after they didn't make the Luling 90 cutoff, opted to try again next year.

Hippie Chicks: DNS

Risky Business (John Moore, Mike Smith The St. Claire's), : Did well at the MR340 but weren't recovered by the TWS

Cinco De Texorida (David Carlson, Mike Dey, Will Leeds, Chris Bailey): Didn't make the Gonzo Cutoff

All the Novice Teams: All of them DNF'd. Furthest any of them made it was the SWB.

Whiskey Trip: The one team racing in our dimension's TWS. Come watch them suffer on Sept 12th. One of my sources tells me they think they are finishing 55-58 hours. I am going with the over on that one. Do all 6 of them make it to the finish line? Does Trab spend the majority of the race debating with West Hansen on Facebook? There is also a side bet with BJones that they won't make it to Hochheim by 5 am Sunday. So many storylines. Given the water level and well... the fact that this is just one long training run, it's hard to know if this team is tough or stupid or both. Either way, we wish them the best and applaud them for trying to make the best out of what has turned out to be a really weird year. See you in 2021!

Each Palmetto Hotline is written by anonymous source whose opinions are separate of the TWS or TCKRA.