Whitewater calls; can you canoe?

By CARLTON COLEMAN

There is absolutely no excuse for graduating from UNC without having canoed the Haw River. So grab your gymmers (to keep the crawdads from getting your toes) and let's go!

The piedmont region has a generous variety of rivers to run. On one end of the spectrum are the typically easy-drifting, lazy stretches of the upper Haw, located right in our own backyard and well-suited for the Saturday afternoon first-time canoer. In contrast, the turbulent cascades of the Nolichucky, which crashes rafters and kayakers wildly along the bottom of a spectacularly forested and rugged gorge in the Appalachian mountains are a challenge for even the most avid expert.

For now, head over to one of the two outfitters in town to get everything else you'll need. The Trail Shop or the River Runners Emporium can supply you with a canoe, paddles, a car rack and life jackets for about \$10 for the day. There is a substantial savings if you go during the week.

For personal supplies, along with old tennis shoes and cutoffs, bring a change of dry clothes to leave in the car at the take out point (plan on getting wet) and some iceddown beers to be left for the end of the day to have a "Miller time" after conquering nature.

A cold sixer per canoe is fine, but any more than that isn't necessary because along with conquering nature, you'll be getting high on it. Pocket instamatics are nice, but risky to bring along. Mine made it's first and last trip earlier this year. If the river is up, a few tins of Vienna sausage and some saltines would be nice should you find yourself lost up some branch off the mainstream. When you have completed your trip you might question the need for this precaution because

of the ease with which you reached your destination. However, people have been known to get lost.

Now you're ready to go, only fifteen minutes down Highway 15-501 and you are there. An exhilarating, refreshing day of river travel is about to unfold. An adventure comes with each set of gentle rapids, while serene, still areas where the river grows deeper and wider support an abundance of deer and sunning frogs for all to enjoy.

A rigorous day of shooting through endless whitewater rapids can be had on the lower Haw, Nantahala, and the Nolichucky Rivers. This is a more involved venture and will require additional money and energy. A cost of about \$25 per person for a day of rafting includes a guide, lunch and transportation from the river to the outfitter's center.

The Trail Shop has literature with the specifics on various rates and trips offered by the few outfitters in this area. They also have books available on many aspects of boating including Wildwater, the Sierra Club guide to kayaking and whitewater boating, and Carolina Whitewater, which is a guide to all the rivers in the state.

The Trail Shop is also having a teaching class in conjunction with the Chapel Hill recreation department at Clearwater Lake for \$10. This starts soon, so call to make your reservations now.

Here are a few outfitters' addresses and phone numbers:

Black Canyon River Tours, Inc. Route 2, Box 176

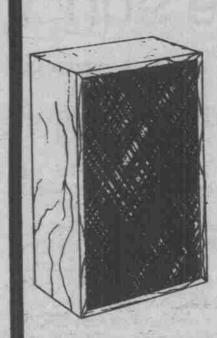
Erwin, Tenn. 37650 (615) 743-5001

New River Outfitters:
U.S. 221 South, West Jefferson
(919) 246-7711
206 Blowing Rock, Boone
(704) 264-1580
Route 1, Box 123 Green Mountain
(704) 688- 2011



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