

MARCH / APRIL 2008

TEXAS CANOE RACING ASSOCIATION

PROMOTERS AND ORGANIZERS OF THE SPORT SINCE 1971



SAFARI SEMINAR



PRESIDENTS MESSAGE,

The race season is about to get into full swing and the year looks to be an exciting one. The town lake series was well attended and I do not remember everyone being this ready to race so early in the season. During the February board meeting several important decisions were made that will have an impact on this year's points races. Tommy has been working hard to bring back the Solo Unlimited Championships and is calling the 2008 race the Texas River Championships. The race is scheduled for April 19th, from San Marcos to the gravel bar. Bob has put out a tremendous effort to make the 2008 Aluminum Nationals the best ever. We will be finalizing volunteer positions over the next few weeks and will need all hands to step forward. For everyone's benefit I will try to briefly review the activities of the club over the last few months and preview the coming racing season.

Membership-

Old Members Please Renew
New Members We Welcome You
Our membership drive has been going well. Ken Keiffer our sec/treasurer has done a great job of organizing and tracking our new members. The recruitment booth has been up at all four of the town lake series races, Buffalo Bayou and the Safari Seminar. The results have been positive with quite a number of new members coming on board. We are putting together a new member packet for mail out in early April. If you are an old member yet to renew or a new member thinking about joining, please send your \$ 15 individual or \$20 family membership fee to Ken Keiffer membership forms and Ken's address can be found at www.txcanoeracing.org. You may

download a membership form from our TCRA website or send in your current address with the fee. Your membership is valued and together we can have a much greater impact on all things river and water related, from racing to environmental issues.

Aluminum Nationals

We have been having regular meetings with representatives from Bastrop and the LCRA to help make the Aluminum Nationals and Southern Pro Championships (cash payout C-2 Race) the best weekend of racing in Texas to date. Please watch for the link on the TCRA web page. Plans are being finalized to bring in a prominent guest speaker for Friday night and a clinic on Saturday afternoon. One of the requirements to race in the Nationals will be current membership in the United States Canoe Racing Association, our website will help you accomplish that once finalized. AS mentioned in the opening, Bob Spain has put out a tremendous effort to help make the Nationals a success and we need everyone in the club to be ready to step up and fill a role. We will be ready to assign these volunteer positions in April, so please step forward when your name is called.

Points Program

The 2008 racing season will see a change in our points program. We have developed a two tiered system. All members are automatically classified as Category One and Category Two racers and eligible for recognition or to compete at both levels. Experienced racers and all others now have the option to declare themselves as Cat. One points eligible only. The purpose of this is to allow our new and developing racers some obtainable goals and identify races where the

more experienced as well as newcomers can expect some heightened competition. Youth racers (18 and under will retain their points eligibility under both systems regardless if they win a reward as a youth racer). As stated below, a member over 18 can self declare out of the Category Two (less experienced and new racers) or be automatically eliminated by winning a Category Two Class points award.

Ken Keiffer will be incorporating this into the current point rules. Again be patient, this is a long term project that will need adjustments as we identify the best way for it to serve its purpose. The board worked long and hard to improve this program.

Town Lake Series

A big thank you goes out to John Baltzell for his efforts in coordinating and running the Town Lake series. The three races on Town Lake were well attended and lots of new members joined up. We will try and have a coordinated series in the Houston area next year with maybe the final effort between the two groups a combined time trial. The OC-1 crowd showed up in large numbers and the weather was great all four weekends.

Thank You,

Pete Binion

TCRA President

2008 POINTS PROGRAM

Lee Deviney Points Chairman txpaddler@aol.com

- a. Three proposals emerged as options for the 2008 points program.
- b. Lengthy debate ensued regarding merits of each proposal.
- c. Discussions of entire proposals were not successful in securing motions to vote.
- d. Was decided to vote on various elements of all three proposals “ala carte” to develop the program.
- e. First motion carried to agree on a 2-tiered system. With actual the name of the tiers subject to revision, board has adopted Category 1 for highly competitive and experienced paddlers and Category 2 for all others. Exclusive placement in Category 1 can be done by either self declaration or elimination of eligibility for cat 2 by virtue of winning a Category 2 class points award.
- f. Second motion to carry stated that all races meeting the current rules for inclusion in the points series would be eligible points races for the Category 2 racers.
- g. After much discussion about class parity and irregular race reporting it was decided that Category 1 point races should be a select few of Texas’ premiere race events and generally equally representing USCA and Unlimited/ICF racing. Identified point races for Category 1 are:
 - i. TCRA USCA Championship Races
 - ii. TCRA ICF Championship Races (exclude K2)
 - iii. TCRA State Aluminum Championship
 - iv. USCA National Aluminum Championship
 - v. Dickenson Canoe and Kayak Races
 - vi. Greens Bayou (K1 only)
 - vii. Buffalo Bayou (K1 only)
 - viii. Come and Take it (solo unlimited only)
 - ix. Junior Water Safari (solo unlimited only)
 - x. CR 100 (solo unlimited only)
- h. One additional rule was agreed upon and it relates to non-solo point contenders. Eligibility for tandem and other multi person boats will require that all persons in the boat are TCRA members in order to qualify for TCRA points.



2008

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Grady Hicks

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Pete Binion

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Ann Best
Frank Gray

USCA Delegates

Pete Binion
Bob Spain
Richard Steppe

Web

Cindy Meurer

Club T-Shirts

Constitution & Bylaws

Bob Spain

Race Directors

Unlimited	Tommy Yonley
USCA	Grady Hicks
USCA-Youth	Frank Gray
Aluminum	Bob Spain Pete Binion
ICF	John Batzell
Martindale	Cindy Meurer Ann Best Teddy Gray



Town Lake Series on the shore



T.C.R.A. RACE CALENDAR 2008

JANUARY - JUNE

VISIT [HTTP://TXCANOERACING.ORG/](http://txcanoeracing.org/)
FOR MORE INFO AND REVISIONS

APRIL 2008

SAN MARCOS RELAY

SATURDAY 4/08/08

HILDAGO FALLS

SATURDAY 4/12/08

SUNDAY 4/13/08

SOLO UNLIMITED CHAMPIONSHIP

SATURDAY 4/19/08

MAY 2008

TWS PRE-LIM

SATURDAY 5/03/08

BARRIER TO THE BAY

SUNDAY 5/04/08

JUNE 2008

KELLERS TO CASTELL

SATURDAY 6/07/08

TEXAS WATER SAFARI '08

9AM STARTS SATURDAY 6/14/08

SUNDAY 6/15/08

MONDAY 6/16/08

TUESDAY 6/17/08

WEDNESDAY 6/18/08 1PM

PALMETTO HOTLINE

MARCH/APRIL 2008

This edition of the Palmetto Hotline was left on River Guru's doorstep in a corked bottle with **Three Dude's Texas White** label. RG claims no knowledge of whom the actual author is, but noted a slight hint of vintification in the air.

At the early stages in Safari season and wine making all is anticipation. Who will taste the sweet flavors of victory, accompanied by the bouquets of adulation with a subtle undertone of jealousy, and who will have only the bitter dregs of ignominy and defeat? **Le Toque Rouge** has been walking thru the vineyards and pondering such weighty matters while savoring a full bodied yet affordable **Cabernet Sauvignon**.

After disproving the 6-man superiority myth we can presume **Carter Johnson**, or was that (**Johnson Carter?**) will return as sure a corked '57 **Château Lafitte**. The question is how will he win the race? In order to have a realistic shot at it, he'll have to break down and get a partner or so, **Le Toque Rouge** notes with interest that **Mr. Rendon and new padre T Yonley** seem to be very fast and dare one add, ambitious?

Last's year's *grand cru* the **Binions** are telling all who will listen, that they are really, really going with **Mollie and Becky** this year but have tipped their blend by entering the Missouri 340 with a crew similar to last's years **Carter beaters**.

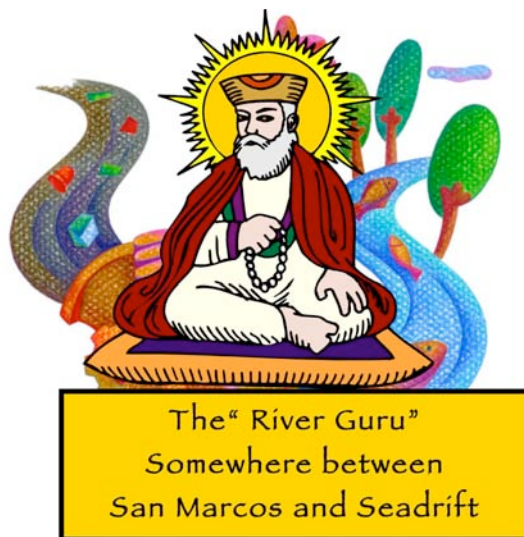
LTR Assumes **The Cowboys** will put in another twist-top effort this year. Rumor has it the Safari board has authorized their new number -**MD20/20**.

And for the Beaujolais Nouveau it appears a contest more epic than the Grapevine oenophile sip-off is fermenting for USCA C2 cold it be that **J Yonley/P Rask** is going bottle to bottle with **J Zeek/Feaster Famine** for the gold?

And for the rest of us... Don't worry that you efforts may not rise to **estate reserve**, of a top 15 finish but there is plenty of joy in **vin ordinaire** of a 48-75 hour effort. And if the **plonk** of a Wednesday finish isn't exactly **Châteauneuf-du-Pape**, it'll still spin your head a little!

RG adds: I certainly hope this means I am off the blacklist for entry to the Three dudes winery. RG was banned last year when he mistakenly suggested that the logistics would be much simpler if **Terry** would convert from the So-20th-century bottles in favor of the sleek new boxes like RG saw down to the local HEB. (and did you know you can make a poor drunkards camelback for the Safari from those? Just drain and refill with water!)

But of course the RG is a writer in the mold of **Hemingway**-no sissy vino here...a bottle of fine, single malt Scotch next to this laptop is the stuff that will get you all the info that crave. It appears **Phil B.** has had difficulty in filling any more "Boot Camps" when it was leaked that all graduates of the first one were commissioned as Safari Buck Privates, and relegated to cleaning the latrines at each checkpoint. The Argosy Cup Adventure is back in full swing with **Mr. Bugge** lining up a crew of **Belizeans** – although word on the street is that this is the kinder, gentler version **John** - he only barks orders every five minutes now. **The**



Mynars have been spotted on the San Marcos and Brazos recently. The RG cornered **Freddie** last Friday and he was head-down, kicking up the gravel with the well-rehearsed company line: "Aw shucks, we're all going solo this year-nope, not going 6-man, no matter what." TRANSLATION: 6-man it is- with **Dunn, 3 Mynars, 1 Californian + a Canook** for good measure. The **two Andrew brothers** from the most talked-about boat of 2007 will be back again. They bought enough graphite cloth to build a stealth bomber, and the boat is no longer hinged behind seat #2. As an added feature, every seat has rudder peddles with the override set to whichever seat the owner is sitting in.

His strange entry last year set the bar a little too high – even for himself, and **Kenny StarZ** will enter this year's Safari in a Lexan-bottomed rowboat so he can "Scout the river bottom" for the next low water year. And finally, recent news seems to indicate that Safari running seems to be a factor in getting pregnant. **Abby**, are you and **Tim** keeping mum?

THE “LUNCH BOX” OF THE SAN MARCOS RIVER...

Erin Magee

The section of the San Marcos from **Staples Dam to Luling 90** is one I used to avoid as a novice and have come to really relish as I've gained skills with experience. It's the “*Lunch Box*” of our river.

Without skills, this section will eat your lunch. With boat handling and river reading skills, you'll be passing thru that area sometime just after lunch and hungry for the challenge.

The mileages are approximate. Water levels make a difference and new cuts with floods will change the mileage slightly. The river described is below the Staples Dam and does not include the Staples Dam portage.

Staples to Fentress (9.5 miles) is littered with strainers and sweepers, with a few obstacle course moments around rocks and trees. This section is working ranches on both sides and you're wise to keep a heads up for barbed wire and t-posts that are in the water near the bank. Floods have put some of the fencing into the river over the years, and lower water exposes it. T-posts rip carbon and kevlar, FYI! Any portages in this section will be due to trees across the river or low water and gravel bars. There are no dams or drops. For a landmark, 5 miles into the stretch, easily visible at present on river left, is a very large, wooden home. Once there, you're slightly over halfway to the Fentress bridge.

Fentress to Prairie Lea #1 is 2.5 miles of too much fun! You'll enjoy the short distance getting to Leisure Camp with the sweepers and obstacles. You'll know you're at Leisure Camp as you're in a long straight away with an inviting gravel bar, and usually people fishing, swimming, and playing in the area. The people will cheer as you pass, but they might not move out of your way. Narrow and constantly turning, I always feel like a mouse in a maze slaloming thru the trees and rocks. This section does have the a very old low dam wall, with it being eaten away over the years it'll be just a few ripples, or bigger waves to ride – depending on the water level. But it's never a portage.

Prairie Lea #1 to Prairie Lea #2 is 2.5 miles and has a few more straight aways, some sweepers, right now lots of gravel bars, and it has the old ranchers dam and ranchers bridge 1.5 miles into the split. The old ranchers dam, if you don't like the waves or rocks, or can't tell which is a wave or a rock, and don't like the idea of running on the higher bank, thru the trees while dealing with it- you can easily portage and you'll see where in plenty of time. The ranchers bridge, if clear like right now – is easy to lay back or lean forward and go under. If you find it blocked, I recommend portaging on river right, there is/was a cement ledge running on the right bank for a short distance. The left has always proven to be fairly deep, again, all that changes with floods and droughts. The new Prairie Lea #2 bridge is tall.

The Purgatory Mile is Prairie Lea #2 to Stairtown. Deceptive on going under and away from the Prairie Lea #2 bridge where it's flat and shallow – you round the first bend and never stop drawing, sweeping, reading the river and handling proactively the turns with sweepers replete with trees in the water, and hanging over it. The good news is in this water level is that if you don't like what's coming – you can probably jump out- stand up, reposition yourself or portage, and go on. Do keep the boat in line with the current. It'd be an easy section to pin a boat.

Exit The Purgatory Mile and you're headed for **Luling 90** (6 miles). The first 3 miles are straight aways of flatwater heaven compared to where you've been, a minor sweeper or two, but nothing that should do anything but let you refocus. The last 3 miles of the section has more sweepers that require laybacks, and a few obstacle courses. The major landmark this section are the erosion barriers approximately 1.5 miles above the Luling 90 gravel bar. The first set of barriers is on river left, as you're making a right corner. As you're rounding that corner, well away from the barriers, be heads up. You're in a very short straightaway with a hard left 90 degree turn you'll need to make and the next set of barriers is on your right. There's a lot of trash and trees in those barriers, and that's where the water is going to push you. If you get pushed to the upstream side on river right of the trees, logs and barricades, you are in an eddy but it's deep, and you will have some time to figure out what to do based on your skill level. You'll know you're reaching Luling, as the smell of black gold becomes more pungent, and you know you're there where you cross under the dual set of bridges. One is the RR bridge, and one is for car