

Madawaska Kanu Center

5 Day Tandem Whitewater Canoe Course



Sun. July 25/04: *Bill:* We left Bayfield at 12:50pm and had one stop at Alliston's Tim Horton's for a coffee and muffin. We gassed up in Barry's Bay and were at Dixie Lee Chicken for supper at 6:30. We drove to Madawaska Kanu Centre. We checked in at 7:15pm and set up camp beside Bob and Paula. We enjoyed a nice evening chat and retired to bed at 11:30, knowing we had to be at breakfast at 8am and ready to paddle at 9am. We were wondering what lay in store for us.

Mon. July 26/04: *Janice:* Breakfast was good and there was lots of it. We met at 9am at the vans and Sarah and Allan K., our instructors, helped us load our canoes and showed us the ropes. We are off to Bark Lake Dam where we practice strokes and get ready for some faster water. Bill & I, Bob and Paula are learning some new techniques and trying to get rid of some old habits. They bring us back for lunch and then we are on the water again at the dam. We are paddling downstream to the bridge. This gives us some practice and confidence in our new river js. We load up and head on back to MKC for a shower, sauna, and a drink, whatever. We have free time till supper. Supper was excellent! We met again in the evening for a talk.

Tues. July 27/04: We now have our routines set and after yoga and breakie we are off to the bridge again to work our way to the Chalet Rapids. We are split into 2 groups and we are with Allan. We head downstream and paddle from the Chalet to Claudia's Rollers in the afternoon. Bob and Paula took quite a swim at the rooster tail at Staircase Rapids. It has been a long day. We do rescue stuff in the evening.

Wed. July 28/04: We are working the Chalet Rapids and then moving on down past Claudia's Rollers to the Mud Bay. Bill and I loose it and take a swim; no brace, wrong tilt. Carole and Rheal are also out of their canoe. Everyone has had their swim. We have lunch and head off to Bark Lake for an afternoon off to swim or test boats. It has decided to stop raining and we have a great sunny afternoon and supper picnic; barbequed chicken. We go over safety equipment in the evening and find out we are heading to Palmer Rapids tomorrow; both tandem groups.

Thurs. July 29/04: *Bill:* We had a great breakfast again and were off in the van at 8:45am. We went to Palmer Rapids and played at Jessup's rapids and Piano rock. We played back and forth with ferries and s-turns. Janice and I dunked twice today, once because our tilt was wrong and then when we came down the chute everything was perfect and we freaked out. We got it the second time. The afternoon we had Janice in the stern till we did that chute. We paddled on down the river and played in the eddies till we ended up at the bottom of the set. The van and trailer was waiting for us to load. We changed in the bush and went back to the lodge. In the evening we had graduation where everyone in our group got our ORCA 11 level. Janice, Paula, Bob and I received our ORCA 11 accreditation. Went down to the Chalet Rapids and took lots of pictures. We have to leave early tomorrow so we readied our gear before bed.

Fri. July 30/04: Drove to Quadeville and down a very small trail to the river, Aumond's Bay Road. We paddled down a quiet stretch of the river till the first rapid, Island Rapid. We scouted out all the rapids and ran them mostly ducky style. We took on water in a lot of them, but never tipped. At the Split Rock Rapids we launched the canoe into the air and came down deep. We got sucked into a pretty good hole and paddled extremely hard to get out of it. We ended our day with a few more battle wounds (Janice smacked her finger on the huge rock and it turned colour and is swollen). We took out at Buck Bay Take-out, got changed and had an ice-cream cone at Quadeville. Had steak for supper and packed up for a quick getaway in the morning. Great course! Great instructors! Madawaska River & Opeongo River Whitewater Guide by George Drought describes the river well. Yes we'd recommend this course.