

Jet pilots might smile at white-water speeds, but Phyllis Mossberg (above) vows that 4 mph over rocks is like riding a comet

Ride the **WHITE WATER**



Jeanne Hopkins, fairly swamped, takes "the Drop," famous tough ridge in Quaboag River

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PRACTITIONERS of the art of baseball look upon their sport as a source of excitement with few parallels in this world. Hockey enthusiasts have similar feelings toward their own diversion; lacrosse and football players ditto. But few sportsmen devoted to a specific entertainment ever achieve the same kind of spiritual and physical jolt as the devotees of white-water canoeing.

This risky, thrill-packed, soaking-wet pastime is a relative newcomer to river sports. It was developed some 30 years ago by enterprising sportsmen associated with the Appalachian Mountain Club, the big East Coast organization which devotes itself to the great out-of-doors. Finding themselves with spare week ends unsuitable for mountain climbing or hiking, a group of intrepid A.M.C. members hauled their canoes to fast, swollen mountain streams and tried riding the rapids. The combination of fresh spring air, the murmuring of rushing waters and the exhilaration of eating heartily and sleeping the sleep of heroes under mountain skies was irresistible; A.M.C. has been promoting white-water canoeing ever since.

White-water people work the rapids in relatively shallow streams and rivers. They haul their canoes to the tops of treacherous, boiling, white rapids and

ride on down—as much as 15 miles at a stretch—breaking paddles, ripping boats, getting battered black-and-blue, until they are stopped by dams, mills or slow, deep water.

Though there are white-water fans in almost every state of the Union, the great majority strain their muscles in New England—especially Maine—tossing about in light canvas or aluminum boats on rivers with wild-sounding names like Quaboag and Ammonoosuc and Contoocook. Most of the stouthearted, callus-kneed sailors of the Eastern rivers today are members or guests of the Appalachian Mountain Club. They make their river runs on spring week ends in independent groups of a dozen or so boats. There are no sex or age restrictions. But more and more, to avoid trouble, skill limits are being imposed by individual groups—only canoeists of top skill may team up for the rough streams. No points are given in this jouncing, bouncing sport. It is not a race.

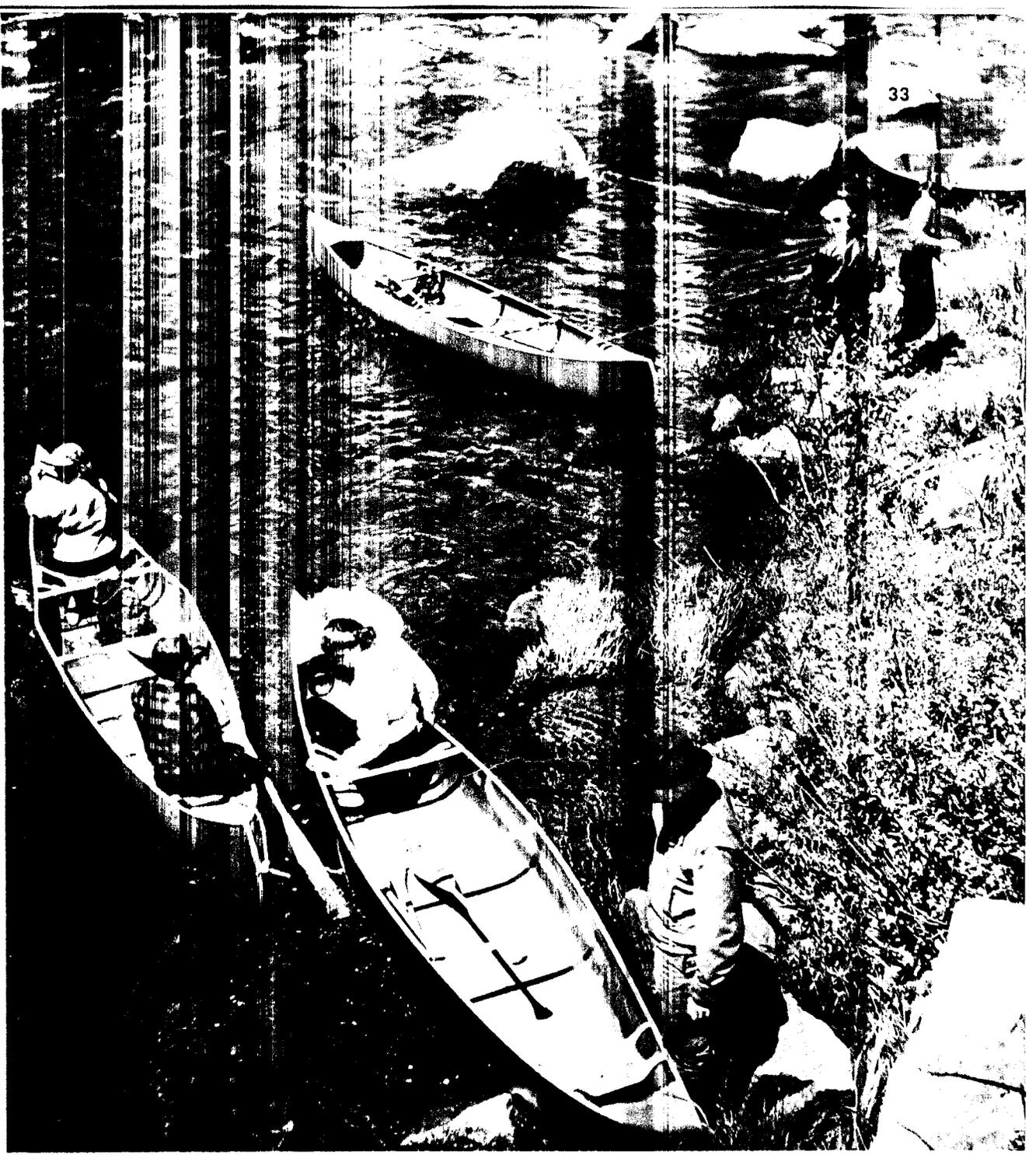
All you have to do is *finish*—after bumping along for miles in the bottom of a canoe, being spilled out, soaked down and bruised up. But there are folks who'll vow it's the only sport in the world with any kick to it. And they mean just that.

THE END

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR COLLIER'S BY ARTHUR GRIFFIN



Knee-deep in New Hampshire's Contoocook, Helen Ingraham stands helplessly over trapped canoe

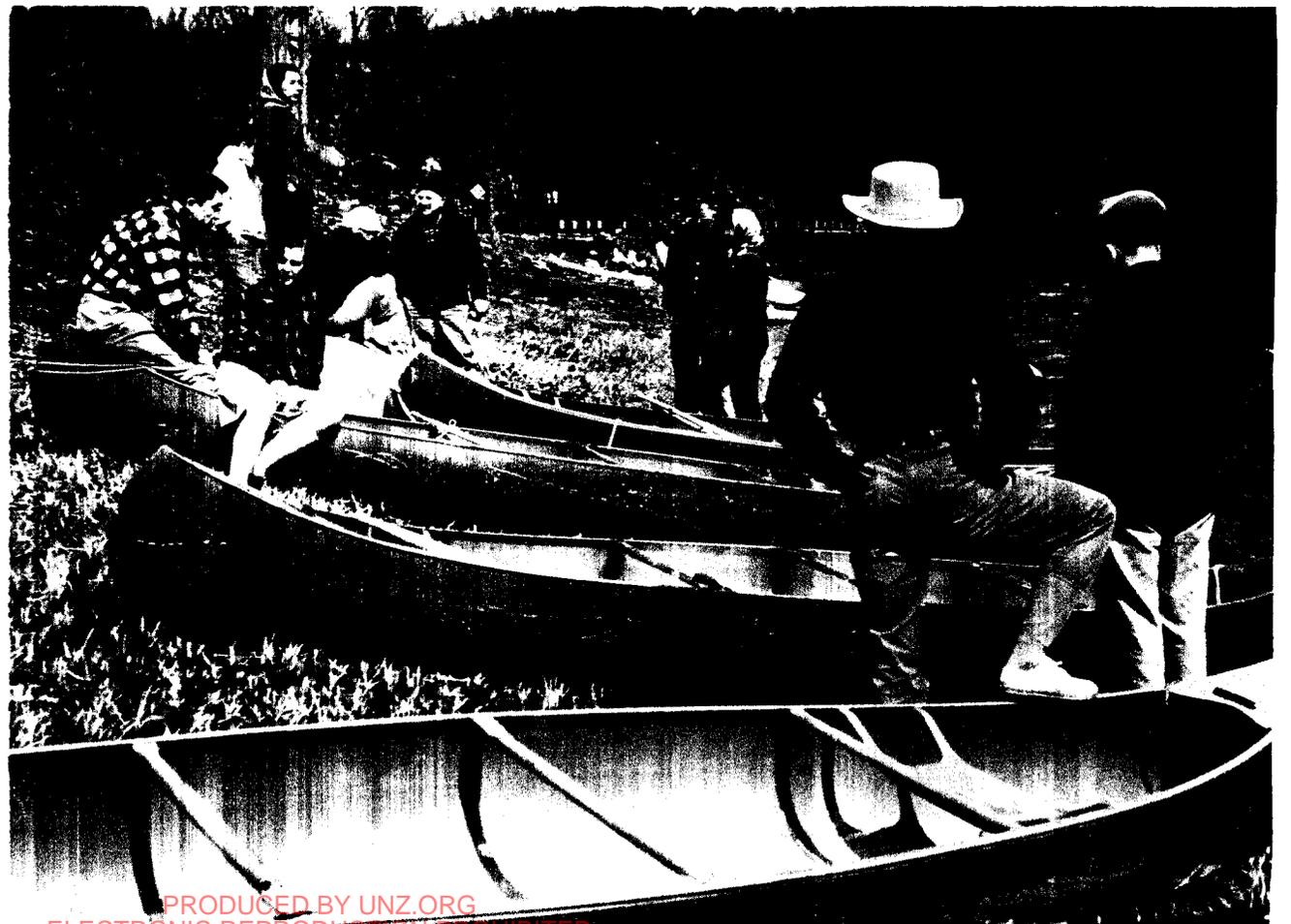


Not always wetted-down and battered, white-water fans, who soon get to understand what it's like to be a trout in fast waters, may run the same course twice in a day just for practice

Hungry as a cub this trip, too, Marjorie Hurd, over 60, helped develop sport some 30 years ago



Doug Brown (in red cap) of Meriden, Conn., leads a white-water group of Appalachian Mountain Club. Here he is on the Quaboag River, about to take the folks through the wild wet yonder



A SHOT in the DARK

By RICHARD POWELL

Pingree carried more than fishing tackle on his boat, Johnny thought. He could be carrying aliens, and he could be the man Johnny wanted. But, suddenly, he'd vanished

The Story: JOHNNY EDWARDS was playing a dangerous game of hide-and-seek. He was hunting the man who'd murdered his friend TONY MENDOZA, and all he knew about him was that he was head of the alien-smuggling racket in Havana.

To learn more about illegal immigration, Johnny joined the United States Border Patrol. Then he went down to Havana, off duty, and set a trap for the man he wanted. But SALLY McCARTER, the pretty sister of a Border Patrol inspector, blundered into it and wrecked his plans. Later, Johnny was followed by a cringing little man named GEORG RANKOSCI, who, he suspected, was a small-timer in the racket.

Johnny took Rankosci to a Havana café and fed him drinks to make him talk. He found out that the aliens smuggled from Havana were landed near Fort Myers, Florida. Before he could learn more, Sally McCarter walked in—and wrecked his plans again. To talk to Rankosci, Johnny had broken a date with her, and her escort, BOB TATE, wanted to pick a fight over it. By the time the brawl with Tate was over, Rankosci had slipped away.

Back with his patrol unit in Miami, Johnny began working for a transfer to Fort Myers. TIM McCARTER, Sally's brother, was senior inspector there, and Johnny knew Tim wouldn't welcome him as a partner if Sally had told her brother what a heel she thought Johnny was. But Tim agreed to his transfer, somewhat reluctantly, and Johnny flew to Fort Myers.

He got a chilly welcome there. Sally disliked him because of the broken date, and Tim disapproved of him because he'd heard that Johnny had used political pull to get into the Border Patrol. Never-

theless, Johnny felt he was on the trail of Tony's murderer at last. He was even surer of it that night when he took a stroll along the river. A passing cabin cruiser turned a blinding spotlight on him, and a minute later a bullet missed him by inches.

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ONE morning a month after the shooting on the dock, Johnny Edwards went to the rear of the black Border Patrol sedan, unslung the whip aerial and raised it. Inside the car, Tim McCarter stepped on the accelerator to power the battery and flipped down the lid of the glove compartment to reach the sending key. His fingers jerked a few times on the key. No orders came from WWMI. Tim waved a hand, Johnny telescoped the fifteen-foot sending aerial and locked it into place, climbed into the front seat, and they were off for another day.

A month in Fort Myers with nothing happening was telling on him. Things had looked promising that first night, but apparently the boys in the racket had changed their minds, and everybody had run for cover like fiddler crabs scuttling into holes. The new technique was to bore him to death instead of shooting him. It was working well, too.

At first Tim had been very worried by the shooting. But he hadn't been able to figure why it had happened, and he had worked around to deciding it was an accident—a guy was doing some illegal gigging alongshore, saw a uniform and thought a conservation agent was after

him and threw a couple of .30-30 bullets in his direction as a hint to lay off. Or something like that. Just as a precaution, though, Tim insisted that Johnny continue living in the McCarter house so they would be together in case of trouble.

Johnny sighed. They had been together, all right. Morning, noon and night, ten days a week. All weeks had at least ten days in them lately. The only trouble they had found was strictly home-grown; they got along together like a couple of Florida real-estate salesmen working on the same prospect.

"What," he said, "is the breath-taking program for today?"

"We'll visit Fort Myers Beach," Tim said. "And on the way we can drop in at Punta Rassa."

Punta Rassa was a tiny fishing village at the mouth of the Caloosahatchee. "Don't tell me what we're going to do there," Johnny said. "Let me guess. We're going to make some more friends."

"You don't like making friends, do you, Edwards? What keeps you so sore at people?"

"I need a good enemy to bring out the best in me. Bob Tate would do nicely if you'd let me at him. Why your sister wastes time on him I don't know. She was out with him twice last week."

"Three times," Tim said.

"We'd better quit this," Johnny said. "I'm not getting in the right mood to make a lot of friends today. Let me practice thinking nice thoughts." (Continued on page 38)



ILLUSTRATED BY WARD BRACKETT