



Left: *Mark Jacobson* on his way to victory in USCA's KI ICF Championship, Warren, PA, August 10, 2003

Courtesy ©2003 by Will Arts and Tech

March



Volume 37 Issue 1 of 6

# CANOE NEWS

The leading news magazine for canoers and kayakers  
— serving *all paddlers* throughout North America



In this issue:

## Remembering Mark Jacobson

plus

### USCA Winter Meeting Highlights:

- Women's Classes Across The Board
- New Kayak Classes, Specs
- Committee Agendas for 2004

### Rime of the Ancient Paddler

### Classique Rock: Ti-Lou

### A Party for Serge

### A Party for Mike

### Nationals: Which Days

### for Which Events

### & Aluminums in VA

### Which Pro Boat?

### Run of the Charles

### Best New Races 2003:

- Holyoke Cup: Pro Kayak
- Great Rivers Marathon
- Massey's Gator Chase
- and Webberville, TX

### Canoe/Kayak Race Schedules

### Other Event & Cleanup Schedules



## CANOE NEWS

Serving canoers and kayakers

Official Publication of the  
**United States  
Canoe Association**  
Supporting a Five Star program  
★ Competition ★ Cruising  
★ Conservation ★ Camping  
★ Camaraderie

[www.USCAnoe.com](http://www.USCAnoe.com)

### Canoe News

#### Advertising and Editorial

**Gareth Stevens, Editor**  
PO Box 56,  
Hubertus, WI 53033  
Phone: (262) 628-9991  
Cell: (262) 853-5453

Email: [nawal@ticon.net](mailto:nawal@ticon.net)

For advertisements,  
articles, and photo  
submissions: — please  
email Editor for advice on  
preferred formats.

#### USCA Officers

##### Executive Director

**John Edwards**  
1929 Arrowhead Drive  
St Petersburg, FL 33703  
(727) 522-3348  
[canoechamp@aol.com](mailto:canoechamp@aol.com)

##### President

**Kelly Wypych**  
338 Onondaga Terrace  
Syracuse, NY 13207  
(315) 423F-9075  
[kwypych@twcny.rr.com](mailto:kwypych@twcny.rr.com)

##### Vice President

**Jan Streib**  
609 N Division  
Bristol, IN 46507  
(219) 848-4279  
[Cekayak@aol.com](mailto:Cekayak@aol.com)

##### Secretary

**Karen Levitt**  
101 Main St (Apt #17)  
Keene, NH 03431  
(603) 355-8968  
[Karen\\_levitt@nmhschool.org](mailto:Karen_levitt@nmhschool.org)

##### Treasurer

**Marc Lessard**  
460 Stevens Rd  
East Thetford, VT 05043  
(802) 785-4350  
[marc.lessard@dartmouth.edu](mailto:marc.lessard@dartmouth.edu)

## Contents

Remembering Mark Jacobson .....	2-5
President's Message—Kelly Wypych .....	5
Executive Director's Message—John Edwards .....	6
From the Editor/Letters to the Editor .....	8
Highlights of USCA's Annual Meeting—Kelly Wypych .....	9-10
USCA Committee Agendas 2004 .....	11-13
Publicity and Public Relations—Janet Perry .....	13
Women's Interests Committee: We're on our Way!—Janet Perry .....	14
USCA Instructor Committee: Report on 2003—Tave Lamperez .....	15
The Same River Twice - Movie Review—Janet Perry .....	16
Kayak Korner—Pam Browning .....	17
Age and Endurance Athletics—Larry Liquori .....	18-19
A Party for Mike Fremont—Larry Latta My Hero—Thor Ronemus .....	19
Lionel (Ti-Lou) Rock aka Mr Classique—Rosslyn Kendrick .....	20
A Surprise Party for Serge—Gareth Stevens .....	21
USCA Nationals: Which Event on Which Day? .....	22-23
Announcing a New Nutrition Column—Barb Bradley .....	25
Much Ado About Pro Purse at Run of the Charles—Gareth Stevens .....	26
ROTC Enviro Fair—Gareth Stevens .....	27
Go-getters: top recruiters for the USCA .....	27
Which "pro" boat?—Gareth Stevens .....	28-35
Business Affiliates .....	37
Colorado 100 . . . in Texas—Mike Drost .....	37
Best New Races in 2003: Great Rivers MN, Gator Chase LA, Holyoke Cup MA, Webberville TX—Gareth Stevens .....	38-45
Race Results .....	46-49
Race Schedules .....	49-59
Cruises, Rendezvous & Other Fun on the Water .....	60
Cleanup Schedules .....	61-64
USCA, Divisions, Club Affiliates & Other Associations .....	65
USCA's Committee Chairs, Delegates, and Addresses .....	66-67
USCA Merchandise & Membership application Form .....	68
Proof readers: Colin Ingham, Judy Jeanes, Lucy H Moore Stevens - thank you!	



Main Cover: **Mark Jacobson**, shown here holding his USCA National Championship trophy for K1 ICF Marathon in August 2003. **Mark** died tragically in January 2004 in an accident while cross-country skiing: memorial and tributes, pp 2-5.  
Photo © 2003 Glen Green

## USCA is Proud to Support:



**Y** We build strong kids,  
strong families,  
strong communities.

Which "pro" boat?

Gareth Stevens

"What a concept — a useful article in Canoe News!" wrote Joe Shaw to me a couple of months ago (playfully, I'm sure). I just hope the article lives up at least part way to Joe's new expectations of this fine organ of the paddling world. If it does, it will only be due to the considerable help and insights that various paddlers and pro boat manufacturers have tried hard to give me (and not to my limited knowledge and modest talent as a hack). In fact, you will see that my modus has been to present the feedback I have received using direct quotations as far as possible, rather than paraphrasing and re-presenting.

The premise I offered to each of my advisers was this: there is no universal "best pro boat". And the question paddlers should ask is not "Which is the best pro boat?" The question paddlers should ask is "Which is the best pro boat for a team with our experience and characteristics?" - even adding "in the type of water we expect to race?"

In the "preview" article in the December issue of Canoe News, I listed a number of factors which I thought would have a bearing:

- Weight of the team and weight distribution, bow and stern
- Depth of water and bottom characteristics
- Wind conditions
- How stable the paddlers are (how good is their balance?) - vs how stable the boat is
- How fast the team can go — maintaining their top speed

John Diller (of Savage River Works) suggested I add:

- How the boat handles in twisty windy rivers (which I think is a question of the related issues of rigidity of construction on the one hand, and balance on the other), and
- How the boat performs wake riding

All canoes are stable. Some people are not. - Bob Vincent

Ted Bell (of Bell Canoe Works) suggested that color was a factor. Some people think that black boats go faster than yellow! I thought he was joking. "But no," Al Rudquist tells me, "carbon boats are more rigid than kevlar, and therefore more responsive."

Bruce Barton responded with such a useful and methodical summary I have used it as a frame on which to hang much of the other great feedback I got to my questions. Bruce's assessments are given here in bold italics — not to indicate an endorsement, but as a graphic device to help the reader navigate. I've also tagged them "BB".

The Hassel

BB: "The [earlier design] Hassel is a stable boat and is fast in shallow water. It is hard to paddle in 3-5 ft water — unless lifted. It is also very hard to move up through wakes because it rides over them, not cutting through. It is not good in rough water; it bounces over waves and takes in a lot of water. It's very narrow in the rear, making it hard to move the seat back for lighter stern paddlers. The Hassel is the best on narrow, twisty rivers. Available from: Crozier, Wenonah, and Serge Corbin."

The question of stability is an important one for many teams. Folks with less than good balance or those learning to balance will definitely be better off in a more stable boat. Many of the paddlers with whom I spoke echoed each other with this message: get a boat that you are comfortable paddling in for long period of time. If you have less than perfect balance, don't get a boat with a tippier reputation. What you lose by fighting instability in a supposedly faster boat is as great as the benefit you gain from the comfort of traveling in a more stable boat, and from the ability, therefore, to focus all your energy on propelling the boat forward and working with the river and other boats. But, as Carl Normandin says, "Any boat you get, you need to spend time in, to get really comfortable."

Here are a some other views on the older Hassel.

Al Rudquist: "The old Hassel is a very popular boat for paddling in shallow water. It has a relatively flat bottom which lets it "pop up" very easily. It gives a perception of being screamingly fast when popped up, but I think that is partly a reflection of how slow it is when it isn't! It is a very stable canoe, and may well be the best boat for a team which is (you think of how to say this politely) not as fast as the best teams."

Gord Cole: "Little slower top end, doesn't corner as well as the V-1, easier to run through shallows. Very stable. Handling similar to V-1. Hard to get bow down so a large bow paddler is good."

Jim and Carl Normandin both peg the Hassel (and the Newman Pro) as the best choices for beginners. Jim: "The Hassel does not have the fastest hull, but it is more stable than the V-1, great in adverse conditions and for beginners." Carl: "The Hassel is a good all round entry level boat, very comfortable and maneuverable."

CROZIER Racing Canoes

- High quality, high performance, custom-built racing canoes
- The latest space-age technology
- Extremely lightweight, stiff, durable lay-ups

Crozier Racing Canoes
W2079 Highway 64
Marinette, WI 54143

Ph: (715) 735-9763 Fax: (715) 735-5460
E-mail: erccrc@cybrzn.com

## Which “pro” boat?

For handling in big, rough water, some paddlers disagreed with **Bruce** and gave the *Hassel* good marks. For a heavier, but experienced, team in big, rough water, **Carl Normandin** rates the *Hassel* with the *V-1*. For an inexperienced team, he recommends a *Hassel* or a *Newman Pro* equally over a *V-1* and way over a *Gillies* or a *Corbin*. For an experienced but lighter team, he puts the *V-1* ahead of the *Gillies* and the *Corbin*, but drops the *Newman Pro* and the *Hassel* to the bottom of his list.

### The Hassel ProV

Bell Canoe Works manufactures the newer Hassel design. **Ted Bell** tells me the canoe is similar in some respects to the *V-1* but with “a fair bit of rocker,” which sets it apart from most other pro boats. **Dana Henry** has just bought one but as yet has no experience in it, and I have not found a paddler to give me comparative feedback. I’ll post a notice of how **Dana** feels about it in a future issue.



Above: A Hassel, looking at the stern. Don’t let the foreshortening of the photo fool you. The boat is not as wide as it looks mid section (nor quite as narrow in the stern). The view of the same boat below gives a better idea. These and the photos not otherwise credited on the following pages were all taken in Crozier Racing Canoes’ shop, and thank you to **Everett Crozier** for letting me run around there with my camera.



## What is a “3x27” aka a “pro” racing canoe?

Essentially a pro canoe is a racing boat built to match certain specs which have evolved over time to become the *de facto* standard in one of the two major marathon canoe racing circuits (the other has been tied to the USCA 4x32 standard) in the US and Canada. A pro canoe is powered with single-bladed paddles. If it gets powered by double-bladed paddles, it becomes a double kayak — but that’s another argument.

It is called a “pro” boat because for many of the races there is traditionally a purse, a little money for the winners (and often for participants quite far down the ranking). Not a lot of money. For the winners of the big races it may come close to defraying expenses, but otherwise the amounts are just small (but highly-appreciated) feel-good contributions to the costs of travel and participation.

Because the term “pro” signifies (in the popular mind) BIG money, some people like to avoid the term altogether because it give the wrong impression. (**Richard Toupin** proposes “elite” racers rather than “pro” racers.) Others don’t like the term “pro” because it is “inaccurate” because you can also race it in non-money races. They prefer to call the boat, simply, a “3x27.”

And the term “pro” sends shivers down the spines of diehard amateurs, some of whom won’t paddle a 3x27 because it’s “tainted” by its “pro” connections. And some just fear pro boats because of their tippy reputation (by comparison to the 4x32) — but that’s another . . .

For the time being, and in this article, they are pro boats, because that’s what most people in the sport call them.

“But enough of your twisted prose and provocation, buddy. The facts, **Gareth**, give us facts.”

OK. Here are the specs, this version taken from the rules of *La Classique*, one of the progenitors (the other being *AuSable Marathon* in Michigan) of the current generally accepted North American pro boat specs.

1. Maximum length: 18 feet, 6 inches.
2. Minimum width: 33” on top and 27” at 3” from the bottom of the center of the craft.
3. Minimum height: 15” bow, 10” center, 10” stern.
4. The measurements of 33” and 27” at 3” from the bottom, may be separated by 14” maximum.
5. The measurements of 33” and 27” at 3” from the bottom, may be at a maximum of 14” in front or behind the actual center of the craft.
6. A concave curve of a maximum depth of 1/4” is allowed between the measures 33” and 27” at 3” from the bottom.
7. No concave curve is allowed under the waterline (hull). The imperfections from repairs and sanding will be tolerated but must be minimal to conform to the regulations.
8. All measurements will be verified on the exterior of the hull.
9. In a situation where any of the above clearly-defined rules regulations are not adhered to, the competition committee has the right to reserve final decision and enforce said rules.

The USCA 3x27 version is consistent, if a little abbreviated:

USCA 3x27 Racing Canoe Specifications — maximum length 18’ 6”. Minimum heights – 15” bow, 10” center, 10” stern. The minimum height gunwale line shall be a continuous smooth arch curve. Minimum width 33” on top of gunwale line, 27” wide at 3” water line or 3” of draft.

The USCA now allows boats that meet either USCA 4x32 cruiser specs or 3x27 specs to race in all its National Championship canoe races (but paddling one with two double-bladed paddles would not find a class at USCA Nationals, I believe, but I could be wrong).

# Which “pro” boat?

## V-1 and V-1M

**BB:** “The V-1 is a boat that is easy to turn and fairly stable. It also turns easily in and is good in rough water. It passes through wakes better than the Hassel boat, but not as well as the Corbin or Gillies. The rear seat can easily be mounted farther back for lighter teams. The V-1 may be the best all around canoe. Available from: Serge Corbin, Crozier, Wenonah and Clipper.”

[Note: the V-1A is a 4x32 “version” of the 3x27. The V-1M is a slightly higher volume V-1 and it handles almost identically— see comments in the captions to photos]

**Al Rudquist:** “As far as the designs go, I do not buy the theory that the V-1 loses more speed as you paddle less hard. I also realize I may have a bit of a different perspective on speed than the next guy. It may be less comfortable for some to sit in, and that will make it seem to slow down more.

“The V-1 has been around since ’84, and is the same boat. It is moderately stable and very fast. My perception of the canoe is that the harder you paddle, the faster you go. Some canoes (such as the old Hassel) seem to have more of a distinct top end, and that is as fast as they go.”

Sparrow-weight **Jan Perrin**, who rates herself as a midpack paddler (who cannot therefore speak for the top end performance of the boats, she says), finds the V-1 to be a good, fast, and maneuverable boat, better than **John Newman’s Newman Pro** pro boat for teams with widely disparate weights, but she is also “very, very pleased with her Newman Pro boat,” which, when she paddles with someone no more than 50 lb heavier, handles every bit as well and is just as fast as the V-1, if not faster.

**Gord Cole:** “V-1: The standard. Very sensitive to trim, must be run bow heavy, especially in the shallows. Sprints okay, rides wash okay, stable. Most paddlers are familiar with its handling characteristics and can run the boat without thinking about it much. Must be popped in shallows.”

**Matt Streib:** “As a stern guy, I like the V-1 because it is easier to control in wakes with a bunch of other teams around, and I want to make sure that we don’t get blown off the water because of boat control issues. I don’t think the V-1 gives much or anything away to the newer designs, but it is definitely a much softer, more forgiving boat in wakes. If I’m racing with someone that I haven’t gotten some good training time with in the boat, then I would rather be in a V-1 because I can still put it where I want to even if the big guy in the front is leaning the wrong way.”

## The Bullet

**BB:** “The Bullet is very stable, turns easily and is good in shallow water. It is also good in the 3-5 ft suck water. It isn’t as good as a V-1, a Corbin or a Gillies at going through wakes, but better than the Hassel boat. It is good in rough water because it’s very stable. It bounces more than a Corbin, a V-1, or a Gillies because it rides over waves. You can easily mount the rear seat further back on stern. The Bullet is probably the best boat for a heavy team, or a team new to the pro boat. Available from: Savage River.”

This is **Bruce Barton’s** design. I have had no feedback from other paddlers about it and have only seen one myself.

Below, top picture: A V-1M — though it may as well be a V-1 for photographic purposes, the difference is so subtle. Bottom picture: **Everett Crozier** at work on **Paul Clott’s V-1**, for delivery later this Spring. The boats are all hand made, one at a time, with the finest craftsmanship.

## WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW CAN HURT YOU

- Let’s say • Your expensive canoe / kayak is at home . . .
- Your expensive canoe / kayak is on the river bank . . .
  - Your expensive canoe / kayak is on the river . . .
  - Your expensive canoe / kayak is on a car . . .
- and . . . you forget to tie down that bow rope, you drive forward, and snap your boat in half
- . . . or some dolt backs his SUV over your boat
  - . . . or your expensive boat gets totalled as you wrap it around a tree on the mighty Susquehanna
  - . . . or your expensive boat inexplicably flies off your car and smashes
  - . . . or your expensive boat flies off your buddy’s car because the \*&@! forgot to tie it down
  - . . . or, much worse:
  - . . . your airborne boat damages property or injures a person!

## DO YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE COVERED?

**(BET YOU’RE NOT!)**

There is actually very little chance that your expensive racing canoe or kayak is insured by your homeowner’s policy, your auto insurance, or any other insurance for that matter. Or worse . . . you probably don’t have third party coverage (that’s liability) for damage to other people or their property.

**Jacka-Liquori Agency can help.  
Economically and easily.**

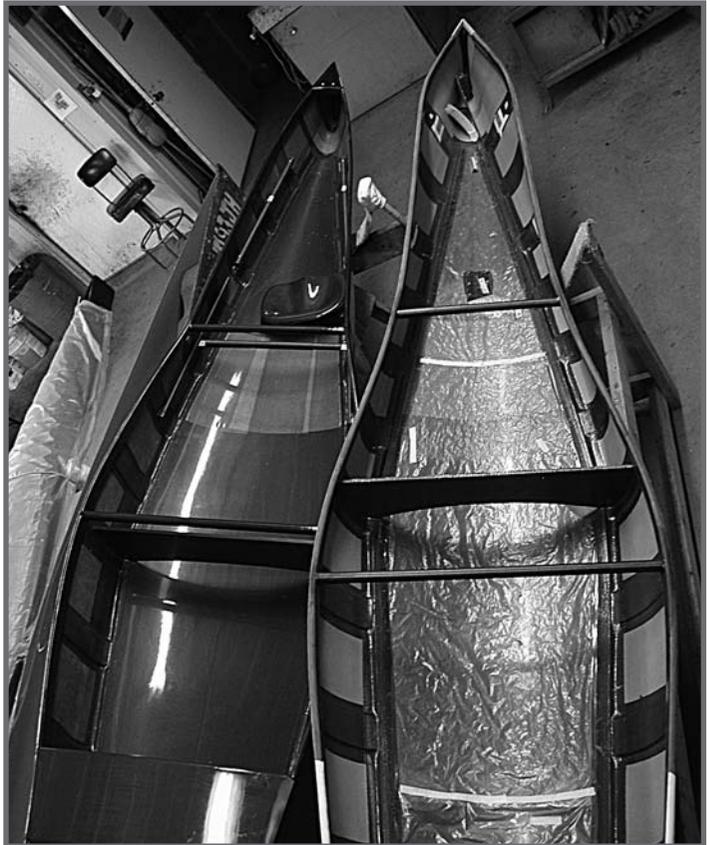
Call Larry Liquori at 1 (800) 464 7935,  
or email him at [Lliquori@jacka-liquori.com](mailto:Lliquori@jacka-liquori.com)

**Jacka-Liquori: insurance specialists to  
the world of paddling.**

**Competitive rates + Expertise = Peace of mind**



Which “pro” boat?



Above: Boats in process. A V-1M on the left and a Hassel on the right, view towards the bows. Below: Looking at the V-1M from bow, back. The V-1M differs from the V-1 with a little more volume up front for a heavier bow paddler. The difference is hard to see. I could feel it with my hands, though.

Above: The Hassel on the left and the V-1M on the right, view towards the sterns. Below: Looking at the V-1M from stern, forward. Note how, in common with most other racing canoes, the gunnels and sides are swept in to allow as close a stroke as possible for the stern paddler:



# Which “pro” boat?

## The Gillies

**BB:** “*The Gillies is the most unstable of all the pro boats. It is very fast for a light team. The Gillies glides easily at a cruising speed, making it good for long races. It is similar to the Hassel, making it hard to mount the rear seat further back because of the narrow gunnels. This boat is best for experienced teams. It may not be available at this time.*”

**John Gillies** licensed **Patrick Lynch** (Shawinigan, PQ) the right to build *Gillies* pro boats while **John** took a sabbatical to focus on ski instructor training. That hasn’t worked out for reasons that are not clear to me. However, no boats have been produced, and **John** is looking for one or more builders to keep his boats available for the paddlers who swear by them. His boats have won every major pro race, he says. Anyone interested in contacting him can reach him at the phone number and email listed in the endnotes to this article. If he doesn’t find a manufacturer, he says, “I guess I’ll have to go back to building them again myself!”

The *Gillies* is a lower volume boat and is ideally suited to teams weighing about 320-340 lbs combined. 380 lbs would be just too heavy. **Gillies** echoed what **Gord Cole** says below: that the boat can be run stern heavy quite successfully. In contrast to the *V-1*, the *Newman Pro*, and the new *Diller pro boat*, the widest point is very close to the mid-point instead of set back well towards if not all the way at the maximum allowed. **Gillies’** theory is that it is very nearly as important to control the replacement of the water behind the boat as it is to split the water in the first place, to keep turbulence to a minimum and reduce drag.

**Al Rudquist:** “The *Gillies* is supposedly (I didn’t think so) a very, very fast canoe. It is, however, very tippy. Good teams can deal with that, but I think inexperienced teams should look at this canoe skeptically.”

**Gord Cole:** “The *Gillies* has a reputation of being less stable than the *V-1*, but we haven’t noticed. It runs well stern heavy, so is good boat where a light person is less skilled and should be in the bow, for example, a kid. Corners well, runs shallows well. Seems to get best speed with a slightly modified stroke, shorter and quicker, almost a poke. Handling is similar to the *V-1*.”

If you have very good balance, like **Gord Cole** — or like **Matt Streib** (see below), are not tall, with a high center of gravity, like **Calvin Hassel**, and don’t weigh over about 175 lb then the *Gillies* may be the boat for you. But even **Carl Normandin** and **Patrick Lynch** tipped twice in a *Gillies* in the *Clinton 70-miler* a few years ago (and **Carl** never tips, says his dad, **Jim**). On the other hand, they recovered to place a solid second.

## The Corbin

**BB:** “*The Corbin is very fast in all water types. It is less stable than all other boats except the Gillies. It tracks, but with experience it can learn to be turned. It is very good at passing through wakes. The Corbin is fast in rough water, but sits deep in the water because of low volume, and waves can get on the cover. The rear seat can be placed far back, but not as far as on either the V-1 or the Bullet. The Corbin is best for an experienced team. Available from: Serge Corbin, Crozier, and Savage River.*”

**Bob Vincent:** “The *Corbin* third generation is less stable than the *V-1* because of its sharp edge at the 3x27 wide point: the sharp edge farther back also gives less volume in the stern, which is not good for teams over 170 lbs, or for a heavier stern person. It goes faster bow light, and rides stern wash easier than side wash. It’s very touchy about leans. For steering, a little is good; a lot and you lose the angle too fast.”

**Gord Cole:** “The *Corbin* is the best boat for top end speed, great in shallows, just paddle it through with no weight shift, it doesn’t squat.

“Not as sensitive to trim as *V-1*, and can be run stern heavy, although being less sensitive to trim, it is more difficult to determine what the optimum trim is! Handles very differently than other C2s when riding wash.

“Much tippier in waves, such as on the start .

“I think the *Corbin* is the boat of the future but it requires a lot of learning for those of us accustomed to other boats. My partner and

*Below: Jeff Kolka (bow) and Serge Corbin (left), paddling a Corbin pro boat, with Al Rudquist (bow) and Tim Triebold riding their side wake, paddling, I believe, a V-1. This photo was taken at the Clinton 70-miler in 2001.*

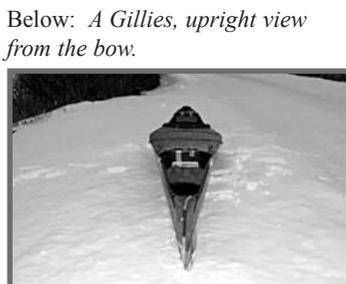
*Photo courtesy of, and © 2001, by John Ruebartsch*



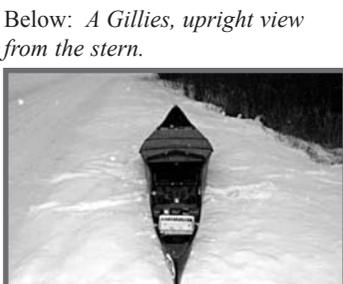
Above: A *Gillies*, oblique upright view from the bow.



Above: A *Gillies*, oblique upside-down view from the bow.



Below: A *Gillies*, upright view from the bow.



Below: A *Gillies*, upright view from the stern.



The four photos above, and the small one on the opposite page, are courtesy of, and © 2004 by, **Matt Streib**, who ventured forth in the chilly twilight of a northern Indiana January to take these photos for us. Thanks, **Matt**.

## Which “pro” boat?

I (a 390-lb team ) find stability a problem in cross waves, although we have only had 30 hours or so in the boat. We do not have this problem with any other design.”

**Matt Streib:** “The *Gillies* and the *Corbin* are both much more sensitive to steering with leans, and in wakes they can be a real headache if you and your partner haven’t been in the boat together enough to be on the same page in the playbook at all times. The stability issues that everyone talks about are barely noticeable to me. I grew up racing *ICF* kayaks and cruisers, so with my *ICF* experience (I can stand up in every *ICF* kayak I’ve ever seen), stability just doesn’t matter to me. As far as team sizing for the various boats, I don’t know that I’ve had enough variety of experience to make an independent judgement. I’ve heard the typical thing that the *Gillies* is better suited to smaller teams, but I don’t even remember what they say about the *Corbin*, and I haven’t raced in either boat with anyone much bigger than me (I’m 155 lbs), with the exception of hitting a race in Michigan with **Calvin Hassel** in the *Gillies* a little more than a year ago on the way to *Nationals* in NH. We got beat in the *Gillies* in the tune-up race and **Calvin** told me he doesn’t think the *Gillies* is good for his size in the bow but then we got beat a week later in his *V-1* at *Nationals*, so it’s hard to say definitively that it was the *Gillies* in the first race.”

*Just because Serge is [somewhat fast] in his boat doesn’t mean everybody will be.* - Al Rudquist

**Al Rudquist:** “The whole family of *Corbins* is, I think, somewhere between the *V-1* and the *Gillies*. As I have not paddled either of those (the *Corbin* or the *Gillies*) enough to make any real evaluation, I just have to go by what I have heard. It is obvious that

the *Corbin* is fast, otherwise **Serge** would not paddle it. It is a bit smaller than the *V-1*, and I would bet a bit tippier. One interesting note is that if you laid these boats upside down and looked, there is not a lot of difference. They all have pulled in gunnels in the stern for ease of paddling. The bottoms are relatively the same, except the *Gillies* has a very hard and defined chine [ie a sharp edge transition between the below water part of the boat and the above water part]. It is also more “Veed” in the bow and the stern. The *Corbin* is a bit smaller than the *V-1*, but if they aren’t side by side, it can be hard to tell them apart. On top of the car, you have to look carefully to tell them apart.”



**Jim Normandin** rates the *Corbins* and the *V-1*, even for speed, and places the *Newman Pro* and the *Hassel* behind them but very close to each other.

### *Newman Pro and JD Pro*

**BB:** “There is also a pro boat available from *Grasse River* that I have never paddled. *Savage River* will also have a new pro boat out for 2004.”

For *Grasse River* and *Savage River* boats, I spoke to both designer/manufacturers and, in the case of the *Newman Pro*, a few paddlers who have experienced the design, which does not seem to be well known yet outside the northeast.



Above: The bottom side of a *V-1M* (looking from the stern) and below, the bottom side of a *Hassel* looking from the stern — at **Crozier’s** shop. Of all the pro boats reviewed, the *Gillies* is easiest to distinguish upside down(!) with its hard chine (see small picture from **Matt Streib** to the left).



## Which “pro” boat?

### Newman Pro

I spoke with **John Newman** at Grasse River Boatworks. **John** has been in the canoe-building business since 1971, and the current carbon composite pro boat is the development of a successful design introduced in 1975. The model with its “proprietary core” — the *Newman Pro* (and the *Newman Mixed Pro*) has been available for about six years. It weighs in the 28-30 lb range.

The hull is stiffer than for most carbon boats, says **John**. It is wider for a longer way in the stern, allowing an easier conversion to mixed weight paddlers — the lighter partner being able to go much further back in the stern. Boats built as mixers (ie for the bigger weight differences) have the same hull, just different rib and seat placement.

The 3x27 wide point is as far back as specs allow, giving a sharper entry into the waves and water — full and round by the middle of the boat giving stability. The ideal team weight would be about 330 lbs.

**John** stressed that his boat is very stable, very “seaworthy,” which is good, as he builds it with big wind and waves on open lakes in mind, as well as tight, twisty rivers.

Paddler **Jan Perrin**, who acquired one of **John**’s first *Newman Pros*, concurred. “It’s very good in rough water,” she says, “ideal for the *Adirondack 90*, for example.”

Continues **Jan**, “The boat likes to be run bow down, and that can be a problem with a very heavy bow paddler. It can handle a 50-lb weight difference, just, but not much more. The *V-1* can maybe handle up to 70-lbs difference.”

“It has a great terminal stability, leans very well, and has good

control with gunnels in the water. It’s also very sensitive to trim. It does shallows really well. Climbing wash? It’s OK, comparable with the *V-1*.”

**Carl Normandin** places the *Newman Pro* boat with the *Hassel* as “good all-round entry-level boats, very comfortable, and maneuverable.” They are both easier to turn than the *V* boats.

A note on mounting and climbing over another boat’s wave. Quite a number of the paddlers I spoke with expressed opinions about which boats cut through waves better. **Carl**’s response was that it came down to how you set about the task of attacking the wave, and that he could not really rate one boat as better than another.

Pricing of *Newman Pro* boats is around \$3000 “fully outfitted” - by which **John Newman** means standard seats and adjustable footbrace. Decking, additional bailer, sliding seat assembly etc is extra. This is about the same as **Crozier**’s and **Corbin**’s boats.

### Savage River’s JD Pro

The newest pro boat design on the water is *Savage River*’s *JD Pro*.

*Savage River* also builds *Corbins* and *Barton Bullets*.

I spoke with the designer/builder, **John Diller**.

Direct experience in the water has been gained only with the prototype, a woodstripper that has been tried by a number of paddlers, **Jeff Rankinen** and **Todd Roadman** among them, but there is enough of a buzz (and enough demand for 3x27 boats in general) that **John** has seven boats on order, the first of which will be delivered at the end of March.

Here’s what **John** told me. The boats will weigh in the 26-28 lb range, basic layup. He has emphasized more volume front and back of center, with a sharper V near the center for tracking, and rounder near bow and stern. Generally “the 2 to 3 inch waterline is flatter throughout, but with more V in the center” is how he described it. Widest point is a little behind center. Construction is with a foam core and carbon/spectra shell — just like his C1s.

The prototype performs very well in shallows, **John** says, and while he is confident it will do well in other water conditions, he wanted to wait on more paddler reports. It has not been tested in really rough water yet, for example. I liked his straightforwardness.

It cuts through waves, he says, and leans and turns very well.

Below: *The upper boat is a Newman Pro boat with John Newman Jr in bow and Al Frisina in stern paddling the 1999 Adirondack 90.*

*Photo courtesy Chuck Bolesh.*

“GRB - The Innovator in Race Boat Technology”

PO Box 496  
Canton NY 13617  
315-386-1363

grasseriverboatworks.com



