

Ike Says...**From page 2**

We had all been quite tired after day two, but were well revived when we awoke on day three. We devoured breakfast, broke camp and were relieved to see our kayaks, which had spent the night by themselves, intact. Soon we were back on the river, plowing through more slow water. Our first rapid on the trip was Grand Rapids; in my book it is not so grand, but it did liven up the day some. We made our way past all the homes overlooking the river in the Vinemaple area and soon came to the Highway 26 bridge. We knew that the river was going to get more interesting once we passed under the bridge. The Nehalem River at this point gets steeper and sits in a deep river canyon so we were soon boating class II rapids on a regular basis, water flying off the bows of our boats and into our faces. With the rapids came speed and we were burning up the miles. We pulled out of the river at the bridge just downstream from Humbug Creek and ate our lunch. Dad had pulled over at this spot so we were able to raid the coolers for additional refreshments. The river started slowing down, with more pools, but usually finished with good rapids. We made a stop at Spruce Run Park as the clouds provided a brief shower. The sky was breaking and we were getting glimpses of sun with showers mixed in.

So far, we had all stayed upright on this trip, but our first real challenge would be Little Falls, a short distance downstream from Spruce Run Park. While we would not do the falls section, the rapids on river left border on being Class III, due to the maneuvering required to miss rocks. We all did fine and I was impressed with our group's ability to deal with this more challenging water. Would

we paddle the whole trip without taking a swim? That question was soon answered when we ripped down the Greek Rapids and converging waters tripped up Dennis. I saw him go over and soon he was alongside his kayak, bobbing down the river. Next, he bounced up over a submerged rock, then disappeared in the hole below. As Dennis held onto his boat I was able to give him my stern grab loop and pull him to shore. We could have used one of those sun breaks then, but we were greeted with wind and clouds. Dennis said the water wasn't that cold and soon we

and we all made the gorge in good shape. Day three's paddle was around 27 miles, but we all felt in very good shape. We made our way through the last rapid of the day and brought our kayaks up on the sandy beach. Camp was waiting for us just a short hike away. The skies provided a brief shower while we set up the tent, then stopped and let us eat our dinner in peace. Tonight's menu consisted of garlic bread, salad, beefsteaks and plenty of libations. We were all in high spirits after conquering the day's rapids, but in the back of our minds

did warm-up laps in the put-in pool before we started the rapids waiting below. We had talked about the Salmonberry drop the night before and it was the consensus of the group that we would portage. I had run the Salmonberry drop a few months earlier but was concerned that, at this water level, we would experience carnage in the main chute over the drop. It is said that a wise man knows when to walk. Dennis and Stan decided to walk the following rapid, also, but Troy and I were game. The river takes on a new look in this section; it is a river slot in what is a much wider riv-

stream.

The rapids start letting up from this point on and, eventually, the river turns into tidewater. We had timed our trip so we could ride the tide all the way to Wheeler. We made the swing down the waterfront of the town of Nehalem and were greeted by two bald eagles that were screeching and giving aerial demonstrations in the blue sky. We soon passed under the 101 bridge and could see our final destination ahead. We pulled up next to the dock at Wheeler, to the cheers of our female partners. It had been a long trip and we were all ready for a shower and a soft bed. To prepare for that, we had rented the whole Old Wheeler Hotel. We were all very impressed by the hotel, an old building that has been fixed up very nicely. I would highly recommend the Old Wheeler Hotel; they made the end of our trip very enjoyable.



Weary, but elated, foursome made shore in Wheeler after 100 mile journey down the Nehalem River. From left are Stan Horton, Dale Webb, Troy Horton and Dennis Nelson. Photo by Winston Lazlo, proprietor of the Old Wheeler Hotel.

were headed downstream toward camp, which lay just upstream of the Salmonberry River.

My big concern was the gorge just before our campsite. This section of the river is constricted by high rock bluffs and is very swirly, which can trip up paddlers. We were able to cut the corner on the lead-in rapid

loomed the most challenging section of water on the trip, which lay just downstream of camp!

Day four dawned with a low cloud cover, but hinted of a bright, beautiful day ahead. After our usual breakfast and gear-packing chores, it was time to hit the river. Everybody

er bottom, with higher flows. It has steep chutes and lots of rock, both on the sides and in the stream. Our group experienced several more swims, but was game for more. When we came to Nehalem Falls, it looked very nasty and we all portaged. We ate lunch at the concrete bridge just down-

Izaak Walton League

Nehalem Valley Chapter meets monthly on the third Thursday at 7:00 p.m. Call (503) 429-7193 for location.

WEATHER REPORT

MAY 2003

DATE	TEMPERATURE		PRECIP. AMT.
	HI	LO	
1	66	38	--
2	65	38	--
3	53	42	.12
4	54	37	.18
5	57	31	--
6	58	29	--
7	53	36	.05
8	55	31	--
9	59	36	--
10	56	37	--
11	60	40	--
12	65	35	--
13	76	34	--
14	59	35	T
15	51	34	.37
16	51	33	.11
17	51	31	.12
18	60	31	--
19	71	33	--
20	59	42	.01
21	73	46	--
22	72	45	--
23	85	47	--
24	68	45	.07
25	61	41	T
26	68	41	.06
27	84	41	--
28	71	40	--
29	79	47	.07
30	62	49	T
31	69	46	--

Temperature and precipitation amounts are from the official U.S. weather station at the Vernonia water plant. Measurable precipitation in May totaled 1.16 inches.



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