

Two Cedar City Men Explore River In Kayaks, Relate Tales of Rapids Runs

An unusual and exciting vacation in kayaks was spent recently by two Cedar City men, Antony Stocks and Jim F. Jones. The river jaunt began in Ouray near Vernal and terminated at Hite on the upper Lake Powell.

During the approximately 300 miles in between, they traveled th Green river thru the beautiful and little known canyons of Desolation and Grey and finally past the confluence of the Green and Colorado Rivers through Cataract Canyon.

The two men made the trip in order to see the extraordinary and remote places accessable only by the river because of their hobby of running big rapids.

Their kayaks were 14 and one-half foot round-bottom hulls

which was designed by Lawrence Cooper of Cedar City and a 15 foot V-bottom hull designed by Ron Smith of Salt Lake City.

Although preparations were made well in advance and several practice runs on other rivers had been made, the two men stated that practice runs do not really prepare them for the Cataract just as reading old expedition journals didn't prepare them for the unbelievably awesome scenery which they saw. Their only guide, aside from a Utah road map, was the Frederick Dellenbaugh account of the 1871 Powell expedition. Despite its nearly one hundred years, Dellenbaugh's journal remains the most informative and current document on that area.

In the course of their trip, Jones and Stocks ran every rapid in Desolation and Grey Canyons and all of those in Cataract with "only a few upside down" according to their report. The Cataracte rapids are listed in a class by themselves because of their size and velocity. Grand Canyon, however, has bigger and more violent rapids and hopefully they will be included in the river travels of the two men.

Both Jones and Stocks stated that it was a wild and spectacular trip where watching the terrain was as exhilarating as flying through the hugs waves. Except for the sight of an occasional plane or stallite which they spotted overhead, the character of those free-flowing rivers had not changed much in the nearly hundred years since the Powell expedition.

"Nowhere else on earth can one get so near to the colossal heartbat of elementary nature as one can in the mammoth canyons of the Colorado, especially in the deep and almost vertical canyons of the beautiful Cataract," according to Jones.