

USCA 2009 National Stock Aluminum Canoe Marathon Championships, May 16, 2009

*Des Plaines River, Vernon Hills (Townline Road Canoe Launch) to Wheeling (Dam#1 Woods)*

# USCA 2009 Aluminum Nationals

## **Race Report** — Gareth Stevens, Race Chair

The river and weather gods smiled (overcast to sunny, with temperatures in the 50s and 60s), and we had superb conditions on a beautiful river (good flow, safe water).

Paddlers from ten states and the DC came to make up the 26 teams that competed on the *Des Plaines River* in northeastern Illinois. Ages ranged from 10 (!) to 73. Congratulations to all racers. We had 52 participants - 3 boats short of a record. And the volunteers were AWESOME! See p 4.

**Peter Heed** conducted a wonderful canoe racing clinic, then paddled the talk!

The Awards Banquet started late (words with the restaurant) but was well attended (55), raucous, and a lot of fun. **Peter** gave a great speech as guest speaker - and we headed back to homes & hotel to rest for another great day's racing the following day, in the *Des Plaines River Canoe Marathon*.

This year's *Aluminum Nationals* featured a race within a race: the *Junior Challenge Cup*. Three junior teams competed - I expect junior representation to grow a lot next year, in Pocahontas, AR.

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Men Open Champions,  
Wade Binion (left) and Peter Heed,  
crossing the finish line.



Women Master Champions,  
Teddy Gray (left) and Cindy Meurer,  
crossing the finish line.

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**2009 USCA Aluminum Nationals – Final Results**

Careful examination of time-stamped photographs of all starts and finishes revealed two transcription and two “wrong-stopwatch-read” errors. Consequently, the preliminary results issued after the race have been adjusted for boat #s 620, 629, 670, and 659, to the confident satisfaction of the Chair and timers.

	Boat	<b>2009 USCA Aluminum Nationals Women Open</b>		Recognition
<b>1</b>	#565	Becky Burris (AR)[57] / Ruth Perkins (AR)[20]	2:16:58	<b>Women Open Champions</b>
<b>2</b>	#571	Donna Short (MO)[56] / Donna Moore (MO)[45]	2:26:58	
	Boat	<b>2009 USCA Aluminum Nationals Women Master</b>		
<b>1</b>	#572	Cindy Meurer (TX)[47] / Teddy Gray (TX)[56]	2:11:45	<b>Women Master Champions</b>
<b>2</b>	#573	Pat Bayers (FL)[54] / Jeanine Shaffer (FL)[40]	2:37:55	
	Boat	<b>2009 USCA Aluminum Nationals Men Open</b>		
<b>1</b>	#75	Peter Heed (NH)[59] / Wade Binion (TX)[30]	1:58:57	<b>Men Open Champions</b>
<b>2</b>	#68	Doug Pennington (MO)[51] / Jim Short (MO)[59]	2:00:54	
<b>3</b>	#76	Clifton Rickey (AR)[54] / Casey Rickey (AR)[25]	2:03:39	
<b>4</b>	#66	Aaron Vidusek (IL)[18] / Thomas Sayger (AR)[18]	2:03:54	<i>First under 25 1st Junior Challenge Cup Winner</i>
<b>5</b>	#73	Michael Hickey (IL)[37] / Patrick Hickey (IL)[41]	2:10:03	
<b>6</b>	#74	Wally Werderich (IL)[36] / Pat Faul (IL)[67]	2:12:00	
<b>7</b>	#72	Milan Kratka (IL)[43] / Larry Davis (IL)[35]	2:13:35	
<b>8</b>	#67	Nathan White (AR)[16] / Alex Iacampo (AR)[16]	2:14:09	<i>2nd Junior Challenge</i>
<b>9</b>	#78	Brian Ellison (IL)[48] / Jeff Ellison (IL)[45]	2:14:37	
<b>10</b>	#71	Tom Kron (IL)[55] / Amanda Kron (IL)[27]	2:34:17	<i>1st Mixed</i>
<b>11</b>	#65	Martin Kratka (IL)[12] / Thomas Kratka (IL)[15]	2:40:43	<i>3rd Junior Challenge</i>
<b>12</b>	#77	Roger T Clark (MI)[57] / Austin M Clark (MI)[10]	3:09:13	<i>Austin Clark - Youngest Paddler</i>
	Boat	<b>2009 USCA Aluminum Nationals Men Master</b>		
<b>1</b>	#620	Rocky Caldwell (MO)[51] / Jon Webb (MI)[48]	1:59:25	<b>Men Master Champions</b>
<b>2</b>	#629	Don Walls (AR)[46] / Dale Burris (AR)[53]	1:59:26	
<b>3</b>	#639	Earl Brimeyer (IA)[65] / Ted Cramer (IA)[55]	2:03:02	<i>1st Senior</i>
<b>4</b>	#650	Doug Berg (MN)[66] / Dave Dahl (MN)[60]	2:05:09	<i>1st Veteran 1</i>
<b>5</b>	#609	Ken Gerg (PA)[73] / LaVerne Young (FL)[72]	2:05:22	<i>1st Grand Veteran</i>
<b>6</b>	#649	Terry Pontius (IN)[62] / Skeet Craig (IN)[60]	2:05:49	
<b>7</b>	#660	Norman Staniszewski (MI)[68] / Jim Braig (IA)[65]	2:07:13	<i>1st Veteran 2</i>
<b>8</b>	#670	Tricia Heed (NH)[57] / Frank Gray (TX)[57]	2:13:32	<i>1st Mixed Master</i>
<b>9</b>	#659	Norman Bell (IL)[65] / Chris Brown (DC)[61]	2:14:22	
<b>10</b>	#640	Sixto Linares (IL)[54] / Jim Wilcox (IL)[64]	2:38:28	

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The Women's classes start: left to right, Teddy Gray & Cindy Meurer, Ruth Perkins & Becky Burris, the two Donnas, and Jeanine Shaffer and Pat Bayers.



Women Open Champions, Ruth Perkins, bow, & Becky Burris.

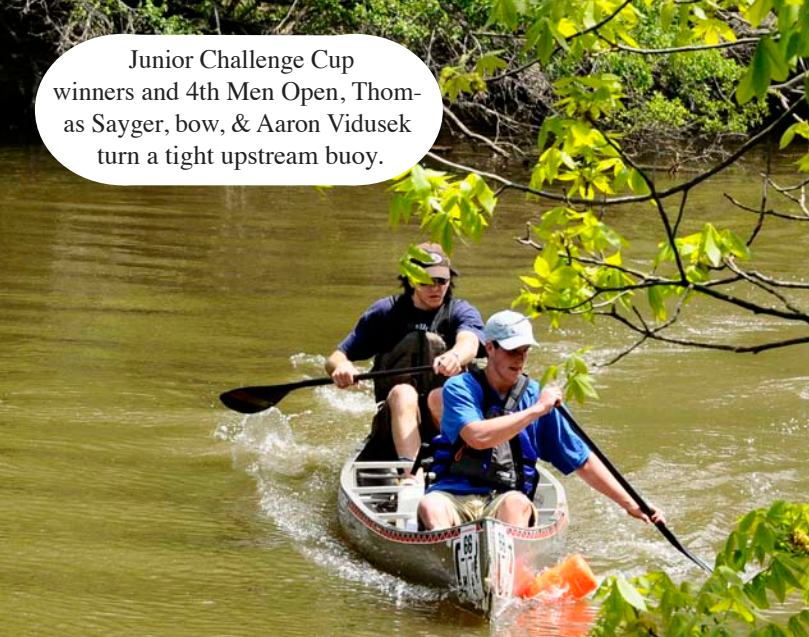


The closest race of all: Rocky Caldwell, bow, & Jon Webb hold on to their lead over Don Walls, bow, & Dale Burris – by *one second* at the finish line.



Grand Veterans LaVerne Young, bow, & Ken Gerg, putting in an impressive time and beating many.

Junior Challenge Cup winners and 4th Men Open, Thomas Sayger, bow, & Aaron Vidusek turn a tight upstream buoy.



Larry Davis, bow, & Milan Kratka with juniors Nathan White & Alex Iacampo, riding wake, giving chase in a tight Men Open race.



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Volunteers in the registration tent, left to right: JB Livengood, Jan Livengood, Natalie Corke – with Wade Binion, Peter Heed, Ted Cramer, and Lois Cramer in the foreground.

Volunteers at the timing table, left to right: Lynn Snarr, Errol Schluter, Barbara Walls, and Kurt Doberstein.

### The People Who Made It Happen

As Race Chair, and on behalf of the *United States Canoe Association* and hosts, the *Des Plaines River Association*, *Lake County Forest Preserves*, and the *Forest Preserve District of Cook County*: my profoundest thanks go to all the volunteers and others who helped this event go so well:

- to the *Des Plaines River Association* race committee, who worked with me all year to prepare for the event on tasks too numerous to mention all: **Jack Snarr**, Chair, and **Al Pilgrim** Vice Chair, **Jeanne Barnas**, **Cliff Beringer** (T-shirt and brochure design), **Seabee Bess**, **Kevin Bradley**, **Andy Cocallas**, **Bill McDermott**, **Mikey Minor**, **Jim Peterson**;
- to *USCA* President **Janet Perry**, who provided safety monitoring with **Mikey Minor** on the day of the race, and took the course down, and who, along with **Veronica** and **Eric Luth**, me, and **Andy Cocallas** checked the course for obstacles and safety after the recent flooding (which had closed the river) and again two days before the race (when we also set up the course).
- to the *Forest Preserve* clean up crews who worked tirelessly to remove trees and other obstacles left by the flood, so that the race could proceed safely, and the *Cook County Forest Preserve* security folks who attended the finish-line area;
- to **Jack Snarr** and **Al Pilgrim** for not only their guidance and leadership throughout the year, but their help with buoys, signs, armbands, results notice board, the cash box, etc, etc.
- the excellent registration team, **Jan** and **JB Livengood**, who also provided the registration tent and other equipment, and took it all to the finish line for the timing team to work from;
- to **John Gepson** who cleared the start area and provided marshaling services for cars and canoes at the start site;
- to **Errol** and **Beth Schluter**, our great starters and timers, ably helped by **Lynn Snarr** and **Barbara Walls** at the finish line;

- to my wonderful niece, **Natalie Corke**, who helped all of the above at the start and finish line areas, and who, with **Kurt Doberstein**, helped me fit five canoes with racing seats in the prior weeks to make more boats available to help boost participation;
  - also to **Kurt Doberstein** for computer help and a wonderful piece of emergency repair to a canoe just prior to the race (and to **Pat Faul** for lending **Kurt** his drill for that repair!);
  - to **Jeanne Barnas** who marshaled cars at the finish line area before the race, and herded paddlers to the shuttle bus to get them back to the start on time;
  - to **Don Walls** for making his extra canoes available – bringing them all the way from Arkansas to help boost participation;
  - to **George Jaros**, our wonderful webmaster, for his great work on the *Aluminum Nationals* web pages at [www.canoemarathon.com](http://www.canoemarathon.com) ;
  - to the management and staff at the **Wyndham Glenview Suites** for their welcome and their generous support of the event;
  - to the photographers of the event, including **Mike Zarnek** – and *most especially* **Peg Cipolla** and **Rich Hodgkins** whose thoroughness and professionalism gave us not only a wonderful record of the 2009 *Aluminum Nationals*, but the tools to review and catch a handful of timing errors with a degree of confidence that could not otherwise have been attained!
  - and to my wife, **Lucy H Moore Stevens**, for her unending proofreading, and her unwavering support for the time she allows me to pour into this sport.
- Not least – my great thanks to the 52 paddlers who came, from near and far – very far, some of them! Your support and enjoyment of the race makes it all worth while. See you in Pochontas, AR, next year.

Thank you, all — *Gareth Stevens*

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