

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Rum River Flag Race 5-17-03**

What a beautiful day for a canoe race! Eighteen of us got together at Pati and Lee Midlo's Country Camping Tent and RV Park in Isanti on the Rum River for the Rum River Flag Race. Miss Isanti was there as well to start and time the race. Those of you that haven't paddle this section of the Rum River are missing out on some beautiful scenery. This seems to be a nice time to hold the race. The last three years the water has been up and the leaves on the trees seem to be well on their way to be fully developed. The weather today was very warm. You know how that goes when you have a race on one of the first warm days and it seems hot but later on in the summer it's just another nice day. It was one of those days. The water depth on the river is mostly deep with only one rock (more about that rock later).

Stephanie Larsen and I went for a run to warm-up as others went to the river to warm-up. My partner for this race was Al DuBois. We haven't been in a canoe together for a couple years. We got on the water for 5 to 10 minutes, checked our trim and headed back to shore for the pre-race meeting. Pati explained the course and thanked the paddlers that participated in the pond relays in canoes with the Girl Scouts last year. There were about two hundred girl scouts that went back and wrote about their experience that week-end which led to a plaque giving recognition to given to Pati and Lee Midlo.

The race started a couple minutes after the meeting. There was some gunnel banging a few yards off the start at least with Ed Arenz /Tom Gardner and Al and I causing us to lose some ground on the leaders. Todd Ellison/Dave Nelson followed by Jason and Stephanie Larsen, Dan Hassel and Steve Hassel, Rick Lorenzen and Kevin Shriver, then Al DuBois and I.

I guess it was about 10 to 15 minutes into the race when the first two teams started moving across the river from one side to the other preventing the third team, Dan and Steve Hassel, from seeing the rock in the middle of the river. Dan and Steve hit the rock causing them to tip over. Steve made it to shore but Dan was moving downstream holding onto his canoe. The water was moving pretty quickly in that area due to some obstructions on either side. Some of the teams back in the pack assisted Dan to safety. Later, Dan said if no one had helped he would probably still be floating downstream. The rest of us decided to stop paddling until things were under control and all the teams were ready to start the race again. I guess we stopped for up to 10 minutes (I had given my Ironman watch to Miss Isanti so she could time the race). We got everyone back in the same order prior to the tip. We started everyone out one by one in the correct order and the race was started again. Shortly, Al and I caught and passed Rick and Kevin. I hadn't been in a canoe with Al for a couple seasons but we seemed to get our rhythm pretty quickly. I don't remember when we passed Dan and Steve. The other two canoes were a ways up ahead. Eventually, we caught Jason and Stephanie and woke their side wake. We crossed the river about 10 minutes from the turn around buoy and hit a little shallower water next to shore and pulled away from Jason and Stephanie. We rounded the buoy and headed for shore where the flags were stuck in the ground. We were told at the race meeting that it was deeper water near the shore but I don't recall hearing about a

large branch sticking just out of the water. You had to make sure you were lined up parallel with the shore otherwise you could have problems with that branch.

Al and I were still moving pretty good but so was Todd Ellison and Dave Nelson who was ahead of us. We weren't picking up or losing any ground on them for what seemed the longest time but toward the end we started to move up on them and cut their lead but it wasn't going to be enough.

The racers put their canoes on their vehicles and talked about the race before heading up to the office/store where the hot dogs and brats were being cooked on the grill.

Several door prizes were given away.

This is a very nice race and I highly recommend anyone to do this race next year in either the Pro or citizen class. This section of the river is nice, the hosts are great, and it's such a beautiful location.

I would like to see more paddlers in the citizen class. Just because it's a race doesn't mean you have to be the fastest paddlers. You can compete against yourself by doing the best you can do, enjoy the scenery, enjoy the weather and meet a nice group of people.

Thank you to Pati and Lee Midlo for their support of canoe racing.

***Chuck Ryan***  
***05-17-03***

**Rum River Flag Race**  
May 17, 2003

**Pro C2**

1	David Nelson (MN) / Todd Ellison (MN)	1:28:36
2	Chuck Ryan (MN) / Al DuBois (MN)	1:28:47
3	Stephanie Larsen (MN) / Jason Larsen (MN)	1:29:13
4	Dan Hassel (MT) / Steve Hassel (MN)	1:29:24
5	Tom Gardner (MN) / Ed Arenz (MN)	1:31:40
6	Rick Lorenzen (MN) / Kevin Shriver (MN)	1:31:55
7	Keith Canny (MN) / Lee Jarpy (MN)	1:33:49
8	John Sullivan (MN) / Kathy Sullivan (MN)	1:35:55
9	Duane Strike (MN) / Norman Strike (MN)	1:40:15