

Oregon River Games

with

Venturing Crew 360
Snohomish, Washington

Over the weekend of May 5-7, 2006, Venturing Crew 360 traveled from Snohomish, Washington, to Estacada, Oregon, to compete against professional guides and outfitters in the 3rd Annual Oregon River Games. Crew 360 specializes in whitewater rafting and kayaking in the summer; snowboarding and skiing in the winter; and also portrays E Battery of the 3rd US Regiment of Artillery in Civil War reenactments. They meet twice a month at the Snohomish United Methodist Church and have at least one weekend activity per month. Additionally, they host other Venturing Crews and Boy Scout troops on whitewater day trips.

The Crew left home late on Friday night and drove their converted Greyhound bus to near the Oregon border, where they stopped and spent the night. In the morning they traveled to Clackamas, Oregon, where they stopped for breakfast, and proceeded to a Forest Service Campground at Carter Bridge and Carter Falls for the competition. They found several hundred other rafters, kayakers, and oarsmen camped out in the area, and a big event center with live music and vendor tents. The Crew's plan to "eat cups of soup to save time" was quickly revised with the pleasant presence of food concessions.

During a trial run of the course, Brenna Anderst fell out of the Crew's paddle raft and had to swim Carter Falls until the boat could catch her and pick her up. As luck would have it, this happened directly in front of the River Games announcer, who congratulated them on their excellent rescue of a swimmer in the middle of the rapids! The remainder of the Crew, stood on the banks and watched the ordeal, having just completed a flawless run of the same course. To date, Brenna has not heard the end of this!

Both of the Crew's teams competed in the Coed Recreational Paddle Team Slalom Race. Each boat had to go through seven sets of gates while negotiating the hydraulics of Carter Falls. The adult's boat went first, and had a nice clean, but unspectacular run, fouling two of the seven gates. Penalty points are accrued for touching gates with any part of the boat or paddle team, including the paddles. Even bigger penalties are assessed for missing a gate altogether. We later learned that the adult's boat finished in second. Since their primary goal was to beat the Venturers, the adults were pretty happy!

The Venturers had a pretty good run in this event, too. The deciding factor in their placement was that they completely missed two gates. It may have also hurt them that they stopped racing short of the finish line. Despite these two oversights, they came in third and just missed beating the adult's boat. The Crew adult leadership is still gloating about their win, but just wait until next year!!

Katie Garrett competed in the Women's Inflatable Kayak Down River event. She ran the course in record time, and missed beating the best men's kayak time by only 12 seconds. Again, just wait until next year! Right after Katie's kayak event, the Crew entered a boat in the High School Cup. This event is open to any high school that fields a 6 person team. Crew 360's team went over a very large boulder, spun around



backwards, and stuck in the hydraulic below the boulder. They executed a perfect back paddle to get out of the hole, but lost precious time backing out and turning to face downriver again. They still placed fourth in the event, and can be proud of doing so well in their first-ever competitive river games. But next year!! Well, never mind...

In the end, Crew 360 brought home four medals. Katie Garrett won first place in the Women's Down River Inflatable Kayak event. A paddle raft team including Brenna Anderst, Daryk Kohler, Brian Becvar, Whitney Walker, Katie Garrett and Kyla Boswell took Third Place in the Coed Recreational Slalom and Fourth Place in the High School Cup. A team of adults from the Venturing Crew won Second Place in the Coed Recreational Slalom.

The Oregon River Games are held annually at Carter Falls on the Clackamas River east of Portland, Oregon. The games are open to professional guides and outfitters to compete with paddle rafts, oar boats, catarafts, inflatable kayaks, hardshell kayaks, and river boards. Their website is www.oregonrivergamesinc.org.

Crew 360 has sent members to Guide School each April for the past 3 years. The professional guide school prepares river runners for employment in the whitewater tourism industry, and includes 10 days of classroom, practical, and on-river training. The Crew also sends its guides to Whitewater Rescue Technician training, a 2.5 day course in river rescue, boat recovery, and swimming rescues. Two of Crew 360's guides have gone on to become river guides after they turned 18 years old, the minimum age for employment in this field. River guiding is a great way to supplement your income while attending college. The work is mostly on weekends and during the summer, is fun, and pays well.

