

Shooting the rapids

Magical Mississauga casts its spell

Last week I took advantage of the flooded waterways of the north Kawathas and headed down the Mississauga river with my lifelong canoe partner, Alana Hammill.

Alana, being a novice paddler, was a little hesitant to try running rapids for the first time, but I ensured her that the magic of the Mississauga would quickly leave her spellbound.

The great thing about this river is that even though it has over 20 portages along only a 16 kilometre stretch, some of these sections can be navigated quite safely. From the put-in to almost halfway downriver, the rapids are next to impossible to run. But as you slowly make your way further down, the sections of whitewater begin to get easier and easier. The magical part about all this is that while you are navigating more and more rapids you begin to think it's your skill you've gained along the way that has enabled you to conquer the river, not the ease of the runs themselves.

When Alana and I reached the halfway point on route we came across a bend in the river where you could hear the roar of rushing rapids just around the corner.

We put in along the bank so I could check out the portage and after finding the trail to be blazed through a bug-infested swamp, I opted to check to see if the rapids were runnable.

From my vantage point on a rocky ledge I could look down on to the rapid. The river squeezed itself through a narrow, boulder-strewn canyon, creating a series of deep water haystack waves halfway through the run. But the boulder garden at the base of the run was swallowed up by high water, so the only trouble spot was to make sure to balance the canoe through the haystacks.

NATURE'S WAY

Kevin Callan



I quickly returned to where Alana was holding the canoe against the bank and asked her if she wanted to run it. "Sure, let's go for it," she exclaimed. So I tied down the packs, tucked my legs under my seat, zipped up my life-jacket and then pushed away from shore, allowing the current to take us round the bend.

The moment I saw the sudden drop and swirling water a lump formed deep in my throat. The rapids sure seemed a lot safer from the rocky ledge alongside the portage than at the brink of the tumbling river.

"Back paddle, back paddle," I screamed out to Alana. It was too late, the current dragged us into the centre of the run and pushed our flimsy fibreglass vessel straight into the rolling haystacks.

As the canoe bounced up and down the standing waves like a roller coaster I began to panic. Luckily, with Alana still back paddling, I was able to shift the canoe away from the worst of it with a series of prys and sculling draws. At the base of the rapids a small eddie worked in our favor as I swung out of the rushing current to the safety of shore.

What came next just proves that ignorance is bliss. I knew if we had capsized in the midst of all that foam and froth I wouldn't be writing this down right now, but Alana just thought it was all part of the ride. Before I was able to catch my breath and apologize for my stupidity for trying to run the rapids in the

first place, she gave out a loud "Yaaa-Hooo!" and then asked, "Can we do it again?"

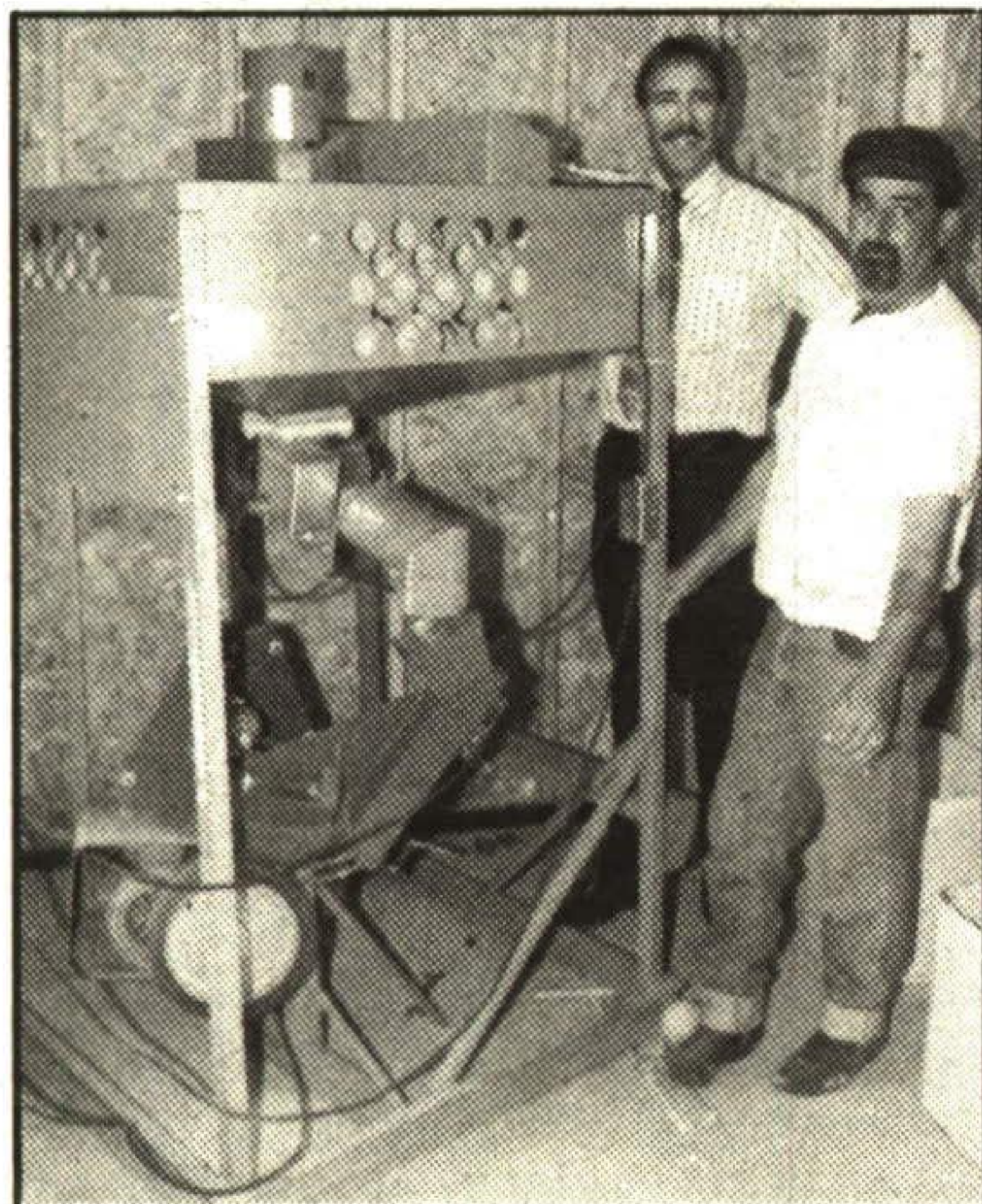
There was nothing I could do for her now. The magical Mississauga had cast its spell and Alana was doomed for ever to be a whitewater fanatic.



Play ball!

After months of construction, the Prospect Park batting cages are officially open as Mayor Russ Miller was on hand recently to cut the ribbon to the cages. The facility is coin operated, costing \$1 for 15 balls and will feature different speed settings for specific nights of the week. Joining in cutting the ribbon were Tom Shepard, Director of Parks and Recreation, Acton Minor Baseball president Cornelia Turpin, Mayor Russ Miller, Dave Nakeff of Acton Lions Club and Bryan Shynal, Superintendent of Parks for the Town of Halton Hills.

TED BROWN Halton Hills Weekend



Ball executive says 'thanks'

Dear Editor:

Acton Minor Softball Association would like to thank all the dedicated volunteers for the hours of help in making a dream a reality to improve the batting skills for the youth of Acton.

We would like to thank the Acton Lions Club for their \$7,500 donation in September of '91 towards the batting cage which cost Acton Minor Softball to date approximately \$35,000 of which most of this money was raised by selling tickets and working bingo etc.

Thanks goes out to Glen Pemberton of Skyking for the use of a scissor lift, Acton Lions Club and friends for the construction of the building, James Dick for donating concrete, Tim Price for the numerous hours of help and many thanks to all the dedicated parents that helped us run bingos to help finance this project.

We hope that after all our long hours and hard work that the youth of Acton will appreciate this facility and not try to destroy it after all it was constructed for your use.

Cornelia Turpin
Acton Minor Softball

Plenty of flag football fun

Despite cold temperatures the fifth (and final) charity football games got underway at Neilson's Field last Saturday.

Organizers would like to thank all the sponsors for their generous donations, especially JV Clothing for the T-shirts, Pete Hayes and Brian Farrell for being chefs, Clint Peacock for refreeing more games than he was intending to do and all the participants from CHCH TV, Halton Police and the Men's and Ladies' Flag Football Leagues.

Thank you also go to the Oakville Shrine Club who have given great support in the last five years. Proceeds this year exceed \$1,500 which will be donated to Shriners Hospital For Crippled Children in memory of Bob Copland.



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Contact: Darin Coones

Fax/Phone: 519-853-4675

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Extended Day Care Available
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Sunday June 28: 2 to 4 p.m.

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