

Memories From Arkansas

The Minnesota boy s team was extremely excited for some real competition at the Arkansas Canoe Race this past summer. Throughout the first few legs of the race, the Russellville boys team and the Minnesota boys team were neck and neck in overall time. However, the Minnesota team fell far behind when they gouged a hole in the bottom of their boat and had to paddle/bail their boat for the last few miles on the second day of the race. When it came to the last day of the race, the Minnesota team wanted to finish strong. Despite knowing they couldn t win the overall race, they were determined to work their hardest till the end. As a fellow paddler, my partner and I were about 1/3 of the way through the last leg when we heard the boys teams coming up behind us. Since the Russellville team was favored to win, it was a surprise to us when we saw the Minnesota team speeding past us.

They were breathing hard and extremely focused. They had passed the Russellville team by finding some deeper water. They paddled 7 strokes each side and were sprinting the entire 7 mile course. When my partner and I crossed the finish line, we found out one of the Minnesota boys was in the ambulance. They had sprinted 7 miles in extreme heat and when they crossed the finish line in 1st place, they jumped into the ice cold water. After a few moments in the cold water one of the boys went into a minor state of shock. Both the Minnesota and Russellville team waited outside the ambulance for about half and hour. Despite all the competition, the Russellville team was extremely sportsmanlike and when he recovered everyone was there to greet him. For the Minnesota team, the best memories from Arkansas include not only paddling the race against some great competition but also spending time with the amazing people we met and competed with during the race.