

## 52nd Texas Water Safari gets underway as 101 teams try to make it 260 miles



Daily Record Photo by Tyler Mayforth

Bobby Smart and RD Kissling (Boat No. 620) navigate Cottonseed Rapids during the first day of the 2014 Texas Water Safari. Smart and Kissling are racing in Tandem Unlimited.

## Next stop: Seadrift

Boat No. 150 has lead on first day of "The World's Toughest Canoe Race"

### From Staff Reports

As nightfall on the first day of the 2014 Texas Water Safari arrived, the race favorites found themselves in the lead.

Boat No. 150, which consists of Andrew Condie, Gaston Jones, Wade Binion, Jeff Glock, Ian Rolls and Clay Wyatt, sits first overall after Day 1.

With several Safari veterans, including six of the Top 8 finishers in last year's race, Boat No. 150 passed Palmetto State Park at 6 p.m. with a lead of about three miles.

Second place at press time belonged to Boat No. 807, nicknamed "The Cowboys"



Daily Record Photo by Tyler Mayforth

Members of Boat No. 150 check out what's ahead as they near Cottonseed Rapids.

See **Safari**, Page 13A

## Team captains make TWS go

By **JOE VOZZELLI**  
Daily Record Sports

No matter what the goal of their boat is or the experience level of the competitors inside that vessel, there's little doubt about the importance of team captains during the Texas Water Safari.

Many of these captains are Water Safari veterans, who know the San Marcos and Guadalupe rivers well. These captains have gone through the pain, the sleep deprivation and eventually the sheer sense of accom-

plishment that comes after touching the Seadrift Seawall before the 100-hour deadline.

Even so, a much smaller contingent of captains have never raced in the Water Safari before and must learn on the fly as they guide their boats toward the finish line.

While captains aren't inside the boat, they remain busy throughout the race by supplying their teams with ice, water and some food at each of the official check-

See **Captains**, Page 13A



Daily Record Photo by Tyler Mayforth

Team captains Stephen Rask and Rachel Rask hand Jonathan Yonley supplies after the race's first checkpoint.



Michael Cleveland goes over a checklist with an official while his mom Kathe and daughter Veronica watch (Photo by Tyler Mayforth).



Kirk Scheidt poses with his dad Chuck after checking in last Friday before they took on the Water Safari (Photo by Tyler Mayforth).

## Family matters in the Safari

By **TYLER MAYFORTH**  
Sports Editor

Every year at 9 a.m. on the second Saturday of June, hundreds of paddlers churn up the calm, aquifer-fed water of Spring Lake as they embark on a 260-mile trek from San Marcos to Seadrift.

When the Texas Water Safari officially gets under way is of little significance to anybody but the competitors, fans and organizers. Yet when the third Sunday of that month falls on the second day of the event — like it does this year — the placement of the start date means a little bit more to those involved.

Father's Day, like Mother's Day, is a time for family members to come together and celebrate those who made life possible. It's a Catch-22, because those who are being praised are often selfless

and just want the best for their children.

Young or old, time with family is invaluable — even if it's spent on two rivers and one bay for up to 100 hours in near 100-degree temperatures.

### Deriving Down The River

Libby Geisinger, a recent graduate of Bowie High School in Austin, doesn't see her dad too much.

Joe Geisinger owns an industrial automation company in Dripping Springs and his business sends him all over Texas and the United States.

So when an opportunity came up to spend an extended period of time together while doing something they both love, they weren't going to let that chance pass.

See **Family**, Page 13A

### What They Said

"It means a million times more to me to do it with him (pointing at his son Kirk) than to get in some other boat with some superstars and win." ~ Chuck Scheidt, Tandem Boat No. 71

"I don't think of it as 260 miles. I think of it as 'From here' to the next time I can see the family." ~ Michael Cleveland, solo paddler in Boat No. 3003

### COLLEGE FOOTBALL...



File Photo

Illinois head coach Tim Beckman hasn't had much success in conference play, having only won one game in two years.

## Wanting to get their fight back

### Illinois is tired of being Big 10's forgotten team

By **JOE VOZZELLI**  
Daily Record Sports

Texas State and Illinois find themselves in similar situations entering the 2014 season.

In their third season as members of the Football Bowl Subdivision, the Bobcats want to take the next step as a program by playing in a bowl game. The Fighting Illini, who are in their third season under head coach Tim Beckman, look to gel and become a contender in the Big 10

Conference's Leaders Division.

So when Texas State and Illinois meet for the first time on Sept. 20 at Memorial Stadium in Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, both teams could use a victory to send themselves on the right path toward reaching those goals.

"A lot like Texas State, we've had to rebuild — and had to start from brand new," Beckman said in a

See **Illinois**, Page 11A

### Countdown To Kickoff

From now until Aug. 17, the Daily Record will get you ready for the 2014 Texas State football year by previewing each opponent on the schedule. Check back each Sunday for a new opponent. This week we'll be looking at the Illinois Fighting Illini.

Run Date	Opponent	Game Date
June 4	Arkansas-Pine Bluff	Aug. 30
June 8	Naval Academy	Sept. 13
June 15	Illinois	Sept. 20
June 22	Tulsa	Sept. 27
June 29	Idaho	Oct. 4
July 6	Louisiana-Lafayette	Oct. 14
July 13	Louisiana-Monroe	Oct. 25
July 20	New Mexico State	Nov. 1
July 27	Georgia Southern	Nov. 8
Aug. 3	South Alabama	Nov. 15
Aug. 10	Arkansas State	Nov. 20
Aug. 17	Georgia State	Nov. 29

The Daily Record's  
**TWO MINUTE DRILL**

### LOCAL SCHEDULE...

Sunday, June 15

Happy Father's Day!

#### Endurance Paddling

• This is the second day of the Texas Water Safari. Teams have 100 hours — or until Wednesday at 1 p.m. — to reach Seadrift.

Monday, June 16

#### Endurance Paddling

• This is the third day of the Texas Water Safari. Teams have 100 hours — or until Wednesday at 1 p.m. — to reach Seadrift.

Tuesday, June 17

#### Endurance Paddling

• This is the fourth day of the Texas Water Safari. Teams have 100 hours — or until Wednesday at 1 p.m. — to reach Seadrift.

Wednesday, June 18

#### Endurance Paddling

• This is the fifth day of the Texas Water Safari. Teams have 100 hours — or until this afternoon at 1 p.m. — to reach Seadrift.

### BRIEFLY...

#### Coach Z Basketball Camp

Does your child want to polish up their jump shot? Or just learn the game of basketball?

Well Coach Z's camp might be the perfect choice. Texas State women's basketball coach will hold four different summer camps.

The junior camp for ages Pre-K to second grade will be held from June 22-27 and will focus on beginner skill development, learning and most importantly — fun! The cost of the camp is \$125.

The skills camp for kids from third through 12th grades will take place from June 9 to 12. During the camp, kids will work on skill development by position and participate in competitive drills. The cost of the camp is \$200.

Zenarae Antoine will also have individual training sessions and an elite camp. The individualized sessions will be \$25 per hour and are aimed at kids in sixth through 12th grades. They will take place June 23-27. Antoine and her staff will work on individual

training by position — guard work, post work, ball handling and shooting. Limited space is available for this camp.

The elite camp, which is aimed for high school children, will be held June 14-15 and is broken down into an overnight (\$210) and commuter (\$185) sessions with advanced-skill development and competition.

For complete registration, you can visit [txstatebobcats.com](http://txstatebobcats.com) or contact camp organizer Abigail Whitting ([abi.whitting@txstate.edu](mailto:abi.whitting@txstate.edu) or 512-245-6019).

#### The 2014 Danny Kaspar Basketball Camps

Does your child want to polish up their jump shot? Or just learn the game of basketball?

See **Briefs**, Page 11A

**RUNNING AND FITNESS...**

# Running keeps the true meaning of competition alive and well

Running is sort of a unique sport in today's world of competition.

Next Saturday the Camp Ben McCullough 5K run will be held out at Dripping Springs.

As with most races of this nature, awards will be to the overall male and female winners and to the master's male and female winners for those runners that are over 40 years of age. Even in the age groups runners have three chances to come home with an award.

In each age group there are awards for first, second and third place.

This is what makes running races so unique. How many sports do you find awards for third place?

Many years ago, before the Super Bowl game became the championship symbol between NFL football teams, there was a game for third place.

Vince Lombardi, the namesake of the NFL Super Bowl trophy, is often quoted as saying, "Winning isn't everything, it is the only thing." Coaches used this motivational quote on teams for years.

The point that is missing from this is that that quote was part of a longer speech and in that speech he mentioned, "There is a bowl game for losers, played by losers."

He was talking about a game played after the championship game between the two teams that lost to the winners and they played another game for third place.

In basketball tournaments there was a consolation bracket played by the losers for third and fourth place with the winner getting third.

This week the NCAA Baseball Championship started in Omaha, Nebraska. It is a double-elimination tournament where each team has to lose twice to be out of the tournament. It comes down to the final two teams playing a best-of-three series to see who is champion.

This is true for the women's softball championship as well.

But what of the two teams that got beat by the two teams in the championship game? Do they play each other for third place?

The Spurs and Heat are playing for the NBA Championship. What happened to the Thunder and Pacers teams that got beat? Did they play for third place in the cham-



**MOE JOHNSON**

Running with Moe

pionship series?

Today, it's "win or go home."

That is what makes entering a local race so interesting. Even a slow runner has a chance to win an award.

It gets better if the age groups are in five years increments instead of

the usual ten years age categories. Depending on the number of runners in each age category a runner has good odds of going home with an award.

It gets even better, because the overall winners are eliminated from the age group awards. One more advantage is that awards are divided between men and women for each age group all the way down to third place.

For most people, except the very true diehard person of the sport following championship competitions, after a few years have a hard time remembering who lost or took second place. It is difficult to imagine how many people would remember teams that played for third place, and who was the team that took fourth?

Runners in that third-place finish will

have that medal hanging on the wall or have a trophy setting on a shelf in their den to remember the race. For them to remember who took first or second in their age group is similar to the followers of a sport trying to remember the team the champions beat after a few years.

Fame is fleeting. Try asking the average person, "Who lost in the Super Bowl in 2005?" To the person that remembers the winner, try asking them what team was it that the winners beat to get into the championship game.

Running is a good sport because it still keeps third place in the mix. Some of the older athletes will remember playing in those consolation brackets for third place and feeling good about being third.

Teams today only play for one place — first. After that it gets lost in the pages of history for a few that want to look it up. Let's get a cheer for running and third place in the awards.

*Dr. Maurice Johnson is a former professor at Texas State University in the Department of Health and Exercise Science. His column appears every Sunday in the Daily Record.*

**NBA...**

## Spurs look to wrap up NBA title in Game 5 Illinois...

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Early Sunday evening, LeBron James will gather his Miami Heat teammates around him and offer a few final words of wisdom before they try to extend their reign as NBA champions.

James never rehearses the speech, but already knows what the gist will be.

"It would be in the range of, 'Why not us?'" James said Saturday. "Why not us? History is broken all the time. And obviously we know we're against the greatest of odds."

Against the greatest of odds, against maybe the

greatest of San Antonio Spurs teams, too. Both are very much against the Heat now, and both are winning. The Spurs are a victory away from their fifth championship, and will go for it at home Sunday night in Game 5 of the NBA Finals.

The Spurs are the 32nd team in NBA history to hold a 3-1 lead in the finals. All 31 of the previous teams have won the title.

"History is made to be broken, and why not me be a part of it? That would be great," James said. "That would be a great story line, right? But we'll see what happens. I've got to live in the moment,

though, before we even get to that point."

The Spurs have the same way of thinking. They took command of the finals in stunning fashion by not just winning in Miami, but winning twice — and winning big. San Antonio won Games 3 and 4 on the road by a combined 40 points, never trailing by more than two in either contest and running out to 25-point leads in each.

"We've got to act like we're coming into it like it's a road game," Spurs guard Danny Green said. "It's a mentality thing."

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phone interview. "This program has really progressed since two years ago. We are moving forward. The players are excited about where we have come from and what the future holds."

The Bobcats are also trying to learn from the past as they move into the 2014 season.

"I hope it left an empty feeling in their stomach after not being able to get that seventh win and make a bowl game," Texas State head coach Dennis Franchione said after the Maroon and Gold Spring Game back in April. "It did for me. You hope that converts to hunger and a feeling of 'I want to get it done this year.'"

While Bobcat fans know what went wrong last season for their team, they probably don't know what ailed the Illini in 2013.

Illinois finished last season with a 4-8 overall record and a 1-7 mark in the Big 10 — but those underwhelming results were

mostly because of a porous defense. The Illini surrendered 35.4 points per tilt, which sat 10th in the conference.

"We were young at the corner position," Beckman said of a pass defense that ranked ninth among conference teams. "We couldn't add complex schemes coverage wise. A lot of those guys were just out of prom. We had to keep it simple."

VAngelo Bentley and Eaton Spence (both sophomores in 2013) played a majority of the snaps at corner last season with mixed results. The cornerback tandem could be two key players if Illinois' defense is going to improve in 2014.

Beckman knows his defensive line must also be more of a factor next season. The third-year coach hopes a better pass rush will take some pressure off his secondary. Illinois only had 15 sacks last season, which ranked second to last in the Big 10.

For all the questions Illinois has on defense, its

biggest unknown might be at quarterback, which is a far cry from 2013 when Nathan Scheelhaase was the star of a passing attack that experienced a jump in production under first-year offensive coordinator Bill Cubit.

The Illini improved from the Big 10's 11th ranked passing offense in 2012 (168.8 yards per game) to the conference's second-ranked passing team in 2013 (287.7 yards per game).

Illinois won't have Scheelhaase in 2014 as the quarterback exhausted his eligibility after his senior season. The Davenport, Iowa native leaves his former school as its most prolific passer (10,643 yards).

"The thing that you miss from Nathan Scheelhaase is leadership," Beckman said. "But we've got Wes Lunt, who has played Big 12 football and started, Reilly O'Toole, who has started in the Big 10, and Aaron Bailey, who started for us as a true freshman.

"We've got great competition and I'm really excited to see how the summer pans out."

So who has the inside track for the job?

Beckman remained non-committal but look for Lunt to emerge at the top of the heap. The Oklahoma State transfer started the team's home opener back in 2012 as a true freshman and threw for 1,108 yards and six touchdowns in six games. Lunt injured his knee in the Cowboys' third tilt of 2012 versus UL Lafayette and eventually lost his job to Clint Chelf.

After the 2012 season, Lunt decided to transfer and sat out last year due to NCAA transfer rules.

Regardless of whether it's Lunt or someone else at quarterback, don't expect the Illini to change their offensive philosophy.

"You are going to see the same type of Illinois football," Beckman said. "We're going to be a fast-paced offense and one that gives you numerous looks."

## Briefs...

**(From Page 10A)**

Well Danny Kaspar's camps is the perfect choice.

The first session, which runs from June 29- July 2, is for grades 4 through 12. The second session, which runs from August 4-7, is for grades 2 through 9.

Prices for the first session range from \$415 for the resident camp to \$130 for either the morning or afternoon camps. Prices for the second session range from \$245 (day camp) to \$130 (morning camp).

The basketball camps will stress fundamentals with a heavy emphasis on the skills of shooting, dribbling, passing, individual moves and movement without the ball.

The camp will adhere to a 10-1 camper-coach ratio, which provides for a safe and well-supervised learning environment that will allow for more coach-camper interaction than seen in most camps. Our 2.5-1 camper-ball ratio will allow for more hands-on opportunities for each camper to learn the fundamentals of basketball.

For more information on the camp, call 512-245-3832 or 512-392-4567. You could also e-mail Kaspar at dkaspar@txstate.edu or visit the camp website (www.danrykasparbasketballcamps.com).

**Ty Harrington Baseball Camp**

Does your child love the game of baseball and the Texas State Bobcats?

Well Ty Harrington's baseball camp is probably the perfect choice.

Texas State's head baseball coach will host five different summer camps.

There will be three separate All-Star Youth Camps. These camps will focus on helping kids understand more about the game. Campers will work on hitting, bunting, base running, infield and outfield mechanics and skill, catching: block/framing, throwing and pitching mechanics. The camp costs \$210.

Texas State will also host two high school evaluation camps. The

one-day camp costs \$185.

This camp will cover pitching, hitting and defense. All campers will take live batting practice on the field and all pitchers will throw an instructional bullpen that will lead to throwing to live hitters on the game field.

For questions regarding Ty Harrington Baseball Camp at Texas State University, contact Daniel Fernandez at 512.245.7682 or e-mail him df1169@txstate.edu.

**2014 Coach Fran Football Camps**

Are you ready for some football? Texas State will host two mini camps, a star of Texas QB/WR/TE Academy and a Bobcat Kicking & Snapping Camp.

The mini camps are designed for grades 9 through 12. Online registration is \$40 per person, while walk-ups are \$45 per person. The first camp takes place June 13 with the second camp on July 18.

The mini camp will focus on position specific drills. Each athlete will be evaluated by the Bobcat coaching staff during this camp and will receive skill instruction related to camper's position. This is a non-contact, no pad, day only camp.

The star of Texas QB/WR/TE academy runs from June 14-15 and is designed for grades 7 through 12. The price of the camp is \$200 per person.

The academy will focus on position-specific drills. Each athlete will receive skill instruction related to camper's position. Due to individual instruction, this camp will be limited in size. We encourage you to pre-register. This is a non-contact, no pad, day only camp.

The kicking and snapping camp will take place July 23. Online registration is \$125 per person, while walk ups are \$130 per person. The final day to register online is July 22.

One on One Kicking w/ mike McCabe Services will direct instruction for this camp. Camp is designed to help kickers, punters and snappers improve their techniques and mental preparation.

For more information, please call Rueben Vaughn at 512-245-2587 or send an e-mail rv15@txstate.edu

**Kat Conner Soccer Academy**

Have a soccer-lover in the family?

Well here's your chance to give them a fun summer.

Kat Conner will host three different soccer camps for kids from ages 5 through 18.

The full-day and half-day camps will take place from Monday, June 16 through Thursday, June 19. Cost of the full-day camp is \$235 per person, while the half-day camp is \$110 per child.

Conner will also hold a residential camp from Sunday, July 20 through Wednesday, July 23. This camp is \$460 per child.

The camp is designed to enhance kids' capabilities in the four components of soccer: technical, tactical, physical, and psychological.

Camp sessions will be divided by age and skill level and will be under the guidance of the Texas State's soccer staff. The full day will be more demanding by working on tactics and psychological aspects of the game.

For questions regarding the Kat Conner Soccer Academy, contact Link Scoggins at 512.245.1443 or ss95@txstate.edu.

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YOUTH SPORTS...

# Holding court inside The Snake Pit



Courtesy Photos

**Anybody Who Blinks Runs Laps:** Last week the San Marcos Lady Rattler volleyball team held its annual youth camp inside The Snake Pit. More than 100 local athletes showed up to compete in the camp put on by head coach Michelle Moreno. At left, the older group of campers poses for a picture. At right, the younger group poses for a photo.

# Local players camp with the 'Cats



Daily Record Photos by Gerald Castillo

San Marcos pitcher Victoria Vasquez takes her swings as other players watch during last weekend's softball camp. Vasquez will be a junior this year and led the Lady Rattlers to the Region IV-5A Finals in the circle and at the plate.



**From Staff Reports**

Ricci Woodard's softball camps continue to be a huge success as area players flock to the Bobcat Softball Complex for valuable instruction.

At top: Texas State assis-

tant coach Peejay Brun speaks with a group of players during a break.

At bottom: Cameron Hernandez, Heavenny Garcia, Eryka Escobar and Ysa Gonzales pose for a picture. They all will be playing at San Marcos High.



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Daily Record Photo by Tyler Mayforth

Spectators at the Water Safari's first checkpoint (Staples Dam) watch Michael Cade as he works his way around the obstacle. Cade is paddling in the Men's Solo Division and at press time, was 12th overall and fourth in his class. Jeff Kellington and Lorena Pesantes are Cade's team captains and furnished him with supplies when he got down the steps.



Daily Record Photo by Gerald Castillo

Amy Boyd, who is competing as one of only seven paddlers in Women's Solo Division, is looking to finish her second Water Safari (first as a solo entrant). As of press time, Boyd was in second place of her division and 31st overall.

## Captains...

(From Page 10A)

points. For many of the racers in the 52nd Water Safari, these captains are also their main support system.

Just ask women's solo competitor Amy Boyd.

"They're my everything," Boyd said. "They keep you grounded. It seems like at times they know more about your well being than you do. They are your brain."

As has been the case with numerous racers before her, Boyd made it all the way to the San Antonio Bay only to drop out within a few miles of the finish line during last year's Water Safari. Often, the Bay — with its choppy water and wind — serves as a cruel ending to what is billed as "The World's Toughest Canoe Race."

Ginsie Stauss, who has completed 11 of the 12 Water Safaris she entered (six times as a solo racer), will join Jeanette Burriss as a team captain for Boyd. Stauss knows better than anyone else what it takes to reach the finish — and also what it means to come up just short.

"I know it's so important for her," Stauss said while fighting back tears. "It would just mean everything. It's a big deal when you don't finish. There are people who don't believe she has it in her — and we do. I don't know how to put it into words what it would mean to see her finish."

So if Boyd does finish this year's Water Safari, look for there to be quite the celebration in Seadrift as she would only be the 18th woman in the event's history to finish the race as a solo paddler.

To make that happen, however, Burriss realizes her role doesn't just entail providing supplies.

"I can help her get past the mental part of the race," Burriss said. "I know she's physically ready, but the mental part is much harder. Since I've been out there and have raced before, I know not to feel sorry for her. I can't



Daily Record Photo by Tyler Mayforth

Team captains Ginsie Stauss (left) and Jeanette Burriss (right) pose with Amy Boyd during last Friday's Safari Check-In. Their team name is "Liquid Courage."

treat her like my mother, my sister or my daughter. I've got to push her at times."

Boyd, Burriss and Stauss might have plenty of Water Safaris under their belt, but on the opposite side of the spectrum sits the novice tandem of Chris Andry and Conor Harrison along with team captains Bobby Pross and Marcus Morriss.

They bring a combined zero years of experience to this year's Water Safari.

"We are coming down the river blind," Andry said. "We don't know what we are going to feel like. So, we will be relying on them (the captains) to tell us what to eat, what to drink and what's in front of us."

To the trio of Water Safari novices, there's nothing like going through the 260-mile marathon race for the first time together.

"It's a learning experience for everyone," Pross said.

Pross remembers a conversation Andry and Harrison had over a few beers in Morriss' backyard about a year ago.

"They (Andry and Harrison) told us what they wanted to do and asked us if we'd help out," Pross said. "We were like, 'Yeah, we'd love to be a part of that. It will be a great adventure.'"

Also in his first race as team captain is Willy Martin, who will be responsible for assisting an experienced unlimited boat with its sights on winning the Water Safari. "The Cowboys" (Boat No. 807) have two racers (John Dupont and John Mark Harras) with at least 25 Water Safari finishes.

"I'm a little nervous," Martin said during last Friday's check-in, which happens the day before the Water Safari begins. "It's a big deal for me to have this responsibility. Sure, I'd like to be racing — but it's still exciting to be a part of this."

## Family...

(From Page 10A)

Last year the Geisingers competed in their first Water Safari as a team. They touched the Seadrift Seawall in 71 hours, 41 minutes and placed 28th overall, third in their class (USCA C2).

"It was a lot of fun," Libby Geisinger said. "We really grew closer spending time together during the race and getting ready for it."

This year, the Geisingers trained harder and "planned for the unplanned" as they hope to improve both their time and placing after a successful run in last month's Texas River Marathon.

"We had to work our way through some issues last year, but that made it fun," said Joe Geisinger, who is looking for his third finish.

"When we finally got to the bay, she dug in deeper than I thought anybody could and forced me to switch sides. I was so proud of her."

With Libby off to college this fall at Texas State, Joe couldn't think of a better way to spend his hard-earned vacation.

"This is a great gift," Joe Geisinger said. "This is something I'll remember for the rest of my life, because you don't get many opportunities to go out there and do things with your kids as they get older. You need to make the most of those moments when you can."

### No One-Man Show

As his brother's team captain last year, Michael Cleveland got a first-hand look at "The World's Toughest Canoe Race."

Cleveland decided to get closer to the action for the 52nd running of the Water Safari and brought along his daughter Victoria and mother Kathie.

"I've really been looking forward to it," Michael Cleveland said. "Originally my brother Todd and I were going to do it tandem, but it takes a lot more practice to do tandem since you have to practice with the person. With me in New Mexico and him in Mansfield, Texas, I decided to go solo."

Cleveland prepared for the Water Safari by competing in the Winter 100 on the Colorado River and last month's River Marathon. After dropping out of the first, Cleveland brought Victoria along to captain the second, which he completed in 6:06.

"I was nervous, but watching him made it a lot better and really, really fun," Victoria Cleveland said. "I want to make sure he finishes this race." Michael Cleveland knows it's going to be tough, but he thought of a perfect way to mentally break up the longest paddle of his life.

"I don't think of it as 260 miles," Michael Cleveland said. "I think of it as 'From here' to the next time I can see the family."

### Two Families Have One Goal

What did Tim Sukow, a 26-year veteran of the Marine Corps, teach his son Chris about toughness?

"Everything," Chris Sukow said. "He's my hero. It's that simple."

Tenacity, after all, is 99 percent of the Water Safari. Paddling and good fortune packs the rest of that equation.

Needless to say, the team of Chris Champion, Chris Sukow and Joel Truitt must

feel pretty good about their chances to get to Seadrift with Tim Sukow and AJ Champion, the other Chris' dad, serving as team captains.

"This is special for us," AJ Champion said. "This whole experience has been really enjoyable so far."

Should Boat No. 8 successfully navigate the 260-mile course, it will be each of the paddlers' second consecutive finish. All three completed last year's race with different teammates — but it was equally as emotional.

"When I saw him come across the bay last year, I was grinning ear to ear and had tears in my eyes," said Tim Sukow, who lives in North Carolina. "I probably will this year again."

Chris Sukow, a Texas resident, knows how taxing the race is on both parties.

"It's almost harder on them since we don't see each other a lot along the course so they can't check up on us," Chris Sukow said. "It's like we finish together, even though we will be separated for 80 hours."

### Bragging Rights on the Line

Back in 1995, Dave Brown and Chuck Scheidt made a pact.

Brown and Scheidt just finished the Water Safari in 88:23 and pledged that when their sons were old enough, they'd compete in the race as tandems.

Brown and his son Cody took the first crack at it last year. The Browns finished in 96 hours.

"Dave told me he was definitely trying to beat our time," Chuck Scheidt said. "They were on pace, but they got lost in the bay and I could tell that really bummed him out."

Now it's the Scheidts' turn and the whole family is involved. Chuck Scheidt and his 25-year-old son Kirk, better known as "The Chupacabras," will paddle Boat No. 71 with Kirk's wife Sarah as one team captain (Dave Brown is the other) while Chuck's wife and younger son will provide support.

"I told my wife last night that out of all the gifts over the years, this is the best since I'm getting to spend Father's Day this year with my entire family for the entire day," Chuck Scheidt said. "You can't possibly beat this."

After hearing his father talk about the Water Safari for the previous 14 years, Kirk Scheidt couldn't wait to participate in his first four years ago. A finish wasn't in the cards as he and his partner dropped out before the second checkpoint, but for him to get another shot at the race with his father in the same boat more than makes up for it.

"This is all about family," Kirk Scheidt said. "If we finish, it will show we can work together. This is going to pull us closer together."

While the Scheidts want to beat the Browns' time and the original duo's finish from 19 years ago, they know what the Water Safari — especially on this weekend — is all about.

"I can't begin to tell you what it's going to feel like to finish," Chuck Scheidt said. "It means a million times more to me to do it with him (pointing at Kirk) than to get in some other boat with some superstars and win."

## Safari...

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because of the hats they adorn during the Water Safari. Team members are John Dupont, Andres Cabb, Karon Cabb, Daniel Cruz and John Mark Harras.

While Boat No. 150 went through Cottonseed Rapids unscathed, "The Cowboys" weren't as lucky.

After Boat No. 167 tipped over in the last section of the rapids, the team righted its vessel and started to climb back in when "The Cowboys" thundered recklessly through the whitewater and struck the stranded team. That prompted a few angry looks from members of Boat No. 167, who

weren't happy about the contact.

The Cowboys recovered from the mishap and eventually climbed into second place. Boat No. 167 fell back to third place. The men's solo boats of Thomas Yonley and Chris Issendorf rounded out the Top 5 at press time.

Through the first day, 93 of the 101 teams that started the race remained. All of those boats will have until 1 p.m. on Wednesday to complete the 260-mile trek from San Marcos to Seadrift.

Many of the fastest paddlers are expected to finish the Water Safari early Monday morning. Many others should follow.



Daily Record Photo by Gerald Castillo

Joel Truitt (front), Chris Sukow (middle) and Chris Champion (back) comprise Boat No. 8 and are paddling well in the race.