

Campways & Riken History

By Herm Hoops

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The Campways and Riken companies have an interesting and complex history. Campways rafts began in the 1960s and was the predecessor to Riken rafts, which began just prior to 1985. Boats of both companies were manufactured by Formosan Rubber of Taiwan and Okomoto (who also makes condoms and tires) in Japan. The initial Campways boats were purchased from Formosan Rubber.

Andy Anderson and Dan Baxter's father Edgar began in the Army and Navy surplus business in 1947 and was a major buyer of two, four and six-man surplus rafts. One of their early customers for surplus boats was B. A. Hanten of the Rogue river fame. The business only sold wholesale at first, but by 1951 Dan's father saw the potential of selling the small rafts for fishing which was a new concept then.

Campways was a take off from the name Camp Trails, a company that sold tents, backpacks and camping equipment. Mark McGillis' father, Dick, owned Sunset Sporting Goods a large retailer of outdoor equipment.(#c.) Campways began with significant financial backing from Dick McGillis. Harold Horne was a salesman for Standard Sales.(#g.) Mark McGillis' father provided the financial support for Mark to start Campways to do the same thing that Standard sales was doing: importing camping equipment.(8,11) Harold Horne, the founder of Campways became its CEO by 1974.(11,22) Baxter had a good relationship with Campways because of the merchandise they supplied to his surplus store in Portland, Oregon.

In the late 1960s Baxter's surplus store was selling black military-type dry bags to outfitters, primarily at the Grand Canyon. Ron Smith, of Grand Canyon Expeditions bought 2,000 of the bags at one time. Other outfitters like Martin Litton also bought the bags.(11) Baxter was also selling the bags to Vladimir Kovalik's Wilderness World rafting (WiWo) guides. WiWo was an early Grand Canyon rafting company, which eventually became Canyon Explorations.(6,11)(#d.) WiWo also had operations in California, Oregon, Idaho and other places. Kovalik heard that his people had been buying the bags from Baxter, so he went up to visit with Dan and they hit it off.(11)

Kovalik had been working with Holcombe Industries (#e.) on the development of the Havasu raft model. Gordon Holcombe, of Holcombe Industries, had begun building two sizes of the Havasu for Vladimir but they were having problems with the vinyl and leaking seams. (11,17,23,) After some discussion Baxter agreed to take on the project. Dan was "just a young kid" so he contacted Harold Horne and told Harold he wanted to get into the rafting business because of Dan's many contacts with river outfitters.(11) At that time the rafts sold by Campways were flat and lacked a kick in the bow and stern.(21) In 1971 Baxter put up \$100,000 and sent Kovalik with his slightly modified Havasu design to Taiwan, where Formosan Rubber agreed to the design material and specifications for production.(23,24,31)

{Numbers in parenthesis (1) are REFERENCES; letters in parenthesis (#a.) are described in SIGNIFICANT NOTES.}

Jon Osgood, working for Campways in sales and camping equipment designs, went on his first raft trip with Kathy Meyers and Jon Runnestrand on the Tuolumne and Stanislaus Rivers. Osgood came back to Campways in love with Whitewater rafting. He had recognized the obvious flaws in the boats being used on whitewater and that the boats needed larger tubes, better valves and better rowing frames.(21,22) Jon took a stock Formosan raft and with Tom Jones ran the Stanislaus and Tuolumne. He then joined up with Baxter and they ran the Rogue River in Oregon. Then Jon ran the Deschutes River in Central Oregon. When Osgood returned to Campways from his river trips he spoke enthusiastically about the potential market to Steve Horne.(17,21,22,34)

Kovalik returned to Taiwan to work with Formosan Rubber(#a.) engineers to design production specifications for the Havasu, Shoshone, Miwok, Havasu and Hopi.(11,17,21,23,24) All four models had similar designs but they were of different dimensions and sizes. Baxter didn't have a lot of funds, but to get Campways' attention he ordered 200 Havasu rafts. Manufacturing began, but when the first 102 boats arrived in Portland they were made from 420 denier black neoprene instead of the beautiful gray, 37 ounce ripstop nylon that had been ordered.(11,17)(#a.)

Baxter stopped production immediately and negotiated a credit. But he still had \$475 in each boat and he had 102 rafts to get out of inventory. He painted them silver and did everything possible to sell them. Campways sent representatives, including Vladimir Kovalik to Japan's Okomoto Industries to manufacture the boats.(#b.) Campways and Baxter bought the prototypes, kept working on refinements, and within a year and a half had some pretty good looking rafts.(6,11,23) The rafts were designed with outfitters in mind, but because of their low retail price, of around \$700 for the smaller boats, they also appealed to private boaters. The Hopi and Miwok were designed for whitewater use on smaller rivers. The Havasu and Shoshone were designed to be used as paddleboats or with rowing frames.(11,22,24)

Baxter had set up a good retail network in Montana, Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Because the rafts were designed for multi-day river trips most of the buyers were in the West. In return for the production, Baxter's B&A Distributing eventually became the supplier for seven Western states. Mike Walton's Walton Marine, in Salt Lake City became the distributor for Wyoming, Colorado and down to Texas. Campways took the distributorship for California and the Eastern states.(8,11) Baxter improved his profits by letting others propose the design of boats. He used Campways catalog and shared trade shows with Campways. Tom Schlinkert was the East Coast representative and the Eastern outfitters purchased the Nantahala Model for narrow rivers and day trips there. "Everything was going good."(11,22)

Harold Horne's son, Steve, was selling Campways products to the "Big 5" national retail chains. The "Big 5" had placed a large order for tents over six months ahead of spring when they expected the order. They began their advertising campaign, and anticipated receiving the tents in time for distribution to their stores. There were production problems at the factory, but Steve didn't tell the "Big 5" retailers, and he kept misleading them about the order.(11) When the "Big 5" retailers finally found out they weren't getting on-time delivery of the tents they cancelled the order.(11)(#l.)

At that point Baxter's operation was called Campways Northwest, he was also supplying big chains like Fred Meyers and Payless. In 1984 Baxter had a 25,000 square foot warehouse filled with tents and backpacks. Desperate, Campways offered to buy the merchandise, and they wrote Baxter a check for \$180,000. When the merchandise was delivered Campways stopped payment on the check and by 1985 Campways went bankrupt.(8,11)

The factory in Japan wanted to know who was going to take over. Dan Baxter met with Okomoto and took over world-wide distribution.(11) Mark McGillis had a great relationship with the Asian manufacturers because of his dad who owned Sunset Sports.(8,11) Mark had the funds Baxter needed for the new venture, and Mark took over much of the distribution in the middle of the United States and called his Salt Lake City company Pro-Advantage.(11,34) Dan Baxter at B&A Distributing kept the Northwest of the United States. Tom Schlinkert had been the very successful representative for Campways rafts on the East Coast. Upon Campways bankruptcy, Tom got together with Dan Baxter and they formed River Equipment Distributing Inc. located in Birmingham Alabama to import the newly branded Riken rafts. This lasted about four years. Sales never achieved the levels experienced during the Campways years. Tom went back to devoting full time to his company, Schlinkert Sports which represented large national sporting goods manufacturers such as North Face, etc. In retrospect maybe the choice of the company name of R.E.D. Inc. was a poor choice. Baxter then took over East Coast distribution.(8,11)(#q.)

With all of the changes they switched the name from Campways to Riken. Riken was the name of the tires produced by Okomoto Industries and they wanted their tire name on more products at a time when many Asian companies were developing markets around the world.(11,12) Riken Tire was later sold to Michelin Tire.

After a few years the raft distribution fell off and Baxter took over the Riken distribution.(8) "My memory is that Mike McGillis' Pro-Advantage Company in Salt Lake City had kept ordering boats to keep Formosan Rubber happy but they didn't sell well. Pro-Advantage was buying both from Riken and Formosan Rubber."(8) The Formosan rafts were called Legacy.(34) They were trying to sell to both the recreational and outfitter markets and later Dan Baxter added the Momentum line to serve both markets.(8)

By 2001 Baxter had burned out. He wanted to sell his business, including the Riken Raft lines, and retire. Unable to sell the company, Baxter called Bill Parks of Northwest River Supply (NRS) and made Bill an offer to sell the company. Baxter's offer was to reduce his inventory below \$200,000 and provide NRS with his exclusives, customers, terms of sales and products that Baxter owned or developed. Baxter's offer included his cost for everything: freight scales, cartons, and everything in his warehouse. Bill Parks accepted the order. Dan Baxter remembers Bill saying: "I'd be crazy not to take you up on that, I got rid of a competitor and picked up merchandise that I'm (already) selling."(11) So in 2002 Northwest River Supply, owned by Bill Parks, purchased the company and its designs.(11,8)

Baxter had already sold his building three months earlier. By September everything was gone from the warehouse, the crew swept out the warehouse and Baxter went home and slept until 11 a.m. the next morning. He was out of the raft and surplus business.(11)(#r.)

Did he have any regrets? Dan firmly told me: “Oh no.” Then he told me: “When I started out there were only a couple of competitors. When I retired I was competing with more than a dozen companies. Margins kept getting smaller. The young guys I started out with had their own companies... and they were asking for more than I wanted to do: lettering outfitter names on boats at the factory, and options like Urethane floor coatings, moving d-rings, and changing raft specifications for small orders. That wasn’t my bag. I wanted to sell Chevrolets.”(11,34)

Dan Baxter’s philosophy seems odd in these days of point of sales and minimal inventory: “My philosophy was that you couldn’t sell from an empty wagon. I wanted to keep my factories making the same number of rafts each month, year around. I wanted to keep quality up and you couldn’t do that if you kept changing people at the plant.” If people were not employed they would leave the plant and new people would have to be hired when production ramped up. “I was selling 1,200 rafts a year between Momentum and Riken, between Taiwan and Japan. I would have 500-600 rafts in stock.” If Hyside and others were out of rafts “I figured it was a good way to get my foot in the door” because I could supply the rafts. “If they liked my rafts I would get a new customer. I had a lot of money tied up in inventory, figuring that it would pay off in the long run.”(11)

Richard DeChant worked for Campways 30 some years ago (2012), before he started Hyside Inflatables.(4,11,17) DeChant and Baxter continued as good friends even though they became competitors. Prior to Richard, Jon Osgood worked for Campways from 1974 to 1980.(4,17)(#h.) He began as a salesman and backpacking designer before Campways began designing whitewater rafts, and Osgood quickly moved to quality control and marketing of the rafts. Without formal training Jon observed what made a good whitewater boat and he modified the design of Kovalik’s Miwok specifications. The Miwok was initially designed with 17" tubes.(17,23)(#g.h.d.) As Jon experimented with the Miwok the tubes were increased to 19" and finally to 21.5" which made the boat better for a variety of river conditions.(22) The basic Miwok design is still widely used today by NRS, Hyside and others even today but with self bailing floors. Vladimir Kovalik and B.A. Hanten recognized that the old “flat” boats did not work well in whitewater and needed to have a rake on the bow and stern as important concepts in boat design. They also recognized that strong upstream winds can affect a boat if the bow or stern kick is too high and those characteristics were included in the Campways designs.(17,21,23,34)(#d.)

Vladimir Kovalik’s passion for design and perfection led to the development of most of the Campways models, and later the Avon Spirit and Pro.(1,2,11,17,21,23) Dan Baxter had an eye for marketing, and he encouraged Kovalik to develop new designs and model well into the 80s, as Campways rafts became Riken. Baxter tried to keep Vladimir designing new boats by giving him a sliding scale of commission on the rafts he designed, starting at 5% and reducing the commission 1% each year.(23) Riken, Maravia, Caligari and Metzler were influenced in part by Kovalik.(1,2) Vladimir made a yellow cataraft with the same PVC material as SOTAR later used. Features like self-bailing floors, lace-in thwarts, collapsible frames came to the river market, as did tapering tubes in part because of him.(6)

Ole Olson was the highly respected Campways engineer for everything from making molds to making sure that the designs were something that Formosa Rubber or Okomoto could do.^{(17)(#i.)} Paul Maddox, a retired Navy SEAL also had an influence on boat design at Campways.^{(17)(#j.)}

Some of the early Campways and Riken models were troubled with air leaks that appeared over time. The red rub strip tended to deteriorate and become hardened, and the protective seam tape wore down to the base fabric.⁽⁷⁾ The boats were made from Nylon base fabric coated with Neoprene or EDPM on the inside of air holding chambers and Hypalon of various weights and deniers on the tubes and floors. The material weight on later production was increased to a heavier 40oz. 840 denier tube material, and later to 1000/1200 denier in the floor. Most of the weight was the rubber coating not the base fabric material.^(3,4,11)

Avon was not producing rafts specific to white water use when Campways began competing with them. The Avon Redshank and Redstart were designed as yacht tenders, they had a slight lift to their bow, but the stern was flat and squared for a motor. The Avon rafts were small for commercial outfitter use. As Campways developed and sold their Havasu and other river whitewater models, Avon began designing and producing the Adventure and Pro models. The new Avon boats were more symmetrical in shape and had their bow and stern uplifted. When Avon stopped producing the older squared stern boat designs, Dan Baxter saw an opportunity. Steve Horne and Jon Osgood thought up the River Rider Series because Steve needed a raft series with lower price points for retail sales that were suitable for both lake, fishing use and basic whitewater.⁽²²⁾ In the mid-1970s Campways and Baxter began producing the River Rider series with a little more rake to the bow and a squared stern with a rubber motor mount similar to the older Avon boats. The design was a take-off on the very popular Avon designs, that for some reason Avon discontinued when they changed their river raft designs to be symmetrical like Campways.⁽³⁴⁾

Campways was widely panned or mocked at trade shows for making what were obviously river running rafts with motor mount attachment points on the stern. So when a outfitter/private boater would actually try and put a motor on their raft the prop would not reach the water without a long extension. If the air pressure was lowered so the prop would hit the water the raft had a lot of drag.^(#o.) The River Rider Series were a retail oriented boats made of 35 ounce, 420 denier Hypalon coated nylon with a neoprene inner coating.^(11,14) They were made of lighter material, fewer air chambers and with a blue strake to differentiate from the Gray Line Series that cost more.⁽²²⁾

Early Campways and Riken boats used a brass pressure relief valve on the inflatable, self-bailing floors designed and manufactured by Okomoto in Japan.⁽¹¹⁾ The valves were in a boot that rose slightly above the ribbed floor that, in time, due to wear from cargo or peoples feet the boots began to crack and leak.⁽⁷⁾ The tubes, thwarts and floors also had a valve boot, and used military-like nylon valves designed from the standard military valve, perhaps to escape patent infringement lawsuits.^(#m.) The boot hole that held the valve was slightly smaller than the standard military valve, and the six screws holding the valve in place were slightly off from the screw set of military valves. The later Rikens, after production by NRS, used Leafield C7 valves on the tubes, thwarts and floor and Leafield A6 pressure relief valves to protect the floor.^(4,7,22)

The early boats were not self-bailing but the company soon moved to manufacturing self-bailing craft.^(#f.) By 1986 the River Rider Series featured I-beam, inflatable, self-bailing floors. Campways and Riken chose the I-beam construction over drop-stitch as it was less expensive.⁽¹⁷⁾ The Mohawk, Cheyenne, Pawnee, and Nez Perce were also self bailing models. Riken continued some models with non-self-bailing floors. All of the boats, except the Pioneer had a full wrapped 840 denier floor fabric on the bottom and tubes to protect the boat from the wear and tear.

At one time Avon litigated Baxter for copying the Avon self-bailing floor. They wanted Baxter to pull all of his self-bailing boats off the market and stop production. Dan went to Hyside, Demaree Inflatable Boats (DIB) and other American raft producers, gave them copies of the lawsuit and explained to them that if Avon was successful against him they could be successful against them. Most helped with information for Baxter's defense, and Hyside and DIB even sent prototypes with documentation about their inflatable, self-bailing floor design. Eventually Avon admitted the only thing that was copied were the use of stainless steel grommets for drain holes, and to attach the floor to the tubes. Dan said: "My lawyers went through Avon's applications for patenting the self-bailing floor, it was basically a suit for harassment."^(11,34)

All Avon patent infringement claims were eventually rejected. "Avon had a patent claiming their thwarts pushed down on the inflatable floor to keep it from rising. Since we had thwarts smaller in diameter that didn't touch the floor the lawsuit was tossed out." "One of their claims, that was thrown out, was the use of stainless steel grommets around the floor. The lawsuit made me look at why we used grommets. They could get bent and cut the boat. So I simply ran a strip of thick gum rubber around the edge and punched holes for self-bailing as before. A lot cheaper and just as effective. Thanks Avon!" During the patent searches the lawyers found a self-bailing kayak that was designed in Germany with photos and drawings from around 1896. The lawsuit was thrown out of court.^(11,16,18,34)

Standard features were d-rings, rub and wear strakes, carrying handles and inflatable thwarts. Campways tried using some plastic D rings but they broke so Ole Olsen had a steel D ring with the flat part separate to replace the broken rings.^{(8,34)(#n.)} Robert Tubbs remembers the plastic D rings: "The boats also had plastic D-rings which were replaced as needed with a crafty metal D-ring on which the straight part of the D was removable with an allen wrench. We could leave the D-ring patches in place and just slide these D-rings in without any gluing or rubber repair work."⁽¹⁰⁾

The dimensions of each model, fabric weight, and other specification factors of the Campways and Riken Models changed from time to time, and probably more than any other manufacturer. The dimensions and weight changed as fabric and/or design was slightly modified. As time went on outfitters would request one or two boats with a 2" higher bow and stern lift, or a ½ inch larger diameter tube and that created a plethora of models.⁽¹¹⁾ Initially Campways boats were assigned a capacity based on the number of people they were designed to safely carry. Because the boats were also used on multi-day trips, legal issues in the boating industry, and because of U.S. Coast Guard and federal agency requirements, that was changed to the weight the rafts were designed to carry.

Both Campways and Riken manufactured the *Red Line* (Miwok & Shoshoni), Blue Line (River Riders) and in 1984 the Pioneer Series. The Professional series, called the *Red Line*, were made from 35 ounce fabric for the tubes and 60 ounce material for the floors. The composition of the tube fabric was 25% Hypalon and 40% neoprene.(#p.) All Campways and Riken boats were manufactured with the glued, cold adhesion process. Both companies carried a 10-year retail warranty and a 5-year commercial outfitter warranty on their boats. Tom Schlinkert came up with names like Dodger, Challenger and Charger, but Baxter preferred naming the boats after Indian tribes.(11,17,21)(#k.)

<u>CAMPWAYS</u>	<u>MODEL</u>	<u>LENGTH</u>	<u>BEAM</u>	<u>TUBE DIA.</u>	<u>WT.</u>	<u>CAPACITY</u>	<u>FABRIC</u>
<i>Miwok</i>		13'6"	6'8"/7'	19.5"-21"	130/145	4-6	30oz/840 denier tubes 40oz/840 denier floor
<i>Shoshoni</i>		16'	7'10"	23"	165	6	30oz/840 denier tubes 40oz/840 denier floor
<i>River Rider</i>		10'6"-15'	6'/6'10"	18"/20.5"	100/140	2-3	35oz/420 denier
<i>Pioneer</i>		11'6"-13'	5'3"/5'10"	16"/17"	80/90	2-3	37oz/840 denier floor

{Oar boats multi day trips; paddle boats can carry more people }

<u>RIKEN MODELS</u>	<u>LENGTH</u>	<u>BEAM</u>	<u>TUBE DIA.</u>	<u>WT.</u>	<u>CAPACITY</u> (#q.)	<u>FABRIC</u>
<i>Tahoe SB</i>	13'	6'	19"	135		1000 tubes/1200 floor
<i>Mohawk SB</i>	13'8"	6'8"	19"	159		1000 tubes/1200 floor
<i>Cheyenne SB</i>	15'	6'10"	20"/12"	182		1000 tubes/1200 floor
<i>Sea Rider</i>	14'	6'8"	19"	70	2700	
<i>Chattooga</i>	13'	6'	18"	113	2340	
<i>Paiute</i>	11'	5'5"	15"	52	1470	
<i>Hopi</i>	12'	6'	17"	66	1800	840 tubes/840 floor
<i>Apache</i>	12'	6'	16"	98	2000	
<i>Dodger</i>	12'5"	6'	20"/16"			
<i>Apache (#p.)</i>	15'	6'6"	18"	141	3400	
<i>Tahoe</i>	13'	8'	19"	135		1000 tubes/1200 floor
<i>Pawnee SB</i>	14'8"	7'	21"	190		840 tubes/840 floor
<i>Miwok II</i>	13'6"	6'8"	19"	190	2660	840 tubes/840 floor
<i>Charger</i>	16'	7'2"	21"/14"	160		1000 tubes/840 floor
<i>Nez Perce SB</i>	16'	7'2"	21"/14"	188		1000 tubes/1200 floor
<i>Shoshone</i>	16'	6'10"	19"	154	3000	840 tubes/840 floor
<i>Shoshone</i>	17'6"	7'8"	21"	197	4200	840 tubes/840 floor
<i>Havasus 17'</i>	17'	7'6"	21"	235		1200 tubes/1200 floor
<i>Havasus 18'</i>	18'	8'2"	23"	270	4300	1200 tubes/1200 floor
<i>River Rider</i>	13'6"	6'8"	19"	125		420 tubes/1200 floor
<i>River Rider</i>	15'	6'10"	20"	140		420 tubes/1200 floor
<i>Pioneer</i>	11'6"	5'6"	17"	77		420 tubes/1200 floor
<i>Pioneer</i>	12'10"	6'	18"	89		420 tubes/1200 floor
<i>Nantahala</i>	11'	5'5"	15"	88	1400	
<i>Choctaw</i>	12'8"					

{SB above = self bailing boat }

{Greg Yeager (03/28/2014) told me that Down River in Denver sold a 16' boat with 23' tubes and it had the label "Navajo" on it. }

Osgood remembers: "Once the first good quality boat samples came over, the Miwok, Shoshone, and Havasu, I took the Miwok out. The Campways boats were always airtight right from the beginning. The model I was proudest of was the Miwok. I realized that with the 17" tubes it was just too small, so the first redesign we went to 19" tubes and a 6'8" width." "Logically the Miwok should have been 14' but we decided to settle on something a little bit smaller with bigger tubes to get down the Tuolumne at any water level. You could do water anywhere in the world with it, I took one with a self-bailing mesh net floor down the Bio Bio before it was dammed.(17)(#k.)

Many of today's raft designs are essentially the Miwok, Havasu, as well as a number of other Campways models.(1,2,8,17) The Tahoe, Charger, Mohawk, Cheyenne and Nez Perce featured tapered or diminishing tubes. The Nantahala raft was manufactured by Riken as part of their Pioneer Series, it is 11' long, 5'5" in width and weighs 88 pounds. The Shoshone was basically 2' longer than the Miwok.

The NRS E-152 Cheyenne 15'2" Self-Bailer, selling at \$5,495 in 2009 was designed to be rowed with a frame or paddled. Modeled after the original Riken design it had 20.25" main tubes taper to 18" at the bow and stern. Tapered "diminishing" tubes provide more cargo room, increased splash, easier paddling.(5)

The Nez Perce had four main tube air chambers, fourteen 2" D-rings and six EasyCarry™ handles. The NRS E-162D Nez Perce 16' self-bailer sold new for \$6,185 in 2009. The Nez Perce is built for big water and heavy loads. It will carry up to 12 paddlers, but is ideally run with oars. Modeled after the original Riken design it had 21.25" main tubes taper to 18" at the bow and stern. It has Leaffield™ C7 Valves on the tubes, thwarts and floor, and the Leaffield A6 Pressure Relief Valve to protect the inflatable floor.

A graceful, rugged boat, the Havasu, was initially made by Holcombe Industries of California. It has a 17.5 foot length and 7.5 foot beam 125 pounds and 20" tubes. It was light gray nylon-vinyl fabric. The design and appearance of the Havasu is quite beautiful, its eye pleasing lines swing smoothly from an uplifted bow to an uplifted tapering bow and stern. An early black Havasu was sold right off the assembly line to Rich Bangs with SOBEEK. He went over to Africa and a rhino got all but one or two tubes of it. Rich said it was one of the most scary things that ever happened to him in life!(17) The 1978 prices for a new boat was \$1,500 for Havasu II.(2) By 1978 World Wide River Expeditions was still using military pontoons but started switching over to Havasus. In 1979 Wild Water West changed their name to Adrift Adventures and they used Havasus, but they had problems with the plastic valves and the valve seats. Adrift ran the Havasus as a triple rig in Cataract Canyon during high water of in June, 1979 at 65,000 cfs.(10)

Both Campways and Riken manufactured inflatable kayaks. The 1983 Cherokee tracked well. Its detachable floor was a departure from the standard “ribbed” floor, using large tubes to track straight. It was 9' long with a 3' beam, 11" tubes and weighed 36 pounds. A review in River Runner Magazine called it stable, well designed and constructed. The review concluded the larger tubes made up for tracking normally attributed to a ribbed floor. But they, like Jon Osgood, pointed out the boat was a real danger when full of water and it needed a self-bailing floor.⁽¹⁷⁾ The Comanche was the 2-person version: a little longer (13') and slightly wider with slightly larger diameter tubes. Campways did not manufacture a self-bailing inflatable kayak but Riken produced the Cherokee and Comanche models with self-bailing floors.^(17,20)

Sometimes we attribute a success to a leader, famous person or legend. That is not the case in the development of the Campways river craft. It is obvious that Dan, Jon, Ole, Paul, Vladimir and others all contributed to their success, which one was the catalyst that brought the whole concept together - who knows. But it is unrefutable that Campways and Riken had a very long run providing a plethora of boats to outfitters and private river runners. So many outfitters used Campways or Riken rafts it is impossible to list them all. The boats were well designed and well-made and they have held up for a long time under rigorous conditions - many of them are still in use today.

Dan Baxter didn't want to build Ferrari's or Lamborghini's, he wanted to build affordable and durable Chevrolets... and he did that. Dan Baxter, now seventy, may sleep late in the mornings now that he's retired, but the graceful boats he produced, the Havasu, Nez Perce and others live on gracing the rivers and serving outfitters and river runners years and years after Dan's retirement. But for any process to occur, energy, known as activation energy is required. Without the help of a catalyst, the amount of energy needed to spark a particular reaction is high, but when one is present, the activation energy is lowered, making the reaction happen more efficiently. Whether the catalyst in producing Campways river boats was Vladimir Kovalik or Dan Baxter, it is obvious it was a potent mixture of talent, dedication and passion.

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12/11/2011;
- (27) David Brown, Executive Director, America Outdoors Email to Herm Hoops, 12/12/2011;
- (28) Bill Parks, NRS, Email to Herm Hoops, 10/14/2014;
- (29) Richard DeChant, Hyside, Email to Herm Hoops, 10/14/2014;
- (30) Tom Workman, U.S.N.P.S., Lee's Ferry Ranger, Grand Canyon;
- (31) "Passing the Torch," Generations of Paddlesports Businesses, *Paddle Dealer*; Ted Eugenis;
September 1994;
- (32) Ron Smith Email to Herm Hoops, 12/13/2014;
- (33) Dan Baxter Email to Herm Hoops, 4/4/2013;
- (34) Dan Baxter edits & corrections to Herm Hoops, 3/10/2017;

MISCELLANEOUS:

- **Campways U.S.C.G. Hull Manufacturers Code: CMP**

- **Riken U.S.C.G. Hull Manufacturers Code: BZA**

- Campways, 12915 South Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA 90061

Riken Distributers:

- Dan Baxter: 520-395-0868; hey_dan@comcast.net

- B & A Distributing; 201S E. Oak Street, Portland, OR 97214 (Riken Northwest Distributers)

- Pro Advantage; 1971 S. 4490 W., S.L.C., UT 84104

- River Equipment Distributer; 903 Alton Parkway, Birmingham, AB 35210

- Campways Shoshoni boat (CMP000161Z74) 415 Molino Street, Los Angeles, CA 90013 (see photo pages)

SIGNIFICANT NOTES:

(#a.) Formosan Rubber Group Inc.: (Taiwan) Founded in 1952 and is currently the largest Asian rubber and leather manufacturer. Profile: Capital: \$145 million dollars (2012); Revenue: \$124 million dollars (2011); 215 employees, 20 R&D members; 61 patents approved; 67 patents pending; They make the following fabrics used in inflatable boat construction: PVC/Polyester, PVC/Nylon, Hytex® (an inflatable boat material competitive with Pennel Rubber), EPDM based material.

It is interesting that Formosan Rubber had been making Udisco rafts for some time, and given the difficulties in communicating in different languages along with cultural differences, if that is why Formosan Rubber incorrectly used the lighter fabric on the first Campways order? Udisco's Mark McGillis also represented Campways in Taiwan. It may be likely, given the traits of Taiwanese culture, because Formosan Rubber had been manufacturing Udisco rafts with the lighter material, they simply chose to make the first Campways boats from that material.

(#b.) Okomoto Rubber Company: The Japan Rubber Industry was founded in January 1934 with just 50,000 yen and a corporate mission to manufacture a line of rubberized clothing and raincoats. Just one month later, latex condoms were added to the product mix under the name Okamoto Rubber Co., Ltd. Okamoto was formed from the merger of four companies: Nippon Gum Industries, Ltd., Riken Rubber Co., Ltd., and Okamoto Rubber Co., Ltd., with the present name being adopted shortly after the merger. By 1974, Okamoto USA, Inc. opened in New York, operations in Japan and other countries continued to expand and strengthen. Okomoto has joint ventures with Reebok Japan, Inc., Michelin Japan.⁽¹²⁾ Baxter got along well with Okamoto and if a certain run of rafts of the same model experienced less than ten percent of a particular problem, he would have it repaired at his expense. If more than ten percent had problems Okomoto would pay. Thus, no rafts were ever returned to the factory.⁽³⁴⁾

(#c.) For information on Sunset Sports see "The History of Udisco Inflatables;" (Herm Hoops Collection, J. Willard Marriott Library, Utah River Running Archives, University of Utah)

(#d.) Vladimir Kovalik:

Vladimir worked as a war games research analyst at Stanford University during the 1950s and 1960s. Prior to a stint in Viet Nam as a contractor he had floated the Colorado River with Ron Hayes and Marton Litton in 1968. The rivers snared his mind and he and his wife Nada began Wilderness World outfitting on the Grand Canyon in 1972 and eventually on other rivers in the West. Shortly after Ron Hayes joined the company. Vladimir developed a passion for designing a good oar boat. Kovalik contacted Gordon Holcombe, a California manufacturer producing aircraft escape chutes and a variety of inflatable devices. Holcombe produced Kovalik's Havasu design out of vinyl but the boat had serious seam leaks.

"One of the best, brightest, and certainly most colorful characters ever to grace the passageways of the Grand Canyon (or more appropriately—the planet Earth) is a crazy Czechoslovakian named Vladimir Kovalik (IK). Most of us owe the man (and, as he himself constantly points out—his beautiful family, fine friends and wonderful crew) more than we know. Back in the good old days VK, along with his extremely competent wife Nada and his good buddy Ron Hayes (the actor), started a river company called Wilderness World (which ultimately—after a seventeen year run—was sold and thereby metamorphosed into the modern day Canyon Explorations). What we all owe him for, besides that impossibly cool little company and all the great trips and hot-spit crews and magical traditions thereof, is a passion for design and perfection that led to more advances in boats and boating technology than you could shake a stick at: the Campways Havasu, Miwok, Apache; today's Avon Spirit and Pro; whole companies like Riken Inflatables and Maravia that were sucked into the business in part through VK's energy and enthusiasm; as well as boats by Caligari and Metzler; features like self-bailing floors, lace-in thwarts, sitting on the

cooler, collapsible frames; not to mention music trips and silent float outs to Diamond Creek...all these things and many more VK had a major hand in.”(6) It should be noted (2014) Ron Smith believes that some of his designs might have been used by others in the design of new model boats.(32)

Kovalik designed the lace in thwart, the cargo carrier with a zipper to hold customer dry bags, the bow and stern tapering tubes, and perhaps the Campways floor with three sections, eight inch thick sections in the middle, thinning to three inches in the bow and stern. He also designed foam filled pfd's in 1972 or 1973, which were the predecessor of today's Type V pfd's now in use.(24)

There are many anecdotal misrepresentations circulating in river camps, around company warehouses and among private boaters. Part of my goal is to do my best to correct those misconceptions, which can be difficult when they involve famous people, legendary boaters or well-heeled historical writers. Here are some that I have uncovered:

In “*The Complete Whitewater Rafter*” (1996, page 3) Jeff Bennett refers to Georgie White as working with Ran (sic.) Flemming of Rubber Fabricators to design the Green River Model raft. Schnurr (2011) has a clear memory of Lance Martin, Ron Smith, Frank Ewing, Dick Barker and several others who came to Rubber Fabricators with design ideas. Flemming was more concerned with securing large military contracts, and Schnurr was the engineer who built the boats. Schnurr also does not remember Bryce Whitmore as the first to design river rafts as some have claimed. It is more likely that Whitmore used surplus or off the shelf tubes to create his “Spiderboat” and “Huck Finn” style (four 18" or 20" diameter tubes, 14 feet long tied together and topped with a rowing frame, boats that were basically four tubes lashed together with a rowing frame. In the 1985 March/April issue of *River Runner Magazine* article by Ron Bolling: Floating on Air: The Evolution of Rafting claims that Georgie White “tracked down Rubber Fabricators... and had them build something new. Georgie says the product of her request was the legendary Green River Raft. An article *River Runner Magazine* (March/April 1985) and another in the *Boatman's Quarterly Review* (Volume 18, Number 4, Winter 2005/2006) claims that Vladimir Kovalik contacts “...Rubber Fabricators and anything I could get ahold of... I wrote letters about how I would like to design a boat... Naturally everybody refused this...” Bob Schnurr is a pretty straight forward, straight shooter. Schnurr would have certainly remembered such a character and female as Georgie White and for that matter “any Russian named Vladimir.” He does not recollect either of them. Schnurr received dozens of letters, telegrams and visits from people who wanted newly designed boats, and though unprofitable he almost always entertained the requests, and he is pretty clear that he did not receive requests from Georgie or Vladimir. In several interviews Schnurr insists that he and Ron Smith were the persons who designed the Green River Model. Schnurr was the person anyone who wanted a new raft design would have to talk to as he was a design engineer and managed the Richwood RFI Plant where most inflatable boats were built.

(#e.) Holcombe Industries

Inventor Gordon Holcombe was spurred on by Vladimir Kovalik to use his expertise and knowledge of new, high-performance materials to build a better boat. Holcombe developed the first U.S. Coast Guard approved Class V lifejacket. Kovalik began working with Holcombe in early 1971 or late 1970 on his “dream boat,” that he named the Havasu. It may be that Gordon Holcombe and Vladimir knew each other from their days working for the Stanford Research Institute (SRI). At SRI Kovalik's work was related to the military and Gordon built submarine covers to hide the submarines when they were in port for the U.S. Navy. Vladimir might have used the submarine cover material, which was very tough but didn't hold adhesive well, to build the first Havasu rafts.

The first batch of Holcombe boats arrived and were on the water in 1972. The sleek boats were white and had Vladimir's signature curve bow and stern design that eliminated the "stove pipe" design that often caused other rafts to fold when taking a big hit from a powerful wave. Kyle remembers: "Unfortunately, they leaked like sieves and we would have to pump them up at lunchtime. In the mornings they would be nearly flat on the beach." (23)

In 1972 Holcombe began whitewater raft manufacturing under the name Maravia. A young man named George Aragon worked for Gordon Holcombe. When the raft manufacturing part of Holcombe Industries began falling apart George left and founded Maravia, perhaps paying Holcombe for the manufacturing and patent rights. By 1984 George Argon and partners Doug Tims and Mike McCloud purchased Maravia and moved the company to Idaho.(23)

(#f.) Inflatable, Self-Bailing Floors

Vladimir designed Holcombe's self-bailing floor with Holcombe's George Aragon. Kovalik convinced Holcombe Industries to develop a boat with a self-bailing, Chubasco style floor in late 1972. The floors, like the seams on Holcombe's vinyl boats, had considerable air retention difficulties. The original boat was about 22' long with large (24") diameter tubes and featured a laced in floor that was above the water line. Because the boats were so large Wilderness World never used them, but they were adopted by John Vale of Outdoors Unlimited and were in use by his crew until a few years ago.(23) The floor design might have been the inspiration for SOTAR's designs of the early 1980s when they produced an inflatable, self-bailing floor on their models.(23)

Inflatable, self-bailing floors, were designed and used in military rafts with I-beam construction in the early 1940s. By the late 1940s the drop stitch inflatable floor was developed. Without taking any credit from Vladimir Kovalik, SOTAR and others for their contributions, the self-bailing inflatable floor had been in use on rivers for some time. Although rare in the surplus boats on whitewater rivers, the Helins and others used them in the 1960s. In early 1966 Dick Barker and Frank Ewing contacted Bob Schnurr of Rubber Fabricators to discuss the Snake River Scenic float raft. Their design included three removable, drop-stitch inflatable floor sections. Their order for 26 rafts arrived in Jackson, WY on July 29, 1966. Six years later Barker & Ewing had Schnurr redesign Ron Smith's Salmon River model, modified bridge pontoon, to add an I-beam inflatable, self-bailing floor. The later productions of the Snake River Float model used I-beam floors as the drop stitch had proved unreliable. Rubber Fabricators of West Virginia made the boats in their Richwood plant. (See: The History of Inflatables and How They Saved Rivers; The History of Rubber Fabricators, B.F. Goodrich, Rubber Crafters and Demaree Inflatable Boats; Herm Hoops Collection, J. Willard Marriott Library, Utah River Running Archives, University of Utah)

(#g.) Harold & Steve Horne

Although they were known as Horne, the Horne's real surname, or family name was actually Hornestein. They were of the Jewish faith. (17)

(#h.) Jon Osgood

"I thought of starting my own import raft sales company like Dick (DeChant) did but that only lasted about 10 minutes. I knew all too well the problems that Campways had over the years I was there plus I really liked rafting itself, the time off in the winter and the social aspects of owning my own company. If I did not start Libra/AWE I would never have met my wife!" Jon started American Whitewater Expeditions, in 1978 originally called Libra Expeditions, in 1980, after giving Campways a year notice that he wanted to start a river company. Osgood recently sold the company on December 12, 2012.

To understand Jon's passion for river boats one needs to understand the passion he developed, very quickly, for river rafting. " People would ask me why I started my outfitting company, and I tell them I saw the picture of Kathy Meyers and Jon Runnestrand in McGinnis' book and I made an offhand comment about being single at the time and she certainly was a good looking lady. About two weeks later she called me up and said: would you like to go rafting this coming weekend on the Tuolumne and the Stanislaus with me and Jon Runnestrand."

"So I flew from LAX (airport) up to San Francisco, they were waiting in a converted paddy wagon with a trailer behind it with a giant wood rowing frame. We drove over and did the Tuolumne one day in low water... and I realized as she was struggling to go down the river, and that's the only way to describe it, because it was a low water run and it was a 10 man Hypalon boat with a heavy rowing frame with those death spike thole pins that we used to use back then with the canvas fire hose clamped to the oars. But going down the river I realized that I was absolutely in love with the concept, could easily do it because I had a canoeing background from Michigan and the YMCA camps and everything like that. So we get off the river, go square dancing in Sonora, or they do that night, and do the Stanislaus the next day and I fly back to Campways. I walked in the door on Monday morning and I said to Steve Horne: boy is this going to be a huge industry. Anyway in my enthusiasm for the whole thing, I said: these boats are junk they need to have lift in the bow and stern, they need better valves, they need better material, they're regarded as pretty much junk in the industry and we're never, ever going to sell these things in any numbers to the commercial outfitters all across the country."

Jon built a wood rowing frame and two weeks later left on a two week vacation with his good friend Tom Jones, a brilliant engineer. They trained themselves on the Tuolumne and the Stanislaus. Then Jon took off and went to Oregon and hooked up with Dan Baxter. Jon then did the Deschutes River and the Rogue River with Vladimir Kovalik. Later that year, or the first of the next year he did his first Grand Canyon trip with Wilderness World and Vladimir and he's been rafting ever since.(17)

(#i.) Ole Olson

Ole was the Campways engineer for everything from making molds to making sure that the designs were something that Okomoto or Formosa Rubber could do. He was a real crusty old engineer with a Swedish background. Ole was instrumental with the four piece, break down frame that Vladimir designed. They were expensive to build because of all of the different compound angles, without Ole's persevering Vladimir's frame would never be built. The frames were works of art and very expensive to build. Ole designed the Campways plastic military style valve.(17)(#m.)

(#j.) Paul Maddox

Paul came to Campways down in El Segundo, CA with a wealth of design ideas. He took a stock gray Miwok and said: "I want to go do some work on this boat for you. And he shows up two weeks later and he'd put a net mesh floor in the 19" tube and 6'8" Miwok. Paul had inserted a net mesh floor that he'd mounted by putting lacing in a net with grommets. He mounted a strip to the inside of the tube somewhat up from where the water line would be. This ex-Navy Seal was Jon Osgood's mentor and teacher. Jon remembers: "We'd go down all the California Rivers and at super high water levels that to everybody else was sheer death. His idea of fun would be in the back of the boat would be for all of them to take over control of the boat, even though I was the guide, but I was the new kid on the block. So we would go from giant hole to giant hole, until we managed to flip the boat. Then they would all just get back on the boat if they could and we would continue down the river upside down. We'd flip it over with the flip straps.

(#k.) Campways Model Names and Designs

Dan Baxter liked the use Indian Tribe names for the entire line of boats, perhaps inspired by Vladimir Kovalik's name for the Havasu model and Baxter proposed they develop an entire line of quality rafts of different sizes for commercial outfitters and private boaters named after Indian Tribes, mostly those from California. But to accommodate all of the different models they had to use other tribes like Apache and Shoshoni. With lace in thwarts that could be removed and replaced with coolers in a rowing frame, the boats were perfect boat for private river runners. Campways kept models simple with the Piute at 10', Hopi at 12', Miwok at 13'6", Shoshone at 16' and Havasu at 17'8".(17)

(#l.) Why Campways Went Under

Although Jon Osgood was not working for Campways at the time and feels that Baxter's version may be correct was told that it was due to large tent deliveries going out to the Big 5 with tent poles that broke the first time the tent was set up. All of them came back and they all wanted their money back rather than new poles/credits. The Big 5 cancelled the order because they were left with no tents to sell at all. And Campways had spent the tent money on other things.(22)

(#m.) Valves

Early Campways rafts used the tiny brass valves like Formosan used in the 10 or 14 man rafts. It might have been the first prototypes from Formosan, but now many of them were made. The first ten 17" tube Miwoks and then the following models used military valves. Campways had to buy the military style valves from the US manufacturer, ship them to Okamoto in Japan. It was costly to purchase and ship them and there were delays. They had to air ship them when things got out of sync. Ole Olson came up with a plastic version of the military valve which Campways could manufacture for less and ship for less. One reason Campways produced this valve was because Campways planned on producing rafts in Los Angeles and wanted to at least be in control of the valve production/cost because they were going to go after the military inflatable market. Having to purchase the valves from the US manufacturer was going to cost a lot more than producing them and Ole thought they would be more durable than the metal ones.(22)

Early runs had tolerances too tight and o ring failure. If they were tightened too much you could not open them easily without vice grips or channel locks, especially if they had sand in them. The Leaffield valve was a great improvement.(22)

(#n.) Plastic D-Rings

Ole Olson designed the plastic d-rings. Jon Osgood was a sceptic about them because they were not tested under river conditions before they went into production. They bent out of shape just tying gear into the raft or tying down the rowing frame, so it was obvious that using these D rings for a unwrap was out of the question. Ole came up with the replacement Stainless steel D ring which cost a fortune to make and ship to placate irate outfitters and private boaters.(22) Ironically at this time Avon was using plastic S-rings on some of their whitewater model bow and sterns.

(#o.) River Rider Square Sterns and Motor Mounts

Why did Campways design the River Rider Series with square sterns with motor mounts? Besides closely replicating the Avon Redshank and Redstart models there was another reason. It obviously cost Campways/Okamoto something to do the new design and additional motor mounts. The real reason is that someone at Campways while reading the US Custom tariffs realized that if the rafts had motor mounts on them the import duty was less than if they did not and it was a substantial amount of money. So Campways paid less duty per raft and could sell their rafts for less than the other manufactures in England, Germany, Italy and other countries who were entering the US whitewater inflatable market.

(#p.) The Apache Model

At the same time Paul Maddox was experimenting with the Miwok and military IBS (Inflatable Boat Small) Vladimir came went to Baxter with the concept of knocking off the military boat. So Campways developed the Apache 12' which was a slight revision of the Selway model, basically a 7 man assault boat. The first boat was given to a young Kyle Kovalik to row along with WiWo's commercial trips. The boat was named "Lil Moki" and is in storage at a friend's house in Montana (2014).(24) Having owned a Rubber Fabricators Selway, I can attest to the fact that you either got to be a pretty good river runner, or an excellent swimmer!(25) Eventually Osgood modified it to the Apache 15' because the Apache 12' wasn't big enough for commercial use.(17)

(#q.) Raft Loading Capacity

Notice that after the initial production of Campways Models the loading capacity was changed from number of people to gross weight. In the early 1980s raft carrying capacity became an issue at Grand Canyon National Park and the potential of U.S. Coast Guard intervention on the issue was a possibility. The raft manufacturers supported by the commercial outfitting industry stopped recommending carrying capacity in people, of their boats and replaced it with pounds because of the liability risk. If a regulation was based on weight it would be unenforceable ("Hi ma'am, please step out of the raft and onto the scale"?). Better to have no rule than one that can't be enforced.(25) The U.S. Coast Guard bases it's inflatable capacity on the pfd or floatation available when a raft is capsized. Another problem with this regulation was what happens when a raft pops a tube. Then you may have to "overload a raft" to get the folks to safety. That creates the potential issue of legal double jeopardy, but safety wise it 's generally preferable to swimming or hiking people over the boulders and exposing them to other risks.(25,27)

Military life rafts in WWII were rated by the number of 150 pound people that would be supported by the tubes half way in the water. This number implies a much greater capacity than the say 6 man or 8 man raft capacity.(28)

Almost every state has a law in their boating statutes stating a vessel may not exceed the manufacturer's rated limit. Those laws and ratings are for flat water. Several states where commercial whitewater boating is prevalent have regulated loading capacity. Many states have left it to the permitting agency to set limits. Colorado limits the number of people in rafts less than 14' long. The National Park Service rates various brands and models individually for number of people with gear and without gear.(26, 27, 28, 29, 30)

(#r.) Dan Baxter & Nike

Baxter had just started importing whitewater rafts, and had just brought in 110 rafts from Taiwan. They were all 17 ft. Havasu models and he had spent all of his funds on them at \$500 apiece and needed to sell them so he could place the next order.

One day Dan gets a call from a fellow who had opened up a small tennis shoe store called Blue Ribbon Sports somewhere on Portland's East side. That didn't impress Baxter because in 1970 who would open up a tennis shoe store? The caller wanted a better price than the \$1000 retail price Baxter was asking, so Dan told him I could offer a 10% discount for two. The caller had a friend and accepted the offer. By the time Baxter sold him the frames, oars, river bags, life vests, etc. it was going to be a \$3000 sale and he invited the man to by at closing time so they could assemble the order. In Baxter's words: "So a Phil Knight and his friend come in and we proceeded to complete the sale and he mentions he's going to design tennis shoes and import them much like I'm doing with rafts. He's looking for people to put up a minimum of \$20,000 to invest in his new venture. I thought who would invest in a tennis shoe company, sounds nuts to me. He didn't press it and didn't offer any business plan so I told him I was tapped out and good luck with your venture."

“A neighbor of mine graduated from the U of O and went to work for his new company as an accountant, so I was sort of kept up-to-date on the progress he was making. I was going full steam ahead in my rafting business by 1975, and have no regrets. I had gotten together with a backpacking company called Campways and took seven western states as a rafting distributor. They did the overseas travel, produced the catalog, did the national advertising, did the trade shows, etc. I paid them 8% over cost and had the rafts shipped directly to Portland. We switched from Taiwan to Japan for manufacturing and had over 20 models by 1976. I understand that we had over 50% of the US market at that point.”

“Campways went bankrupt in 1985 due to some missteps in the camping business so I took over all factory production worldwide, along with Mark McGillis and Tom Schlinkert and changed the name to Riken and ran with it until 2002 when I closed everything down and retired.”

“Of course, you could guess how much a \$20,000 investment would be worth today if I'd said yes and didn't run with the rafts, but then I would have never met Phil Knight in the first place. I heard later that lots of business people in Portland were approached, and didn't invest. I'm sure we could all get together and tell "what-if" stories.”(33)

(#p.) Red Line Series and Inflatable Floors

The first Red Line self-bailers really had floor problems. Fortunately they had laced-in floors. The factory produced new floors for every single one. The last ten years saw very few problems. Baxter recalled that one East Coast outfitter was upset when a floor had blown its beams. Dan had him send the raft to White Water Warehouse (now Nantahala Raft Repair) which was an authorized repair center. The outfitter was upset that the damage was not covered under warranty. It turned out the East Coast outfitter's boat had Dentyne gum stuck in the pressure release valve. It seems the outfitter had a guide who always chewed Dentyne gum. Case solved. The later model PR valve really did work well.(34)

(#q.) East Coast Sales Representative

When Baxter decided to switch the East Coast Sales Representative he chose Drew Hammond. Hammond had a good reputation with Nantahala Outdoor Center and had a great repair facility. His business still exists today as Whitewater Service and Supply in Bryson City, NC.

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