

## International Whitewater Hall of Fame 2005 Nominee Biography



### Candidate: **Bob McNair**

**Category:** Pioneer (Deceased)  
**Sport:** Whitewater Canoeing  
**Years Active:** 1945 – 1995  
**Home Base:** New England, USA

#### **Introduction:** (quoted from Affiliate Nomination Form)

“Bob McNair’s *Basic River Canoeing* was “the manual” for basic cruising techniques used by many to learn and teach whitewater canoeing. McNair was the founding father of Buck Ridge Ski Club, a year-round outdoor club with a paddling component. McNair was instrumental in the formation of the American Whitewater Affiliation, reaching out to paddling clubs across America. Buck Ridge and McNair began the first inter-club whitewater slalom races on the Brandywine held annually until the early eighties. Dick Shipley, dad of Scott Shipley, learned from McNair.”

#### **Accomplishments:**

- 1945 - What began as the XYZ Ski Club, Bob McNair was one of the renamed Buck Ridge Ski Club’s founding fathers. Bob McNair purchased fiberglass canoes from Waterways Unlimited based on the French Teams 1952 boat used in Salida, CO.
- 1955 - Buck Ridge started the first inter-club canoe slalom, the Brandywine Slalom, held annually until the early eighties.
- 1955 - Bob McNair in conjunction with the SE Chapter of the American Red Cross began conducting basic canoeing courses. This became know as “Red Ridge College of Canoeing Knowledge” 3 day YMCA camp, Red Ridge (and other canoe schools) later used Bob McNair’s *Basic River Canoeing* as their manual into the 1970s.
- 1956 - Buck Ridge promoted slalom competitions, sponsorship, instruction and whitewater river trips.
- 1958 - 1st Eastern Whitewater Slalom Championship co-sponsored by Buck Ridge Ski Club and AMC. Buck Ridge viewed slalom competitions as a valuable skill building activity. Buck Ridge and Bob McNair were instrumental in the formation of the American White Water Affiliation uniting clubs across the country.

- 1958-1959 - Bob McNair handled most of *American White Water's* overseas correspondence. American White Water Affiliation promoted slalom racing. Bob McNair was also involved with the American Canoe Association promoting slalom racing among other things.
- 1968 - Robert E. McNair co-authored *Basic River Canoeing*, at the time was fairly advanced and current with basic whitewater techniques.
- 1985 – *Basic River Canoeing* by Robert McNair, Matty McNair & Paul Landry published and updated through the American Camping Association.

Source: *The River Chasers* by Sue Taft