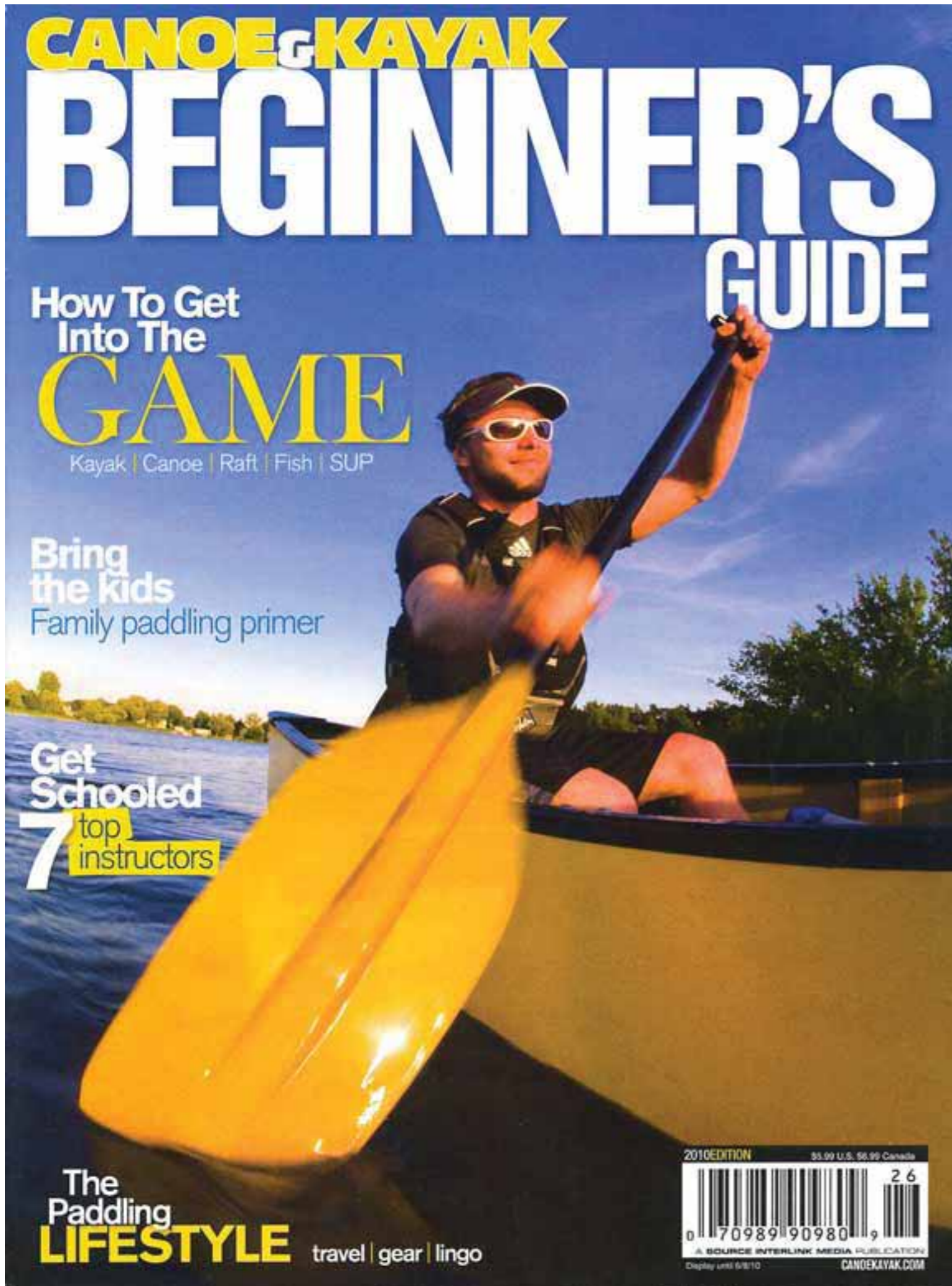


# Spring 2010 Canoe & Kayak Beginner's Guide

## Featuring NRS Revolution 140 Raft.



### RAFTING GEAR

#### \*GEAR ESSENTIALS



As a rafting beginner, don't invest in expensive paddles. They're the first thing to go should a passenger swim or a boat flip over. That's why if you spend enough time on popular rivers, you're sure to find a durable, all-purpose, aluminum-shafted, plastic-bladed paddle. And that's all you need to get out on the water.

**Pictured:** CARLISLE ECONOMY PADDLE, 30 OZ., \$20, CARLISLEPADDLES.COM

When it's time to row your own boat, don't skimp on the oars. You need a solid set that can handle the inevitable abuse of transport and still allow you to keep on pushin' every new season. **Pictured:** The Sawyer Polecat Oars are made with powerful fiberglass shafts that offer medium flex and quick response while the Duramax blades will hold up to the abuse if you aren't, well, quick enough. Laminated

Douglas-fir oar handles round out these powerful river tools. **SAWYER POLECAT** (\$169, PADDLESANDOARS.COM) L: 9'; BLADE WIDTH: 30"; 7 LBS.

Now all you need is the frame to rig the oars to. Consider a frame you could use on both cataraft tubes and a raft, should you ever want to diversify your inflatable fleet and on-river skills. **Pictured:** NRS makes a universal frame (their lightest cat frame) with the requisite oar mounts and a high-back seat, plus breakdown rails for easy transport. **NRS UNIVERSAL FRAME** (\$885, NRSWEB.COM) L: 108"; W: 66"; 102 LBS

Oh yeah, don't forget the pump. Cylindrical barrel pumps are the gold standard. **NRS 5" BARREL PUMP** (\$189, NRSWEB.COM)



#### \*RAFT RUNDOWN

Although canoes can stake the claim to a classic form both historic and beautiful, it's the diverse inflatable armada that provides the modern and democratic means for giving most people their first taste of whitewater—whether that's on a commercial raft trip or a basic inner-tube adventure. For hauling camping gear and family members and then deflating the boat for the trip home, first-timers have several types of craft to pick from before they can blow and go.

#### PADDLE RAFT

The classic and versatile 14-foot raft is ideally suited for a group of four to six paddlers (plus the most experienced boatman or guide steering from the back chamber), leaving extra space between the thwarts to rig day-tripping gear. **Pictured:** This season, Idaho's NRS is introducing its Revolution line of polyurethane-coated nylon rafts. These workhorses boast a lighter weight material with the same NRS toughness. **REVOLUTION 140** (\$3,195 in 1680-DENIER, POLYURETHANE-COATED NYLON, NRSWEB.COM) L: 14'; W: 7'; 98 LBS.

#### CATARAFT

For those who don't have ready access to a team of paddlers, the cataraft offers an efficient downriver, gear-hauling option. Although

two or four paddlers could paddle the dual tubes rigged to a central frame, catarafts are most often rowed solo by a rafter using a pair of oars attached to said frame. **Pictured:** The AIRE Ocelot is a versatile, responsive all-around cat with big-water capability and heavy-load capacity. **AIRE OCELOT** (\$2,099 in PVC, AIRE.COM) L: 14'; W: 6'6"; 71 LBS.

#### INFLATABLE KAYAKS

Inflatable craft suitable for the rigors of prolonged whitewater use (sorry, Shamu pool toys don't cut it) are made of durable materials coated in either Hypalon (a synthetic rubber) or plastic polymer (aka PVC). If you choose to go with an inflatable kayak, commonly known as an IK or sometimes a ducky, make sure it's made of one of these materials. In learning to paddle rivers and to control your own craft, it's better to start in a solo IK rather than worrying about being on the same page as a boat partner—there's a good reason tandem IKs are jokingly called "divorce boats." **Pictured:** Advanced Elements' self-bailing solo sit-on-top incorporates aluminum bow and stern ribs to improve tracking and then easily deflates into a duffel bag for transport and storage. **ADVANCED ELEMENTS STRAIGHTEDGE INFLATABLE KAYAK** (\$549 in PVC, ADVANCEDELEMENTS.COM) L: 9'8"; W: 35"; 34 LBS.

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