

# Accident Database

**Report ID# 833**

Help

2003-07-07

Date

Sandra Barnett

Victim

24

Victim Age

Vermilion, M. Fork

River

Section

Low-head dam in Danville United States Illinois, US

Location

Gage

Water Level

N/A

River Difficulty

Caught in Low Head Dam Hydraulic

Cause

Cause Code(s)

– Caught in Low Head Dam Hydraulic

Injury Type(s)

– Does not Apply

Factors

– Inexperience

Inexperienced

Victim Experience Level

Private

Trip Type

Open Canoe

Boat Type

Group Info

Other Victim Names

Reported

Status

## Accident Description

On July 8th two canoes carrying four young women capsized at the base of a 5' high dam on the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River in Eastern Illinois. According to Eric Sprenne, an AW regional coordinator, the dam is a known killer, and there are strong warnings about it in the guidebook "Paddling Illinois." Fortunately, two of the four girls were able to grab an inner tube that was floating in the backwash. The Danville, IL Commercial News noted that the recirculation was so powerful that the two teens were literally bouncing off the face of the dam. The pair also tried to support Sandra Barnett, 24, but she slipped out of her life vest and was pulled under water.

A 16 year-old girl made it ashore and went for help. An hour later Danville firefighters threw a rope to the two girls. They had to time the extrication to avoid a collision with a large log that was loose in the backwash; even then it took a number of strong men to pull the girls free.<http://tinyurl.com/create.php>



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