



Accident Database

Report ID# 594

Help

1999-07-09

Date

Joe Miranda

Victim

30

Victim Age

Clinton (W. Avon Road (at Livernois) to E. Avon Road (Yates Dam)

River

W. Avon Road (at Livernois) to E. Avon Road (Yates Dam) (5 miles)

Section

Low dam near Yates Cider Mill United States Michigan, US

Location

Gage

High

Water Level

N/A

River Difficulty



Cause Code(s)

- Caught in Low Head Dam Hydraulic

Injury Type(s)

- Does not Apply

Factors

- Other

Extensive Experience

Victim Experience Level

Private

Trip Type

Whitewater Kayak

Boat Type

Group Info

Other Victim Names

Reported

Status

Accident Description

DESCRIPTION: On July 9, 1999 Joe Miranda, 30, was kayaking on the Clinton River near Rochester Hills, MI with a friend. They had paddled together often and knew the river well. Water was high following recent rains. The pair arrived at the low dam near the Yates Cider Mill and found to their surprise that there was plenty of water to run it. The two ran the dam successfully, and Miranda portaged back to the top to make a second run to recover a dropped cooler. His boat stopped dead, and was trapped by the hydraulic at the bottom. His friend attempted rescue, but was sucked into the backwash himself. "It just kept pulling me down," he said. "When I was down



SOURCE: Detroit Free Press

ANALYSIS: Dam hydraulics are capricious and deadly. You can run a dam successfully, then get in trouble on the next attempt. My guess is that when Miranda tried to pick up the cooler, it slowed him down and allowed the river to grab him.

Michigan is not well known for whitewater, but low head dams are a constant source of problems in the Midwest. On July 9 Joe Miranda, 30, was kayaking on the Clinton River near Rochester Hills with a friend. They had paddled here often and knew the river well. Water was high following recent rains. An article in the Detroit Free Press said that the pair arrived at the low dam near the Yates Cider Mill and found to their surprise that there was plenty of water to run it. The two ran the dam successfully, then Miranda portaged back and made a second run to recover a dropped cooler. He was trapped by the hydraulic at the bottom. His friend attempted rescue, but was sucked into the backwash himself. He was rescued by a man on shore with a rope. Mr. Miranda's body was recovered two days later by emergency responders.



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