

Terradise to Cincinnati Expedition

Shadeville to St. Rt. 762 Bridge – Scioto River

September 1, 2007

5 PM – 7:15 PM

4.69 miles

This day dawned clear and sparkling – much like another September Day that lives in infamy for the world. There was not a cloud the entire day, and the temperature started at 57 and warmed to about 82. A perfect day to be on the river!

First, we took a carload and a truckload of “stuff” to Sarah’s for the big yard sale. There was a flea market at the fairgrounds in Urbana, Ohio just down the street from Sarah. So we decided to join Sarah and get rid of some stuff. The sale went pretty well, and with the \$25 yielded from the last of Harvey’s ham radio accessories, we treated ourselves to some Dairy Corner chicken sandwiches and ice cream.

When business fell off in mid-afternoon, I announced that I thought I would spend some time on the river. No one objected, so I beat a path from Urbana to Shadeville, unloaded the kayak and drove the truck down to State Route 762. This would be a short trip, as the evening was fast approaching, and the days are getting shorter.

The past two weeks have seen the river rise about 7 feet and then quickly fall back to just a little above normal – perfect for my tastes. The rains which flooded Findlay Ohio in Mid August fell mostly on the Lake Erie Watershed, but enough crossed over to the Scioto and Olentangy headwaters to give a 12 foot stage at Terradise – well out of the banks and on the 2nd step up to the patio. This water was released from Delaware Dam and found its way to points south.

I gamely mounted the bicycle for the trip back to Shadeville via State Route 104. Fortunately the traffic was mostly southbound, coming from the Ohio State Football opener against Youngstown. (I could have marched in the Alumni Band, but I would rather be on the river!) I made it without incident, and hid the bicycle and prepared the kayak for today’s leg.



After putting in, I enjoyed the crystal clear waters for this short trip, passing the Scioto Canoe Livery and a large group of folks cooking out and swimming in the river. The spot was well-placed, since less than 700 yards downstream a sewage treatment plant sends a fine clear stream of treated water out of a 18" pipe. The telltale sign, however, was the school of bass feeding on the outwash. There must have been at least 20 16" or longer bass. Soon the stench hit me, but this soon departed on the crisp autumn-like breeze.

Just as I was thinking that there was a notable lack of wildlife, what I believe to be an osprey gave three short descending whistles and swooped down to retrieve his supper. From then on, the birds gave me a great show, with herons, ducks, two ospreys, kingfishers and finally, swifts.



Osprey?

On the left bank, I soon noticed the clay bank giving way to an incoming stream – the Big Walnut Creek. Now the combined flow of the Scioto and Olentangy joined with the Big Walnut to give the Scioto the aspect of a fine Midwestern river. With an average 6 foot depth or more, I could picture a steam boat struggling up river during times of high water. But that was only a figment of my imagination, and probably was not possible!



Confluence of the Scioto and Big Walnut Creek

After another half mile, the Picway Power Plant of American Electric Power came into view. This plant produces electricity, but from the river, it almost appears shutdown.



The river splits below the power plant, and I chose the right branch, since my takeout point at the bridge would be on that side, and I wasn't sure that the bridge didn't cross an island. It was a wise choice, as I had a nice rapid current for this passage until the other branches joined back together just above the bridge.



I took out, loaded up everything (including my paddles!) and headed back up to Shadeville to retrieve the bicycle. After a little reconnoitering for the next leg, I headed cross-country to find I-71 by following the sunset. I arrived back in Cincinnati at 9:45 PM.