

<http://rapids.americanwhitewater.org/rivers/id/1687/>

Youghiogheny, PA  
 6. Lower (Ohiopyle to Bruner Run)  
 Class III  
 7.4 Miles  
 Avg Gradient 25 fpm  
 Max Gradient 45 fpm  
 Gauge Information  
 PA Youghiogheny River at Ohiopyle, PA 1.98 ft 1050 cfs usgs  
 5/16 7:00

Min Sug. Level: 1.2 ft  
 Max Sug. Level: 9 ft

Description:  
 The above gage is the virtual Ohiopyle Gage, based on some old data butt probably quite reliable. It's based on the Confluence gage (minimum: 1.7'; max: 8'). You can get the official Ohiopyle level from the USACE gage.

Class IV at 4 ft (on the Ohiopyle gage). Fast, bigwater at 6 ft.  
 You can get a prediction of the weekend's level on the Yough by clicking here (usually updated Thursday).

River Description  
 Note: except for Ohiopyle Falls weekend, it is illegal to run Ohiopyle Falls.  
 Alternate takeout: the Loop, about a mile and a half downstream of the putin. This allows the paddler to run the first few rapids through Railroad without having to run shuttle. The trail out is steep, but quite hikeable. The Loop has the most gradient of the run.

Directions to Ohiopyle:

From the PA Turnpike (I-76):  
 Take Exit 9 (Donegal). Go left at the end of the off-ramp.  
 A couple of miles down the road, turn Right onto Rt. 381. Continue for several miles until you reach the T intersection.  
 Go left at the T intersection, staying on Rt. 381. Continue for several miles.  
 After crossing the railroad and the river, you're in Ohiopyle. Turn left up the hill and park.

From Washington, DC:  
 Take I-270 to I-70 West.  
 In Hancock, take I-68 West toward WV.  
 In Keyzers Ridge (near the Savage River), take US 219 North, and after about a mile, take US 40 West.  
 After about 20 miles, in Farmington, bang a Right onto PA 381. After about 4 miles, you're in Ohiopyle, ready to change and shuttle!

(Shortcut: on Rte. 40, turn right on DinnerBell-Ohiopyle Road shortly after Glissan's Restaurant, at the Priestly Ridge School sign. Dinner Bell Road will take you right into 381 North.) Permit from Ohiopyle State Park is needed to run the Lower Yough on weekends from April 1 until October 15. Call 724-329-8591 or, tool-free, 888-727-2757. (The permit is not necessary if you put in after 3 PM or before 7:45 AM.) It costs \$2.50; a season's pass is also available. In addition, those who take out at Bruner Run on weekends must buy a bus token for \$3.00. The bus token will get you to the top of the hill, but not back to Ohiopyle. (In other words, you still have to run shuttle.)

Note: Dimple Rapid has a very dangerous undercut, which has killed at least two people, maybe as many as five; in the year 2000, three people died in this vicinity! Novices, including those renting inflatable duckies, should seriously consider sneaking or portaging! Read Charlie Walbridge's report on a low-water, park-sponsored scouting expedition to Dimple Rock!

Rapid Summary

Mile	Rapid Name	Class	Features
0.0	Entrance	III	Putin Playspot
0.1	Cucumber	III	
0.4	Piddy	I	
0.5	Camel and Walrus	II+	
0.6	Eddy Turn	II+	
0.7	Dartmouth	II+	
1.0	Railroad	III	Takeout Playspot
3.0	Dimple	III	Hazard
3.2	Swimmer's	III	Playspot
3.8	Bottle of Wine	II+	
4.4	Double Hydraulic	III	
4.6	River's End	III+	Hazard
5.2	Schoolhouse Rock	II+	
5.8	Stairstep	II+	
6.2	Killer Falls		Waterfall
6.8	Maze	II+	
7.4	Bruner Run	II+	Takeout

Rapid Descriptions  
 Entrance (Class III, Mile 0.0)  
 One of the best and most technical of the Lower Yough rapids, this one is playful! Playhogs can easily spend an hour in this rapid. Start in the middle, head right of center (but not too far right, if you don't want a trashing in Bryson's Hole!), and then work your way left.

Cucumber (Class III, Mile 0.1)  
 The biggest drop on the Lower Yough, and not a good place to flip. There's a submerged rock that'll clock ya upside the head if you invert. The tailwaves have some play potential.

Piddy (Class I, Mile 0.4)  
 Easy. The pourover "play hole" on the right is a bit spanky, though.

Camel and Walrus (Class II+, Mile 0.5)  
 Head between the rocks. The second rock, "Walrus," has an excellent boof opportunity. Boof it from the right side into the hole. Niche!

Eddy Turn (Class II+, Mile 0.6)  
 All rocks and eddies. Pick your way down. Enjoy!

Dartmouth (Class II+, Mile 0.7)  
 A smaller version of Entrance. There's a big playhole at the bottom, but you risk being stuck in there when a raft has a bead on your pink liddle bod.

Railroad (Class III, Mile 1.0)  
 One of the more technical rapids in the Loop, this one involves a cut to the right of Charlie's Washing Machine, which may be the best cartwheelin' playhole on the river. An alternate line is to ride the "Frog's Back" slot between two boulders just to the right of the main line. The Loop takeout is on the right. After Railroad come two miles of Doldrums, punctuated by Dimple Rock.

Dimple (Class III, Mile 3.0)  
 The most dangerous spot on the Lower Yough, Dimple Rock was the site of three deaths in 2000. All were rafters or kayakers in inflatables. The normal line is far river left, cutting right into the eddy just upstream of Dimple Rock. There's a sneak to the right of "Vulture Rock" and "Pinball Rock" for those who want to take no chances. The easiest portage is the rock beach on river right.  
 Check out a great bunch of photos, showing the line at Dimple, by clicking here.

Swimmer's (Class III, Mile 3.2)  
 One of the most famous playholes in the Eastern US. Downstream of the hole are some nice tailwaves, too.  
 Rafters get a big kick out of jumping into the water from a rock not far above Swimmer's Hole and swimming through it.

Bottle of Wine (Class II+, Mile 3.8)  
 A fairly easy rapid. You can take the river-right line between two boulders, riding a wave train down.

Double Hydraulic (Class III, Mile 4.4)  
 As the name implies... The first hole is a pourover ledge, the worst of which can be avoided towards the center of the river. The second hole is playable, but trashy at lower levels. Around 3.5', the second hole is a smooth wave.

River's End (Class III+, Mile 4.6)  
 Perhaps the toughest rapid on the Lower Yough, this one has a couple of rocks with pinning potential. The normal line is to start in the center, and work strongly to eddy out behind the big rock on the left.

Schoolhouse Rock (Class II+, Mile 5.2)  
 A fairly easy rapid with a playable wave train. There's a neat attainment move in a slot between the huge Schoolhouse Rock and a small rock just downstream of it.

Stairstep (Class II+, Mile 5.8)  
 This is one of the easier rapids. The normal line is to take the wave train down the river-left side.

Killer Falls  
 This one is bad. Nasty. Dangerous.  
 This rapid is so scary, that it's too scary to look at. Therefore, it's traditional to run it backwards.

Maze (Class II+, Mile 6.8)  
 This is more fun than difficult, as you find your own route through the boulders on river left.

Bruner Run (Class II+, Mile 7.4)  
 Watch out for the Gates of Hell at the beginning; they're just close enough to two-point broach older, longer boats. Right of the big rock in the center of the river are a bunch of

waves. There are some cool ferry moves here, if you still have energy, and some of the waves are good play, especially at higher levels. Take out left, and hike yer boat up to the bus. You didn't forget your bus token, did you?

#### User Comments

Brad Roberts 2003-07-13 20:25:17  
From Boygenius on Boatertalk:

Bridge Hole on the Lower Yough: (6.5-higher on the Ohio pyle gauge???)

After that awesomely fun spot, I drove up through Friendsville up to Ohio pyle. I arrived at 5:00 or so and some friendly, but seemingly burn-out local raft guides turned me on to a hole on the Lower Yough just under the bridge above the falls. After checking it out, I hopped in for a great time. The hole is very wide, fairly shallow, kind of scary in a way, but great for hole-moves. It's a pour-over hole with a very uniform ledge, which might even be man-made. The surfer's right side is very shallow, but it's not too hard to surf over to the left side where it's deeper and has a small wave for a shoulder. This spot is REALLY reneventive--in fact the only real eddy is in the backwash of the hole, which you just paddle up in to from directly behind! It's easy to surf your way out either corner, though. When the hole's good (it was a hair higher on Saturday), you can link endless (and I mean endless 20+ points) ends to the left, clean and super clean to the right, split both way, hit small loops, and I even was hitting lefty tricky-wu's in it--which I've never done before! You can blunt and backstab right off the surfer's left shoulder wave, and rides can last just about as long as you want them to. Moves are smooth and in-control here. What a great time!!! I appreciated finally having a few other boaters around here...playboating is just more fun with others!

How to get there:

In Ohio pyle, either park at the take-out for the loop or simply walk there with your boat. You can see the hole from the road's bridge across the river upstream of the falls. It's the largest of the holes in the area and is more or less in the middle of the river almost directly under the bridge. Put-in on the river right side in a BIG eddy and surf your way across to the big, turbulent eddy/backwash of the hole. This backwash/eddy is large enough for 3 or 4 boaters to wait in while a paddler plays. Because of it's proximity to Ohio pyle falls, this is not a safe place to play for any playboater who might potentially swim. Also the hole can be very grabby in the middle and if you're not comfortable moving your boat around side-to-side in a large hole, this might not be a good place to play.

Entrance Wave on the Lower Yough (6.9 and under...best at 6.3ish on the Ohio pyle gauge)

After playing the hole under the bridge for about an hour, I walked across the bridge down the the put-in for the lower Yough to surf entrance. The river was totally empty of other boaters, giving me the wave all to myself! It's on the river-right at the top of entrance rapid. This wave is AWESOME!!! It breaks consistantly on the surfer's left and hole moves are possible here, then turns into this STEEP, BIG, GLASSY wave on the surfer's right side. When it winds up to it's highest, it's probably every bit of 4 or 5 feet high! It was rising and starting to green out on me friday night, but that didn't keep me from hitting my first ever Helix to the right there! This spot seriously rules. On Saturday, I threw ends both ways, split at least once, clean spun, big air-looped, blunted left, flip-turned, and helixed all in one ride!!! The eddy on river right is smaller and more turbulent, but right next to the wave. There is a HUGE eddy river left, but it's farther accross the river. I had more fun at this spot than any of the others on Friday: it just gave up huge bounces and awesome air-moves. Who would have known that something like this was on the lower Yough!!!! There was no one else around...I LOVE WV...er, PA!

How to get there:

Put in at Ohio pyle at the standard put-in below the falls, paddle downstream about 200 yards, in the first wave-train on the river right, you will see the breaking, happy wave with an eddy to it's river right side. You can easily carry back up to your car at the put-in by heading up the river left eddy and walking back up the short gravel access road to the put-in. It's only a 4-minute walk!

Saturday was so much fun paddling the lower yough with my good friends Brian and Kristin. What a great weekend. Back in time for church on Sunday. Enjoy these spots!!!

Stephen Wright  
Team Prijon

<http://www.threerivers.org/yough.htm>

#### Youghiogheny River

The "Yough", which consists of several significant segments, is the local, summer river of TRPC. Segments include:

- \* Top Yough (class IV-V)
- \* Upper Yough (Class IV-V)
- \* Middle Yough (Class II)
- \* Lower Yough (Class III-IV)

#### Lower Yough

The Lower Yough is one of the local summer hangouts. It is dam controlled, so has reliable water just about year round. Because of this, and all of the commercial and "self-guided" raft and ducky traffic, the park has instituted access controls. During the season, it will cost you \$2.50 for a launch permit. During the week, it will cost you and additional \$2.50 to be shuttled by bus from Bruner Run up to the upper parking lot. In past years, there has been a season pass available for around \$20. Oh, and the launch permits are by reservation only, and there are rumors that they will only be available from the PA Parks central reservations system this year.

#### Access

There is a single put-in access for the Lower Yough, on river left, across the street from the Boater's Change House (or, what you get for your \$2.50). There are two available take-outs. One is the "Loop" take-out, which accesses a 1-mile stretch of river. Shuttle is not required here, as a 1/4 mile walk brings you back to where you started. The other take-out is Bruner Run.

#### Shuttle

The shuttle route takes you from the Private Boater's Change house downriver (left) on Route 381. Shortly, you will encounter a road entering on the right (near Cucumber Run). Follow this road through the park, across one stop sign (at the State Park campgrounds), and on until the road ends. This is the upper parking lot. If you are lucky, and the gate isn't closed, you can take the road just before the parking down down to the actual take-out. The shuttle takes less than a half hour

#### The River

This is one of the great play rivers of the east. The entire river can be run in about 4 hours at normal levels, but your play habits may stretch this out significantly. In fact, during the summer, it is common to have a group put on after 3:00 pm, and take off the river AT THE LOOP (1 mile away) at DARK.

Some places to pay attention to include: Cucumber Run (the second rapid, but the first rapid, Entrance, is REALLY long, so it feels farther away). Railroad (at the loop takeout) has one significant hole (Charlie's Washing Machine) that has delivered beatings in the past. Dimple rapid has a significant undercut (Dimple Rock, on the left). There is also a significant pin opportunity at River's End. All this being said, the most significant obstruction is probably all of the floating undercuts (rafts). Sometimes, you just feel like you are being targeted.

If the Yough is too high for comfort, try the Casselman.

#### Lodging

There is a Youth Hostel in Ohio pyle. There are also a few rooms available above the falls market. There is also the State Park campground, which does not allow any alcohol. Other places to camp include Benner's Meadow Run and Scarlet Knob campgrounds. There is another, unlicensed campground across the road from Scarlett Knob that is also available, but be discrete. Other lodging is available along Route 40 to the south.