

BARRY TESSMAN RIVER RUNNER

Rivers run through Barry Tessman's life like blood through veins. The lure of white water has taken the 33-year-old Californian all over the world, from southern Chile to the heights of Nepal. His 1989 visit to a turbulent Soviet Union ended up lasting two years so he could join Russian adventurers in the exploration of Siberia, central Asia, and the Caucasus by raft and kayak—and chalk up perhaps a dozen first descents of wild rivers by a non-native. But Tessman, whose photographs appear in *Outside* magazine and the Patagonia catalog, hasn't neglected domestic waters. He regularly runs his home state's unruly Kings River, shown here as a fellow catamaraner negotiates its infamous "That's Dumb" rapid. Tessman pulled out his boat and scrambled downstream over slippery rocks to get the shot. "Taking a picture is a good excuse to stop and scope out a rapid," he says. "You can get a better ride that way." Stopping to examine his surroundings is an important part of Tessman's adventure style. His most memorable river trips are the ones that combine a physical challenge with extraordinary visuals. "The Futaleufu River in Chile was one of my all-time favorites," he says. "The water is a pure aqua blue, and the mountains are pristine." Yet the photographer reports that such virgin waters are increasingly remote. Says Tessman, "It seems as if I have to travel farther for the kind of adventure in which I don't already know what's out there."

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