



CANOE NEWS



Racing Tips by Peter Heed

Builder Profile: Daryl Remmler / Think Kayaks

Paddler Profile: Roxanne Barton



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From the Editor:

Welcome to the Winter Edition of Canoe News! Many of us are now looking out on frozen lakes and rivers, doing alternative workouts and thinking about our return to the water come Spring. Hopefully this edition of Canoe News will give you a bit of a lift during your down times, while perhaps even helping you plan your strategies for the next race season. Be sure to read Peter Heed's racing tips, along with some interesting interviews with Roxanne Barton and Think Kayak's Daryl Remmler. This year the Aluminum Nations are coming March 4th and 5th, so no slackin'!

Keep paddling strong!

Steve

Cover Photo: Top Surf Ski Racer Sean Rice paddling the Think Uno Max (photo courtesy of Daryl Remmler).

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VIEW FROM THE STERN

USCA PRESIDENT PETER HEED

THERE IS SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT OUR SPORT

It is the Holiday season. For many paddlers in the northern states, this is also the “off season”: a time to ski, cycle, run, weight train, and pursue other activities. Yet many paddlers put on warm gear and stay out on the rivers and lakes right up until those waters freeze over. Thoughts of the past race season and our National Championship events remain fresh, and most racers are already starting to plan their training and line up potential partners for next season’s races.

Year after year, I observe this same process play out. It is clear that paddling and racing marathon canoes and kayaks holds a special place in all of our lives. We all live it and breath it. Our sport takes hold of you. It is a passion, and once you are exposed to marathon canoe and kayak paddling, it is hard to let it go.

I often find myself reflecting on the source of this special feeling -

this unique place in our hearts - we all have for paddling a marathon racing canoe or kayak. I suppose that everyone has their own reasons. Yet after more than 40 years of competitive paddling, I have come to agree with renowned author and conservationist, Sigurd Olson, that there is a certain “magic” we all experience while paddling.

“There is magic in the feel of a paddle and the movement of a canoe, a magic compounded of distance, adventure, solitude, and peace.” Sigurd Olson. A canoe or kayak and a paddle - a basic craft and a simple tool. Yet, as Olson knew so well, there is indeed magic in the feel of a paddle moving a canoe or kayak through water.

And if that hull happens to be slender and well designed - like our racing canoes and kayaks - you add the dimension of speed. In relative terms, you may only be going 6 to 8 miles per hour, but when you are out on the water paddling a beautifully efficient canoe or kayak, it feels as if you are flying. Bringing a racing canoe or kayak up to speed, watching and sensing as it seems to dance across the water, is

a special thrill. It keeps you coming back for more!

There is a unique intimacy to it all. The close connectedness between hull and water is intense and immediate. Just a short single or double bladed paddle makes the racer one with the water, while transmitting the paddler’s motive power. Your hands get wet and you literally feel the liquid medium through which you propel your hull forward. This is so unlike the more distant sensation one gets by rowing with large oars or while letting the wind do the work in sailing. In paddling, you are “up close and personal” with the action, and your connectedness to the boat and to the water is part of the magic.

I sense that another source of the “magic” comes from the historical origins of the boats we race. Paddle any canoe or kayak for any distance and you are partaking in one of the oldest transportation rituals on the North American Continent. These simple yet versatile hulls have undergone surprisingly few changes from the early Native

American and Eskimo designs of centuries ago. Clearly, we are not the first to feel the magic.

Marathon canoe and kayak racing is also special in that it provides a unique endurance experience where the focus is mainly on the muscles of the arms, back, and torso (core), together with the cardiovascular system. Think about it. What other endurance sport relies exclusively on the upper body for propulsion? The classic endurance sports such as running, cycling, cross-country skiing, and triathlon combine cardiovascular endurance with muscular endurance of the lower body, especially the legs. And even though there is an upper body component in cross-country skiing and swimming, the heavy bulk of the propulsion chores is carried by the legs. On the other hand, in canoe and kayak racing the musculature of the upper body is stressed totally and almost exclusively for hours on end. This unique sport is, in fact, one of the only safe havens for the non-running endurance athlete.

No, you don't need superior leg speed to be a successful marathon canoe or kayak racer. In fact, except for long portages, running ability is just about irrelevant. Not the fastest kid on the block? Have a gimpy knee or hip from an old injury or too many miles pounding

on the pavement? Canoe and kayak racing is for you.

Another important factor for most canoe and kayak racers is that the training experience is so pleasant and enjoyable. No matter how many competitions you enter each season, the majority of your time in the boat will be spent training. We all quickly come to realize that there is no better way to relax and get alone with your thoughts than to be out in your canoe or kayak on any body of water. It is a life-enhancing activity which provides you with an opportunity to be close to nature while experiencing the sensory pleasures of gliding through a liquid medium.

We all soon notice how different and lovely the world can look from river level. Even when rivers and streams flow through residential and urban areas, the perspective from the seat of a canoe or kayak is so different that the world takes on a whole new appearance. Views of all sorts of wildlife are commonplace. For a few glorious moments you feel removed from the hectic day-to-day activities and demands of the modern world and its electronic devices. Canoe and kayak training is not only good for the body - but also the soul.

One of the most special aspects about the sport of marathon canoe

and kayak racing is the high level of commitment to good sportsmanship exhibited by nearly all competitors. This was one of the first lessons for me early on in my racing experience. Competitors would often come up to me after races and give me valuable suggestions on how to improve my technique or my training. This certainly was not what I had grown accustomed to in other competitive sports. Canoe and kayak racing is, by and large, a self-coached sport, and most of the experienced paddlers will tell you that they learned much of what know about racing from the advice and guidance of other racers. This "helping your competitor" attitude is one of the great traditions of our sport. It is part of the magic.

As you probably have guessed by now, I confess that I'd rather be out paddling a racing canoe on some river than just about anything else in the world. Many of my friends like to kid me by telling me that I am just not good at anything else. Others think that I just enjoy getting out of the office and away from the stresses and demands of everyday life. The truth is very simple. Like Sigurd Olson, I feel the "magic." I am confident that you do as well.

Peter Heed

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EATING CROW

BILL KANOST

I have always found first race stories rather amusing, but mine may be a little to the embarrassing side. I had never been in a canoe before, so when the local car rental place decided to put on a canoe race it sounded like just the thing to try. They were putting up \$200 for the winners and since I knew nothing about canoeing what could possibly go wrong? At 18 years of age we were very good at math so the plan was to buy a cheap canoe for \$150 or so, win the race, and it's paid for. What a plan! We bought a 15 foot American Fiber-light canoe that weighed 80 pounds

or so, thinking that would be just fine. My partner was left handed so he said that he felt better paddling on his left side and I naturally felt better on my right, so that is how we paddled. I was a little concerned about a 17 mile race with no experience, but my worries were quickly set aside when we got to the race. There were two fellows from out of town with a canoe that we thought was much too long for this twisty course and when they warmed up we were sure they were not a problem. They couldn't even decide which side they wanted to paddle on. Back and forth they

went; this would be easier than we first thought. Well we kept those fellows in sight for a little while until we started cramping and falling back, but we did finish second and won a whopping \$50. The guys that won were in some sort of club that raced all over the place and they told us about a race in Winamac Indiana a few weeks later. Perfect we thought, a chance to redeem ourselves. There was a very nice family from Michigan and many more teams who switched back and forth from side to side at that race, and as you can imagine our education about the sport was just beginning. We did learn about switching and the never ending need for better equipment from the race sponsor. Thank you John! Some 45 years later I still enjoy racing and all of the people I have met. I am still looking for the next faster canoe and still not making much of a living at this. The first canoe, however, is nearly paid for! I am continuing to work on my math and hope to see everyone in the Spring. Paddle on. Bill



Have a great story for the Eating Crow column? Send it to the Editor for consideration!



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OLD KAYAKERS JUST LOSE A BLADE

STEVEN HORNEY

Old Unlimited Kayak racers don't retire – they become canoeists. Or so it appeared from the makeup of the gang that assaulted the St. Joe River at the St. Joe River Canoe & Kayak races in South Bend, Indiana this past September. With the entire participant roster composed of entries into either canoe or sea kayak classes, we appear to have accomplished the long-sought goal of some within the USCA: class simplification. The reasons varied as to why we had no K1 Open/Unlimited entries this year, but a surprising number centered around the pain experienced while operating a double-bladed paddle. All of which was unfortunate for Ted Beatty, who showed up with both a canoe and his down-river kayak, hoping for the traditional end-of-year K1 match between Ted and me. But with the rest of us paddling canoe of some sort (mostly C1's, but the Gilmans were in a C2 and I was in an OC1), Ted yielded to peer pressure and paddled C1 as well. As it turned out, Ted and I had the closest race we've ever had (or probably could have) paddling the single blade, but I'll get to that in a moment.

Saturday morning dawned...uh... overcast and cool, but actually quite perfect for a hard-core paddle race. The water was still decently warm, and with temps in the upper

60's and the sun blocked we found that overheating wasn't a problem; neither were we cold as has happened at this race on a number of occasions. For several of the paddlers – namely those who relish high doses of early morning pain in the same manner that most mere mortals relish a cup of coffee early in the day – the warm-up for the water races began with a 5K (or, more commonly, 24.855 furlongs) run in quest of the coveted iron-man (or woman) award. Competitors at this race found themselves confronted with a bevy of options: running-only race, biathlon with a 3 mile paddle, biathlon with a 7.2 mile paddle, Iron-person with two 7.2 mile paddles, 3 mile rec paddling race, and 3 and 7.2 mile competitive paddling races. Just sign on the dotted line... Not being a runner, and coming from afar (Julie and I were camping near Silver Dunes, MI), I avoided that section of the competition, but it was exciting to watch the racers finish after I arrived. Matt Meersman easily took first, but the exciting race was between Ted Beatty and Ken Stelter, with only 1 second between their finish times. A true "photo finish" and just a taste of things to come for Ted...

Launching our frail craft into the clear waters of the St. Joe River, we could sense the excitement building that can

only be found in the heat of intense competition. With a moderate current, perfect temperatures, very little breeze, and good water levels we were set for some excellent racing as we lined up across from the dock. Situated between Matt Meersman to my left and the Gilmans to my right, I could hear just behind me and to my left the quiet voice of Bill "Cannonball" Kanost taunting me, asking how well that OC1 could accelerate. I had come too far to just meander off the line with that challenge. Immediately upon hearing the command "GO!" I made good use of the OC1's stability and my aggressive paddle, laying into it for all I was worth. I think the water caught fire around boat; she leaped off the line, pulled ahead of everyone else, and charged headlong for the bridge, hitting 9 mph indicated on the GPS before it was time to settle down. I knew there was no way for me to sustain that pace, but looking good off the line is what counts. Right?

As I backed off, Matt Meersman pulled past me, running a steady but fast pace. Charging hard off the line put me in good position to latch onto his wake, of which I freely availed myself for quite a ways on the journey down to the first turn bridge, with Ted Beatty hanging onto my wake. Meanwhile, the Gilman's weren't sitting

still: they pulled their beautiful strip-wood C2 alongside Matt, revved their engines a bit, and the race was on. As Matt charged off to keep his lead over the Gilmans, I couldn't stay in his wake, so I drifted over to grab the wake of the Gilmans, but they too were running a bit fast for me to hang on for any length of time. Meanwhile, "Cannonball Kanost" was making time a little further to my left, seeking to work his way up to the Meersman/Gilman juggernaut. No real surprises here; I knew all of those characters were fast with the single blade; what surprised me was what I saw next: a UFO! No, but close: Paul Kane was moving up on my right, and he was moving that canoe in a way that was beyond what I expected. I tagged onto Paul's wake and rode it to the bridge, where I put the nose of the OC1 into the water right behind the bridge pylon, kicked the rudder hard, and let the current swing the tail right around, putting me ahead of Paul's wider-turning C1. But now the game changed: we were heading upstream, balancing running the typically slower shallows that were near shore with the advantage of keeping out of the current, against running the deeper, faster waters further away from the shore but fighting stronger current. The disadvantage for me is my OC1 doesn't do as well in the shallows and Paul caught back up after a bit, passing me. But from there we all pretty much held position up to the island.

Kamm's Island. It has such a romantic sound to it that you can almost hear Tattoo of *Fantasy Island* yelling "Boss! The plane! The plane!" But to paddle racers Kamm's island is either

a dreaded foe or a cherished friend. With a combination of significantly boosted current, shallows, and sometimes obstructions beneath the water, it can make or break your race (usually the latter for me). Heading towards the island, I was staying ahead of Ted Beatty who couldn't close the distance on me. Ted made a better choice in timing at the point where he decided to switch sides of the river, closing a lot of distance, but I still led as we came into the channel around the island. Ted is a local, knowing the island well, and as we entered the channel he upped his game, intently focused on getting around my OC1. My primary advantage at this point was the width of the boat with the outrigger; it kept Ted at bay in the narrow channel for a significant part of the journey.

As we approached a downed tree cutting off half the channel, I knew I needed to keep my lead, so I accelerated hard and held him off through the passage. Once passed the tree, however, Ted laid the hammer down and managed to slip by me, building up some serious distance in the process. I played it conservatively going around the top of the island, wanting to preserve my boat and rudder from the very shallow, high-current tip of the island that has laid many a boat to waste. (I think the wreckage of the Edmund Fitzgerald may be there somewhere.) Working back into the channel I was dismayed to see Ted now an eighth of a mile or so ahead of me. But things were in my favor; the OC1 loves deep, fast water and I saw my speeds climb back to serious levels – usually between 7 and 8 mph or

more. I knew I had the speed now but did I have the distance to reel Ted back in? The others were too far gone but Ted was a possible target, so it was time to light the boiler – and keep directly behind him so he wouldn't know where I was. My strategy paid off. I caught Ted about the time we got to the last bridge before the finish line and pulled up beside him. Now we had a horse race, in spite of the lack of equine stock anywhere nearby. I pulled the nose of the OC1 ahead of the black carbon C1 as we approached the line, but Ted wasn't about to back off. We were both giving it our all, muscles crying out in agony, sweat pouring down our faces, paddles slamming the water as hard and fast as our over-exerted arms and bodies could move them. Just before the line, I desperately wanted to switch sides with the paddle, but knew I couldn't take the time hit to make the switch this close to the end. With boats bumping together Ted gave his boat several heroic strokes and literally pulled that carbon C1 bow dead even the bow of my OC1 as we screamed across the line. It may have been the closest race in the history of this race. What a way to finish! Though we were some distance behind the leaders, our race-within-a-race was one incredible adrenaline-boosting experience rivaling anything I've ever done. I think I need a nap after just recalling this race ...

NOTE from the Asst. Editor: Steve delights Indiana paddlers with colorful race reports all season long. Follow him on Facebook and join in the fun starting this Spring!

BUILDER PROFILE—THINK KAYAKS

STEVEN HORNEY



The explosive growth in surf ski paddling occurring over the past 10 years or so has both fueled and been fueled by the appearance of several new boat manufacturers. One of the scrappiest of these companies is no doubt Think Kayak, a real innovator in the surf ski world. I recently caught up with Daryl Remmler, founder and owner of Think Kayak, and found some fascinating information about his background and the start of Think Kayak.

CN: I really appreciate the opportunity to hear about the founding of Think Kayak and the directions in which you're headed. But first, tell us a little about yourself – how did you get into paddling, what areas really “lit your jets,” etc.

Daryl: I grew up in southern Ontario, Canada in a paddling family; my dad moved over from Finland and was a keen paddler before moving to Canada. And although I don't remember my grandparents paddling, apparently they were ac-

tive paddlers before coming to Canada as well. Essentially all our family had a paddling background.

I started paddling regularly around 1970, at a time when paddling was quite popular. I soon joined the Ontario Voyagers Kanu Club which, in spite of the name, was primarily composed of kayakers. Due to our geographical location we predominantly paddled rivers and lakes, but through the river side I got very involved in whitewater paddling. By 1977 I was racing downriver /

wildwater, advancing to the point that I raced in the provincial championships. But then I drifted away from whitewater racing and became more involved in river expeditions, trips, and such. In 1986 I moved to the west coast of Canada and got back into white water racing. In 1989 I raced downriver for Team Canada in the White Water World Championships in Maryland. This was really an exciting event with world class paddlers (the USA had a top notch team at the time) and a hugely positive feel about the whole thing. I made the 1991 World Championship team and raced in Yugoslavia on the Bovec River, traveling with the USA team (which included some of the very top racers in the world). The Canadian team didn't really exist because paddlers were self-funded and most couldn't afford the travel. Following the downriver events I stayed a little longer to watch the slalom events, which were conducted right afterwards. Four days after the World Championship finished, the Ljubljana Airport was blown away by war and Yugoslavia (as a nation) ceased to exist a short while later. It was kind of a strange feeling to be back home and watching the war on the news, happening in a place you were racing at only days earlier. At any rate, that World Championship was pretty much the end of white-water racing for me.

In 1990 I discovered surf skis (I was into anything paddled with a kayak paddle!) A gang of us from Vancouver went down to the Alcatraz

race and saw this unique boat that you sat on top of for sale for \$999. It was a Chalupsky. Not many had even seen a surf ski in the USA at the time, not to mention in Canada. I bought it. It was quite a tank and didn't really fit me, but I got really hooked on the boats at the time. I found out that surf skis were available from a few places like Valhalla in California, Findeisen in Florida, and some others, and then I found out about Shearwater in Florida and I bought one of their skis. That was really the beginning of a lifelong passion with surf skis. It opened up a whole new set of experiences for me. Prior to that I had almost always been on inland waters; the ocean was something entirely new and it offered quite a challenge - and a lot of fun! I started doing ocean kayak tripping as well as surf ski paddling. It was a really great, fun, time.

I was still doing some paddling with decked kayaks but I realized at some point that it was safer to be in a ski in bigger water than in a decked kayak because it's so much easier to remount when things go wrong. About 14 years ago I put away my last decked boat and stayed exclusively with surf skis.

CN: You have quite a fascinating background! So how did Think Kayaks come out of all that?

Daryl: In my work life I had finished my university degree and picked up a job as a sales rep in the sporting goods industry - a job I greatly enjoyed. During this time I

went from paddling a Fenn XT to a Huki SIX, and then into the Epic V10L - probably one of the first V10L's in North America. The Huki was a good boat but the seat just didn't work for me (this was when the boats were fixed-length and my boat didn't quite fit me.) I paddled the V10L for a couple of years quite happily with no thought of being in that side of the industry. Prior to the arrival of the SIX and V10 type skis, a lot of people were getting into surf skis and the Speedster by Current Designs (designed by Greg Barton) was one of the few readily available. It was essentially a long K1 with a surf ski deck which, as you might imagine, was not an easy boat to paddle; less experienced paddlers got discouraged by it. Even though the Epics and Hukis that followed were easier to paddle, they weren't an easy enough step to encourage paddlers back into skis. It was a big jump from a stable sea kayak to a V10. Epic then brought out the V10 Sport. I was excited to see the new and more stable Sport: I thought it would really bring the paddlers back. I had one of the first, but I didn't really find it that much more stable than the V10L. I was disappointed that it wasn't stable enough for the people I knew and at that point I decided to build a surf ski for my friends. I knew the industry well and had connections, including overseas manufacturers. So I developed the first Evo and brought it out in Spring of 2007. I had no intentions of it going any further than just providing a boat for my friends.

Stewart O'Regan in Australia heard about the Evo and asked to get some. So I built a few for him. He ordered a couple hundred in the first year. Suddenly the surf ski manufacturing became much bigger than anticipated. I liked my job and wasn't sure I wanted to change my path. So initially I incorporated with a friend to found Think Kayak. He was to run the business while I continued in my job. My friend then had a change in life circumstances in the first year, resulting in the business coming back entirely to me. I continued to try to balance my job with Think for a few more years. I basically worked Think as a night job, while cutting back on my rep work. It worked ok while I just had one kid at home. But that would change...

The next boats to be developed were the Fit and the Legend; both about the same time (Fall of 2007 for appearance in Spring of 2008). The Legend was to be a race boat; the Fit was designed to be a marathon/training boat that could be used in the winter with a skirt (a geography-based boat). I kept the boat within the same 17' length as ICF boats, but incorporated a surf ski cockpit with a rim and gave it additional width/stability (it was 20" wide). I thought it would be a game-changing boat to bring paddlers out of sea kayaks, but it didn't really quite work that way.

The Legend was an unusual design for the surf ski world, with hard chines and flatter bottom – a product of my white-water background. It

worked really well in certain water conditions, but not so well in other conditions. Paddlers were divided over the boat: some loved it and some hated it. But now with 3 boats in the line all were selling well enough that I needed to create a real brand out of Think. I developed the Uno in the Fall of 2008 to be delivered in 2009. With the Uno I was developing a top-end race boat. The chines of the Legend were toned down but still there and I gave the boat more taper in the rear than many other surf skis. The boat was ridiculously fast! It wasn't the best surfing boat, but it was very fast on flat water and very fast-moving from wave-to-wave. It had to be paddled a little differently than other skis but for those who knew how to work with it, the Uno was capable of race-winning performance. At the same time as the Uno came out, Think teamed up with elite surf ski

racer Sean Rice which was a huge boost. With Sean's wins the Uno was well-accepted as a great race boat. It put Think "on the map."

I left my rep job and went full time with Think in November 2009. Shortly thereafter my family and I went on a trip to Thailand, NZ, and Australia. I was manufacturing in China and thinking of moving production to Thailand. Shifting production turned out to be much more challenging than I thought. Some people promised what they couldn't do, not realizing the job of building a 20 ft. long boat at 25 lbs. is very challenging. It almost put me out of business, since I was only able to manufacture a very small number of reasonable quality boats and I had to cover a number of boats under warranty. It was a hard mistake to learn, but some people really stood by me and kept me going - including the team in China, who took me



Daryl Remmler testing the Think Eze.



Uno Max top view.

back without any problems and worked to improve the product at the same time. The positive outcome was the team in China really “got it” – they figured out I wanted to build a better product, not a cheaper one, and our boat quality has taken a big jump ever since.

CN: Think has a reputation for pushing the envelope a bit. Tell me about some of your innovations and the design philosophy behind your boats.

Daryl: Thank you – when we see a niche we strive to fill it with a quality product. Some of the changes are big but others are more gradual.

The Uno, for instance, was a very fast boat, but the boat was smallish for bigger paddlers. The Uno Max was developed at the end of 2010/ Spring 2011 to create a bigger volume version for larger paddlers and to give a drier ride. The hull was always being tweaked, but it always followed the same basic lines. We found the chines/flatter bottom/lower rocker profile of the Legend gave us a lot of what we were looking for; we refined these features in the development of the Uno. The Uno has a flatter section on the hull that really gives a lot of excellent glide and speed on the waves. The hull is optimized for moving quickly from wave to wave, even more so

than surfing. Our stern is a lower volume tail than some of the other boats. It allows the boats to accelerate very quickly. You have to paddle it differently than say a V10, but it works very well if you know how to paddle it. Nothing was faster on the flats when it was introduced. Now it makes it a very good all-around winning design.

Think was the first company to add handles to the boats. A number of people told us it would never catch on. Now handles are almost universal. We were also the first ones to have a closable bailer (we used a plug in the bailer) but now everyone is doing it.

The River Layup came about due to demand by dealers in NZ and Sweden where they have some seriously challenging races over rocky rivers. Using a carbon-Kevlar weave coupled with other strategically selected layup components creates a very rugged hull for those challenging river race conditions. River layups come with an over-stern insert and the set up to take an over-stern rudder. A SmartTrack race rudder is available. Right now we’re in the process of going to a closing bailer in this layup.

In addition to boats, we sold padded paddles for a while. I built the pad-

dles with a smaller diameter shaft and added vinyl grip tape. They worked very well for relieving discomfort in the hands and wrists, and the wrap lasted essentially forever. Unfortunately, they didn’t sell that well. We had two problems in selling these paddles: the added weight turned off some paddlers, and you had to sell consumers on the value. Sales pressure convinced me to revert back although I personally liked the taped paddles – they really helped me with numbness in my hands. I still use one to this day.

The Think Eze was a very easy boat to make; I really just adapted a true surf ski deck/cockpit to the Fit hull. The Eze has done much better as a true surf ski than the Fit did. It’s been very well accepted by smaller paddlers, women, and recreational paddlers. More recently we came out with the Big Eze – now called the Ace – a wider-hulled (2” wider) version of the Eze to accommodate larger paddlers and those who want even more stability.

Some might define our more recently introduced Ion as an “intermediate boat,” but I don’t really think of any surf skis as “intermediate boats.” Even the Ace would be considered a high-performance boat in the paddling world. I prefer to think of the boats as high performance, advanced, and elite. The Ion is an advanced boat – almost elite level - that serves as a half-step between the Evo and the Uno Max. It has almost as much speed as the Uno but with a lot more stability. It’s a great choice for

someone who paddles the Uno on flat water, but doesn't have as much confidence when conditions get tougher.

We also have a flat-water marathon race boat (basically a more stable ICF boat) called the Super Lancer. This is actually an older boat design I just recently added to our web site. I started bringing some boats to the Canadian races in the mid-2000's and paddlers told me they needed a competitive boat with comfortable stability for the non-elite paddlers. I developed the Super Lancer as a club development race boat but I didn't put it into the Think line until recently. It makes an excellent marathon river boat especially for paddlers around 150 lbs.

CN: With the exciting developments just mentioned, do you have anything up your sleeve for the future that you can tell us about?

Daryl: I did a lot this Fall with the modified Ion (set up for a broader range of paddlers), the modified Uno Max, the modified Evo II (reduced

windage and improved the cockpit), and developed the new Uno.

Next year we're bringing out a boat between the Ace and the Evo – a stepping stone: essentially a "friendlier" performance boat. It will be fast, stable, and fun, and it might be the last boat many paddlers will need to buy. Many paddlers buy boats beyond what they're really capable of paddling and find out later they need to take a step back. Our new boat should be a

great all around boat for many paddlers who just want to enjoy high-performance surf ski paddling without needing to develop an elite-level skill set.

CN: Thank you for your time, Daryl, and for bringing us up to speed on Think Kayak and your many exciting products. I'm "thinking" there might be a bright future for Think Kayak!



Sean Rice and Kenny Rice at Lake Tahoe (in the middle). Warren Bruce is on the left; Daryl Remmler on the right.

RACING TIPS

PETER HEED

AGONY AND ECSTASY: THE ART OF THE FINE BUOY TURN

In marathon canoe racing, one of the most commonly encountered challenges is the buoy turn. It is often a critical moment in a race - where much can either go wrong or right. Increasingly, canoe organizers are including out-and-back routes with buoy turns as part of their race courses, so as to start and finish in the same location. Often courses will include short loops with a number of buoy turns, or a buoy turn close to the finish line. This type of format is exciting for the racers and gives spectators a marvelous chance to view some thrilling race action - encounters of the close kind!

Whenever a buoy turn is encountered, it creates a unique opportunity for competitors with good boat handling skills to jump a wave, open up a gap, or make a crucial move to break away. On the other hand, a poorly executed buoy turn can not only result in losing ground to your competition, but at worst can end up as an unscheduled swim.

The problem seems straightforward enough: execute a quick and sharp change in the canoe's direction, often 90 to 180 degrees. The

problem is that marathon racing canoes are designed to go fast and to go straight. They are NOT designed to turn. The keel line of a marathon racing canoe has minimal or no "rocker" (such as most recreational canoes or whitewater hulls), and thus stubbornly resists sharp turning maneuvers. This is a time when we marathon canoe racing paddlers often wish for a good foot pedal operated rudder, like our friends in racing kayaks and surf skis enjoy - also known as "rudder envy!"

The sad fact is that many marathon canoe racers do not do well on buoy turns. Too few have mastered the skills involved with sharply turning a marathon canoe, and this results in wide turns, loss of speed, and loss of valuable time. By learning to make buoy turns well, you will have a distinct advantage over most of your competition. It may enable you to catch and possibly pass racers who may otherwise be faster than you at straight-ahead paddling. At the very least you will no longer lose ground to the teams around you. All it takes is the mastery of a few key techniques.

The Approach

When coming in toward a buoy turn - or any sharp turn - do not wait

until the last moment to plan your approach. Anticipate the upcoming maneuver by approaching from a slight angle approximately 10 to 15 yards off to the side of the buoy. Begin to initiate your turn about 3 to 5 yards BEFORE the buoy is reached. Try to carry as much speed as possible into the turn, as conditions allow, so that the bow of your canoe comes within a foot or two of the buoy. Keep in mind that your approach is often dictated by the specific conditions of the course and/or buoy placement. If you have a great deal of room on both sides of the buoy, and no competitors close to you, then you will be able to approach in a more gradual, wider set-up. If the river is narrow or you find yourself with other boats, you may by necessity have to approach on a straighter line and anticipate a tighter turn. Canoe racing is all about adjusting to an endless variety of conditions!

The Brace And Roll

When the bow of the C-2 canoe comes within a few feet of the buoy, it is time for extreme measures. Time for "the brace and roll!" First, the stern paddler should set up by calling the "huts" (or switches) so that the bow paddler is paddling on

the inside (closest to the buoy), and the stern paddler is on the outside. This will provide maximum leverage and stability.

Now the bow paddler must throw down an aggressive high brace - often referred to as a “post” or “bow

rubber” in marathon circles. (Keep in mind that some racers find the cross bow rudder to be just as effective.) The brace or rudder is a static position where the bow paddler holds the blade firmly in the water with the power face of the paddle nearly parallel to the direction of

travel but angled slightly back, the leading edge pointed in the direction you want to turn. The pressure on the blade is created by the forward motion of the canoe. In effect, the bow paddler is acting as a “pivot point” for the canoe, as the stern paddler leans the boat to the outside of the turn and continues to paddle forward.

Inexperienced teams need to practice this initial phase of a buoy turn in order to get comfortable, efficient, and fast. The top arm of the bow paddler should be high and out over the blade. The blade face needs to be angled back enough to provide pressure to hold the brace, but not so much as to cause dramatic loss of forward speed. The “drag” created by this high brace (post) provides the pivot point around which the canoe will turn. It also provides the stability which allows the stern paddler to lean the boat. While the bow paddler holds the brace or post, the stern paddler will utilize some sweep or quarter draw strokes to power the canoe forward around the pivot set by the bow paddler. Simultaneously, the final ingredient to this sharp portion of the buoy turn is for both paddlers to roll (lean) the canoe so that the outside gunnel (the side of the canoe farthest from the buoy) is leaned down. The more extreme the roll, the sharper the turn! And keep in mind that since the bow paddler is leaning to his/her “off” side (to the side away from the paddle), good communication and mutual confidence between partners is essential.



Neckra 2016 BillAmosPhotography.com

Several top mixed teams on sides and going hard around the buoy turn at the 2016 Nationals.



Neckra 2016 BillAmosPhotography.com

Doug Howard throwing a “cross-bow rudder” on a buoy turn at the 2016 Nationals.

Finishing Fast : Going To Sides

No matter how well you set up and start your buoy turn, one thing always happens - the canoe will lose some forward speed. The team that can finish the turn and accelerate the canoe fastest as they straighten out will gain a significant competitive advantage. Once your canoe is approximately one-half to three quarters of the way through the turn, the bow paddler should “hut” (switch) to the outside of the canoe so that both racers are now paddling on the same side - the side that is being rolled down. It is important to maintain balance while keeping the boat rolled down (leaned) in a consistent manner. The racers should hit it hard with a slight sweep stroke or a straightforward power stroke. This will bring the canoe out of the turn quickly and maximize acceleration. Be alert while both racers are sprinting “on sides” - not a good time for a dump now that you made it around the buoy so fast!

Acceleration Phase

Once you have gotten around the buoy and are nearly back on the correct line, the bow paddler should “hut” again so that now both racers are paddling on opposite sides of the canoe. The normal switching pattern should be quickly re-established and you will want to paddle with maximum intensity to get the final acceleration out of the turn and take advantage of any gains made on other teams. The astute racer will note a tendency on the part of some teams to slow down slightly, right after a

buoy turn, in order to recover. This is the perfect time to attack - either to catch teams after the turn or open a big gap on teams that you out turned at the buoy.

Extreme Buoy Turns

On some courses you may encounter buoy turns where the river is so narrow or the conditions so tight and challenging that you will need to apply some extreme techniques to successfully turn your 18.5 foot marathon canoe. The usual methods as set forth above just will not do the job. A classic example is the buoy turn on the sprint course of The Michigan Marathon on the AuSable River in Grayling, MI. If you have paddled this great race, you know just what I mean. The sprint course buoy is placed in a section of the

AuSable which is literally only 20-24 feet wide, 5-6 inches deep, with fast moving current! Sometimes the approach is downstream and sometimes the organizers place the buoy for an upstream approach. Either way, it is incredibly difficult! Forget about maintaining speed. The goal here becomes to hit the brakes, get around the buoy in any way that works, and then accelerate as quickly as possible.

The bow person cannot employ a regular brace or bow rudder - there simply isn't enough water depth to provide the resistance necessary. Instead, bow paddlers must drive their blades right into the gravel bottom (either with a classic “post” or “cross bow rudder”) to provide that crucial pivot point for the canoe. Some bow paddlers go to sides and actually drive the bow around by



Extreme Buoy Turn: Rebecca Davis (stern) and Mike Davis (bow) show how it's done at the AuSable Sprint Course, 2014.



Bill Kanost demonstrating mastery of the C1 leaned turn in 2012.

thrusting sideways with their paddle blades dug into the river bottom. Even more extreme, some bow paddlers will jump out of the canoe, holding on to the bow while the canoe (with stern partner) swings around the buoy! This is a risky move, as it is easy to take on a lot of water when the bow racer jumps back in, and it is even easier to quickly flip the canoe over! And for the stern paddler, the usually reliable roll and sweep stroke does not cut it. For an extreme turn like this, when getting around successfully is the object - not speed - then there is nothing more effective than the good old fashioned stern rudder! It may not be pretty, but it does the job on super tight turns.

C-1 Buoy Turns

The same basic principles apply to a one-person racing canoe, although the buoy turn becomes more challenging, for now there is only one paddler and that person is located in the center of the canoe. The approach to a buoy will be along the same lines as a C-2, but it will help to lean the boat down to the outside while getting as far forward in the canoe as the seat will allow. Naturally, there is no paddler to set a post, so the C-1 racer must compensate by using an exaggerated sweep stroke. Keep the canoe steadily rolled down on the outside, but be careful not to lean beyond that critical "point of no return." Once around the buoy, bring the C-1 to nearly level and accelerate with an up-tempo stroke rate.

To execute tighter C-1 turns, start with the sweep stroke and lean, and

then without changing your grip, cross the paddle to the other side (inside), setting you blade in the water like a bow C-2 paddler during a cross draw or cross bow rudder. This is a cross boat rudder for a C-1. It slows the canoe slightly, but it makes for a sharper turn and may allow you to cut inside other C-1s. Once on that inside side wake of the other canoes, accelerate out of the turn so that you take full advantage of the move.

A Little Buoy Practice Goes A Long Way

Like any aspect of canoe racing, good consistent buoy turn technique has to be learned through practice and repetition. If you are with a new partner or on the starting line of one of the season's big races, it is not a good time to realize that you have no real plan as to how you are going to handle the buoy turns on the course. It is not hard to incorporate some buoy turn practice into your weekly training routine. Just throw an old milk jug in your local river or pond (or find a convenient log or bridge abutment) and get out and practice those tight turns. Try different techniques and approaches. Find what works best for you and gain confidence. Retrieve the jug as you make your last turn. With just a little practice you will find yourself looking forward to those buoy turns in your next race.

Peter Heed

REGISTRATION
USCA NATIONAL STOCK ALUMINUM CANOE/TOURING KAYAK/DOWNRIVER KAYAK
MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIPS

Saturday & Sunday, March 4th & 5th, 2017 at Dallas White Park, North Port, Florida

Mail-in registration. Postmark by 2/15/2017. Send completed form to: Lloyd Reeves, 125 Eagles Nest Lane, Crescent City, FL 32112. Make checks payable to: City of North Port. Registration is available online at www.paddleguru.com for a discount, look up Cocoplum Paddle-A-Thon.

Register on site (Championship classes only) We will have "emergency" day of registration for Championship only classes during check-in times Saturday and/or Sunday, but please, please help us out by registering early. The online Paddleguru site can process registrations as late as 4pm the day before.

Entry Fees. Adults - \$30 Juniors - \$10

Current USCA membership required for all USCA Championship events. To **join electronically**, Go to www.uscanoe.com click JOIN USCA button and chose how you want to join. Online or download paper forms and mail by February 15th, 2017 to USCA Membership Chair, Harold Theiss, 12802 Lake Jovita Blvd., Dade City, FL 33525, or **join at the race site**.

Check In: 7:30 - 8:30 am Saturday & Sunday. Cocoplum Waterway, 5950 Sam Shapos Way, North Port, FL 34287

Failure to observe the following safety requirements will result in a disqualification in that event or a time penalty may be assessed to the violators' finish time as determined by the Competition Chair or designee.

Safety Rules: Attendance at pre-race meetings is mandatory. A *US Coast Guard* approved PFD must be in the possession of each contestant, and properly worn if wearing it is required in accordance with the *PFDs Owner's Manual* and what is stated on the label attached to the PFD (if there is not a manufacturer's instruction label on the PFD then the PFD is not *US Coast Guard* approved). If there are any questions pertaining to PFDs consult with the Nationals Coordinator or Competition Chair ***BEFORE YOU ARE ON THE START LINE***. A sound producing device (such as a whistle or portable air horn) must be in each boat, easily accessible. A *US Coast Guard* approved PFD must be worn by all non-swimmers and by persons ages 5 through 14 at all times on the water, and by all contestants in Youth (13-14) and younger classes. Inflatable PFDs shall NOT be worn by non-swimmers and by all persons under the age of 16

Lightning: Before a race has started, if thunder is heard and/or lightning is seen, or a lightning detector indicates an approaching thunderstorm, the racers, race helpers, and spectators shall take proper shelter and wait at least 30 minutes after hearing the last thunder. Once a race has started, if lightning is seen, you count the time until you hear thunder. If this time is 30 seconds (6 miles) or less, or if you do not see the lightning, but hear loud thunder; get off the water immediately and seek proper shelter. The race is considered officially stopped at that moment in time. **This is a weather emergency and race clocks will be stopped.** The order of the paddlers on the race course at that instance will be considered their placement in the finishing order, based upon discussion with the racers and race officials at the finishing area. Thirty minutes after hearing the last thunder the racers may proceed down the race course. Detailed information will be provided at the pre-race meeting.

Stock Aluminum Canoe Specifications:

1. Maximum length is 17 feet 4 inches.
2. The intention of the stock aluminum class is to have a National Championship class for stock factory aluminum canoes. The specifications of a stock canoe have been purposely left off and the canoes will be judged "stock" by the Competition Chairman and the Technical Director of Inspection. Most common manufacturers of aluminum boats will meet this requirement. Approval may be obtained for a specific model at the Nationals jiggling.
3. No modifications can be made to the canoe except seat type, placement changes and interior modifications to interior bulkheads and end caps. To facilitate a change of seat type and placement, original factory seats may be removed. Adequate flotation to support the boat fully submerged with 25 lbs must be permanently attached to the canoe.

Touring Kayak Rules: any single kayak, sit-on-top, surf ski with a maximum overall length of 20' and a 4" waterline beam of at least 18". *

**** Additional rules touring kayaks:***

1. Flip up rudders not included in length.
2. No hull modifications.
3. Must have sufficient flotation to support a 25 pound weight in a boat full of water.

Paddlers may elect to "paddle down". Winners will be awarded only in the class in which they register to compete. **No duplication of awards** except for Special Age Recognition Awards.

REGISTRATION
USCA NATIONAL STOCK ALUMINUM CANOE/TOURING KAYAK/DOWNRIVER KAYAK
MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIPS

Saturday & Sunday, March 4th & 5th, 2017 at Dallas White Park, North Port, Florida

Saturday USCA CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> C2 Stock Aluminum Men [C2 Stk Al M] | <input type="checkbox"/> C2 Stock Aluminum Men Masters (40+) [C2 Stk Al MMA] |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C2 Stock Aluminum Women [C2 Stk Al W] | <input type="checkbox"/> C2 Stock Aluminum Women Masters (40+) [C2 Stk Al WMa] |
| <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Man Open [K1T M] | <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Woman Open [K1T W] |
| <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Man Master (40+) [K1T MMA] | <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Woman Master (40+) [K1T WMa] |
| <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Man Senior (50+) [K1T MSr] | <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Woman Senior (50+) [K1T WSr] |
| <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Man Veteran 1 (60+) [K1T MV1] | <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Woman Veteran 1 (60+) [K1T WV1] |
| <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Man Veteran 2 (65+) [K1T MV2] | <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Woman Veteran 2 (65+) [K1T WV2] |
| <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Man Grd Vet 1 (70+) [K1T MGV1] | <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Woman Grd Vet 1(70+) [K1T WGV1] |
| <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Man Grd Vet 2 (75+) [K1T MGV2] | <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Touring Woman Grd Vet 2 (75+) [K1T WGV2] |

Sunday USCA CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> C2 Stock Aluminum Mixed [C2 Stk Al Mx] | <input type="checkbox"/> C2 Stock Aluminum Women Junior [C2 Stk Al W Jr] |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C2 Stock Aluminum Men Junior [C2 Stk Al M Jr] | <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Downriver Woman [K1D W] |
| <input type="checkbox"/> K1 Downriver Man [K1D M] | |

NAME: _____ 2017 Membership # _____
 Last, First

ADDRESS: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____
 Adults: Age on race day Junior: Age on 1/1/current year

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ Country: _____
 (Other than U.S.A.)

PHONE: _____ Email _____

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CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ALSO ENTERED: _____

Day 2 PARTNER'S NAME _____ AMOUNT PAID: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ALSO ENTERED: _____

Special Event Cocoplum -USCA T-Shirt: Free with pre entry before February 5th. \$10 each after February 5th, Please pre-order.

_____ Size, _____ Quantity

Waiver of liability form. Sign on site.

Awards in Championship Classes

- Adult. Top three teams in each class will be awarded USCA Champion medals..
- Junior (paddler not 18 on 1/1/17): Top six teams in each championship class will be awarded USCA Champion medals.
- First place teams or individuals in each championship event receive a USCA National Championship Shirt and trophy, if available.

First place medals will be awarded to the following Special Age Groups:

- C2 Aluminum Men – under 24 teams
- C2 Aluminum Men Master – 40 and over, special recognition for 50-59, 60-69, 70+ (1st 80+) teams
- C2 Aluminum Women – under 24 teams
- C2 Aluminum Women Master – 40 and over, special recognition for 50-59, 60-69, 70+ (1st 80+) teams
- C2 Aluminum Mixed – under 24, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70+ (1st 80+) teams
- K1 Touring Man under 24, (1st 80+)
- K1 Touring Woman under 24, (1st 80+)
- K1 Downriver Man, under 24, 40-49,50-59, 60-69, 70+ (1st 80+)
- K1 Downriver Woman, under 24, 40-49,50-59, 60-69, 70+ (1st 80+)



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_____	_____	M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>

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Barton Cup (Sub-ctee, Youth Activities) - Pam Fitzgerald & Teresa Stout

Bylaws Review - Harold Theiss

Camaraderie – Judy Jeanes

Camping/Cruising - Bob Allen

Competition – Norm Ludwig

Competition / Dragon Boat - Robert McNamara

Competition / Kayak – Ron Kaiser & Lloyd Reeves

Competition / Nationals Awards – Barbara Walls

Competition / Orienteering – Stephen Miller

Competition / Outrigger Canoe – Hype Mattingly

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Competition / Youth Sprints - Lloyd Reeves

Competition / Standup Paddleboard - Lloyd Reeves

Competition / Swan Boat - Glen Green

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Publicity & PR –

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USCA Bylaws/Rules/Regulations Review & Oversight – Joan Theiss

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PROFILE: ROXANNE BARTON

BY STEVEN HORNEY

In past columns I had the pleasure of interviewing two of the notable “Barton gang”: Bruce and Greg. But there’s another senior Barton who also stands out for her paddling excellence: namely Roxanne Barton, one of the most accomplished female paddlers on the USCA circuit. Starting her paddling involvement not long after the forming of the USCA, Roxanne has been a fixture at many of our races and has won many National Championship titles – including winning C2 Woman last year (2015) with her daughter Rebecca 40 years after Roxanne originally won it! Here’s the fascinating story of a woman who went from manicurist to pig farmer while becoming a top marathon paddler.

CN: It’s great to be able to talk with you, Roxanne, and to hear your story. Can you give us some information on your background and how you got involved in paddle sports?

Roxanne: I grew up in a suburb of Chicago as a member of the Triebold family. During our teen years my mom wanted to get my brother Tim involved in a physical sport. Not far away was a big canoe race (the Des Plaines Marathon Canoe Race) that ended in a forest

preserve about a mile from our house. So my Dad took my brother and they competed in our first canoe race in the later 60’s; shortly thereafter my sister opted to race the Des Plaines and then finally I got involved. This wasn’t my first race, but it was the one that really ignited my interest. My first race was the Sugar Creek Race in Indi-

control. We hit the first bridge right after the start and pretty much stayed at the back of the race the whole time, only passing those who overturned or had other issues. Mom was waiting at the finish quite concerned about us! I continued racing with my friend for a few years then I started racing with my sister for most of the races. At the



Jenny Rudquist in bow on the left side of the picture with Lynn Capen in the stern. Roxanne in the bow of the right side of the picture with Connie Cannon in the stern. Nationals in Kentucky on the Green River 1986.

ana in 1970, but it was nearly a disaster for me: my friend and I had only been in the canoe a few times prior to the Sugar Creek race, the waters were fast and at flood levels, and we didn’t have very good boat

Des Plaines Race my brother Tim and I paddled together and we had a great time! We’ve paddled together as a team on and off since then and Tim and I still paddle to-

gether a lot. These days our paddling together is often in a C4.

My initial race involvements came about just because the rest of the family did it. As our family became more heavily involved in paddling, we started to hit the Indiana circuit hard (Indiana was very big in canoe racing in the early 70's, with lots of youth races) and I really enjoyed seeing everyone each summer. In my early years canoe racing I simply enjoyed being around all the paddlers; it was really fun and led me to greater involvements. I particularly enjoyed traveling to all the races.

CN: How did you end up as the wife of the fastest pig farmer on the water?



Roxanne and the women's marathon team racing OC6 in the Catalina Island Race.

Roxanne: I first met Bruce in the Fall of 1970 at the Wabash, Indiana race. My friend and I raced against Bruce Barton and his brother Greg. The boys won but we made them work for it! Although I raced against Bruce in my teen years and got to know him on the racing cir-



Roxanne Barton and Connie Shawingian in the Classic in 1995.

cuit, we didn't start dating until I got older; we got married in

My first job was as a manicurist at Neman Marcus. Quite a change from manicurist to pig farmer!

CN: Tell us about your competitive history and some of the races you've enjoyed.

Roxanne: I raced my first Nationals in 1971, although my partner and I didn't do particularly well. In 1972, however, Evert Crozier and I won the C2 mixed race at the Nationals in Oil City, PA when I was 15 – I couldn't even drive yet! We paddled a wood strip canoe in that race. From there on I was hooked on canoe racing.

1980. Bruce's parents were farmers and Bruce always wanted to be on the farm. He was already farming when we got married and I just fell into it and started working on the farm. I went to college initially but I didn't care much for it and I ended up working until we got married.

Since that time I've raced a lot of Nationals (although I've had to miss quite a few along the way for various reason, including two back surgeries – each of which took 5 years of recovery time), and I've won several. A lot of my racing has been in C2, but I enjoy a variety of paddling options: I've paddled C1, C2,

kayaks, OC2, and OC6, and now I find I really enjoy paddling C4. C4 canoes are more forgiving, not as tippy, and have more room for leg movement than most of the racing C2's. I dabbled in kayaks in the 70's and stopped in '84. A lot of juniors from the Indiana circuit were paddling kayaks at the time, so my sister and I tried it. Back then most of the kayak races were basically sprints. I wasn't a great sprinter, but I entered the Worlds a few times and advanced to semi's a couple of times and made it to the finals in K4 once. I decided I really prefer middle-to-long distance races rather than sprints.

Some of my more memorable races have taken place in OC6. I was part of the Marathon woman's team in 1986 at Molokai, where we came in 2nd (this was the year after the marathon canoe men's team won the Molokai in 1985). We had another OC6 team set to go last year, but the race was cancelled for the first time in 35 years – a tropical storm was threatening. Naturally this occurred after we were already there... I raced OC6 in Catalina with the marathon women's team in 2016, where we came in 7th overall out of 75 teams and 4th in the women's division (our team is composed of some of the top USCA women marathon racers). As mentioned earlier, I've really come to enjoy C4 paddling as well. I raced C4 at the General Clinton in 2015 racing with some Michigan paddlers who are good friends. Another one of my favorite races is the Adirondack 90 miler in

which I've raced several times in the c-4.

Racing is just one of the enjoyable aspects of paddling for me. I particularly enjoy paddling on canoe trips and as a family. I've paddled the Missouri river - one of my very favorite paddling locations (up in NW Montana where it is wild and desolate), the Yukon (where we saw lots of grizzly, wolf, and moose), the non-rapids Colorado River, the Boundary waters, Saskatchewan Canoe Quest, and a myriad of other rivers all over the country.

CN: Do you have any special training secrets that help maintain your paddling performance?

Roxanne: I don't have a particular program, but I train a lot including cross-training by running, cross-country skiing (winter), and weight lifting. Of course, I'm on the water paddling as long as there's open water. I would credit weight lifting for significantly helping with my recovery following my back surgeries. One of the really nice aspects of having a large farm operation is having a lot of employees who run the farm; it really opens up my time.



Roxanne Barton (3rd back) paddling C4.

Also, we tend to be early risers. We get up early, get our work done by around 3, and then we head out for our workouts.

Most likely the biggest performance help for me is that I like to train and I've come up with a good routine: lots of long paddles and a lot of speed work. We also incorporate a significant amount of upstream paddling on twisting rivers and wake riding practice to build up our technical skills.

In my earlier racing years I used to beat a lot of the men's teams when racing with Bruce because I typical-

ly trained harder over the year than other paddlers did (at the time most paddlers started training 6 weeks before the first race). Later the others caught on and most racers now train through the off season as well. Cross-training really helps keep me in shape. I haven't really had any significant injuries from paddling, but I do know more now about how to utilize better paddling positions to reduce injuries than I did when I was younger.

CN: Anything in particular you would like to see in the sport of paddle racing?

Roxanne: I would love to see the sport grow more, especially among the young. Many of the older competitive paddlers grew up in families that paddled, giving the kids an early start. We don't see that too much anymore.

CN: Thank you, Roxanne! It's been a pleasure getting to know you a little better. You're an inspiration to all our paddlers!



Roxanne (in purple) paddling Voyager Canoe in the Saskatchewan Canoe Quest.

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*Wesley Echols and Dave Thomas racing K-2 at
the 2016 USCA Nationals. See you next year in
at the Nationals in Des Moines, IA gentlemen!
Photo by Ed Hoffmeister.*

