

Canoe News



The Gap Year Issue

Kai Bartlett Interview

Pitch for Heeling

William & Lynne McDuffie

2 Blasts From History

Summer 2020 Vol. 53 No. 1



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From the Editor:

Welcome to the "Gap Year" summer issue of Canoe News magazine. Normally this issue would be chock full of info to help you register and prepare for the upcoming USCA Nationals. But alas—as with so many things in this strange year—we had to postpone the 2020 USCA Nationals due to issues surrounding the COVID-19 virus. But fear not! We still have plenty of goodness in this issue to keep you engaged and hopefully motivated in your training for other races and future Nationals events. Check out boat control techniques by our FreeStyle friends, classic stories and photos, an interview with Kai Bartlett, training info, and more!

Keep paddling strong!

Steve

Front cover: Kai Bartlett surfing big Hawaiian waves in his Ares OC1. Photo courtesy of Kai Bartlett.

Inside front Cover: River McDuffie and Lindsey Stone following youth sprints. Photo courtesy of Lynne McDuffie.

Back Cover: C2 Youth, 2019 Nationals. Photo by Kelli Anthony

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VIEW FROM THE STERN

USCA PRESIDENT REBECCA DAVIS

When I look back at my column from the last issue, I realize just how much our world has changed. Instead of opening registration, ordering medals and finisher prizes, and sorting out race day logistics, I have been charged with figuring out how to postpone events, keep insurance available and cost effective for races that may not happen, and run a semi-annual meeting virtually. I'm a long way from having this all figured out, but all I can do is take it one day at a time. This season is one full of change; we all have to learn to live with it.

There are many unknowns as we move forward: how long will this last? When will we be able to have gatherings again? When we will be able to travel out of state (or within state) again? When will we be able to paddle C2/K2/C4 again? That is why we made the decision to postpone the Newaygo, MI Nationals, and now the Aluminum Nationals in Poplar Bluff, MO until 2021. I can speak for the Michigan events that our Department of Natural Resources is not planning to issue any marine event permits in 2020. They plan to reevaluate the decision later this summer—hopefully allowing a smaller event to take place. If we can still

pull off an Aluminum Nationals somewhere in 2020, that is an option, but I don't have any host yet (maybe by the time you read this things will change). It is important that our hosts have the authority to make decisions that are cohesive with the guidelines of their individual communities, even though no one wants to cancel USCA events.

My yearly travel has dwindled drastically: between January and mid-March I flew on three different trips and traveled to seven states. Since then I have hardly left my county. While this has been trying at times and I miss my paddling friends, it has given me a good opportunity to explore my own backyard. I have covered quite a few different stretches of the Kalamazoo and St. Joe Rivers, hiked my local trails, and found that evening walks just out my front door can be as beautiful as any I have taken on my travels.

In a year where racing appears to be scarce, my husband



Mike has also been playing with periodization in his training—something that he hasn't had time to play with much between back-to-back packed racing seasons. He is incorporating more roller skiing and running into the summer, to prepare more fully for ski season. Of course, we still paddle most days. It will be interesting to see how this “break” from routine affects his results. This is a time to experiment with our fitness, take a step back, introduce our kids or friends (in a responsible, safe way) to the water, or just have fun. Our community will weather this storm, and our friendships will remain even after a year of separation.

KAI BARTLETT—KAI WA'A OUTRIGGERS

STEVEN HORNEY



Kai Bartlett powering up one of his outrigger canoes!

Kai Bartlett is the designer of the well-respected line of Kai Wa'a outrigger canoes (and now surf skis) sold by Ozone. With most people under some kind of “shelter-in-place” requirement at the present time, it was a great opportunity to catch up with Kai and to find out more about his history and the workings of Kai Wa'a.

CN: *Thank you for taking the time for this interview, Kai.*

You're a noted designer of outrigger canoes; how did you get your start in paddling and building boats?

Kai: When I was young my parents paddled some in the 1980's, but by the time I was 9 they had stopped and so I never really got into paddling with them. But as a boy growing up in Hawaii I was in the water, always surfing and swimming. Paddling just came later.

I actually started building canoes before I started paddling. A buddy of mine was working with John Martin at Hawaiian Designs in Oahu, building a number of Hawaiian outrigger canoes. (John Martin was one of the first manufacturers of one-man outrigger canoes in Hawaii.) One night while driving around Kailua in 1996 in an old rusty Toyota Tercel with a friend, the speakers basically rattled the hatch loose. I offered to help my buddy repair

the hatch, so I went over the next day to work on the car with him; we basically fiberglassed the whole hatch back onto the car. While I was helping my buddy with the repair, John Martin saw me working on his car and asked if I would like a job!

I stayed with John Martin about 3 years. I got into paddling while I was working with John and then really got into the competitive aspect. Competition, in turn, really got me into focusing on different production techniques and on design.

My entry into paddling while working with John came about in an unusual way. One year John gave us a Christmas bonus option: he would give us a certain amount of money or he would take us to Bend, Oregon to go snowboarding. I figured if I took the money I would just blow it on something, but going snowboarding would be a cool experience with great memories, so I took



Kai Bartlett surfing the Gemini OC2 on some stout Hawaiian waves.

him up on snowboarding. On the second to last day in Oregon, I tore my MCL. Since I couldn't surf once I got home, I decided to take up paddling every day.

John was very focused on fiberglass hand layups, and making good money on it. He really wasn't too interested in looking at other techniques and materials. Since I was into racing, I decided

to leave John's to work for Karel Tresnak of Outrigger Connection, because Karel was really pushing the limits of strong, light canoes for the era – vacuum bagging and such. While working for Karel, he placed me working side-by-side with the guy who did all his designing at that time (Brent Bixler), so I was able to learn a lot about the design side of the business as well as the manufacturing side.

I worked for Karel for a couple of years and learned a ton about the business and how to work hard so you can get ahead and make something of it, but at a certain point I wanted to go out on my own. So I started my own repair business (Bartlett Enterprise) to have some more freedom and to try some new things. You can only go so far working for someone. So a guy on the Big Island came and asked if I would like to build canoes for him under a license agreement (now under my

Kai Bartlett surfing Hawaiian waves in the Ares OC1.



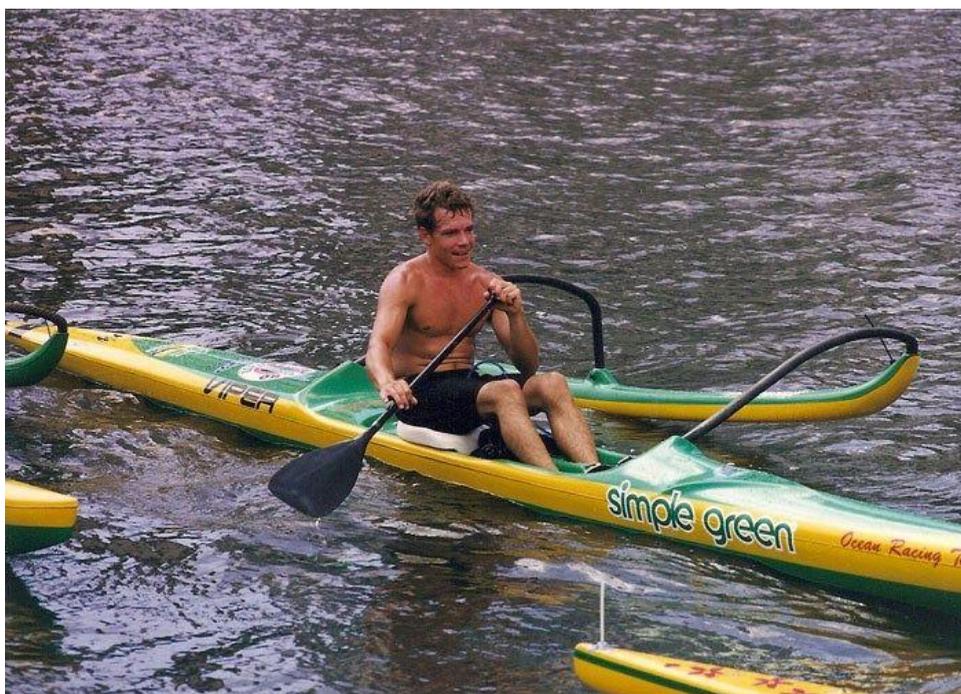
company name Kai Wa'a, starting in 2001). He asked me to design a canoe for him a year later, but that got a little funny. So in 2003 I came out with my own design. I was young and had a ton of energy, but I was still learning a lot about designing. My first canoe design was kind of a bust, but it really surfed breaking waves well, like Makaha. I did 3 designs between 2002 and 2003, but my first really successful design was the Pegasus, which came out in later 2003. That canoe really got us rolling. We didn't really redesign anything again until 2007. At that point I wanted to design a bigger volume hull for men and have a canoe that would be competitive in all conditions. So in 2007 I designed the Scorpius. The Pegasus was left in the lineup as a canoe for women, until we designed the Scorpius XS later in 2010. In 2009 we came out with



the Scorpius XM, an intermediate volume version. Our Scorpius line had very good success; each design won the World Championship Channel Race at various times.

In 2006 we started discussing doing business with Ozone, but then they got bootied from the factory they were in which was located in

South China. In 2008 they got going again with their own factory, and since then they've been producing our designs from the Pegasus on. We still make some canoes in Hawaii through a licensed local builder in Oahu called Kilakila Watersports, but most of our canoes are produced by Ozone. Finding good local workers in our industry here in Hawaii is a real struggle.



Following our success with the Scorpius line, I wanted to work on another canoe design that would run well in all conditions with a bit more volume; the result was the Antares. The version we made in Hawaii was a pretty nice canoe, but unfortunately the version made by Ozone was different with some rocker issues and didn't perform as well in the ocean. During that time I was working on a smaller version of the Antares. I always liked having a canoe with more volume, and a canoe with smaller volume, catering to different size paddlers. So we

Kai Bartlett at age 24, working for Karel Tresnak and paddling for Outrigger Connection.



Paddling the Scorpius!

came out with the Ares, and to our surprise the Ares suited a wide variety of paddler weights. Ozone's version of the Ares was pretty identical to the hull we developed in Hawaii, so I was very pleased with it. The Ares has become a very successful design for a wide range of paddlers, from beginners to expert and heavy to light weight paddlers.

In 2016 I designed the Gemini, our OC2 (two man outrigger). We had the first one out at the Gorge (in Oregon). I wanted to design an OC2 canoe since 2003, but when you're the designer as well as the manufacturer, finding time is hard. But once things settled a bit I was able to do what I wanted to do. Also once Ozone got their manufacturing down it made things a lot easier and I didn't have to worry about relying solely on my Hawaii manufacturing.

CN: *That's quite a path you took. When you design your canoes, do you use computer software, or do you design more by appearance/feel?*

Kai: I design my canoes & surf skis old-school. I draw it out life size, glue some foam together, make a lot of measurements, shape it, glass it, and go out and try it. I'm not really computer savvy, but I really enjoy the hand-shaping part of it. Once you begin to hand shape, it's original. Mike Giblin at Ozone will scan our part (canoe, ski, ama), feed it into his computer, take his time to make it as perfect as he can, and then send it to the factory. I do all my shaping in a 30 x 14 tent in my yard, with a partition. I just love being in there; I can have fun shaping foam all day long. I definitely enjoy getting creative and when working with my hands. I enjoy the artistic side of it all.

CN: *What are you currently up to and do you have anything interesting in the works for the future?*

Kai: The Vega is our new surf ski – something I wanted to do for a long time. I did paddle surf skis a bit between 2002 and the present

day, but I never stuck with it too long before getting back in my OC1. Still, I wanted to do something with a surf ski, partly to support Pat Dolan who paddles both OC1 and surf ski. I met Pat when he was 14 and he would join us in our paddles when I paddled with the Men's program at Lanikai Canoe Club. He wanted to join our men's practice paddles after his youth practices and he was persistent. Over time his persistence really paid off; he's had a very successful career. Pat's mom was raising 4 kids as a single mom and teacher. Pat showed a lot of promise early on, so I got him a canoe and he took off from there. He tried out to be an Olympic competitor, but he eventually grew out of that and decided he needed to focus more on a future career. (Pat's now a Honolulu fireman.) From that, though he started focusing more on surf ski paddling.

With the Vega (21 x 16 13/16), I wanted to create a ski that would



really surf easily, but would also work in all conditions (like our OC1's). My observation was that most skis didn't surf as easily as our outriggers. I think we came up with a ski that really surfs well, but is also fast in the flats. We also feel the ergonomics of the ski are very good. We now have the new Vega Flex ski, a mid-range surf ski measuring 20.5 x 18.25. With both the Vega and the Vega Flex I had fun shaping the seat area; I tried to create the male plug and pull a carbon seat from it with a vacuum bag. But the whole assembly was crushed! So I went back and shaped it with my grinder, like I do with my OC1 seats. I shaped thousands of OC1 seats so I figured it couldn't be too different, and now it seems like it's a very comfortable seat.

A few years ago, we came out with a "flat water" ama for the Scorpius line, but found it worked so well in the waves that it just became our standard ama. We'll probably eventually play with the Ares a bit since it's been out for a while, but the Ares is still the canoe of choice so I don't feel the need to change anything right now. Some of our competitors have had to come out with several designs to try and compete with the Ares during its time on the market and so far the Ares is still going strong. These days with young kids it's taking me a little longer to get things done than I expected. Nowadays I'm mostly doing design, repairs, spare parts, upgrade parts, etc. when I have time.

CN: *Do you still race?*

Kai: I still race – it's healthy and fun. I'm older now, so I know I'm not going to be a top competitor anymore. But I still enjoy it and I can look back on past accomplishments with satisfaction. I'm not the guy who travels around to races just to cheer others on and wave his pompoms; I love paddling too much and participating in events. I feel you share more of the experience with everyone by participating. I also find it important with designing that I get out and race all over the globe so that I can feel what's going on with my designs when under pressure or in a moment of fatigue. You learn a lot about the efficiencies, comfort, and elements that can be improved on when exerting yourself for hours versus just casual paddling now and then. I truly feel like my pad-

dling and racing has provided me with a competitive advantage in designing. I am a much better paddler and canoe designer than I am salesman so I take pride in designing high performing canoes that speak for themselves. Nothing better than having the canoe do the selling rather than me having to create a story or narrative to sell people on it.

My time off due the virus has been nice; not so much training focus, but lots more time with family, fishing, and just enjoying a bit of recreational paddling. The one thing I am looking forward to this summer is the opportunity to do some nice, long ocean runs: 24–44 miles of surfing! The virus situation may be messing up a lot of races, but now you have opportunities to do other things, and spend more time with family. It's a good thing!



A PITCH FOR HEELING—PART 2

MARC ORNSTEIN



Canoes and most other boats turn much like wheelbarrows. The stern rotates around the bow, unlike a car where the steering takes place up front. When the canoe is traveling forward and one tweaks the paddle in one way or another to initiate a turn, what one really does is give the stern a bit of a nudge. Barring any other forces such as wind, current, or other paddle manipulations, the stern will continue in the direction that it was nudged until the canoe

runs out of momentum and comes to a stop. The greatest force resisting that turn is the water that must be pushed aside, by the stern of the boat, as it rotates. As I discussed in part 1 of this article, increasing rocker reduces the effort required to turn the canoe but it does so evenly, reducing forces at both the bow and the stern. Pitching (or tipping the bow down) increases the forces on the bow but decreases the

forces on the stern where it counts most.

When one pitches the bow down the bow gets pressed deeper into the water, somewhat pinning it in place. At the same time the stern is raised, reducing the amount of water that it needs to push aside while turning.

When sitting, it is even more difficult to control pitch than it is to control rocker. The paddler can lean a bit forward but not much.

If the pitch is mild, the effect is more subtle. The canoe may only appear to be a bit bow heavy (as below).



When kneeling, one can come up partially or fully off the seat, effectively moving their full body weight forward.

Heeling and pitching can be combined. While heeling is often used alone, pitching is almost always combined with heeling to effect a tighter turn. Various body posi-



If the pitch is more significant, the stern may actually rise out of the water. Like rocker, this is something that you can control (as above).

tions can be used to take full advantage of these techniques. Occasionally, you'll see a paddler lunge forward, putting his or her knee on the rail which causes the canoe to heel and pitch radically. Most often, simply coming off the seat and onto one's knees is sufficient to get the job done. Entire classes have been devoted to this art.

I almost always paddle from a kneeling position as it gives me the most control. With time and practice it's quite comfortable, even for long periods of time. When traveling a twisty stream, I rarely make a turn without heeling a bit, often combined with some pitch. I'm constantly adjusting my canoe to the conditions at hand.

Heeling and pitching are both techniques that with practice will improve your boat control and increase your enjoyment of canoeing. They are two important skills that all serious paddlers should learn and use in their everyday paddling.

These two videos show an axle (a basic turn to the on side) using a modest heel, combined with some pitch to enhance the turn. The 1st video is at normal speed while the second is at 1/4 speed.

1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HidISfnNPAw>

2 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AB_MTz5ud3c

This last video shows a group of paddlers traveling down a series of narrow, twisting streams using

a variety of FreeStyle techniques,
including heel and pitch.

[https://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=drM58OgHxOo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=drM58OgHxOo)



HOW WE GOT INTO MARATHON CANOE RACING

LYNNE MCDUFFIE



William and Lynne in their earlier paddling years.

William and I started out down river racing while we were dating. There were not a lot of white water races around North Carolina in 1989. We had the race bug, so we found a series of flat water races started by Mickey Turlington. This later became the North Carolina Racing Association. We raced plastic boats and were doing pretty good. Our friend Roger Woolwine had been to USCA Nationals and the Clinton. He convinced us we needed to go.

Our first USCA Nationals was in Ohio in 1994. We bought a standard boat when we got there. Getting in a little practice before the race we felt we could keep it upright so off we went. We were ac-

tually running middle of the pack, but gradually started losing ground until we were dead last.

Team Turlington and Team McDuffie preparing for their first USCA Nationals.



Apparently, unbeknownst to us, the seats slide in those boats and we were so bow light by the time we finished I was barely able to reach the water. This experience prompted us to learn how to actually paddle a marathon boat. We bought the Mike and Tanna Fries marathon paddling tape and Peter Heeds book on Marathon Paddling (see p. 16) and managed to get some better. I learned the stern which was a story in itself as I was convinced the boat was crooked and it was not my fault that I could not keep it straight.

As often happens when two OCD overachievers get married we paddled and paddled and

paddled. We continued white water racing and play boating (our first love) as well as annual trips to Northern regions for USCA National and New York for the General Clinton Canoe Regatta. The USCA Nationals came very close to us in 2001 in Georgia. Unfortunately that year the Nationals fell on the same month, year, and day of the birth of our only child, River (you would think we could have planned that a little better!). Needless to say, we missed this one. Everyone said that having a child would end our paddling days. Just to prove them wrong we drug our infant, toddler, then teenager all over the country. She was a trooper from day one and became close friends with many adults and children that remain friends to this day. She has developed into a fine athlete in her own right surpassing her mother in many (all) venues. She was out running me by five years old, and has mastered not only canoes but kayaks and is working on ICF boats.

Canoe racing has been a blessing to us as a family. William and I have maintained physical fitness for almost 30 years, developed close friendships with many people from all over our country and Canada, seen places we never would have seen, and passed the love of rivers and competition on to our daughter. Someone once asked William if there was a dollar amount that would be worth giving this all up for (as they sat in boats on the Arkansas River in Colorado), they all agreed that no

amount of money would be enough. So as we sit with no races this season, it is a good time to reflect on how much this sport means to us. My hope for the next generation is that they can embrace the passion and joy of canoe racing and keep it alive for many years to come.

Thanks to all that have encouraged and befriended us over the years. There truly is not a better bunch of people anywhere.

**Canoe Racing: The Competitor's Guide to Marathon and Downriver Canoe Racing by Peter Heed and Dick Mansfield, 2004*



William McDuffie and daughter River celebrating a C2 victory!

Lynne and a young River McDuffie by their racing machine.



PADDLING THROUGH HISTORY

PETER HEED

PADDLING THROUGH HISTORY: CANOES, CONFLICTS, AND GHOSTS ALONG THE RIVER

The connection between paddling and our heritage is striking. All of us who enjoy racing canoes, kayaks, or SUPs have the great good fortune of spending significant chunks of time on our country's beautiful rivers and lakes. Back and forth we go, training, racing, or just noodling along - always experiencing a perspective of the world that few get to appreciate and enjoy.

What is sometimes easy to miss is that our sport literally allows us to paddle through history, to connect with our country's past. So much of our early heritage is inextricably linked to the rivers and lakes on which we train and race. You could be paddling on the Des Plaines River in Illinois, the Columbia River in Washington, the Guadalupe in Texas, the Delaware River as it flows between Pennsylvania and New Jersey, the Susquehanna in New York and Pennsylvania, the Suwannee in Florida, the AuSable in Michigan, or the Charles River in Boston - just to name a few - and you will always be surrounded by incredible history. At

nearly every bend in the river there are compelling true life stories of real people who have passed this way before, stories of courage, determination, occasional violence, and redemption. As you paddle along, you can almost sense their presence - the native Americans, the voyageurs, the pioneers, early settlers and the loggers.

Fascinating stories are everywhere: along the riverbanks, on the water, at islands, and sometimes in areas now submerged by impoundments behind dams. Having just a little sense of this vibrant history can give you a whole new level of appreciation while you paddle, train, and race on your local rivers and lakes. We are very fortunate in New England to have a wide variety of great paddle friendly rivers, nearly all of which played a significant role in the history of our country.

One of our most historical and paddle friendly waterways is the Connecticut River which flows from northern New Hampshire, south past Vermont, and then through both Massachusetts and Connecticut on its journey to the ocean at Long Island Sound. This beautiful river is particularly rich in heritage, as it served as the major north/south

“superhighway” for Native Americans, explorers, and early settlers alike - often by canoe, bateaux, or flat bottomed boat. Nearly every island, every rapid, and every bend in the river comes with a riveting story attached.

Many USCA members have enjoyed the good fortune of paddling/racing on spectacular sections of the Connecticut River, as three of our most well-attended National Championships have been held on this waterway in 1988 and 2002 (at Hanover, NH) and most recently at Northfield, Massachusetts in 2016. For those who raced in 2016, you will recall the turn around a bridge abutment at the top of the course. Just a mile or so upstream from that point is a large island located close to the western side of the river. It is just across from where the Ashuelot River joins the Connecticut, and it is known as “Pomeroy’s Island.” Today this quiet island is recognized for its beautiful shade trees, attractive campsites, and a sandy beach on the southern end - perfect for picnicking or fishing. Paddlers know that along the shores are many fun eddies and shallows to challenge any canoe or kayak heading upstream. Pomeroy’s Island is also

frequently used as a turn around point for local canoe/kayak races. But many years ago, this peaceful island was the location of a canoe event of another sort - a bloody, running gun battle involving canoes; a dramatic rescue of kidnapped children; and the death of three men. ***Here is the story:***

All appeared to be calm and quiet as evening approached at the North Meadow Farm along the banks of the Connecticut River in Hatfield, Massachusetts (just south of the USCA race course in Northfield). The weather was unusually hot and sticky that July day in 1698. There was still much unrest and distrust between the early settlers along the river and the local Native Americans, who once freely roamed and enjoyed the river valley without interference from English colonists. Nathaniel Dickinson and other farmers, with the assistance of their young sons, were finishing up chores in the corn fields. Nobody was overtly concerned, as there had been no trouble for months. By all appearances, it looked like another peaceful summer evening. That was about to change.

Shots rang out from the tree line near the river! A party of four warriors from the Pocumtuck Tribe emerged from the trees and rushed the farmers, capturing two young boys. The warriors took several shots at Nathaniel Dickinson, hitting and killing his horse, which dropped from under him. Nathaniel man-

aged to crawl away and escape into the thick brush. He then ran and spread the alarm, letting fellow settlers know that his son and another boy had been taken.

It will come as no surprise to you as to how the Pocumtuck war party got away - in canoes, of course! The warriors took their captives and jumped into canoes they had secreted along the river banks. They headed north - upstream. And like the experienced paddlers they were, the warriors kept a high cadence, staying close to shore, out of the main downstream current, and working the side eddies (just as we do today). If they only had some modern fast 3X27 racing hulls and bent shaft paddles, they might have made a clean getaway! But no.

News of the raid quickly spread to the near-by village of Deerfield, where a group of 12 volunteers mounted horses and gave chase. They rode hard north along the western shore of the Conn. River in hopes of rescuing the two young boys. Horses were faster than canoes, but the trails along the river were narrow, twisty, and difficult. The warriors had the straighter course on the river, and they knew how to get the most speed from their birch bark canoes as they pounded upstream along the shoreline. It was a race in the true sense of the word - with the lives of two young boys hanging in the balance.

One of the volunteer rescuers was a teenager from the Deerfield

area, Nathan Pomeroy. Although the youngest of the rescuers, Nathan had a fast horse and he was well known for his skills with a rifle and a paddle. He was a welcomed addition to the group, which rode hard all night. By daylight the rescuers had reached the "Great Bend" in the Connecticut River on the west bank near an island. The Ashuelot River, which flows out of New Hampshire, entered the Connecticut River on the opposite shore.

The rescuers rested their tired horses while they scanned the river. Out of the morning mist, two canoes emerged along the far shore! It was the war party! The rescuers could just make out the four warriors, as they paddled steadily upstream, passing the mouth of the Ashuelot. It appeared that the two young captives were unharmed and sitting in the middle of the canoes. The rescue party dismounted, each man taking careful aim with his rifle. It was indeed a "long shot" but the settlers believed it was their best chance to save the captives.

All 12 volunteers fired at nearly the same instant. When the smoke cleared, it was apparent that one warrior had been killed. The other warriors leaped out of the canoes and into the river seeking cover. The captive boys took advantage of the confusion, grabbing paddles and then both jumped into one of the canoes. They set out across the river, paddling as fast as they could

toward the island and the west bank - hoping to reach their rescuers before the Pocumtucks could catch up to them. When a second warrior stood up in shallow water and attempted to take a shot at the fleeing boys, he received a fatal bullet from one of the settlers across the river.

The two boys were skilled enough with the canoe to be able to paddle across the main channel and get in behind the island. Now in the eddy and using the island as cover, the boys successfully reached their rescuers on the far shore. Yet it was not over. The remaining two warriors were not going to give up so easily. They took the other canoe and gave chase. When they got closer, the warriors realized how outnumbered they were and decided to stop on the island. Two of the most rugged settlers, together with the adventurous teenager Nathan Pomeroy, decided not to let matters rest. The three men jumped into the canoe that the young captives had utilized to make their escape, and paddled back over to the island in an attempt to finish the fight and capture the other canoe. It was going to be an "Island Smackdown!" But it did not end well.

The two warriors waited concealed in the tall grass on the south end of the island. Nathan and the two other settlers landed

their canoe and quietly worked their way along the sandy point. They did not realize that they were walking into an ambush. More shots; more musket smoke. Nathan Pomeroy lay dead.

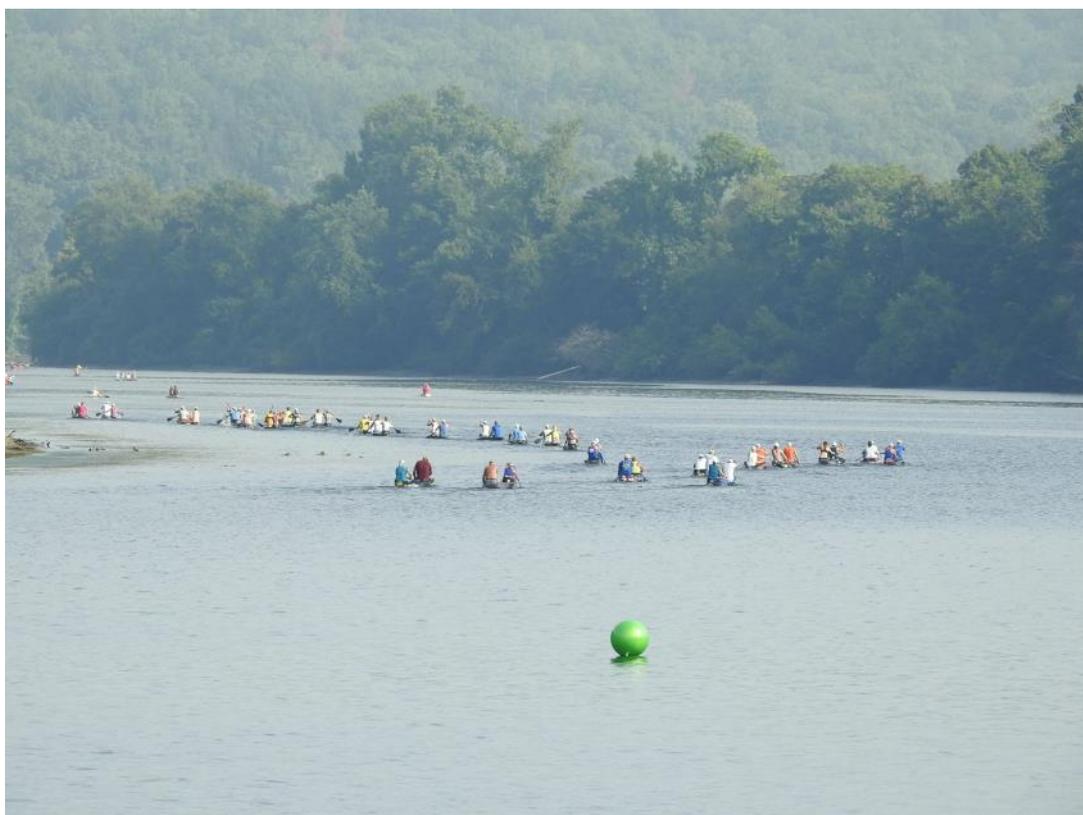
The Pocumtuck warriors then made good their escape. The settlers paddled Nathan's body back across to the west bank of the river and buried him there. Nathan was never to return to his loved ones or to Deerfield. However, the two young captives were reunited with their families, who remained ever grateful to Nathan Pomeroy and the other rescuers. Nathan's grave remains to this day on the west bank of the Connecticut River across from the island that now carries his name.

All of our rivers are rich in heritage and compelling real life

stories which are fun to keep in mind as you are out paddling on your local river. This tale is just one small example. When you have a moment, check out the history of your local river. The next time you are out on the water, take just a moment and imagine in your mind's eye the Native Americans, the voyageurs, the early settlers, the loggers, and all who may have paddled by at some time in the past. I think you will agree that being a paddler provides you with a very special perspective on our world and the people who have gone before. Even if you are not a huge history fan, I trust you will remember how "Pomeroy's Island" got its name.

Peter Heed

Paddlers moving up the Connecticut River towards Pomeroy Island during the 2016 USCA Nationals.



LAND PADDLING TRAINING

STEVEN HORNEY



Steven Horney land paddling in the parking lot after racing the SUP class at the 2019 USCA Nationals in Warren, Pa.

In the Spring 2019 issue of Canoe News magazine I produced an article on land paddling – basically moving a skateboard by means of a “land paddle” much like an SUP or canoe. My plan in getting into land paddling was to use it as a “co-training” aid to help build those paddling muscles when I couldn’t make it to the water. Not to mention riding a skate board is a heck of a lot of

fun anyway! What could be better than combining the two?!?

Now that I’ve had a year to train in this method, I think I can declare *success*. Getting back on the water this year after getting relatively little water time over the winter, I found my muscles and technique were still in good shape. And my balance is improving as well. The only downside is I’ve found another enjoyable sport that now competes for my time!

As an aging paddler (like nearly all of us...), it was important to me that I be able to train without further injuring joints that were already feeling the brunt of years of kayak racing. So I adopted the BraapStik land paddle (with the carbon shaft and canoe handle, naturally!) for all of my land paddling. The BraapStik has a leaf spring (much like a runner’s prosthesis) that absorbs impact as you plant the paddle on the pavement, releasing that compressed energy to help propel you forward at the end of the stroke. A Kong Ball (same as the dog toy) on the bottom of the spring provides the grip needed for forward propulsion. For my boards I split my time between a Kahuna Creations Shaka Surf long board and a ZenXTen big-wheel long board.

The Kahuna has a nice, surfy feel to it, great maneuverability, and a very large deck (46” long x 14” wide), which allows me to paddle either “skateboard” style or “SUP” style. The big wheel board has very tall, narrow wheels that allow me to roll over almost anything. It also has a lot of flex that absorbs road shocks (but takes away some of the precision feel of the Kahuna). I use this board a lot in the winter when road conditions are marginal.

Apparently I had a bad influence on Don Walls, as he’s taken up land paddling as well. In his case,



it was a real blessing because he’s far away from his canoe training spots. Here’s what Don had to say:

I am currently in lockdown in the city of Al Ruwais, Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. Lockdown over here means that I can't leave the city. Because of that I had to come up with an alternate means of staying in paddling shape. I found out about SUP long board paddling from Steven Horney and it was the perfect answer. I did have to adapt my paddle stroke; I needed a more positive plant, to grip the pavement, but other than that the same muscle groups are engaged. I have enjoyed this alternative answer to my paddling training so much that once the lockdown is over I will keep it as my go to cross-training on those days when the wind is blowing too hard to take the surf ski out or when I just need a change of pace.

My longboard is a Winmax. The wheels are scooter wheels I found over here, so the bearings took some break in. I've finally got them rolling good. It feels like the bearings are pressed in

and I don't know if I will be able to swap out to the ceramic bearings when they get here. I wore out the original set of bearings and two of the wheels.

Don is using a land paddle of his own design. He has a BraapStik as well, but needed some parts – not easy to get in Abu Dhabi! So he created his own paddle with an aluminum SUP paddle shaft and a grip area, now reinforced with a flip flop. It works great for him!

So if you can balance on a skateboard, and you want a great way to keep in paddling shape when you can’t get to the water, give land paddling a try!

Below and left: Don Walls land paddling in Abu Dhabi, maintaining his winning style! Note the scooter wheels on his board.





Top Left: My ZenXTen Big Wheel board and BraapStik land paddle; a potent combination when the roads are rough.



Steven Horney land paddling the Kahuna Creations Shaka Surf longboard and BraapStik land paddle in the neighborhood.



Bottom Left: Don Wall's Winmax board and home-built land paddle. Later Don changed the wheels on his board to scooter wheels and glued a flip-flop to the grip area of his paddle.



Don's flip-flop land paddle mod. Using contact cement, Don improvised a new grip section when he wore out the stock part and couldn't get a new one easily. He says it works great!

BLAST FROM THE PAST

CLASSIC PHOTOS

With the USCA Nationals postponed for a year, we thought it would be fun to post a few classic photos for readers to enjoy.



C1 Race Start at the 2012 Nationals in Warren, PA 53 canoes were on the line!

Ed Leszek and daughter Andrea at the Little Beaver Creek Race in Ohio, 1983.



*Ed Leszek and son
Paul at the
Tiadaghton Elm Race,
Pennsylvania 1982.
Held on Pine Creek
and the
Susquehanna
River.*



Roxanne Barton

*My first canoe race was in
1970 when I was 13 years
old. It was here at Sugar
Creek in
Crawfordsville IN. There
was another young
paddler there too, by the
name of Bruce
Barton although I didn't
meet him until later that fall.
Today 44 years later I raced
with our daughter Rebec-
ca. May 17, 2014.*

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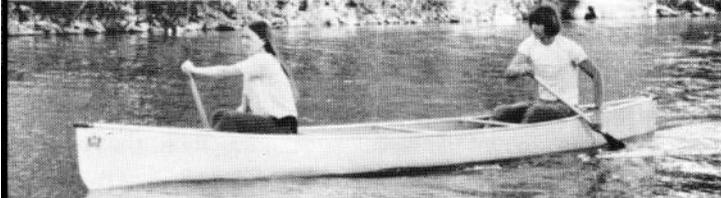
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Don't lose focus. Nationals will be back in Newago, Michigan next year!