



HUT!

Edition # 4

Oct 2019



MRX Coureur de Bois—Danielle (DanDan) Holdsworth in SUP, Mike Hayes in Stock C1. Tough year with rain, wind and storms. Mike stayed with Danielle until she could be pulled out then paddled on for a first day finish at 2am. At the 5am start the next day Mike pulled out exhausted. DanDan went on to do the 58K 'Sprint'. DanDan's Mom called Mike a 'beautiful human' for staying with her daughter.

Many said race built collaboration. Good sportsmanship was shown throughout. Three other racers stayed to help others and as a result missed the Bracebridge cut-off time. Race organizers awarded these three registration in next years event. See Bob Vincent MRX story inside.

Also, see Danielle's story on concussion and Mike's Texas Water Safari story in this issue.

In this issue:

President's message—from Oliver McMillian

Adirondack Classic (90 miler) – story by Craig Creighton

My Concussion Experience—story by Danielle Holdsworth

Conquering the Grand—story by Mackenzie Buis

Texas Water Safari—story by Mike Hayes

MRX 2019— story by Bob Vincent

Roscommon Canoe Classic

Other: List of executives, membership renewal form

GMPE online registration required—deadline Oct 5



OMCKRA AGM November 2, 2019



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Darryl Bohm

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President's Message

It's hard to believe the race season is coming to an end. It seems that not long ago we were bundling up for those classic spring races. Soon we will have to be bundling up for what is hopefully an extended fall paddling season. With only one race left on the calendar I think back at all the races this season, I think about what an impact Ontario paddlers have had abroad this year.

Races such as the General Clinton in New York state, the Texas water safari, and who can forget some phenomenal results in the Yukon River Quest!

The final race of the season has been described as somewhat of a homecoming; the Great Muskoka Paddling Experience has always been an end of season gathering. No one is training for any big paddling event, they're there to have fun and catch up with

people who they may have missed throughout the season and to have one final race before winding down into the off season. (a reminder that there is **ONLINE REGISTRATION ONLY for this year's GMPE** and it closes on OCT 5th) Hope to see you there.

I will leave everyone with another reminder that we are coming into the cold-water paddling season.

Please take precautions. Wear your PFD and pack a dry bag with clothes. I was reminded of this after an unintended swim in

Lake Ontario late September, that took my breath away.

Paddle safe.



Oliver McMillan

THE GREAT MUSKOKA PADDLING EXPERIENCE

A fun racing experience for Canoes, Kayaks & SUPs for all levels of participants

Saturday October 12, 2019

Online registration only. Registration is open until Oct 5 at

<https://www.webscorer.com/register?raceid=188614>

Notice of AGM was also emailed to members September 3 2019.

AGM Ontario Marathon Canoe and Kayak Racing Association (OMCKRA)

Saturday, November 2, 2019 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm

St. Andrews (Hespeler) Presbyterian Church, The Fellowship Room,
73 Queen Street East, Cambridge, ON NC3 2A9 (Queen and Cooper Street),
Contact phone 519-651-7054. All may attend, OMCKRA 'racing members' may vote.

AGENDA

Call to Order, Approval of minutes for AGM held November 3, 2018, President Report, Race Secretary Report, Treasurer Report, Membership Report, CKO (Provincial PSO) Report, MCRC (National NSO) Report, Resolution on Constitution*, Other business, Awards Presentation, Election of board members, Adjourn

*proposed: membership elect the board of directors; board determine executive positions
Social gathering will follow next door at 87 Queen Street East

90 Miler— story by Craig Creighton

Adirondack Classic September 2019 NY State

The 90 Miler, have you ever done it?" I was asked. "No, but I'd Like to", I answered. And that started the process! Well, as most reading this know, a lot goes into a race prior to getting there, so I'll skip that and get right to day 1. Arriving in Old Forge NY, Dan Mallet and I got a room on the main floor with our boat right outside the sliding glass door. That was a good thing as we had only met a few days before and had a completely empty boat. "Nope..., not race ready." So, that evening instead of chilling out, we made drink containers, installed paddle clips, set foot braces, taped jells to the thwarts and hurried to make ready for the next mornings start.

Start Day 1: There were 250 boats lying on the lawn at the park with nearly 2,000 people (competitors, crew and fans) milling around. The race is run in waves starting with the slowest boats and ending with the fastest. There were 9 waves and we were in the 8th with at least 50 boats starting with us. Off we went and by the 3rd stroke my foot brace pushed off to the center of the boat. Since we were 3rd boat from the lead, we decided to wait for the portage to fix it on land. The portage was 11 miles away (18km) but still we remained 3rd boat running.

The portage! I was hoping that we could run. I have been a runner from birth and Dan is this tall ectomorph type guy that I hoped could also run. Later I learned Dan had represented the Canadian Armed Forces in Cross Country Skiing in his youth and the "son of a gun" could outrun me like a gazelle. The portage went up a steep hill to the town and through the streets for over a kilometre. I had a canoe stuck to my head and didn't see much, but Dan in the bow, had a great view. At the put-in Dan exclaims "We passed the 'Red Shirt!" "That's impossible." I said, "The Red Shirt was in the lead!" Apparently, we had passed both lead boats on the portage. "That's a good thing," I said, my tongue on the gunwale I was so out of breath. I focused on fixing the foot brace. It took at least a minute to fix it and both teams passed us right there. We knew that the "Red Shirt" team was faster than us on the water, so all we could hope for was better performance with a foot brace and another big honking portage and we had both! The Open Class guys with the Red Shirt, beat us to the finish by 3 minutes and we were second boat in at 6:12:00.

Day 2: Oh, my friends... the cauldron was boiling the night before and the Voodoo Doll with the Red Shirt looked like a screen door it had so many holes in it. Dan and I had a battle plan to



win this thing. Three minutes is close! Right off the bat, we rode wash on the Open Guys (he had changed his shirt with all those pin holes in it) and powered down the lake with a strong stern wind. It didn't take long on the outside of this dog's tail that it was obvious these young lads couldn't control their boat in a stern wind. I shifted my weight to the stern a bit and made the call. "Give er!" Off we went to the 1st portage in the lead, and like Rocky and Bullwinkle (tall guy and short stubby guy) we never saw them again. We won day 2 by 6 minutes.

Day 3: The thoroughbreds were gnawing at the bit and we were away, again, but with a slow start. We were 3rd boat again, but with lots of wash to ride. The 9th wave behind us contained the C4s, 6s and 8s and all these provided great opportunities to ride wash. That was our plan... It takes a lot of juice to ride the wash of a much faster boat, but since it was a shorter day, we rode as much as we could. The Open Class guys were still faster than us, but we had 3 minutes on them. "Just keep them in sight Dan." Big boat after big boat went by us and we hopped on board every single one that came by. We were in the lead again, but we knew that it was not by much.

There seemed to be a fair bit of boat traffic, cottages and many people cheering us on. We knew we were close! Dan asked some people "How far to the finish?" One mile was the answer and we felt grateful. I decided to look back just in case our 'friends' were within sight. Dan agreed I should. Holy Fruholy! They were right there! It was a race again!

Dan and I put the pedal to the metal, but those guys were faster than us and paddling like they'd been eating prunes. The finish line was in sight and a C4 decided that they were going to beat us in too. Can you hear opportunity when it knocks? On the wash of the C4 we rode to the finish with a few more holes punched in that Red Shirt...we had won the race! 14:39:18.

Turned out we were also the fastest C2 overall beating out even the best time of the pro class. Good race. - Craig

My concussion experience - story by Danielle Holdsworth

I was trying to live a healthy life...and then the world went black.
Trying to set a good example for my children...and then the world went black.
Trying to keep fit in the Sunday night league...and then the world went black.
Trying to have fun with my friends on the field...and then the world went black.

In that one blinding instant of blackness, the trajectory of my life would be forever changed. I watched the soccer ball as it left my opponent's foot. Time stood still as the ball connected with my face and launched me into an unconscious free fall onto the turf. The world stopped in a singular gasp as all eyes turned towards me, not moving, my world blackened. I didn't realize when I came to just how significant this moment would turn out to be. You see, in that split second when the soccer ball connected with my head, my brain sustained an impact that would ultimately result in a severe concussion, otherwise known as a traumatic brain injury (TBI). While I accepted a ride home from the field that day, I truly believed I was fine. Sure, I felt a bit rattled, but concussions were no big deal, right? I'd just rest for the night and shake it off by the morning. After all, I had two small children and a career to consider. As the next few days crept by, it became apparent that I wasn't "OK". The world spun in circles around me, I couldn't keep my eyes open and I had difficulty completing the simplest of tasks. I was distracted, clumsy and confused. In that singular moment I had lost who I was. My world had been turned upside down. I was no longer able to go to work, read bedtime stories to my children, or use a screen of any kind. My once intelligent brain was constantly failing me, becoming distracted and forgetting the simplest of things. My vision suffered, I could no longer recall words and I dropped almost everything I touched. I couldn't balance a bike, let alone race the upcoming season of triathlons. As weeks turned into months, I was diagnosed with Post Concussion Syndrome (PCS), a complex



disorder where concussion symptoms linger, sometimes up to a year or longer. My days became filled with physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and vision training. I learned strategies to cope with my deficiencies and slowly began the road to recovery. After 14 months of hard work I was able to return to teaching. Slowly, my world began to expand, although I was easily overwhelmed by too much stimulus. Seven years later, I am not the same person I used to be. I will live forever with post-it notes reminding me to do things, alarms on my phone, and creative names for things I can't remember the words for. I have grieved the loss of my former self, the one swallowed by the darkness the day the world went black.

Now, I am learning to embrace the person I have become and develop a sense of humour for those things I continue to struggle to achieve. While I will never play competitive soccer again (the risk of a consequent concussion is too high), I have found a renewed athletic joy competing in canoe and SUP. I have found ways to push my boundaries and explore the world with a new perspective. While it doesn't seem possible in the throes of a TBI or PCS, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Sometimes you just have to be incredibly patient to find it.

Concussion awareness is beginning to become more mainstream with the enactment of Rowan's Law. Use this awareness to protect yourself and your loved ones. Know the signs and know when to seek medical intervention. The best way to cope with this "invisible" injury is to prevent it before it happens.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/rowans-law-concussion-awareness-resources>

Above is the link to the **Concussion Awareness Resources** document that amateur athletes, parent, coaches, team trainers and officials are required to review. Athletes 25 years old and under are required to confirm that they have reviewed these resources. While there are relatively few reported concussions sustained while marathon canoe training and racing it's important to remember that aerobic activity can exacerbate the effects of a concussion. An athlete injured in another sport should not take part in a marathon canoe/kayak race. Also see this: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/rowans-law-information-sports-organizations-and-schools#section-1>

Conquering the Grand—story by Mackenzie Buis

Conestogo to Dunnville An Expedition training trip.

The idea to canoe the Grand River from Conestogo to Dunnville had been stewing in my canoe partner, Mike Hayes', mind for several years and after several attempts to unsuccessfully organize an early season Brent run in Algonquin it was decided to run the Grand. The idea was to run the entire length of the Grand from Conestogo to Dunnville in an adventure padding race format, self contained and as fast as we could. Upon a bit of research, we discovered that there had been a group of canoeists that had done the trip in the past, however they did it over a period of seven days it was our goal to do the 170km distance in 24 hours or less.

We started in Conestogo on Saturday at about 8:00, it was a cool day and it was slightly overcast so, perfect for paddling. As we had organized our trip for the Victoria Day long weekend and we had been blessed with an abundance of rain, the water was moving! We made good time through Kitchener and made it to our first portage south of highway 8 and after a quick stretch and a bite to eat we were back on the water quickly and started our way downstream to Cambridge. We had good water until we hit the shallows just north of the Fountain Street bridge, much to my chagrin we picked up a scratch or two on my freshly refinished boat, but quickly got back into the deeper water and made our way to the Mill Street Portage. We encountered some wind as the river widened up just before the Mill Street portage, but if we were worried about the river, it was nothing compared to the traffic on the bridge! I will say that the portage is clearly marked but the people on the road only stopped when we chanced it and stepped out on to the road and made them stop!

Paddling through the historic Galt district and realizing that the river retaining walls were the very same as seen in the dystopian "Handmaid Tale" gave a startling contrast as we made our way down the river towards Glen Morris. The riverbanks quickly changed from concrete and urban sprawl to forest and we enjoyed the change in scenery; the water was high enough that we made good time to the set of rapids upstream from Paris. We met a group of kayakers playing in the rapids and made some small talk and received several incredulous stares (not the last we would receive) when we calmly responded with "Dunnville" when they asked where we were headed.

The take-out at Paris is a very nice maintained boardwalk, a stark contrast to our last takeout in Cambridge where we had to fight with traffic to make it across the street and back to the river! The distance to Paris from our starting point was about 70

km, we had made it that entire distance in less than seven hours. We got back onto the water and worked our way downstream to the half-way point at the Wilkes Dam in Brantford. The portage around the Wilkes Dam is a well-maintained trail through

a conservation area. However, the put-in after the trail leaves much to be desired. The portage requires you to get back into the river in a branch that meets back up with the main river after a short distance and it was very shallow. After some bumps and a few more scratches on my now less than perfectly refinished canoe we made it back to the main portion of the river and paddled through Brantford. If we thought the rapids upstream from Paris were interesting, they were nothing compared to the set right in Brantford, after we successfully made it through the rapids, we rode the fast water most of the way to the Cockshutt bridge launch. Once there we had to make a choice to paddle the oxbow or take a 1km portage and remove 11 km of river from our adventure, by this point we decided to portage the oxbow and use it to work out our legs. After a much-needed portage we put back into the river and our next stop was Caledonia. The river after our portage was significantly different from the first half of our adventure, the fast water that had aided us for so long was simply non-existent. For all intents and purposes we were paddling one very long lake, as we dug in and continued our trip downstream we still made reasonable time as we worked our way towards Caledonia, the overcast sky that had been obscuring the sun all day long cleared up and we were treated to the first continuing sunshine of our entire trip. The paddle through the countryside was quite picturesque as we paddled into the evening and the setting sun. We made our way to Chiefswood Park as the sun had finished setting and the chill was starting to seep into our bones, we made the call to step out and used the public dock at Chiefswood Park to change into our warmer clothes. The warm clothes were a very welcome change as the temperature began to drop as we paddled on past the park. It was shortly after this we started to see the fireworks. We counted three separate displays and we had a front row seat to all of them!



Conquering the Grand—continued



After paddling for 16 or so hours the fireworks display took on an otherworldly appearance, with several different fireworks displays lighting up the river we continued down the river quite enjoying the displays until they finally petered out and we made our way to the portage in Caledonia. As we saw the lights of Caledonia in the distance we found the portage with some difficulty as it seemed to be a bit neglected and not very well marked. The put-in after the dam was quite different, with its clearly marked access point and well-worn path it was obvious that

leg of our journey to Dunnville.

The fast running stretch of water from Caledonia to the small hamlet of York was a very welcome change from the slow water north of Caledonia, it woke us up and energized us a bit. I have never had the experience of running a series of rapids at right but it sure wakes you up! After the swifts at York it was no current, no wind, just us. We paddled on into the night and as we came up on Cayuga we opted for another 20 minute break as by this time we were both feeling the prolonged paddling in a variety of aches and

more people used this access point than the one on the upstream portion of the dam. At this point we had covered 130 km and we had done it in about 16 hours, we took 20 minutes or so to refresh ourselves (I napped while my partner stretched his legs) we got on the river about 12:30 or so and started the last

pains. The portion of the river past Cayuga was wide with many islands and side branches of the river, we stayed mostly to the right side of the river and at every bend we were looking for the lights of the Dunnville bridge, the lights that indicated an end to our journey and some well deserved rest. Just as the sky began to lighten we finally saw the lights of the bridge ahead of us and our final destination. We had booked campsites at the Byng Island Campground and after one small portage in the camp itself we reached our end-point.

We had started in Conestogo Saturday morning and ended in Dunnville early Sunday morning, in all we had paddled 170km done many portages, braved a busy highway, shot several rapids, saw an absolutely beautiful fireworks display, battled our own fatigue overnight and accomplished our goal of completing it in less than 24 hours. As we relaxed over our celebratory breakfast of steak and eggs, I asked my canoe partner if he would do it again and with an answer that only a marathoner would respond with, he answered. "Absolutely."

Texas Water Safari—story by Mike Hayes

"We found him!! He's over here by the port a potties!" I opened my eyes to see 2 figures standing over me. "C'mon Mike! Time to go!" It took a second, then I remembered, I'm in Texas.

Scott Ide asked me to race the TWS shortly after the MRX. I agreed without putting too much thought or research into the decision. During the ensuing months I began to learn more about the adventure river that is billed as "The Toughest Canoe Race in the World." Highlights to expect include 100°F+ temperatures, fire ants, boat eating rapids, water snakes, dams and roads to go over and under, alligators, serious sleep deprivation, and to end it all a paddle across



the Bay to the finish line at the little town of Seadrift. Add to that Scott, who lives in Massachusetts, and I had only raced together once this past May in NY. And we would be doing the entire 260 miles (418 km) without scouting the rapids and portages, many of which we would do in the dark. My excitement for the race shifted to terror. I had serious doubts I could do it.

Scott and I flew into Austin and started outfitting our rented Alumacraft canoe. Our first advice from Bob Vincent was to get a sturdy boat. Valuable advice. Our service team and co-



Texas Water Safari—continued

captains were Seth (Scott's bro) and Andre. On no other race that I have done is the service crew a more important part of your team than the TWS. And our lads did a fantastic job!

Our Friday gear check went smooth. Mandatory gear includes flares and a snake bite kit. Never have I witnessed such a variety of racing watercraft. Wood, Kevlar, Carbon, and tons of Aluminum. Solos, tandems, 3, 4, 5, and 6 seaters. High mounted lights, electric bailer pumps, single blades, double blades. The other racers were friendly. The guys beside us gave us reflectant tape for our paddles. Makes it easier to find them when you flip in the dark they said.

Once on the water my nerves shifted back to excitement. We didn't do the pre-qualify race which determines your start position. But we were gifted an upfront row because we were from out of state. We started in the 10th of 30+ rows. Finally we are off! With 185 boats and 4 portages in the first few miles, it is crazy. We got a good jump on the field but the 4+ person boats



start passing us. They are way faster than our Alumacraft. But our boat proves to be maneuverable, stable, and indeed sturdy.

The first day is very technical. Lots of rapids that feature fallen trees occupying the best line. The numerous dams can be portaged, lifted over, or run if you're gutsy. Or crazy. Scott and I decide before the race to take a conservative approach. Our objective is to finish. There are many places to get hurt or to wreck a boat. Numerous people tell us that the first day consumes the majority of the DNFers. And on the first day we see tons of flipped boats and many gorilla tape hull patches. Miraculously we never flipped. Partly from the training I received on the Thames River. But partially we were lucky with a dozen close calls to either flip or be knocked out of the boat by a tree. Our closest brush with disaster is best told in Scott's own words:

"Well into the first day, we were really focusing on the upcoming Palmetto State Park Bridge, but didn't have Broken Dam Rapid (Son of Ottine) on our radar at all. So, around mile 56 when we heard that water rushing, we had no idea what we were approaching and no real plan. We followed Lady Grey (also known as Cyndi) as she went left and watched as she stumbled / walked her surfski through the broken dam on that side. What we did-

n't see was the chute on the left bank affectionately named "The Room of Doom" and our bow started down the rushing water. Cyndi looked over her shoulder and yelled to us, "DON'T GO DOWN THERE!" We decided to take her advice. I grabbed some high grass on the river bank in stern and Mike, back-paddled harder than I have EVER seen a Canadian paddle. We swung the boat Alumacraft around and took our turn going through the broken portion of dam, then the actual rapids. Definitely got our adrenaline going."

With all the technical paddling, I found it hard to hold back to a multi-day pace. I pushed too hard and didn't eat and drink enough. Seth and Andre were encouraging me to eat more. And I could hear echoes of Bob back in Canada telling me to eat and drink. In fact Bob was constantly texting with our service guys. Giving encouragement, advice, and passing on greetings from my paddling friends back home. When your moral is down and your body is hurting, a few well wishes are huge. Thank you.

Our day one goal was Palmetto Bridge before dark. We precariously got over the bridge. This marked the end of the most technical part of the race. However I was tired and realized that I didn't do a good job of mounting the boat light. The upcurve of the deck caused a shadow on the water and an aluminum reflection for my eyes. I had to resort to my headlamp which caused a white flash off my hand with every stroke. And! And...it encouraged every night time Texan insect to land on my face and crawl inside of my ears, nose and mouth.

By the wee hours I was done. Low energy, low morale, and was on the verge of puking. Doubt crept into my mind if I could finish this race. We pulled into Gonzolas Dam about 4 am. There were bodies and boats laying everywhere. I flopped onto the ground but had to head to the port a potties. That's when I became dizzy and faint. I sat down before



Texas Water Safari—continued

falling over. Realizing I was in a parking lot, I crawled to the grass. That's where my guys found me two hours later. Staggering back to the boat I was still dizzy and ready to puke. I quit the Motrin for the sake of my stomach. For the next two days I would embrace the pain.

Day one we were in and out of the cooler upstream water with portages. But day 2 began to heat up and we felt it. It would soon be 102°F (before the humidex) and no breeze due to the high banks of the river. Scott was a pillar of strength and never complained. But the heat was tough on him. We pulled over a few times to soak in the river in a vain attempt to cool off. On one stop I told Scott to freeze! I waded over and flicked a spider the size of my hand off of his hat. We promptly got back in the boat.



We had a long stretch between seeing our service guys on this hot Sunday. I didn't drink my Boost fast enough. When I took a big gulp I swallowed it before realizing it had gone bad. The sour taste stained my mouth for the rest of the day. And my chocolate protein bars and Snickers went from iced to melted before I could eat them. Even my Starburst Gummies went to liquid. But Seth and Andre became my heroes when they presented us with pizza and twice bestowed us with McDonald's Cheeseburgers. Delish!

As I could no longer stomach the Boost, Andre traded my extra food with other teams. I think it was Sunday night when he handed me a treat. A Ziploc bag of chips, pretzels, and...Funions! They are the onion equivalent of cheezies. Pure junk food, pure joy.

As the sleep deprivation set in, the hallucinations began. For me, the logs and trees in the river all became animals. From zebras to dragons and other mythological creatures. Even small sticks morphed into animals of some sort. So bizarre yet funny.

Sunday we would occasionally take turns grabbing 20 minute naps. This was Bob's advice and it worked well to take the edge off the sleep deprivation. After 20 minutes you would get uncomfortable laying across a thwart, sit up, have a sip and a bite,

and paddle again. I would nap with my paddle across my lap as I awoke a couple of times to Scott screaming my name. I whipped up to see us bearing down on a log across a set of rapids. A quick post and a narrow miss would ensure that I was now awake.

A storm brushed us Sunday night. In the wee hours of Monday, as Scott napped in the stern, I ran class two rapids from the bow. I was loving it. The stars were out. My headlamp caused tiny green reflections from the eyes of hundreds of spiders on shore, on logs, and even on the water. And the hallucinations continued. It was a wild and surreal experience. A stark contrast from my low of 24 hours earlier. It was at this point I decided that I would do this race again. Assuming I lived through this one.

Early Monday morning, Scott suggested I that I peel off my socks and shoes to let my feet dry out. Scott was great making sure I ate and drank and took electrolytes. I'm glad he told me to deal with my feet. They had been wet for nearly 48 hours and I gasped when I saw them. They were white and it looked like the flesh was about to fall off. A few hours later the colour started to come back. Got to them just in time. Thanks Scott.

Monday was a grind and a blur. I don't specifically remember much. I do remember a couple of log jams. The log jams worried me. I heard stories and saw videos of paddlers lost in the dark for hours trying to portage around them. At our first one, we went back upstream looking for a portage around. We saw some lights of other paddlers in the bush and headed in. We portaged, aka dragged, our aluminum tank through the thick brush and came to a little creek. I think this whole area is a delta with multiple flows of water. We paddled it and fortunately came back out to the main river.

When we encountered our second log jam, Scott suggested we try to paddle around the edge of it. We zigzagged through where the river flooded into the trees and were able to paddle around the entire obstruction.

We pulled into the last place to stop and meet our service guys before the infamous Bay. The conditions on the Bay can vary from calm to un paddlable. We heard tons of horror stories. Of



Texas Water Safari—continued

course we would do it in the dark. We put on the mandatory spray skirt and headed out. Before the actual Bay, you run through a maze of canals loaded with Alligators. We saw lots of them and their red eyes not far from our boat. Something about being in the dark, cloudy head, and Alligators gave me an ominous feel as we paddled through. A large splash directly in front of our boat startled me and cleared my head. I don't know what it was but it was big. Then another large splash and I could feel something flopping on the spray skirt behind me before finding its way back to the water. I think it was a Garfish. I was now awake.

The route we planned on taking was completely clogged with water plants and we had to find a different canal. Once on the Bay we got a little disoriented but with Scott's sense of direction, we got on course. We were both done at every level. We knew we had to get past the last point and turn left to Seadrift and the finish line. After passing what we thought was the last point, another point presented itself. Over and over. It was tough to hold it together but I knew we were close. The sky started to lighten as we headed into Seadrift. Again, it was a

surreal indescribable feeling as we came into the finish. 69 hours and 26 minutes. But our time didn't matter. We finished. As we staggered into dry land, Seth and Andre handed us each an ice cold king can of the most fantastic American beer I have ever consumed. This had been an adventure like no other. Would I do it again? Hell yeah.



Scott Ide and Mike Hayes at finish of TWS

MRX- story by Bob Vincent (afterword by Don Stoneman)

The running start was Ok. We were in the middle of the pack. We started passing canoes right away. I smiled as I heard paddlers in the canoe beside us yell at a green canoe to 'MOVE OVER. We want to pass on the left.'

The wind came up on Fairy Lake and the waves were about six inches high. Into Huntsville for the way point and back out there were no problems. The first portage was fast and easy. It took about 40 minutes from the portage to get to Mary Lake. The wind was up and the waves were two feet high. Don Stoneman was four lengths in front of us. We had made up the 10 minute head start that solos got. We and most other canoes went to the left shore. There was no place to hide and the water was pouring in. We were in my pro canoe with a middle cover but no bow skirt. My fault. We had to dump five times. We were passed by about



Gwyn Hayman and Bob

eight canoes. We made it to the other end of the lake and portaged into the river. Man, it felt so good. 20 canoes quit before the portage. Three had to be rescued from the lake by organizers. Gwyn was great in the bow. I could hear her talking to herself, "pull, brace" over the tops of the waves.

The river felt so good. We passed four canoes in the next hour. One C1 caught us up at the Wilson Falls portage. It was a bad takeout so we helped him up. He was faster on land. We went way left and went straight over and put a minute on him. On our last portage, Gwyn had to use the rope with handles to get up the river bank. On the run down we caught a kayaker and passed him.

I did not drink enough and had a bad headache. Two pills and lots of water and it cleared up. Steve Tait and his grandson made it to the finish and Ewing was very happy with the race.

MRX—continued

Dean Coulson and Amado Cruz changed ends on Mary Lake to take advantage of their weight difference. They were in a pro boat with a tarp but they only tipped once.

Bruce Barton and Solomon Carriere got lost on a portage on the first day of the Coureur des Bois race. The Turner brothers put 40 minutes on them. On Day 2, the crews paddled together. Turners had wheels for their canoe for a very long portage up a hill, so they carried gear for both teams and were good friends. Mike Hayes dropped out after day 1. He got into his camping area well after midnight, with a 5 am wakeup for day 2. He paddled beside Danielle Holdsworth on her SUP. Danielle's mother was grateful that Mike stayed with her. Danielle went on to (unofficially) finish the 58 km sprint race the next day.

Mackenzie Buis made it to the finish of the shortened Classic race at Baysville.

More excitement on Day 1. Mike d'Abreu, paddling with big Tom, from Ottawa, was hit by a falling

birch tree whilst on a portage. Tom was happy to hear Mike start shouting. The Race Organizers got the team out and Mike to the hospital for assessment. Mike was ok but racing was over. Tom still looked shook up the next day at the banquet just having seen his partner knocked down.

Back to the end of the race; Organizers thought Lake of Bays was going to be too rough and called the competition off at Baysville, 30 km of Lake of Bays short of the start/finish line.

The food afterwards was great. We talked to lots of new people. Don Stoneman beat us by two minutes and five seconds., darn it. We won our class for the 58 km race.—Bob



Don Stoneman



Dean Coulson of Ontario and Amado Cruz from Belize with Dean's daughter Ella cheering.

Now Don gets his say.

On the run I thought I was at the back of the pack and sucking dirt. The young guys up front were running like gazelles. I realized that portages were going to my weak spot. I had run the Port Sydney to Bracebridge section of the course on Wednesday and there were three big ones that I didn't like. Easy to get lost in the woods on the new Trans Canada hiking trail instead of the portage.

So I made as much time on the water as I could, passing all the solo canoes before I was off Peninsula Lake. In Huntsville at the way point I stopped to tighten a screw on my footbrace (I did that four times during the race!) and saw that second place was not very far behind me.

The north end of Mary Lake was brutal in the headwind but the 16'8" stock C1 was so much better in the waves than a C2. I bobbed like a cork and kept pace for the entire lake with Seb and Jen Courville. At times I was even passing them. Once past the Port Sydney portage though, they were gone. I rode wash on another mixed crew for a while but just couldn't quite keep up. Jen Nicholson and Tom Stead caught me just before the Wilson Falls portage and led me through it, to my happiness. I chased them to the last portage and the finish line. Good to be done 58 km on a horrendously tough day in 7:59 and change.

The organizers describe the first day of the Coureur des Bois class with active lightning, thunder and high winds. "An amazing

MRX—continued

demonstration of backcountry fortitude was exhibited.” And then there was the day 2, already described. Every year the MRX is a bit different.

The MRX has a history of being tough. While 2019 was memorable, 2014 was worse, with only 39 per cent of teams making it to the finish line. The 4 pm cutoff at Bracebridge this year was strictly enforced. Teams arriving later were not allowed to continue. Mike Crouzai on a SUP and canoeists Johnathon Ayles and Neal McCain forfeited their race when they stopped to help paddlers who were in distress on the lake and did not make the

cutoff. The organizers gave them complimentary registration for the 2020 race.

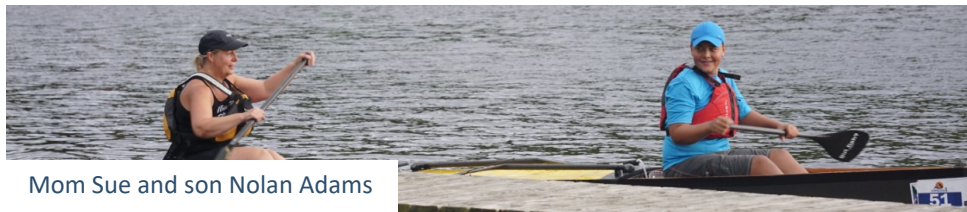
This year the MRX attracted international racers; Amado Cruz from Belize, Roxanne Barton and Bruce Barton from Michigan, Gloria Wesley from New England and Tim Turner from Africa . From out of province Dave and Abby Lewis from Nova Scotia, Pat Turner from BC and of course Sol Carriere showed up from northern Saskatchewan. Expect more out-of-country racers next year. Don



Nova Scotians Abby Lewis and Dad Dave Lewis at High Falls



Grandson Ewing and Steve Tait



Mom Sue and son Nolan Adams

Roscommon Canoe Classic, 37th Annual



Chris Prater and Oliver McMillan

The first points race of the Michigan season, the day before Mother’s Day attracts teams from throughout the Midwest to the south branch of the Roscommon River, described as “a highly technical affair rewarding teams that corner smooth and fast.” The same blog on marathon canoe racing (Canoeraceworld.com) describes “a bonus team from Ontario,” dominating the second heat of mostly unseeded teams, opening up a wide gap between themselves and the second team in the heat. Their H2OCanoes ProB1 racing canoe was wickedly fast up river, not the mention the Ripple FX paddles that propelled them effortlessly. Do we have to mention this team was Oliver McMillan and Chris Prater from London, Thames River paddle group veterans, who went on to race the Ausable River Marathon this year?

OMCKRA Membership Application/Renewal Form (coverage to March 31)

Membership may be paid by

- ◇ **e.transfer** from your bank to omckra@gmail.com
- ◇ **cheque** made out to OMCKRA mailed to: Membership c/o 87 Queen Street East, Cambridge ON N3C 2A9
- ◇ **credit card** at: <https://raceroster.com/memberships/4009/omckra-2020>

Fill out this form below and include with payment if using cheque or cash. Please don't mail cash .

| | | | |
|----------|--|-----------------|--|
| Name : | | | |
| Address: | | | |
| Phone: | | E-Mail Address: | |

| Fee schedule for members of OMCKRA | Enter Fee [C\$] | Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) | What do you race? C, K, Rec., OC, etc. |
|--|-----------------|----------------------------|--|
| Individual/Race Organizer (per race) | (\$50) | | |
| Full Time Student or <18 yr. as of Jan. 1 | (\$40) | | |
| Child <20 yr. as of Jan 1 with parent (maximum 4 adults) Parent apply & provide family info | (\$70) | | |
| List Family Paddler Names & ages | | | |
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RELEASE FROM LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISKS - OMCKRA

1. I acknowledge that the activities involve risk, dangers and hazards inherent in canoeing, kayaking and associated outdoor water sports (the Inherent Risk). And further acknowledge that in addition to the inherent risk the Activities involve certain additional risks, dangers, and hazards, some of which may include (but are not limited to): physical exertion for which I may not be prepared; weather extremes, including sudden and unexpected changes, dangerous water conditions, including cold water and movement, waves, currents, rapids and white water, collision with natural and man-made objects, including rocks and other boats, and equipment malfunction or failure (collectively the Additional Risks).

2. I acknowledge that the enjoyment and excitement of my participation in the activities is derived, in part from the Inherent Risk and the Additional Risks and I agree to freely accept and fully assume all risk of personal injury, death, property damage or less, resulting from any cause whatsoever, including but not limited to the Inherent Risk and the Additional Risks and active or passive negligence, imprudence, lack of skill, error of judgment, breach of contract or breach of statutory duty of care on the part of the Organizer or the Ontario Marathon Canoe and Kayak Racing Association (OMCKRA). For greater certainty and without limiting the foregoing, I acknowledge that I use the equipment and facilities of the Organizer and OMCKRA with understanding of the nature, condition and state thereof and entirely at my own risk and acknowledge that

3. I am solely responsible for the safety of my person and property and that the Organizer and OMCKRA assume no responsibility whatsoever for the safety of my person or property in connection with the Activities.

4. I waive any and all claims I may now and in the future have against and release and forever discharge from liability and agree not to sue the Organizer and/or OMCKRA for any personal injury, death, property damage or less sustained by me as a result of my participation in the Activities due to any cause whatsoever, including but not limited active or passive negligence, imprudence, lack of skill, error of judgment, breach of contract, or breach of statutory duty of care on the part of the Organizer or OMCKRA.

5. I agree to save harmless and indemnify the Organizer and OMCKRA from and against any and all liability for any personal injury, death, property damage or less to any third party, resulting from my participation in the Activities or in the operation of the Organizer.

6. I agree that I am responsible for all costs of rescue or medical attention rendered to me or for my benefit, arising from the Activities and I agree to indemnify the Organizer and OMCKRA from any and all liability in respect of any and all such costs.

7. I acknowledge that in signing this waiver and release I am not relying on any oral, written or visual representations or statements made by the Organizer or OMCKRA.

8. I agree that this Waiver and Release shall in all respects be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the province of Ontario.

Fair play agreement and waiver must be agreed to by members.: As a Member of OMCKRA, I agree to follow the OMCKRA code of conduct, to behave in a sporting way, with a sense of fair play and to follow the rules and directions of the Organizers of OMCKRA Sanctioned or Recognized Events. I hereby waive and release any and all claims against Ontario Marathon Canoe Kayak Racing Association (OMCKRA) and its directors, volunteers and staff, for any and all damages or injuries arising out of participation in any events or activities by me and/or my dependents and/or my guests. I hereby grant for the minors listed above, as their parent or legal guardian, permission to participate in OMCKRA sanctioned events and activities.

Rowan's Law (concussion policy): I confirm that I have reviewed the Concussion Awareness Resources document at the Ontario government site: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/rowans-law-concussion-awareness-resources>

Signature: _____

Members receive annual meeting notices and newsletters via e-mail, are eligible to vote, are covered for insurance in OMCKRA sanctioned events and may apply to participate in provincial and national awards competitions. Personal information collected by OMCKRA is used to provide services to our members. These services require administrative responsibilities such as documentation of insured events and instructor registration. A limited information membership list (names and city) is provided to race organizers for insurance purposes. Private information is never given to anyone by OMCKRA for other reasons. People registering for OMCKRA coaching or who have taken part in an insured event may receive membership information from OMCKRA in the next calendar year.