

Learning to Hunt

Hosting a hunting-based outdoor skills event in your community



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Wisconsin
Department of Natural Resources
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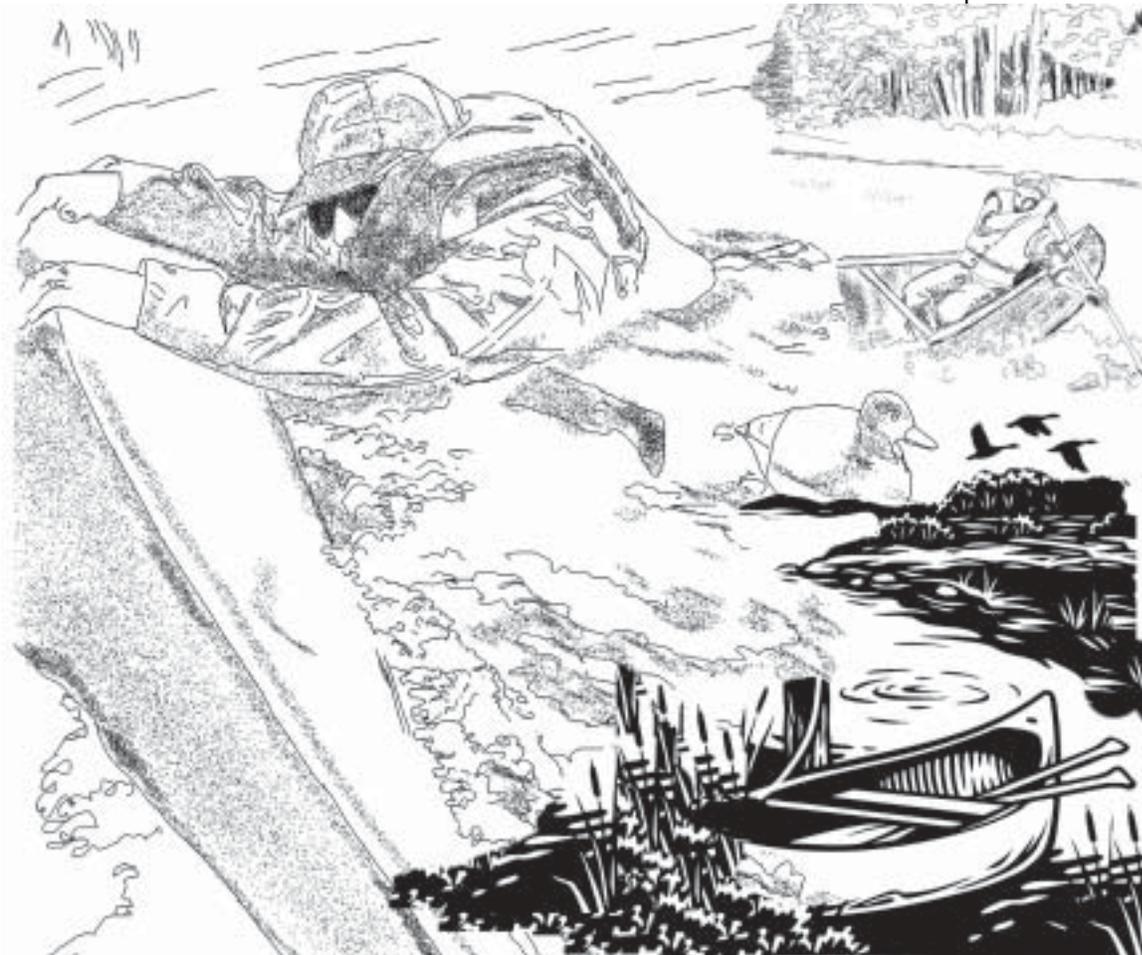
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A Double-ender

Canoeing basics for beginning waterfowlers

Participants experience some of the basic maneuvers for launching, riding and paddling a canoe and learn ways to prevent drownings as well as ways to survive mishaps.



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Objectives

Participants shall:

Use canoe terminology and discuss basic canoe safety.

State how to remain comfortable while canoeing.

Demonstrate the use of the J-stroke and the power stroke.

Demonstrate safe and accurate handling of a canoe in the water.

List the common reasons why waterfowl hunters drown.

Describe or demonstrate ways to save yourself if you fall into cold water.

Station Setup

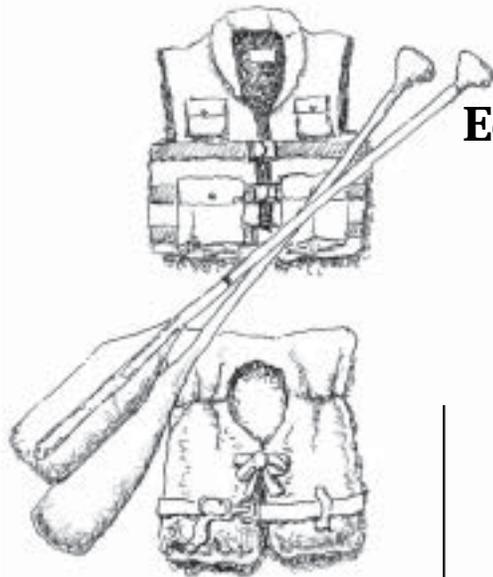
In this on-the-water activity your participants will have the opportunity to learn how to maneuver a canoe. Hold your session on a clear, warm summer day, in shallow water along a flat beach or dock. Participants should learn their canoeing techniques on a quiet lake or slow-moving stream.

Provide one experienced paddler with knowledge of rescue techniques for every 2-4 canoes on the water. Having a lifeguard on duty is also beneficial in case of emergencies and to calm any non-swimmer fears.

If you choose to set up this station at a public boat or canoe launch, decide in advance how to handle conflicts with other people launching their craft or returning ashore. Have canoes secured in the water if possible so participants don't have to carry the canoes any distance. Keep paddles, PFD's, hip boots and waders on shore for demonstration purposes.

Equipment

- Canoes
- Paddles
- Personal Flotation Device's (PFD's) including several child-sized PFD's.
- Hip boots and waders
- Car, Truck, SUV or other vehicle
- Canoe racks, rope, bungee cords or other straps



Safety Note: Every participant *must* wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD...Life Jacket) for this activity station.

Background Information

More hunters die from water-related accidents each year, than they do from gunshot wounds. Waterfowl hunters are especially vulnerable to drowning and hypothermia because they hunt on or near water. Participants should understand that they should always approach the water with caution and safety in mind. They need to know the wetlands and waterways they hunt, they need to know their canoe or boat they are using, they need to pay attention to the weather forecasts and they need to know their own limitations.

Canoes are versatile, traditional watercrafts that can get you into backwater reaches and shallow rivers and streams where no 16-foot, 40-horsepower boats can travel. They are relatively light, easy to transport and easy to paddle and canoes are very well suited to traveling rivers and streams.

Due to their narrow keels, canoes are quite prone to tipping suddenly or capsizing, tossing the paddlers into the water. They are not suited for use on large, open bodies of water during rough weather.

Stow your gear low and in the center of the canoe. Avoid standing and moving about once you are in the canoe. Train your hunting dog to sit still when in the canoe. While shooting, stay seated and brace yourself against the gun's recoil.

One good thing about canoes is that most will generally never completely sink. The upsweep design of the bow and stern often means that air is trapped in these parts when the canoe is overturned. Therefore, the canoe usually always will stay afloat. Always stay with your capsized canoe if you can't get to shore safely.

Canoes have come a long way in the last several hundred years since Native Americans plied the waters in birch bark and dugout models. You can still find canoes made of wood, but most modern models are made of aluminum, fiberglass, ABS plastic (acrylonitrile-butadienes-tyrene) or Kevlar. Kevlar canoes are about 25% lighter than fiberglass canoes.

Canoes range in length from 13 to 18 feet, with a typical 2-person canoe being 16 or 17 feet. They can weigh from 18 pounds to 125 pounds, with 65-90 pounds considered average. Wider, longer canoes, with gently rounded to flat bottoms, are very stable, but



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slower moving. Although wider canoes are slower, they are more difficult to tip and so a waterfowl hunter carrying valuable hunting gear would find the stability of wider canoes very important. Canoes between 33-38 inches wide provide sufficient stability. Seats should be high enough so that feet don't catch under them, but not so high as to make the canoe tippy. Thwarts, or the reinforcement bars running across the canoe, are good to have because they not only give strength to the canoe, they also provide backrests, lashing points and hand holds.

When teaching canoeing, consider your participants' prior skills, age, disabilities, coordination, fears and apprehension of trying something new. Calm reassurance is essential to the beginning paddler.

Introduce this activity by asking who can and cannot swim. Make a mental note of those who say they can't swim. Tell your group it is imperative that every participant must wear a PFD, regardless of their swimming abilities. This teaching station is divided into two parts:

- A. Safety and Ethics and
- B. Terminology and Techniques.



Safety and ethics

Procedure

Discuss some of the safety issues to keep in mind while using a canoe during a waterfowl hunt. Tell participants they should:

take along enough food and water as they may need in an emergency. Good sources of quick energy include trail mix, sausage and fruit. Drink about two quarts of water as a minimum per day.

use waterproof bags to store all food and extra foul weather clothing.

avoid taking cans and never take glass containers.

carry a first aid/safety kit in the canoe.

carry both day and night visual emergency signaling devices, since waterfowl hunting often takes place in remote areas and canoes and hunters are camouflaged.

carry an old coffee can, bleach bottle scoop or other device for bailing water.

For greater enjoyment of your waterfowling expedition, avoid getting sore. If your hands are exposed to sun and water for long periods they can dry out, burn or chap. Some people prefer to wear gloves to reduce burning and protect their hands from developing blisters from paddle use. Your muscles can also get sore from overdoing your canoeing at the start. The key is to pace yourself. Relax and enjoy your canoeing and you will last longer and be less sore. When duck hunting on a water course, start your trip heading upstream so your return, when you are more tired, will be easier. Long downstream hunting trips can be taken if you have someone meet you or a vehicle waiting at a pickup point down river. Also, paddling upstream brings you to the safer, slower eddying waters below swift currents and rapids. Paddling downstream on an unfamiliar river can pull you into fast-moving water before you know it.

Activity A



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Prevent Drowning

Stress the following ten points to your participants to help them learn how to prevent drowning.

❑ **Wear your PFD.** The first and most important tip to prevent a foolish drowning is to wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (PFD) while traveling too and from your hunting blind. By law, in Wisconsin, each boat must have one wearable PFD per person, although the law doesn't specify that persons aboard must wear the PFD. Float coats and flotation coveralls will also provide some protection against hypothermia.

Demonstrate proper use of personal flotation devices (PFD's). Repeat that all participants must wear PFD's when on the water. Stress the importance of wearing PFD's at all times, even if they think they are strong swimmers.

❑ **Don't overload your boat.** Hunting boats are typically small craft under 14 feet, and many have flat bottoms which are particularly unsuitable for rough water. Overloading and too little freeboard is an invitation to capsizing and the most common

cause of waterfowler drowning. Check your canoe to see if it will float when filled with water.

❑ **Stow it Low.** Stow all your hunting gear, decoys, blinds, coolers and other equipment low in the boat. Demonstrate how to properly stow gear in a canoe. Tell your group that if they have to paddle alone, they should move up closer to the center of the canoe. Demonstrate how to kneel amidships to keep your center of gravity lower. Explain that your J-stroke will have to be very good, or you may wish to switch sides after every five strokes. Paddling alone with brisk winds can be dangerous—it can be virtually impossible to control your own canoe on a large windy lake.

❑ **Don't Rock the Boat.** Stay seated in the middle of the boat. No leaning out over the side. If you must change places aboard a boat, follow the "one-at-a-time" rule, and have your buddies counter-balance the weight shift. Don't play musical chairs. Keep your hunting dog seated and within sight. If you "gotta go" when "nature calls," then go ashore to urinate and prevent unnecessary rocking of the watercraft.



❑ Watch the weather. Beware of changing weather, especially in fall and early winter when cold fronts and squall lines are common. If the weather report or common sense tells you “no”...then don’t go. If you’re already out when a storm warning comes, heed it and head in. All but one of the waterfowling boat fatalities in a seven-year period happened after October 21, and in windy or stormy weather. Don’t let bluebird weather at the start of a hunting trip lull your judgment, and be sure to get an up-to-date weather forecast before you head out onto the water. **DO NOT CANOE DURING ELECTRICAL STORMS!** You will only lose if you try to play “whether or not” against the weather.

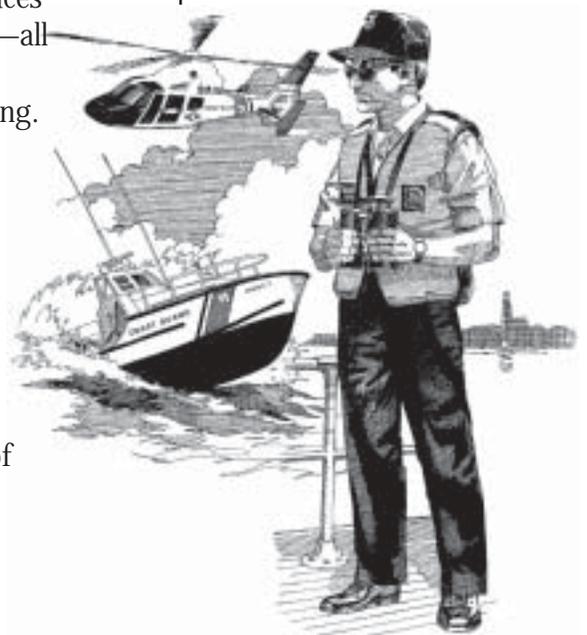
❑ Handle the waves. Waves from the wake of fast-moving boats can be dangerous to canoers. Try to canoe perpendicular to the waves. If a wave hits your canoe broadside, you may get swamped. Avoid crossing large open bodies of water and stay as close to shore as possible when traveling to and from hunting locations. If you are hosting this activity on a busy lake, you may want to show your participants how to turn your canoe into the waves.

❑ Don’t Anchor from Stern. Always anchor off the bow, never from the stern. Let rough water break over the bow, not “break up” your waterfowling trip.

❑ Handle the wind. Wind on open water can make your canoeing more difficult if it is against you. You will have to paddle hard to compensate for being blown away from the direction you are trying to go. When canoeing against strong winds, adjust the load so the bow is a bit lower in the water than the stern. This “weather vane” action helps you control the canoe. Also, kneel or sit on the bottom to keep your center of gravity lower—you’ll feel and be more stable and serve as less of a sail. On large bodies of water on windy, wavy days, stay near the shoreline, protected from wind. Never paddle or drift toward the middle or across a large body of water.

❑ No alcohol. Never drink alcohol while you are in a watercraft. Alcohol impairs your judgment, increases your sense of risk taking and reduces your visual awareness—all key factors needed to prevent foolish drowning.

❑ Learn to Swim. Swimming can extend your enjoyment of the water beyond the confines of a boat. It may also extend your life beyond the limits of a day’s hunting trip.



To the Rescue

If the unthinkable happens and you find yourself about to tip into cold water, or if you have already fallen in, here are some things to keep in mind:

❑ **Hypothermia, your greatest risk.** Most drowning victims die from hypothermia rather than from water-filled lungs. (See Station # 7 Now What Did I Forget, for a discussion of hypothermia). When you fall overboard or capsize, you lose body heat—one of the greatest hazards to survival. Cold water doesn't have to be ice cold to cause hypothermia. It just has to be colder than you are. Water robs your body of heat 25-30 times faster than air. Sudden immersion into cold water cools your skin very quickly. Within 10 to 15 minutes your core body temperature (brain, spinal cord, heart and lungs) begins to drop. Your arms and legs become numb and completely useless. You may lose consciousness and drown before your core body temperature drops low enough to cause death.

❑ **Torso reflex: your last gasp.** Anyone who has ever gotten into a cold shower, knows the effects of the "Torso Reflex." This is your automatic gasp for air in response to being hit in the chest area with cold water. If your mouth is under

water when this gasp occurs, drowning is the most probable outcome. If you know you are about to fall into cold water, cover your face with your hands and hold your breath.

❑ **Minimize body heat loss.** Certain areas of your body are "hot spots" that lose large amounts of body heat faster than other parts. Your head and neck are the most critical areas. The sides of your chest and your groin area also lose large amounts of heat. Do not remove your clothing! Button, buckle, zip and tighten collars, cuffs, shoes and hoods. Cover your head, if possible. The layer of water trapped inside your clothing will be warmed by your body and help insulate you. Act quickly to get out of the water before you lose full use of your hands. Board anything floating, even your capsized canoe if you can't right it.

❑ **Don't try to swim.** Unless you are swimming for a nearby boat, another person or a floating object on which you can climb, don't swim. Swimming pumps out the warmer water near your skin and pumps warm blood to your extremities where it cools quickly and reduces your survival time by as much as 50%. The more energy (heat) you expend, the quicker your body temperature

drops, reducing your survival time. An average adult in 50 degree water will survive for two hours by swimming slowly or treading water. That person can survive about three hours if holding still. The person can last four hours by using the H.E.L.P. position or huddling (see below).

❑ **Remain as still as possible, however painful.** Intense shivering and severe pain in cold water are natural body reflexes. These won't kill you, but heat loss will!

❑ **Hip boots and waders will float.** Waders do not turn the practiced wearer upside down, and even when filled with water, they will not pull you to the bottom. They do offer some protection from hypothermia. Fasten a good strong belt around your waders to help trap air and provide some bouyancy. If you keep your legs bent in a seated position, enough air is trapped in the shin area of the boot to keep you afloat for hours. You can then propel yourself backward to return to your boat. If weather and time permits, demonstrate how to use hip boots and waders to help you float.



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❑ **Handling a swamped canoe.**

If you tip over, most canoes are made to float even if they are swamped. Stay with your canoe. You can either paddle in it while it is filled or push or tow it to shore while holding on with one hand. If capsized in fast water, stay upstream of your canoe so you don't get caught between it and a log or rock. Demonstrate this to your group.

Emptying a swamped canoe:

You can either right your canoe in shallow water by gradually tipping it over and emptying it, or in deep water using a second canoe as a brace. Demonstrate this to your group.

Get back into your canoe:

Hypothermia is a factor in most duck hunter fatalities. Since water conducts heat 25 times faster than air of the same temperature, it is important to keep as much of your body out of the water as possible. If you unexpectedly enter cold water (any water less than 70 degree is considered cold), immediately attempt to re-enter the boat. This will minimize the effects of hypothermia, and greatly increase your chances for survival. Demonstrate how to properly get back into the canoe.

Do not remove wet clothing:

Keep your wet clothes on while in a swamped boat unless it's absolutely necessary to remove them. Even wet clothing holds body heat in like a diver's wet suit.



If your canoe capsizes, roll it right side up. Hold onto one gunwale and reach for the other.



Pull yourself across the gunwale with a slow, easy motion, keeping your body well submerged.



To empty a swamped canoe, swim to one end. Put your hands on the end, push forward, then bring your weight down hard. As the end goes down, push the canoe forward and upward without letting go. The water will surge out. Repeat until the canoe rides high in the water.

❑ **H.E.L.P. position.** If you fall in while wearing a PFD and decide not to swim for shore, and can't get back into your swamped boat, you can reduce the effects of hypothermia by assuming the H.E.L.P. position (Heat Escape Lessening Position). Cross your ankles, cross your arms over chest, draw knees to chest, lean back and try to relax. This head-out-of-the-water fetal position reduces body heat flow to the water by at least 50%. It should, however, be tried in a pool before depending on it. Note that the hands should be kept high on the shoulders or neck. If kept out of the water, the hands will stay warmer and more flexible—an important factor in self-rescue. Studies have shown that 97% of all non-PFD wearing adult males can float motionlessly, hands stretched behind their heads, with faces out of the water for long periods. If large waves prevent floating on the back, a non-PFD wearing individual should keep his or her head out of the water and slowly tread water or dog paddle. The operative word here is slowly. Excess movement such as swimming or thrashing about, accelerates heat loss and encourages hypothermia. Unconsciousness can occur in as little as 15 minutes in very cold water, and death follows unconsciousness. Demonstrate this position.

❑ **Huddle together.** If more than one person is in the water and wearing PFDs, the “huddle” is recommended. This is where small groups of two to four “hug” with chest closely touching chest. Your arms should be placed around the backs of the others and kept underwater, while smaller individuals or children can be placed in the middle of the “sandwich.” The huddle helps to conserve body heat and it is also easier for rescuers to locate a group of people than one lone victim. The close proximity of victims can serve also as a significant morale booster. With the help of volunteers, demonstrate this position.



The H.E.L.P. position helps the waterfowler float and conserve body heat.



If more than one hunter capsizes with the canoe, they should huddle together to conserve body heat.

❑ **Don't Drink Alcohol.** Contrary to what many people believe, alcoholic beverages don't warm you up, they actually serve to speed up cooling and bring on hypothermia.

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The Gales of November

Help your participants appreciate the safety issues of hunting on water. Tell them that waterfowlers seldom think of themselves as boaters or canoers. After all, a boat is simply a means to cross the slough to the blind and set out decoys....right? Why bother with lifejackets and boat cushions that take up valuable space that could be used for extra decoys, dogs, guns and a whole host of other little things that duck hunters deem essential? But the reason to bother with lifejackets and boat cushions is simple. Every year, hunters drown needlessly because they spend more time getting the perfect camouflage paint job on their canoe, than making certain they have the necessary equipment and skills to survive in an emergency.

Review the following statistics with your participants. In an investigation of 10 separate accidents resulting in 14 waterfowl hunter deaths in Minnesota, the following factors were in common:



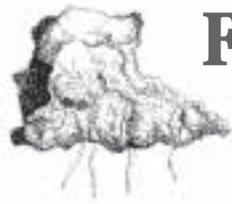
Factors Leading to Waterfowler Drownings

- Waterfowlers were more likely to drown in a boating accident than to be shot by a hunting companion.
- All accidents resulted from the boat capsizing or swamping due to overloading, sudden shifts in weight, or weather conditions.
- All but one accident happened under cold, stormy conditions in the latter half of the season.
- None of the victims wore a personal flotation device (PFD).
- Sixty percent of the accidents were in canoes or boats 12' or under.
- Hypothermia was a contributing cause of most of these deaths.
- More waterfowl hunter drownings occur on small sloughs rather than on big lakes, possibly because big water hunters use larger, more stable boats, and are more likely to carry PFD's.
- Two-thirds of the accidents involved young men, ages 18 to 23. Young men tend to take greater risks. They generally have less experience than older hunters.

If time permits, either read or distribute a copy of the following **Milwaukee Journal** article, by the late outdoor writer, Gordon MacQuarrie. Explain that the infamous Armistice Day storm of November 11, 1940, struck the upper Midwest with a vengeance. Temperatures dropped more than 50 degrees in a few hours and winds reached 80 mph. More than 50 duck hunters were found dead by rescuers, their frozen

bodies recovered from marshes, lakes, potholes, ponds and rivers from Ontario to Illinois and from Iowa to Michigan. Gordon MacQuarrie was on the scene in Winona, Minnesota and this story appeared only days after the disaster.





Fatal Armistice

By Gordon MacQuarrie
Milwaukee Journal



The winds of hell were loose on the Mississippi Armistice day and night.

They came across the prairies, from the south and west, a mighty, freezing invisible force. They charged down the river bluffs to the placid stream below and reached with deathly fingers for the life that beat beneath the canvas jackets of thousands of duck hunters.

They will tell you of this for years to come. They will recall how dad and brother were saved, and men who came through it alive together will look at each other with new understanding, as is the way with those who have seen death brush them close.

And eventually they will look back upon it as "the year of the big wind." To such a futile phrase will come what now seems to be the greatest hunting season disaster in Northwest history and perhaps the greatest in the country's history.

"The dead in this area, 50 miles up and down the river, will likely come to 20 and we know of 16 men," say Winona newspapermen. So much for the statistics, which will be tallied for days as more of the missing are found and more upturned skiffs located.

The winds of hell it was that were abroad that frightful Monday and Tuesday and the winds of hell in high gear with the throttle wide open.

They came, those winds, with little warning of their intensity. After a poor duck hunting season along the Mississippi, duck hunters welcomed the wrath from the west. They liked it in its early stages. They tossed out their decoys and said, "Let'er blow, that's what we've been waiting for."

Forgotten ducks

They stationed themselves on tiny sandspits and boggy islands and the ducks came. The ducks came with the blast, riding it bewildered and headlong, so many a man, in the first mad hours, took his limit

of birds easily. "Bushels of ducks we could have killed," said one survivor. "But we forgot about the ducks..."

Tuesday night on Louis Stantz' boat livery dock, a few miles out of town, 50 skiffs lay at anchor. The dock was snow covered and deserted. Seven dead ducks, frozen stiff, lay there forgotten. The people who crowded to the dock all day Tuesday had other things to think of. Up the bank from that dock Tuesday came five dead men. The ducks lay there on the dock where the river goes by.

The wind did it. The furious wind that pierced any clothing, that locked outboard engines in sheaths of ice, that froze on faces and hands and clothing so that even survivors crackled when they got to safety and said their prayers.

The wind did it. The cold was its ally. Mother Nature, sometimes a blue-eyed girl with corn colored hair, was a murderous mistress Tuesday night on the Mississippi.

She caught thousands of duck hunters on Armistice Day—a holiday. She teased them out to the river and marshes with her fine, whooping wind and then when she got them there she froze them like muskrats in traps. She promised ducks in the wind. They came all right. The survivors tell that, grimly, but by that time, the duck hunters of the Mississippi were playing a bigger game - with their lives at stake.

By that time men along the Mississippi were drowning and freezing.

The ducks came and men died. They died underneath upturned skiffs as the blast sought them out on boggy, unprotected islands. They died trying to light fires- and jumping and sparring to keep warm. They died sitting in skiffs. They died standing in the river water to their hips, awaiting help.

They died trying to help each other and a hundred tales of heroism will be told, long after funerals are over.

Over in Winona General Hospital tonight lies Gerald Tarras, 17, a survivor. He is a big boy, nearly six feet, and strong. He had to be, to live. He saw his father, brother and his friend die. He has not yet come to a full realization of what has happened, for grief is sometimes far in the wake of a catastrophe.

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Gerald Tarras, his head buried in a hospital pillow, his frost-blistered hands clutching nervously at the bedspread, tell part of it. Just a part. No need to ask him exactly where he was. Just out on the river. Out on the hideous gut of water between the high bluffs near Winona, where the furies came on endlessly. Gerald tells it hazily, in a sort of open-eyed trance.

"We went out about 10 in the morning, the four of us. It was raining and warm. The wind came at noon. We began to worry. My father (Carl Tarras, 43, Winona) said we'd better go back. It got fierce. Then Bill Wernecke (his friend) died. He was cold. We boxed each other to keep warm. Bill died. I was holding him. He went 'O-h-h ...' and he was gone.

"We were standing in water. We had a black Labrador dog with us. My brother (Ray, 16) died next. Yes he died. I knew he was dead. He was cold. An airplane flew over and I moved my arm. It saw us. Then my Dad died. They took me off in the government tug and gave me some coffee. They gave me some whiskey."

Max Conrad

In a Winona restaurant sits Max Conrad, aviator, sipping coffee with Bobby Bean, his assistant. He tells his story very badly for he is a modest man.

Conrad took a Cub straining with a top speed of 75 miles an hour and led the government tug Throckmorton and other rescue boats to marooned hunters on the river. He flew all day, sometimes with Bean, sometimes alone. He would fly his plane repeatedly over a spot where hunters were caught and the rescue boats would know where to go. He would toss packages containing sandwiches, whiskey, cigarettes and matches. He would open the door of his plane and, with the motor cut, shout down to the men below to hang on, help is coming. He would route the little plane time after time through the channels over which marooned hunters could follow skiffs.

Conrad tells a poor story, for he is modest. Harold Eastman, of Winona, meter superintendent for the Mississippi Valley Public Service Company, tells Conrad's story and his own better.

"I was hunting with R.J. Rice and Richard Guelzer. The wind caught us on a bog. The oarlock broke. Dick said 'We camp here.' We turned up the skiff for a wind break. We tried to light a fire but everything

was wet and it was too windy. At 9:30 a.m. Tuesday we heard a plane. We fired our guns. The plane did not see us. At noon the plane saw us. It was Conrad. I know him. He saved our lives.

“Conrad yelled down to us from the open door of the plane: “Sit tight! We’ll get you out of here!” In five minutes he was back with a tin of food and cigarettes and dropped it. He kept flying over us, then hollered down “Start out and go in the direction I am!”

We took our shotguns and started. Conrad said. ‘Leave your guns and take the skiff.’ We did. We broke through the ice several times, then we would hang onto the skiff and work it along the new ice. The Throckmorton picked us up. Conrad saved our lives. I feel all right except for the smoke in my eyes from the fire.”

Over at the Conrad home four small daughters, Judy, Jane, Betsy and Molly and their mother waited for their dad. He came home all right. Then he slept hard for today he took up the patrol again looking for three skiffs and men, dead or alive.

Conrad says the river shambles were bad because pan ice piled up on banks and islands, so skiffs could not get through. He says he saw dogs alone on boggy islands. He says, “The guys who used their heads built windbreaks with their skiffs and then built fires.” He says a lot of fellows “lost their heads.” He is a kind man. He will not even guess at how many are dead. It will take days to find out, he says.

Some of the dead brought in, like those at the Louis Stantz river landing and boat livery, had their faces and hands blue and bruised. It was not possible to park a car at this spot for the cars of anxious relatives - waiting. The bruises, they said, were from the men in the bitter night beating each other to keep warm shadow boxing and sparring, likely even when their hands were frozen clubs and were without feeling.

Thus they died on the Mississippi on the night following Armistice Day.

Dark Slough rescue

Out of town a way is Calvin Volkel. He helped bring in 17. Likely saved their lives. He was sleeping Tuesday night, in the back of his tavern. He awakened and talked:

"At 9 Monday night it began to look bad to me. I needed a good big fast boat to save those fellows out on the river. I was looking especially for Eddie Whitten. I went to town and got Al Squires. We got a 12-horse outboard and started out. It swamped. Then we rowed, each with a pair of oars, shouting to each other 'one-two, one-two' to keep the stroke.

"Our backs were ice coated. I had put on an aviator's suit. We got to the place I knew Eddie was hunting. There were 16 others there! We got Eddie back ashore, and called the police for help. We needed good oarsmen. The men on the island were lying on top of the fire. Not beside it. On top of it. They lay on top of it!

"They had been shooting off boughs for fuel with shotgun shells. Two men would shoot at once and knock off a bough. I came back and brought off a fellow named Anderson. I brought a hatchet for wood, and whiskey. Then we worked it this way.

Every man who got ashore in the rowboat went back and took off another, and the one he took off went back and took off the next.

"It was in what we call Dark Slough..." Also in the hospital is 14-year old Ray Sherin, whose father, Torge Sherin, was in the rescue party that saved him from the bottomlands death after an all night search.

The boy has a frozen purplish foot, encased in a special tent. He is not coherent. His eyes stare wildly at the ceiling and sweat stands on his smooth-boyish forehead. He will be all right. His foot may be all right, doctors say. He is very lucky.

Next to him in the room is Bob Stephan, Winona, with a frozen hand. He will be all right. Older, he tells the story that will be told up and down this river for years to come "the river, the wind, the cold, the fear and rescue."

Hundreds made it ashore under their own steam and men stood, white and shaking on solid ground, and looked back on a river running four-foot waves. They came ashore and home and put down their guns and looked at them hardly believing there was a safe, warm world and they were in it.

There were long prayers by the Mississippi's banks Tuesday, the day after Armistice, when the ducks came and men died.

The Ethics of Waterfowling

Point out that ethical waterfowlers should:

- ❑ Respect the rights of fishermen and landowners while canoeing.
- ❑ Position yourself at least 200 feet from water when needing to go to the bathroom.
- ❑ Keep noise to a minimum, especially near wildlife and near others on the water or banks.
- ❑ Practice the “Pack it in-Pack it out” ethic. Bury all human and organic waste and carry out all paper and sanitary items.



Station
24

A Double-ender

Learning to Hunt

Terminology & techniques

Procedure

Gather participants around one canoe. Point out these canoe parts:

- bow
- stern
- amidships
- keel
- thwart (crosspiece)
- gunwale



Then, point out these parts of the paddle:

- tip
- blade
- throat
- shaft
- grip

Explain to participants that when they handle a canoe on shore, they should always carry it. Never drag it over rough ground.

Activity B



Now demonstrate the following techniques:

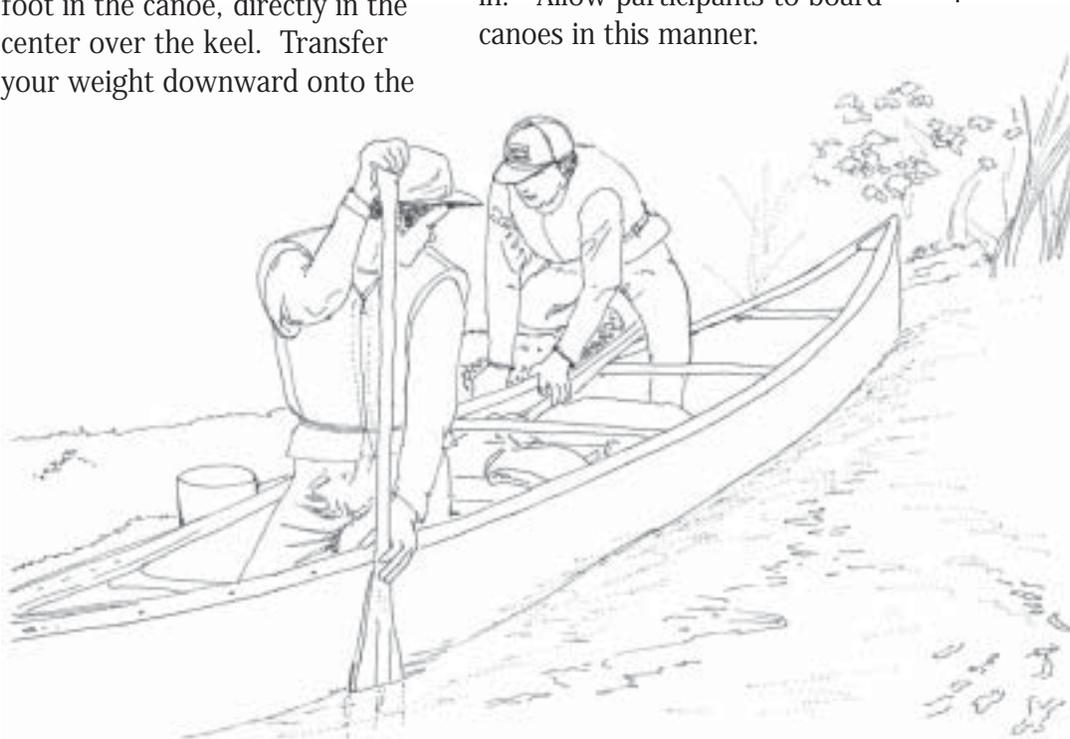
End-first launching:

Demonstrate the end-first method of launching. If two canoeists are launching the boat, it should be launched hand over hand, end first, onto the water. When the canoe is entirely clear of the bank, let it down on the water full length and guide it to a position parallel to the bank. To lift the canoe out, reverse the steps. Let participants try their hand at launching their canoes in teams of two.

Boarding: Now, demonstrate proper boarding procedure. Stand or kneel near the edge of the dock or bank, facing the bow of the canoe. Place your outer foot in the canoe, directly in the center over the keel. Transfer your weight downward onto the

foot in the canoe. At the same time, grasp both gunwales with your hands. Remove your foot from the dock and place it beside your other foot in the bottom of the canoe. You are then aboard and may take your position for paddling, walking down the center of the boat.

When two people board a canoe at a beach, one person on shore adjusts the canoe so that its end is just barely touching bottom at the water's edge and braces the canoe between the knees with the hands. The other person steps around into the canoe, keeping the weight low, and moves down the centerline, holding onto the gunwales, to the proper place in the boat. The person on shore then moves the canoe out another foot and steps in. Allow participants to board canoes in this manner.



Station 24

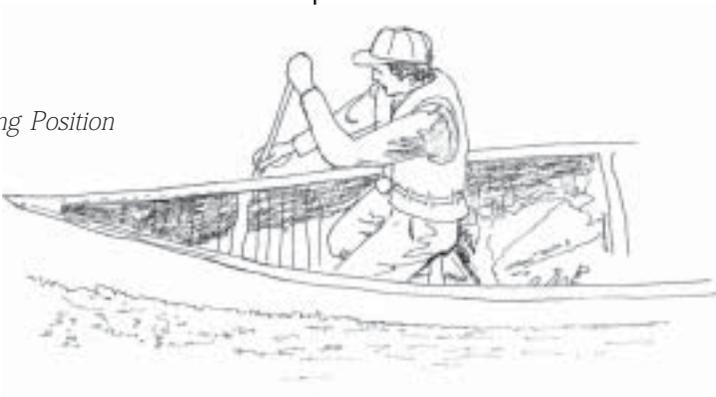
A Double-ender

Learning to Hunt

Paddling Positions

Demonstrate the following three paddling positions: cruising position, one-knee cruising position, and seated position. Stress the importance of proper weight distribution in a canoe. After demonstrating each position, have participants practice these three positions in their canoes.

Cruising Position



Cruising position: The cruising position is that of kneeling on both knees on a soft cushion on the bottom of the canoe while at the same time leaning or sitting on the forward part of a seat. This position is good because it keeps the paddler's center of gravity lower in the canoe.

One-knee cruising position: This is often called the relief position because it is frequently alternated with the normal cruising position. Lean back on the seat while kneeling on one knee and extending the other leg forward. Always kneel on the knee that is on the paddling side.

Sitting position: Seats are comfortable, however, they do raise the center of gravity. You have less control over the craft in a seated position than in a kneeling position. The seated position, therefore, should be used only in calm water.

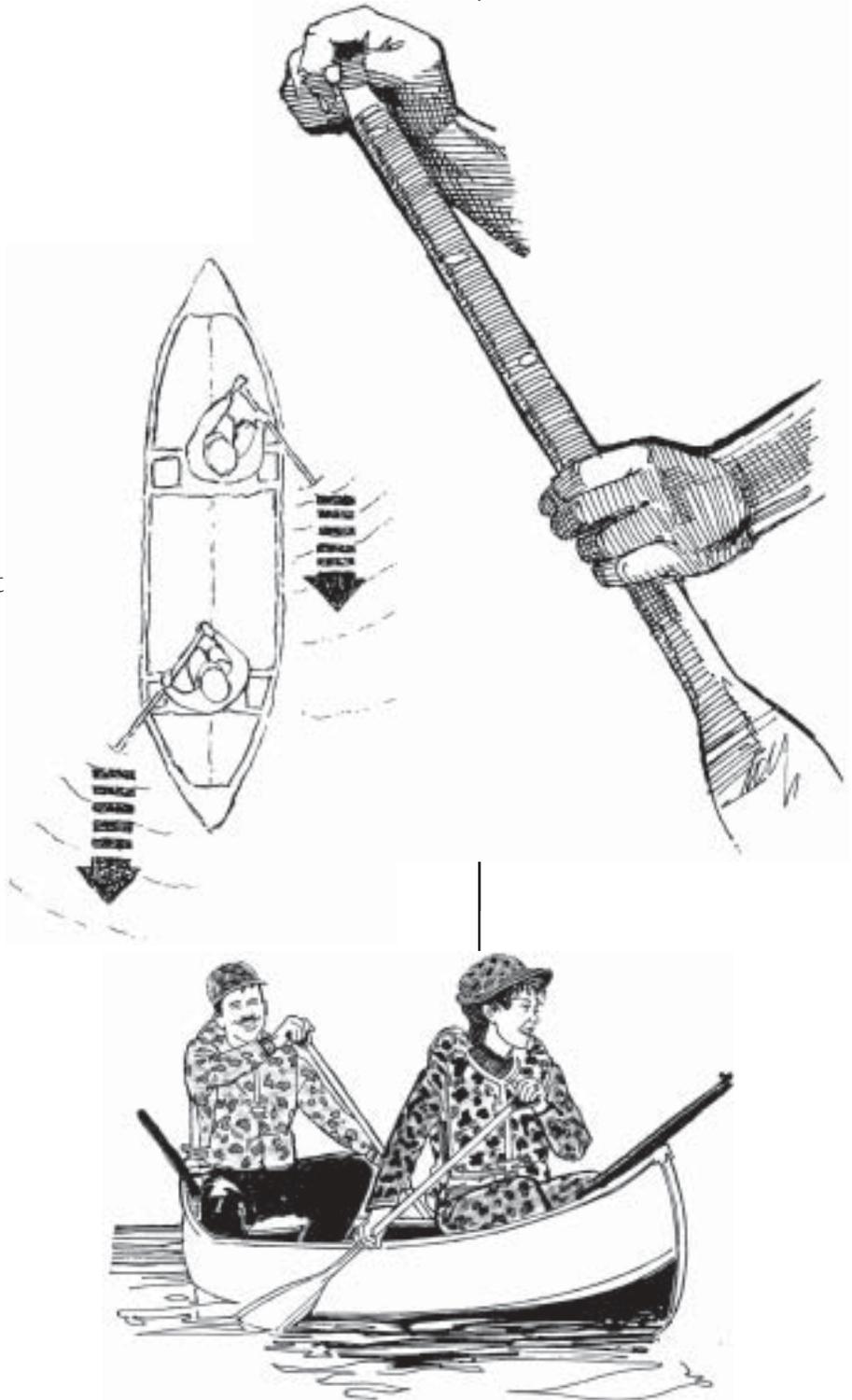


Sitting Position

Strokes

With the canoes in the water, demonstrate the two basic strokes used in tandem canoeing, the power stroke and the J-stroke. Remind participants that they should apply their strokes on only one side of the canoe. The person in front should paddle on the side opposite the person in the rear.

Power stroke: The forward-propelling power stroke is used to move the canoe without turning. One hand grasps the grip of the paddle and the other hand grasps the shaft several inches above the blade or throat. With the paddle held vertically, the blade should be in the water with the throat just at the water surface. The lower forearm is parallel to the gunwale and just above it. The upper hand “punches out” at about eye level. To begin the stroke, extend the lower arm forward full length. The upper arm is bent at the elbow so that the fist is beside the head, near eye level. The lower arm pulls directly backward, parallel to the keel, and the upper arm drives forward in front of the head. Feathering the blade in a wide sweep above the surface of the water to the starting position makes the recovery.

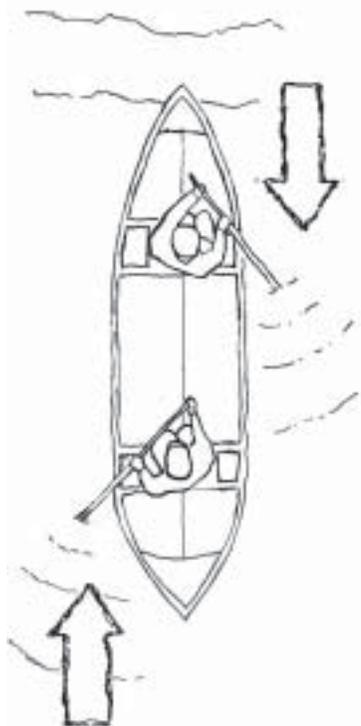
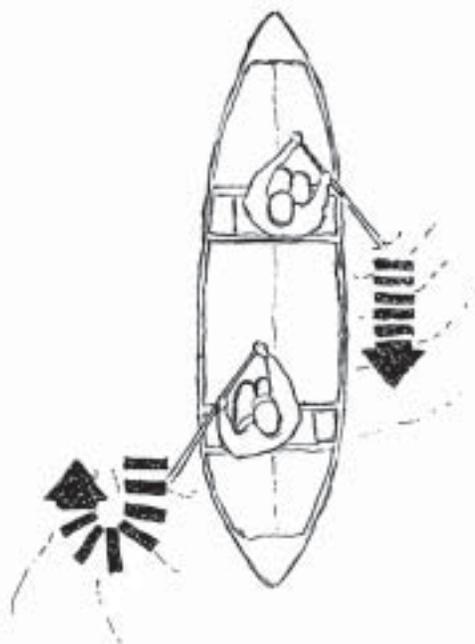


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Learning to Hunt

J-stroke: This stroke is a modified forward stroke used by the paddler in the stern to keep the canoe on a straight course. The beginning of the J-stroke is identical to the forward stroke. A little more than halfway through the stroke, the paddler gradually turns the blade outward to a final angle of about 45 degrees. Do this by flexing both wrists and rotating the thumb of the grip hand away from the body or downward. A "J" is drawn when this stroke is done on the left side of the canoe. Pulling the paddle through the water with the blade at an angle forces the stern of the canoe to move away from the paddling side, thus helping the canoe stay on course. The blade is kept flat and close to the water during recovery.



Turning the Canoe Around: To turn the canoe around, both paddlers should work together, though in opposite directions. See illustration at the left.

Using the Paddle as Rudder: When you need to turn the canoe sharply and quickly, put the blade of the paddle into the water next to you. The flat side of the blade should be parallel and tight to the boat. Your grip should be at the gunwale. Operate the paddle as a rudder. You can change course rapidly and with ease.



Loading the Canoe: Ask participants to practice loading and unloading a canoe onto a car, truck, SUV or other vehicle. Discuss the need to secure the canoe tightly with ropes, bungee cords or other straps.



End of Teaching Station



References

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