

## THE CLASSES

### INTERNATIONAL CANOE • BY HUGH WHALL

Class Name and Address: The American Canoe Association; Class Secretary, Miss Doris Cousins, 400 Eastern Street, New Haven, Connecticut.

Dues: \$4 per year plus \$1 initiation fee.

#### SPECIFICATIONS:

Length over-all, 16 feet to 17 feet  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

Waterline length, unrestricted.

Beam, 37 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches to 43 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches.

Draft, centerboard shall not project more than 3 feet 3 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches below the keel of the canoe when lowered.

Sail area, 107.64 square feet, maximum.

Hull weight, according to following formula: The minimum hull weight shall not be less than length over-all times beam times K. When weight is in pounds K equals 2.4.

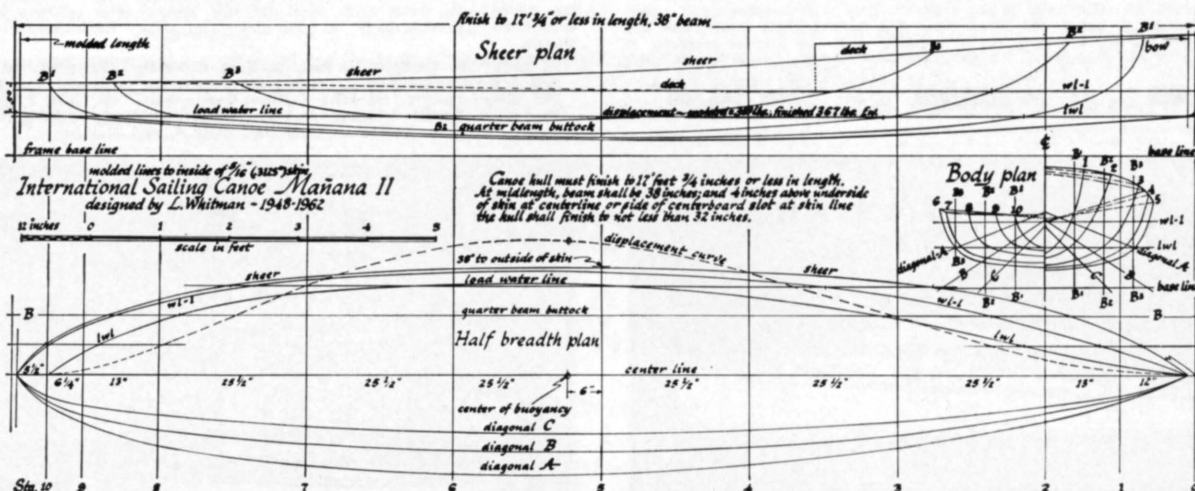
Construction materials: Wood or fiberglass.

Price range: A completely rigged boat costs from \$900 to \$1,300.

A Proctor hull is available from William Kempner (Chippendale Boats), 47-53 St. John Street, Smithfield, London, E.C.1. The Proctor hull without decking costs about \$650; with decking about \$850.

Max Andersson of Sweden can also supply the boat through Louis Whitman, 1814 48th Street, Brooklyn 4, New York. These boats can be bought in various stages of completion and the bare hull costs \$260 including duty and shipping charges to New York. With decking installed the price is \$450.

Fully battened sails cost up to \$200, a conventional Dacron suit about \$150.



The appellation "racing machine" when applied to any particular vessel can and often does cause many sailors to stamp their feet, pound the bar, and turn red, and such craft, real or fancied, are strictly anathema for more conventional minded sailing buffs.

Often, however the label is applied to boats that don't really deserve the sobriquet and the manufacturers, designers, and owners of the injured craft go to all kinds of lengths to wipe away the blot from their escutcheons.

There are boats though that are purely racing machines and refreshingly their disciples wouldn't have it any other way. One such almost unrestricted sailing splinter, because that is all it can be called, is the International Decked Sailing Canoe, a shockingly swift and physically demanding sloop that, perforce makes use of a sliding seat so her lonely skipper can keep her right-side up.

The Class is of a restricted nature meaning that while there are a few limitations on what designers may and may not do, generally they are allowed a pretty free hand when it comes to conjuring up new canoes. Restrictions include a maximum length of 17 feet (Continued on page 51)

## The International Canoe

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three-quarter inches and a minimum of 16 feet even. The widest beam can be not more than  $37\frac{3}{8}$  inches, but no less than 32 inches. "The sheer shall be a fair continuous curve" and "No steps shall be allowed in the skin." Minimum weight of the stripped hull "... shall be not less than length over-all times beam times K." (K equals 2.4 when length and beam are in feet and weight is in pounds). Maximum sail area permitted is 107.64 square feet and curved masts are not allowed.

The Decked Sailing Canoe's chief antecedent is generally believed to be *Rob Roy* an odd little boat built for one John McGregor in 1865. A sometimes ecclesiastical and often philanthropic version of P. T. Barnum, fittingly, McGregor was principally responsible for the formation of the first canoe club at the "Star and Garter" in Richmond, England. It was his trip in the *Rob Roy* to the Paris Exhibition in 1867 that earned the publicity needed to really establish canoeing.

The early British canoes were deep hulled craft with heavy keels and centerboards and some even carried inside ballast. It was these boats that were copied by Americans until Paul Butler, an American Canoe Association member, began to design his own boats. Butler is credited with using the first self-bailing cockpit, sliding seat, crosshead, and athwartship tiller, and bulkheads in his canoes. That was all around the 1880's. Later, in England, Uffa Fox contributed, among other variations, the sloop rig which replaced the then popular ketch rig.

Other changes include fitting the main with full length battens *a la* catamarans and giving the main an exaggerated roach. This sort of rig, it has been found, is much more efficient for boats with high speed potentials.

There are two basic methods of sailing the canoes. The English seem to favor jamb cleating the jib while working the main and tiller. This system, they believe, is particularly suitable for light air sailing. The Americans, conversely, prefer to cleat both main and jib down. They then play with the tiller and manipulate their weight to keep the boat upright and moving. It is claimed by the practitioners of this black and seemingly suicidal art that the boat is kept going at a better clip using this style.

Canoes can be hard-chined—these are recommended for beginners—or round-bilged, and can be molded, planked, or built of fiberglass. The centerboard is often made of laminated wood but sometimes is solid. The rudder is made of aluminum or an equivalent material.

Sailing and racing International Canoes is a specialized art and the numbers of canoes in existence at any one time has never been great when compared, say, to Flying Dutchmen, Snipes,

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or other one-design or restricted classes. But the ardor of canoe owners for their slippery slivers more than makes up for the lack of numbers, and competition in the Class is of an extremely high caliber.

Uffa Fox, perhaps, is the best known canoeist, at least among outsiders. He is typical of the sort of person who is attracted by canoes and he once cruised an oversize two-man shell from England to Brittany. The boat's name was *Brynhild* and she was 20 feet long, had a beam of 4 feet and her sail area was 130 square feet. She was launched in the middle of an English winter and, typically, Fox started sailing her immediately. Later, while crossing to France, Uffa reports they ran into a blow of between 25 and 30 mph and pushing *Brynhild* on under full sail he says in his book

"Sail and Power": "Steering was tricky work, for at the speed we were traveling it seemed possible to roll her completely over by giving her a lot of helm at once, and so I had to anticipate her every move in advance using only the smallest amount of rudder." Uffa also notes, somewhat disappointedly, that *Brynhild* never did hit 20 knots, merely getting up to the 15-knot mark. This wasn't even as fast as a 17-footer he owned that was clocked at 16.3 over a half-mile measured course.

Uffa Fox then is the caliber of sailor who sails the breathtaking, demanding International Decked Sailing Canoes—the be-all and end-all of singlehanded racing machines. The more lethargic sailor had better stick to Fourteens, Lightnings, and even perhaps Finns. &