

# THE COUREURS DE BOIS

## NEWSLETTER - WINTER 1999



### INSIDE:

AGM Report  
President's Message  
Upcoming Events  
Summer Courses at MKC  
New Years at P-L  
Mike Fuller's Jambalaya  
Waterwalker  
Nepal - Part 1  
Canoe and Kayak Show  
The Paddling Sadhu  
Membership List

### CONTRIBUTORS:

Holly Blair  
Jim Forbes  
Sheila Green  
Ken Panton  
Charles Wesley-James

### EDITOR:

Maureen Lamb

NEWS, EVENTS AND TRIP REPORTS FOR  
OTTAWA AREA PADDLERS AND OUTDOORS ENTHUSIASTS  
CIRCULATION: OVER 150 \* WEBSITE: CDB.OTTAWA.COM

### AGM REPORT

*Maureen Lamb*

The 1998 Annual General Meeting and year-end party were hosted by Tom Duxbury in early November. There was a good turnout for both the party and the AGM. Tom had set up the room above the garage for the meeting and slide show, so they would be somewhat separated from the usual chaos of the party animals!

One of the items up for discussion was whether the club should continue to purchase and maintain tripping and other paddling equipment. We agreed to continue to do so and to set up a subcommittee to determine what should be purchased. We also agreed that some of the profits from the pool sessions would go to paying for equipment for those sessions – paddles and spray skirts.

Another item on the agenda was the election of the new executive. There are a few new faces on the executive and some old ones although they are in new positions. The new executive is:

Pres - Sheila Green  
VP (social coordinator) – Holly Blair  
Secretary/Treasurer – Charles W-J  
Newsletter – Maureen Lamb  
Training - Ken Panton (summer)  
Member at Large - Blue Morgan  
(winter training)  
External - Tom Duxbury

### Appointed Positions:

Membership - Mike Cockburn  
Equipment - Larry Wong  
E-mail - Richard Kowalski

The annual achievement awards were then voted on. They went to:

Best Camp Food - Lynn Morgan for the oat bread on the Mountain River  
Most Improved Paddler - John Helps  
Most Helpful - Ken Panton  
Best Run - Rylan Sobol  
Best/Worst Swim - Sheila Green (Petite)  
Most Broken paddles - Richard Kowalski  
Best Storyteller - Heather Adeney

Following the meeting, Kevin Reynolds showed slides from the Mountain River Trip (see previous newsletter) and Ken Panton showed slides from the trip to Nepal that he and Jim had just completed. More on that in this issue.



Magic Forest - Papineau Labelle (Holly Blair)

## President's Welcome

*Sheila Green*

Greetings from your new president! Now that I've recovered from the shock and have forgiven my friends for electing me, I am settling comfortably into the position as club president. This is my fourth year as a member of C de B and it's about time I do something to thank all the people who have pulled me out of the water and/or patiently waited while I summoned up the courage to run certain no-nameable rapids. My goal this year is to change as little as possible about the club because I think it is already the best club that I have ever belonged to, not to mention the cheapest! Many thanks to last year's executive and to all the club members who put in hours of volunteer time to make our club what it is - a safe, supportive and non-competitive atmosphere for anyone who loves to paddle. I'm happy for the chance to continue the tradition. We have lots of fun activities lined up to keep everyone happy until spring when real life can begin again. Blue Morgan has taken over pool sessions and things were off to a great start January 17<sup>th</sup> with lots of trainers and some new equipment. We have moonlight skiing, both downhill and cross country, kay-boggoning, and skating on the canal. Let's hope the weather co-operates for all of these activities. It appears that our T-shirt contest has created a lot of interest so I'm looking forward to some awesome new shirts for our Palmer's Weekend. Until then have a great New Year and I hope to see many of you out there enjoying the ice and snow at club functions.

*Want to join the Coureurs de Bois?*

*At \$10 a year, it's a great deal!*

Please contact our Membership Co-ordinator:

**Mike Cockburn**

731-4125

ae987@ncf.ca

*Keeping up to date with club activities is easy!*

*Have your name added to the CDB Weekly e-mail list.*

*Contact:*

**Richard Kowalski**

Richski@cyberus.ca

### RECENT EVENTS

The first **moonlight ski** of the 1999 season was held on Saturday, January 30<sup>th</sup>. Conditions couldn't have been better with a temperature of about -10°C, a clear night and some fresh snow. About 16 people met at Keogan between 6:30 and 9:30 to eat and visit. It was a busy place, and the parking lot was even busier. Jim Forbes persuaded Sean Freill to don skis for the first time ever and join us. Jim reports that Sean is a natural but I haven't heard how he did on the trip out (which is mostly downhill).

### ONGOING EVENTS

Pool sessions are being held every Sunday evening at Brewer Pool from 8:00 to 9:00 from now until April 18<sup>th</sup>. They're filling up fast. The person to contact for more information is Blue Morgan (MorganB@SIWIRED.com). There are also plans to hold some pool sessions at the Kanata Wave Pool. The dates are Feb. 6, Feb 20 and March 6, from 9 to 10 or 10:30. The price will depend on the number of people and the length of the session. For more information, contact Jennifer Burke (jennb@nortelnetworks.com).

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- ❖ **Skating Party & Potluck** – Fri., Feb. 12 at Maureen Lamb's  
Contact: Maureen, 730-1320
- ❖ **Moonlight Ski**  
Sat., Feb. 27 from Pine Road to Herridge  
Contact: Holly Blair, 722-7683
- ❖ **Snodeo**  
March 7 (tentative),  
Contact: Holly Blair, 722-7683

The Coureurs de Bois is a not for profit, volunteer-based organization dedicated to self-propelled recreational activity in the outdoors.

Based in the Ottawa valley, the Club promotes outdoor safety, tripping and skills development with a focus on whitewater paddling.

The Coureurs de Bois Newsletter is published 4 times a year on recycled paper and is available to all current CDB members and sponsors.

Our circulation of over 150 is laser printed from an all-digital source at 600-dpi resolution in magazine format.

Current advertising rates are \$50/half page commercial and \$75/full page commercial. Classified ads from CdB members are free!

Your articles and photos about your outdoor activity are needed! The preferred method of submission is email (maureenlamb@home.com), however, almost any format will do.

Please contact the editor to make check and make arrangements.

CdB Editor  
**Maureen Lamb**  
50 Southern Drive  
Ottawa, ON  
K1S 0P6

## Summer Courses at MKC

Just a reminder that we will try to organise a group booking for MKC for this spring and/or summer. The usual discount has been 10 % for a group of 6 people and 15% if we have a group of 15 people. Last year Claudia allowed us to book as a group but people could sign up for whatever level, time slot (weekend or week), and boat they wished to take as long as it was all arranged through one person. I just want to give people some prior notice because a couple of people were disappointed last year when they missed the notice on the email. We will probably be arranging this during March - to make sure that no one misses out in having a space for the course that they want to take. You need to obtain the course information and fill in the registration forms yourself and deliver them and a cheque to me. Then I will take them all to Claudia. Please watch the email for more information and deadlines.

Holly Blair 722-7683

## New Years Trip to Papineau-Labelle *(Holly Blair)*

For a number of years CdBers and friends have been making a New Years trip to Papineau-Labelle, a park about an hours drive north of Montebello. The trip involves driving to the park headquarters and then skiing 2 to 2 ½ hours to the cabin (L'Hote). It's a beautiful two-story log cabin with the basic necessities (e.g. get your water from the lake). The cabin is quite large, as you can tell by the group size this year. We had 16 adults and 8 kids (7 of the kids were of a size to be brought in by baby glider so we had quite the flotilla of those crafts).

We skied in New Years Eve and were there for two nights. There are 3 large bedrooms upstairs. Scott Duxbury suggested that next year the rooms should be split into kids, snorers and others.

One week before Christmas the snow situation wasn't looking too promising but luckily we got a little snow in Ottawa and there is always more snow in the park. The temperature was seriously frigid but we managed to bundle up and even got all the cars started afterwards. The cabin stayed toasty with the wood stoves fully stoked.

On Saturday there were a variety of ski options (or not). Sonya's "Magic Forest" was truly beautiful. We had a hardy bunch that set out on a mountain climbing expedition in the afternoon but had to turn back due to lack of cleared trails. Other activities included fort building, giant sparklers, cookie decoration (thanks to Heather Park), and some extended card playing.

The trip does consist of some skiing and but also eating, drinking, and relaxing in the true holiday tradition. Our shared New Year's Eve and day meals were up to the usual sumptuous standard. Mike's jambalaya was equally delicious for dinner and breakfast and Jim Forbes remains the king of the appetisers.

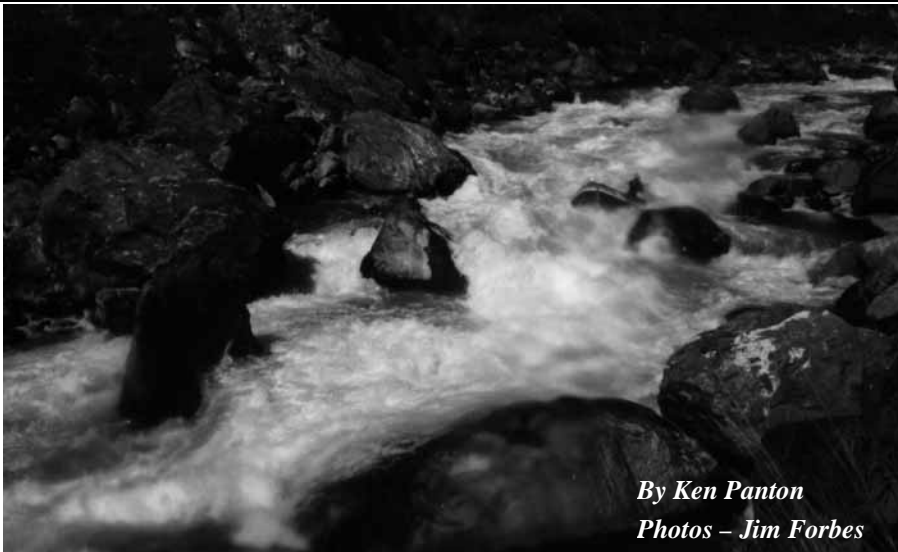
## Mike Fuller's Jambalaya Recipe

- ¾ cup chopped onion
- 2 cup chopped celery
- ¼ cup chopped green pepper
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tblsp butter
- 2 cups cubed ham
- 28 oz can tomatoes
- 1 can beef broth (10 oz.)
- 1 cup uncooked rice
- 1 cup water
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp thyme
- 2 tsp chili powder (or more)
- ¼ tsp pepper
- 1-1/2 lbs shrimp
- 1 tblsp parsley
- Optional: Cilantro, jalapenos.

Saute veggies in butter. Add everything else except the shrimp and simmer for 2 hours. Add shrimp and simmer until shrimp are ready. Enjoy!



The Cepella family (Holly Blair)



*By Ken Panton  
Photos – Jim Forbes*

### It was serious class 5 ...

The current was pushy, and nasty. It was the monsoon, finished falling, but still rushing to the sea. Eddy's were there but they flew by us as we were carried helplessly through the maelstrom, tossed about as potatoes in the deep fryer. Obstacles forced the raging torrent into even tighter confines, accelerating the flow to speeds I've seen only from a safe distance on TV. "hoover beer, hoover beer", I heard, but from where? I thanked my genes as I stretched up and peered over the crests of the waves and spotted Jim. And what was Hoover beer? He was waving madly for me to Eddy out, "Over here! Over here" he cried. No way, I knew I hadn't a chance, so I looked to the other shore, closer to me. I spotted a refuge, then pulled, pulled, PULLED! I didn't know where I found the strength, but possibly I was motivated by too much late-night TV. I gritted my teeth. "For Xena!" I shouted, then lowered by head, leaned forward and kept my hands in front thereby balancing my weight perfectly while keeping my hips loose. Somehow, I made it. Exhausted, I pulled out of the current and slumped against the rock wall. I was alive, Jim was alive, and we were in time for the breakfast

special! But Jim was on the wrong side of the street. I left him and walked into Alice's Restaurant for the morning pick-me-up. It was all down river from there!

Why did Sheila not warn us about the traffic in Kathmandu!

When I sent out the e-mail last spring asking for travelling companions for a proposed trip to Nepal, I had no idea who might reply. After an initial flurry of interest, only Jim Forbes, my nephew and rafter extraordinaire Matt Girard, friend Cory Bialowas and I made plans for the journey. Jim and I travelled together on Air Canada and Thai Airways, meeting Matt, who travelled on Singapore Airlines, in Kathmandu. Cory had his own journey planned through Nepal and would join us for the Tamur trip. I figured that it would be difficult to find a better way to cap off the paddling season and, sure enough, by the end of the last river trip, I was ready to hang up the spurs for a few months! As we ventured forth, we thought we were prepared. I had no reason to think this, as I hadn't read much before leaving. Fortunately Jim and Matt had.

After being caught by a hotel tout at the Kathmandu airport, we were shuffled off to the Potala Guest House, or was it the Potala Hotel,

in Thamel (Nepali for "Put all of the tourists in one small part of town"). Hotels, restaurants, pollution, smog, tiger balm, "want some smoke?", class V taxis, cows; much can be found on the streets of Kathmandu.

We left town ASAP.

Having ignored advice to buy tickets in advance, on the morning of the third day, we got a cab to Pokhara Bus Street - true, I saw the sign - at 5:45 AM. The buses were lined up for ¼ mile and, as expected, were full. I put on the check jacket carried just for such occasions, and sprung into action.

"Full, eh?". (shamelessly flaunting my Canadian-ness)  
 "Yes, sir. The bus is full". (flaunting wasted)  
 "No room?"  
 "No sir."  
 "We have money and would really like to get to Pokhara today. How about the roof?"  
 "We'll see how much room there is at 6 o'clock."  
 "Who do we pay?"  
 "Me."

After persevering and pestering whoever was close by, we managed to get 1 seat and two aisle stools for the delightful 8-hour bus ride. Little did we know this would be the most pleasant bus ordeal of our trip. This was also our introduction to "bus boys"; every bus has one and they whistle in a most irritating fashion an even more irritating percentage of the time the bus is in motion. Also, horns are used as a symbol of virility (I never saw a woman driver), it would seem, and next time I go I'm taking a portable boat horn and will then place myself directly behind the driver and support his incessant honking with a blast or two directly into his ear!

We ended up spending a day and a half in Pokhara, Nepal's second largest city. It was much calmer than KTM and almost tropical with palm trees and tourists supping in restaurants beside the lake. The pace of the merchants was a little more subdued there as well, though we had to be overly assertive on our cab ride

The topology of the Nepali rivers is quite consistent. The rivers flowed through seemingly lush green gorges (drying out into semi-aridity from time to time only on the Tamur); what differed was the pitch and difficulty of the run and the depth of the gorge. On one section of the Kali I guessed the gorge depth to be about 4,000', though nowhere on the section of the Kali that we paddled was it unrunnable. In fact, though most of the rafters were first timers none of them ran into significant difficulties.

As mentioned the Kali rapids were mostly pool and drop, often featuring large trains of 8-10' waves and an occasionally nasty hole. Often the river would zig-zag from wall to wall each time piling up against the wall into sort of a banked corner!

Overnights were on beaches of fresh sand deposited by the recently finished monsoons. Later in the year, the beaches become increasing dirty and do get to the disgusting stage as it they are often used as village toilets. We used them for that purpose as well, digging pits below the high-water line to ensure that our deposits would be washed away in next year's floods. Organic food waste was dumped into the river current; apparently the local fish enjoy salad.

Kids and Jim go together like peaches and anchovies. Always within 5 minutes of sliding up onto the bank, kids would be there to greet us. Often they assembled around Jim, much to his chagrin; though it gave Jim plenty of opportunity to practice his Nepali; "Jam, Jam", he would exclaim (Scram; begone; get out of here; go bug that guy over there; leave me alone)! It didn't work; he was a marked man! Thinking back, we got that word from our Nepali guides and who's to say what it really means...

The folks we encountered hailed from all over: Brits, Scots, Danes,

Germans, Kiwis, Aussies, Israelis, Americans and a Canadian or two. Some were on relatively short jaunts, others were passing through Nepal as part of their extended worldly travels of up to 2 years expected duration. I've decided it takes a special attitude to head off for that length of time.

We were off the river by 3 o'clock, leaving plenty of time for camp set-up, journal writing, food prep and drinking. Tips: rum punch is seriously over-rated; Tuborg is the best beer to be had over there; San Miguel is swill. Accommodations were often under a leaning raft or in a tent.

This brings us to food and drink quality. Nepal must be one of the easiest places in the world to fall ill, generally from poor water quality and poor sanitation around food. Be careful. I was successful in avoiding a bug until literally the last day in Nepal, while Jim had a worse time of it earlier. Veggies were soaked upon arrival at camp in iodized water for 30 minutes before being chopped. Drinking water was also iodized river water and often we would buy personal bottled water when we passed through villages. Food was mostly rice, pasta, root veggies, lots of garlic and spices, and occasionally meat as conditions allowed. Trip food quality varied from very good to pretty poor.

The Kali trip ended with a bus ride, as it had begun. A 3-4 hour return trip at dusk back to Pokhara. The next trip was to begin the next day with a bus departure out of KTM. We three had arranged to meet the bus at a small town along the highway which doubled as a pick-up point for terminating rafting and kayaking trips on the Trisuli and other rivers. This was about an hour south of Mugling for those who have a map handy! Our Kali bus was, in fact, heading to this point the next morning to pick up a trip and we three rode along to join up with the Tamur expedition.



Top to bottom: Falls (see the kayaker!), river scenes on the Kali, Mugling buses



Along the Kali

On the way we stopped in Mugling to pick up a Kiwi couple who had finished kayaking the Marsyandi two days before and had since been experiencing Mugling hospitality. This is a favourite stop for late-night truckers; a big red light hangs over the town. Bill and Sara are a delightful couple and expert paddlers to boot. They told us they didn't have much sleep or much comfort and I'm sure they were happy to see the bus arrive which was their ticket out! After a lunch of Dahl Bat, we departed Mugling, arriving at the rendezvous point about 1 o'clock. At that point, we waited. And waited. And waited. I don't think Jim got bothered too much by kids.

I was walking up from one of several strolls down to the river when I came across Cory, who I hadn't seen since my last day of work when we said "See you on the road"! The bus had arrived; it was about 4:45. As we loaded our gear, we heard tales of a bus ride from hell from our fellow adventurers. The trip from KTM to Mugling that had taken 4 hours, a week earlier, this driver had done in 2 hours. We were shocked. That was not a pleasant road but one with steep cliffs on the sides as it went over passes on the way. Some were physically ill. Anyway, we climbed on board, walking up the aisle filled with flats of San Miguel swill and found

a couple of seats. We were off at about 5:30. We would not reach our destination for another 27 hours. THIS was the bus-ride from hell!

Our plan was to head south out of the mountains onto the plains of the Terai, turn left, stop at Biratnagar airport to pick up those who had chosen to fly from KTM (wise move), and then head north to the roads end. We did all this but stopped along the Terai at a gas station for about 6 hours sleep (on the bus, on the roof, on the ground). We arrived at the airport at 9:00AM, waited an hour for the plane, had some breakfast (Jim declined after inspecting the kitchen), reboarded the bus now fuller by +10 and headed off. We were now a full complement: 20 clients and 6 staff, 15 cases of beer and several more bottles of rum inside the bus and 10 days of food, rafts, kayaks, and other gear in a pile on the roof! If the brakes failed, we weren't going to stop! We arrived at our destination at 8PM... NO, Wait! There were two more clients to pick up! In the little village of Hille, in the middle of nowhere, after dark, we collected the last two clients who had just finished a 30 day trek to meet the bus.

So we arrived! And were put up in the local hotel. Think of a barn; think of small rooms in the barn; think of dirt floors; thinks of straw filled mats. This wasn't the Four Seasons! We were happy to get off the bus, however, and we settled into some tea and more Dahl Bat

before heading to sleep. I actually slept quite well. Our altitude was perhaps 7,000'.

We awoke to much commotion around the bus. The staff was busily conscripting porters at double or triple normal wages for this trek (3 days) which started in the middle of a festival. Not everyone in town was eager to carry when they could be partying. While we were standing around, I happened to notice the barber was open for business and his business was, in fact, booming. With the help of one of the guides, I got the price and stood in line. 20 rupees for the cut (50 cents). I was quite happy with the way the cut turned out, as was the crowd, for I stepped from the shop to great applause. They were doubtless happy to see that the barber had not slipped and that I would be carrying my own body.

This was the start of the trek: we left the village in a morning mist, scrambling along the short dirt street to the edge of town and then climbing to the north-east along a mountain ridge.

////////////////////////////////////

*"What do rodents, kitchen appliances, sex and plumbing all have in common? Ever said to your paddling buddy "I think that was the rapid we were supposed to scout". Learn more in the next issue as we continue downstream in Jim & Matt & Cory & Ken's Excellent Adventure, Part III!"*



← The "Barn" (Laxmi Hotel and Lodge)

## The Paddling Sadu: A Preachy, Fireside Philosophy Discussion

*Charles Wesley James*

Here is a new paddling guide: The Harvard Business Review. Check out the classic case, "The Parable of the Sadu", by Bowen McCoy (Harvard Business Review, September–October, 1983; reissued May–June 1997)

In the HBR version, McCoy (the business prof, not the doctor) had been trekking in remote areas of Nepal for a few months. Tired and suffering from altitude sickness, he and his trekking partner were nearing completion of a pass when they found a nearly naked, half-frozen, unconscious, nearly-starved holy man; called a Sadu. If left there, the Sadu would die. Yet for McCoy and his partner to take the Sadu to the village on this side of the pass would mean losing contact with their own porters and gear, which were ahead and already over the pass. Later that night, these porters would likely then risk their own lives searching for McCoy and his partner.

In the end, McCoy and his partner took the Sadu only as far as a Japanese team following, and they in turn took him down only as far as a French team following them. The French took him still lower on the mountain side and left him sitting in the sun, somewhat more conscious with the spare food and clothing he had accumulated from the groups.

In the article, McCoy is quite surprised at his own lack of concern for the Sadu, and still seems to question his actions of that day. The article is used in business schools to discuss corporate ethics. Why did no-one take responsibility for the Sadu, or should they have? There was no indication that the villagers below would have cared for the Sadu either.

Another line of thought would be that he intentionally climbed the mountain without food and clothing – therefore, maybe he wanted to die on this holy mountainside, and the foreigners messed up that plan by carrying him down the mountain. Or, that it is the Sadu's own fault, so McCoy could have let the Sadu get out of it himself.

Another angle is to examine the Nepali porters who were in the lead. The article does not state if they saw the Sadu, but let's assume that they did. Did they leave him because they knew he had a religious purpose in dying at that time, on that mountain? Or did they treat their obligations to the foreigners who are paying them as overriding the life of the penniless Sadu? And if that is the case, are we, the foreigners who trek, to blame for setting up such attitudes in our employees, or blameless because had we not paid, then no one would have found him, and the porters would also be poor? Yet another possibility is that the porters did find the Sadu, only in a worse place, and brought him down to where McCoy would find him, just

as McCoy brought him to the Japanese and so on. If so does that vindicate McCoy in some way? Does he need vindication?

It is sad, but quite probable, to assume that the actions of the trekkers and Nepali would have been very different had the Sadu been a wealthy foreigner instead. How does that effect the ethics?

### Paddling

Enough about the HBR article. You can look up the full version if you like. Let's relate this to Newcomers Day, 1998. (Okay, okay: my own story is hardly as life threatening, but I like the story anyway.)

On the Newcomers Day trip, on the Petite Nation River, we have many members of varying skill levels. The intermediates and novices warm-up on the small rapids at the "Farmers' Field," while the more experienced run the First Canyon. The First Canyon takes some time and by the time it is completed, the folks at the Farmer's Field are chomping at the bit to get a move on.

Last year we completed the canyon and in the pool at the end found a solo canoeist. This guy had had a big swim in the canyon, had smashed up the bow of his boat, and had lost his only paddle. Despite lack of helmet, proper floatation, or wet suit he seemed to be physically okay. The guy was French-speaking, and deaf. We eventually figured out that he was on an overnight trip by himself, and had set up a shuttle by bicycle.

Some of the kayakers searched the nearby eddies for his paddle. Then someone else towed him across to the same side as the Farmer's Field, where he could walk downstream and rent a new paddle at the paddling school. Another canoeist lent him a spare paddle, with no provision to ever get it back. And off he went, walking upstream to look in the canyon eddies for his paddle. And then we left for downstream, like McCoy leaving the Sadu. (Ok, unlike the Sadu, our friend could walk, but did he know 300 meters downstream was a paddling school?)

Later, on the river, we found our friend again, scouting the rapids on the second canyon. A couple of us gave him advice to portage this canyon. He didn't portage, and actually had quite a good run, and that was the last we saw of him.

I will leave it to you and your next philosophical discussion to decide how closely the Sadu story matches the paddler story, and to compare these cases with life in the city, or to the decisions they make while climbing Everest.