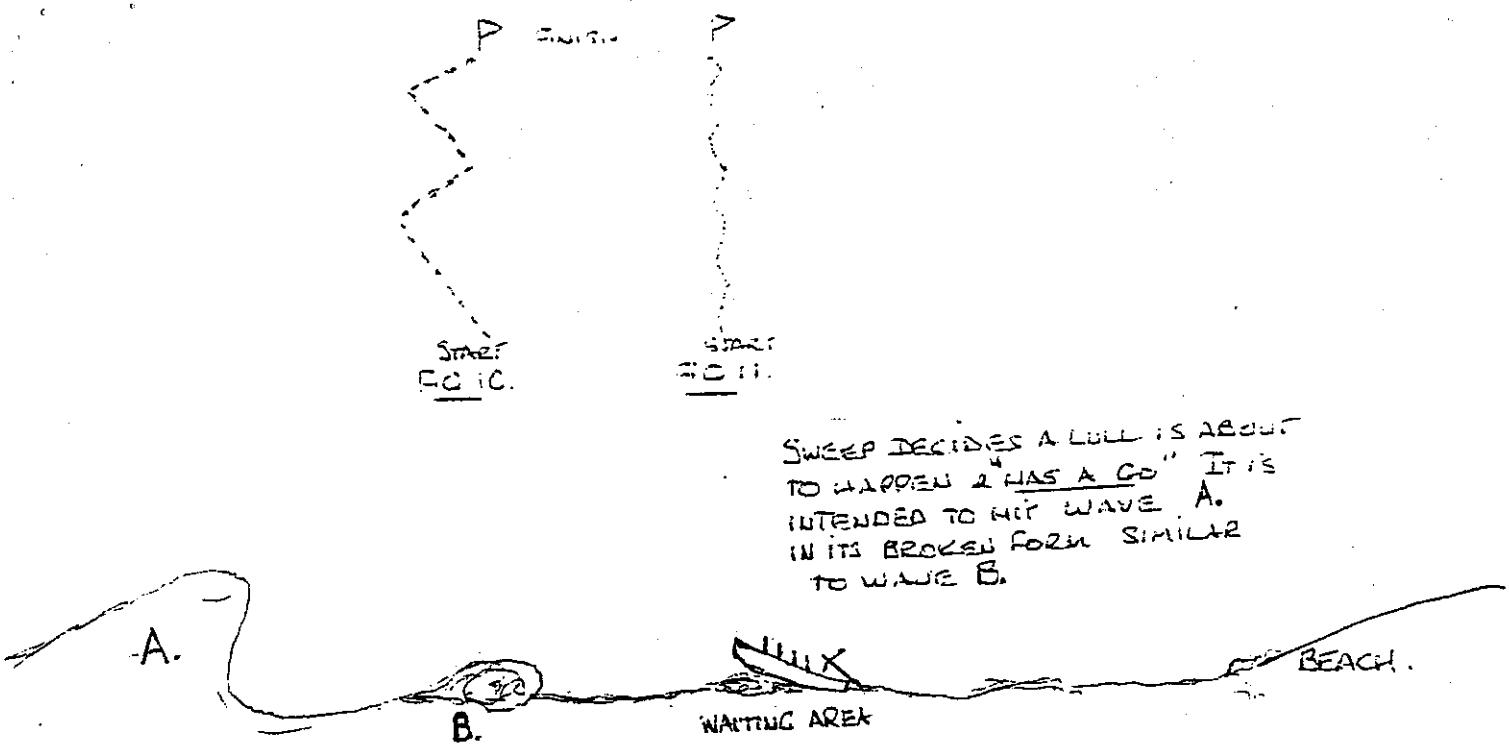


FIG 16.

WAITING FOR A BREAK.

You may have got your boat away at the perfect moment and taken it straight out through the broken water. But most likely you will have to stop the crew and wait for a break. This is quite tricky as you must remain tin a stationary position, with reasonable water under your craft and away from the shoreline. To gauge the incoming surf more closely you may choose to get up on the wave stands. But when you decide to go make sure you get off the stands. On most occasions it is preferable to take on a moderate broken wave before your encounters the lull that you think is coming [Fig.17]. By doing this you gain time and distance to sea, and have more boat speed that helps if your judgement is out and a hidden wave appears.

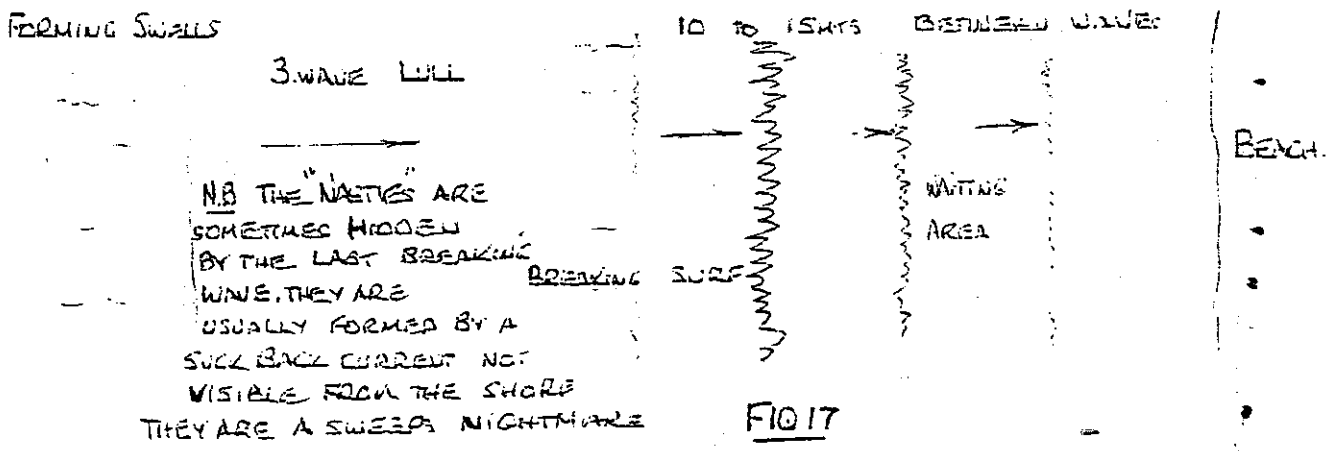


FIG 17

COME BACK- COME AFT.

This is the most important command a sweep makes.
Gauging this order is the difference between a good or bad wave. Given to soon, before boat speed energia is obtained, will see the boat drop off the swell. Given to late, will put both the sweep and crew in awkward position.
It must be realised that over half the boats gross weight is being transferred from one position to another and the way this shift is carried out will have a big bearing on how the sweep controls the boat on the wave.
The crew must really concentrate and perform this action smoothly, without rocking the boat. A good crew makes a good sweep.
Good surf boat rowers, make sure they control their blade properly on a comeback and it does not interfere with their crew mates progress through the boat.Fig.20

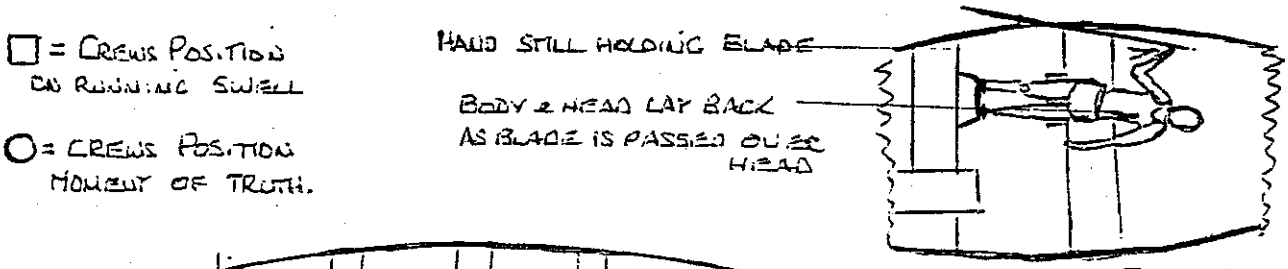


FIG 20

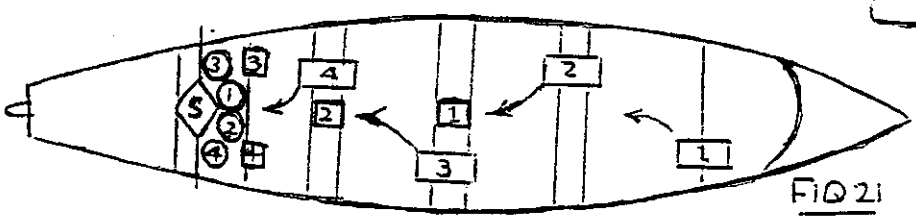


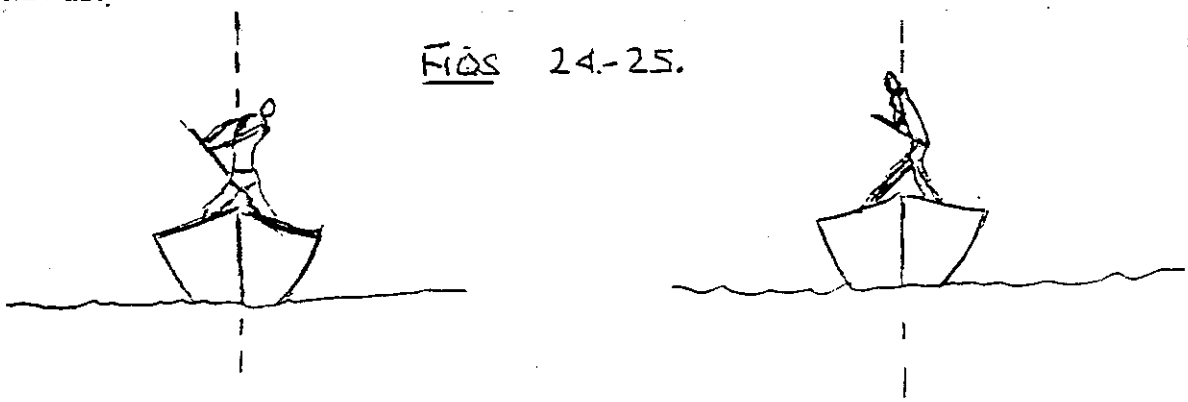
FIG 21

They must step cautiously along the exact centre line of the boat, keeping their bodies low as possible within the crafts hull, with perfect balance, even though their backs are towards the shore line.
After taking up their correct wave catching positions [Fig.21] they must use their body weight to keep the boat on a even keel, they do not just sit their like shop window mannequins.
With the boat running level and true and the crew sitting quietly in their proper positions, you are now in complete control of the boat Fig.22.
It all depends on feel, balance, and relaxed stance. You must look and be confident and any course correction should be made without any sudden jerky action.

BREAKING WAVE.

This is the sweep and crews "moment of truth".Fig.23.
No matter how well you and your crew have carried out the previous actions, Mother Nature will now really test your skills. You have travelled through reasonable staple waters and now your boat is being pushed and dropping at approximately 40klms per hour, into turbulent waters that have been churned up by the previous waves. Pressure on the bow and hull are coming from all directions. The rowing oars are jumping and waving about and there is certainly a hidden undertow below the white water. To add

to these problems, right behind you is wall foaming white water waiting to batter you and your craft. You and the sweep oar are the only controlling factor, the crew can only help by quickly obeying commands and remaining as still as possible.
If you where concentrating before the wave broke, now is the time to double that concentration.
Before the white water hits the boats tuck, you must order your crew to "Come back hard." and be ready for the enormous pressure that will try to force the sweep oar handle downwards [See- Crew help on a wave.]
To take this sudden strain on your body, you can slightly round your shoulders and bend your knees. Similar to catching a heavy medicine ball. The bow stem should be magnified in your vision and the slightest deviation from the I.S.L. quickly corrected, but be careful not to over correct. This is when the leaning steering posture is very helpful as the "earth" feeling is felt more quickly.
As the white water hits the tuck it will shoot the boat forward and you will receive a reaction to your body similar to standing in a bus when the brake are applied suddenly. You must be ready for this energy surge. The slightly bent knees helps.
After this mini explosion, you start the hard part of controlling the boat. The sweep oar is experiencing every type of surf turbulence. It could be dragging along the ocean bed and will certainly vibrate in your hands. You must "hang in there" and not let it take control. Your body will be forced from side to side by these tremendous unseen forces. You must at all cost try and keep your body weight as close to the centre of the I.S.L. Figs.24-25.



Figs 24.-25.

CREWS HELP ON A WAVE.

A good crew can make or break a sweephand. Their boatmanship must be spot on. Especially when taking big waves. On the "come back" command their oars must be properly controlled till the last fraction of a second. If one person lets their oar handle go to soon, after it has passed over their head, it will cause untold trouble for the whole crew and sweep. Fig.21.
The sweep may ask the Stroke or 2nd Stroke to help hold the sweep oar handle upwards, but they must never push the oar in any other direction unless asked by the sweep. If the Bow is ordered forward, they do so down the I.S.L. and as low down in the boat as possible
A good crew is always attentive to commands and sensitive to balancing the boat at all times. Insisting on good boatmanship is a must if you want to be a good sweep.

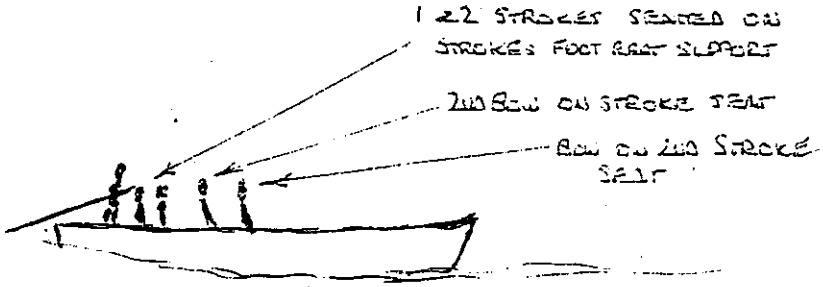
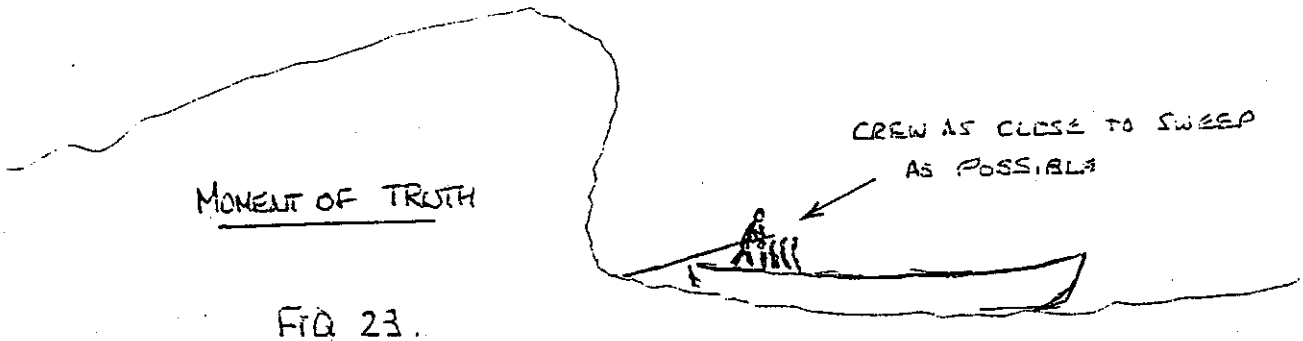


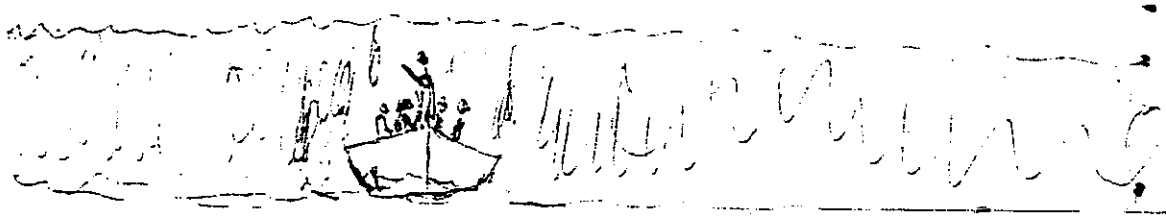
FIG 22

BOAT RUNNING ON MAKING WAVE



MOMENT OF TRUTH

FIG 23.



CREW EVENLY BALANCED

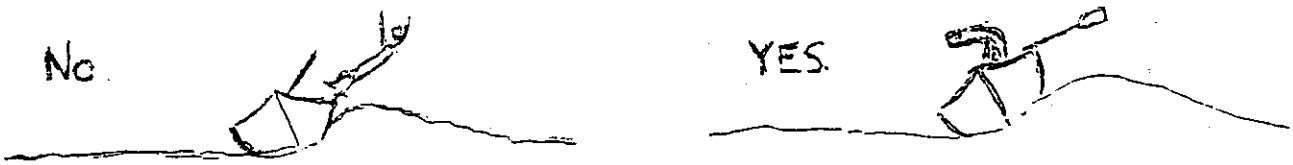
RUNNING ON BROKEN WATER.

Many sweeps lose concentration in this phase, as they mistakenly think they have overcome the waves worst moments. Although the explosion is over the after effects can be just as destructive. The crew may become restless, the rowing oars are all at different angles and doing everything to upset a straight course. The hidden side current is much stronger, the bow is hitting all types of turbulence. Most times, you will work harder in this section, than any other area of sweeping
Never take your eyes of the bow stem until the bow hits the shoreline fair and square, and then be careful as the sudden stop can throw you forward. You can always tell a old sweep by the scars and bumps on their shins

BROACHING..

This is a fact of life for all sweeps. A modern surf boat is possible the most unstable craft ever designed, for coming ashore through broken surf.
Over the decades it has been developed for speed through the water, this has certainly made it better for going out through waves, but coming ashore has become more hazardous, and sweeps and crews of today must perfect their skills much greater than the crews of past years.
The slightest mistake by a sweep or crew can immediately cause a boat to broach. When this happens all the theories and instructions are useless and a sweep has very few options in trying to get the boat back on a correct course. The main thing is to stay aboard and try anything to get the boat back under control. You will most likely have to pull the sweep oar inboard and lose your "earth", bumping along sideways with the crew " high siding" until you are in a position to straighten the boat up.
The most important thing is to stay with the boat. Fig.26.

FIG.26.



FINALLY.

Remember, it is very seldom that you bring a boat ashore without taking a wave. Creeping in leads to trouble and injury.
If you feel you are not capable of catching a wave, then return to the lake or harbour until you have the confidence to do so.

GOOD LUCK. HAVE A GO.

Bill "Woofa" Barnett. Oct.95.