

MCC canoeists use regatta as practice

By BEVERLY BOWEN

For most of the more than 200 canoeists at the first Western Division regatta of the season, the Mississauga regatta on Saturday was a major challenge. For some paddlers, it was another practice session for international competition.

"You shouldn't go all out if you don't have to peak. I took it (the regatta) as a regular training session and I know Gregg (Smith) did too," said Mike Hurley of the Mississauga Canoe Club, which won the regatta.

"It helps the club spirit if you go in the war canoe races, and actually the war canoe is good for training. This is a sprint regatta. It's 150 (metres), maybe 175 metres short of the official course."

Hurley, who specializes in the solo C-1 competition, is training for a place on the senior national team, which will represent Canada in the world championships in Duisberg, Germany, Aug. 16 to 19. The trials for the team are July 14 to 15.

Hurley, 19, was first in the open men's C-2, paddling with Smith, also of Mississauga. A stocky paddler in a sport where most of the athletes are slender, Hurley was edged out of first place in the junior C-1 race by Brian Bliss of Mohawk Canoe Club of Burlington.

Hurley finished eighth at the trials last month and just missed a chance to make the national team that will compete in Europe. His C-2 partner, Smith, made the team, but passed up the opening to stay for the Mississauga regatta.

"It came down to being at the world championships or at Nottingham and I considered the world championships more important," said Smith. "You have a chance to compete against 30 countries. I decided to stay and work on my pace in the C-1."

The national team returns from an 18-country regatta in Nottingham, England, one week before Smith's trials. The travel and jet lag could ruin his chances, Smith said.

Smith, 23, a silver medalist at the Montreal Olympics in 1976 paddling the C-2 with John Wood, was second in the C-1, 500-metre race at the 1977 world championships in Bulgaria.

Larry Cain and Kevin Stott still were adjusting their canoe when the starter called the open men's C-2 race. They lost their burst at the start, but pulled within half a boat length of winners Smith and Hurley. The recovery was a small triumph for Cain, 16, of the Oakville Racing and Canoe Club and Stott, 17, of Mississauga, one of the best C-2 teams in the country. They have been training all year for the European junior championships.

The junior team competes in Tampere, Finland, Aug. 2 to 5. The trials for that team are July 14 and 15.

Cain won the inter-club midget C-2 race, but the victory with clubmate Tony Sturgess was more difficult than the loss with Stott. "Tony doesn't train and I could feel the difference between him and Kevin," said Cain. "The boat rocked and it was hard keeping a straight course. It's hard adjusting to another partner."

About 100 spectators, wrapped in blankets and sleeping bags to guard against the cold, lined the banks of the Credit River to watch the regatta. Mississauga finished with 239 points. Island Canoe Club of Toronto was second with 127 and North Bay was third with 86. The paddlers received individual medals.

One spectator, Charles Streight, wouldn't let the cold keep him away from the regat-



—Globe and Mail, Tibor Kolley

Island Canoe Club and coxswain Bob Allen rejoice in winning war canoe event.

ta. Streight, 93, was in the first North American war canoe championships in 1904.

"The Peterborough company told us if we won the

championship we could save \$100 on the canoe. We won and got it for \$265. How much do they cost now, about \$1,500?" said Streight. Island Canoe

club has made the latest purchase. It cost \$5,000.

The next event is the Island Canoe Club Mini Regatta on July 1.