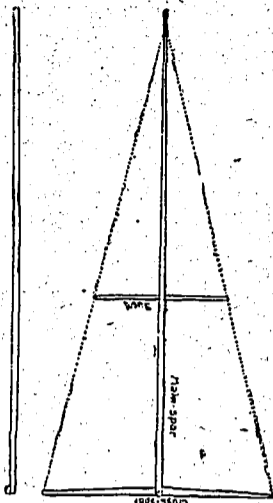


A SKATE-SAIL.

HOW TO MAKE AND USE IT—A FASCINATING SPORT.

Of skate-sailing in general less needs to be said now than a dozen years ago. It is wonderfully fine and



How it is made.

fascinating sport, based on the longing for wings. Who can stand skate-shod on the ice with a fresh wind blowing, and not feel that longing? But although many of us boys had long felt that desire, it was only with the introduction of the form of sail of which I write that skate-sailing came into great popularity among us.

Our sail is, to describe it in the simplest terms, simply a triangular piece of cloth, stretched on a T-shaped frame, carried to windward but unattached to the body. One of its chief merits is its simplicity. Yet it has other excellent qualities; I know of no other form of sail with which so large a wind-surface can be carried with such complete safety.

It is a safe sail because it is unattached to the body; with a little experience one can even drop it upon the ice if it becomes necessary. In using a sail which is fastened to the body there is always the danger, especially in a gusty wind, when skate-sailing is at its best, of one's sail becoming unmanageable.

The frame, which should be spruce or light pine, consists of two pieces. The length of the cross-spar should be about twice the distance from the ground to the armpit of the boy as he stands upon skates. Thus, for a boy of sixteen, the cross-spar should be perhaps eight feet long. In order to express myself definitely I shall describe this size of sail throughout, it being understood, of course, that other sizes should be in about the same relative proportion.

The thickness of the cross-spar should be one inch, and its width two and a half inches in the middle, tapering towards the ends. By width, in reference to the spars, I mean that dimension which lies in the plane of the sail.

The main-spar should be twice the length of the cross-spar; that is, for an eight-foot cross-spar, a sixteen-foot main-spar. The greatest strain on the main-spar is at one-third of the distance from the forward end. Here it should have a width of an inch and a half, tapering back to an inch at the rear end. The thickness at the point of greatest strain should be two inches, tapering slightly backward and forward.

At a point two inches from the main-spar's forward end it is joined to the cross-spar at its middle point by a quarter-inch bolt; a thumb-nut for this is convenient but not necessary. Round corners on the forward half of the main-spar make it more comfortable to handle.

The sail proper should be made of heavy unbleached muslin or sheeting, cut of such a size that, after hems have been made all round—one-half inch wide at the end, and one inch on the two long sides—the sail shall be a trifle narrower at the wide end than the length of the cross-spar, and about a foot shorter when stretched than the main-spar.

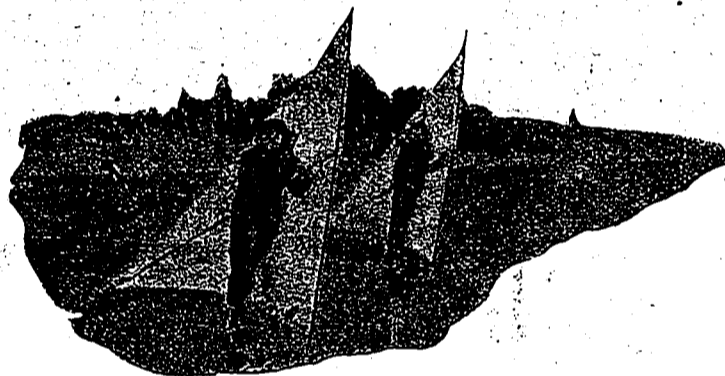
A quarter-inch rope should now be run through the two side hems, a protruding loop about three feet in length being left at the apex of the sail. The ends of the rope, after having been sewed tightly to the cloth at the two angles of the base, are knotted securely to the ends of the cross-yard through holes far enough apart to stretch the base of the sail snugly upon the yard, where it is fastened with tacks. In bolting the cross-yard to the main-spar the cloth side of the cross-yard is outside. The apex of the sail should be neatly and strongly stitched, but not fastened to the rope.

We now come to what may be called the halyards. In spreading the sail, the object to be secured is this: to pull the side ropes taut to the end of the main-spar, and then from swing the cross-yard around in line with the main-spar and roll the sail up, we will now go down to the ice for a trial.

The sail is carried on the windward side of the body, the main-spar being held under the arm about three or four feet from the forward end. The lower end of the cross-spar comes a few inches above the ice; the rear end of the main-spar drags.

The centre of resistance is, as I have said, one-third of the distance from the forward end. The whole problem of steering is involved with one's relation to this point.

If you are going directly before the wind you should be just at this point. If you are tacking you should come a little forward. If you would come



HOW IT IS USED.

into the wind, steer closer with your skates and come to the front of the same point to pull the cloth tight upon the ropes. This may be accomplished in many ways, varying with the inclinations and ingenuity of the builder. I will describe what is perhaps the simplest way:

About three inches back from the apex of the sail is sewed, by means of several laps of cloth, an enamelled iron ring perhaps an inch in diameter. The loop of rope already spoken of is pulled taut, and fastened by being passed through a hole in the end of the main-spar; it is then turned back, passed through the ring, again pulled taut and fastened by being caught over a hook or some such device.

One thing more; the sides of your sail will sag too much unless they are stiffened by a sprit. Somewhat forward of the middle point of the sides the rope is bared of the hem for an inch, the edges of the hem being oversewed to prevent ravelling. A piece of hickory or ash, one-half inch by one inch, notched at the ends, is sprung into place.

Now your sail is done, I believe. You have taken a day or perhaps two to make it. Five dollars is a fair estimate of the cost of material. If you will loosen the halyards and sail, when, of course, all the wind is spilled behind. To come about, the sail is shifted to the other arm by being passed over the head and turned upside down. There is always perfect safety so long as you are able to come forward of the centre of resistance.

Now, if you are ready let us take a long flight up the river. There is a strong and gusty gale, the kind of wind that makes you love the sport. The hard surface of the ice stretches

out before us far and wide, polished and smooth, and ringing, when struck, like a plate of finely tempered steel. We are off.

How the wind rushes! But we know you of old, Boreas! Many a time have we wrestled with you upon this glassy arena! We speed away with a swoop, the sharp steel hissing, the wind stinging our faces, the spray from our skates whirling over the surface. Braced with all our strength, we lean far over upon the wind. Yet a stronger gust has seized us, and we are whirled away like leaves across the ice.

But here we are at the end of our course, and we rush up into the wind; it howls and roars about us, and the sail shakes and quivers. Again we are off on our wild flight back.

There is joy in an ocean-swim, through the surf and out upon the great waves. There is joy in swimming in the brown water of some northern river among great, fragrant logs. I remember moments when tearing over the ice on skates after a 'shiny block' seemed the most glorious thing in life.

Again, there are the memories of long skatings off into the sunset, with fine feelings of freedom and power. Or our skates have led us on into quiet bayous, which stretch back into the depths of the solemn forest. We linger to watch the colors in the west through the branches and among the great trunks of the elms. Then, as we turn homeward in the phantom light of the moon, we hear the reverberating cry of the great owls, and

the dinner, I heard the voice of the other young fellow (he had not been asked), who was talking with a group of workmen on the pavement. They were returning from a meeting that had been addressed by him and he was answering some of their questions. Nobody connected with the dinner gave any thought whatever to Number Two; but ten years later the handsome young fellow was still carrying a lady's shawl and helping a man of fame with his great-coat. He was charming to have about and made a hit in society; but the other had got in his work in a more thorough and solid way. He had gone to Congress, and was the author of standard works on the new political economy, and everybody says he will yet be himself the chief justice.

The young lady rose and said to the philosopher, while her face glowed: 'Goodbye, and thank you. I am going by myself to practice the lesson given me on the violin by a great master and another lesson just given me—by a greater.'—Frances E. Willard, in 'Union Signal.'

A BAD THROAT.

(By Mrs. E. J. Richmond.)

'Doctor, please look down my throat,' said a seedy young man to the village doctor.

'Sore throat, eh?' said the doctor.

'Worse than that,' said the young man. 'Consumption, I think. Why, a whole farm, farming implements and all, and a large stock of cattle have gone down my throat, and I haven't a dime to call my own.'

'The trouble is a little higher up than the throat,' said the doctor. 'Why, man! when your father left you that fine, well-stocked farm he thought that you had brains enough to keep it.'

'Didn't think that in ten years I'd be a beggar,' said the young man bitterly.

'Well, Tom,' said a friend sitting near, 'I reckon I'm just about as big a fool as you.'

'Why, Jim, you never drink a drop of liquor, and that's what floored me,' said Tom.

'No; but I smoke. I reckoned up the cost the other day, and as sure as you live I've smoked cigars enough to pay for a nice farm; and I don't even own the house I live in. We're a couple of fools, I take it.'

'That is a sensible conclusion,' said the doctor.

'Now, you can be cured just as easy as to shut your mouth.'

'Gold cure?' said Tom.

'Better than that. Just resolve: "God helping me, I'll never open my lips to take a pipe or cigar or a glass of liquor," and if you are a man you're safe.'

'It looks easy,' said Tom.

'Let's try it,' replied his friend.

'Give me your hand on it,' said Tom.

The men clasped hands.

'Now be true soldiers, and fight for your sacred honor and your lives,' said the doctor.

And they conquered. Men who are respected and honored in the community, where they own pleasant homes, they are not likely soon to forget the good doctor's prescription.—'Temperance Advocate.'

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR ITEMS.

Christian Endeavor now illumines the land of the midnight sun. The first society in Norway was formed a few weeks ago in Christiana.

Tennessee Juniors are circulating pledges among the mothers, asking that all eggs laid by the fowls on Sundays be given to them for missionary purposes.

Some Colorado Endeavorers have organized a Washington '96 Club, to which each member contributes five dollars monthly towards his convention expenses next July. 'On to Washington!'

Good literature to the extent of seventy-five thousand or one hundred thousand, pieces, in the shape of papers, magazines, and books was distributed last year by the Chicago Good Literature Exchange, Box 1013, Chicago.

the river begins solemnly to boom with the settling down of night.

Among a host of such happy memories I count many a glorious sail on skates.—A. W. Whitney, in 'Youth's Companion.'

TWO WAYS TO WIN.

'I wish to learn the violin,' said she, 'and to make myself famous.'

She spoke to a philosopher, who slowly lifted his tranquil eye and said: 'There are two ways. The first and truest is, get the best master that you can, go by yourself and put in several years and practice under his instruction. The second best is, get a fairly good instructor, learn something about the violin, and then go to all your friends and ask them to buy tickets to your entertainment, and get the newspapers to say that you play well. For a while the last succeeds; but if you have really mastered your instrument these social and advertising methods will not be needed, for you will have become like Orpheus, who had but to put his instrument in motion, and even the wild beasts of the forest gathered to listen.'

The young lady looked at him with widening eyes.

'I know a case in point,' continued the philosopher. 'Two young men were graduated from our best university. They were presentable, fine fellows, one of them particularly handsome and both determined to succeed. I was present at a dinner given by the dean one night, a few years later, and the chief justice was there. The handsome young fellow who wished to get on helped him with his great-coat, carried the shawl of a lady of distinction, and made himself useful and delightful to every one. When I went down from