

ment, and we hope in co-operation with other groups in this country, to encourage Canadians to assume greater personal responsibility for their own health," said Mr. Lalonde.

The package, designed in the Fitness and Amateur Sport Branch of the Health and Welfare Department, includes the Canadian Home Fitness Test which enables Canadians to evaluate safely their current state of cardio-vascular fitness and to compare themselves to standards for their age and sex. Another element is the Walk-Run Distance Calculator, which enables each individual to work out a personal exercise program.

"Why are we so concerned about lifestyle? To take just one example: half of all motor vehicle accidents involve alcohol. The health costs alone of these accidents are \$300 million annually," declared Mr. Lalonde.

"Loss of productivity costs another \$1 billion a year. Property damages add a further \$1.4 billion to the cost of motor-vehicle accidents for a total price tag of \$2.7 billion a year. This is a price we cannot afford.

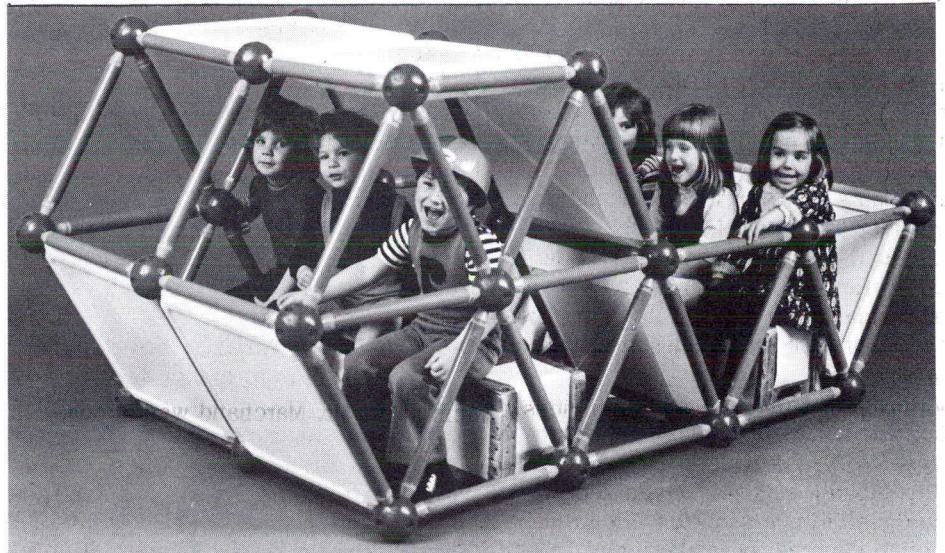
"Speeding, smoking, drinking, over-eating or not eating properly — all are part of an individual's lifestyle. Obviously many of the health risks run by Canadians are matters of choice. Surely it would be just as easy to choose a sensible lifestyle. Every accident, every illness that is prevented represents a saving of health to the individual and saving of money to the rest of the population...."

### Fun and games and training, too

So that the younger set can capture the team spirit, Maxima 2000 Inc. of Ste-Foy, Quebec, has designed Barboul — a simple, ingenious game that develops children's creativity while stimulating intelligence and imagination.

Barboul consists of two main components: a smoothly-finished sphere and a connecting-rod that can be put together to make two basic structures — one triangular, using a 60-degree angle to make an equilateral triangle, and the other cubic, using a 90-degree angle to make squares.

Designed for children at nursery or kindergarten level, and for use at day-



*The Maxima company's Barboul is assembled by the children themselves.*

care centres, Barboul teaches children how to socialize. Because of its size, they must work together to assemble it and, since they design their own structure, they must think and plan how they want it to look.

Being scaled to a child's height, Barboul becomes a true life-size structure. Its big advantage over other models is that the fun doesn't end once the structure is assembled. After completing it, the children can live with their creation by going inside it, around

it and climbing on top of it.

Barboul is of sturdy construction and can be put up and taken down by the children at will. Assembling it requires both concentration and dexterity. After the connecting-rod has been inserted into one of the spheres, the child must slip the wrench round the hexagonal nut and turn it until the connecting-rod is tightly fastened.

Maxima 2000 exports to the United States and France and is interested in developing additional markets.

### Canadians head Amazon scientific team

The National Research Council of Canada recently announced that it had awarded a \$170,000 grant to a pair of University of British Columbia scientists who are heading a study of air-breathing fish of the Amazon River. The award was offered in 1974 under the NRC program of negotiated grants. Payment was postponed until now because of a one-year delay in the preparation for the expedition.

Doctors David J. Randall and Peter W. Hochachka are co-chief scientists, heading Phase III of the *Alpha Helix* Amazon Expedition. This is a multi-phased expedition, comprising biomedical and physical scientific studies proposed for the Amazon basin in the autumn of 1976.

The 133-foot research vessel *Alpha Helix*, after which the expedition is named, is a U.S. scientific facility operated by the Scripps Institute of Oceanography, funded by grants from

the U.S. National Science Foundation. The Phase III investigators propose to study the problems faced and the strategies adopted by Amazonian fish that can exist out of water for long periods. Most of these fish have evolved special structures and functional mechanisms that allow them to make forced but temporary dry-land excursions. It is felt that they may be modern analogues of the processes operating in Devonian times.

The research team expects to establish a research site at the confluence of the Rio Negro and Rio Branco, where it will remain for eight weeks beginning September 4.

### Medical chemistry award

The Award in Medical Chemistry of the American Chemical Society will this year, for the first time, be presented to a chemist outside the United States. The 1976 recipient will be a