Foresters keep the old days alive in the woods



Photo by Steve Patriquen

The old pioneers never had it so good, but the UNB foresters try hard to keep their skills alive. Above, a participant in the recent woodsmen competition takes a breather.

Have you ever dreamed about building a log cabin somewhere in the wilderness, pleasantly remote from this miniworld of lectures, assignments and digitized students? Hmmm? Well, unless you are a devout technocrat, skill in the use of basic hand tools will be almost essential.

The competitions organized by the UNB Forestry Association last Saturday provided an excellent opportunity for anyone to observe men and women using axes, swede saws, cross-cut saws, etc. with considerable skill. Twenty-three teams from nine schools competed against wood and watch in twelve events.

Going into the last event Maine "A" held a narrow lead over University of New Hampshire "A" team. In less than four minutes UNH chopped, split, shaved, huffed, puffed, and boiled their way to victory in the water-boil and emerged as overall winners of the meet. Try it sometime -- you start with one block of dry cedar, one axe, five matches and ten ounces of water in a tin can.

Other axe events included chopping, dot splitting (an accuracy test), splitting (speed test), and the axe throw. Sawing events let teams display their skills with swede, cross-cut, and power saws. Felling and twitching, chain throwing, and log decking are other contests which may require some explanation.

FELLING AND TWITCHING: two axemen chop (fell) a tree down attempting to drop it on a target stake; then the remaining four team members run from the finish line to the log tie a rope around it and drag it across the finish line.

CHAIN THROWING: one man represents the team as he lays out, then coils, throws and ties a steel surveyor's tape or "chain". Throwing is the act of twisting the large initial coil into a doubled small coil.

LOG DECKING: Two men, using only peavies or cant hooks, roll a large log up and over the end of a ramp formed by two poles supported at one end to a height of about five feet.

This year five teams of women and one mixed team were a welcome addition to what has usually been an entirely male sport. Things are looking up.

Final Standings

	Total Points	
1	1045.1	UNH 'A
2	1039.6	Maine 'A'
3	1023.1	MacDonald 'A'
4	988.8	NSAC'B'
5	880.3	UNB 'A'
6	862.9	NSAC 'A'
7	829.8	UNH 'B'
8	824.7	SUNY 'A'
9	817.8	Colby 'A'
10	816.2	MacDonald 'B'
11	803.6	Maine 'B'
12	783.6	UNB 'B'
13	744.7	MFRS 'B'
14	736.3	MFRS 'A'
15	706.3	SUNY 'B'
16	660.5	Colby 'B'
17	648.1	U of T 'A'
18	546.3	MacDonald 'C'
19	490.5	UNH 'C'
20	449.2	Maine 'C'
21	436.8	SUNY 'C'
22	420.8	Colby 'C'
23	411.8	U of T 'B'

Grumps.
Achievers. Gropers.
Leaders. Puppets.
Planners. Procrastinators.
Those who empathize.
Those who don't.
Hypocrites.

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We'll be on campus at:

University of New Brunswick, November 3 and 4

We'd like to talk.
And listen.

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