

waterlines continued

explains the reasons why) but it was an exciting day when the boat first hit the water and the ideas were proved to be correct.

Stability and space is greater, but the main benefit is from the straight running of the hull. The twin keels cut through the water and make rowing a delight and there is none of that exasperating slewing about in the wind. But the greatest benefit is to be found when propelling the craft with that sadly dying art, sculling. Not the sculling done on sheltered waters with toothpick boats and arrogant attitude, but the art of getting along with only one oar wagged over the stern. The sculler will be pleased to know that Moby can be sculled at a remarkable rate and in a straight line. Too many boats seem to waggle from side to side while the oar stays still.

Another and perhaps surprising advantage of the hull shape is that when it is upside down on top of a car it seems aerodynamically stable at speeds up to (and, dare we say, beyond) the legal maximum. It also knocks very little off the top speed. Turn to page 202 for the full story.

Fallen leaf

The name *Maple Leaf IV* might not mean a lot to modern-day boating people, but back in 1912 and 1920, it was just about a household word. The boat won the British International Trophy in 1912 and held the world water speed record from 1912 until 1920.

Designed by Saunders and built on the Hamble, *Maple Leaf IV* was 39ft 6in (12m) long and powered by two New Orleans engines reputed to produce 400hp each. Her owner, Mr Mackay Edgar, left the driving to Mr Tom Sopwith, who set the world records of 43mph in 1912 and 57mph in 1913.

After the Great War, *Maple Leaf IV* was re-engined with 550hp Rolls-Royce motors and competed in the British International Trophy races where she was soundly beaten by the more advanced hulls of the American boats. Pensioned off while her owner continued racing with other craft of the same name, she finally came to rest in a muddy creek just above Bursledon Bridge on the Hamble.

There she remained until just a few years ago the creek was filled in to make a car park for what is now known as Profile Marine. The developments now taking place at the Profile yard lead us to believe that the car park could be ripe for digging up. If that is so, could the remains be exhumed and repaired, ready for display, say at the Maritime Museum? *Maple Leaf IV* is a proud name in our fast boating heritage and

this could be the only chance of recovering an example of the early racing hydroplane.

Clip on

A well-known yachtsman of our acquaintance — magazine editor and recent visitor to Russia — surprised us recently by dashing into a mountaineering shop and extolling the virtues of the carabiner hooks used for connecting ropes between climbers.

The hooks are really large spring shackles forged from high strength alloy, capable of taking safe working loads in the region of about two tons (2000kg) but only weighing a few ounces. Various types are available and most cost far less than their marine counterparts.

The obvious uses are for safety harnesses and lifelines, but their locking action and great strength make them ideally suited to many other purposes on a boat. It might be worth a visit to the nearest climbers' suppliers?

Promise of breach

Exactly a year ago we reported that the British Waterways Board had been promised an immediate grant by the Government of £5m, plus the promise of another £5m a year later (i.e. now), to cover the urgently needed canal repairs highlighted in the Peter Fraenkel report. Well, it may or may not surprise readers that the Government has yet to keep even the first part of its promise.

The official reason for the delay is "complications regarding the pay code". The Board put forward its plans to spend the £10m and this involved the taking on of new staff and extra work for its existing employees. It's well-known that the

Board, with its limited resources, is not the most generous of employers and it will have to pay well over its usual odds to attract new staff, and hence pay its existing staff more too. Despite the fact that the latter will be doing more work there are still "complications regarding the pay code".

Apart from being one of the best examples of the need for flexibility in the pay code this long-running farce is being played out against the steady deterioration of many of our canals. How many more breaches, lock failures and tunnel closures have we got to put up with? And if the £10m is not forthcoming what hope is there for the £60m which the Fraenkel report said was required to catch up with the total backlog of waterway maintenance?

On your marks

The measured distance we used during our trials on the Firth of Clyde in the Fairways Trawler 38 (page 180) was an impressive affair. For a start it must have the most dramatic backdrop of any measured distance, with the mountains at the northern end of Arran climbing up behind to a height of nearly 3000ft. The marks themselves are beautifully clear but most impressive of all, as we approached, flying our speed trials flags (SM), someone (thank you whoever you are) switched on the lights at the top of the marks. It was rather murky at the time and they helped a lot.

Arran's measured distance is used by naval ships which is perhaps why it is so good. Our editor recalls going up and down it at 40 knots in a frigate when he was in the Navy. It puts to shame most of the others we've used for boat reports, especially that grim affair on the west

'*Maple Leaf IV*' on trials in Southampton Water before her successful attempt on the British International Trophy in 1912. Today she's buried under a boatyard car park, but could she be recovered? See 'Fallen leaf', left.

