

## Back, and Still in the Game

..... David Landenwitch

After a short hiatus of approximately 35 years, the 2008 *Nationals* in Bristol was my comeback year. Reasons for the hiatus were many, including career and family obligations.

When I left the canoeing circuit I had, in my short career, won the 1969 *Junior Nationals*, been a member of the 1970 World Championship flatwater team, won the 1971 Men's *Nationals*, and was selected for the 1972 Olympic flatwater team.

Despite being out of canoeing for so many years the memories of the friendships made, workouts that provided physical health, the thrill of the race itself, and the commune with nature all remained part of my psyche.

Now, since time and circumstances permitted, I decided, with the encouragement of family and friends, to try once again to relive the glory of days gone by.

Can one go back and relive those past days or are they gone forever? Upon reflection of the events at the 2008 *Nationals*, the answer for me ended up being – it just didn't matter. I was able to race in many events and had a great time.

Time as always takes a toll on the physical structure, but my heart and mind were still in the game. Looking back on the races themselves I accomplished what I had set out to do – to gain experience for the next set of challenges life was to provide.

I participated in five events, many of those with partners I had never raced with before. I felt that we performed very well given the circumstances. In the end I think it's the participation that matters most, but it's also the hope of a possible win that keeps us coming back.

I would like to thank my partners **Brian Benson**, **Meghan McDonough** and **Josh Quintel** for racing with me, **Roland Muhlen** my longtime friend and coach, and my wife **Jeanette** who continually puts up with my issues and never waivers in her support. Hope to see everyone next year.



*Above, September 1969, at the Nationals in Wabash, IN: David Landenwitch (with trophy) and Eric Ronemus, whose father, Thor, was one of the founders of USCA just a year earlier. Dave and Eric had just won the C2 Junior marathon championship. Do any Canoe News readers recognize any of the other faces?*

*Below, also 1969: David Landenwitch (stern) and Roland Muhlen high-kneeling a cruiser. Roland Muhlen was at this year's Nationals in Bristol. This is Roland's second year back after a long hiatus from Nationals: he turned up in Warren last year much to the delight of old and new friends.*

