

April 26, 2021

CONTACT: Jay Walterreit
walterrj@alpenacc.edu
(989) 358-7215

For immediate release:

CONCRETE CANOES RACE; NOBODY GETS WET

Alpena Community College Concrete Tech students took their concrete canoes to the pond in front of Northern Lights Arena today and proved that concrete can float.

The concrete canoes project was a part of the lab portion of the Concrete Tech program's precast/prestressed concrete class, which is part of the second-year course curriculum. Students divided into two teams; each team made their own canoe.

"This was a fun, educational project where students learned to make a concrete canoe that needed to be lighter than the density of water," said Eric Kennedy, ACC Concrete Tech Instructor. "The students worked extremely hard all semester on this project and learned how to work together as a team to construct the canoes as well as learn more about lightweight concrete mix designs."

One group was named Team Merica and had a red, white and blue paint job; the canoe weighed in at roughly 550lbs. The group formed their canoe over an existing canoe with some minor tweaks. The second group was named the Misfits and had a black and orange paint job; their canoe weighed in at roughly 500lbs. The Misfits constructed their canoe over a custom mold made from plywood.

The two student project canoes were joined in the water by a faculty-constructed concrete canoe piloted by instructors Kennedy and Tim Onstwedder. Retired Concrete Tech Instructor Kevin Sylvester acted as honorary race starter.

Striking a blow for middle-aged wisdom over youthful exuberance and muscle, the faculty team of Kennedy and Onstwedder started the race strongly, made the turn without mishap, and glided across the finish line to a dry first-place finish. The two student canoes also finished the race on top of the water, but not so gracefully.

ACC closes out its Spring Semester with final exams May 3-5 and with a special Drive-Through Commencement on May 6. The Concrete Tech program is hosting an orientation meeting April 30 for all students who are interested in enrolling in the program.

For more information please contact Jay Walterreit or Concrete Tech Instructor Eric Kennedy (989.358.7364 or kennedye@alpenacc.edu).

In the photos:

ACC Concrete Canoes_2020.jpg:

Posing in front of their concrete canoes, from left: ACC Concrete Tech Instructor Eric Kennedy; ACC Concrete Tech Instructor Tim Onstwedder; ACC Concrete Tech student Adam Sobeck; ACC Concrete Tech student Devon Mills; ACC Concrete Tech student Jory Zdybel; and ACC Concrete Tech student Nathan Cruse.

ACC Concrete Canoes_1970.jpg:

ACC Concrete Tech instructors Eric Kennedy (front row, back seat) and Tim Onstwedder (front row, front seat) strike out hard at the beginning of ACC's concrete canoes race held in front of Northern Lights Arena on April 26. ACC Concrete Tech students Adam Sobeck (middle canoe, back seat), Devon Mills (middle canoe, front seat), Nathan Cruse (back canoe, back seat) and Jory Zdybel (back canoe, front seat) paddled to the best of their abilities but came in second and third, respectively, to the more-experienced faculty team. All canoes remained on top of the cold, cold pond, proving concrete can float.

– END –