



**Lonnie
Wheeler**

East Fork Tops Eastern Tradition

Saturday night the Harvard team, having pulled heroically through the last 1,000 meters of the Cincinnati Regatta, was discussing the merits of an expense-paid trip to England for the Royal Henley Regatta, which is where they could go from East Fork State Park.

Generally, East Fork is a good jumping-off spot for the Red River Cattle Company in Bantam or Frankie's Drive-In down toward Amelia, which is what made Saturday's whole scene so strange. There were the triumphant Harvard men hugging each other's shoulders on the bandstand on the beach, as if this was Cambridge or New London or some place with lineage. Ah, the hallowed waters of Harsha Lake, the august damming of Elklick Creek and the Little Miami east fork, the teeming 10-year tradition of bass fishing and speedboating, the eight-oar heritage of Clermont County.

Why weren't these kids yachting off Newport, anyway, or summering in Nantucket? What were they doing in boats in Ohio in June, in hot competition with other collegiate crews, in a race for the national collegiate rowing championship? Who were these 12,372 spectators, and what did they care about the crews from Harvard and Yale and Brown and Washington?

How has this happened?

THERE WAS a small gray-haired man munching on the three-piece chicken box lunch in one of the tents for the rich or privileged Saturday, a man whom few knew. His name was Charles Butt, and for 35 years he has been the rowing coach at Washington & Lee High School in Arlington, Va. Among the students he taught were Tony Johnson, presently the rowing coach at Yale University, and Bill Engeman, an attorney at Taft, Stettinius and Hollister in Cincinnati.

Butt is the kind of man who makes an impression upon his boys, and Johnson and Engeman had gone on to become accomplished collegiate oarsmen, the former more famously. Engeman, for all of his present modesty, was quite a stroker for Brown, however, and might have wrested the 1959 single-scul national championship from Harvard coach Harry Parker if he hadn't been so occupied in carrying Brown's crew into uncharted prominence.

Engeman and Butt kept in occasional touch after the lawyer moved to Cincinnati, but the relationship intensified a few years ago when, while on a boating expedition in Europe, Engeman heard from a common acquaintance that Butt was building boats these days. He called his old coach and had a scull made.

It was while running his craft at East Fork that the idea occurred to Engeman to make something out of the rowing