

Book Reviews

The Camper's Guide to Outdoor Pursuits: Finding Safe, Nature-Friendly and Comfortable Passage Through Wild Places (2nd ed.), by Jack Drury & Eric Holmlund, Sagamore Publishing L.L.C., Champaign, IL, 2006, 206 pages, ISBN 1-57167-559-0 (pb).

I like to think of myself as a person who enjoys a good laugh, but I have to admit that I don't find anything that funny in the new edition of *The Camper's Guide to Outdoor Pursuits*. The authors describe it as a 'fun', 'lighthearted', or 'wacky' treatment of outdoor skills incorporating 'off-the-wall characters and bad jokes'. Personally, I find the fabricated anecdotes and jokes to be a major distraction from the serious content about outdoor adventure travel and safety. Many of the graphical cartoons could also be considered old-fashioned and in some cases inappropriate. For example, the prominent picture on the back cover promotes behaviour of human–bear interaction that has long been discouraged by North American park authorities.

The book is parochial in its style and content and is clearly aimed at the US market as its intended audience. Anecdotes and examples are American, and imperial units are used almost exclusively. It seems a shame that a more international perspective could not have been adopted in order to make the text relevant to outdoor enthusiasts in other parts of the world. It is also unfortunate that most of the referenced sources for the content of the book originate from the 1970s and 1980s, and these inevitably contribute to the somewhat outdated feel of the publication.

It would be fair to say that, among the anecdotal padding, the book does contain a range of useful advice on outdoor trip planning, wilderness travel, safety procedures, and group leadership. Of particular value are the highlighted 'tips' that emphasise the key take-home messages throughout the text. Some areas are lacking, like the treatment of risk management as promised in the first page of the introduction. This would logically appear in Chapter 7 on 'Safety and Emergency Procedures for the Backcountry', but seems to have been overlooked in favour of addressing first-aid skills and incident management approaches. The topic of risk management also does not appear in the index.

Hypothetical anecdotes in the book hinge around the attributes and experiences of 'the Stumps', 'a 'normal' American family'. As soon as I read that

Forrest, the father, ‘thinks of himself as a benevolent dictator, exasperated coach, over-worked referee, and family doormat’ (p. 5), I knew I was going to have difficulty with the ongoing scenarios. Sure enough, this was borne out in the dull narratives that followed, and I offer the following two examples that really speak for themselves:

The sun rose over the mountains on the first morning of the Stump family camping trip to the Cascades. ‘I know it’s early, kids, but have I ever told you about your great-great-great, well, prehistoric Uncle Zak?’ said Forrest Stump to Willow, Moss, and Woody, who were in the back seat of the family van. Holly Stump groaned as she prepared for another of her husband’s half-baked stories about famous family forebears.

‘He had it rough, you know. He didn’t have Lycra and Gore-Tex when he wanted to stagger across the frozen tundra. No way. But that was *really* living.’ (p. 7)

To understand compasses, you need to understand direction. In the historic days of ocean exploration, Christopher Columbus, or Cristoforo Colombo for you Italian aficionados, hired Forrest Stump’s Spanish forefather, Silva Stump, as navigator on the *Santa Maria*. Now the *Santa Maria* had a state-of-the-art 15th-century liquid-filled ship’s compass, but during this time direction was based on the 32 cardinal points of the compass. In other words, Silva had to memorize North, South, East, West, along with Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, Southwest, North by Northeast, North North by Northeast and the remaining 22 cardinal points. What a headache! (p. 128)

I tend to agree with the last point, and I believe my students would feel the same way. In this regard the appeal of the book is likely to be limited, especially outside of the United States. Some may consider it useful as an introductory text in an undergraduate outdoor recreation or outdoor education course, though its colloquial style would probably make it more attractive to the general public, especially outdoor pursuit novices and those with a compatible sense of humour.

For Australian and New Zealand outdoor recreators, I believe their needs would be better served by books like *Bushcraft — Outdoor Skills for the NZ Bush* from the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council (Wellington, 2006, 4th ed.) or *Bushwalking and Ski Touring Leadership* published by the Bushwalking and Mountaineering Training Advisory Board of Victoria (Melbourne, 2000, 3rd ed.). As an American alternative, I would find it hard to go past the thoroughly tried and true *Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills* now in its sev-

enth edition (Seattle, 2003). The latter is a genuine reference text on outdoor pursuits and not just a guide to backpacking as is the case with the book under review.

Overall, I feel a sense of disappointment about not being able to offer a more positive assessment of this apparently updated guide to outdoor pursuits, especially when we are so accustomed to the high standard of leisure texts from Sagamore Publishing. In my view, it could achieve far greater impact and appeal with a totally fresh and contemporary edit which combined factual information with real-life case studies and incorporation of international perspectives.

• *Terry J Brown, Griffith University*

Working with Volunteers in Sport: Theory and Practice, by
Graham Cuskelly, Russell Hoye, and Chris Auld, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, London and New York, 2006, 180 pages, Hardback, ISBN 0-415-38452-4, and Paperback, ISBN 0-415-38453-2

This text provides a comprehensive guide to the issues surrounding the management of volunteers in sport organisations. The focus of this book is sport volunteers — their characteristics, and their contribution to the industry and to the sustainability of sport at all levels, from the involvement of volunteers at local clubs to managing volunteers in an international sporting arena. An overview of the settings and the organisations in which sports volunteers work, and the issues associated with their management is described.

Primarily written for academics and individuals who wish to understand the characteristics of sport volunteers, the text provides an insightful record of the contribution ‘Volunteers in Sport’ provide to the field of sport historically. Further, in terms of the sustainability of sport, the contribution of volunteers is recorded through maximising the effectiveness, efficiency, and retention of volunteers in the future.

Volunteers provide the backbone of many sporting events and this text provides relevant dialogue to interpret the diversity of issues impacting on volunteer involvement in sport, from their diverse intentions to get involved as a volunteer, to the myriad of trends that have influenced volunteer participation. Importantly, the text examines the changing trends and policies, as an increasingly professional sporting industry continues to challenge and guide the volunteer culture. The text provides a valuable contribution to the field of sports management and to the broader field of leisure and business management.