

January 2012

LAST SUMMER

In the early part of last summer, up at the family cottage, I would take the Super Sprite out into the lake alone with Chelsea, my relatively new hyper energetic dog, leaving the two seats in place but putting one of the drive units in the center hole. This made the seating only modestly uncomfortable, but another problem arose.

By my straddling the seats, and with them extending full width across, Chelsea was effectively blocked from being able to move her energetic self from the back to the front and back again. This seemed to cause her a lot of consternation but I tried to not let it affect me but of course it did.

And so, one time early on, I was out in the center of the lake, pedaling back across toward the cottage (the lake is about a half mile wide at that point) when I heard a big splash behind me. In her frustration of not being able to have a greater area to move around in she had climbed up on the rear deck when an errant wave evidently caused her to misstep and in she went. When I turned around, about 20 or so yards away, there was a very wet small dog paddling for all she was worth toward the boat.

The thought of pulling a sopping wet dog aboard the boat where she was sure to shake additional cold wet spray all over me caused me to seriously consider leaving her to swim for it. But I didn't, I turned around and somehow got her back into the boat where she not only shook thoroughly all over me but insisted on climbing into my lap to lick my face to thank me for saving her.

Then next time out, and from then on throughout the summer, I did what the Super Sprite was designed to do - took the seats out and put one back in the center position. Chelsea then on those rides was able circle from back to front and back again. I wouldn't say that this made her really happy - she just has too much

energy to want to sit around in a boat - but at least she didn't get up on the deck and dive in again.

Hmm. Now if we could only harness up that energy to the boat pedals.....