

# Make Your Own Water Skis

By Hi Sibley



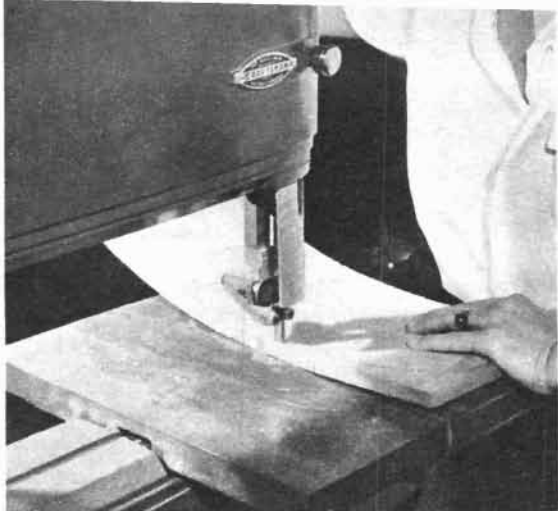
While tightening second and third clamps on bending jig, apply pressure with knee.



**M**AKE these water skis and you'll have a championship pair. They were designed and built by Miss Elva Swoffer, a California school teacher who holds many trophies and has taught water skiing to over a hundred people from eight to seventy.

For the lumber, select two pieces of clear spruce. Check to see that the grain does not run out on the surface to be bent and taper each end in a jointer. The tapered side will be the top side of the finished ski. Now soak about 24 in. of the forward end in water for at least 48 hours to relax the wood fibers; a week's soaking will do no harm. After that, boil it for an hour or more.

*Mechanix Illustrated*

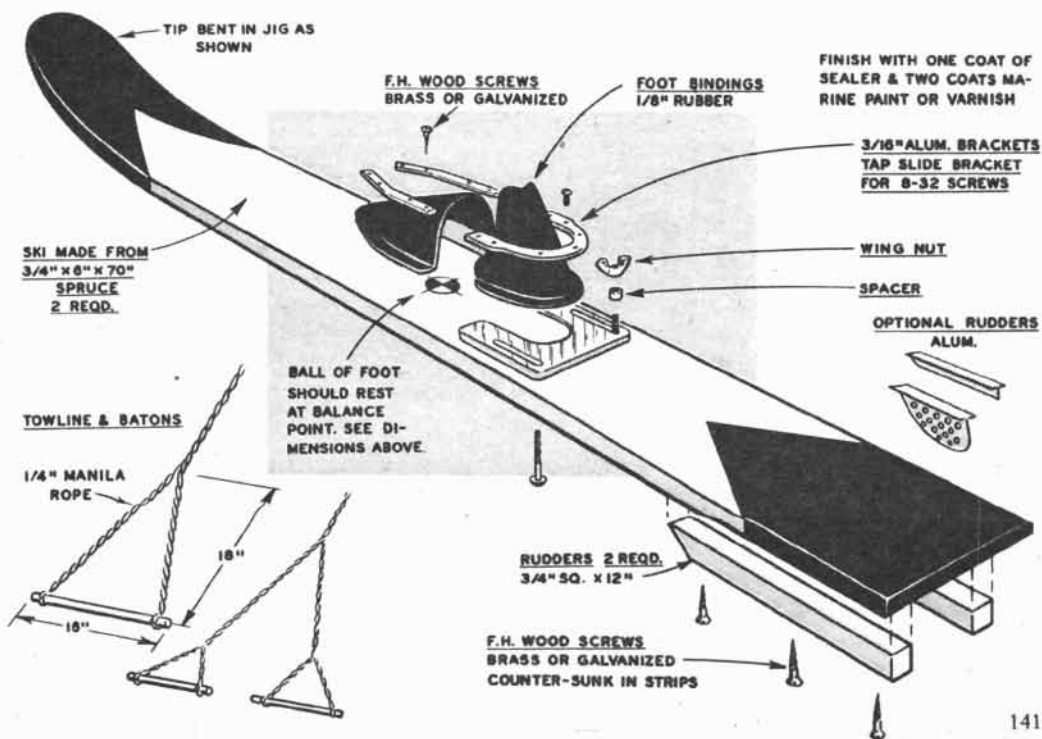


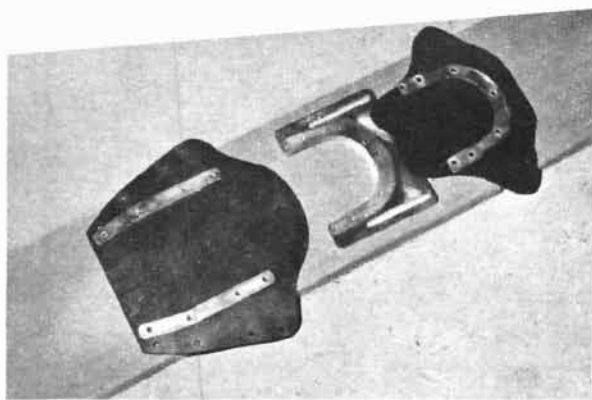
Cutting of rounded nose is done after ski has been bent; other end must be held up.

To cut slots in adjustable aluminum heel plates, drill holes and insert saw blade.

To bend the nose of each ski, build a form to the given dimensions. Any rough lumber will do so long as the radius of the curve is true and the surface smooth. Place the pair of boards on the form, tapered side down, and tighten the end clamp first, exerting slight pressure on the back ends of the skis. It is assumed that you have the

toes square in the press. Continue pressing on the ends until you can draw down the second clamp, then the third. If bending is a little hard, tighten the second and third clamps alternately until both are down. If the skis still do not bend easily, do not exert so much pressure that they splinter. Remove them from the press and boil them





Completed parts of a foot binder shown in their relative positions before assembly.

longer. Let them remain in the press about two or three days, depending on drying conditions, and remove them only when thoroughly dry.

For a natural finish, sand the wood as smooth as possible, apply stain if desired and then a coat of wood sealer. Complete the job with two coats of marine varnish.

Skis to be painted should have any

blemishes filled with surfacing putty. They are then sanded a second time. Follow with one coat of wood sealer, one or two applications of marine undercoat Brolite and one or two coats of marine gloss of the selected color. The bindings, of course, are installed after painting.

Metal parts for the foot binders are cut from  $\frac{3}{16}$ -in. aluminum. Note that the adjustable heel plates are tapped for the 8-32 machine screws which pass through the horseshoe and the rubber heel binder. Soft rubber, such as a piece of inner tubing from a truck tire, should be used for the toe binder; a stiffer rubber should be used at the heel.

Those who need some pointers on the subject of water skiing can get a free book by writing to Evinrude Motors, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. •

