



The Last Run: A true story of rescue and redemption on the Alaska seas

Todd Lewan

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

The Last Run: A true story of rescue and redemption on the Alaska seas

Todd Lewan

The Last Run: A true story of rescue and redemption on the Alaska seas Todd Lewan

It was the catch of a lifetime. In late January 1998, after a miserable stretch of fishing that hadn't paid for even their groceries, the five-man crew of a seventy-nine-year-old Alaska schooner called the *La Conte* risked one last run to the Fairweather Grounds, despite the approach of bad weather. The young skipper, a father-to-be, was convinced fish could be found on the shoals, and his instincts were right: they hit the mother lode. For eighteen hours their lines had a fish on every hook: yellow eye, lingcod, calico, halibut, even the occasional sand shark; it was an incredible haul, one that would bring huge profits -- and respect -- back in port.

But they stayed out too long, and a hurricane-force Arctic storm caught them. Though in need of repair herself, the *La Conte* had weathered bad seas before -- and might have again. But in the cruelest of ironies, the additional burden of its magnificent catch sank the ship, and set the five men -- Bob Doyle, Mike DeCapua, Gig Mork, David Hanlon, and Mark Morley -- afloat in frigid seventy-foot seas. Their radio beacon was sending distress signals to the Coast Guard, but the chances of rescue under such conditions seemed remote.

Eight months later, on a deserted island nearly 800 miles away, two boys found a mutilated corpse that had washed ashore and been mauled by brown bears. A forensics investigator, haunted by the thought that this man's family might never know what had become of him, and with only a single partial fingerprint and scraps of a survival suit for clues, set out to identify the body.

Author Todd Lewan's painstaking investigation into these events began here, too, with the discovery that the man found dead on Shuyak Island had been one of the fishermen aboard the *La Conte*. Lewan became obsessed with learning what had become of the other crewmen; with understanding how five "end of the roaders" from different parts of the United States had come together in Alaska to fish one of the world's most treacherous patches of ocean in the dead of winter; and with conveying the way in which that "dream catch" represented an opportunity for each of the men to significantly alter his life. In the process he learned of the truly heroic efforts undertaken by no fewer than three different teams of Coast Guard helicopter rescue units to save these desperate men.

Lewan's re-creation of the events themselves -- the discovery of a lost fisherman's remains; the bonding of troubled men on the high seas; the horrifying hours spent fighting to keep from freezing to death in thirty-eight-degree water; the impossibly courageous efforts of the helicopter rescue crews; and the moving account of how one of the survivors, in particular, found during this tempest an unexpected inner strength that allowed him to turn his life around -- makes for an unforgettable tale, a page-turning narrative drama of the first order. It also provides a timeless, affecting portrait of hard-living seekers drawn to Alaska: of adventurers in search of roots, home, and the chance to remake themselves in the spirit of America's last frontier.

The Last Run: A true story of rescue and redemption on the Alaska seas Details

Date : Published June 29th 2004 by Harper

ISBN : 9780060196486

Author : Todd Lewan

Format : Hardcover 384 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Adventure

 [Download The Last Run: A true story of rescue and redemption on ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Last Run: A true story of rescue and redemption o ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Last Run: A true story of rescue and redemption on the Alaska seas Todd Lewan

From Reader Review The Last Run: A true story of rescue and redemption on the Alaska seas for online ebook

Mike says

Great story, but i couldn't shake the fact that there's so much dialogue in a non-fiction book. Would've been stronger and more believable -- how are we supposed to buy all of that dialogue is accurate? -- without the extended passages, though.

Dave Allen says

Started a bit slow but quickly picked up. A very good adventure and an engrossing story. A good job detailing the boat life and heroism of the Coast Guard. Definitely would recommend this.

Joel Horn says

As other reviewers have pointed out this book starts out slow as the author builds the stories of the characters. Since it is a true story it is very very true life and you wonder if you want to dwell into the characters personal lives that much. The last 2/3 of the book it all comes together with a plot twist not normal for true life.

As a former UH-60 helicopter crew chief in a medevac unit I have never read a better account of the issues and emotions of high stress aerial rescues. He managed to capture that awful fear a helicopter crewmember feels upon the sound of "rotor droop" in the flight parameter death zone.

If you read this book you are reading an account that is just about as accurate as it can get for aerial rescue.

Kenno82 says

Lewan's writing seems very authentic. The characters feel very real and believable. While he presents heroic acts, the people involved are ridden with faults and insecurities. Alaska presents as a frontier nation, full of people who have spent their second and third chances and are chasing a fourth. I really enjoyed this after a slow start.

Russell King says

An engrossing true story of the struggles of coast guard men to save five fishermen who abandoned their ship in Alaska seas during a hurricane level storm in winter. Just the right amount of personal background is supplied about a few key individuals to make the story have depth. Makes one appreciate the skills and efforts of those who perform rescue missions for the coast guard and the travails potentially faced by fishermen.

Cathy Leming says

This was--admittedly--an Apollo 13 story, only with a large fishing vessel and the U. S. Coast Guard and great-big rescue helicopters ... in Alaska. And it is well-written. I add here, if not first, that I'm not a fan of non-fiction. I read it for book club. This read like fiction, however. What I didn't like about this book is that the first half is all about the men on a large, professional fishing boat and these men are not very likable. In fact, I have heard them referred to as "losers." I'd agree with that description, so it's hard to root for them. They encounter a perfect storm of sorts, of bad weather (a gale), bad decisions and bad luck. The Coast Guard to the rescue. Then it gets exciting, but only halfway in. Read it if you like adventure, and real adventure, because this is a true story. But if you must have the fiction formula of likable characters that is as basic to a book as mirepoix is to soup, then pass on this book. But if you like adventure and daring rescue against impossible odds and think all people are redeemable, then read this book.

Will Byrnes says

Todd Lewan - image from HarperCollins

A Perfect Storm meets the arctic. Facing eighty-foot waves, hurricane strength winds (110 mph) and golf-ball sized hail, and worrying about deadly icing, three Coast Guard crews risk all in the north Pacific to try to save a crew of five, floating in the frigid water after their boat sank. Award-winning writer Todd Lewan, a veteran AP reporter, lets us in on the desperation of the men, offering insight into why they were willing to take so great a risk to try fishing in such perilous conditions. He points out that the owner's greed played a role in the condition of the boat they went out in. This is an engaging and exciting read. The rescue sequence would be a natural to grace the silver screen at some point, although the film *The Finest Hours* offers some wintry, albeit not Alaskan, oceanic rescue horrors, so it may be a while before another film-maker will want to weigh anchor on making this one. In the meantime, if you are casting about for an exciting true-life fish(ing) tale, you could do worse than to reel in *The Last Run*.

Amerynth says

I mainly read this book because I'm acquainted with a relative of one of the rescuers and heard about this story. Lewan's tale of a dramatic helicopter rescue of Alaskan fisherman who were shipwrecked started out beautifully. But it quickly got bogged down in superfluous detail and background about each person's life. I basically felt like Lewan didn't have enough material for a whole book.... so he tried to flesh it out the best he could and all that stuff just made the book more difficult to read.

Denae Zvarick says

Note to my friends: crude language, blunt dialogue, discriptive action scenes. Hilarious dialogue, I laughed so hard. I felt like I was right there on the boat as Bob Doyle worked along Mick, Mork, David Hanlon, and the Skipper. The water was cold, the fish were slimy, the waves were unbelievable and I can't believe they survived! Then the rescue teams efforts were described so well that even though I've never been in a chopper I felt like I was right there with the men in search of the survivors.

Truly an extraordinary read.

Don Healy says

Having just finished a trip to Alaska, I can confirm that it is filled with end-of-the-roaders, but also amazingly creative resourceful, self-reliant people, often in the same person, who make our lower 48 culture of whining seem shameful. This true, gripping story of just what's at stake when we order a fish dinner also reveals the depth of these people who live where we couldn't imagine living and who do what we couldn't imagine doing.

Annie Hirahara says

Was hoping he wasn't rescued

Donia says

This is normally my type of book. The first few pages were interesting but then the story got bogged down in much unnecessary detail (for me anyway). Not until page 160 does the story pick up. I think there was an attempt to give absolutely anyone that had anything to do with this story a place in the book and hence for me it became difficult to keep the characters straight.

Even during the exciting rescue pages (they are the highlight obviously) I still wasn't certain who was who at times. This detracts from the story.

Perhaps it would have been easier to keep the characters straight if the author had told his audience what happened instead of using dialog. I've read many ship wreck stories and this is the first one that I've struggled with. Never-the-less it is a story worth reading if you are into this type of story.

Praise of course to the incredible efforts of all who attempted and save the fishermen from their deaths.

Stuart says

Nice read and well-written account of the rescue of the crew of a fishing boat in Alaska with horrendous weather conditions.

Especially enjoyed the author's weaving in stories of the crew's personal lives and backgrounds as well as the rescuers to give context and better understanding of the story line.

Would recommend

Steve says

When I was in Juneau last June, I found myself glued to this book in the late hours after the grandkids had gone to bed, and in the wee morning hours before they got up. It has everything; first, it is a true story. The story centers on sinking of a fishing vessel in Alaska, the terrible ordeal the crew went through while waiting for rescue in the frigid waters, and the efforts of the Coast Guard to rescue them during a raging winter storm. But even more, it is a look into the lives of all of the people involved, before, during and after the tragic sinking, and the life lessons they learned, or re-learned. Fascinating, captivating story, well worth reading.

Debbie says

Reading this book reminds that:

1. I never want to be a fisherman in Alaska
 2. The Coast Guard is one of the most under-valued and steely eyed group of people in the world.
-