Advanced Sea Club Kayak

Newsletter

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J J Ramwell
Secretary ASKC
32 Glebe Road
West Perry
Huntingdon
Cambs PE18)DG

ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB

NEWSLETTER NO 17

EDITORIAL

Firstly, a Happy New Year to you all and may the sea be kind.

When I first started compiling these Newsletters it was often a case of padding out with whatever material I could find that was relevant. Now I have to be selective as the cost factor has to be considered and, therefore, should you have written to me recently with contributions please bear with me if they are not in print.

Now to this edition which includes the following :-

1. A brief outline of the Third National Sea Canoeing Symposium.

2. A preliminary draft of Frank Goodman's "Twenty-up" Canoe Rally.

3. A re-introduction of the Sea Touring Committee Incident Report Sheets.

4. An article on a deep water rescue technique by A Starrenburg and A Joosse.

5. More on Alan Byde's Cockpit Liner from Nick Padwick, followed by an excerpt from a recent letter from Alan to the ASKC.

6. An idea from Joe Lamb in Australia which he has entitled "Sea Kayak Trial".

7. Baffin Island Expedition 1979/80 by Frank Goodman.

8. Finally, some various notices.

1. THE THIRD NATIONAL SEA CANOEING SYMPOSIUM

I have heard it said that the definition of a sea canoeing symposium is a collection of sea canoeists who go as far inland as they can and then talk about it!! Well.....why not! It makes for a pleasant change to hear the wind and rain rattling the windows outside than have it bouncing off your face, whilst at the same time dreaming of expeditions to come when the weather improves.

As on the previous two occasions, this third symposium was organised by the ASKC in conjunction with the British Canoe Union, and was held this year at Cliff College, Calver, Nr Sheffield, over the weekend 15/16th December 1979. Cliff College is a Methodist Institution and is located amid some beautiful Derbyshire countryside in view of the River Derwent. It served our purposes ideally and we were well catered for. It was an excellent setting to relax and enjoy a weekend of lectures and discussion on one of our favourite topics - sea canoeing.

Guest speakers included Tom Baptie from Merton Adventure Centre in London; John Barnard from H M Coastguards Swansea; Reg Collins from Radio Communications Lincolnshire; Nigel Foster from Burwash Place Outdoor Centre and Brian Sheen from Cornwall. Between them the speakers covered such subjects as The Organisation of National Sea Canoeing Meets; Wind and Waves - their theory and effect; Organisation of Large Scale International Expeditions; Services of H M Coastguards; Radio Telecommunications and other electronic aids for sea going canoeists; and, "What's New" in the world of sea canoeing equipment. Apart from this impressive list of subjects, there were several illustrated accounts of recent sea canoeing expeditions...Derek Hutchinson on his Aleutian Island Exped., Derek Hairon on his Circumnavigation of Ireland, Nigel Foster on his Newfoundland Exped.

With all this going on in the space of one weekend there was really only time for discussion between members of the conference during the meal breaks and on the Saturday evening when we all adjourned to the local pub (the locals wondered what had hit them!).

There was a very good turn out for the symposium with almost 50 people attending. There is always the risk of bad weather preventing members from attending when the conference is planned during December. Happily we got away with it. Should any of you have thoughts on the timing of the symposium, its content or venue, then I am sure the Sea Touring Committee of the BCU would like to hear from you as, from henceforth, they are to be responsible for the organisation. I know that any (reasonable) suggestion would be appreciated.

A full report of this symposium is being prepared by Keith and Margaret Maslen and it is hoped to be ready for distribution to all symposium members and ready for sale to others in time for the Canoe Exhibition 23 February 1980. Before concluding this report I would like to place on record our thanks to both Keith and Margaret Maslen, without whose help and support this symposium would not have been possible.

J J Ramwell.

2. "TWENTY-UP" CANOE RALLY

Object - The primary object is to provide the sea-canoeist with enjoyable, sociable competition without recourse to extreme athleticism. Secondary objectives are to sharpen canoeing skills, develop safety consciousness and to entertain canoeists and the public at large.

Venue - The area chosen should include subjective hazards and technical problems, and may include crossings, circumnavigations, journeys along coastlines and into estuaries.

Participants - Entries can be made by individuals or teams of two or three canoeists. In the interests of safety, exposed courses may be designated team events only. Teams and individuals can participate at the same time.

Method - Preliminary Organisation - In the chosen area, ten checkpoints will be selected. Each checkpoint will carry a score:-

1 checkpoint	will score	8	points
3 checkpoints	"	6	"
2 "	"	5	"
2 "	"	4	"
1 checkpoint	"	2	"
1 "	"	1	"

Checkpoints with the same score will be identified by the addition of a letter, eg 6A, 6B, 6C. Thus the ten checkpoints will be: 8, 6A, 6B, 6C, 5A, 5B, 4A, 4B, 2, 1.
Each checkpoint will be set up in the field and will have its own stamp to mark cards carried by the canoeists. Checkpoints will be manned or unmanned at the organisers' discretion. Checkpoints shall be easily visible from 20 metres away.

General Procedure - Each canoeist will be required to visit checkpoints in turn until he has a total of TWENTY (20) POINTS, using the best possible route devised by himself after taking weather, tides etc into consideration. There are ten different combinations of the scores that add up to 20:

8	8	8	8	6	6	6	8	6	6
6	6	6	5	6	6	5	5	6	5
6	5	4	5	6	4	5	4	5	4
	1	2	2	2	4	4	2	2	4
							1	1	1

The number of permutations of routes runs into many thousands (for instance, there are 18 ways of visiting just 8, 6 & 6). It is clear that the higher scoring checkpoints must be placed in more 'difficult' positions than low scoring ones. The canoeist cannot score more than twenty.

The Start - Each canoeist shall bring compass, chart, O.S. map, pilot, tide-tables, etc as specified by the organiser. Other equipment, such as safety flares, food, etc shall also be available and checked.
The Starter shall give each canoeist a list of checkpoints. These will be designated by either Grid ref. Lat and long. Bearing and distance. Other methods though fit.
In addition a short description will be added eg
(a) S. end of beach
(b) Top of cliff path. (nasty).
(c) End of harbour jetty.
(d) Third buttress from south bank of viaduct crossing estuary (very nasty at low water).
The canoeists can start at any time between limits set by the organiser (last competitors must be home before dark).
Before they start canoeists will - enter details of checkpoints onto their maps; be given an entry card, pay an entry fee and have their entry card stamped with their start-time, before the checkpoint details are given out.
After collecting his twenty points, the canoeist returns to the start, or a separate finish, and his time of arrival is stamped onto his card. The lowest time-scorer is the winner.
Variations may be added at the organisers' discretion.
Due provision must be made for the safety of the canoeists.

Subsidiary Skills - As part of the 20-up Rally, other tests can be arranged at a suitable site; normally on sheltered water, where spectators can watch. These events will be particularly important where good PR is to be encouraged (tourist resorts, etc).
These tests can form preliminaries to the main event; be held on the Saturday before a

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Sunday event; can be scored so that they can be combined with the main event to give an overall winner.
These events could be used to decide what class the canoeist is put in for the main event. This would be important from a safety point of view, insomuch that less skilled paddlers may only be allowed to compete in the main event as a member of a team and not as individuals.
Various tests could be devised, for example :-

Capsize race - capsize on start line; regain canoe unassisted; paddle to finish line. Score - time in seconds, plus penalty for every gallon of water still in canoe at finish.

Manoeuvrability race - simple slalom type of course between buoys. Score as slalom.

Rescue race - paddle to man in water; rescue onto deck of canoe, paddle to finish line. Score - time in seconds.

Tug of War - individual or teams tied together. Knock-out competition.

Paddling to destination race - set of directions are given to the canoeist who has to judge distance and plot direction from compass. Score - penalties for number of metres away from predetermined finish points worked out by organisers.

Obviously the idea of the 20-up Rally is very much based on orienteering, and there may be many other ideas that would fit into such a scheme as this. So many sports these days seem to demand tremendous physical fitness, and the idea of these rallies would be to provide something more than just a tour by canoe, but with an emphasis on map-reading, compass-work and general canoeing ability rather than athletic ability. It should not be taken too seriously!

Frank Goodman.

3. THE SEA TOURING COMMITTEE INCIDENT REPORT SHEETS

John Kuyser, Chairman of the Sea Touring Committee writes:- "Last Christmas I heard on the News of a sea canoeing incident and decided to officially offer my assistance to the police and Coastguard. After several abortive 'phone calls to local part-time police and Coastguard stations I managed to put together some information about the incident which had resulted in a fatality and a lost canoe, and also contacted the local Coroner by letter to ask permission to talk to witnesses. This was readily given and I wrote to a key witness asking him to answer some queries regarding the condition of the canoe, experience, lifejackets worn etc. His reply was added to the Incident Report form and from this a fairly full picture of how and why the incident had happened could be seen.

I forwarded this to the BCU Safety Officer who later wrote thanking me for the form, saying that it had saved him from making detailed inquiries. As it turned out the incident had no connection with BCU activities but I was able to show this fact to local authorities and throw some local specialised knowledge onto the reasons for the accident.

Incident Report forms are available from John Ramwell, and are a valuable aid to investigations into any canoeing incident."

John Kuyser

4. DEEP WATER RESCUE BY TWO DUTCH MEMBERS OF THE ASKC

While canoeing along the Dutch coast of Walcheren, half way between Oostkapelle and Domburg, we had an experience and subsequent rescue action which we think is interesting to the readers of the ASKC-magazine.

At the time the sea was rather rough - estimated wind force about 5 - as we encountered rather heavy breakers on a bank parallel to the coast. As it happened a rather high "freak" wave turned up and toppled both of us over. We had to leave our boats as the kayak roll did not succeed (inexperience in such circumstances), at a distance of about half a mile from the coast. We decided to try and re-enter as swimming would have taken a long time with both kayaks in tow.

Firstly, we emptied the kayaks as well as possible which succeeded much better with Starrenburg's self-made kayak (which has a cockpit 30 x 65 cm) than with the Nordkapp. This is entirely due to the difference in size which factor also made us decide to try and enter the larger cockpit first, this being easier and faster. Both of us then manoeuvred the kayaks head-on to the waves, with both paddles across, to create a sort of catamaran. It is necessary, however, for both canoeers to remain in between the kayaks to try and keep the whole unit rigid - this might seem a bit dangerous but, at the time, it presented no difficulties. Next, the man in between the paddles entered the kayak while bracing himself on the paddles. The other man had to steer the unit as well as possible and warn for higher waves. After the first man settled the second got in the same way whilst No.1 tried to keep the kayaks steady. The drawings will clarify this story.

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We successfully completed the whole manoeuvre in approx 15 mins, after which it was rather cold even though wearing wet-suits (November). As another lesson we learned that for a kayak the same laws apply as with any other vessel in that a vessel with a free liquid surface (such as a half-filled kayak) there is a decrease or even complete loss of stability. The Nordkapp rolled over almost automatically again so that half the procedure had to be repeated again a bit later. Paddling to the shore, the Nordkapp was brought in stern first so as to be able to anticipate every wave. It also appeared that in a heavy sea it is almost impossible to use a pump (mounted behind the cockpit) as well as closing the spray-cover properly, it needing two hands to do this.

One last bit of information which might be useful - we have been using full-size wet-suits which, on longer trips, caused abrasions on the inside of the elbow joint which is quite irritating. We have therefore cut out the elbows of the suits using the lower armpiece separately - this is, of course, in combination with wearing a good nylon canoeing jacket.

Drawings overleaf - page 5. A Starrenburg/A Joosse

5. REMOVABLE COCKPIT LINER

I wrote and asked Alan about the possibility of a removable cockpit liner - here is his reply which is worth duplicating in full :-

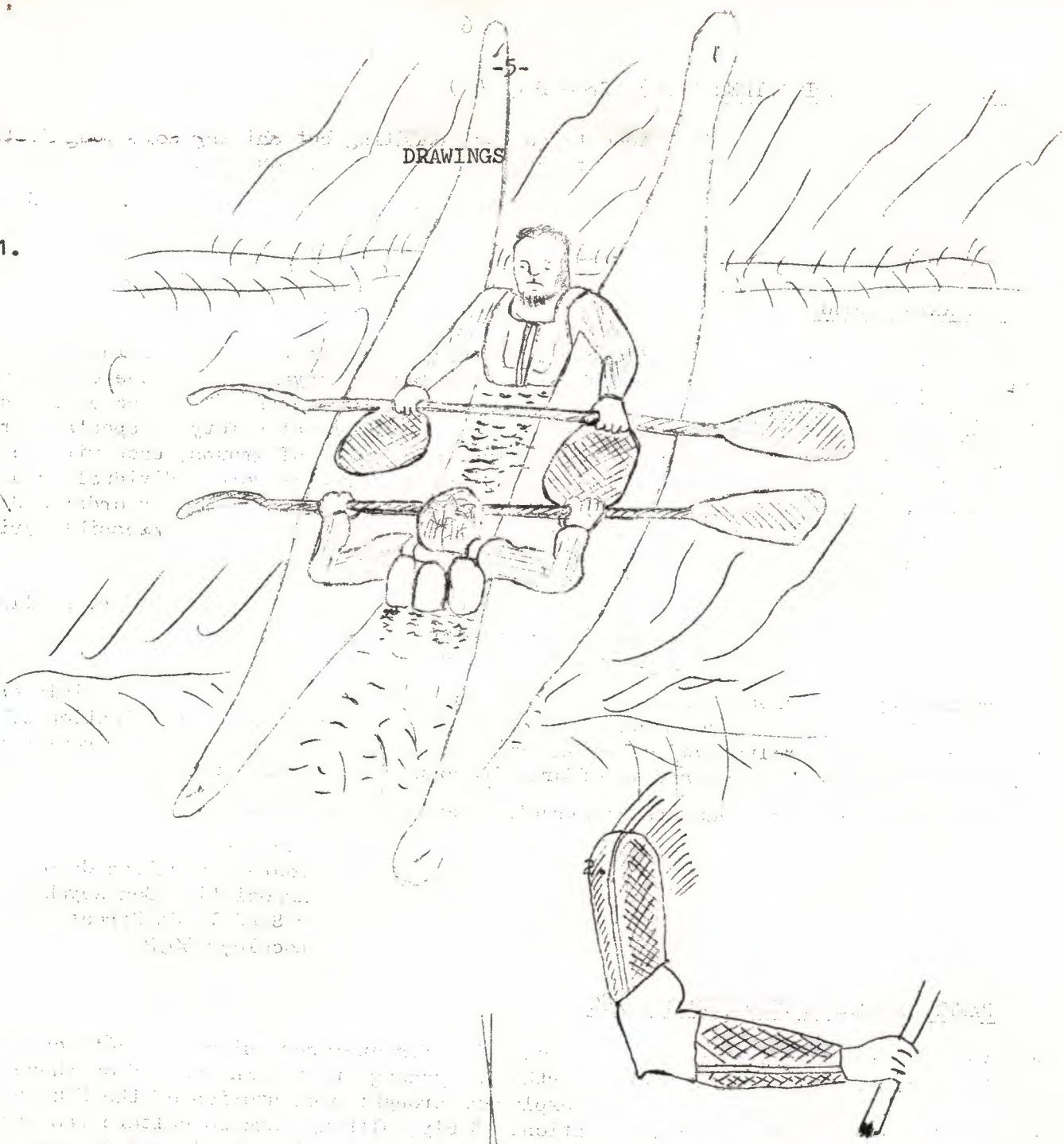
Your plea for a removable pod, as distinct from a liner, touches a responsive chord. Yea, verily, that must happen too. And pods in which one can sleep whilst at sea - and pods with centre-boards so that really extended fast journeys can be made, so that Cherbourg in a day, 6 hours, is no problem and so on..... What I am doing is engaging my wits in the gentle art of people-packing. The kayak builder makes a device called a kayak or canoe which is really an interface between a human being sitting, maybe standing, or kneeling, in an upright position, and the water through which it moves. Like bicycles, there really cannot be much improvement on the classic diamond-frame pattern, for lightness, strength and good looks. The same with hulls, at least. Water, long ago, demanded certain shapes for certain uses and water has been around for a lot longer than man. However, decks I reserve judgement upon - I don't think the use of gap mouldings in decks has yet been finalised. My latest sea kayak provides 17 separate attachment points, all moulded into the deck as permanent fixings; positions are the result of acid tests by experienced canoeists. These are now as near right as anyone will ever get but there are still things like flare troughs, flask and sandwich access, camera box, compass housing etc which all set up new possibilities. Imagine for instance the Eskimo kayak - the floating buthcer's bench. Attached to it are the sealskin float, the gun bag, knife sheath, toggles for harpoon shafts, pan for line coils, paddle park and so on - all done long ago by seal hunters and well before the Europeans started using the kayak for sport. So, we know the classic shape of the North Atlantic kayak - but do we realise why it looks like a bit of drifting flotsam when in use Because it has been adapted for ITS PURPOSE! Underneath clean as a kayak can be - on top a mess of baggage. So, let's use the fluid shapes which can be produced in grp, and mould them in from the start so simplifying the business of rigging. Why do we have long deck lines which may have a good 8 ft between attached points To grab hold of people say, to have a length of line for towing or man-hauling up cliffs out of dodgy landing sites. You must have tried to re-rig a deck line after use at sea and whilst still afloat - t'aint easy. Therefore, with three thwartwise lines fore and aft (6 in all) if the passing floater cannot seize hold, it's a poor look-out. As for towing or hauling up cliffs - give me a long, long line with some bounce in it and coil it on deck to hand. Also I use side rails, 2 ft long beside the cockpit - very interesting uses - surf rescue - person in trouble; you go up to them from shore side, end on; they grab side rail - next wave comes along, and whoof, in you go broached, laying over the patient, talking kindly, and they stream out up-wave and you lie broached towards the shoreside of patient riding the paddle blade. Very safe presentation for patient.

Duw! I do go on. I have 2, maybe 3 more sea kayaks on order, to make using my prototype moulds. It's a stretched Tiger - called the Sea Tiger. Much faster than a KW7 and probably faster than the new, shorter, North Sea Kayak. Those who have them, or have used them, rate them as great boats. Deck design changes from boat to boat. When I have enough time to make my own kayak for trial perhaps you would like to use it for a while (John). I have the early prototype made in February 1979, but it lacks all the deck detail that is really its special appeal, in addition to its speed. 15 ft loa, 24 in beam, 12 in deep, liner fitted as standard, pump and hatch from Henderson. You could use the early one now but the later model with details will be better. If you know anyone who would like an Aleut. with liner (2nd ever built), my own, built Feb 1978, or the prototype Tiger, price reasonable, condition ace in both cases, I'll sell at a reasonable price - ie £65 for the Aleut. and £80 for the Sea Tiger prototype. Not trying to do business - just trying to keep the garden tidy! I turn out large grp objects like Henry Moore!

(Continued on page 6)

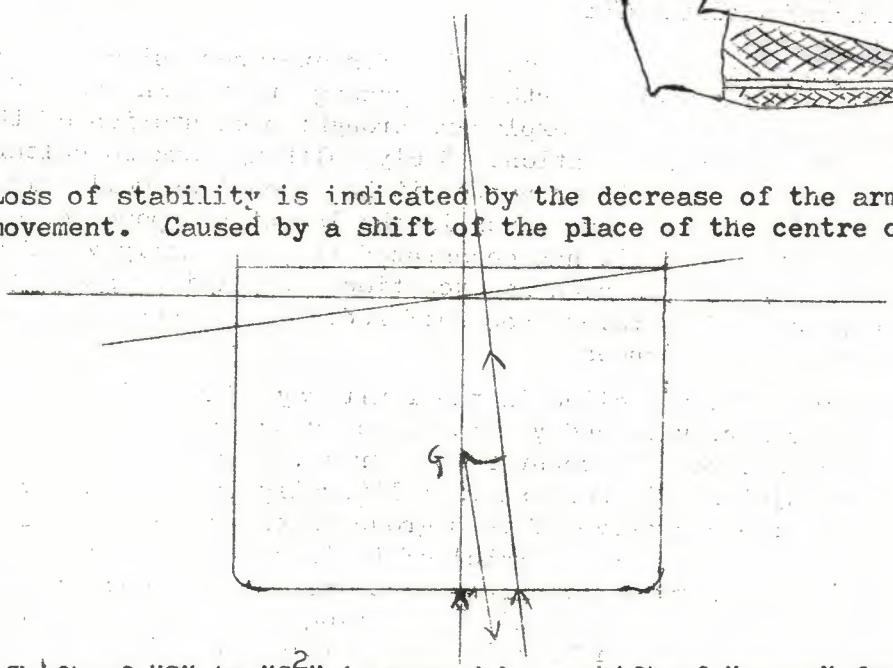
DRAWINGS

1.

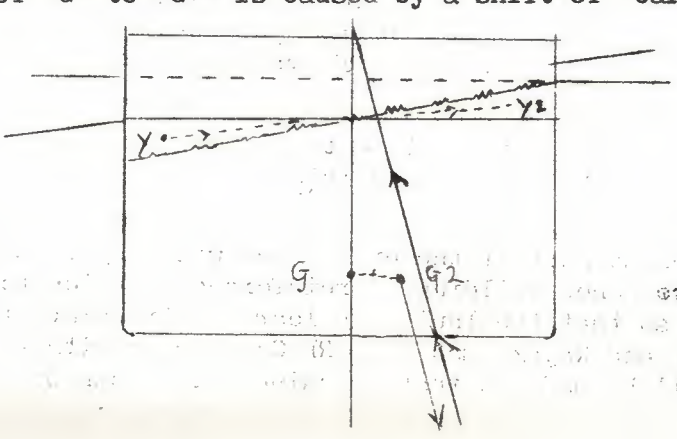


2.

3. Loss of stability is indicated by the decrease of the arm of righting movement. Caused by a shift of the place of the centre of gravity "G".



4. Shift of "G" to "G^2" is caused by a shift of "cargo" from y to y^2.



5. REMOVABLE COCKPIT LINER (Ctd) (from Page 4.)

May I join the club. I don't intend to do much paddling but sailing solo long distances appeals to me. Group paddling lost its charms for me long, long ago.

Soon, my wife and I will be moving to 5 Masterman Place, Middleton in Teesdale, Co Durham.

Alan W Byde.

6. SEA KAYAK TRIAL

Sea Kayak Trial is a real situation challenge and game instituted to develop proper attitude, capacities, skills, techniques, etc for adventure by sea kayak. It is the objective of Sea Kayak Trial to engender positive qualities and improvements in man and equipment for the pursuit which spans the entire spectrum from recreational safety to spectacular enterprises. Sea Kayak Trial participation involves any number of groups, each with no less than 3 individuals, co-operating (as few as two groups of three or more individuals can have three or more different combinations) to complete any same course in any order and/or direction within a specified period of time so as to demonstrate the accessible criteria-emphasis on:

(a) Planning and preparation
(b) Execution - navigation, strategy, logistics, skills, environmental care, etc.
(c) Debriefing and report.

The course may be a crossing, a circumnavigation of an island or a group of islands, visit a number of designated places along a coast or within a bay, or any combination of them. The course should involve subjective hazards and technical problems in the real expedition situation to test the co-operative effort and competence of the group.

The writer respectfully requests constructive comments in response to this idea.

Joe H Lamb
South Australian Canoeing
Association Sea Kayak Co-ordinator
2 Sandilands Street
Lockleys 5032

7. BAFFIN ISLAND EXPEDITION 1979/80

The Arctic Barren Lands have held a fascination for explorers since the 16th century when Frobisher first tried to discover a north-west passage to the Indies. From these regions of ice-berg and polar bear the early explorers brought back stories of the Eskimo that have left an indelible mark on our imagination. Sadly, although Eskimo culture was capable of withstanding the rigours of the bitter north, it has been less well able to resist the impact of the white-man's technology. Such is the lamentable power of our aggressive, often arrogant civilization that it has devastated other, equally valid cultures throughout the world, and Eskimo society has been no exception. For this reason, the traditional Inuit(Eskimo) culture of Baffin Island has suffered, losing much of its sense of worth, with some tragic social consequences.

One symbolic indication of the decline in the Inuit way of life is the kayak. For centuries it was central to their survival, and yet it is now a principally endangered icon of a critically threatened culture. To counter this trend, a group has been recently formed in Baffin Island called Qajalirijiit Nunatsiarmi; literally 'those who have to do with kayaking in a beautiful land'. The objective of this group is to promote kayaking as one way of projecting into the future a powerful symbol of their culture and thuse restore the kayak to prominence in the area where it originated. Since it is generally recognised that the U.K. leads the world in modern sea-kayaking, a dialogue has been established between the two islands and as a result the Baffin Island Expedition is being organised here in Great Britain. The long-term objective of the Baffin Island Expedition is to forge a link between the Inuit Culture and our own by way of canoeing, canoeists and the kayak, and by so doing mitigate in some small way the cultural shock sustained by the Eskimo. The Expedition's immediate timetable is as follows :-

(a) August 1979 - to ship to Baffin Island the moulds of a modern sea-going kayak together with all the necessary tools and materials to build and design canoes in reinforced plastics.

(b) November 1979 - Two members of the expedition will fly to Baffin where they will set up a workshop to intro canoe-building in reinforced plastics to the Inuit. This workshop will be developed so that the Inuit can learn to translate their traditional designs into plugs, moulds and kayaks made of GRP Concurrent with the workshop course, a cultural study will be made so that teaching method can be modified as Inuit attitudes to the work become apparent.

(c) December - January 1979/80 - Members of the expedition will return to the U.K. leaving the Inuit to continue their kayak-building so that a number of kayaks are produced ready for a kayak expedition in the summer of 1980.

(d) August 1980 - An expedition team of four canoeists will fly to Baffin Island where they will link with a small group of Inuit to make a journey by kayak along the coast of Baffin Island. This kayak journey will traverse the bay where Frobisher first landed on Baffin Island, collected some fool's gold, and sailed for home. Such is the isolation of this coastline that the inlet has only been visited once since then! This will be a time of mutual education, when the British expedition members can trade their expertise with the Inuit, who in turn will pass on their knowledge of survival techniques needed along this barren coastline with its freezing waters and shifting pack ice. Apart from the bonds formed within the group, links will also be forged with isolated settlements to be visited along the route.

Modern materials have often been castigated, but reinforced plastics, with its unsophisticated fabricating technique is an ideal material for kayak-building, and its introduction to the Inuit could make a positive contribution to an ailing society. Not all cultural difficulties are in distant lands however, and inner city deprivation is a problem of our own. Adventure Centres have been one way of broadening the horizons of young people trapped within our conurbations, and the Baffin Island Expedition is selecting one of its members from within a group of youngsters from the city who have shown a positive response after being introduced to sea-canoeing as an aid to personality development.

The Baffin Island Expedition is an attempt to combine the spirit of adventure with modern technology, thus helping deprived individuals of two widely differing cultures and ultimately assisting both to reconstruct their declining communities.

F R Goodman.

8. TROMSO/HAMMERFEST EXPEDITION

Bernd Chilian of Falkensteiner Ufer 32, 2000 Hamburg 55, Germany, writes :-
"As to canoeing I'm going to have this year's expedition in North Norway from Tromso over Hammerfest around the North-Cape. Distance is approx 400 kms = 216 miles. Time: 5.7. - 10.8.80. Transportation: Hamburg - Tromso by car, Tromso - Honningvag by kayak, Honningsvag - Tromso by ferry (Hurtig-Rute). Transportation costs: approx DM 900 = abt. Kstg. 250, (incl. all necessary ferries). All calculations based on present oil prices and ferry prices for 1980 not yet firmly known, per person. Equipment: fully equipped sea-kayak and arctic survival equipment. Temperatures last year: 28° Celsius max, 8° Celsius min. (August 1979), -3° Celsius min. (August 1974). (Lofoten) average temp. August 1976 +6° Celsius.

If anybody of ASKC members is interested he should write to me for further details and applications. I am preparing presently two reports for you which will follow.

Bernd Chilian

9. VARIOUS NOTES FROM YOUR EDITOR

(a) I thought it worth while publishing part of one of our South African members' letter following my despatch to him of various ASKC stickers:-

"I am dishing out the car stickers very carefully. Each person that has one has completed an oceanic journey of at least 30 kilometers in a group of minimum three. They have to submit their logs for the journey and produce their equipment for inspection. By doing this, and delivering constructive criticism I am raising the standard of safety in sea canoeing here. I have had your car sticker produced in my club colours in cloth. In wearing this badge our canoeists prove themselves qualified to lead groups of sea canoeists on trips. (A bit juvenile - like Boy Scouts but it works). I am returning your "Paddling Techniques" and thank you very much for its use."

Peter Keller

(b) Mark Harrison of 39 Richmond Road, Newton Hall, Durham, has copies of his circumnavigation of Ireland Expedition for sale at 75p. I can well recommend this report to add to your library of worthwhile canoe expeditions.

(c) Simon Brewitt of 46 Springhill Ave, Blackrock, Co Dublin, wrote to the ASKC recently as follows :-

"There are two main centres of interest here, the North Monastery School Club in Cork and Espoir Canoe Club (appropriately based on the sea) in Dublin, both with about 10 Nordkapps each - and both clubs are going well this year. We held a weekend meet in

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Donegal over the Whit weekend last June which was an enormous success. It was made International by the presence of a French and German canoeist, so there were some interesting multi-lingual conversations. We made trips along the foot of the Slieve League Cliffs reputedly the highest sea cliffs in Europe at almost 2000 ft, and along some of the very rugged Donegal coastline under real "special kind of freedom" conditions."

Simon went on to tell us that he is looking into the possibility of running another similar meet this year, the first weekend of August, under the auspices of the ASKC. The site he has chosen is the Blasket Islands off the south west coast of Ireland - the largest of which was inhabited until 1954. The seas around the Islands have the reputation of being treacherous, with interesting tides, and a full Atlantic swell running permanently. Needless to say I have written to Simon with every encouragement - and all being well I hope to attend this meet myself. Watch this space for further details.

(d) Most of you will already be aware that I have relinquished my role as Secretary to the B.C.U. Sea Touring Committee. I thought it was about time that this Committee and the ASKC were seen to be two separate entities, which really they have always been. At the last meeting of the STC in December 1979 it was agreed that so long as the ASKC remained affiliated to the BCU there would be a seat (albeit a non-voting one) for the ASKC on the Sea Touring Committee.

Whilst on this note - you may find it worthwhile discovering whether your Region has a representative on the Sea Touring Committee. If not - then <u>volunteer</u>.

(e) The BCU AGM is scheduled for January 26th. All BCU members will have received notice of this AGM at the end of which is a "Voting by Proxy" form. If you are unable to attend and would like me to speak for you then complete this form and send it off to BCU and then let me know. My BCU membership number is 003374.

(f) This is the last Newsletter going out to 1979 ASKC members who have not renewed. There is a renewal form for your use at the foot of this page.

(g) FOR SALE: ASKC ties @ £2.00 each inc P & P.
ASKC stickers @ 30p each inc P & P.
ASKC letter-headed paper @ 5p per sheet (orders in multiples of 10 only).

.....please tear off.....

1980 Subscriptions to Advanced Sea Kayak Club now due - £1.50 cheques or postal orders made out to the Advanced Sea Kayak Club. Please send to J J Ramwell, 32 Glebe Road, West Perry, Huntingdon, Cambs PE18 0DG.

Name..... Sum enclosed £.....

Address..... Signed.....

..... Date.....

.....

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SEND OFF NOW!!

To: J J Ramwell Esq
Advanced Sea Kayak Club
32 Glebe Rd
West Perry
Huntingdon

From: Quarry House
Colwinston
Cowbridge
S Glamorgan
17 September 1979

Dear John

Many thanks for your newsletters and enclosures. The purpose of my writing is really as a follow up to Alan Byde's Cockpit Liner paper in Newsletter No 12, and also to demonstrate how the facilities provided by the cockpit has changed certain aspects of thinking towards canoeing and provided a somewhat different type of sea canoe. I and my family have four boats with these cockpits and I still have two more to fit! In my opinion "the Cockpit Liner' is the most understated description of this development. My name for it is 'the Safety Cockpit!'. It is my belief that this is the most important and fundamental development in basic canoe design since the coming of glass fibre. It is particularly suitable for sea boats and for any youngsters or novices since it gives them a vastly greater degree of confidence than is the case with conventionally fitted boats. I have a Sea Tiger (another Alan brainwave modified). This boat is the safest and, in my opinion, one of the most versatile sea canoes afloat. Having stuck my neck out thus far I guess I must explain myself. My requirements for a sea boat are wide ranging and can be summarised as follows :-

1. It must be safe and capable of allowing self rescue.
2. It must be directionally stable, as well as be easily steerable for rock-hopping/caving etc. (Obviously a compromise, but strangely not as much of one as might at first be thought).
3. It must be buoyant at the bow and stern to provide as dry a rise as possible. The foredeck shape is also important in this respect.
4. It must be capable of a reasonable turn of speed if required.
5. It must be comfortable to sit in for long periods.
6. It must ride surf well and particularly a swell.
7. It must handle easily in all relative directions of sea, wind and paddling direction.
8. It must be a good rescue boat and be easily rescued itself.
9. Minimal emptying must be required when swamped (e.g. do away with visits to the beach when in surf yet still be able to forget a spray deck). The pump must be capable of emptying the whole boat, not just a section/s between bulkheads.
10. It must have a chart/compass deck, easily accessible flares, spare paddles, an unimpeded rear cockpit towing point, adequate storage space, pump - which should be rarely required in anger, deck lines, toggles, etc.
11. It must be a strong, robust boat, but not too heavy or long.

Many of these requirements are fairly standard and some may have different priorities with different people depending upon the conditions to be met. However, other requirements in this list are most important and cannot be achieved without the Safety Cockpit. The Sea Tiger is a boat which meets virtually all of these requirements. Those who have seen it and tried it agree it is most impressive. No sooner was the first prototype finished, four were instantly ordered by the first four people to use it! Not bad!

You may think I have a vested interest in this - not so. My efforts in modifying the design were to get a boat as I wanted it. I have now got it. What, I think, is important is that when a first class piece of design comes to the fore its existence should be brought to the attention of those who could be interested. For the sea canoeist the Safety Cockpit is such a development and the different thinking that it develops is fascinating. Let me give you some example of cases I have dealt with in the last few months :-

Imagine a situation of deep, rough water, you in it with a paddle in one hand and an upturned boat in the other. How many could be paddling away from the danger in a fully buoyant boat within 15 seconds without assistance ! The Sea Tiger has an aluminium bar running down either side of the cockpit. The technique is to face the back of the boat, holding the paddle and the rail on one side of the cockpit with one hand and the rail on the other side of the cockpit with the other hand. Duck under the boat, do a half backward somersault till you are sitting in the cockpit upside down and then roll up. The cockpit at most will only have a couple of buckets of water in it. If possible do a quick slap support or scull to empty all but half a saucepanful of water and paddle on. If not possible to empty the cockpit more, just paddle on as it makes next to no difference - it is just more comfortable.

Another case. My 6 year old lad in a child's boat fitted with a Safety Cockpit, my 13 year old in a similarly fitted KW7 and my 11 year old in a Bat Mark 9 (fitted with a tree) - another locally developed and patented device which leads to a vastly superior beach rescue craft than any other, and finally myself in the Tiger. Twenty

yards from the beach, little wind but half a knot or so of tide, over goes the small one. Instant panic, paddle goes one way, boat the other and the lifejacket does its stuff with infant in cold water. I go for the child and calm him whilst getting him to hold onto the bar beside the cockpit where I can see him easily and talk as we paddle back to the beach (it's amazing how having something substantial to hold onto increases confidence). The 11 year old goes after the paddle some 30 yards to the 13 year old who is arranging a tow for the child's KW7. The 11 year old flips over the upturned boat which is fully buoyant and both return to the beach. The comment on the return from their first 'real rescue' was "Gee Dad, that was easy. What is with all this deep water rescue stuff we have had to do " - what indeed

As a final example: a narrowish, sandy beach with a rocky point to the left. Incoming spring tide, little surf, a knot or so from right to left, but good size breakers over the point, plenty of supervision as we are teaching junior lifeguards craft handling. You guessed, there is always one! He slides out against orders and, unseen at first in a 'tree boat'. It is amazing how quickly situations can develop. I spot him, turn and paddle rapidly towards him as panic sets in. He is completely out of control, spinning just about at the point of the break. I go inside the break and paddle out. Fortunately, there is a lull in the sets and I get him to grab the cockpit bar and paddle out to sea just missing the break on the next wave. When out of danger a short tow back. There is no way I would have attempted that rescue in a conventionally fitted boat. There was a bit of luck involved with the wave sets and when I started I had no idea whether I would be successful but at no time was there any danger that two of us would have to be rescued - thanks to the cockpit. And there is one small lad who will listen next time!

Looking at the Sea Tiger in detail in relation to the requirements I have already listed, I have the following points to make:- I do not know of a safer, conventional kayak afloat. The first 2 examples above demonstrate this and the ease with which either a self rescue or an assisted rescue can be achieved is quite remarkable. Its facilities with the cockpit, aluminium bars, rear cockpit unimpeded towing and speed make it a first class rescue craft only possibly to be beaten by the tree boats used by the Surf Life Saving Clubs in my area. Our rescue boat, as recommended by the Canoe Lifeguards, has not seen the light of day for years. Techniques and design have long since passed it by.

The Sea Tiger is not quite as directionally stable as a Baidarka, slight correction being occasionally required at normal paddling speeds. As with all boats this is more the case with a following sea at an angle to the direction of paddling. However, its manoevrability when rock-hopping etc is extremely good. Its general stability is excellent. I have paddled the boat in Force 5 winds and cannot fault it in windy conditions. I have never been able to understand the theory behind the conventional bow and stern shape of the sea canoe in that it is intended to slice its way through the water simply because at speeds being considered the water reforms behind the prow over the deck. The first 18 ins provides very little buoyancy with the result that the bow digs deep before the buoyancy further down the boat starts to take command. Why not have a bow that pierces the water and provides as high a degree of buoyancy as early as possible, of course bearing in mind the need for a good v-shape to the hull to maintain good speed and handling characteristics. With this thinking in mind the old 'Tiger' hull was the starting point. It was cut in two and an additional 15 ins or so was inserted making the boat some 15 ft 3 ins long. The deck is perfectly flat in front of the cockpit, the flat section forming a V towards the bow. This flat V section is raised above the main slope of the deck and acts as a chart table/compass platform. The way in which this section is moulded to the main deck is such that any water flowing over the deck is deflected outwards. This, coupled with the buoyancy of the boat, gives a very dry ride. At the sides of the chart deck I have made two flare holders from domestic waste pipe and stop ends. To the sides of the cockpit are the aluminium bars and behind it the hatch, pump, tow point and elastics for spare paddles etc. Since the boat does not have a raised stern, there are no fittings in the way of the rear cockpit tow point which is my personal choice.

The Sea Tiger is surprisingly fast in sea conditions, although as yet I have only one piece of timed evidence to offer. I recently paddled 2½ nautical miles in each direction directly against and then with about a Force 2 to 3 wind and between half to one knot tide and a 2 ft swell (all in the same direction) in three quarters of an hour - a speed of some six knots. On the return journey with the wind and the swell behind me ample use was made of the boat's excellent surfing qualities which are generated, I think, by the flat hull section of the boat coupled with the buoyant bow.

The cockpit seat is the most comfortable I, or any who I know have tried it, have sat in. The seat itself was recast many times to achieve this. Whether I am fortunate in that I have a B.S.B. (British Standard Backside) I don't know.

To date I have not had to use the pump - there is next to no use for it even without using a spray deck! The other day I paddled without a spray deck for some 3 to 4 miles against a Force 4 to 5 wind creating a fair chop and only managed to ship about half a pint of water. Going out through fairly heavy surf I had the cockpit almost full but with a quick scull beyond the break, a couple of pints was all that was left, and still no use for the pump.

Looking at the disadvantages there are, in my opinion, only two. The first is that although the boat is considerably lighter than a Baidarka, its weight is a little more than I would have hoped. The second is that the boat is not as fast as I would have hoped in flat water conditions. Bearing in mind the overall conditions in which the boat is to be used and the facilities that it provides, I consider these two disadvantages to be relatively insignificant.

If you have managed to get this far, you will gather that I am somewhat pleased with the outcome of some considerable work and I am deeply indebted to Alan Byde for his help. It is my opinion that with the Cockpit Liner, as he so modestly calls it, he really has a winner for many applications of which the sea is one and, also, with the Sea Tiger, another fascinating step has been taken.

Yours sincerely

(Signed) NICK PADWICK

EXTRACT FROM "CANOEING" MAGAZINE

"ON THE AIR
Joseph Banks - Kayak and Marine - now have in stock the Communique V8001 Marine VHF/FM handy transceiver. The V8001 is a very small light weight VHF/FM hand held transceiver with six channel capability, fitted with channels six and sixteen as standard. The latest solid state technique are used to give minimum current drain for maximum battery life and high reliability for years of trouble free use. The V8001 is the smallest marine VHF two-way radio available - size approx 6" x 2.5" x 1.5" less antenna. It is fully type approved and can be licenced (around £6.40). It will last some 10 hours of use on one charge. Comes complete with case and carry strap, rechargeable batteries, mains charger and crystals for channels 16 (call and emergency) and 06 (ship to ship). Demonstrations of the above and other marine VHF R/Ts are available at Joseph Banks. Full details from: Joseph Banks Ltd, 749 Knutsford Road, Latchford, Warrington, Cheshire.Tel:0925 31569.

It would greatly assist our committee which is concerned with the safety of Sea Canoeing if you would fill in the following report :-

BRITISH CANOE UNION SEA TOURING COMMITTEE INCIDENT REPORT SHEET

Date and time of incident.....

Location of incident (Grid Ref. if poss).....

State of the Tide, Springs or Neaps.....Local H.W. Time.....

	Before	At the Time
Weather conditions.....		.....
Condition of the Sea.....		.....
Visibility.....		.....
Wind - Beaufort scale.....		.....
Rain/sun/overcast.....		.....
Number in the group.....		.....
What was the level of the group.....		.....

B.C.U. Qualifications, if any, of the leader or member of the group

.....

.....

What clothing was worn by group members.....

.....Lifejackets, type and number.....

.....Flares.....

Type of Canoe/s and construction type.....

What deck lines, toggles, towing lines were fitted.....

Paddles, spare clothing, repair kit carried or used.....

.....

Was an escort vessel used.....Type.....

Did the group receive outside assistance. Who.....

Did the group carry a compass.....Was buoyancy fitted in the canoe.....

What damage to canoes.....

What happened Any other information.....

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Names and Addresses.....

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