Advanced Sea Kayak Club

AN INTERNATIONAL SEA CANOEING CLUB OPEN TO ALL INTERESTED IN THIS ASPECT OF CANOEING

NEWSLETTER

AIMS

1. PROMOTION OF SEA CANOEING
2. COMMUNICATION
3. ORGANISATION OF EVENTS AND CONFERENCES
4. SAFETY AND COACHING

Secretary:- John J.Ramwell.
32, Glebe Road,
West Perry,
Huntingdon,
Cambs.
PE18 0DG.

ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB NEWSLETTER No. 27.

AUGUST 1981.

John J.Ramwell,
32, Glebe Road,
West Perry,
Huntingdon,
Cambs.,PE18 0DG.

FROM ME (EDITORIAL)

Raymond Rowe, Frank Maguire and I safely returned from our Alaskan Expedition recently and we are now busy preparing a full and comprehensive report which we intend to make available at cost price very soon. In fact I was hoping to have included a report in this Newsletter but this has not been possible.....so next time. Suffice to say that we successfully circumnavigated NUNIVAK ISLAND off the extreme south west coast of Alaska.

On a more personal note, I am to move to Wakefield this month on permanent transfer. My address will be 4, WAVELL GARTH, SANDAL, WAKEFIELD, YORKSHIRE.... in case you would like to make a note, and I hope that you do as I require.....:

CONTRIBUTIONS for this Newsletter. Please keep them coming.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1982. The 1982 subscription (£3.00) can be paid as soon as you like and I have provided a form for this purpose. Those of you who have joined recently (within the last couple of months), though you have received all the 1981 Newsletters, are invited to remit only £2.00 for next years subscription.

4th. NATIONAL SEA CANOEING SYMPOSIUM was to be at the Eurosports Village this November is now to be staged at CALSHOT, SOUTHAMPTON OVER THE WEEKEND OF 11/13th DECEMBER,1981.

This popular event has been moved to Calshot Activities Centre, Southampton in order to provide this weekend at a more realistic price. I have included details and application form and hope to hear from you soon with the completed application form and deposit.

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Please NOTE that Mrs. Sharon Rowe is no longer providing the neoprene spray deck/ vests (The manufacture of these plays havoc with the sewing machine)

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Send to John J.Ramwell.
32, Glebe Road,
West Perry,
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Cambs, PE18 0DG.

AN EXTRACT FROM CK/MER INFORMATIONS JULY 1981. Transalated by Jean Michel and John Kuyser.

" A BOAT THAT WANTS TO EXIST by Guy Ogez, Secretary CK/MER

According to experts of great knowledge the ideal boat would be an empty bottle well plugged. Imagine a 4 metre bottle, sharp at each end with the neck in the middle and a man with one paddle replcing the plug. You have the kayak, the most extraordinary of boats!, sealed, unsinkable. It can capsize ten times and then eskimo roll up. It has no mast, no engine, no keel, no ragile, nor cumbersome accessories which are a source of annoyance to men of the sea.
The Kayak, state the English, would be the best ship in the world if it carried the kitchen sink. My friend, Francois Blanc, who has paddled all the coasts of Europe and Africa, replaced the sink for personal emergencies with a large sponge which he sqeezed over the side! The British have improved on this. They have a system of bulkheads to seperate the equipment from the cockpit and a pump able to empty a cockpit in six minutes.

This happy find had several unexpected advantages. Increasing the independence of Kayak, encouraging far expeditions on the most incredible seas: Bering Seas, North Sea, Greenland Sea, Baffin Sea, Indian Ocean, Tasman Sea, etc.

Always the British must visit where others have not gone before. Today her Gracious Majesty's Kayakists have many 'firsts', Paddles to Nordkapp, Aleutian Islands, New Zealand, Newfoundland and Cape Horn as their ancesters did to the Cervin, Grandes Jorasses, L'Aiguille, Verte and Everest.

They even had the idea of a French expedition, an enterprise far more difficult than a voyage in Alaska or Tasmania! The coast of France is surrounded by administrative rocks and a barrier of regulations and the English failed!!

Not content with this they wrote to the Admiral, head of Maritime Affairs in the hope of obtaining a special permit by presenting a dossier about modern sea kayaking. The kayaks have been used on the sea since early history. The Eskimo have since improved the kayak considerably. Today we are able to,single handed, recover after a capsize far out to sea, emptying the boat and re-entering it before returning to land. Even in terrible sea conditions! The dossier contains photographs, witnesses and accounts of expeditions and press cuttings.

Why has the Admiral not replied? Some say that he is jealous of Contre-Admiral D.J.Hoare who set upthe Corps of Lifeguards - a remarkable idea! The Lifeguards navigate. They act as volunteers, usually young people, teenagers, but very well trained and able, for example, to resuscitate people on their kayak in the open sea. They patrol their beach, they collect swimmers, capsized dinghys or Zodiacs with defective engines, and all that without public subsidy or petrol costs! Kayaks are extraordinary boats often able to do what nothing esle can. But perhaps the Admiral does not know of these facts of English life! An Admiral learns from Nautical instructions and regulations. In them the kayak does not exist! Since the 1969 (28th. February) decree, boats are with sail or engine, - otherwise they are nothing. Nothing except an embarcation boat, a tender, a floating engine, a beach toy.

Recently Gerard D'Aboville got it into his head to cross the Atlantic in his 5.6 metre dory (the length of a sea kayak) rowing. It is a pure folly. The navy immediately sent a patrol craft to bring back the crazy man and his cadget. Too late for the Navy - the Atlantic he had already crossed. D'Aboville was arriving home!

There is certainly a solution to be found. We must search for the real problem. This is what we intend to do. We will ask everyone involved in the sea to give their view including individuals, officials, members of the French Federation of Canoe Kayak (F.F.C.K.), instructors at the Glenans Nautical Centre, cruising sailors, the administration of Youth and Sport and other administrations. This is why we took the initiative of creating CK/MER. An Association for the knowledge on the sea by kayak. A turntable where information can be exchanged and the best opinions aired. Francois Blanc will meet Gerard D'Aboville as an example. The French, forgetting Afincourt and Waterloo will meet the English. Alain Feuillette will teach the Admiral how to repair a kayak hull with brush and resin. The Admiral will show him how to use parallel rules and Ephemeris Tables!

If you think it worthwhile to try to work together to make the sea kayak exist the best thing is to talk about the CK/MER around you and if you have not done so already, send today for details of membership.

You will remember that in the last edition of the A.S.K.C. Newsletter I reproduced correspondence from The Ocean Kayaking Association of B.C.,Canada Newsletter regarding John Dowd's book, 'Sea Kayaking'.

This correspondence captured a lot of interest and so, here from the latest issue of Ocean Kayaking Newsletter I reproduce further correspondence on the same subject. In case any of you have had enough of it already(!), this is your lot on the subject, at least for now.

Dear Ed. (of the Ocean Kayaking Newsletter),

The exchange of letters in the May issue had a very constructive effect on me! I read John Dowd's book and I went to visit his shop and talk with him. I found both the book and it's author fascinating with experience and conclusions that were worth considering. I hope never to have to spend more than a couple of hours away from land, or to have to ride out a storm at sea in a kayak. He has done both, and some of his conclusions stem from this background. On the other hand most of us are Island hoppers in pretty protected waters.

His conclusions about narrow one person kayaks (such as the Nordkapp) is that they are great fun, but that you can't sleep in them. For island hopping as most of us do, who cares, but for some of the trips and conditions described in his book, that could be a fatal flaw. Further his rescue methods on self rescue under very rough conditions, where many of the usual pool session favourites might have little utility or be dangerous. Members of the Association would do well to read his book. I found it a good complement to Derek Hutchinson' Sea Canoeing. I would love to hear John Dowd describe some of his trips in more detail, and hope that that can be arranged at the Canoe Club some time.

Sincerely,
Robert McInnes.

Dear Ed.,
May I comment on one crucial sentence in your introductory remarks (last Newsletter) on John Dowd?

I strongly disagree with your judgement that Mr. Dowd's letter contains nothing of any use to the Association. On the contrary, he has contributed something that seems suspiciously rare among modern sea kayakers - a divergent point of view.

Remember; in all areas of human endeavour, it is the trouble makers and dissidents whose ideas infuriate us but help us to evolve!!

Sincerely,
Philip Teece.

Dear Editor,

I appreciate that another response to the discussion inspired by John Dowd's letter may be a tedious burden for your readers to bear. I was delighted that the measured replies of Frank Goodman and Derek Hutchinson avoided the temptation to polarise the discussion into sterile consideration of the virtues of one method of travelling against another. Indeed, John Dowd's comments, however dogmatically expressed, do reflect a concern over some aspects of narrow boat design expressed not least by Frank Goodman, Derek Hutchinson and even our Derek himself. However, I would like to add some general comments with regard to (1) the means of journeying on the sea; and (2) the problem of certification.

(1) Mastery of an art, be it kayaking or karate, involves structured exercies and practice of skills until one transcends a mere fascination with technique and equipment. Mastery does not preclude the individual from the possibility of human error; what it provides is a more fully conscious perspective of one' movements and the enviroment through which one is paddling. A kayaker or canoeist may aspire to mastery within a range of different boat designs. One design is not intrinsically 'better' than another, and it becomes unproductive to attempt to dictate which design is 'best' for given situations. I am not suggesting that sprint boats may be effective ocean craft; rather, that discussion of whether a Klepper design is 'better' than a Nordkapp is no more worthwhile than defining whether a fifty foot ketch is 'better' for sailing the Pacific than a balsawood craft. Similarly it would be arrogant for me to suggest my friend would be better off in a kayak than in a fourteen foot rowing boat whilst journeying round Vancouver Island. The master crafts man may work in wood or in G.R.P., and the master

kayaker in Klepper or Nordkapp. In either case his or her achievements are special and unique.

(2) The comments outlined above are intended to illustrate my perspective on the thoroughly western disposition to measure, evaluate and cast judgement upon the ways of others. Unfortunately evaluation in teacher education (if this is what certification is about) is also concerned with the casting of such judgement, but with more justification. Caught in this dilemma of a balancing act between safety and adventure, we are in danger of methodising adventure out of existance. We are at risk of taking on the persona of that hideous Frankenstein: half teacher, half canoeist/kayaker.

Having wrestled with the problem of developing a curriculum for teacher education in outdoor education, I appreciate there is a problem in attempting to evaluate expertise. The role of experience, judgement and leadership is even more problematic. If the B.C.U. Coaching Scheme emphasises jumping through hoops constructed of standardised tests, then it is in company with most educational evaluation, and the reason for it is clear. One may achieve some measure of objectivity in assessing skills development. However, if this leads to an obsession with technique, then it is at the expense of attempting to evaluate perhaps more intuitively and subjectively in the effective and cognitive learning domains. Since it is the blending of technique and experience which contributes towards consideration of safety, judgement, creativity and mastery, then failure to take account of experience in teacher evaluation is serious indeed.

Consequently I am pleased that John Dowd has highlighted this potential problem but, in the spirit of the Editor's desire for constructive comment, I wish to add some notes concerning evaluating experience.
Evaluation procedures for Coach(Sea) should demand:

1. Maintainance of logbook of sea kayaking experience.
2. This experience should include evidence of planning and implementing multi-day sea journeys in a range of challenging conditions; and of teaching experience at a level which promotes opimal arousal in learners up to advanced standards.
3. Non-standardised tests to evaluate journey planning, contingency planning, accident procedures, etc. This would include consideration of, for example, weather, first-aid, rescue, navigation and expedition/journey planning priniples.
4. Behavioural observations, in simulated practical exercises, of ability to exercise sound judgement in situations which hazard learner/group safety; for example landings on, and navigation round rugged shorelines and lee shores, strategies for keeping a group togetner, and procedures with exhausted or injured paddler.

If writing these notes produces a sense of 'deja-vu' in me, then this is perhaps not so surprising. It certainly reflects, at least to some extent, my own B.C.U. Coach(Sea) assessment! But these comments beg more difficult questions, like how many days, weeks, months, years of experience, and what of the quality of that experience? Attempting to answer these makes me feel like a soldier in the trenches raising his head over the edge and waiting for the snipers bullet. As has been suggested already, experience is difficult to quatify, in much the same way that leadership and judgement are hard to define and harder to teach. One can gain written and oral evidence of experience, and invoke discussion and simulation exercises which in some way test responses to particular situations. Then one uses intuition and one's own experience - and so we are caught in a circle game. However, bearing in mind that the coaching scheme in Britain rests on a progression through awards, I suggest it will take most people five years of committment to gain sufficient skill, knowledge, experience and wisdom to take learners safely into a range of sea conditions in the pursuit of challenging journeys. What do I mean by 'committment'? Well, perhaps you can tell me.

Yours sincerely,
Barry Smith. School of Physical Education, University of Victoria and B.C.U. Coach.

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THE RELEVANCE OF TRADITIONAL ESKIMO DESIGN FEATURES TO THE MODERN SEA TOURING KAYAK.

by Dave Mitchell.

The traditional design of Eskimo kayak (or at least its European adaption) conjours up all that is ideal for paddling on the sea. Many a slalom paddler, feeling slightly inferior amongst the 'Nordkapp' shod professionals has eagerly ordered a new boat from an ever increasing range of designs in order to partake properly in the fascinating and highly challenging sport of the open ocean. It is not the place of this essay to criticise current production boats. They vary from excellent to indifferent but it should be made quite clear that many, including some very good boats, impose some limitations in certain circumstances because many of their design features are emphasised to meet particular needs. For example a boat designed to run fast and straight through heavy seas will be difficult to turn and may be almost impossible to handle in surf. There are probably a fair number of paddlers (I know a few!) who, having ordered their new boats, found that they how owned something rather different from what they thought it would be. Occasionally we hear the laments 'I just could not turn at all' or 'Can we raft up so that I can get at my thermos flask' (in calm water).

The advanced paddler will overcome the limitations of his or her boat be skillful handling, knowing that the advantageous design features of the craft apply for the majority of the time. The Yorkshire coble is a useful analogy here. As a fishing craft designed to land stern first in open beach conditions she is excellent but this gives her sailing characteristics that require much experience for safe handling. A similar situation arises with some of the Labrador and N.W. Greenland hunting kayaks. Their deep forefoots cause them to lie head to wind, an excellent position for a hunter to face upwind towards his quarry and get a steady harpoon or rifle shot. The same design characteristic will make a craft very difficult to handle in a following sea or beach landing in rough water. This would thus be a poor design feature to incorporate in a modern touring kayak but matters little to a local eskimo who works in calm water off a sheltered beach. Where conditions are more exposed, as in some of the Aleutian and S.W. Greenland areas, the designs become more seaworthy.

We see that the traditional Eskimo kayak varies to suit local conditions in just the same way as do British fishing craft. The modern adaption of the kayak for general purpose sea use is thus a very big problem indeed. It is necessary for an intending purchaser to know the design history of any particular boat. Some early craft were direct copies of Eskimo boats and their limitations soon prevented their widespread adoption. Other adaptions to the proportions of European paddlers, for example the excellent 'Anus Acuta', have stood the test of time. Other craft have been produced for more specific purposes. The 'Vyneck' for example enabled the successful circumnavigation of Iceland by its designer in this very fast and true running boat.

For the beginner to sea canoeing a further generation of kayaks have appeared that combine to give a good 'all round' sea performance, generally with more stability and an ability to 'look after' the paddler. Derek Hutchinson's designs appear to fit this role very well, being kind to the inexpert and advanced paddler alike.

The answer for the newcomer to sea paddling is to try as many boats as possible in as many conditions as possible and often this will require attending courses with a good range of craft. This can be expensive but will usually be amply rewarded by the prevention of what could be an expensive mistake as well as being rewarded by being able to meet other sea paddlers and swop opinions and experiences. If a sea boat is to be purchased (and it may not be as necessary as some would think) then the beginner owes himself some basic design knowledge.

Let us now consider the basic design elements of what is now considered as the modern 'Eskimo Sea Kayak'.

The most obvious feature is greater length, usually between sixteen and eighteen feet. the merits of length are essentially greater speed (a function of waterline length is displacement craft but which if carried to extreme in kayaks of touring beam will be outweighed by added weight and surface friction), better directional stability, faster and easier surfing on open sea waves (not on beaches where handling is difficult), better ability to run (maintain speed when you stop paddling) and greater load carrying capacity.

In sea boats the overall length often includes long overhangs, particularly at the bow. These are partly for looks as they exemplify the image of the traditional boat and in practical terms need to be carefully considered. In the case of the bow a long overhang will give reserve bouyancy as the boat dips into a head sea and, if

it is combined with a good flare will deflect water aside. An excessively high bow will cause windage however and may make a boat difficult to paddle in a strong beam wind (often causing excessive leeway rather than turning the boat downwind) and difficult to turn into the wind. Bow overhang increases waterline length (and theoretically speed) when it dips into a wave but this is of minimal importance in a kayak, what is more important is that excessive bouyancy should not cause the bow to rise too high as this makes the boat attempt to go 'uphill' and slows it down seriously. Against this however is the slowing also caused by excessive water washing back over the deck and hitting the paddler. The choice of bow design in head seas will determine to a large extent if a boat will cut through a beach surf or loop backwards. Of course where wave height approaches kayak length this ceases to be an argument! In short following seas a long bow overhang becomes a liability as it buries into the wave in front and encourages a broach. A deep forefoot also causes this problem.

It has often been said that 'Any fool can design a good bow but it takes a wise man to design a good stern'. Tradition and some Greenland designs balance a the bow sheer with a high stern (in some cases so nigh as to cause the boat to 'weather-cock' and face upwind, but this is a hunting adaption). The result is a good looking 'banana boat' but, complex mathmatical reasons aside, when a kayak is being paddled in a beam sea the windage in the stern is far greater than that in the bow and the majority of traditional designs respond to this with a low flat stern as in the Baffin and Southampton Island boats. Clearly the stern must have a smooth 'run' but the very high length/beam ratio of most kayaks ensures this unless wide beam is carried excessively far aft. The major problem with sterns is to decide if the keel is to extend into a 'skeg' to give good directional stability of be given a flat run so that the boat responds easily to a stern rudder stroke. In some early boats the problem was resolved by a rudder but this is now regarded as a very serious proposition because of its complexity and vulnerability. The directional stability of the 'skeg' stern is to some extent a myth. While the boat will run straight in most conditions, and in fact be quite difficult to turn, in a quatering or following sea at the point when the midships section is in a trough, the bow and the stern are gripped so hard that the boat may become virtually uncontrolable,and broach violently. In this situation a skeg stern may prevent a quick resumption of course and require some heavy muscle work to recover. The advanced paddler who knows his boat will often be able to correct early enough to maintain control but a beginner may find this action in a 'directionally stable boat' alarming.

A recent development which a few individuals (including myself) have tried is an adjustable drop skeg. If well designed this 'variable geometry' works very well but would be an expensive addition to a production boat. It has the advantage that being placed 18" forward of the stern it gives controlability without 'taking over'.

Having discussed the length and profile we leave the stern problem largely unresolved except to say that a paddler will learn more, have a lot more fun but work harder in a kayak without <u>too</u> much directional stability.

The next factor is the cross section of the boat. The Eskimo kayaks vary greatly in beam although the favourite thinking seems to be that they were excessively narrow and unstable. Some were; for example 19" beam and about 17" on the waterline for some S.W. Greenlanders. Others were wider but excessively narrow on the waterline with round of 'V' sections giving what appears to be the stability of a stationary bicycle! Some boats however were not only flat bottomed but almost 30" wide. Cross sections vary from rectangular (flat bottomed) through single and double chine to round, depending on the number of stringers. Earlier modern boats tended towards low stability to give speed, ease of rolling and a seaworthiness based on the (largely mistaken) concept that they would not be heeled to leeward in beam seas. In fact for a beam sea to have any appreciable effect the kayak would have to be at least 30" beam to overcome the balancing effect of the paddler.
In my own opinion the waterline beam of a sea kayak should be as narrow as is compatible with the ability to relax without support strokes as soon as the going gets a bit choppy. This appears to be a minimum of about 20" for a very flat bottomed section but may be considerably more for a 'deep V'. The choice between round and chine construction appears to be largely one of materials. Early fabric or wooden boats had to be of chine construction if weight was to be saved and building to be simple. G.R.P. has liberated design to a great extent and most boats are round sectioned although some incorporate a chine or 'V' bottom. The deep 'V' chine or 'V' bottom to otherwise round section can,in some cases, give rise to an undesirable 'wobble' and a feeling of instability even on flat water. It is a matter of literally balancing the discomfort against more speed and greater directional stability. Similarly stability will be affected by the height of the seat above the

keel, the greater paddling power gained from a higher seating position must be set against greater instability and (at sea) windage. Excessive rocker of the keel will also make a kayak more unstable as it brings more boat above the waterline at bow and stern, but then again this will give more manoeuvreability.

Before leaving cross sections is remains to consider them in relation to waterline plan. Broadly boats may be divided in symetrical, fish-form (max. beam nearer the bow) and Sweden-form (max. beam towards stern). Traditional Eskimo boats are mainly the latter or symetrical and so are modern ones. The fish form hull, while suitable for submarines, has disadvantages of high resistance and 'wave climbing' bouyancy in head seas and so is safe but slow. Excessively narrow lines at bow and stern will give speed, a very wet ride, low load carrying capacity, low stability, high directional stability and be a liability in surf. Full lines at both ends will essentially have the opposite effect. The narrow bow and full stern lines of the Sweden form hull have developed speed and seaworthiness in displacement craft, and been carried further in the pioneering designs of dinghys by Uffa Fox and modern power craft that plane on the surface. The principle is the 'double-wedge', the vertical bow wedge cuts the water, deflects waves and enables enough speed to be gained for the hull to lift and plane of the horizontal after wedge. This may not seem to very relevant to the low speed kayak until it is realised that the open sea paddler often relies on the ability to keep up high average speeds by surfing on following seas. The bow wedge enables speed to be picked up until the boat planes on its flat stern. The paddle rudders to give control and all works well unless the waves are short and the bow digs in, at which point control may be lost unless the flat stern can be swung back upwind of the desired course - something which cannot be done with narrow stern lines and a pronounced skeg. (see preceeding paragraph on stern design).

Lastly we come to the matter of deck and cokpit design. In simple terms the bow deck should easily shed water (difficult to integrate with large flat area for access to hatches) and the stern be flat to cut windage and carry gear. The strong sheer of the traditional Eskimo bow automatically encourages a flat deck which may 'scoop' up short steep waves. In the hunting boats of Greenland the flat deck was the 'workbench' but the King Islanders of Alaska developed a steep watersheding deck at the expense of the highly sheered bow - in fact they embodied the elements of the modern white water racer - without doubt an excellent bow for facing head seas.

The cockpit arrangements of the sea kayak often leave much to be desired. The term 'spraydeck' at sea becomes a misnomer. It keeps sea out (not spray) and sea is often very solid, very heavy and approaching the paddler at a high rate of knots. The Eskimo either built a high cockpit coaming in hopes of keeping it out or tied his anorak firmly to the rim. We wear spraydecks which are not often regarded as an intregal part of the deck but something to keep sandwiches dry under. Modern improvements in this direction have been slow. Bulkheads give bouyancy and easy rescue but cockpit volumes still tend to provide stowage space and be too large. Unless on calm water the spraydeck should stay on. To remove it to retrieve Mars Bars,,drinking bottles or, even worse, flares in rough conditions renders a kayak unseaworthy. My personal feeling is that nothing except the paddlers' posterior and possibly a fitted footpump goes in the cockpit of a properly designed sea kayak. Gear and supplies needed at sea (including safety equipment) stow on one's person or on deck (in properly designed fittings that will survive rolls, towing, other people on board and surf wipe outs without coming adrift, causing instability or windage) A good modern equivalent of the Eskimo 'luggage rack' is all to rarely seen. Given that there are bulheads and the cockpit is small, or perhaps even better, also contains one of the recently developed 'liners', traditional rescues become obsolete (but should still be known!). Lift the bow and 'flip her over' and the boat is empty! This of course will only have to happen after the fifteenth attempt to roll has failed and water has entered the brain via the sinuses!

Kayak design that obviates 'across deck' rescues leaves the way clear for a deck 'workbench' that carries the needs of the touring paddler, namely chart, compass, spare split paddles, food, drink, repair and first aid kit, towline and paraflares. On the person are bouyancy aid, lifejacket (deflated and folded), location 'day and night' diver's flares, knife, watch, snack ration and money (in case you get seperated from your boat). A torch normally constitutes part of the emergency kit but if night navigation is seriously envisaged, then a helmet light with all round visibility is most useful. Where rough surf landings are likely a helmet is essential but it is a bulky item to pack on deck which is the only place it can go for instant use. A survival bag is useful but is no substitute for spare thermal wear clothing and waterproofs. It should be regarded only as a stop gap windbreak or something orange to attract attention. Its most useful application may be to climb into if yoy are stuck in the water (it has been suggested) or to inflate as a float.

Having brought the Eskimo kayak up to date, there now remains the question 'Does it justify itself?'. On the design features mentioned in the last two paragraphs I am adament, particularly with regard to bulkheads (or at least to an extra large amount of bouyancy added to the normal polystyrene blocks) but the standard slalom type of kayak can certainly be made suitable for sea touring. It should not be a modern competition boat (although that is often ideal for surfing) as such craft just do not have the carrying capacity and bouyancy for sea work and are hard work to paddle any distance. Older craft such as the KW7 or Gaybo 'Funa' are quite suitable and their lighter weight almost balances their slower speed against the sea kayaks. Some boats such as the KW9 and the B.S.C.A. Cadet are very good in rough water though the latter needs some measure of skill due to its comparatively low stability. Low carrying capacity of slalom, downriver or marathon boats does of course impose a problem for any long distance touring. It must also be realised that few paddlers, particularly young ones can afford a boat for every occasion. My suggestion for this is to construct a 'custom sea kit' for temporary conversion consisting of extra bouyancy in the form of air bags and a rear deck 'pod' of G.R.P. moulded to fit the rear deck and attached with wingnuts. The pod would contain the loops, elastics and clips for spare paddles and 'luggage'. When removed the wingnuts (on the inside) would block the holes with a rubber washer. A large metal washer must be used inside to resist the whole pod being torn off when in position. Footrests, as on sea kayaks, should be of the solid block variety beyond which the feet cannot pass or swing back fail safe type. This is importnat in case of looping against the bottom in a surf landing when the shock transmitted through the feet is enormous. End loops must be substituted by toggles and decklines are an added advantage where traditional rescue methods may be required.

The justification question thus remains largely unresolved. Provided the safety factors are met and the paddlers skills are up to the conditions a lot of fun can be had astride a plank!

David Mitchell
8th. June, 1981.

References:
Bark and Skin Boats of N.America, Chapelle.
Sea Canoeing, Hutchinson.
Sea Touring, Ramwell.
Living Canoeing, Byde.

Designs considered in the compilation of this essay

KW9
B.S.C.A.Cadet
KW7
Gaybo 'Funa'
Anus Acuta
Angmagssalik
Baidarka
Explorer
Umnak
Nordkapp(All stern versions)
Sea Hawk
Lindisfarne
Islander
Vyneck
Artic, Ocean Fox and Sea Fox,'one off' designs built by the author.

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A WEEKS SEA CANOEING JULY 24th. to JULY 30th. 1982.

At the Anwoth Camp site, Gatehouse of Fleet, Kirkcudbrightshire, SCOTLAND.

More a holiday than a course, though there will be some coaching, sea proficiency assessments (if required) and led expeditions (day and night) with talks on sea canoeing and related subjects.

This is the 5th. biennial course and is timed to coincide with the Gatehouse Gala Week (fun for all the family while the canoeists are on the water)
Self catering with a grand communal barbecue on the final evening.

Cost £7.00 per canoeist (this pays for the instructors expenses and the barbecue)
Make cheques payable to the Advanced Sea Kayak Club and send to me:
John Ramwell, 32, Glebe Road, West Perry . Huntingdon, Cambs, PE18 0DG.

Closing Date...when the course is full, and if previous experience is anything to go by, this should not be far away.....so hurry!

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ROUND THE WIGHT ?A TRAINING PROGRAMME.....

Many years ago a friend asked me to travel with him from N.Wales to the Isle of Wight to paddle round the island. I jumped at the chance, but for logistical reasons we called it off and crossed the Chennel instead. (logistics means 'duty free' in plain english).

Ever since, and especially now that I live here on the Island, I've had a goal and ambition that old enthusiasm; to paddle round the Island. Last year I nearly made it. Setting off from Newport I skidded along on a flat ebb then ran smack into unscheduled headwinds at the back if the Wight, until at Force 6 they battered me to a halt at Atherfield. By the time I'd manhandled 150 lb. of sea kayak up the cliffs there, then walked (WALKED) back to Newport for my car, I was ready to think about training.

Now, if you think I'm going to write about time trials and speed records - you're wrong. My aim was to get round the Island. No heroics, no records to break, just a good old fashioned do-or-die attempt to actually succeed in paddling round the Isle of Wight. But first.....training.

With Mike Watson I went up to the Faeroe Islands in 1980. There we worked hard in the rain and the wind to toughen up for the challenge. The huge Atlantic swells, the inter-islands tides rips, the roaring overfalls, bare coasts of foamed whipped cliffs; they all helped to develop the skills necessary for success.

The Isle of Wight is a fair paddle too. Perhaps 60 miles of water lie before the canoeist. Camping will be necessary. The heat can be a problem. Radical measures were obviously called for, and phase II in the training programme developed into a punishing 2½ month, 2,000 kilomentre paddle in air temperatures of over 100 degrees codenamed 'British Sea Kayak Expedition to Japan', the exercise was designed to be a physical and psychological test; the outcome of which would decide whether I was ready for another attempt on the Isle of Wight.

Members may be interested to know about this training exercise in Japan. My canoe, a Gaybo 'Vyneck', the fastest expedition boat around, vanished over the horizon on the Red Funnel ferry in April. By the end of May I was reunitied with it in Japan and with five others who were joining me for the trip we set offalong the Inland Sea, a maze of 3,000 islands.

Three weeks later we were hardened to eating raw fish, raw squid and shell fish, sea-weed for breakfast, to paddling in skin-crisping sunshine in waters which at 83 degrees were warmer than an indoor swimming pool, toughened to the chaff of salt on flesh, to the grind of eight hours or more paddling a day. But this was just the beginning of the trip. The other five had to go home, time and money had run out. Alone I set off to paddle round Kyushu, a major Japanese island comparable to Ireland.

I'd already been hit by one Typhoon (one of eight which swept the Japanese islands during my visit) and on Kyushu paddled non stop through the night and all the following day to escape another Typhoon.

At times the sky was a mercilessly clear blue, the sea surface was glassy calm and the sun beat down - but driven by storms thousands of miles away across the Pacific huge gentle swell would undulate quitely under the kayak. Any venture towards the coast would reveal the danger of crashing dumping surf, or the sucking whirl of broken waves around rocks. It was in these conditions that at different times I had my sunglasses torn off and charts and hat swept away, had the boat (18ft. long, paddled forward flat out) picked up like a small toy and flicked into a back loop, and once, when hit broadside, had the deck line broken and the spare paddles torn off.

Whatever happened during the day, however, whether it had been a hard slog into head winds, or slow steady progress in burning sunshine, whether there had been flying fish skimming away from the boat, graceful terns fluttering and diving around, or the sight of an inquisitive turtle, playing dolphins or just mindless open crossings hour after hour over empty vistas. there was always the certainty of Japanese hospitality when I landed.

I had had regular press, radio and TV publicity, people in the remotest places would know of me, and it was seldom that I was not offered something, be it a bottle of beer, a bath, gifts of food, or an invitation home for a meal and 'bed. Bed in Japan is a mat on the floor, the pillow a woven bamboo cage. It might sound hard, but insomnia was unknown - cured by a surfeit of seafood and sake.

It was this hospitality - warm, spontaneous generosity from very ordinary village people who did not know me, would never see me again, and expected nothing in return - which is the most enduring memory of Japan.

What did it all achieve? Well, sea kayaking and canoeing in general, received a lot of publicity in a country with great potential for the development of the sport. By the time I left a Japanese paddler had set out to paddle up the coast of Honshu Island. I'd coached various clubs and groups - invariably at a stage of development and boat design achieved here in this country twenty years ago - and a handicapped association had decided to adopt canoeing. Only a modest contribution to the sport - but the Japanese are not slow to imitate and improve, and I am confident that their competitive paddlers will go from strehgth to strength, while if the adventurers prove as cabable as their mountaineers and skiers, there will soon be reports of Japanese canoe expeditions

On a personal level I was proud to have the first sea kayak used there and to have made the first canoe circumnavigation of Kyushu, the south island.

But all this was just a prelude, a warm up. The real challenge still waited back at home, a small, quiet island, nestled below the soft, gently rolling hills of the south of England, a challenge which after 18 months I had still not been able to bring myself to face.

The Isle of Wight Could I really paddle round it.....!!

DREW DELANEY.

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COURTLANDS CENTRE FOR CANOEISTS

B.C.U. SEA SURFING CANOEING COURSE.

Friday 27th.November - Sunday 29th. November, 1981

Applications are invited for the above course which will include both practical and theory aspects of surf canoeing.

The course will be led by Raymond Rowe who is a B.C.U. Sea and Inland Coach and is in charge of sea canoeing at the Plas y Brenin National Centre in Wales, where he has been developing all aspects of sea canoeing with particular emphasis on surf canoeing.

He is an experienced canoeist, taking part in world championships, has coached surf canoeing in Australia, has surfed the Severn Bore and has held the record for the fastest circumnavigation of Anglesey with John Ramwell who is also attending this course.

Participants will be expected to bring their own equipment which should include a kayak slalom and/or a surf canoe. Other necessary equipment is:-

Paddle Footrest wetsuit (longjohn or trousers) bouyancy aid good spray cover helmet canoe cagoule.

Participants should have an interesting (although not necessarily extensive) record of their experience in their log book. It will be assumed that they will have a reasonable knowledge of the topics covered by the course.

PROGRAMME

Friday		
27th. Nov.	P.M.	ARRIVAL
	7.30	Evening meal (a cold buffet will be arranged for late arrivals)
	8.30	Introduction, briefing and talk by Raymond Rowe on wave formation, beaches, basic manoeuvres and safety. Informal drinks at the bar.
Saturday		
28th. Novem.	8.30	Breakfast
	A.M./P.M.	ON THE WATER Coaching and practical techniques
	Even.	Rolling coaching in swimming pool. Analysis of days work.
Sunday		
29th. Nov.	ALL DAY	Follow on from previous day.

COST £34.50 This includes full board accom. and tuition.
APPLY to:- Courtlands Centre, Kingsbridge, S.Devon, TQ7 4BN (Tel Loddiswell 227)

THE BRITISH CANOE UNION SEA TOURING COMMITTEE AND THE ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB

PRESENT THE 4th. NATIONAL SEA CANOEING SYMPOSIUM 11/12/13th. DECEMBER, 1981

AT CALSHOT ACTIVITIES CENTRE, SOUTHAMPTON.

This popular event has been moved from the rather expensive Eurosports Village to Calshot Activities Centre in order to provide this weekend at a more realistic price.

The cost per individual for full residence, i.e. Friday supper through to Sunday lunch is £27.50 (£22.00 if you are under 19 years of age). If you really want it cheap, how about £12 for camping, and this includes meals on Saturday and Sunday. If you wish to merely attnd but not actually stay it will cost you £2.00 per day.

In return for this expense we shall be offering a series of talks and discussions on the many aspects of sea canoeing by specialists in their own field, plus recent fully illustrated expedition reports. On the Saturday evening we shall be holding the A.G.M. of the B.C.U. Sea Touring Committee to which everyone is welcome.

Application must be in on or before the 10th. November,1981 and should be sent to me, John J.Ramwell, 32, Glebe Road, West Perry, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE18 0DG. with a deposit of £10.00

P.S. Those of you who have already stated your intention to attend the Symposium that was to be held at the Eurosports Village over the weekend of the 21/22nd November, 1981 need not re-apply.

**********Tear off and send to J.J.Ramwell, **********
32, Glebe Rd., West Perry, Huntingdon,
Cambs, PE18 0DG before 10th. November.

I/we wish to join the Sea Canoeing Symposium over the weekend of the 11/12/13th. December,1981 to be held at Calshot Activities Centre, Southampton.

Please find my/our deposit of £.....made out to the Advanced Sea Kayak Club

NAME..... AGE(if.under.19).....

ADDRESS.....

.....POSTAL CODE.....

Please state here the subject matter of any presentation you wish to make to the Symposium and the minimum amount of time you will require.

REMEMBER CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATION NOVEMBER 10th. 1981.