

NEWSLETTER

of
the

Advanced Sea Kayak Club

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



AIMS

1. Promotion of sea canoeing
2. Communication
3. Organisation of events and conferences
4. Safety and coaching.

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EDITORIAL

CANOE EXHIBITION time again - how the years fly by.

I was hoping to have the full report of the recent 5th. Sea Kayaking Symposium published and ready for distribution but it is not quite ready. I have included a short report in this 'letter. It is intended to make the full report a comprehensive document that will be useful for reference purposes when planning expeditions. You will remember that the theme of the symposium was expeditions.

Also appearing in this newsletter is the announcement of the Gatehouse canoeing week. If past years are anything to go by we will enjoy a pleasant and relaxed week. I have arranged the campsite, the programme is now well established (though there will be no island burning this year!); all we need is you and good weather - so let's be hearing from you.

I asked for test reports on tents in the last newsletter; I've had a fair response and so will be publishing a special tent edition of this newsletter soon. I could certainly do with more reports so let me know what you think of your tent. If I can generate interest in these equipment surveys they should prove useful - so pen to paper now.

You will come across a short notice about the ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY. They maintain an excellent library of expedition reports from all sorts of people, but not many from sea canoeists (though I noticed Frank Goodman's 'Round the Horn' trip on file there). Perhaps we ought to put this right; now that sea canoeing is recognised as such a professional activity and more and more expeditions are taking off, we really ought to get more involved with this very worth while Society. Certainly they are very accommodating should you be researching for an expedition of your own; just turn up, fill in a form explaining what it is you are seeking and the librarian will help you all he can. Their premises are close to the Albert Hall at 1, Kensington Gore, London, SW7 2AR.

Renewals to the A.S.K.C. have been coming in regularly over the past few months - the Club is stronger than ever at the present. Once the Canoe Exhibition is over I shall be compiling the 1984 membership list. I've heard how useful many of you find this list - helping you get in touch with others who live not far from you or who live in areas you hope to visit.

Just a few words before closing this editorial on ACCESS. Yes, it's starting to effect the sea canoeist. Suffice to say at this stage that the B.C.U. Sea Touring Committee and the Access Committee are working together to ensure the interests of you lot out there are being taken care of. The Nature Conservancy and the Government are colluding to draft Wild Life Protection Bills that will restrict 'small vessels' from certain coastal areas. It wouldn't be so bad if these areas weren't already very popular with sea canoeists. I am sure effective compromises can be agreed on in the end - meanwhile we need to ensure that parts of our natural heritage, - only available to us at the far end of a pair of binoculars if we are not careful, remain open to us. I shall be publishing a more complete account of this state of affairs in due course. Meanwhile, if you have any experience of access difficulties to coastal areas please let Mick O'Connell, 9, The Green, Kirksanton, Millom, Cumbria, know, - Mick is the Sea Touring access rep.

Good Paddling, Nanuk.

A.S.K.C. SHOP.

- Ties @ £2.50
- Stickers @ 30 pence
- Letter headed note paper @ 50 pence for 10 sheets
- 4th, Sea Canoeing Symposium Report @ 75 pence
- T shirts - small/medium/large/X large @ £3.50 each (the new black ones are quite stunning)
- Sweat shirts - small/medium/large/X large @ £6.30 each (ditto)
- Information Sheet on Tides and Buoyage @ 75 pence each
- H.M.Coastguard Paper on Safety @ 50 pence each

PRICES INCLUDE POST & PACK.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

I could'nt make out from Nick Padwicks' letter whether 1) he has a vendetta against the Nordkapp; 2) there are so many Nordkapps about that he cannot find any other boat to paddle with; 3) the Nordkapp is really a terrible sea boat.

Be that as it may, I do take exception when he tells me, "I should know better" than to say the Byde Pod is anything but perfect. He may not be aware that I was the first (only?) manufacturer who offered my boats with the facility of having a Pod fitted by Allan. Obviously I was'nt happy when Allan implied publicly that the Trade were not interested in his device. Allan and I had a long talk at Crystal Palace and Allan agreed that he had over stepped the mark here. Allan and I have been friends for years and are likely to remain so; so I don't think Nick needs to take up the cudgels on his behalf.

The fact of the matter is that the Pod is a very good idea, but it is NOT right for commercial production. Technical problems make it too expensive to produce. When canoeists hear of the price of fitting a Pod to a canoe I never get any takers in spite of spending money on advertising it.

Sea boats don't break in half or collapse, and if you want to keep water out of the cockpit there are cheaper ways of doing it than fitting a Pod. For instance the 'Sea Sock', well known in the U.S.A.

Whether we like it or not, safety has a price - and if we had unlimited funds we could make canoeing infinitely safe - and the adventure would disappear.

I have spent many years with canoeing safety - over ten years with B.S.I. and many months working out the new B.C.M.A./B.C.U. standard for buoyancy aids, but I don't propose to go slowly bankrupt making a non-viable product.

What Nick does'nt understand is the vast difference between a viable commercial article and something that can be made by the home-builder.

Let me illustrate this from another letter in the A.S.K.C. describing a 'home-built' waterproof hatch. The author says it is the cheapest on the market. What a laugh! It MUST be the most expensive. What he has forgotten to do is to cost his TIME.

If you earn £3 per hr. at V.C.P. my overheads are one and a half times the wages bill. Therefore I must charge £7.50 for every hour spent making a boat BEFORE I make any profit.

I produce a waterproof hatch for £12.00 and the charge for fitting it means that if my canoe builders spend more than half an hour putting it into the canoe I'm losing money!

Thus, if we make a hatch on the boat with a temporary plastercine mould and then sew a 'spraydeck' cover to fit it, I must make the whole lot in less than two hours if I'm going to be cheaper than the 'commercial' product - it cannot be done

FRANK GOODMAN
Valley Canoe Products, Nottingham.

From Tom Trump, Murrysville, P.A. U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Ramwell,

I have been enjoying the A.S.K.C. Newsletter ever since I joined the Club and look forward to receiving future issues. In Newsletter No. 37, June, '83, I was particularly interested in Peter Carters' article entitled 'Tasmanian Technicalities'. This summer I installed a Rule 400 pump in my Mariner kayak - a high volume greenland style boat designed by Cam and Matt Breze of Seattle, Washington. For power I installed a 12 V 6 amp/hr, 6 lob gell cell battery (manufactured in U.S.A.) in the bow of my Mariner. I selected the gell cell over a motorcycle battery because the gell cell will not leak if overturned and for its good electrical qualities; although it cost three times

that of a motorcycle battery.

In tests the Rule 400 system pumped out my Mariner which was completely flooded with the exception of two floating bags, in fifteen minutes. With a person and gear in the boat the time should be much shorter. I estimate the 6 amp/hr battery to be good for at least 8 to 10 plus complete bail outs of the Mariner. Right now I am working on a water-tight switch design which will incorporate a 2 amp fuse so I can eliminate a separate toggle switch and fuse bottle.

My rationale for going to an electric pump was simple. After watching people pump their boats by hand during self rescue demonstrations, it appeared to me that in rough seas it would take both hands on the paddle just to keep the boat upright.

Maybe one day I can do some paddling in the U.K., if I can find a cheap way to get my 18' 5" Mariner across the Atlantic.

Sincerely,

Tom Trump

From Pat Ewen, Dublin (Pat sent me a postcard showing a remarkable picture of a wave lashed cliff coast with a small hamlet set back inland with a rainbow ending over it - Gort na gCapall, Aran Islands)

Dear John,

Many thanks for your encouraging letter last week. Herewith my sub for 1984.

Yes, I would be pleased to write an article on, perhaps, the attraction of our west coast for sea canoeing if you think it would be of use to your members. I think it might be of more general interest to, as it were, introduce Irish coastal waters from the sea canoeing point of view, rather than to describe my own efforts, which would, I think, seem rather ordinary.

Reading some reports of expeditions by English based groups on the Irish coast I rather felt that some strange land in the antipodes was being described, and I feel that some sort of introduction to Irish waters - how to get there, etc. might be of interest to club members. If you agree, perhaps you could let me know about how long you would like it, etc. and I'll see what I can do.

I thought I would use this postcard to whet your appetite! It shows the Tran Islands in Galway Bay - a fascinating spot, excellent for canoeing, drinking, dancing, women, traditional music and other 'diversions'. We paddled along under the cliffs the summer before last.

Best wishes and thanks.

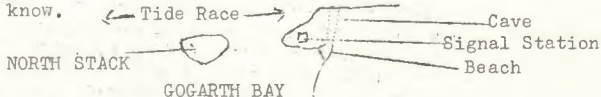
Pat Ewen

From Mike Wood, Cheshire.

Dear John,

.....ANGLESEY - NORTH STACK

Just over twelve months ago a group of us travelling round from Soldiers Point intending to pass further down the coast, found the conditions below South Stack to be too rough and so turned back. Even though there was a twelve foot swell in Gogarth Bay we found that we were just able to land on a tiny stoney beach below the signal station at North Stack. We found that a cave at the back ran right underneath, and although we did not use it, we decided that in an emergency it would be possible to portage through. It may be useful for people who use that coast to know.



BIG SCARE by John Wilkinson, Oxfordshire.

Saturday, 27th. August, 1983: Spring tides. The forecast was N.W.4 becoming N.E. 3 later; moderate visibility. The prevailing conditions were N.W.4 with very good visibility, chilly but with the sun shining and not much cloud, lots of white caps.

We could see the light house on the Mull of Galloway across Luce Bay, the shark tooth of Big Scare, and low rocks of Little Scare looked almost inviting. We decided to go (mistake No.1). Our phone call to Ramsey Coast Guard had resulted in the friendly and very helpful Whithorn Coastguard driving over to Barraloch Point (just south of Port William) to see us off - a new experience for us which helped to pass the time before high tide at 2.40 pm. I had stupidly decided to eat a late lunch out in the Bay, or on Big Scare if we could land (mistake No.2) so we ate only chocolate biscuits before setting off. My parents were going to meet us at West Tarbet Bay on the Mull, and our E.T.A. was 7.00 pm. We launched at 2.30 intending to keep up-wind (north) of the islands at first while we assessed the wind effect, and to use the 4 knot tidal stream which, on the ebbing tide, flows in an arc into the bay and then across to the Mull of Galloway. Later the wind might veer N-NE and help us along. Robin and I were feeling quite happy about the conditions. The 3 foot waves were steepening as the tide began to flow against the wind, and the number of white caps increased, but the sun was shining - and how the sun affects one's state of mind!

It was now obvious that Nick was having directional problems with the Huntsman (one of my boats which he had used on our 'warm up' paddle the previous weekend), with the skeg fitted it was turning away from the wind, and vice-versa. After taking it off and putting it back on, he decided that keeping it on was the lesser of the two evils. We discussed the possibility of returning to the car which was waiting two hours before driving round, the decision was to continue, but I would try to change boats with Nick on Big Scare. I was paddling my Sea Tiger Mk IV (built by Alan Byde) which, with it's pod and feeling of security in rough seas would have been the better boat for Nick who had only limited experience in rough conditions and could not roll. Robin was paddling his Baidarka Explorer - a superb sea kayak but the most difficult of the three to empty in a rescue situation owing to its large cockpit volume and position of the rear bulkhead, which, in my opinion, is too far back. I had fitted a rear bulkhead in the Huntsman, angled up from the seat to the cockpit rim so that complete emptying could be achieved in seconds by lifting the bow 6 inches and flipping the boat over in one movement. However I was kicking myself (not easy!) for giving Nick this kayak (mistake No.3)

We progressed fairly well across the Bay and found that our leeway was minimal, obviously the W.N.W. set of the stream was almost cancelling out the effect of the N.W. wind, so we began to head more towards the Scares (mistake No.4) relieved that we were not going to be blown to the Isle of Man! The seas were getting bigger and steeper and the others were disappearing in the troughs, but we were enjoying the exhilaration of paddling through beam seas which gave us occasional mini bongo rides on their white crests. Seeing that Big Scare was creeping to the right of Little Scare instead of keeping in line, we now paddled and surfed due south to avoid missing them altogether. We needed to get to the S.E. of Big Scare and calmer water, and we chose not to go between the islands. Approaching the east end of Little Scare, we entered an overfall and Nick capsized while surfing a big wave! I watched him go - very slowly and gracefully. During the rescue (Robin and I rafted) we realised that the tidal stream was pushing us towards the rocks, so with the neoprene spraydeck-fitted at last (it seemed to take for ever) it was case of 'let's get the hell out of here' - paddling back into the waves to reduce the chance of another capsize. We cleared Little Scare and checked the time - 4.45 - on schedule, and made another attempt to reach calmer water by passing through the deep channel between the islands. Well, we tried to pass through the channel, but old Neptune had other ideas and progress soon became non-existent against what was now a 4 knot stream. We were in a wonderful position to admire the beautiful white sunlit gannets soaring effortlessly over our heads (they must have laughed 'till they cried!) but it

wasn't getting us any closer to that tantalising 'calm' water we could see ahead. So we decided to cut and run. Then Robin was sea sick. We had rafted up to eat and rest just S.W. of the islands when it suddenly hit him without warning after a couple of chocolate biscuits. He was transformed from a strong canoeist to a quivering heap with no sense of balance or muscular power. I then discovered that my sea sick pills were still in the car (mistake No. 5). We managed to pour out some coffee but he could'n't even keep that down - he looked (and felt) like death. With the sea getting lumpier, I was not a little worried about our predicament. Robin managed a few words, "by the way, John, you've got a hole in your boat!" My first thought was, "Oh, God, I'm going to sink." "try mending it, dear Henry" came the reply - or words to that effect - and that got my paralysed brain working again. The one inch hole was above a cleat which pulled off the rear deck during a rafting session, so it was easily covered by denzo tape. I had a fair amount of water in my boat but it wasn't affecting my stability, and pumping it out would have been tricky in the 5 - 6 foot breaking waves. We stayed rafted for a long time hoping Robin would recover enough to be able to balance his Baidarka, but it was probably the unusual movement of the rafted kayaks which had triggered the sea sickness in the first place, so it was a catch 22 situation. I was 'happy' to drift for a while as we were drifting towards the Mull of Galloway and away from those evil islands (already a good mile away to the north east), although the wind (strengthening N.N.W. 4 to 5) would obviously blow us off course to the south. Our biggest problem looked like being the overfalls off the Mull, and I was hoping that our inevitable slow progress (if progress was to be made at all - and I had my doubts) would allow the seas to calm down enough to let us limp through at slack water. Robin's condition got worse and we discussed the possibility of sending up flares. We knew my father was by now watching for us from the light house and our flares would probably be seen; but we also knew we would lose all our kayaks in the subsequent helicopter rescue. I decided not to send up flares - yet, as the visibility looked like staying good. I tied the Baidarka and the Huntsman together with a spare towline and started towing them into the wind letting the tide take us to the Mull. Both Nick, whose calmness and apparent lack of concern in the face of adversity has to be seen to be believed, and I, with adrenalin flowing out of my ears, were trying to convince Robin that the lighthouse was really getting a bit bigger and we would make it in an hour. I had felt queasy while rafted, but now I felt good and was glad to be underway again. Nick also felt better so he started paddling on his side. I gave him half a split paddle (which was hanging off my rear deck since the cleat had pulled off) and later, when the sea began to calm down, Robin managed to use the other half paddle. How he did this feeling like he did, I do not know! It was his effort that tipped the balance and got us to the cliffs half a mile west of the light house at 8.30 pm - low tide. The last mile - paddling due north - had seemed endless, with the wind coming at us in squalls and a persistent west flowing stream - the water never seems to stop moving round there. Robin had been complaining of cold and looked very white so there was no chance of going along to West Tarbet Bay (one mile west of us). We were landing in a calm lagoon in a zaun when a divers' inflatable came buzzing round the corner and offered us a ride/tow to West Tarbet. They had been sent by my father and were we glad to see them! Robin began to recover on the way as we creamed along past superb cliff scenery with the kayaks in the wake and Nick - apparently unaffected by the afternoons paddle - was describing to the divers various ways to cook the huge crayfish which was lying in the boat! He had worked in a crayfish factory in Australia.

We learnt from my father that the wind speed up at the lighthouse had been 18 knots and that we had been spotted first by the lighthouse keeper with his enormous telescope. He had been giving Ramsey Coastguard a running commentary and waiting for a flare. An off-duty auxiliary coastguard was there to check us in and if necessary, winch us up the cliffs. We are very grateful to this man for giving up hours of his free time for the sake of these foolish canoeists. We also thank Ramsey Coastguard for their help, advice and involvement with our trip, and many thanks too to the lighthouse keeper who we did not meet for keeping an eye on us, to the divers, and finally to my parents who did the right thing at the right time.

ISLES OF THE WIND

by Earle Bloomfield

Box 354, Mansfield, Victoria, Australia

"Garvellach". A beautiful Celtic word. It begins at the top of the palate and moves softly to the back of the throat before being exhaled as a satisfied sigh. The tongue moves around the word much as it would savouring an old liquer; much as the tides of the ocean move along the Garvellachs, the Isles of the Sea.

Gliding effortlessly at three and a half thousand feet, the aircraft cabin filled with its re-assuring drone, my mind lazily ebbed and flowed between the familiar Hebridean necklace along Scotland's west coast and the new islands below me where our bat-like black shadow, our devil-self, leaped and jerked fitfully over these unfamiliar peak and plains; these Garvellachs of the Southern Seas.

One hundred and twentyfive islands litter the eastern sea shelf of Bass Strait, scattered, confused and undisciplined; tossed off Tasmania's north east shoulder in a fit of pique to be battered to bits by countless millennia of violent storms and finally resorbed into the sands of infinity. Modern day sailors (perhaps members of the South African based Flat Earth Society), keen to relive the ancient seafarers nightmares of sailing off the edge of the world would do well to stow their sea chests securely and make for Bass Strait and her treacherous islands.

The rounded polished pates of the mountains and reefs on these islands remind one of the great age and the need for some respect. But early explorers would have encountered a younger, much wilder place: Thick weather proof bedsocks of Melaleuca scrub fastened up tight around the ankles of huge granite cliffs while Gothic collonnades of jagged rock strutted and dipped their way along the towering ridges above. Below, gruesome black primordial reefs and shoals grinned lustfully through the seething westerly surf.

So must these islands have appeared to the poor horn-eyed sailors, bullied by devils fists of wind and water, or the want of both, driven here in search of a safe anchorage but who found instead only the Final Mooring, when the bellies were ripped from their stout wooden ships. Over two hundred vessels have gone to the bottom of Bass Strait, at least seventy of them along the shores of the Furneaux Group of Islands, where our plane now bumped and skidded to a halt.

We had arrived at Whitemark on Flinders Island, the Canberra of the Furneaux Group and the wind capital of the world. Within our first two days here I had decided to gorget my Garvellach notion. This was no Scotland. This, I determined, is Bass Strait and these are the "Isles of the Winds". Over the next two weeks, to justify my semantic side-stepping, we were blown down, up, sideways and under, at all hours of the day and night and from every direction.

We were a typically rat-eared bunch of sea canoeists, we five, come to squander our rubles on a holiday that promised to be slightly more satisfying than even a night at the Wroest Point Casino. Perhaps it was the horror of the previous nights bivvy at Port Welshpool amid mosquitos, mad dogs and a cacophony of engines which sent us bounding headlong for Whitemark's one and only grog hole, the Interstate Hotel. But on the other hand, it could have been the natural ebullience that comes with suddenly being THERE.

If you had walked into the bar at lunch time you would have seen us hitting the Boags pretty hard: Steve Watson, a gnome-shaped Welsh stonemason; Peter Newmam, who saved money selling Heralds to become a town planner; Mr. Tremont who had never been in a sea kayak before and swears never again; Rusty, a Tasmanian who always catches bigger fish than me; and me. I do silly things and make people laugh. Like accepting an invitation to join a two-week sea kayak expedition knowing that I could'nt even afford a pint of milk, much less a flight to Flinders, plus all the other expense entailed. There's no doubt that town planners are an easy touch, as Peter stood me the return air fare, some sandwiches and

heaps of beer, all in the first day. So far, so good.

Nursing the sort of headaches you can only get from beer at lunch time, we retired to the quiet cypress groved farm shed of local shipping agent, Jeff Walker. Mr. Iremont with the kayaks, food and equipment had sailed from Port Welshpool a week before on the 'Lady Gillian', a sort of schizophrenic schooner. (Originally a three masted barquentine, she had been totally rebuilt and fitted out as a two masted, shallow draught island trader causing untold confusion at Lloyds Shipping Register, who were unable to delineate where the barquentine ended and the present ship began.) Single handedly Mr. Iremont had divested 'The Jill' of our kayaks and gear in the short turn around time she takes to load and catch the tide, (her yawning steel stomach gorged with livestock bound for the mainland markets. She is still a beautiful ship for all her perfunctory ruggedness, short masts and snipped off bowsprit, and obviously much respected by her phlegmatic skipper and crewmen whose Bass Strait and Island navigation experience must rank them as some of the finest seamen alive.)

Through the lazy afternoon we waterproofed leaky bulkheads, replaced damaged hatches and sorted through the complete catalogue of outdoor equipment. Climbing ropes, harnesses, runners, bongs, jumars - whatsort of expedition is this? Roman style canoeing? Roman Centurians used to go straight over an obstacle rather than around it.

"Hannibal, you may not believe this, but those are canoes up ahead of us in the snow." I came here to relax on some lonely beach and perv on the pademelons. Ah! mask and fins, a bit more like it! Steve is responsible for all this. "She'll be right," he said to us jovially over the phone. "Just bring everything and don't worry about it". I'm not worried but right now I can see a couple of other people who are. This is going to be an hilarious Heath Robinson affair, the whole lot held together with the mirrors and string of wait-and-see tactics. By late afternoon, with everything sorted, people's little caches of secret-special-mine only food carefully hidden in their kayaks and all the climbing gear dumped back in Walkers shed, where it belonged, we trucked ourselves to the Whitemark beach and set up camp, ready for the off on tomorrow's high tide. By midday, after Mr. Iremont had had a practise with his boat and not actually fallen in, we dragged the kayaks, almost crumpled under the weight of their unreasonable loads, screeching over the coarse granite sand and into the sea at last. Did I say two hundred vessels down there. Its only luck that the tally is not two hundred and five by now. On that singular day, as we limped and struggled through the steep short chop southwards to Trousers Point, I fashioned a new and vital principle, Earle's first law of sea Kayaks. Nevermind the load for they cannot sink, (through a special Archimedean dispensation, I believe). It was a gruelling ride around the western seawall of Trouser's Point in the rebound swell, especially on the first day afloat. This show in't just on the road, it's steaming down the Freeway in the fast lane.

Snuggling into the secluded campsite, we could pretend to ignore the thirty knot winds bellowing past the outer rocks as we hunched over a crackling fire that night. Earlier, long distance solo sea canoeists, Laurie Ford, made a magnificent leaping Rasputin entry into our midst as we unpacked our boats. He'd just arrived on Flinders Island after paddling from Wilson's Promontory in 28½ hours straight. Over a hundred miles of open water through a day and a night. Staggering by any standards. I'm glad he offered me a can of beer to fill my mouth, as I could'nt think of anything appropriate to say. I think I managed, "Thanks for the beer", as he drove off.

The wind had gone and found someone else to annoy so we awoke to a quiet new world and after diving for some breakfast fillets we set off again. Rusty and Mr. Iremont climbed Mt. Strzlecki, at 756 m, the islands highest point, while Steve, Peter and I meandered along the coast toward Franklin Sound, which seperates Flinders and Cape Barren Islands. We had almost started diving off the mid channel reef, Oyster Rocks, when a huge scud, like a Southerly buster cloud front, rose over the horizon. With this fair warning well taken we raced three kilometere northwards, across a breaking tidal stream to shelter in Big River Cove before setting up camp on a tiny beach in the lee of Sarah Blanche

Point. The wind was ripping up the sea now and I worried for our two climbers now paddling behind us, who would be out in all this. At least they had a following sea. Then, towards dusk, they glided into our millpond cove elated with their furious ride. I raced out onto the headland rocks and recorded the wind speed. Eighty kilometres. Forty knots. Not bad for Mr. Iremont's second day sea canoeing. He was a bit wet so I couldn't tell if he was crying or not. There wasn't a lot of beach to go round that night, the high tide put out our fire and stopped about one inch from Steve's tent. As Rusty was smart enough to withdraw to the wooded hillside for the night we thought it appropriate to name this placid cove "Rusty's Retreat".

Our third day out and it's still blowing. This time there's rain to add misery to discomfort. The joke may be wearing a little thin. There's no way we'll get around the whole island now. Leaky boats, morning-after muscles and wet gear. Lets get the hell out of this hole. I want some sunshine with naked nymphs to caress me and anoint my sodden brow with ambrosia. Sixteen kilometres later with the wind still hard at our heels we thrashed and cursed our way across a wind funnel into the pretty fishing village of Lady Barron. We'd definitely earned a night on the turps at the Furneaux Tavern.

I'm now out of the wind just soaking up the warm morning sun. It's a day of rest and I'm lying half asleep with my back against my kayak, vaguely listening to Peter and Rusty's plans to meet Laurie Ford on Clarke Island for a joint trip across Banks Strait to Tasmania. I can feel the eerie sensation of an unseen threat: being aimed at by a highrise sniper; voodooed from afar. My eyes flicker open and in that instant I see it, a great fat Tiger Snake, its eyes a couple of feet from mine with head and neck flattened out as if to strike. My God! I'm going to be eaten! Am I wearing my bicycle clips? Never mind, I can rinse my trousers in the sea. Oh dear, that's done it. In all my panic I took the Lord's name in vain. Not quite a Chappel style holy split infinitive you understand, but serious nonetheless. That's certain to bring endless gale force winds down on us now. Of course I had to interpret my frenzied ejaculation into Queen's English for the troops, but they were too late to leap up into the trees as Timothy Tiger Snake, had shot through, without even so much as a hiss goodbye.

To say that Mr. Iremont busied himself with observing nature would be like saying that mutton birds fly home at dusk, but omitting to add that its millions of them and that they're racing frantically in all directions at once, it seems. Our irascible Herpetologist was after Timothy in a flash, stalking barefoot through nearby tussocks and Ti-trees whilst chiding me for not catching it for him. "Yes yes yes," I said, nodding off again.

Peter and Rusty paddled out past Gun Carriage Island and the wreck of the Farsund, now high and dry on Punccheon Shoals, toward their southern adventure, whilst we caught a truck going north through the interior settlement hoping for a few days of sun soaking on the west coast.

There were more days of wind when Steve and I explored the pitiful remains of the Tasmanian Aborigines' last camp before their extinction. Here was their chapel, now fully restored after being used for years as a woolshed. Four white-washed brick walls with only emptiness between, a physical manifestation of the unbridgeable gulf between the cultures of the city and the bush. Bricks and space, and between them no compromise; one abuts the other. A few yards away a flattened windrow of rubble is all that remains of an extensive street of white terraced houses where the Aborigines lived. Soon there will be no trace of them at all and I now begin to understand that resilience in history is simply a matter of keeping your walls standing. Steve, trained in a craft essentially unchanged these last few hundred years, provided a curious link between our small group and the convict craftsmen, many of them Welsh, who built this place. His insight into their methods of construction was fascinating, - and for a few moments Steve brought to life a gang of shackled Welsh brickies. Their beautiful lilting musical accents mixed with ringing trowels and the muted clink of hand-made bricks, leant a poignant loneliness to this dead and windswept isthmus.

After a storm which provided some fairly exacting canoeing conditions, magnificent seal launches down into the sea from enormous granite slab in clouds of powdered gelcoat, and a superb sunny day spent mostly underwater spearfishing and photographing, we folded our battered tents and paddled south through typically rough wind scoured seas over the last 24 kilometres to Whitemark.

In retrospect, we didn't travel far in the kayaks; constant bad weather trimmed our ambitions. But in terms of personal mileage we each covered a sizeable section of the route ahead. I wouldn't have missed it for quids: The pain and disappointment, the laughter, conversation and most of all, the time and space for reflection.

Peter and Rusty found Laurie, and together made a quick and uneventful crossing to Tasmania, while Steve and Mr. Iremont sailed northwards to Victoria with all our gear on the 'The Jill'. I waved them farewell at Whitemark with my sign-writing gear in one hand and five cents in the other. Just about everyone on Flinders Island wanted a sign done so I stayed, paid for my trip and met a good percentage of the world's nicest people.

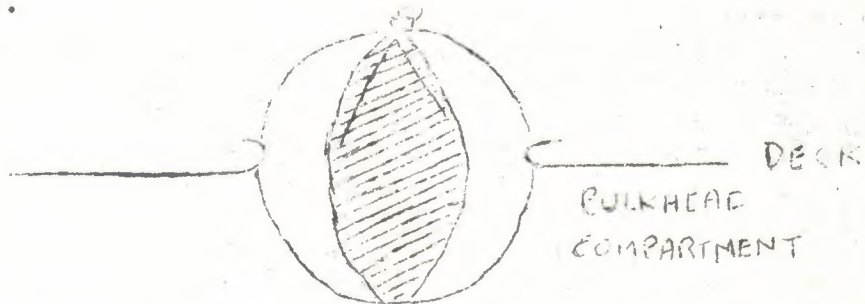
Back home, walking along the Inverloch beach today I felt the breeze tugging insistently at my sleeve as it whispered across the loose packed sand, "You must go back." I know that finally my wandering spirit has been seduced and that I must return again and again, to the "Isles of the Winds".

From Robin Ruddock, Co. Antrim, Ireland.

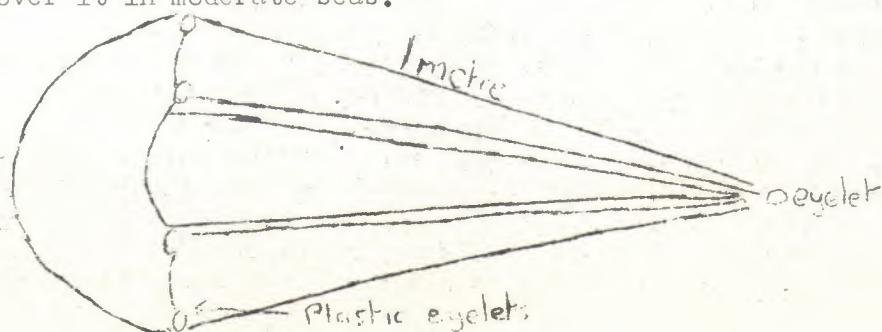
Dear John,

Here are a few ideas on safety equipment which may be of interest to other members.

The first is the use of a plastic beach ball; 1 ft diameter approximately; as an emergency hatch cover. The deflated ball is easily stowed in a repair kit and can be positioned in an open hatchway in a matter of seconds. The ball can be bought for a few pence at holiday shops or found along a rocky shoreline after an offshore breeze.



The other possible free bit of gear can be found on the prom after a gale. The inverted and twisted folding broolly. An efficient drogue suitable for one sea kayak can be made by removing the mechanical structure and fixing four or six eyelets to the fabric. Guys are then attached to meet in a common ring. This can then be shackled to your towing rig for fishing to prevent excessive drift or is useful to have on board in case of extreme emergency. I have not as yet found it necessary to have a retrieval system as it has been easy to recover by reversing over it in moderate seas.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MARINE NATURE RESERVES A CONSULTATIVE PAPER.

1. The Government are considering whether to initiate legislation concerning Marine Nature Reserves. To assist them in this consideration they are seeking the views of interested bodies. This paper sets out a case for making provision for such reserves and the form which any legislation for that purpose might possibly take. Views both on the general desirability and on the form of legislation envisaged would be welcome.

2. A report, NATURE CONSERVATION IN THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT, by a Nature Conservancy Council/Natural Environment Research Council Joint Working Party on Marine Wildlife Conservation was published in 1979 and received considerable support from scientists and those concerned with this aspect of nature conservation. The report recommended, *inter alia*, that the NCC, the statutory advisors to Her Majesty's Government on nature conservation, should "consider obtaining legislation to permit the establishment and management of nature reserves below the present low water limit of its powers".

3. Some of the primary objectives of conservation policy on land have been to conserve representative examples of plant and animal communities, to safeguard sites where research and experiment can be pursued without disturbance and to provide educational facilities. It is illogical that such an approach should end at the low water mark, especially in view of the interdependence of marine and land-based ecosystems. Whilst it is unlikely that any British marine species as a whole is threatened with extinction, the NCC have established that certain local marine populations are already depleted or eliminated and others are currently threatened. In addition there is a noticeable impoverishment of natural communities over wide areas, which in itself justifies the conservation of representative examples of marine communities. The requirement for sites not only for the conservation of wildlife but also for research, experiment, monitoring of change and education is as great in the marine environment as on land.

4. Public interest in marine conservation is growing and there is concern that not enough is being done to protect the marine wildlife resource for both the national and international community. Within the coming months the UK intends to ratify the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species and the Convention on European Wildlife and Natural Habitats. These involve present and potential commitments to protect marine creatures and the areas in which they live. The UK appears to be in danger of lagging behind many other nations (including some within the EC) who have already established statutorily-protected marine reserves.

5. Among the species which have disappeared or are fast disappearing from areas where they were recently plentiful are the burrowing and common sea urchin, the sea fan, several sponges and certain algae. The Salcombe Estuary and Wembury Reef in South West England, for example, are places where uncontrolled collecting is having serious effects. The underlying need, as on land, is thus to provide for the conservation of a range of habitat types and their related flora and fauna before they are threatened with degradation or destruction. If site conservation were to be made possible in the near future while there were still a wide range and large numbers of suitable areas, there would be greater opportunity for selecting sites where conflicts of use and restrictions of rights could be avoided or minimised. Although voluntary reserves receive the full co-operation of responsible organisations, from sub-aqua clubs to Sea Fisheries Districts, there is nothing to stop the irresponsible - for example, amateur and professional souvenir and curio collectors - from ignoring the published codes of conduct. It could prove dangerous to wait until the damage is done before seeking the power to declare statutorily-protected MNRs.

6. A solution might be to provide power for the NCC to propose the establishment of Marine Nature Reserves which would be governed by certain byelaws. The area covered by any proposed MNR would have to be precisely defined and byelaws would operate only within that area. It is envisaged that all proposals for designation and byelaws should be subject to the confirmation of the Sec of State for the Environment in England; and in Scotland or Wales of the appropriate Sec of State. Confirmation would be made in accordance with procedure to be prescribed by regulations

to be made by the Sec of State, who would also have the power to de-designate reserves and/or rescind byelaws. It is for consideration whether a similar scheme should be applied in N.Ireland, where the NCC do not operate.

7. It is to be expected that some restrictions on or prohibition of the exercise of present private and public rights would be necessary within at least part of the area of a reserve. Any such restriction or prohibition would be imposed under the proposed byelaw making power under the statutory procedure referred to in para. 6 above. Compensation would be payable in appropriate circumstances. The actual restrictions or prohibitions proposed would vary from reserve to reserve. There is a list of examples of activities which might be controlled but, it must be stressed, not all of these would necessarily be controlled in any one MNR, since according to circumstances they might be compatible with conservation. In addition some restrictions might apply only to small areas within the reserve. The byelaw powers would not affect the rights of passage to commercial shipping or government owned non-commercial vessels; neither would they cover pollution from commercial shipping (which is the province of other legislation) nor affect existing rights and powers in relation to wrecks. There would also have to be provision for overriding emergencies. It is considered that the normal maximum penalty of £50 for breach of byelaws should be applied to Marine Nature Reserves.

8. The procedure envisaged is that the NCC would, before making any proposal under para. 6 to a Sec. of State, consult all those with rights, responsibilities or interests in the area. This would include Government Departments, local Authorities, statutory and voluntary bodies, industry and individuals. Government Departments having rights, responsibilities or interests which, although outside the area, could still be affected by the proposal, would also be consulted. Such consultation would not affect the right of consultees to register objections if the proposal subsequently proceeded to public advertisement under para. 9.

9. In the light of this consultation and other comments at local level and the views of Government Departments with responsibilities for affected interests, the Sec. of State if he so decided, would authorise the NCC formally to advertise their proposals. Any objections resulting from such public advertisement would be made available to the Sec. of State and there would be the usual provisions for a public inquiry to be held before the Sec. of States final decision was taken.

10. It is unlikely that there would be any initial rush to propose reserves but it is expected that in the first few years some ten reserves could be proposed in a category dictated to safeguarding representative examples of British Marine ecosystems. The Secs. of States' powers to declare MNRs would, of course, be limited to areas within territorial waters and in addition it is assumed that the legislation would contain a maximum seaward extent for marine reserves - say up to 1,000 metres from the MLW/MOT (MLW/MOST in Scotland), but only in exceptional circumstances would reserves exceed 500 metres. It is unlikely that reserves would stretch along more than 10 kilometres of shoreline. In any case, there would be the same rights of objection to MNRs on the grounds of size as on anything else. MNRs would not extend landwards above the low water mark.

11. In addition a need is foreseen to protect samples of exceptionally specialised habitats produced by localised physical conditions. Reserves in this second category would normally be much smaller than in the first.

12. It is expected that most reserves would be established in areas at present unspoilt and free from existing industrial, commercial and similar pressures thus ensuring that conflicts of use are restricted. Two examples of existing voluntary reserves are those around Lundy Island, Devon and Skomer Island, Dyfed, but NCC are at pains to point out that they do not necessarily accept that the existing boundaries are justified, though Lundy is one of the exceptional areas where they might wish to exceed 500 metres.

13. Any comments on this paper should be sent to:

The Department of the Environment, Room 324, Tollgate House,
Houlton Street, BRISTOL, BS2 9DJ.

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ISLE OF WIGHT TIME TRIAL - JULY 16th. 1983

by Mike Watson, Ryde, Isle of Wight.

As one of the members of the Isle of Wight Kayak Club, the organisers of the annual Isle of Wight Time Trial, I thought it was about time that I entered this well established event with the paddlers from all over the Country now taking part.

The past event had been planned as a circumnavigation of the Island in one go (48 nm) and using the tidal streams to best advantage should take a reasonably strong paddler about 10 hours. The previous unofficial record was about $9\frac{3}{4}$ hours held by John Aberdein (ex Calshot Activities Centre) although not timed under race conditions. For the past two years the event had had to be held on a shortened course in the Solent due to strong winds on the day.

Prolonged high pressure leading up to the event day this year augered well for the first trial over the full course. Friday night saw most of the paddlers assembled at the Waverley Caravan Park at East Cowes, some having paddled across from Calshot late in the afternoon while others had brought cars across on the ferry. A briefing by Buzz Austin, the organiser at 22.00 hrs was attended by eager paddlers who then made off to bed early to get some 'shut-eye' as the start was between 06.00 and 06.30 hrs.

Saturday morning brought a flat calm and a fair bit of mist in the Solent, and according to the Coastguard, some thicker stuff on the South side of the Island.

Tired and bleary eyed paddlers made their way to the beach in the early morning mist. I was first away, having had the luxury of my own bed and a good night sleep. Paddling off past Egypt Point in the haze there was only one other paddler in sight about 400 to 500 metres astern. The calmness of the sea tended to belie the speed at which I was paddling until I passed buoys off Gurnard Point at what seemed a phenomenal pace assisted by a strong ebbing tide. Keeping the shore just in sight I went past Yarmouth pier with several paddlers now in sight astern. I headed slightly closer in-shore, past Fort Victoria on a heading which should bring me directly inside of the Needles. This was a mistake as I saw the paddler closest to me stay out in the deep water channel and creep steadily past me. I moved out further into the deep water and kept up with the paddler who was in a Lindisfarne.

I had reckoned on $2\frac{1}{4}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours to the Needles, but as I passed through them my watch showed that I had taken only two hours. Either the tidal assistance was greater than I had expected or I was using more effort than I had planned and would probably burn up before finishing.

The sun was trying to push through the murk and the temperature was beginning to rise, and across Freshwater Bay there was a lot of seagulls and tern activity over shoals of sand eels. On any other beautiful day like this, I would have driven across the Island and then paddled out from Freshwater Bay and put my feathers and line over the side and pulled out the mackerel that chase the sand eels. However, here I was straining muscle and sinew on a 10 hour paddle in the heat racing round the Island!! I thought I must be mad, but I carried on despite an aching back and seemingly slow progress past Atherfield Bay as the tide was giving little assistance at this point. Being ahead of schedule I was'nt getting the best advantage of the tide now.

By this time several more kayaks had crept up and there were about four boats close together as we bounced the overfalls off St. Catherine's Point. Looking round I saw one boat coming through the pack as if it had an outboard motor on the back. Although I didn't recognise the paddler at the time, it turned out to be Andy Freeman, the fastest finisher, in his own design of kayak, who went disappearing into the distance past Ventnor. The time was 11.30 hrs., five hours of paddling, and past the half way point and still ahead of schedule. The sounds of happy holiday-makers came clearly across the water from Ventnor beach as I took a two minute break to grab some orange drink, dextrosol, use the 5-pints bottle and shift about in the seat to try and relieve the numbness in my bum.

"Why am I doing this?", I thought to myself as I again started off across Sandown Bay heading into thicker mist. I took a compass bearing which should bring me to $\frac{1}{4}$ mile off Culver Head. One paddler ahead of me was going much further inshore, and another in a Huntsman, seemed to be heading for Brighton! Luckily I got it right and as I came up round Bembridge Ledge, I was just ahead of both paddlers.

Feeling very tired now, I concentrated on paddling technique and tried to gain a few more yards on these two kayaks. Unfortunately, my body didn't want to respond and I gradually fell behind. At Ryde Pier they were ahead but they lost quite a few yards when they found themselves on the Ryde sands and had to paddle further out. I had reckoned on the water being deep enough to go over the Sands, but being about 1 1/2 hours ahead of schedule, this was impossible.

Old Castle Point was now visible and shimmering in the distance and summoning all available strength and stamina I pushed hard for the last 4 to 5 miles and managed to push past both paddlers by Osborne Bay; however, rounding the Point by Norris Castle with the finish in sight, one of them caught up and went past me, finishing to loud cheers about 25 metres ahead. Over the line, and my thoughts turned towards iced drinks, hot baths to soothe the aches and pains, and the declaration, that although breaking the 9 hour barrier, I would never do it again!

However, I expect I'll be back again in 1984. Thanks to Buzz and Mary Austin and the others in Isle of Wight Kayak Club for organising the event and to Drew Delany for lending me his Nordkapp.

See you there this year.

UNFEATHERED PADDLES by James Chute, Freeport, U.S.A.

(Poached from 'Erie ANORAK - with thanks)

Last June I got a chance to try a couple of David Zimmerly's replicas of Inuit paddles - generally rather long and with quite narrow blades. I was sufficiently intrigued to dig around in my board pile for a suitable plank. What I found was a 7 foot length of 1"x 5" pine shiplap, dressed one side. My paddle would have to be shorter, and perhaps with wider blades, than Dr. Z's. Greenlanders tended to use shorter paddles than other Inuit groups, perhaps because their boats were so low and narrow, so I would still end up with some pseudo-authenticity. I decided on 4" X 30" blades; 4" being the width of the full thickness of the shiplap plank, and 30" would yield a blade area close to that of a modern slalom blade. To get a stronger shaft and to allow for shaping it to an oval section, I glued a 1/4" X 3/4" strip of red cedar to each side of the shaft. A lot of thrashing with drawknife, spokeshave, 3 planes, 2 chisels, and a rasp followed. I finished it with some left-over house paint. The result is very light and probably very fragile. It paddles easily at low speed but slips badly if you try to sprint it; very much like the difference between the higher and lower gears of a bicycle. Rolling is just as sure but less abrupt than with my usual 224 cm Mitchell. If I build a follow-up, it will be about nine feet overall, with blades not wider than 3 inches.

Short, wide feathered blades are at their best in turbulent water where solid support strokes are helpful, or when digging into a headwind. They are a handful in a beam wind of 20 knots or more and the continual wrist movements do aggravate any tendonitis, arthritis, etc. Unfeathered blades are fine for touring except in headwinds, (very narrow blades are a partial solution, at the expense of sprinting speed) and they are by far the easiest for the home craftsman to construct. Two-piece paddles would be best of both worlds (when the ideal centre joint is invented) for those who can re-code their paddling reflexes with every shift in the wind. I suspect that unfeathered paddles users have fewer good-side/bad-side technical problems than these who use feathered blades. I know that I didn't develop a really strong side preference with the single blade until after I'd paddled kayaks for a year or two.

I plan to stick with feathered paddles for the foreseeable future, not because I think that they are superior, but because I've invested a lot of money and 12 years habituation in them. Also, I do race now and then, and unfeathered blades would not be competitive: to diminish wind resistance (which can be tiring even without a headwind), one would have to use "low-gearred" blades and so would be at a considerable disadvantage at the start, or in any other situation where acceleration is important.

Acceleration is much less important in touring, primarily because you can make your moves when and how you want to, without concern for the clock or the competition.

The following is taken from ERIE ANORAK - with grateful thanks.

A LETTER FROM DEREK HUTCHINSON (who!:) TO THE EDITOR, JERRY WELCH

Dear Jerry,

Thank you for your letter and also for doing me the honour of valuing my opinion although you have'nt heard it yet!

You ask me to comment on my various designs well, here goes. I should point out that I'm totally ignorant of the mathematics of naval architechure and all my designs are done the old neolithic way by experience, guesswork and an intuitive feeling for what will work well and look graceful and be beautiful into the bargain.

I designed my first canoe in 1966 I should point out here that, in Britain, of course we use the generic term 'canoe' to cover anything which is propelled by a paddle, whether it's a single or a double bladed one. However, you'll be pleased to know we refer to boats that are used mainly on the sea as 'kayaks'. Still with me? To be confused even further, read on!

I was forced to design my own kayak for the simple reason that there were no sea kayaks on the market which were suitable for someone as nervous as me. I first ventured onto the sea in what could only be described as a kayak in the loosest possible terms. It was called a PBK 10 (it was 10 ft long) and it was very wide. Because of this it was considered safe. As I remember, my damn feet were never dry, woodwork had to be varnished, and the canvass had to be repaired from time to time. In the event of a capsize, the sea would be littered with debris like a major disaster area, with my backrest, foam seat cushion, and everything else that was'nt fastened in floating off in all directions.

There were a couple of 'things' that were sold as sea kayaks; one I remember well as being modelled (the public was led to believe) on a Greenland Kayak. Unfortunately you had to be an eskimo to get into it, or at least have narrow hips, legs which bent the opposite way to everyone elses and nerves of steel. My friend and I both built one of these narrow beamed, lathe and fabric nightmares, and my ocean kayaking career almost terminated before it started. In those days, anyone who could roll a kayak could draw a crowd, and my crowd drawing capacity was very limited. I have a horrifying vision of my friend capsizing about 100 yards from some weed covered rocks one miserable foggy day and SWIMMING WITH THE KAYAK FASTENED INEXTRICABLY TO HIS BACKSIDE all the way to the shallow water. We then put an end to the kayak before they put an end to us I know I gave mine generously to a local school, (well, I had made a nice job of it!)

My first kayak design was the North Sea Tourer. At that time it was the best and although out of date now, I believe there are still some modified models about which are extensively used in Australia. I was lucky in that I hit upon an excellent hull shape first go; and it was only in 1975 that I decided to do a few modifications which would give taller people more foot-room and a little more stability.

I called the revised kayak the 'Baidarka' and it was in this that three of us made the first and only crossing of the North Sea. We actually had two attempts. The first, in 1975, almost killed us (it's a good yarn) but in 1976 we succeeded after a 31 hour non-stop paddle. The hull shape was ideal but I'd cut the stern off sharp so that a rudder could be fitted. It looked awful and anyhow, nobody in their right mind used a rudder anyway in Britain. And anyhow, they usually break in the worst possible position and get wrapped around nets and lobster pots, etc.

The next modifications to the Baidarka came three years later. I decided to do some paddling in the Aleutian Islands but before going I made some more alterations to the hull. I gave it more legroom by raising the deck and built up the bow and stern to give it an appearance reminiscent of the baidarkas of the Aleuts. The 'Baidarka Explorer' as I called it was a complete success. The hull in cross-section, in the centre below the waterline, is semi-elliptical with just a perseptive keelson. Fore and aft the keelson becomes more prominent and the cross section is more 'V' shaped. The keel line is straight, but about 20 inches from the stern, I developed the keel to form a shallow skeg, which is still an intergral part of the hull shape. I placed the cock-pit slightly aft of centre to give the kayak a powerful bouyant forward section. The result was a kayak with incredible directional stability. The boat actually seemed to cut a groove in the water and then slide

along it, having no tendency to waggle at each paddle stroke or be pushed off course by waves buffeting on the beam. This quality was especially noticeable in a following sea, and it's possible to ride at right angles or diagonally across waves in a quatering sea and still remain on course. I designed the bow so that it would throw the water sideways when plunging into a head sea. Although the Explorer has a width of only 21 inches, stability is no problem and a sheltered, protected feeling is given by the comfortable cockpit. (When you get to my age you've got to be comfortable!) The seat is well down in the hull and gives the thighs plenty of support.

This new kayak proved so popular that I had a slight disagreement with the firm in Britain that was producing it under licence at the time. It was all rather sordid and they seemed a little confused as to the ownership of the design - them or me! The whole affair took three years to sort out, and although it all ended very happily for me (in a settlement out of court) it meant that my beautiful design was 'sub-judice' (or something) for three years. So, it was during this time that I decided to design another sea kayak. Now there were two kayaks in the world that I admired, one was my own (naturally), and the other was one built by a very good friend of mine called Frank Goodman. He had designed a kayak called the 'Nordkapp' in 1975 and I wanted my new boat to have the best qualities from both of these designs. It had to be graceful, fast, but also stable enough so that I could be towed backwards!! The reason was simple - I had an expedition planned to film the killer whales of Prince William Sound in the Gulf of Alaska. I needed a kayak that would also be stable enough to film from even in rough weather and also while on the move. It would have to run straight but I also wanted to be able to turn the kayak quickly if the need arose. I called the new kayak the 'Umnak Ice Flow'. I started off by designing a general purpose boat only 15½ feet long. This was for paddlers who normally liked to paddle slalom kayaks on the sea. I called this kayak the 'Umnak'. I then used the amidships section of this one on which to base the design of the Umnak 'Ice Flow' expedition kayak. When I finished I was rather pleased with the result and I felt that I'd achieved something quite unique.

I gave the new kayak a width of 21 inches and a much less sharp gunwale line than other sea boats. Instead of giving it lots of volume at the bow and stern I kept those parts as fine as I could, although I had to be careful, of course, in case problems with the laminar flow ensued. I got it right, however (even for me things go right sometimes!) and the results were obvious in rough seas. In a wave trough the less buoyant bow and stern allowed the kayak to settle lower in the water. The broad amidships section then had a chance to give maximum stability - this is not the case with kayaks that have too much volume at the ends because they tend to lift the hull up too high causing a condition we are all too familiar with.

On top of a wave crest, these less buoyant extremities hang in fresh air. This doesn't matter because the broader section amidships is still providing stability directly under the paddler. I designed the bow to slice down into steep oncoming, windblown seas (we get lots of wind here) but most important of all I wanted it to slice out again, cleanly, thus keeping the occupant dry. The kayak has a powerful forefoot and this, together with the rest of the keelson gives the boat its straight running qualities. If the hull is leant over sideways, however, turning or correcting your track becomes very easy. If the hull is leant really well over, the skeg at the stern can be raised high enough to plane over the surface of the water and the kayak almost spins round. This very pleasing quality was purely accidental however and was an added bonus to all its other qualities.

The result of all this designing has given me a great deal of happiness. After all, I design kayaks to please myself and not to please others ... but I like kayaks to look beautiful with plenty of flair. By the number of Baidarka Explorers and Umnaks being sold it's obvious that there are more show offs than me in the world. However, you can't please everybody and I had a number of requests to produce the Baidarka without the turned up ends. The result was the Dawn Treader, which was just the updated hull of the Baidarka with the graceful stern of the original North Sea Tourer left on. Basically both the Dawn Treader and the Explorer are identical except for the turned up ends and both have the hull of the kayak that did the North Sea crossing.

The Dawn Treader is now being built by a very good craftsman in Seattle called John Abbenhouse at Northwest White water The Ice Flow is being built by Dancing Bear & Hutchinson Fine Sea Kayaks, Juneau, Alaska. D.C.H.

REPORT ON THE 5TH INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAKING SYMPOSIUM

by Stuart Fisher, Editor of the 'Canoeist'

The Advanced Sea Kayak Club held their fifth bi-annual symposium at the Ullswater Outward Bound Mountain School, so avoiding a repeat of the embarrassment of the previous symposium where Britain's leading sea paddlers were caught out by a high tide and had to rush from a lecture to move their cars. This year's conference was considered to be the best yet with no paddling but having a well balanced and full lecture programme. A group of Irish paddlers were the only overseas contingent at what was billed as an international symposium but the deliberations of leading British sea paddlers usually have implications for paddlers on a wider front.

Survival in a Hostile Environment

Fred Fearnley, chief instructor with Survival Aids and the mastermind behind the ending of the Ianian Embassy siege, opened the action with a hard hitting lecture on a subject which should never be needed unless a sea trip goes wrong, as they sometimes do.

He listed out the enemies of survival. The body can hide pain when the mind is occupied. Cold is insidious and numbs the mind, body and will to survive. Thirst can dull the mind but can be forgotten if the will to survive is strong enough. Hunger lessens the ability for rational thought. Fatigue reduces mental ability and causes carelessness while boredom and loneliness allow situations to deteriorate.

There are three kinds of fear, fear of the unknown, of the paddlers own weaknesses and of discomfort. Acceptance of fear leads to purposeful action. Fear is a safety trigger. Fearless people take unnecessary risks.

The aids to survival are equipment, training and the right mental attitudes. Danger stems from, 'It can't happen to me. I'm fireproof.' Preparation and planning prevent poor performance. The will to live, the desire for self preservation never to stop trying are paramount.

To survive, the paddler must be able to make up his own mind, be able to improvise and be able to live with himself. He must keep his humour going and keep up the spirits of the others with him. He must be able to adapt to the situation but stay cool, calm and collected. He must hope for the best but prepare for the worst, have patience, be able to take it, be able to live with others and know where his special fears and worries originate.

A group must be able to organise its manpower to keep everyone occupied and make selective use of personnel. People must be able to accept suggestions and criticism. Consideration must be given to the time available and the survival equipment of the group must be checked. The situation must be surveyed, survival knowledge and skills drawn on and reaction speed in survival emergencies must be adequate.

Fred advocates survival training courses of the kind which his firm runs. 'Death is God's way of saying you should have done survival training.'

Bruce Campbell opened the discussion with a suggestion that the containers of waterproof matches produced by Survival Aids would be better if the striker was on the inside of the lid where it would remain dry, rather than on the outside. Fred agreed and, to his credit, produced the modified product the next day.

Eric Totty originated a discussion on lightweight tents. Gortex is not fully proven and it must be expected that spray will come through in a heavy gale. Gortex bivvy bags have been used successfully in the Falklands although there may be condensation inside. Nick Padwick reckoned Gortex tents were good for a force 11 gale if sealing is placed over the stitching. Fred simply uses a poncho instead of a tent to save weight. Fibre pile sleeping bags have both weight and bulk penalties when packed.

The effect of shock was discussed. One delegate had been the first on the scene of a major rail accident. He had worked well for 4 hours before delayed shock knocked him out. He came round in hospital 21 hours later.

Frank Goodman warned of the danger of thinking that training could cover all situations. There was always bound to be an unexpected incident that had not been covered.

Corsica.

Barry Howell provided some light relief with a review of his circumnavigation of Corsica which, he noted, is also a white water river paradise yet to be discovered by British paddlers. A slide show set to 'Reflections' produced some idyllic settings while some slides seemed funnier with hindsight. One showed jets

passing over the group on bombing runs with live ammunition. A series of pictures showed an experiment with a spinnaker on a windsurfer mast. Reducing the size to make it sufficiently stable had the effect of reducing the speed to that at which it was possible to paddle anyway. The only regular problem the team had met had been shortage of water which had resulted in light headedness, although Barry did concede that this might also have been due to the 5l container of red wine strapped to his rear deck.

Expedition Medicine

Dr. Robin Illingworth took a look at problems arising on expeditions, covering various injuries, diseases and preventative injections, hygiene, cooking and food. His dry humour was interspersed with shock slides which caused people to think hard.

His approach was a practical one. For tinosynovitis he suggested rest or splints or, if these were not reasonable, unfeathered paddles or, failing this, aspirin or, if the paddler is allergic to aspirin, anti-inflammatory drugs.

For a blood blister under a nail, the end of a piece of wire, such as a paper clip, could be heated up and used to burn through the nail to release the pressure, a method more likely to upset onlookers than the patient.

First aid kits could also be used for repairing other equipment although as discussed afterwards, canoe repair kit could also be used for first aid work. Polythene bags were claimed to be better at heat retention than space blankets which were no good as radar reflectors either.

If all else fails and a helicopter is called out, let the loop lowered down earth before touching it as it usually has a charge on it.

Finally, the requirements to treat locals while undertaking expeditions was reviewed.

Questions included the side effects of excessive use of dehydrated food. Robin reckoned it would take three months for scurvy to set in although tiredness would be felt sooner.

Asked about the medical insurance cover needed, Robin suggested £25,000 to include carriage home, a figure which should be increased to £100,000 for North America. Canoeing came in the 'wilful exposure to needless peril' category.

Replying to a question on ways of dealing with hypothermia, he recalled having 8 people in a Vango to get the air temperature up.

A paddler asked about a problem he had with cracking on the ends of his thumbs after immersion in cold salt water on long trips. Robin suggested the use of lanolin-based creams and gloves.

Eric Totty closed the proceedings with the statement that he had the delusion that doctors were getting younger.

Shetland.

Another enthralling expedition review came from Nick Padwick, his slides of Shetland set to Pink Floyd's 'Echoes'. Here were caves like cathedrals, close ups of sea otters and paddlers being attacked by skuas. The team met conditions like those which hit the Fastnet Race. A 'V' shaped wave threw Nick a boat's length into the air at one point. They met a tide race powerful enough to kill a full Atlantic swell. Perhaps the strangest incident happened after two of the four paddlers had dropped out. The two remaining ones completed a long sea crossing between two islands and, on entering an inlet, stopped paddling simultaneously, feeling it to be unwelcoming. Going ashore, they found it was exactly 101 years since a storm had drowned 60 men from the tiny fishing community which had been sited there.

American Sea Kayaking Scene

Frank Goodman surveyed the U.S. paddling scene, basing his observations on his two recent trips out there. The U.S. has more predictable sea conditions and their paddlers are rather hurt because we are ahead of them in sea canoeing.

On the west coast there are two camps supporting wide and narrow beam kayaks and the two don't talk to each other. It is possible to find people with stop watches timing sea kayaks to see how many seconds it takes to turn each model. Some sea racing boats are making their appearance.

The east coast is the preserve of the hunting, shooting and fishing group. Paddlers might be seen shooting venison with a bow and arrow from a 4.3 m boat or catching stripped bass heavier than the 15 kg boat they are being caught from. More time is spent looking at the scenery and it is an older person's sport.

They don't like to suffer like we do and their attitude to food is something else. Boats have backrests and sea socks, tried by Alan Byde and Eric Totty 25 to 30 years ago, are in use. Frank has been experimenting and found sea socks don't catch the feet if there is plenty of material and they are secured to the footrests.

The Americans like the British rescue methods although Frank did come across a buoyancy aid on a back deck which inflates like a life raft.

Wilderness Experience in Alaska

Despite her trip down the Copper River in an inflatable canoe, Joan Busby's talk was something of a diversion, being more related to her climbing activities. It was amusing to note how often Joan had to be excepted from the theories of ensuring speakers.

A couple of useful ideas for those likely to enter grizzly country. Grizzlies don't like moth balls and camping in the middle of bushes stops them approaching quietly.

Planning a Small Expedition.

Derek Hutchinson was to have started the second day's proceedings but his car broke down on the way. John Ramwell went to meet him but ran out of petrol and Derek never did get there.

Nigel Winser started instead. There are a growing number of expeditions, a travel trip becoming an expedition when it is written up and published so that others can learn and benefit. He said that information available from libraries, universities, the B.C.U., the A.S.K.C., the Institute of Geological Science, Kew Gardens and many other sources. The Royal Geographical Society, where he is based, has a series of fact sheets on different countries at £1 each.

Planning should consider what work is to be done during the course of the expedition, the timescale, the size of the team and the budget. Critical Path Analysis could be used for the planning stage. Budget key items are the number of man days, the cost per day, the freight weight, the equipment value and the travel cost. If the finances or time run out it is important that the team are agreed on what should be cut from the expedition schedule.

Brochures or letter headed paper have been found to give a success rate of up to 5% when looking for support but you have to ask yourself who would want to pay for you to go on your trip. Free airfreighting may be available but can take a long time. Discount air fares may be offered, especially if there is to be a magazine write up afterwards. Travel details should not be emphasised. 80% of expedition deaths result from road accidents. Don't use local taxis if possible.

Expedition members have a responsibility to themselves, their team, family, friends, discipline, sponsors, school, university and to those they meet. Nigel was on an expedition to Ethiopia which caused offence by simply coming home at the end of the trip. The locals expected them to maintain contact with return visits there.

With large expeditions some of the local support team might be invited back to Britain for a period of training.

In many countries there may be military involvement.

Kissenger said, "Choose people for your team for their character. Intelligence you can hire". Canoeists are lucky in that they knit together as teams better than those in most other kinds of expedition. Everyone should do more than his/her share. There is no such thing as an expert, only those who got it right last year!

Some years ago a Japanese team caused offence by carrying out a duck survey in Hyde Park. People asked what right they had to be there. What right have you to be doing what you have planned where you intend to go?

Forum

A forum with Frank Goodman, Joan Busby and Nigel Winser on the platform began ranging over a variety of subjects. Eric suggested expedition members should get together beforehand and agree to support the aims of an expedition. Frank suggested a shakedown paddle. At Cape Horn they had no leader and the wind was changing faster than they could make up their minds. They changed their minds about one crossing three times in an hour. Joan suggested a good leader will call a rest when the weakest member flags so that he/she doesn't lose face.

Jonathen Iles suggested separate tents for all to avoid problems which occur when there are more than one group in separate tents. Joan preferred to see partners being swapped when cliques began to appear.

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A suggestion was made that existing information might be ignored in order to discover it all for oneself. Nigel suggested that this would not gain sponsorship. Michael O'Connell is considering doing a circuit of the Irish Sea without maps or aids, avoiding people and treating it as a wilderness trip.

Nigel suggested that scientific observations could be important in areas not usually visited. Derek Hairon wanted to know how to find out who wants what research done. There was no central information, Nigel said, but went on to list projects from bird observations to sampling of sea water. N.A.S.A. are preparing a project which will give data on every 10 m sq. of the earth's surface and for which information will be required.

Frank thought a sea kayak was not a good vehicle for scientific work but Eric and Nick claimed that a kayak does not disturb wild life and can approach closely. Paddlers are not as noisy as authorities think. Alan Byde was concerned by officials telling us where we cannot go. Marine nature reserves could stop paddlers using parts of the coastline. Nigel Dennis quoted the case of an instructor banging his deck at the South Stacks in order to make thousands of sea birds fly just to entertain his charges. There is talk of a ruling to stop boats using the Menai Straits under pain of a £200 fine. After much discussion there was a call for a compromise with the conservationists and for sea kayakists to improve their public image, a role for the B.C.U., John Ramwell said. An Irish paddler thought training should emphasise conservation. Frank felt that any progress would have to come from outside the B.C.U.

Safety at Sea.

Having spent the weekend wandering round with a large pair of calipers measuring the hips of delegates, Alan Byde announced his findings before setting out to change the entrenched attitudes of others in a lecture which raised some hackles. He began with his pod and castigated an unnamed manufacturer and blamed the trade for not taking up an idea which they had agreed to be sound.

He said that we must find a boat which is suitable for our purpose and that we are rediscovering many ideas from the past. We are not hunters and do not need Inuit Kayaks. We need a broad beam to be safe. The voyagers of old, he claimed, managed performances as good as those of today in boats broad enough to sleep in. He advocated the American Traveller.

There should only be one hole, the cockpit, and its rim should be as high as possible. If hatches must be used they should be raised, not recessed. Spare paddles should be inside the boat as it is not possible to pull a spare blade from the rear deck and roll with it. There should be no front hatch. It is better to put tubes of tins in from inside.

He didn't recommend the sea sock, having nearly been killed by one wrapping round his legs on a dumping beach. He supports the idea of bag hatches but is opposed to hand pumps.

He was opposed to B.S.M.A. 91, considering its safety aspects a load of waffle. It was a vague on wrap-around accidents. Did the Trade think safety unprofitable? The B.C.M.A. did not represent the interests of users and the B.C.U. didn't always. He went on to detail objections to the boats approved by the B.C.U.

There was not time for a formal discussion but there was plenty of informal heated chat over dinner.

Marine Bird Life

The tempo was lowered by Mike Mills who started canoeing in order to watch birds which always seem to live on islands. He found that sea canoeists can stir up water containing food for sea birds and that sea canoeists can reach islands, caves and such remote places where others cannot get. Many places are of interest to both. There is a lack of bird watchers on the west coast of Scotland for example, despite the large numbers of interesting species.

His range of slides also showed skuas attacking human beings.

He was aware of the conflict between canoeists and conservationists. The Farnes were one place where birds became agitated when a canoeist goes near a nest. This may stop a nesting bird sitting, resulting in the eggs getting too hot in the sun. Alternatively guillimots may knock their eggs off their rock shelf nests when they are disturbed.

With the correct approach there is great scope for canoeists to plug gaps in existing knowledge.

Greenland.

Mike Twiggs rounded the proceedings off with coverage of the British Schools Exploring Society expedition to Greenland last summer. Some of the children had never been in a canoe when they attended the training course at Trearrdur Bay.

They faced paddles through vast ice sculptures during their time in Greenland.

The leaders had a short expedition of their own in which they found one piece of water described at Corryvreckan with icebergs!

Mike finished with a phrase which had been heard from several of the speakers over the weekend, "To me, this is what sea canoeing is all about".

The A.S.K.C. will be producing a full and comprehensive report of this symposium which will be useful as a reference document on expeditions for sea canoeists. Details as to its availability and cost will appear in this Newsletter and the canoeing press in due course.

IMPORTANT NOTICES IMPORTANT NOTICES

Newfoundland Trip (Summer 1984)

Looking for two to three kayakers who are interested in paddling along the northern coast of the Island of Newfoundland. This island is part of Canada's most eastern Atlantic Providence of Newfoundland and Labrador. Newfoundland has outstanding scenery - coastal mountains, fishing villages, small coastal islands, icebergs and lots of wildlife. Most of all, it has friendly people; the most friendly I have met anywhere.

Tentative dates: July 28 - August 10, 1984 (we will be back in time to attend the '84 Sea Kayak Symposium in Maine)

Trip Location: White Bay or Notre Dame Bay on Newfoundland's northern coast.

Experience required: Intermediate or above; must be able to roll and/or perform other self rescues depending upon type of boat (single or double)

If interested, write to Tom Trump, 388 Nature Trail Lane, Murrysville, PA 15668, U.S.A. or phone 412/327-1882 (home), 412/586-7771 (work)

West Coast of France

The French Association CK/mer informs us that it is organising an INTERNATIONAL SEA CANOEING WEEK at the Isle of Re, on the west coast of France, from the 5th. to the 13th. May, 1984. This sporting event is open to all experienced canoeists who possess a sea canoe.

The principal activity will be the exploration of this beautiful island by a leisurely 4 to 5 day trip around it's coastline.

Also on the programme will be surf canoeing, eskimo rolling, bird watching, as well as free time for lazing in the sun, fishing, swimming or meeting the locals.

A small corner of paradise 20 minutes off LA ROCHELLE, "Re la Blanche Island enjoys a sunny climate. Spring comes early here. With its 2600 annual hours of sunshine, the Isle of Re is a favourite haunt of painters who particularly appreciate its light. The greenery, the colours and general character bring to mind the Mediterranean rather than the majestic Atlantic but the tonic fresh ocean air underlines the sparkling difference.

Approx cost : 300 F.F. each participant.

For further information contact: Christian GABARD, 10, Rue Simon Letoile, 92 260 FONTENAY AUX ROSES, FRANCE. (Tel (1) 660 72 12

CHALLENGE SPORT CAN REPLACE THE AGGRESSIVE ACTS OF OUR ANCESTORS - says Roy Rosenthal,
of California.

Here he gives his views:

We don't have the challenges of old. We used to hunt for food, defend our borders and these days we are only using twenty per cent of our aggressive motivation. Sport that challenges us, and involves a risk of some kind, is enormously beneficial and far more effective than the psychiatrists couch.

My idea is that all young people should involve themselves in challenge. This is not to say they should take absurd risks but it is to say they will benefit by being exposed to some endeavour more threatening to them than merely watching a thriller on television.

Our genes have been coded to receive stimuli resulting from a challenge which may be anything from climbing a mountain, to hurtling down a fast flowing river in a canoe. We thrive on this and if it is absent from our life then well motivated people become listless, and turn to things destructive.

From Boundless Enterprises, 1668, Duranleau Str., Granville Island Maritime Market,
Vancouver, Canada, V6H 3S4.

Announcing a new quarterly magazine on sea canoeing - so new, it's title has not yet been chosen. It is to cover the North American sea canoeing scene predominantly. Interested - then send \$ 10.00 (US) to the above address.

An A.S.K.C. member, Kevin King, runs a guest house at Weymouth. Described as :
"A family guest house with a friendly and homely atmosphere. Children are most welcome. Good home cooking with varied menus."

Kevin is offering special rates for A.S.K.C. members. You can contact him at:

Marvin Guest House,
6, Carlton Road South,
Weymouth, DT4 7PJ (Tel - 03057 73321)

THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY are keen to learn of any expedition undertaken by sea canoeists. An expedition is defined as any trip of any duration where the participants have come back and written a report on it.

They would be very grateful for a copy of your report for their library. Once on file they are able to provide those seeking for information on the area you have visited with sight of your report.

The Royal Geographical Society ask that you register any expedition with them at
THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY,
1, Kensington Gore,
London,
SW7 2AR..... from where Registration forms may be obtained.

Remember, the R.G.S. is a store house of information when it comes to planning any expedition to remote and wild areas. I know - I've used it myself.

THE A.S.K.C. is also responsible for maintaining a library of Expedition Reports. Please keep them coming. Our library is quite comprehensive.

Send a stamped and adress envelope for a list of available reports.

This valuable service relies on you sending your reports, so remember us when distributing them.

1984

INTRODUCTION I have been arranging this sea canoeing course every alternate year for some time now. The idea is to combine a camping holiday with some sea canoeing and so the prime functions are enjoyment, coaching and safety. You should be up to, if not beyond, Sea Proficiency standard. IF you have a B.C.U. Log Book - bring it with you. This is meant to be a family holiday; bring the wife/husband and kids and/or girl/boy friend. The week coincides with Gatehouse Gala week so there is plenty for everyone to do while we canoeists are on the water.

VENUE A camp-site in the middle of Gatehouse of Fleet, Kircudbrightshire, S.W.Scotland. It lies on the A75 between Castle Douglas and Newton Stewart.

COST You pay your own camp-site fees and for your own food, it being self catering apart from the last night when we have a communal barbeque. The coaching fee is £6.00 per head which includes the cost of the barbeque. The cost to non canoeists over the age of 16 yrs is £4.00 per head. Make cheques payable to the A.S.K.C. to which any funds remaining are placed.

EQUIPMENT No equipment is provided. You will need the obvious basic sea canoeing equipment all in sound condition. Sea kayaks are preferable but not essential. You will need camping gear of course both for base camp use and for overnight use whilst on the two day trip.

CLOSING DATE 30th. June, 1984

***** *tear off and return to *****
J.J.Ramwell, 4, Wavell Garth, Sandal, Wakefield, W.Yorkshire

NAME..... ADDRESS.....
.....Post Code.....

Signed Dated

Please find cheque/postal order (to A.S.K.C.) for £.....

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SOFTWARE FOR SEA CANOEISTS

Kayak coats and overtrousers in P.U./Nylon or Gortex*, waterproof packing bags in neoprene/nylon. Protective A4 Tidal Stream Atlas cases, cockpit covers, spray covers (double thickness with pockets pr single) Buoyancy aids and bum bags. Special Order Department and new Gortex Bivvy Bag.

All from 'SKERRIES' 9, The Green, Kirksanton, Millom, Cumbria, LA18 4NP
(Tel 0657 3031)

Sean S.A.E. for further details.

NOTICE

A SEA CANOEING MEET AND THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH CANOE UNION SEA

TOURING COMMITTEE IS PLANNED FOR THE WEEKEND OF 9th and 10th. JUNE, 1984.

SEND FOR DETAILS AND APPLICATION FORM TO J.J.RAMWELL, 4, Wavell Garth, Sandal, W. Yorkshire, W.F.2 6JP.
