

# NEWSLETTER

OF  
THE

## Advanced Sea Kayak Club

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



### AIMS

1. PROMOTION OF SEA KAYAKING
2. COMMUNICATION
3. ORGANISATION OF EVENTS AND MEETS, ETC.
4. SAFETY & COACHING

Editor & Secretary:

John J. Ramwell,  
4, Wavell Garth,  
Sandal,  
Wakefield,  
W. Yorkshire,  
WF2 6JP

EDITORIAL

Another ASKC newsletter already! I thought that as I have material to send out, it may as well go - so here it comes.

First, I want to mention the B.C.U. Sea Touring Committee A.G.M. scheduled for the weekend of the 9th and 10th June, 1984. We have booked a friendly hotel where we can wine and dine in comfort (and why not!) and we have been provided with our own private bar for the A.G.M. and a showing of a video film entitled 'Nanook of the North'. We have arranged sea trips on both days and we can take up to 30 (no limit to the A.G.M.) so first come .... and all that. For further details and application form send to me at 4, Wavell Garth.

There is quite a bit of interest in our sea canoeing holiday at Gatehouse on the S.W. Scottish coast from 28th July to 4th. August. Again, full details from me.

Kevin Mansell has sent me a copy of the Jersey Canoe Club Expedition to Spitsbergen Report. It is very good and is available from him at 2, Teresa Court, Old St Johns Rd., St. Helier, Jersey, Channel Isles..... @ £1 (inc. post & pack).

Geoff McGladdery of Wye Kayaks wrote to me recently.....

"Perhaps you might like to include a mention of Krista Nicholson and Dave Johnston in the next issue of the Newsletter. Krista and Dave are shortly to set out on the 1,000 mile journey from Vancouver to Glacier Bay in Alaska. They hope to complete the trip by late summer. They have chosen to use the new 'Islander Expedition' for the trip. I should be receiving regular communications, slides, etc. as the trip progresses and I will keep you informed."

- \* The report on the 5th International Sea Kayaking Symposium held at Ullswater Outward Bound School last November is now almost ready and will cost you £2.00 per copy.
- \* You will remember that the theme of the symposium was sea kayaking expeditions and we
- \* tapped on to knowledge and information from many sources, including the Royal Geographical
- \* Society. Consequently this report has been produced as a reference document for
- \* expeditions as well as a full report on the proceedings of the symposium.

SEND FOR YOURS NOW to me at 4, Wavell Garth.

As promised, this edition of the ASKC newsletter is a TENT SPECIAL. Now that we have finished with tents - well, at least for the time being - we have another project to put to you. I must emphasise that it is not to be taken too seriously. Our sea trips are a bit like the fishermen's tale - they get bigger for the telling! We, Jonathon Iles, Mike Twiggs and I, thought (whilst having a 'fiasco' on the Wash last weekend) that we ought to have a laid down scale of criteria before being allowed to refer to any of our trips as an EPIC. Let me have your ideas and views on this and I will go into print in due course. Remember - it is only a 'fun project' - for goodness sake, don't let's get too serious about this

That's it. Hope you like this edition. Keep paddling - and please keep those reports on your expeds coming in, as well as news, views and even criticism (but not too much!)

'Till the next letter,  
Nanook

\*\*\*\*\*

A.S.K.C. SHOP

- Ties @ £2.50 each
- Stickers @ 30 pence each
- Letter headed note paper @ 50 pence per ten sheets
- 4th. National Sea Canoeing Symposium Report @ 75 pence each
- 5th. International Sea Kayaking Symposium Report @ £2.00 each
- T shirts - small/medium/large/X large (yellow or black) @ £3.50 each
- Sweat shirts - small/medium/large/X large (yellow or black) @ £6.50 each
- Information Sheet on Tides & Buoyage @ 75 pence each
- H.M.Coastguards Paper on Safety @ 75 pence each
- Expedition Report on circumnavigation Nunivak Island, Alaska @ 75 each

ALL PRICES INCLUDE POST & PACK.

## TENTS

The following is in response to my recent plea for your opinions on equipment, and to start the ball rolling I asked for information on Tents.

From Kees Doets, In de Wolken 47, Amstelveen, Netherlands.

Dear John,

Here's my opinion on tents.

On rough trips I can choose between a Swedish Fjallraven G 66 and a Norwegian Novrona Ravneskar.

G66: Two poles plus middle bow. Intended for two but on a kayak trip with wet gear, etc. barely sufficient for one. It can take strong winds (designed in 1966 for a Greenland expedition). Very simple, very small, weight below 2 kg (4lbs). I use it and have done so for ten years. Apparently it can take salty atmosphere as I have exposed it to such over the last few years. I like it still.

Ravneskar: Tunnel on three bows (glassfibre). Intended for two but can take three if necessary. I've used it during heavy snow storms with no problems. Weight below 4 kg. Has one problem - elastics in the bows lose their elasticity below freezing; the tent shrinks when dry and will not accept it's bows easily. This problem can be overcome with some adjustments.

General

In Holland, sea kayak enterprises are mainly undertaken among our northern islands where camping has often to be done on the sands with no protection at all. You need sand or snow pins for that and a tent which can handle any wind. Your upper roof should preferably be synthetic and it must go down all the way; you need a shovel to sand the edges otherwise a sandstorm can get underneath and cause problems contaminating food and gear. In my opinion the best thing to have here is a tunnel. It won't blow away and doesn't need many pins. On rock also it's an advantage to have a tent which can be anchored down easily. Domes are a good alternative - but they can have their disadvantages as well. Often the inner tent fills all the space under the roof so that no room for cooking is left. Depending on your kind of stove, this may be rather dangerous. A friend of mine bought an Ultimate Phazor Dome which is nice when it stands - but with Beaufort 4 or over he cannot erect the damned thing on his own, which is quite a nuisance. Domes originated in the U.S.A., but the American brands are quite expensive and there are excellent European tunnels for less money.

General remarks on Fjallraven tents

In Holland they are simply too expensive. If you insist on having one, buy it in Sweden and save 'MOMS' and costumes. Most Fjallraven tents are really very simple compared to Dutch and American tents (but maybe NOT to British tents. British style tents are 'nt very luxurious in our continental eyes). For instance, the G66 has no inner walls at all (and no pockets, no zip in the inner tent - not on the one they made ten years ago). On paper such a tent may look roomy but in reality it offers barely crawling space. Most Fjallraven tents are rather vulnerable due to the materials used which is the utmost in lightweight. On foot, this may be an advantage. With a kayak, this is 'nt quite so important and might be a disadvantage (NB I have no financial interests in this matter - Bo Hilleberg who used to develop the Caravan tents and who is a friend of mine now sells his tunnels (several types) quite cheaply, immediately to the public. They are primarily intended for (winter) use in the Swedish mountains but in my opinion they're very good for all types of rough conditions. If you should be interested, I can lay my hands on a catalogue or an address. His tents are more than worth the money)

## ON RUDDERS

Some time ago a German boat was mentioned in the ASKC Newsletter with a retractable understern rudder. From the description it appears to be the HABEL manufactured by Jurgen Pietsch of Buttjebull, West Germany. I own such a boat and have done so for two seasons and I must say I am quite content with it. For what it gives (no bulkheads, no pump, very little deck facilities) it is rather expensive; compared to British standards definitely not as sporting as Nordkapp or Baidarka (with its 60 cm width more comparable to the latest Hutchinson designs) but in rough conditions this is all to my liking. The rudder is definitely very nice to have (though I still know people who are content with an adjustable skeg or even a fixed one). No more one-sided soreness; easy to turn into unexpected breakers,  
\* \* \* \* \*

With thanks to Brod Beech of Machynlleth for the following:

TEST REPORT - SUBJECT- SAUNDERS BASECAMP TENT.

Over the years I have used a variety of tentage, some good, some bad, and some liveable - just. There is a very wide choice, and the range is increasing all the time. New models, new materials, lighter weight, fewer pegs; I am sure you have read it all before. We decide on our temporary shelters by assessing all the pros and cons, including those of durability and price.

Sea kayaking is a strange game indeed. For most of the day we are but a pin-prick in an enormous major environment. However, although our world appears large, it is in fact only as extensive as the width of our kayaks - or as forward or as rearward as we can reach. For this reason I look for a tent that is fairly large when erect, easily erected, smallish when packed and relatively robust.

I use, at present, a Saunders Basecamp, although, to be absolutely honest, I would like to try some of the dome tents available, because I am sure that these probably surpass the Basecamp which is a little dated in terms of design.

The Saunders Basecamp is a classic ridge type tent, offering accommodation for two people sleeping transversely. It will sleep three, but you need to be very friendly. Construction is straight forward, the flysheet being manufactured from proofed nylon, the inner from cotton with a proofed nylon groundsheet and walls (sewn in of course). The tent offers an entrance at each end with good quality nylon zips. The inner having central nylon zips with two zips along the top of the end walls. The usual cord ties are there for tying back the doorways and the inner has a mosquito proof airvent over each doorway. The poles break down into nine separate sections making up into two uprights and one ridge pole. Pitching is easily achieved with 10 attachment points on the inner and 12 points on the flysheet (excluding apex guys. The Basecamp can be pitched flysheet first if bad weather prevails and taken down in the same manner.

When good weather prevails in the summer months (forever the optimist!), a large tent is not that important, but when the weather is not friendly, a largish tent is desirable, adding to our comfort, particularly if we are tent bound. Storage areas are more than adequate, enough space to cook at one end and gear to live at the other. Moreover, if your unit is part of a group effort, it is possible to drop the inner and get everyone together under one roof for a communal brew or briefing session or listening to the Archers - or more importantly still, filling a small area with many heat giving people, stoves, etc. when exposure needs to be dealt with. One good advantage of this tent when striking camp in bad weather, the inner can be dropped, folded, the kayak passed through both doorways and the kayak loaded in dry conditions; and then the only item to pack wet will be the fly-sheet.

In its' basic form the tent is adequate, although I prefer to modify it by the addition of a rock/snow valance to facilitate pitching the unit when pegs bend on rocky ground. The rubber guys eventually perish but are easily replaced by shock cord which I prefer to the original fitment in any case. I have only really had one serious problem with my Basecamp and that was a tear on one apex in severe wind conditions. The apex tore along a seam and was easily repaired.

My Basecamp has been in use on kayaking trips, mountaineering trips and family holidays since June 1980 and I consider it has given me extremely good value for money. For around £80.00 it must offer good value; and well cared for, it will give very good service over a number of years. I have already stated that it is, maybe, a little dated by modern designs and materials, but it is also a little different in terms of price - in short, good value for money, roomy, good quality, fairly robust, easily pitched. A good tent for our purposes that is readily available.

\* \* \* \* \*

BRITISH ALASKAN KAYAK EXPEDITION 1981 - CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF NUNIVAK ISLAND.

The story of three sea kayakists who managed to get their kayaks out to one of the world's most remote islands and then kayak round it.

Contents include a background to the trip, travel details, description of the Island, account of the circumnavigation, navigation, equipment, photography, food and cooking ;;;;;; and is available to you for 75 pence. Send to J.J.Ramwell.

Over the last few years I have undertaken several extended tours by kayak and have used two different tents during this period. I have reviewed both these tents and the results that are presented very considerably. The first is a tent bought from Millets for just over £50 and the second in the Ultimate Phazor Dome which costs nearly three times as much.

MILLETS MALVERN (POLARIS 3)

This tent was bought in March 1981 from a Millets shop in St. Helier. It cost just over £50 - very cheap when compared to some of the models that are available from more reputable manufacturers. The inner tent is approximately 8 feet long by 5 feet 11 inches wide. At the front it is about 5 feet high. The fly sheet has a three feet extension at the front with two plastic windowpanels.

The inner tent is spacious for two people. I have had four people sleeping in it without it appearing cramped. The height at the front means that getting dressed is easy. It is possible to stand up whilst putting trousers on, etc. On the days when paddling is'nt possible, there is plenty of room for relaxing. People from other tents can come visiting without over crowding.

The flysheet extension at the front is the feature which is probably best for the sea canoeist. It is possible to get out of the wet gear inside the flysheet and there is plenty of room to store canoeing equipment.

The tent packs down quite small so it can be easily transported in a kayak. When it is split between two people carrying is no problem. The only weakness that we have encountered with this tent is that in very strong winds the flysheet can be pushed onto the inner tent at the rear. To overcome this problem we have made a guy rope which goes from the top of the rear pole down to the ground inbetween the flysheet and inner.

I have used this tent extensively in Great Britain as well as Europe in a variety of conditions - for example, winds of up to Force 9 with five days of continuous rain. I believe that it is the perfect tent for the touring canoeists. It is spacious, easy to erect, weather proof, compact when being carried and most of all, it is cheap.

ULTIMATE PHAZOR DOME

During the summer of 1983 I went on an expedition to Sptsbergen - the aim of which was to paddle the whole of the west coast. When planning a trip to the High Arctic, one plans to take the best possible equipment. We chose to take two Ultimate Phazor Domes on our eight week trip.

We added valences around the base of the tent as often it was'nt possible to use pegs as the ground was just bare rock and we used stones and logs to pitch the tent. The tents were easy to erect and seemed a good design. We slept with three people in each tent and it was'nt particularly crowded. The large area covered by the flysheet meant that cooking was an easy task. Unfortunately we did have some problems with the tent that could have proved disastrous. Both flysheets broke, one after only two weeks, so we were reduced to having to sew on ties to that we could close the tent. Then the stitching came undone on one of the inner tents - no real problem, just inconvenient having to sew it back up. The major fault was the breakage of the tent poles. In all, ten poles broke, and seeing as we only had taken four spares it required some ingenious thinking to repair the poles to enable the tents to be erected.

Perhaps we were unfortunate in that we had a couple of sub-standard tents, but I think that there is a warning to be had. Too much status is attached to having expensive 'big name' tents, when in fact, cheaper, less glamorous makes are perfectly adequate for most of our needs.

\*\*\*\*\*

WYE KAYAKS WYE KAYAKS WYE KAYAKS WYE KAYAKS. 31, EAST STREET, HEREFORD.

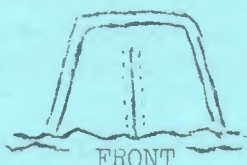
THE ISLANDER SEA KAYAK (We used them in Greenland last year - proved ideal, Ed.)  
The basic Islander retails @ £229.98 (inc VAT) The Expedition Model retails @ £241.48  
Many extras are available - for full details and further advice, consult your nearest 'Islander' dealer or Wye Kayaks, 31, East Str., Hereford. (Telephone: 0432 265453)

\*\*\*\*\*

From Paul Coward, Lydlinch Common, Sturminster Newton

ULTIMATE EQUIPMENT 'PACKER'

As requested a tent review on the above. The 'Packer' is no longer available but the 'Back Packer S' is almost identical except it has a slightly modified entrance. The tent is a roomy one man or mildly cramped two man dwelling. The ridge slopes with sitting room at the front but only a few feet height at the rear. It is light weight - about 6 lbs. - and comes in three seperate bags (useful for stowage). Both the fly and inner tent (with sewn in ground sheet) are made of nylon of very good quality. The fly is cut to allow good air circulation between fly and inner and, as a result, condensation is minimised. The pole system at the front is unuaual and consists of two sleeved uprights -sloping inwards to join a short horizontal pole over the door.



The inner tent is suspended from hooks on the fly sheet and can be dismantled under cover of the fly in wet weather. The tent has served me well and has on no occasion leaked.

Drawbacks:

1. The groundsheet is light weight and some seepage occurs through this when pitching on wet ground - this seems to occur with most light weight ground sheets.
2. The bell end is only just adequate in size for wet gear and cooking under.
3. The front pole assembly has a tendency to rattle in strong winds - although at no time has it failed me.
4. By far the biggest drawback is erection time (I'm saying nothing, Ed.) The front pole system gives a roomy entrance but is definitely not as quick and easy to erect as straightforward A poles.

Over all impression - very favourable if compactness and lightweight is what you want - only problem a little slow to erect in high winds.

I hope that this is of interest.

How about some owners views on a few of the sea kayaks available. I would be glad to comment upon my Lindesfarne Voyager. (Ed. most certainly; hang on for now. Soon I shall be announcing a Sea Kayak Special Newsletter. This has been much requested and before I go into print I shall need to canvass as many reports from owners on as many different types of sea kayaks as I can - watch this space)

\* \* \* \* \*

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

THE B.C.U. SEA TOURING COMMITTEE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
9th. JUNE 1984.

We are making this event into a sea kayaking weekend. Accommodation is a friendly hotel in mid Wales. Sea trips laid on. Good company (I'll be there!) good food and hopefully, fair weather. SEE YOU THERE. Further details from me at 4, Wavell Garth. The A.G.M. is, of course, open to all - just turn up. Venue is the Llugwy Hotel at Machinlleth at 1900 hrs.

\* \* \* \* \*

The following is 'poached' from "Adventure Education" April edition.

The shingled freshness of the wet,  
flat shore, meanders at low tide  
towards the estuary,  
lone boats lie scattered,  
squat in shallow margins.

The atmosphere is not  
for sharing,  
this moment,  
solitary, eclipses everydayness  
and slips transfigured  
into the edges of eternity.

The water line reflects  
a passing sun,  
and gulls persistent  
cry their souls lament  
to no-one in particular.

DORIS CORTI.

\* \* \* \* \*

VIKING DOGGER MALIN & SOLE

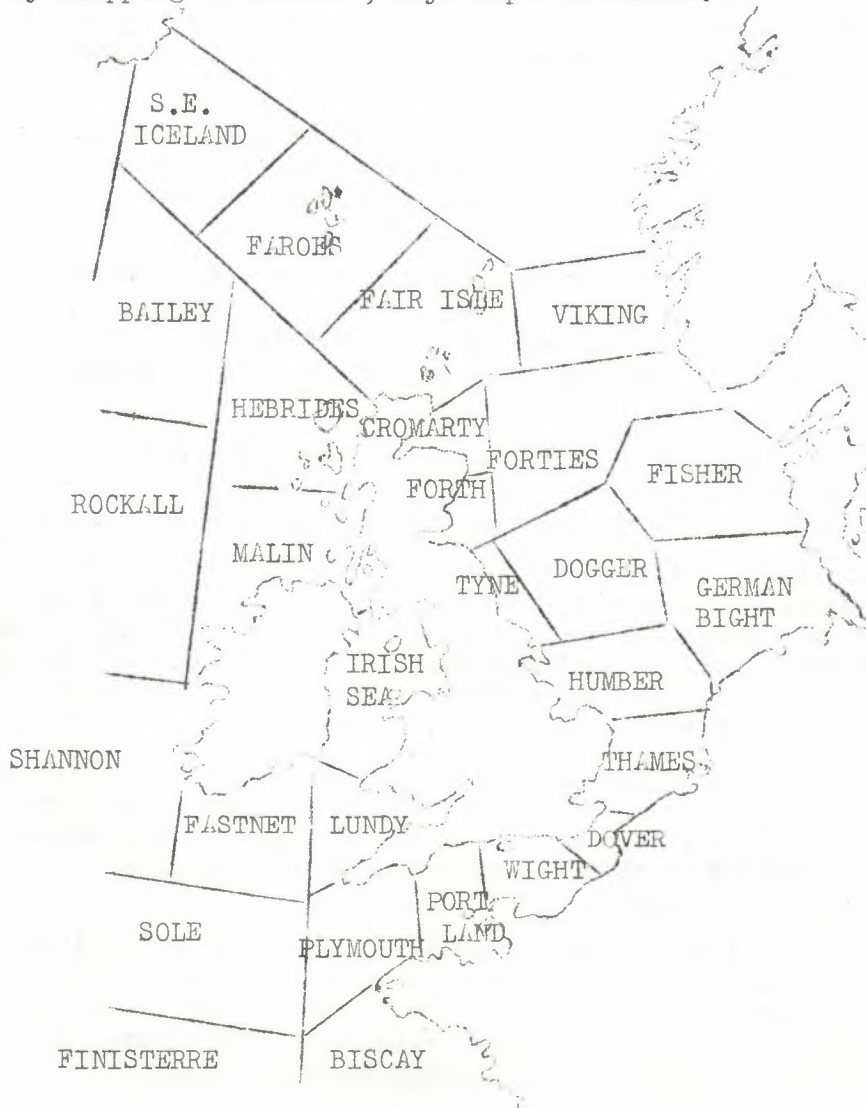
Viking, Forties, Cromarty, Forth ..... the names have cast a spell on daily weather bulletins on the wireless since the days of the Home Service. Dogger, Fisher, German Bight .... they conjure up John Masefield's battling British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack butting through the Channel on mad March days. But where exactly are Finisterre, Shannon, Rockall and Malin; not to mention Bailey and Fair Isle, and all the 29 sea areas for which shipping forecasts have been so reverentially broadcast for more than a quarter of a century?

To most land bound listeners they are almost as unplaceable as the Sea of Despond; almost as mysterious as the precise locations of the 13 coastal weather stations whose reports are also broadcast on the four daily bulletins - places such as Tiree, Varne and Valentia, Dowsing, Bell Rock and Ronaldsway.

Yet although the bulletins are mainly directed at shipping, they are a vital part of British weather forecasting, and helped in the creation of the modern Meteorological Office. As Captain Clive Downes, 50, of the Office's Marine Division puts it, "These days the shipping forecasts may be just a spin-off, but they were the reason the Met Office was established".

The Met Office is constantly struggling to improve the reliability of its forecasting with the use of satellites, computer memory systems and increasingly accurate reporting. Shipping forecasts rely on exactly the same raw data as every other weather forecast, except that their emphasis is directed towards mariners. Likewise the Met Office provides special forecasts for farmers or for British Rail, the latter based on the temperature of the rails.

Reports of the weather at sea are now given by nearly all developed countries and many developing ones. "The oceans of the world are now fairly adequately covered by shipping forecasts", says Captain Downes.



The seas around Britain have always been liable to sudden and dangerous deterioration in their weather - gale warnings and forecasts for ships at sea were started as long ago as 1861 by the first Superintendent of the newly formed Meteorological Office, Vice-Admiral Robert Fitzroy.

He would receive telegrams from various coastal stations describing the weather around them which he then turned into a forecast, telegraphing instructions to ports around Britain to raise storm cones if necessary.

These visual warnings, at the top of flagpoles, were the only alert given to mariners until gale warnings were first broadcast on the wireless in 1911.

But it was in January 1924 when a special "Weather Shipping" bulletin was launched from a powerful Air Ministry transmitter in London, that the seas around Britain were first divided up into the now-familiar evocatively-named areas.

It was then that Channel, Wight, Thames, Humber, Dogger, Forties, Tay, Shetlands, Hebrides, Clyde, Shannon, Mersey and Severn were born. In 1932 three further areas, Orkney, Shetland and Faroes were added.

The names given to the different areas of sea were simply taken from islands, rivers or banks within them.

The broadcasts were suspended during the Second World War, but when they were resumed in 1949, a further 11 sea areas were introduced, and the names of Severn, Mersey and Clyde, were replaced with Lundy, Fastnet, Irish Sea and Malin.

In 1955 it was agreed to rename Heligoland as German Bight (the name by which it was known in Germany and Denmark) and to divide the two large areas of Dogger and Forties in half, creating the new areas of Fisher and Viking.

So, in the romantic list on the radio every evening, Bailey, Sole, Dogger, Fisher, Forties and Viking are named after sand-banks; Lundy, Faroes and Hebrides after islands; Humber, Tyne and Forth after rivers; Fastnet after a rock off the southwest of Ireland and Finisterre after Cape Finisterre in Northern Spain. As Captain Downes says, "They were the obvious names to mariners, and the bulletins are aimed at them".

The method for arriving at the shipping forecasts have changed little since Admiral FitzRoy's day. Although satellite reports are now used to some extent, the principal information is still gathered from land stations (including lighthouses) and ships.

"We still depend on observations of actual weather", Captain Downes says. "land stations and ships at sea make frequent weather observations and return these to the Met Office at Bracknell in Berkshire. From these the meteorologists, using the latest computer methods, and their own experience, project the weather into the future".

There are nearly 250 weather stations reporting to the Met Office every day - some as many as 16 to 24 times a day, some only once - sending their messages in international code via the quickest method available - telex, radio or telephone.

The coastal stations usually report about ten times daily. The forecast for any sea area may depend on observations from up to ten or more of these 'land' stations and those from any ships which may send in information as they pass through. The number of ships sending back reports at any time may vary considerably, although for the last 50 years British merchant ships have been encouraged to provide this service for the Met Office.

Some of the land stations are mentioned by name on the air - places such as Tiree, Sumburgh, Bell Rock, Dowsing, Varne and Valentia - after the forecast for each sea area has been given. If time allows the Met Office will report on weather conditions at up to 13 of these locations, all of them chosen because they are familiar points to mariners.

Not all the weather stations are completely isolated. On the Island of Tiree, the most northerly of Scotland's Inner Hebrides, which lies to the west of the Isle of Mull, the observations are taken at the tiny airport, where the observers (who are Met Office personnel in this case) share the control tower.



Ronaldsway weather station, on the Isle of Man, is also at an air-port; as is Jersey and Sumburgh on the southern tip of the Shetland Isles. Indeed the link between airports and weather observation was forged almost 50 years ago, and observations from civil airliners are regularly supplied to the Met Office for use in their general weather forecasting.

"We don't rely on farmers or housewives for the coastal reports as we sometimes do for inland ones", says Mr. Steve Broomfield, 53, of the Office's Land Division. "The coastal stations have to make reliable readings several times a day, and the majority of them are manned around the clock". But what is the value of these incessant station reports? Captain Downes is in no doubt. "If you are in command of a ship way out in the south western approaches, it is very useful to have an idea of what the weather is actually like where you're going, as well as a forecast".

One coastguard at a station in the south was in no doubt about the value of the shipping forecasts. "You'd be amazed at the number of people who listen to them every single night, and depend on them. We use them, and tell any mariners who contact us about weather conditions - and so do hundreds of amateur yachtsmen who only put to sea one afternoon a week".

Certainly one keen dinghy sailor will be paying particular attention to them later this year. Professor John Houghton - who became the £30,000-a-year Director-General of the Met Office last month - says, "I always listen to the shipping forecasts".

According to Bill Bruce, Publicity Officer at the Meteorological Office's headquarters in Bracknell, general forecasts are already about 85% accurate, and the office hopes to improve the record by developing better and better programmes for its 18 month old Cyber 205 computer - which is capable of 400 million calculations a second.

"But the computer can only be as good as its data", says Mr. Bruce. Information arrives from satellites, radars, weather stations all over the world, ships - and more recently, from commercial aeroplanes, which record temperature, wind direction and speed, then radio their findings to Bracknell or Heathrow.

The Met Office is hoping for more data on global weather conditions - if the number of automatic weather stations can be increased by agreements with other countries at the World Meteorological Office in Geneva. And then there is the sheer unpredictability of the weather. "It's always touch and go, you only have to have a depression which moves four miles .....It would be rash to say we could reach the point of 100 per cent accuracy - but we are aiming for it!"

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

### ROUND IRELAND by Andy Fleck.

Unlike many other trips, mine did not originate in a pub late on a Saturday night. It came about because I wanted to paddle alone, sea canoeing provided the answer. Easter was spent gathering information and writing sponsorship letters. As my finals approached things became increasingly hectic, with my boat to fit out, charts to waterproof and food to pack. The 15th. July arrived after a final two weeks at home. This was meant for training but I got bored and sea-sick on my first day so gave it up as a bad job.

I left my car at the Anglesey School of Sea Canoeing and crossed on the ferry, a big lump in my throat. This soon receded as I skipped customs and got on the water just 20 yards from the ferry. I put in 18 miles that afternoon and dossed in a deserted house. After goulash and rice I called at a house for water. There I told my rather limited story over numerous cups of tea and was invited to breakfast in the morning. During the night plaster fell off the ceiling as the trains went past. After breakfast I pushed on to Wicklow Head and my first tide-race. I camped south of Arklow. Next morning I launched into the face of a thunder storm. An hour and a half later I retired to the safety of a cave as the storm reverberated around me. I had been there 20 minutes when the cliffs shook as a derelict barge, 200 yards along the beach, was struck. That evening I reached Rosslare and the following day rounded Carnsore Point where I turned west.

I pulled in at the village of Fethard on the Hook Peninsula at 5.30., by 6.00 I was enjoying the luxury of a shower in the local V.E.C. Outdoor Pursuits Centre. Chilli-con-carne provided a break from dried food and the company of others was a change from my own. I was sad to leave after a day in their company; however, calm conditions meant I was able to do 35, 28 and 26 miles on consecutive days. I reached Kinsale at lunch time on 22nd. July after crossing Cork Harbour in 10 foot waves, the largest to date. Once more the V.E.C. centre was my home for a day as I had got in touch from Fethard. From there I paddled through the Old Head of Kinsale in a tunnel 150 yards long and 10 feet wide. Trying to get a 17 ft. kayak weighing 200 lbs through a kink in the tunnel that narrowed to 5 ft. is one of the most vivid memories of the trip. I reached Rosscarbery that evening and the day after, Cape Clear Island. Mr. Mrs O'Loideoin have put up most of the people paddling round Ireland in the hostel. However their welcome was no less warm for that. Next day I crossed to Mizen Head and from there across Dunmanus and Bantry Bay. I bounced through the race in Dursey Sound on the morning of the 27th. but there the fun ended as a force 5 sprung up in my face across the Kenmare River, with the wind against tide and every wave breaking over the bow, along the deck, and into my face. It took me  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours to do just 7 miles. Sitting in the lee of Deenish Island I discovered that my bourbon biscuits had disintergrated in my pocket which was the last straw. I arrived at Ballinskelligs tired and very demoralised. After a day off I felt better and moved on to Valentia Island where I camped below the lighthouse. I was entertained by Jeremy Uniacke that evening and sampled my first Poteen (locally brewed potato whisky). Feeling none the worse for it, I crossed to the Great Blasket Island. The island was abandoned in the 1950's but is becoming increasingly popular as a tourist spct.

There I met Tom Daley who paddled round Ireland in 1979. It felt strange to sit on the cliffs with 'America just over the water' to the west.

The following morning I packed in the rain and paddled the 22 miles to Brandon. Warnings of a force 7 kept me in my pit 'till 10.00 am when I hitched into Baile Na nGall, where I met the father of one of the Fethard V.E.C. instructors. He, in turn, introduced me to 'Ger' a local fisherman who rowed a curragh round in 1977. The 2nd. August also saw me stormbound but I made up for this the next day, doing 41 miles across the mouth of the Shannon to Kilkee. That evening a cow walked into my tent breaking a pole and tearing the material. I made repairs but the pole broke repeatedly after this - usually when it was raining. Looking for water I knocked on Joe McMahon's door. He invited me in and then got his brother-in-law, Sean, to listen to my story. Both were very concerned about my safety and offered to transport me three miles up the coast to a better launching place. I refused explaining the need for a complete circumnavigation. Joe saw me off the next morning and I reached Inishmore, the largest of the Aran Islands, by 4.00 pm. This was disappointing as the islanders have no idea about waste disposal and tourism is rearing its ugly head.

I was not sorry to leave, and reached Ballyconeely, my half-way point, after paddling through shoals of jellyfish. Once more, Irish hospitality was evident and Patrick Duane invited me in for tea and cakes. Again I told my story and promised to send him a postcard when I finished. On this, as on many occasions, I felt frustrated that this was all I could do to repay such hospitality. Later I was invaded by ants.

Inishturk was my next stop. With it's golden beach, clear water and tiny harbour, it had a distinctly Mediterranean flavour. I stripped off and had my first wash in two weeks - wonderful! Two days later I passed round the 800 ft. cliffs off Achill Head. They towered over me, rising out of the fog and contrasting strongly with the low, barren Belmullet Peninsula.

I had a rest day at the village of Belderig where Seamus and Ann Caulfield invited me in for a cup of tea. I ended up staying for a day, most of which was spent eating. The whole family saw me off at 6.00 am. on the morning of the 11th, August. I paddled past the sea-stack 'Dun Briste' which was inhabited until the arch broke in the 13th. century. I camped at Pollnadiva and set off for Teelin, across Donegal Bay, in thick fog in the morning. Slieve League looked very close from 15 miles away, but took an eternity to reach. However, paddling under it in the morning the 2,300 foot cliffs were spectacular to say the least.

For the next two days I had following winds enabling me to clock up 72 miles with ease. I paddled round Malin Head in 20 foot waves. My landing at Culdaff caused a stir of excitement when I explained where I had come from; the fishermen had not been out in the bay that day.

From then on it was a question of finishing the trip off. I put in 11½ hours to do the 40 miles to Ballycastle in Northern Ireland. Past Rathlin Island with 4 knots of tide under me and on down the east coast. The tides run north for 9 out of 12 hours on this stretch so I was rock hopping for the next two days. Just north of Bangor I bounced off a rock, damaging the front compartment - a fine 21st. birthday present! To cap that, my catalyst had leaked, but Bangor shipyard gave me some more. After a day of repairs I was "back on the road" and pushing on down the east coast, into the wind and surrounded by fog. Frustration mounted to the point of screaming at the wind as boredom set in. After a spectacular west coast, the east was a real anti-climax. Three days after leaving Bangor I reached Rush, my last stopping place. Despite the frustrations of the last few days, I was sed to unpack my tent for the last time. I camped with the flysheet pegged over the edge of the cliff and had just finished the last of my dried food when I was invited in by Nanny Gray. She gave me tea and rashers, serving as a reminder of the wonderful hospitality which had been such a bonus throughout the trip.

The last morning dawned fine and calm, and I made good time past Lambay Island and Ireland's Eye. Three dolphins circled round the boat and a solitary seal brought back memories of the west coast.

I arrived back at the Royal St. George Yacht Club 40 days after leaving the customs steps there. I landed by myself and was able to reflect for a moment on the past month and a half. Some of it had been bad, a lot of it good, all of it memorable.

Finally my thanks to Damart, Dartmouth Sportswear, Davis Mason and Insulatawear for the clothing. Cags and bags and Whitewater Sports for waterproofs, Lendal for the paddles and Sestral for my compass. Without their support the trip would have been both uncomfortable and impractical.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE ANGLESEY SCHOOL OF SEA CANOEING - TREARDDUR BAY, ANGLESEY.

This excellently sited school is run by Nigel Dennis, a member of the A.S.K.C. of long standing. Rather than go in to a 'potted history' on Nigel, suffice to say that his credentials for running a school of this sort could not be bettered.

Nigel is running the following EXPEDITIONS during 1984

- 23rd. April - 4th. May. Paddle the west coast of Skye and climb the Cullin ridge
- 29th. May - 10th. June. West coast of Ireland. The expedition will pass through the most scenic parts of Ireland and incorporate a number of off-lying islands
- 27th. August - 31st. August. Circumnavigation of Anglesey
- 15th. October - 29th. October. Medeteranian Coast of Spain. The expedition will hopefully cover approx 150 miles of the Spanish coast.

The above expeditions are for people of Proficiency standard and will be run by instructors who have undertaken some major expeditions. The expeditions may be used as Senior Instructor Training or Assessment Courses.

Apply to Nigel Dennis for further details and prices at:

THE ANGLESEY SCHOOL OF SEA CANOEING  
TREARDDUR SCHOOL,  
TREARDDUR BAY,  
ANGLESEY, GWYNEDD

(0407) 860 201

\* \* \* \* \*

The following is from Derek Hutchinson.

#### BACKGROUND TO THE EXTRACT FROM ' FORCE 10 NEWSLETTER

'Force 10 of Elk', California is a kayaking school with a difference - they teach rough water sea canoeing off the west coast of the United States and offer tours of a kind available nowhere else in North America. The boat they use is the 19 feet long "Odyssea" ski and although the amidships seating position is similar to the familiar surf ski, there the similarity ends. The hull is round bilged and has a plaining bow not unlike a modern wind surfer. Because the "Odyssea" is a touring ski, the inside is roomy enough to carry quite a large amount of camping equipment. Access is through the large domed hatches situated on the fore and aft 'decks'.

Steve Sinclair is the chief guide of Force 10 and he is also the editor of their Newsletter.

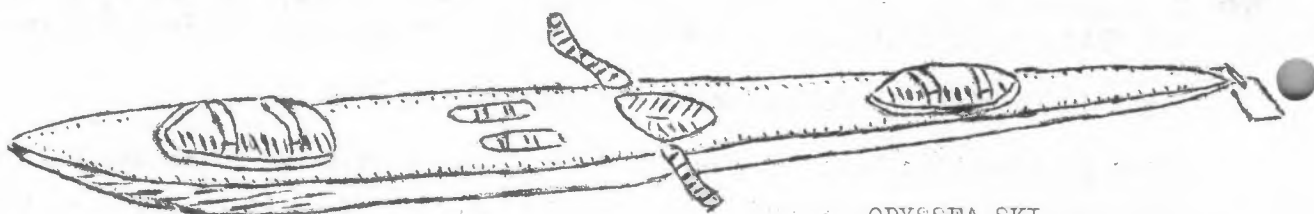
The following extract from their Fall Newsletter gives some insight as to what Sinclair and his colleagues (not to mention Hutchinson) get up to; and also his views on North American kayak designs and construction. (The Dragon House is a sea cave).

Anyone interested in knowing more about Force 10 should contact them at Force 10, Ocean Water Tours, PO Box 167, Elk, California, 95432, U.S.A.

Many North American Ocean kayaks have large cockpits. Some have seats which slide up and down (and fall out) so that the paddler can adjust the trim of his craft. Hatches tend to be much larger than those on European kayaks and they are often held down by turn buttons or thin shock cord. The system of manufacture known as Vacuum Bagging produces a light thin boat ideal for river and racing kayaks, its desirability for sea kayaks is open to question.

#### EXTRACT; FORCE 10 NEWSLETTER FALL EDITION.

The ski tours for the season got kicked off to an interesting start when Richard Calkins picked me up hitch-hiking with a windsurfer on top of the car. He was cruising around looking for things to do while he was in the area for a few weeks, making a movie in Fort Bragg. He was a specialist dog trainer for movies and a really interesting guy. He did great on skis too. Richard learned how to handle some chop with only a couple of sessions. Often ocean sports orientated types pick up on the skis well. Anyway, Richard was an interesting guy and we had a great time..



ODYSSEA SKI

Got to watch Bill McGray, a friend of Tim Taylor's, take off on the skis for the first time. Bill, a veteran ocean man, did a great job. Although he missed the seat squarely, he nevertheless set down and got the paddle moving! He kept forward momentum above all else - he got out past the surf line which he had launched into with perfect timing in-between waves. It was an excellent demonstration of sense-ibility as performed by a first-time kayaker!

Bill is over 50 years of age, with limited use of one arm. I was inspired to watch this skilled water man approach a situation so complicated to kayakers. He made it look easy with no practice.

I had a wild ski run through Dragon House with Martin and Tim, two local enthusiasts. With a south swell running, we went around to Cuffy's short-cut and checked the north entrance to the Dragon House. It was obviously a bit wild and not for the beginners - but I decided to go through anyway because it was'nt any worse than countless other runs.

As usual, I tried to get my timing for a clean run. But within two thirds of the way through I encountered a situation of extreme intensity which required hard, fast action to maintain. The Dragon House is shaped in a long curve; over 60 yards in length. From one entrance you can't see the exit, and so it is dark until you come around the curve and the exit is exposed.

After I negotiated the wild first two-thirds I came around the corner in view of the exit. I could see that a big set was just hitting the Dragon House with only seconds before it hit the opening of the cave! I gave it all I had but the wave reached the cave mouth and closed it, all the way to the ceiling - so for a quick moment it was pitch dark, then the wave tubed and broke. A break of this type is a rare occurrence in Dragon House. This cave usually has a breaking wild water rush - not a tube closing out; a much more radical thing to encounter! I punched into the tubing wall with all I had as it exploded and roared into the cave. I managed to keep it together and maintain as I scratched like mad in the wild roaring pandemonium - to get some headway as I met the next oncoming wave. The next heavy white water blast roared into the cave's opening in a more conventional type of break; yet still closed out the opening to the ceiling - over 20 feet high!

I met the blast with as much as I had, punched into it with maximum pull, clawed and maintained to punch on through a few more smaller waves - and made it clear of the cave. What an experience! A thrill, but one I would choose to avoid! As Charlie Acker said after watching the drama, "That was wild", Martin and Tom were amazed that the ski could handle such extreme intensity. We all had a good laugh as we paddled over to look at the seals.

We never go through the caves in near-such conditions with the K2s; or with a lesson below expert level. The above type of situation is very tricky and could be a disaster in a conventional craft or without appropriate skills.

Another tour on the skis that sticks out in my mind was with a guy named Lew (I can't remember his last name). Lew stated that he wanted to try the skis. After suiting up and all, he told me that he couldn't swim!! "Well," I said, "Ahh, so, hmm?" "Well,,you float in a wet suit!" To which he replied, "Oh, I dive and all, with fins. I just can't swim!" I thought it was wild! So, we went for it and Lew did a great job! We went through a variety of caves, including Gunderson Backdoor, a weird cave I had never before taken a ski tour/lesson through. I finished with a lot of admiration for the guy as he showed no sign of worry or concern in some tricky situations.

To finish our events of interest to date, we took two different trips to Sea Trek Ocean Kayaking Centre. Sea Trek is run by Bob Licht, down in Sausalito. Bobs' outfit provides a variety of services for prospective ocean kayakers. There is a fantastic view of the bay; the city, and Golden Gate Bridge within a short cruise from the take-off beach. Sea Trek is an exciting adventure for visitors to the Bay area.

On August 28th., 1983, we ventured down to Sea Trek to take part in an ocean kayaking workshop. The workshop featured Derek Hutchinson from England as the instructor. Derek is a senior Coach with the B.C.U. We went to the fifth and last day of the workshop. It was an advanced sea kayaking course which had been preceded by days of roll workshops, slides of British Alutian Islands Expedition which was led by Derek, plus various in-water skills were covered. Dereks' skills in ocean kayaking are exceptional; as are his abilities to handle a large group of students and keep things under control. His good humour and stern attitude toward the realities of ocean kayaking are refreshing to experience. Derek did an outstanding job running everyone through strenuous rescue procedures. I felt I could learn a lot (as an American ocean kayaker) from this highly experienced professional, and from the systems worked out by the British who have a great tradition in the sport, and have many skilled ocean kayakers who go through tough examinations to achieve their ratings. I felt a firm relationship with Dereks' attitudes about ocean kayaking and his concern over the lack of acknowledgement of the realities of ocean kayaking which are present among American enthusiasts and kayak manufacturers. Derek and I were both astonished and dismayed at the overall quality of American kayak construction. The quality of most models in the class could barely withstand the rigours of the various rescue procedures Derek taught. The bottoms and decks buckled and cracked under the stress of basic rescue procedures. This demonstrated to me what I have felt for some time; that most ocean kayaks I have seen are much too flimsy for actual ocean kayaking!

In addition to the poor quality of construction of these boats, the skills of the average American ocean kayaker are sorely lacking. The poor quality of these boats reflects a lack of real ocean kayaking - as reflected in their design. The American ocean kayakers' skills could only follow suit to mirror the reality of the crafts

they use. The advise given by various manufacturers is unfounded in actual ocean at sea development.

Ocean kayaking has a great future in the United States with thousands of miles of beautiful shores to explore. I feel the future is in jeopardy if enthusiasts actually head out to sea in most of the existing boats available (condidering the poor skills of most ocean kayakers over here).

I feel it is up to the manufacturers and instructors to take a closer look at the realities of the sea and re-evaluate their crafts and the claims made for the uses of these craft. I also feel that ocean kayaking communities should tighten up on what seems to be a simplistic attitude rampant in this country. It is only a matter of time before the public ventures out to sea with a false sence of security based on the claims made for their craft.; and a false sense of confidence gained from skills developed in protected waters ( and recognized as solid in those situa tions) - hardly a testing or learning ground for ocean kayaking.

There are mary ocean kayak designs available with various handling pluses and minuses. Each boat can be related to, and controlled, perculiar to its handling characteristics. I feel overall that the designs, shape, etc. of most ocean kayaks should heavily be re-evaluated, as there seems to be a lack of understanding of the basic ocean movements represented in nearly all of the designs I have seen,

The fact is that there are a lot of molds, time and money invested in the existing craft and they can all be handled with appropriate skill. The overall failing of most of these craft are their flimsy construction. These craft have to be heavier made, - in some cases much heavier. The mentality at the moment is super light - this super light that; generated from a flat water river racing mentality, and the light weight tape and patch 2 season river rapids mentality. This light construction looses meaning and need in the ocean, where strength and durability are of prime concern. One of the first things I noticed about Derek Hutchinsons' 'Ice Floe'was that it was heavy for a one man boat, but realistically so - to match the demands the ocean puts on anything.

For the prospective ocean kayak buyer I suggest having a look at the model you have in mind. Check its hull, it should not buckle at all with moderate to heavy pressure applied to the middle of the hull. Most of the models I have seen need a much heavier lay-up on the hull, with possibly a keel strip added. This could also be said about the decks too, as was demonstrated at the Sea Trek workshop, where the sound of buckling decks could be heard repeatedly as rescue operations were performed. Your craft should be able to withstand these rescue techniques.

When ordering the kayak you choose, I seriously suggest these qualities be looked into and that the buyer invest any extra money it may take to beef up the craft. You will not regret it as the years go by and you start trying some beach landings and take-offs. Even the best surf kayaker specialist screws up now and then. A well made craft will hold up under the rigours of the learning experience.

My other advice is to the ocean kayaker. Don't underestimate even a flat day at sea. The ocean is totally unpredictable. If you plan to actually go out to sea, even if it's just the San Francisco Bay where heavy chop can occur, be prepared for a capsize! The first step in dealing with the ocean is preperation. Preperation has many forms: choice of craft; preparing the craft; gaining knowledge of ocean aware-ness and skills and, ultimately, KNOW YOUR OWN LIMITS!

The skills of ocean awareness and appropriate techniques can only be gained through practice! Learning the techniques practiced by experts then practicing those techniques until they become natural-automatic is the only safe course to take if you plan to venture out in a small ocean kayak.

If you are fortunate enough to have such a facility as Sea Trek near by, keep a look out for their activities. A course such as Derek's provides a rare opportunity for an ocean kayaker to learn from a tested professional. The skills taught are of primary importance for safe, fun enjoyment in the sport. If you have an opportunity to learn the systems taught by Derek, don't just sit on what you've learnt. Don't be satisfied with a few run-throughs in class - go out and practice these skills until you and your companions have these techniques as second nature.

\* \* \* \* \*

EXPEDITION MEMBERS : Mark Attenburrow, Lyndon Johnson, Steve MacFarlane, John Dunseath, Steve Bowles, Kevin Davies;  
Support Crew ; Jackie Attenburrow, Heikki Kivines.

Tuesday 9th. August:

After a long and hard drive we finally arrived at a pull-in which was to be the start of our expedition. Our first camp site was situated 2 km south of the village of Masi in Northern Norway and just below a 15 m waterfall. This waterfall gave us hours of pleasure as we all worked out routes which we thought it could just about be shot! After a lot of - 'but what if', we decided that we could leave the final decision until tomorrow.

Wednesday 10th. August:

The day got off to a slow start as no-one wanted to be the first up. The thought of all those dirty billies with caked-on Ravens was a horrifying prospect. After breakfast of Muesli and dried milk, we returned to the waterfall. One look and our problems were solved - impossible! it had somehow grown in height over night making only one clear decision possible. Take some photographs of flowers. For this we turned to our scientific advisor, John Dunseath, who informed us that he thought the hill on the other side of the river had the correct habitat balance for our study. We all crossed carrying plastic bags and photographic equipment and about 2 hours later reported back to John. He appeared pleased with our efforts and started immediately to compile the information ready for Birmingham University.

After lunch we started to get ready for the start of the canoeing, with food, repair kit, first aid, dry bags, tents, etc. all being sorted and allocated to the various canoes. Our information told us that we could expect a difficult gorge section somewhere on the Alta River and a spectacular canyon, Northern Europe's largest.

Thursday 11th. August:

Problems; Jackie was very ill and in no fit state to help support the canoeing party. I decided to join the support team for this section to replace Jackie. John, Lyndon, Steve, Kevin and Steve MacFarlane set off about 10.00 am Heikki, Jackie and myself set off shortly after in Heikki's four-wheel drive vehicle, towards Gargia, a small settlement at the end of the Canyon.

Whilst we were crossing the Vidda (high plateau) on a small and very rough track, we met a party of French canoeists. This was the only vehicle we saw in over two hours on this rough and difficult track. The French had more information on the Gorge than we had and it sounded desperate. About five miles long, the river is lost from sight in places and several big drops were known to exist.

Heikki and myself started to plan a rescue plan, as the canoeing party had only two days food. We arrived at Gargia and booked into a Stuga (cottage). Jackie collapsed into bed looking very pale.

Friday 12th. August:

Woke early and started to pack extra food into a rucksack and a dry bag. Our plan was to split up; I would paddle up the canyon as far as I could and Heikki would walk along the canyon rim. Our main concern was that the canoe party would run out of food. I felt sure a long and hard portage was going to be required.

At 1.30 pm I started to paddle up the river into the canyon, using a sea kayak. The river was fast flowing and a sea canoe made progress upstream just possible. At around 2.00 pm Heikki set off on a marathon walk which would take him twelve hours of hard walking in remote terrain.

In the sea kayak I found it possible to canoe up even fast flowing sections, and the river only had two rapids which I had to portage around. This surprised me as looking at the fall height I expected several large falls. Instead the river falls almost continuously. After 6 hours of hard paddling I reached the site of the Dam construction and the Gorge. There was no sign of the canoeists as the cold river mist started to form in the canyon so I paddled back. At 9.00 pm I arrived back at Gargia. I was getting worried when an old woman came over to the Stuga from the farm and said there was a phone call for me. Steve was on the phone and he told me that the canoeing party had just reached the Dam site; after a nine hour portage. They had just eaten their last food. We agreed that the quickest answer

to the problem was if they canoed down to Gargia, as the river flowed quite fast all the way with only one major rapid on its course.

Saturday 13th. August

At 3.00 am Heikki arrived back after a long walk along the canyon and then the Gorge on the southern rim. The canoeing party came in at 3.03 am paddling through the thick river fog which reduced visibility to around 4 m in places.

On getting back to the stuga Jackie had revived enough to cook a huge pot of 'Batchelors' dried food - the best we had in the way of dried food, and mixed with 'Colemans' to add flavour.

Over a plate of hot food and coffee we swapped stories. The portage had been difficult and all the lads had extremely sore shoulders after walking the canoes and equipment around the Gorge which was Grade 6.

At 5.00 am we went to bed waking around mid-day. At 5.00 pm Heikki, Lyndon, John, Kevin and myself paddled the rest of the river Alta to it's namesake, the town of Alta.

After meeting the press, we prepared the sea canoes for the rest of the journey to Nordkapp.

On reflection the Alta had not been the white water we had expected, but this was easily made up for by the spectacular scenery of the Canyon. It is a great shame that the Gorge is soon to be damed to produce a small amount of H.E.P. The need for which must be questioned as if the Norwegian Government spent the same figure as the dam is costing to replace the high tension cables, it would save the same amount of electricity that the dam will finally produce. This area is also very special botanically and scientists are working against the clock to record the rare species found in the area of the Gorge, before it is finally flooded.

Sunday 14th. August:

Steve Mac flew out early in the morning as he had to return to work. Steve had played an important role in the river section and I was sorry to see him leave.

Our expedition changed character at this point as we changed to sea kayaks for the 140 mile trip from Alta to the small fishing community of Skardsnag on the eastern side of Nordkapp. The change was greater than the type of kayaks, as the Norwegian coastal climate was far more severe and very windy. It turned out that this summer never really came and the fishermen could count the sunny days on one hand. They also told us that the weather forecasts and the barometer could not be relied upon. This, coupled with the Norwegian Pilots description of:

'The streams and heavy sea may render it difficult for small vessels to weather these islands.'

and

'Eddies and swirls of considerable strength are reported to occur north-west of Melkry .....

and other such quotes, made me very concerned that we should try and leave a little in reserve at all times.

As we set off from Alta at 10.00 am in a biting cold force 4 in our face, and an uncomfortable and wet wave pattern, the outlook of reaching Nordkapp seemed a little bleak. Progress was hard and without our paddling gloves we could never have made it.

Our dinner stop was a breezy cove and with near zero temperatures, Steve Bowles was finding progress hard due to a shoulder injury sustained whilst portaging the Gorge. After dinner it was pleasant to get back into the kayaks. Kevin and John were paddling the Nomad Sea Kayak (Falklander), Steve was paddling a McNulty Huntsman and I had a VCP Nordkapp.

The afternoon slog seemed to help Steve's shoulder and the pace picked up as we approached Korsnesand, our camp. Here we met up the land crew for the evening. The scenery around this point was spectacular and towards evening the rain gave way to clear skies and tremendous views. Later that evening we were invited by Mrs. Korsnes, a pleasant Viking lady, to have a hot drink with her at her home. Luckily for us her son was at home as he spoke excellent English. He explained that his family had lived at this point long before there were any roads to this



area. His family were a fishing family and owned the small harbour and a lot of the land in that area. Mrs. Korsnes was truly an amazing person at the age of 55 she ran the local taxi as well as the school bus to Alta and grew all her own vegetables. She was fitter than we were and took great pride in everything she did, and called herself a Viking descendant. It was whilst at Mrs. Korsnes's house that John earned himself the name of 'Gannet' as he was seen to pile four strawberries onto one cream cracker!

Monday 15th. August:

We got up early to catch the tidal stream up Rognsund and pack our kayaks for a two day trip to Hammerfest. It was difficult to appreciate distance as the scale is so massive and what seemed only one mile away was in fact five! The low pressure area had moved in and the weather conditions were changing. The wind had backed from N.W. to a southerly and the sky was almost clear. With the wind shift also came warmer temperatures. As we paddled up Rognsund the glaciated scenery all around us came straight out of the geography text books.

As we left Rognsund and headed N.E. a strong breeze hit us straight in our faces! This did not make sense as the wind was on our backs in Rognsund and we changed course by about 90° and had a strong breeze in our face. This type of mountain weather phenomenon we were to get used to in the next few days. We made camp just below the peak of Storfjellet. It would be difficult to find a camp site better than this one. A huge pyramid peak some 859 m rose up to the sky straight from our sheltered bay. Whilst eating tea, bottle nosed dolphins came into the bay to add to the natural beauty of the area.

We turned in early as we had to get up at 2.00 am the next morning to catch the tide up Sorroysund.

Tuesday 16th. August:

Got up at 2.00 am! The wind had changed and had swung towards Hammerfest. As we progressed up Sorroysund the cloud closed in behind us and a light breeze strengthened. All around hundreds of sea-gulls and Arctic Terns hovered before diving into the cold water after shoals of small fish that swam near the surface.

We crossed from Grunnvag to Hammerfest arriving at around 10.30 am in the harbour after 20 miles of easy paddling. As we looked for the support crew of Lyndon and Jackie, Steve landed and made instant friends with the Coastguard/Harbour Master whom we had contacted prior to setting out from Alta. 'Sniffer' Bowles as he was now known sorted us all out with showers on a local ship and arranged radio and press interviews! It was important to keep our progress logged by the press as the fishermen could then keep track of our progress. We were also given honorary membership of the Royal & Ancient Polar Bear Society, in this, the worlds most northerly town.

After meeting up with the land crew we made camp. Steve suggested we hit the town and meet the locals for the evening. This involved being thrown out of a hotel for not being correctly dressed - which I have to say, I fully understand. Not to be put down, Steve suggested a fishermen's bar, this meant paying £2.60 per pint, plus I had to arm wrestle with an ape of a fisherman and talk us out of an 8 men in a rowing boat tow to who knows where! After this escape we returned to our campsite, for my part exhausted through nervous tension. So much for meeting the locals!

Wednesday 17th. August.

John, Kevin and Lyndon paddled around the northern end of Kualoya to Forsol. This was a short paddle of about ten miles. From this point our route was far more exposed as we did not have a continuous island chain to protect us from the open sea.

In the evening Jackie equipped us with three days rations as we prepared for our trip to Gjesvuar located close to Wordkapp on the island of Mageroya.

Thursday 18th. August

As we drove from our Hammerfest camp site I felt a little sad as the people there had been so friendly.

The crossing of Revsbotn some ten miles in extent had a notorious record with the local fishermen for being rough and unpredictable.

We set out with a swell some 2 to 3 metres coming in from the N.W. and open sea, whilst a S.W. wind produced a wave pattern cutting across the swell pattern. It took 2 hours to cross in difficult and wet conditions. Visibility was poor and we had to contend with drizzle whilst crossing. The wind also swung to a N.W. in an hour and blew a steady force 4 which was quite cool.

After dinner, which we had on the island of Rypeholmene, the name being longer than the island, we had a bumpy ride to the sheltered inlet of Bustard. At Bustard there were three fishermen's houses and several foundations of former houses which bore testament of better times. There was no road link to this area which was quite remote.

'Sniffer', living up to his name, asked a fisherman if there was any old shed we could use. He pointed to one end of the three good houses. He explained he owned all three and that we could use one of them. Their hospitality was truly amazing.

After changing we cooked the Ravens and played cards for various chores. The most horrific job being that of cleaning the porridge billies. Cheating was not foreign to the proceedings. I lost!

As the evening wore on we waited in fear of a huge Norwegian fisherman to walk through the door singing 'Fe fy fo thumb, etc. etc.'

Friday 19th. August.

Left Bustard at 10.00 am The tidal race and overfall at the eastern end of Bustard sand proved non-existent as did the tidal race in Havoyssund. The scenery, however, was in no way a let down. As we surfed along the cliff line near Sukkertoppen I was sure I saw an otter in the sea, but I could not be certain.

From Havoyssund we crossed to Masoy in what could only be described as difficult sea conditions causing the kayaks to continually swing off course. At time like this a rudder certainly seems like a good idea. None of us had one.

On arrival at Masoy, 'Sniffer' did it again! within a few minutes of talking to the fishermen he had arranged for us to use a shed to change and eat in, and then a trawler to sleep in!!

The local fishermen explained that all the dried fish we saw hanging on racks to dry both at Masoy and at every other fishing community we passed through, was mainly for sale to Nigeria. We tried some of this rock hard protein. Well, John did, the rest of us watched on.

Later in the evening the wind increased to a strong Force 6 for the first time. This worried me a little as up to now the wind had not been above Force 5. The wind chill factor was very important and with extremely cold water temperatures, life was uncomfortable at times, especially on the crossings.

Saturday 20th. August.

Got up 9.00 am and cooked porridge and coffee; the wind had moderated to a westerly Force 4.

We said our farewells - left at 11.00 am to catch the tide. After a two hour crossing we stopped for dinner on a collection of rocks just off Mageroya. The cloud cover was  $\frac{3}{8}$  and the weather was pleasant. We were surrounded by inquisitive Grey Seals which slowly came closer and closer.

After leaving our idyllic lunch stop we had a little exciting canoeing as we timed our passage between a rocky outcrop, with the wave pattern. Incorrect timing led to a heart beat of 180/sec and a soaking!

We arrived at Gyesvaer at around 5.00 pm. As we had dinner a large eagle believed to be a Sea Eagle, flew over giving a degree of majesty to this area of Nordkapp.

Sunday 21st. August.

A slow rising but I did notice that we got on the water quickly. There was a little excitement in the air as this was to be our final day.

The wind was a Force  $\frac{3}{4}$  southerly and the forecast said breezy, south to south-west Force 4. We had  $\frac{6}{8}$  cloud cover, and a confused sea with a 1 m swell. As we rounded Tunes we could see the far point of land, Knivkezeldden, the true

and most northerly point of Northern Europe, Nordkapp being a little further south by about half a mile. The bay was full of gulls, diving birds and terns as well as seals. The back cloth was a large cliff line. It was difficult to take it all in. We slowly paddled across towards Knivkzelodden, a low spit of rock, when we were hit by strong gusts. We paddled towards the cliff line, rounded the point and stopped for lunch. The speed in which the winds had got up were alarming, almost seconds between a steady Force 4 to a strong gust.

After a slippery landing we had lunch looking over the bay towards the magnificent Nordkapp cliffs, a worthy landmark.

We set off after lunch and John, Lyndon and myself paddled across towards a rocky point just south of Nordkapp so as to give a little lee way, in case we were hit by strong gusts. Steve took a track direct at Nordkapp.

As we approached the cliff line we were hit by violent gusts, the strongest that I have ever experienced, which made forward paddling almost impossible and I remember leaning into the wind to prevent a capsize. Everyone was gripping their paddles for grim death as the gusts hit for fear of them being snatched from our hands. Steve was in a little trouble as he was more exposed than we were, and at one point he hung onto a support stroke for five seconds as a gust hit long and hard. As we arrived at the foot of the cliff we waited for Steve who battled his way towards us. We could not get out of the treacherous down blasts off the cliff, so creeping along the cliffs we continued to round Nordkapp. On getting to the easterly point of Nordkapp the gusts died off and we made our way on a compass bearing at first, but visibility slowly lifted so we could see our destination, Sicarasuag.

We rounded Nordkapp at 2.30 pm and finished our trip at 4.30 pm in Skarasuag.

On the sea section the sea conditions had not been as bad as we had expected and the tidal movement was not strong as the Pilot would have us believe. We did not see any overfalls. However I can believe in strong winds. Last winter, for example, at Gjesvuar, 15 m waves were recorded on the outside of the natural harbour wall.

The scenery has to be seen to be believed and is vast and magnificent.

Of the sea canoes used, all stood up to the rigors of the trip very well. It must be said, however, that the VCP hatches did NOT leak at all. The Nordkapp also was the best designed kayak for load carrying, having a lot of capacity and being nicely balanced when loaded. The Huntsman handled well and was not noticeably any slower than the Nordkapp or the Falklander. It was a little restricted however for load carrying. The Falklander being a fuller kayak than the Nordkapp or the Huntsman, did catch the wind a little more, but when fully loaded this did not prove a problem.

We would like to thank: Nomad Canoes; Wave Sports; Coleman Foods; the Duke of Roxburgh; Lyndon's Mum and all those who helped to make this expedition possible.

A special thanks to all those Norwegians who made us feel so welcome in their fantastic country.

Report by Mark Attenburrow.

\*\*\*\*\*

THE NELSON CENTRE

THE NELSON CENTRE

THE NELSON CENTRE

Send to :- The Nelson Centre,  
Plas Newydd,  
Llanfairpwll,  
Anglesey,  
Gwynedd

Tel: 0248 714565 (9 am to 8 pm)

For their brochure of 1984  
courses

Canoeing courses at most levels for most age groups are provided - you could do worse than make enquiries. Certainly Anglesey is an ideal area for sea canoeing.

Taken from THE SEA CANOEIST

SEA CANOEING IN ANTARCTICA by Peter Keage

We all know of the Eskimo's use of kayaks as a means of travel and to fish and hunt seal, but what of kayak use in Antarctica?

If you are conversant with the early history of human activity in Antarctica, it is evident that the most successful expeditions were those which used traditional Eskimo and Scandinavian 'know-how'. The husky dog handling techniques used by Amundsen, the use of Arctic grasses for boot liners and deer hide sleeping bags are a few examples of the transfer of Arctic 'know-how' to Antarctic exploration. However, it seems that Antarctic explorers were not keen to adopt kayaking.

From my literature research, it appears that only two expeditions, some 80 years apart, have used kayaks. The remainder opting for longboats or inflatables for inshore transport.

The first use of kayaks in Antarctica was by Borchgrevink's 1898 to 1900 expedition. The expedition was based at Cape Adare and was the first to winter on the Antarctic continent. A Tasmanian, Louis Bernacchi was the expedition physicist.

In Borchgrevink's account of the expedition, little technical information is given about the kayaks - they were singles, wooden framed, canvas covered and their paddles were oar shaped. However, there are a number of stories of adventurous kayak trips, in particular, a lucky escape by Borchgrevink who, sleeping in his kayak onshore, was pushed into the water by a companion (Savio) to avoid the collapse of a nearby ice cliff. On that same trip the group paddled continuously for 24 hours, taking advantage of the midnight sun.

In the 1976/77 summer a Joint Services Expedition to Elephant Island (north of the Antarctic Peninsula) used 6 double Tasman kayaks for coastal travel, mapping and some island hopping.

When required, the Tasmans could be bracketed together to make catamarans which could then be powered by outboard motors. This technique was used very successfully in heavy seas and in the surf. The account of the expedition states that they were the first to use kayaks in the Antarctic but in fact they were 80 years too late.

Despite the differences in time and technology between the two expeditions it is interesting to note that they shared similar fears. Briefly, these were the inquisitive nature and ferocity of Leopard Seals, fear of capsize in near freezing waters, the variability of weather and especially its effect on wave formation and the movement of free floating ice.

\*\*\*\*\*

From the archives of the CLYDE CANOE CLUB

A CANOE CRUISE ON LOCH LOMOND Taken from 'The Scotsman' 24th. June, 1874  
(Yes! Eighteenseventyfour)

One of the pleasantest short cruises regularly undertaken by Clyde canoeists when the days are long and the nights warm, is what is familiarly known as the Loch Lomond round - from Roseneath up Loch Long to Arrochar, then by cart to Tarbet, and down Loch Lomond and the River Leven to the Clyde again.

We had often done it before but the scenery is so varied and lovely and the facilities so many for those whose time is limited, that quite as a matter of course the 'Hermit' and 'Lark' were put in commission to go over the old track again. On Friday evening the last steamer brought us down to Holy Loch but before provisions were got aboard, oil put into the lamp, and the lost tent pins found, it was nearly 10 o'clock - rather a late hour for a start. Still, with plenty of daylight, and a fine north-west wind behind us, we scudded down Holy Loch at a great pace, only lowering our sails when the calm water to leeward of Stone Hill was reached. Then our course was steered north for up Loch Long; but before we got past Blairmore, it was dark, and we were enveloped in the shadow of the big hills to the westward. A light shone ahead at Ardentinnny but it vanished as we got nearer, a sure sign that everyone had gone to bed, an example which we felt inclined to follow. So our boats were paddled across to the gravelly beach on the other side of the bay and we pitched tent by lamp light in a field of what looked like grass at midnight but which turned out to be corn.

Beds were easily made, as a waterproof sheet below, with two or three rugs and Highland cloaks above, satisfied us. One advantage of sleeping under canvas is that you always manage to wake very early next morning, but we slept soundly and only got afloat again about 6.00 am. A fine breeze was blowing up the Loch and we glided quickly before it past Dornoch and the wild entrance to Loch Goil at its junction with Loch Long where experience warned us to keep a bright look-out for squalls. It was as well that we knew to be on our guard, for before long the gusts came down on us from the rocky peaks above in a way that almost lifted our boats out of the water. Once past Loch Goil, we were in calm water again, giving us a chance to land for breakfast. 'Hermit' was cook and had just got the water for coffee boiling over a wood fire, when two other canoes, named 'Dolphin' and 'The Mopoon', rounded the point and as is usual among canoeists, their owners without much ceremony, joined us at breakfast. They knew that we were to be in Loch Long and had sailed from the Club house at Roseneath to join us.

Thus reinforced, we ran up to Arrochar before a wind which was now much stronger than we cared for. Only one cart could be got to take us across to Tarbet, but we were in no hurry and managed the portage easily enough; the only difficulty being that the canoes always inclined to slide either over the horse or over the stern of the cart when we were going up and down hills.

Although a stiff breeze was blowing at Arrochar, Loch Lomond at Tarbet was undisturbed by a ripple so sails were put out of sight and pipes lighted before starting to paddle down the loch to Rowardennan which was reached in time for dinner. The evening was clear and bright and we had a most enjoyable sail among the islands on our way to the camping place for Sunday. Profiting by former experience, a breezy headland was selected as the midges hereabouts are quite unequalled for savagery anywhere.

Next morning we were awakened by the noise of heavy rain pelted against the canvas and wisely lay where we were 'till breakfast was ready in the other tent. A look out on the loch showed a very uninviting prospect - nothing but mist and rain, without a breath of wind. At 11.00 am, waterproofs were put on and we walked back to Rowardennan Church but found out there that service was only held once a month in this happy locality. Sunshine followed the rain and we had a pleasant ramble among the hills before returning to camp. Tents were struck at daybreak next morning and a straight run made past Inch Murrin to Balloch where the River Leven escapes from the loch.. Here our masts and sails were put under deck, rudders unshipped and everything made secure for the run down stream. Then, with the strong current helping us along in a deep channel, we passed Balloch; a bit further down shot a rapid, and narrowly escaped running into a mill lade. In other shallow places our keels grated hard on the gravel and stones, a position requiring some management to keep from getting a broadside on, which means a capsized; 'till finally, after travelling many a bend and twist of the river, we were in sight of the historic rock of Dumbarton. The lovely and picturesque Leven here changes in character completely, becoming decidedly useful and common place looking, besides giving forth odours which are scarcely inviting. 'Hermit', 'Mopoon' and 'Dolphin' decided to go straight down the Clyde to head-quarters at Roseneath, a distance of 10 to 12 miles; but here 'till she is required for another cruise we will leave the 'LARK'

\*\*\*\*\*

Taken from ERIE ANORAK

NEW BOOK.

Just received a copy of 'THE COASTAL KAYAKER, Kayak Camping on the Alaska and B.C. Coast'. The author is Randal Washburne and the publisher is Pacific Search Press in Seattle. Although I have not read the entire book yet, I heartily recommend it .... even if you are not planning a trip to the Pacific Northwest in the near future.

The book covers a wide range of topics within its' 214 pages. From 'The kayak as vehicle and luggage', 'Rescues at sea', 'Ashore in Bear Country' to some actual trip planning .... around the Puget Sound area, including the famed and often travelled San Juan Islands and Canadian Gulf Islands. It also details the area up the Inside Passage to Glacier Bay area in Alaska.

To order, send \$ 10.95 plus \$1 P & P to Pacific Search Press, 222, Dexter Ave, Seattle

The following is taken from a recent edition of the DAILY TELEGRAPH

PLAYTIME PERILS by Gordon Brook-Shepherd.

We have got used to dealing with butter mountains and the like; but there is another one piling up fast, that will be much more difficult to dispose of. This is the leisure mountain, which cannot be got rid of by selling at knock-down prices to the Soviet Union. It is a social strain we have somehow got to carry on our own backs. Indeed, I sometimes feel that before this century is out some of our worst tensions will not be racial or political but quite simply recreational.

It is not just a case of the extra time on the hands of the three million unemployed. Those with a job look forward to ever shorter working days. Housewives find more and more gadgets, gimmicks and convenience foods to relieve their daily chores. In or out of work, all of us expect to live longer. In the majority of cases, we are also going to retire earlier - whether lying on our backs on the feather bed of index-linked pensions or the bed of nails of State support. How are these great and growing expanses of spare time to be filled?

If it were simply a case of more hours at the telly, that would at least contain the problem - albeit at the cost of turning us into a nation of square-eyed morons. It's done in your own home, and all you need is a chair to sit on and a box to look at. But though watching TV still seems to be the nation's favourite pastime (with reading a listening to music following closely) outdoor activities are catching up quickly, and it is the ones you pursue beyond your garden fence which present the difficulty.

Anyone who lives anywhere but in the remotest countryside knows the problem; rambling paths open, soon to be trampled into dust: lanes becoming congested with teenage girl riders, drawn these days from nearly all walks of life, and all dreaming of Badminton or Burleigh glory.

As for more esoteric pursuits, so many people now want to climb rocks, descend pot-holes or hang-glide that a Bill was moved in the Lords last week to restrict a land-owners civil liability for injury to persons allowed access to his land for recreational purposes. There seems to be no limit to the purposes some people are interested.

A few days ago, the Elysian calm of the Chilterns valley I have been retreating to from London for the past 12 years was shattered by a young man haring up and down a beautifully undulating field on a racing motorbike, the accent being more on revving than racing. The resultant noise, until I did something about it, was enough to curdle the farm milk and drive all the pheasants from the beech forests.

Yet, the dreadful racket apart, what the youth was up to was admirable. He was, after all, training to do his own thing, as opposed to just watching it on television. We come back again to the problem of limited space on this confined island of ours, and the need to conserve as much as we can of the peace and beauty of its countryside.

Heaven preserve us (or, in the medium term, Margaret Thatcher) from a Ministry of Leisure, along the lines proposed by some Labour spokesmen. Undue regulation of our working life is irksome enough. The dregooning of one's spare time - where the individual is freer to express himself - would be intolerable. But that does not rule out "a well organised and thoughtful approach to leisure needs," to quote the Prince of Wales, speaking on the question last month.

Perhaps, as leisure has such a vast commercial potential as well as being a social time-bomb, market forces should be left to get on with the job. There are projects enough already - a £50 million leisure scheme for the Chatham Dockyard, for example; another one, this time for £500 million, for Bristol's dockland; and a "Wonderworld" scheme for Corby, to help revive the Northants town hit so hard by the steel slump.

Incidentally, I see that one of these leisure "entrepreneurs," Mr. John Broome, a Cheshire schoolmaster turned property tycoon, has built the world's longest logboat run, costing £2.5 million, into one of his centres. I wish I could interest him in a motorbike practice track. It would'nt have to be the world's longest.

\* \* \* \* \*