Advanced Sea Kayak Club

NEWSLETTER

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

A I M S

1. PROMOTION OF SEA KAYAKING
2. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SEA KAYAKERS
3. ORGANISATION OF EVENTS & CONFERENCES
4. SAFETY AND COACHING

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ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB

NEWSLETTER No 54.

FEBRUARY 1986

EDITORIAL.
Here comes the annual 'Canoe Exhibition' edition of our Newsletter. I am looking forward to seeing many of you there - as usual we have our own Stand.

SPECIAL NOTICE - 6TH BRITISH SEA KAYAK SYMPOSIUM.

I had this scheduled for October 4/5 - refer December edition of this letter. THIS IS NOW CANCELLED - in favour of a revised date - 26/27 APRIL - so please amend your diaries now. The reason for this change of date is due to Nigel Dennis and Stuart Fisher deciding to lay on what amounted to a symposium over this particular weekend in April. I decided that the sea canoeing fraternity could not cope with two such meetings in the one year (traditionally held once every two years) and so I have joined forces with Nigel and Stuart to promote theirs. Here are two letters which explain all. First from Frank Goodman:
"News for sea canoeists for their spring paddling.
The Nordkapp Owners Meet is the first weekend of May, as usual.
Meet on Friday night the 2nd May and paddle in groups of your choice on both Saturday and Sunday, 3rd and 4th, stay over to the Monday and finish sometime on Monday, as you wish. Once again the accent is on interesting paddling but there will be a slide show on both Saturday and Sunday night, details from Nigel Dennis at the Anglesey School of Sea Canoeing, Trearddur Bay, Anglesey, N. Wales. Tel:- 0407-860-201.
This year Nigel is also laying on a 'Talking/Lecture' weekend, on the 26th & 27th April, and there will be an opportunity for people to stay over for the week and enjoy the Nordkapp Owners Weekend also.
Don't forget that Nordkapp owners get free accommodation for the weekend, but everyone is most welcome, and the charges are small anyway!
See you all there."
From Stuart Fisher of the 'CANOEISTS' Magazine:
""Canoeist" is sponsoring a sea canoeing conference at the Anglesey School of Sea Canoeing on April 26/27th and would like to invite all ASKC members to attend. The format will be along the lines of your own Sea Kayaking Symposia with a selection of distinguished speakers leading a weekend of lectures, chat and conviviality. The conference is the weekend before Frank Goodman's Nordkapp Owners Meet, also at the school, and for those who wish to attend both events and to undertake a circumnavigation of Anglesey in the intervening week, the school will lay on an expert leader. For details contact Nigel Dennis, etc."

ooOOoo ooOOoo

COMPETITION
A good friend of the A.S.K.C., Jim Vermillion, is offering one of his brand new, self designed kayaks as a prize for naming it. Details are enclosed. Have a go. I shall probably be helping Jim market his kayak in due course. I've included drawings of his new kayak to help you decide on a suitable name - all suggestions direct to Jim Vermillion, SR- 1 Box 2425, Chugiak, Alaska, 99567, U.S.A.

ooOOoo ooOOoo

RENEWALS to the A.S.K.C. are coming in thick and fast, and no doubt more will be taken at the forthcoming Canoe Exhibition later this month. My next task is to compile the 1986 Membership List. This list gets full circulation and is very useful to have when travelling round, most of us enjoy meeting up with other paddlers and you never know when having a friend in foriegn parts might prove very useful.

ooOOoo ooOOoo

What are your plans for 1986? I've been asked to contribute to the Sea Kayaking Symposium in New York scheduled for May 3/4. From New York I'm off to my favourite country, Alaska, where I hope to attend their first Sea Kayaking Symposium in early June. Should be fun. I'll come back with full reports which I will try and make available through this newsletter.

ooOOoo

I was going to introduce this newsletter but I'll let it speak for itself. With me working on the Isle of Wight and my home still in Wakefield I am finding it a little difficult to put this letter together, keep up with correspondence and prepare for the Canoeing Exhibition - soon I'll let you have our new address.

Taken from the Spring edition of the 'Sea Kayaker'

Dear Editor,

Stop encouraging these kayakers. I'm a reasonable person with simple desires:

- I want a clean car for a whole summer, free of sandy PFDs, damp camping gear and sandy wetsuits.

- I want to be able to walk through the front hall without danger of critical injury resulting from tripping over a paddle.

- I want to be able to go away for a weekend in Victoria without finding a boat tied to the roof of the car - "just in case". Just in case the B.C. Ferry sinks?

- I want to be able to remember what my man looks like without having to refer to a photograph. For that matter I'd like a photograph where he is wearing something other than out-door gear.

- I want to receive flowers occasionally, rather than a plastic bag full of oysters - complete with barnacles.

So I'm not impressed with your magazine. It's just giving him more ideas.

A Vancouver kayak widow.

* *

THE COMPASS
ITS USE AND FINE TUNING by David Burch

Besides nautical charts, the compass is the most important aid to navigation. It won't be that often that you absolutely need a compass in a kayak, but some time, somewhere, we all do, and when we do it pays to know how it works.

The earth has about it a magnetic field, just like that of a bar magnet, and compassneedles point in the direction of that field just as wind vanes point in the direction of the wind. But the direction of the earth's magnetic field is not easy to predict. It generally flows from south to north, but not due north, and not even towards any one specific point at all. There is a north magnetic pole of the earth, but compass needles don't point to it. Compass needles align instead with the magnetic field direction, which meanders around the magnetic terrain of the earth as it makes its way north. At high latitudes, a compass needle might point east, for example. To use a compass, we must know the direction of the earth's magnetic field from where we are.

One of the main jobs of a nautical chart is to tell us the direction of the earth's magnetic field over the region it covers. The direction of the earth's magnetic field is called MAGNETIC NORTH - a somewhat misleading name since this direction changes as we move around the world. The difference between magnetic north and true north at any location is called the MAGNETIC VARIATION at that place. In the Pacific Northwest, for example, the variation is some 20° East, meaning magnetic north lies 20° to the east of true north.

But we don't need to know the variation because we don't need to know true directions. We only need to know the magnetic directions that compasses read, and we can find these from the chart. To figure what the compass should read on a particular course, we lay out that course line on the chart and then transfer the line, without changing its orientation, to the centre of the nearest compass rose on the chart. This can be done with a regular ruler or with parallel rules speifically designed for this job. Then read the compass bearing of your chosen course from the MAGNETIC scale of the compass rose - where the line crosses the magnetic scale of the rose.

The compass rose on nautical charts typically has three scales. For magnetic bearings in degrees, we want to use the middle scale. labled MAGNETIC. The outer scale is for true bearings, and the inner scale is for magnetic bearings given in COMPASS POINTS - an archaic nautical system of directions designed to keep mystery in navigation

Now, what does the compass do for us? Foremost it tells us which way to go,

if we can't tell by just looking around. For example, you come round the corner of a large island planning to go around it. But there are so many bays, headlands and other islands in the background that you can't tell which way to point the boat to make the shortest route around the island. So what you do is check the chart to find the magnetic bearing from your known position to the far edge of the island, then take out your compass, identify the point that marks the edge, and go for it.

A compass can be especially valuable on long crossings. In many parts of the world, there are large open waters that can be quite hazardous on summer afternoons when thermal winds (sea breezes) build up. The water is calmest in the very early mornings which makes this a good time to cross. But in these early hours of daylight, any radiation fog that has built up over night may not have burned off yet. This means the compass is all you've got to go by. If your tour is limited in time, without confidence in your compass use you might get caught between a rock and a very hard place.

Besides picking and holding course, you can use the compass to find your position by taking bearings to charted landmarks. You can also use the compass in some circumstances to determine how much a current is setting you off course. Again, it's not often you need this much detail on your course, but when you do, it could be of vital importance.

For example, I am setting off on a crossing in reduced visibility: my desired course is 050 on the compass, and I depart on that course leaving a prominent bit of shoreline behind me. After some time, while I can still see it, I notice the point I left is no longer dead astern, but somewhat off to the right of my stern. Since I am still on course 050, I must be getting set to the left. A compass bearing to departure point will now tell me by how many degrees I am being set. It it were still directly behind me, this should be at bearing 050 + 180 = 230; when I note that my departure now bears 210, I know I am being set by some 20°. With this information I am able to decide whether to head up current to 070 or so (to compensate for the set), and go on, or give up this approach, go back, and cross some other way - from further up current, for example.

From the practical side, there are definitely several things to consider as the compass finds its way onto the boat. First, what kind of compass? Broadly speaking, there are three types: a marine compass that mounts on the boat, a hand-held compass, or a hand-held hikers compass. A marine compass is generally dome-shaped to allow some heel, meaning it can be read when tilted, or at least it can be tilted rather more than a hikers compass. Generally you read magnetic bearings from marine compasses without having to turn any dials, as is necessary on some hiking compasses. Costs vary from a few pounds to about £100. The best choice is purely personal - experienced kayakers have different preferences.

A deck-mounted marine compass has the obvious advantage of being always in sight, so you don't have to stop to read it. You can even alter course to take bearings to points in the forward quadrant without stopping or slowing down much. But you have to plan where to put it so it does'nt end up right where you want to put something else, like the charts, for example. Some companies offer temporary mounts so you can remove the thing when you don't need it. At least one experienced kayaker has found the best solution is to stow his hikers compass inside a transparent chart case where both chart and compass are in view. Another I know prefers to take two compasses in extended tours, one deck-mounted and another readily available for hand-held bearing sights. The most common practice, though, is probably just to carry along a hand-held compass of some sort to be used if needed, and in the end not used not very much.

There is, however, another likely use for a compass which we have'nt discussed above, and that is when night or fog catches a kayaker still some miles away from shore and a landing. Before the intended landing point is lost to shadow, take a bearing on it and make an estimate of drift. You can then follow a compass course to shore.

This, of course, raises the question of being able to see the compass without either pausing in your paddle stroke or losing your night vision. Some hand-bearing compasses feature a small internal light but you have to stop paddling to

operate this. Some deck compasses can be fitted with a light, but these interfere with night vision. Some paddlers use both these systems while others favour a red CREW light velcroed in the appropriate place. Another wokable, though somewhat expensive system is to use an orienteering compass inside a map case, then wear a chemical light stick attached to the band of a wide-brimmed hat in such a way that, when you look down, compass and chart are illuminated and, when you look ahead, the brim of your hat shields the kayak from glare; the light stick also serves as a riding light. Whatever your night viewing system you favour, remember that phosphour dials are not usually adequate for holding a course on a dark night.

Regardless of compass style, anytime you put any kind of compass down on the boat near your stowed gear, there is another factor to consider when reading it. Any steel metal in your gear has the potential to throw the compass needle off its proper direction. And when this happens the problem is a messy one, meaning you can't just say my compass is off 10° and then correct all bearings for it. If it's off at all for this reason, then it will be off by different amounts in different directions. This complication comes about because the magnetic disturbance of the boat rotates with the boat, but the earth's field remains constant. It's like trying to read the wind direction from a wind vane when you blow a fan on it, and then move the fan around.

Famous candidates for trouble are those steel ammo boxes that are popular for water-proof and crash-proof stowage of cameras, radios and other fragile gear. If you want both camera and compasshandy in a kayak, they are'nt likely to be far apart. Likewise, 'tin' cans of any kind are not tin at all, but steel. The simplest way to test these things is to bring them up to your compass before packing and note how close you can get before the needle moves.

Once you are packed and ready to go on a route likely to require the use of a compass, there is a simple way to check that the compass is OK. You can do this in the water or on land and you will not need to refer to a chart. Pick some reference point that you can align with the boat, put the boat on line and read the compass. Then swing the boat around and head the exact opposite direction on the line. The compass should read exactly 180° different. If it does, the compass is right on both these headings. Then check it the same way in a direction roughly perpendicular to the one just used. If still OK, you can fairly well assume it will also be right on the directions in between those tested.

If you're on land and don't get the compass readings which are different by 180°, you can start rearranging things until you do. But if you are making this check once under way this may not be a practical option. In that case, you might simply want to figure by how much the compass is off in the direction you want to go, then correct for it 'till it's more convenient to repack. This can be done using a fundamental principle of compass errors - they should be equal and opposite on opposite headings. Pick a distant landmark roughly in the direction you want to go, head for it and read the compass - let's say you get 340. The turn to head directly away from the landmark and read the compass again. Let's say it now reads 130. If the compass had no error on this heading it should have read 340 - 180 = 160, but it reads 130, so there is an error. To figure the actual error, note the correct magnetic heading away from the mark will be halfway between what you got and what you expected - in this example, halfway between 130 and 160, or 145 Since 145 is correct and you read 130, the compass reading away from the mark is 15° too low. From the equal-and-opposite principle, we know that the reading toward the mark must be 15° too high. When we read 340, the correct reading was in fact 325. Remember, though, that if you change course much the compass error will be different.

Doing the back bearings without tipping over takes some care. Alone you can sight along your paddle held parallel to the centreline for an accurate orientation without having to turn all the way round, but a companion in another boat can much more easily check for your proper alignment

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David Burch is director of a navigation school in Seattle. A brochure describing his navigation books is available by writing: 2101 North 34th St., Seattle, WA 98103 U.S.A.

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Robert Walker, one of our members from the States, recently sent me a novel entitled, "White Dawn" by James Houston. Robert and I had previously discussed my interest in the history and culture of the Eskimo, and it was due to this that he sent me this book. On first glance it appears a cheap, ordinary paperback that I would'nt glance at twice in a second hand book store. In actual fact it is by far one of the best books that I have ever read on the life and culture of the Eskimo people.

Briefly, it is about three North American whalers who, whilst whaling off the Baffin Island coast, get storm blown up to the frozen arctic regions and are subsequently rescued by Eskimo.

The author's note at the beginning of the book sets the scene and then I will go on to publish my favourite chapter which relates how they hunt walrus from their kayaks.

"Here is the first written account of the fate that befell the crew of a small whaleboat whose harpooner struck a whale that towed them far beyond return to their mother ship and into freezing fog and moving ice north of Hudson Bay, the very heart of the Eskimo world.

This saga is based on true events, related to me during the 12 years I lived in the Canadian eastern Arctic, roaming free in search of Eskimo art, and later serving as the first civil administrator of West Baffin Island.

The small camps along the barren coasts of West Baffin Island are thought by many to be the 'Athens' of the Eskimo world, for here live the proud SIKUSALINGMIUT, whose name means the people of the sea ice. They are clever sea hunters, splendid carvers and snowhouse builders, masters of swift dog teams, dancers, singers, storytellers, warm family people who help each other and respect their neighbours".

THE STORY TELLER IN THE BOOK IS A CRIPPLED YOUNG ESKIMO. HIS NAME IS AVINGA.

"In the morning I awoke before dawn and heard people hacking and coughing. Men and women from the camp were stirring in the darkness of the tents, crawling from beneath the two big boats. (Umiaks) Outside, the black rocks were slick with ice, but the wind was down, and the cold sea heaved smoothly with a long gray swell as though some monstrous beast lay beneath the surface, gasping, sighing, slowly expanding and contracting its great rib cage, causing the sea to ebb and flow endlessly against the long black arm of rock.

Men and women carried the hunting gear out quietly and laid it down beside the upturned kayaks. Out in the darkness of the heaving sea the low smooth rock lay wrapped in mist, hidden from us, waiting for our arrival. Dawn came slowly, gently unfolding its pale wings across the eastern sky. At first light men lifted their thin-skinned kayaks over their heads, carefully carried them down through the rocks and placed them cautiously in the water. I saw Poota and Sowniapik slip quickly into their long slim craft and push out into the powerful current and swell that bounded dangerously back from the rock face. Then Kangiak and the four others pushed away from the land and formed together like a loose wedge of geese. The women and children stood silently in front of the tent, watching the kayakmen stroke their way out steadily toward the rock.

With one hand the men arranged their gear around them. Each hunter placed his harpoon in the ivory rest on the right side of the slender deck and his killing spear on the left, and neatly coiled the harpoon line in the shallow drum that rested in the centre of the narrow skin deck. Behind each kayakman on the back deck lay an airtight sealskin float, which was half inflated and attached by a long line to the harpoon.

As the others moved out, I followed behind them in the old widow's kayak. I could feel my throat go dry and my shoulders hunch as the strength ran tingling down through my arms. With the long, narrow double-bladed paddle I forced the slim craft forward until I reached the centre of the wedge of kayaks and heard the soft slap of water on their sides.

When I looked back at the tents, I saw Sarkak's figure standing motionless and alone, down at the very edge of the water. On the highest boulder halfway between the women and the sea, I saw the three foreigners standing together.

They must only now have become aware that something important was about to happen to us all.

The breeze shifted slightly, gaining strength with the coming of morning, and the smell of the walrus came to me again, It was overpowering this time, laden with the heavy night smell of rut and excretement. A light gust of wind opened the fog, and for a brief moment I could see the rock. It was covered with a solid living mass of walrus. All the kayakmen moved forward into the wind, confident that the weak-eyed animals could not see or smell them. Perhaps none of these sea beasts had ever seen a man before, yet we and the killer whales that ranged beyond the ice were their only true enemies. I felt my heart pounding as I saw the big muscular brown bodies humping forward in a rhythmic flow as they pressed tightly one against the other to allow more and more walrus to leave the sea and crowd up onto the smooth black rock, their breaths steaming white in the morning stillness.

As we paddled forward I could feel the silence.Then suddemly the air filled with a strange wild tenseness. The whole herd had become aware of us. Suddenly the walrus stopped their endless swaying and became motionless. They became like an island of carved brown stones. Every head turned in our direction, the thin-tusked females listening, the big bulls holding their heads high, their heavy white tusks curving down dangerously like knives as they peered, weak-eyed and wary, into the fog.

Then we heard the first challenge, a deep throated, grunting roar. Four times it rumbled up to us from the belly of a huge bull walrus weighing twenty times more than one of the men who hunted them. This big bull proclaimed himself the leader, the fighter, the strongest on the rock. He could smell us now and see us. He roared again, and shouldering the younger males and females aside, he violently heaved his great bulk down off the rock with a series of powerful thrusts on his short wide-webbed flippers. Out of the water he was a battled scarred, clumsy hulk, but when he slipped his huge brown body into the sea, he seemed as sleek and as graceful as a salmon disappearing smoothly beneath the surface. All of us eased our harpoons from their ivory rests and waited.

Our eight kayaks were strung out in a long curved line, waiting to see what would happen. Suddenly this great walrus rose out of the water, roaring, thrashing, red eyes rolling, warning us away from his females. He caught sight of Nowya's kayak first and lunged towards it. Nowya snatched up his harpoon. He swung his right arm smoothly backward and then darted it forward. The harpoon slipped through the air, flat above the water, the line whipping after it, uncoiling like a living entrail. Its sleek point drove deep into the thick leather that protected the bull walrus' neck. The whole harpoon head was buried, and the harpoon's heavy driftwood shaft collapsed, as it should, into three pieces loosly tied together. If it had remained stiff, it would have torn loose when the big beast thrashed in the sea.

The bull walrus drove down deep, and Nowya swept his hand across the back deck of his kayak, knocking free the air-filled sealskin float. It flipped upright, danced on the water, then disappeared beneath the surface as the great bull lunged into the depths of the sea. In doing this the walrus snapped the sharpened harpoon head sideways, and it cut into the thick layer of blubber that lay beneath the tough brown leather of his skin. The point was now buried in the walrus for ever. It would not come free until some human cut it from him with a knife. But the battle had only begun.

I was near Nowya and saw him as he turned his head sideways and gestured to us, so wild was he with the excitement of the hunt. He had been the first to set the point of his harpoon into this great prize. But he should not have turned his head or taken his thoughts from that enormous sea beast. As I watched him, I saw his body and then his whole kayak thrust violently upward out of the water. It seemed to pause for a moment, balanced on top of the great thrashing walrus head. Then the long thin kayak bent and skidded in the air as it turned over, I heard the sealskin tearing and the ribs breaking. Nowya was upside down. He was only half out of his broken kayak when he struck the freezing water. I saw his head snap back sickeningly as he disappeared and as the walrus bulk seemed to crash down on top of him. The sea turned pink in a tangle of wreckage amid coils of skin line and a float that danced like a living thing. The empty

broken kayak filled with water and began to sink beneath the surface. All we ever saw of Nowya was one black boot as it raised above the water, twitched and sank as he slipped away from us for ever.

The big bull sulked beneath the surface of the sea until his lungs were almost bursting. Once more he flung himself boldly upward into our midst, gasping for air. Two harpoons flew out and struck him before he could draw his second breath, and we shouted at him in our anguish and hit the water with the flat sides of our double-bladed paddles. His instincts caused him to duck beneath the surface again, this time without enough air. We watched the three floats and drew near the place where he would have to surface again.

From the corner of my eye I could see and hear the whole herd on the rock, swaying with excitement, roaring in fear and confusion, bellowing their defiance as they started to lunge into the safety of the sea.

Suddenly this killer of Nowya reappeared among us, head flung back, red-eyed and roaring, lungs heaving, white tusks deadly. I do not think he even saw us. Sowniapik drove his paddle into the water with force, making his kayak slip forward and swing to the left, and instantly he snatched up his killing spear and drove it in and out of the bull's throat three times. Then with his paddle in his left hand, he quickly drew back out of danger. The big bull coughed deeply, and pink blood came frothing up from his lungs. When he next rolled over the water turned red, then almost black, as his heart pumped dark rich blood into the coldness of the sea. We turned away from him, for we knew he was dying now and that all his meat was ours, safely held with three harpoons and floats.

With Kangiak beside me we turned our kayaks and went toward the rock. It was almost clear of walrus now, save one young bull who waited there, nervously holding back, roaring fiercely at some frightened females just below him in the water. All memory of Nowya's drowning faded from my mind as I thought of the huge abundance of meat swimming live before me, grunting and blowing and surging through the deep clear water.

I followed the young bull, who jealously herded a dozen females ahead of him, roaring and threatening them with his tusks when they panicked and tried to break away from him. I pressed upon him, and he turned and lunged toward me across the surface of the water. My harpoon struck him in the fold of the neck, and as he dove, I used his great rolling body like a rock to shove my thin-skinned kayak away from him. As I waited for him to surface again, I peered nervously down into the water, not only for the young bull, but because the sea around was full of frightened females scattered from the herd and swimming for their lives. When they rose for air or to search for the herd, they could easily turn over a kayak. Many men have drowned in this way.

Every kayakman seemed to have a walrus harpooned and fighting hard against a float. Their killing spears darted in their hands. My heart sang, and my hands trmbled with joy, and gas thundered out of me and drummed against the boat bottom as I saw this great weight of meat around me. For in these few moments our whole camp had been allowed to push death away and return to life. I was shaking so in my excitement that it took several thrusts with the killing spear before the young bull ceased his thrashing and floated peacefully beside me. He left a shining trail of oil on the surface of the freezing water, reflecting like a rainbow of light as the new dawn filled the sky.

I caught the harpoon line attached to my upturned floating walrus and pulled my kayak toward him. Carefully I cut a hole in his thick upper lip beside his tusks and passed a strong line through it. Then, like the others, I started to paddle against the tide that was starting to run out with increasing force. I used all the strength of my arms, and yet I scarcely moved the kayak or the walrus, so great was the dead weight of the sea beast.

When we reached the shallow water, we waited, and soon we heard the long formal wailing of the women as they drew their hoods over their faces and mourned the death of Nowya and comforted his wife and children. But on this day when we had all been given life again, we could not force our thoughts to rest for long with the dead.

* *

From: Mark Carter - Aldershot, Hants.
Dear John,
Re: Desert Island Kit

Survival kits are personal and should ne updated and added to depending on the conditions. I believe my kit is at home both in the Highlands and the Islands. Remember: Protection, Location, Water and Food.

1. Veteka Sport Box - waterproof, acts as a cup and fits into pocket or pouch.
2. 8' x 4' Exposure bag (packs to 2½' x 5")
3. Komet Flare launcher plus 5 red flares (300' for 6 sec.) Good bear deterrant!
4. Whistle and Liquid filled compass
5. Tekna Micro Light (very bright torch, long battery life, waterproof etc.
6. Magnessiom block and flint (will start many fires in most conditions)
7. Mini survival tool (knife, point saw, chisel, can opener, screwdriver etc)
8. Knife blade, strong and sharp. (knife spear etc.)
9. Water purifying tablets.
10. Wire Saw, (saws wood, metal bone, can be used to snare)
11. Needles and very strong carpet thread (fish hooks and wights too)
12. Spoon (handle holds fish line and nylon cord).
13. Lipsel
14. Baby can opener.
15. List of items contained in sport box plus name and address.

Half the battle is knowing how to use what you have or have'nt as the case may be. For a First Aid kit I improvise, its hard to carry an ambulance in your pocket, although I do carry a First Aid Kit on board.
I hope somebody finds my list useful and I would like to hear of any useful additions.

Best Regards,
Mark.

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From Peter Cairns, Dunbartonshire.
Dear John,

I recently took up sea canoeing to get away from increasing deteriation of our hills, to say notheing of the crowds on popular crags!

The very essence of the sport for myself and no doubt many others, is the adventure involved. Any attempts to make the sport less difficult would take away much of the adventure and achievement.

I also feel that it could be a mistake to popularise the sport by making it less demanding given the nature of the sea. I agree with Chris Pendleberry's sentiments (ASK Newsletter 46) and I hope that the BCU Sea Touring committee will scrap this proposed coastal map now before it gets any further, after all not many of us get the chance to go to Alaska etc to experience true wilderness!

Yours sincerely,
Peter Cairns

P.S. Keep up the good work. Any more news on the proposed Marine Nature Reserve?

From: Peter J. Carter, South Australia

Dear John,

I have enclosed a set of lines for Adrian Deans Greenlander 2. I doesn't have the elegance of a Nordkapp, but it's proving to be a very sound design, provided one recognises that the area behind the cockpit must be strongly built. Local building scheme is now well under way at last, and my weekends will be spent working inside one of them.

Our local Board of Canoe Education is holding a Canoe Educator's Seminar in mid April. Will be held at one of our seaside resorts, so will have a strong sea canoeing component.

There was a nasty shrk attack near Port Lincoln last weekend, a woman skin-diving literally bitten in two and eaten. Has shocked the PLC community, and stirred up the usual hysteria. A few weeks earlier two 'canoeists' were rescued by helecopter off adelaide's metro. area. Totally incompetent, insufficient buoyancy on themselves and in the boats, and both capsized. Our Minister of Marine has remained silent to my suggestions for improving the Boating Regualtions.

Must return to lecture preparation.

Sincerely, Peter.

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From: Peter J. Carter, South Australia.

Dear John,

My letter in Newsletter 43 seems to have provoked some reaction. Where to begin to answer it? Perhaps with rudders.....

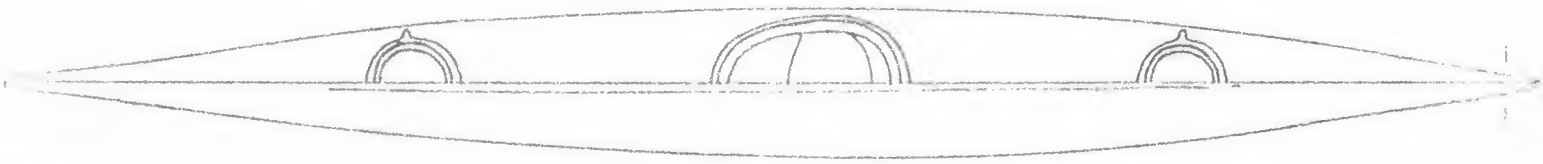
Broderick Beech has hit the nail, sorry bolt, on the head wirh his comments on the C-Trim rudder. It would be economic folly for Frank Goodman and his team to spend their days filing bolt heads, however good the final product. That is the sort of thing canoeists should be prepared to do for themselves. The telling comment is the final one: 'I am sore the average DIY constructor could easily produce a similar device that would work equally well for a fraction of the cost'. Precisely the point I was making.

It was the 'DIY constructor' that devised that rudder system in the first place. As with many other things, several people contributed ideas towards it, but it was the Tasmanian Tony Gaiswinkler who put it all together and devised the prototype of what has become the standard rudder system in Australia. Paul Caffyn's rudder was actually taken from the stern of Tony's own boat and sent to him in Brisbane. C-Trim users can thank Tony Gaiswinkler as much as anyone.

The latest variation is by Colin Langham, ans somewhere nearby you should find a diagram of it. Colin has moved things about a bit so that the stock does not protrude above the line of the deck when the blade is down, making it less likely to snag towlines etc. Note that Colin uses below deck lines for raising and lowering, and the steering cables are also below the deck except for the final 30 cm or so. It took me one afternoon to make one recently for a new Greenlander 2, and I am quoted 120 dollars for a C-Trim by a supplier in Sydney.

I recently took the Gaiswinkler type rudder of my Nordkapp, but that is another story.....

Stations at 50 cm intervals



Greenlander II

Sea Kayak

Designed by Adrian Dean, Hobart, Tasmania.

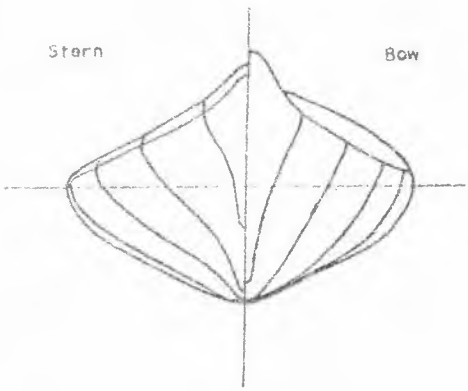
Length 5.7 m Beam 58 cm

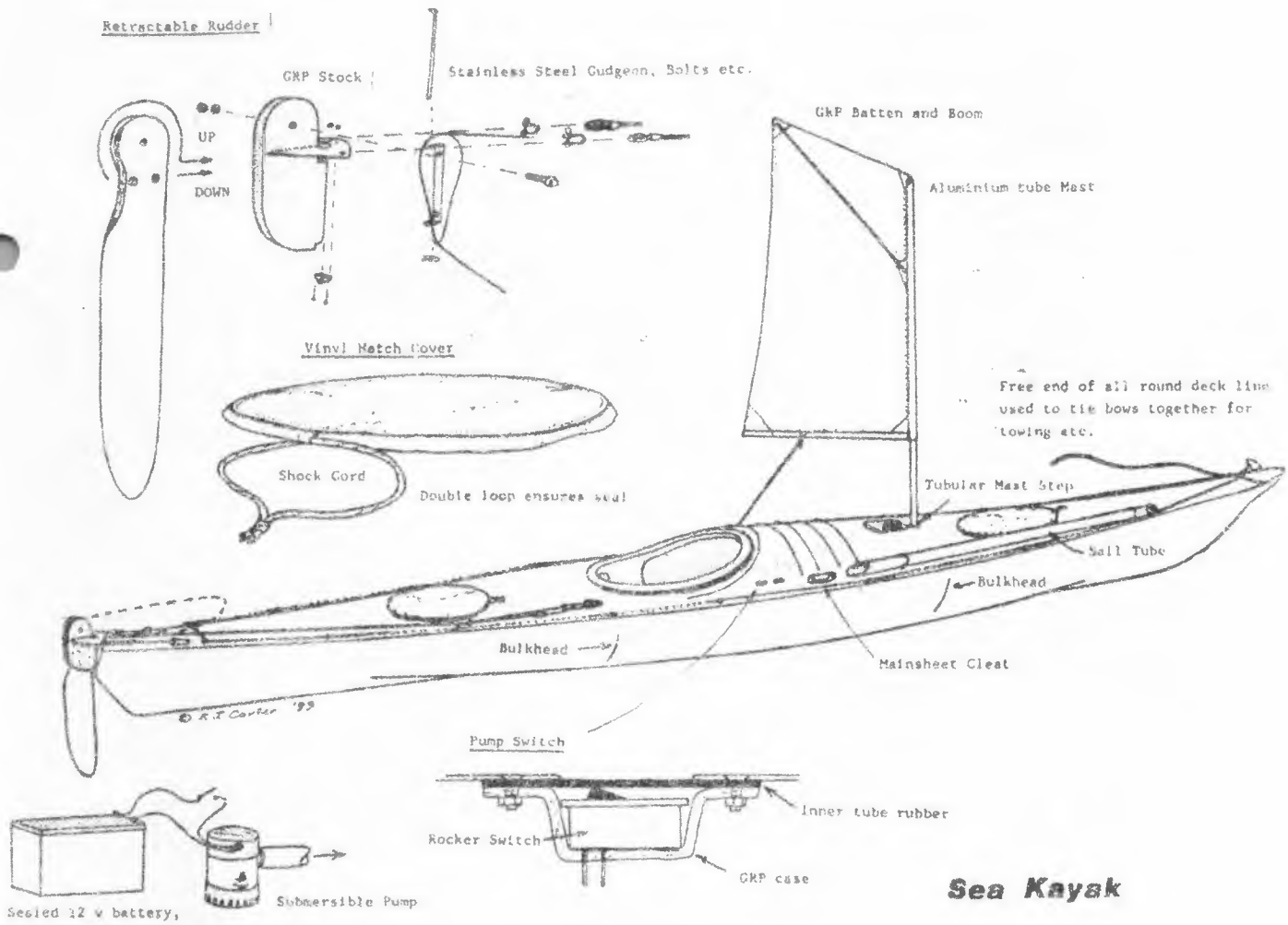
Notes: Hatch size and position varies. South Australian version shown.

Stern is normally cut off at position shown for fitting of Gelswinkler type rudder.

Transverse end and side bulkheads normally fitted.

Drawn February 1985 by P. J. Carter, using photogrammetric methods.





Sea Kayak

Steve Jacobs' Greenlander 2 did not break at the bulkhead, as Alan Byde first suspected, but some 30 cm aft of that position. Alan now has some pictures ofthe boat (John also has copies), and we both agree that the design really needs some extra depth behind the cockpit. Those we are building here are receiving some special attention to the area. Alan is right, bulkheads do cause stress concentrations, but it is not the whole story, any more than either his liner or side bulkheads are the full answer. There really needs to be more development on the whole matter of cockpit design. In the meantime, take your pick, liner or bulkheads. They bothe work, they both have their advantages and disadvantages. In Australia, we usue the bulkheads, easier to design and fit, and giving several, separate, compartments.

There will always be a place in sea canoeing for manufacturers of well designed and made equipment, like Frank and Valley Canoe Products. There is equally, arguably more so, a place for the innovative amateurs, Tony Gaiswinkler, Alan Byde and the host of others, We must all choose: but it or make it? Whichever way, it will cost either in money or time.

Sinerely, Peter

****

PADDLE POWER - Tim Kidman follows up his kayak project with the means of propulsion - in case you were up the creek without one!!!!

Kayak paddles were originally rather short, small in blade area and also unfeathered, the two blades being in the same plane. Modern slalom paddles are feathered; the large curved blades are set at right-angles, and so 'handed'. They can be over 7ft. long. If you paddle with your right hand holding the shaft, allowing it to twist through your left, you are right-handed and so need a right hand feather. If you hold the lower blade concave side towards your feet, the top blade when held vertically will face to the right.

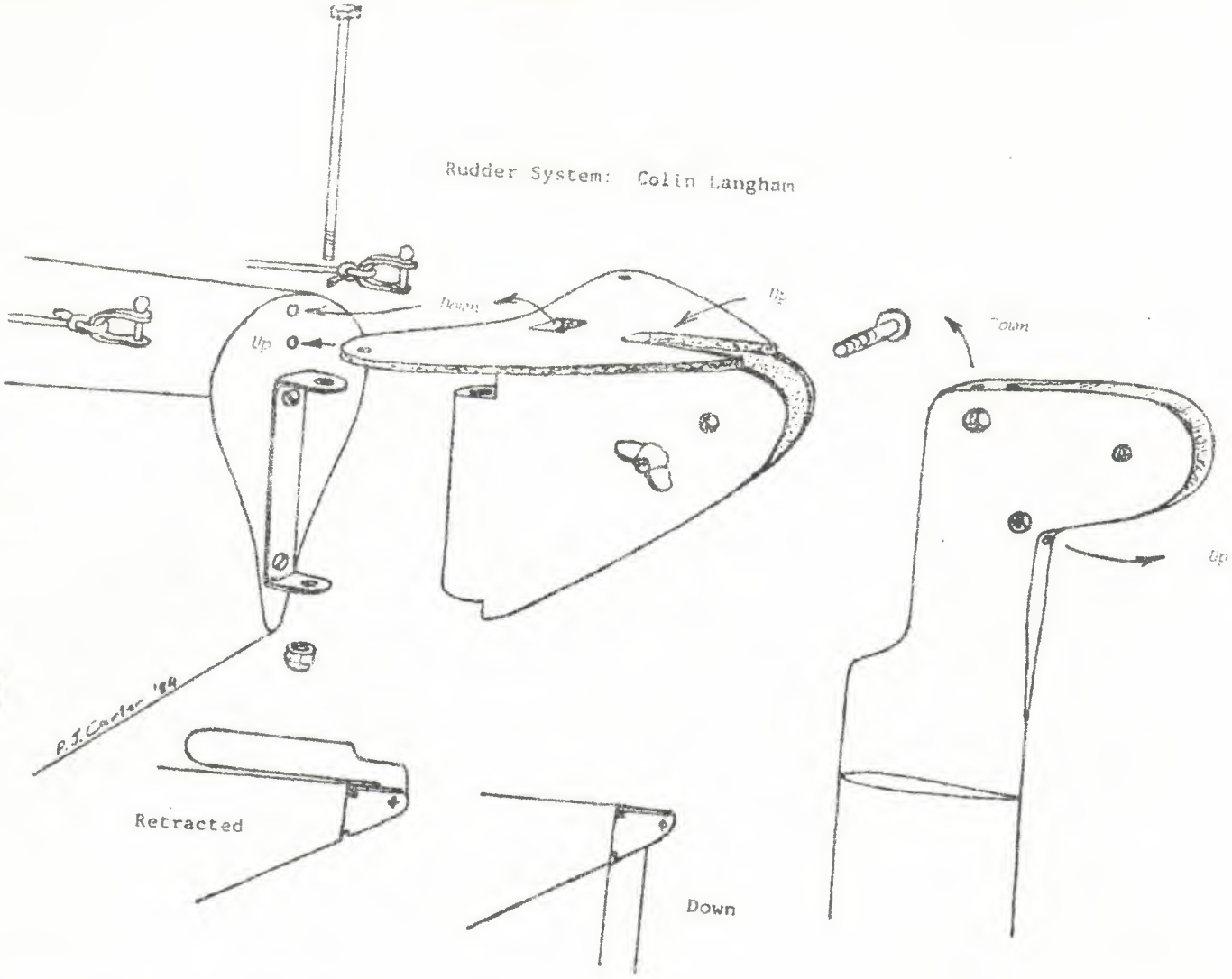
Paddles are used for three purposes; obviously for propelling the canoe, but also as a rudder at either stern or bow - you can steer by paddling harder on one side than the other - and for support. The paddle keeps the canoeist upright, or it can bring you back topside from underneath!

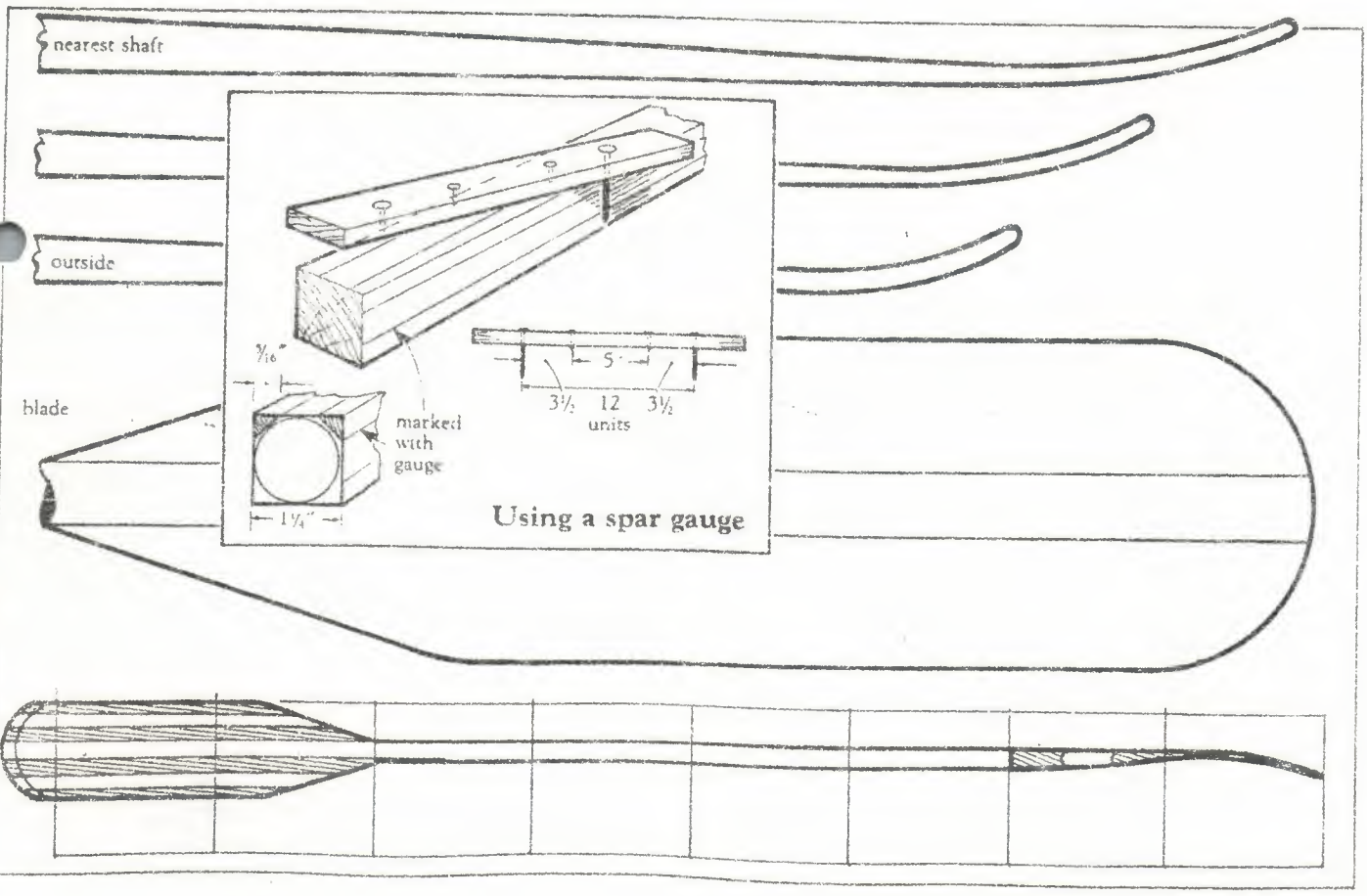
The strain is in the shaft, whose flexing can often be seen in photographs of active canoeists, so it needs to be made of a tough ans springy wood. I use close-grained Columbian pine, which I find gives the right paddling feel.

To make my own paddles (I am a sea kayakist and use a long paddle with long narrow blades), I select a piece of Columbian pine 8ft. 4" long, planed to 1¼in. square, and then add pieces of mahogany, silver spruce and iroko to give me a 6in. wide blade.

My paddle blades are constructed by cutting out the side pieces to a series of shapes that I have made in hardboard, I use these patterns to mark out two sets of each wood of the required thickness - mahogany for the first, silver spruce the next and iroko for the outside. I cut the shapes by bandsaw. The ends of the shaft are marked out using the longest pattern, a process that needs special care because this is when the paddle id handed and given the correct feather.

Rudder System: Colin Langham





PADDLE POWER Cont.

I glue the side pieces to the shaft with Aerolite 306 glue, clamping them tightly. When all six pieces are glued and set the blades are shaped, firstly with a bandsaw to give the overall shape - again marked from a cardboard pattern - and then with a 10in. drawknife to shape the curve. The final shaping needs a smoothing-plane and spokeshave, finishing with a belt sander.

The shaft now needs to be rounded because outside the paddle blades it is still 1½in square. This can be done by marking the square section with a spar gauge, a spar and mast makers tool, before rounding it off, but I use an ordinary marking-gauge set at 5/16in. Then I plane until the markings are cut away. At the blade end I use the spokeshave to carry the cut into the blade, blending with the paddles curved edges.

At each end of the rounded shaft, about 10in from the blade, I flatten the round section of the shaft to give the paddler a feel of the position of the blade. The flat should be at right-angles to the blade - if you take about ⅛in off each side, it can easily be felt by the hand. The whole shaft can be finished off by completing the round with a spokeshave and then pulling a piece of old sanding belt along it to take out any high spots.

When the shaft is completed, the blades need balancing. This is done by measuring to find the centre of the shaft and marking it: if you balance iit on a piece of thin metal you can see which end needs wood removing. Removal is carried out from the back with a smoothing-plane and spokeshave.

When blanced and sanded, the ends of the paddle are reinforced using fibreglass tape and polyester resin. A length of 2in glass tape is pulled along the curved end of the paddle and stretched so that an equal amount comes over both sides, then it is held in place with bulldog clips. The tape is then impregnated with recently catalysed polyester resin.

After setting, excess tape is removed to the edge of the paddle and the end sanded to remove excess resin. Another piece of tape, usually 1½in wide is now laid on and inpregnated with resin, set and sanded to a smooth surface.

Finally the blades are given three coats of polyurethane varnish.

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RUDDERS; A SIDEWAYS VIEW - PETER J. CARTER

When I began sea canoeing, in a KW7, bulkheads, hatches, pumps and such complexities were all in the future. We gave no thought at all to rudders. When I bulit a Nordkapp severn years ago I made sure that had bulkheads and hatches and pumps, but rudders we distained as simply an unessary bit of complication, likely to fail at the wrong moment. Besides, the Unuit didn't use rudders, and we were purists.

We should have known better. Already we had gone beyond the pure Inuit boat with high technology, yet we still refused to use something they had used after all, rudders and sails. Whether it was of their own initiative or as the result of Russian influence, some Aleut people had, as it has now been shown by Duncan Wi ning in Newsletter 46, rudders and sails on their baidarkas.

A visit to Tasmania in 1983 changed my thinging, although I had been tinkering with retractable skegs for a time. For 18 months my Nordkapp wore a Gaiswinkler type rudder on its sawn off stern. With it, the boat was much more controllable in heavier conditions, and it was well nigh essential for sailing. It is virtually impossible to design a kayak that will behave equally well in all conditions, whether you are Adrian Dean, Frank Goodman, Derek Hutchinson, Lee Moyer or whoever: the boat will need some variable geometry, to use the aeronautical term, to trim it.

RUDDERS; A SIDEWAYS VIEW CONT.

Threaded stainless steel rod is the easy way to make the pivot rod. If you have the dies to cut the threads then plain rod would be better, with a couple of washers welded in the middle. Cut it to length, put the centre nuts on and bend it in a vice. It does'nt matter if threads are crushed. Make sure that the pivot moves freely in the mounting.

The actuating rod can be any suitable tube: early versions used bits of grp arrow shaft. They also had the rod working transversely, but the angle allows more steering movement and solves a couple of retraction difficulties. The ends must be smooth to avoid cutting the shock cord, which seemed to be the easiest way to make a universal joint. Pull the middle loop of the shock cord through with a piece of thin wire, then tie the middle of the steering cord to it. The free ends are tied through the hole in the top of the blade.

The cord to hodl the blade down is straightforward, but the Up line is different, and it's shown solid black on the diagrams. The end is tied to the block on the gunwale; and it then passes through the blade, with the stop knot on the outer side. It then goes through its block and the fairlead on its way to the cockpit. Make sure that the hole in the blade is smooth to reduce wear. Because these cords move at different rates they are separate, unlike the control of a Gaiswinkler type blade. Tie the ends around the deckline so that they can be slid forward and aft. One small Clam Cleat retains the Up or Down cord as appropriate. When the blade is down the Up line must be slack to allow free steering movement of the blade.

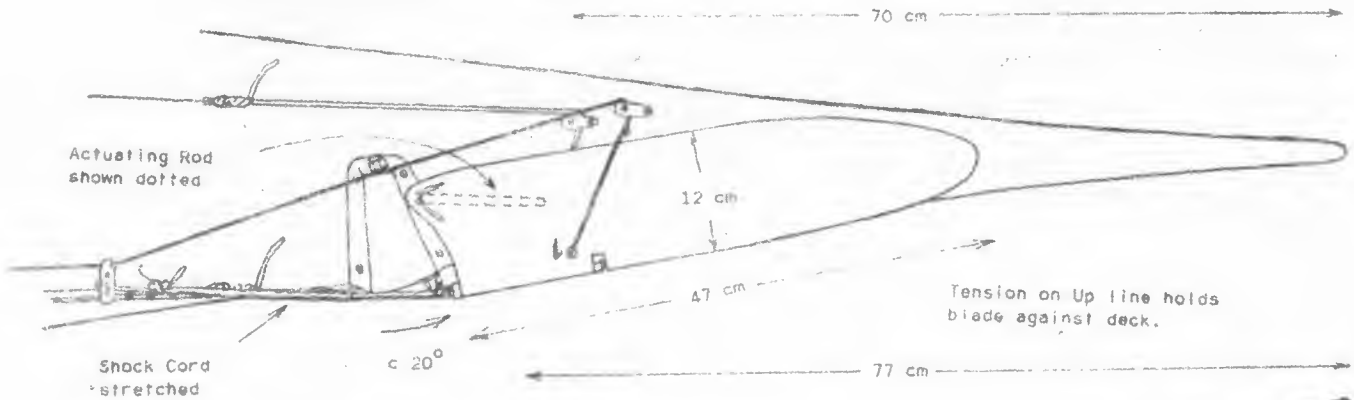
Put it all together and check that everything moves freely. Because the steering cables must be light, with the cord rubbing across the deck, there is considerable friction in the steering movement, but it must not jam.

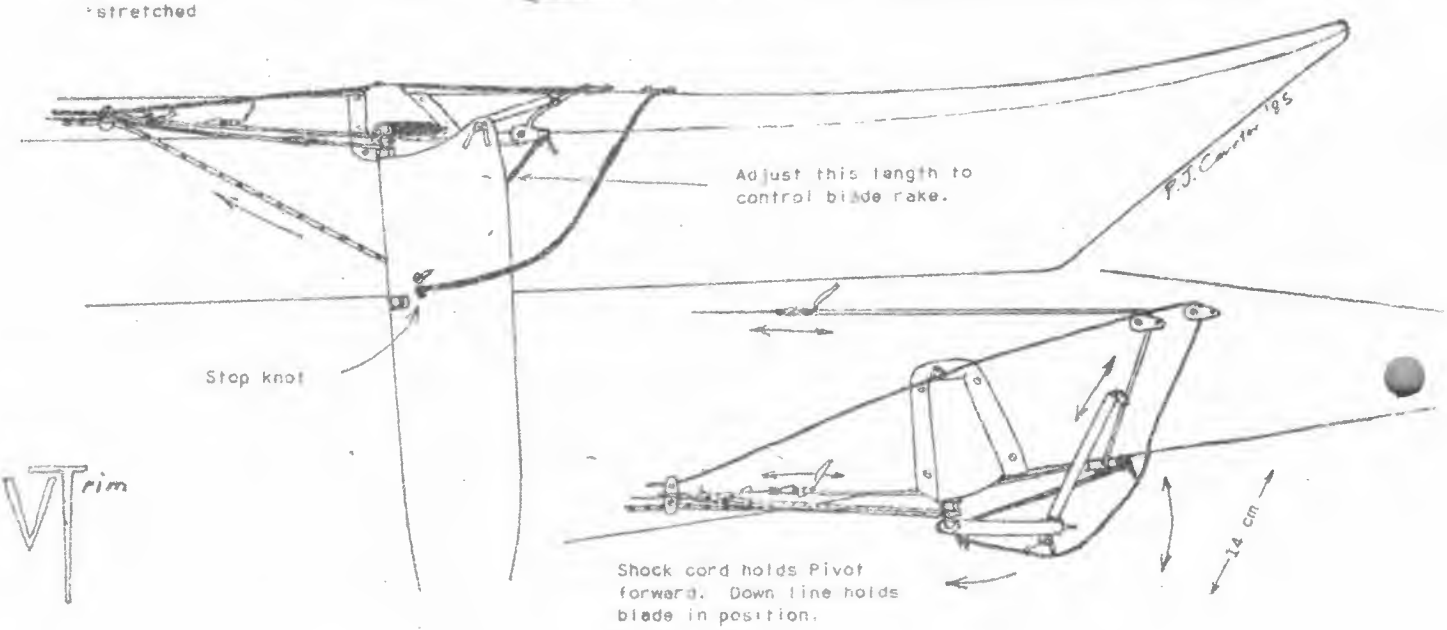
How effective is it? The current version has been out in some heavy weather (2 m seas with chop on top), including towing with blade up and down, and sailing, and did everything that was asked of it. A scrape on a rock did nothing but make scratching noises and breaking seas dislodged nothing, although it hasn't been through heavy surf. I don't intend to deliberately drop it off the car or roll it over rocks to see what happens. It does cause a bit more drag than I would like, because of those immersed cords and there is undoubtedly some interference between balde and hull, but with the wind behind you and the sail set you're not going to notice. The only problem has been keeping the steering cables tight, because of the stretchy cord. Key to reliability in any system like this is maintenance, and with everything out in the open this is easy.

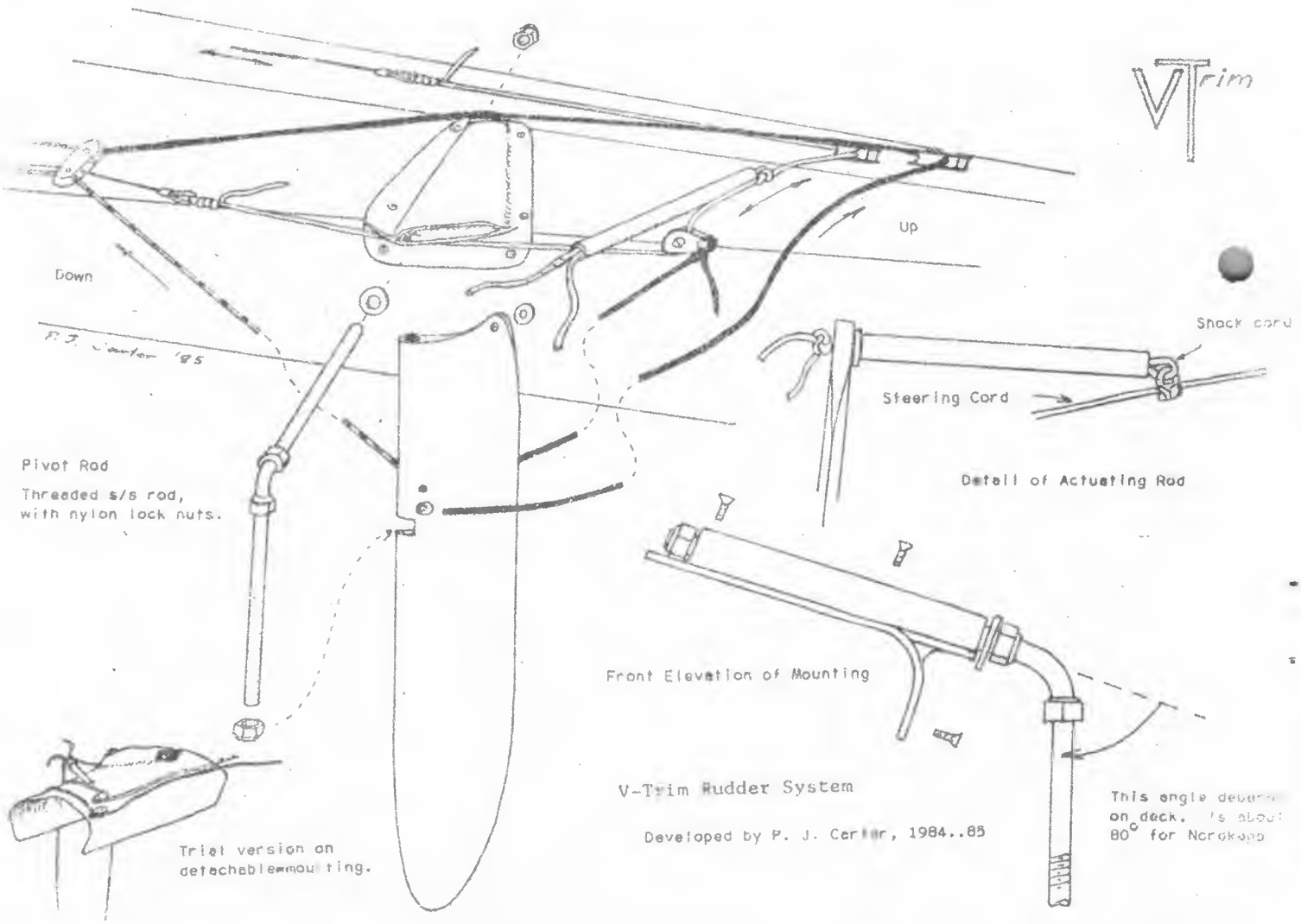
Someone is bound to ask why it is on the port and not the steerboard side. The reason is that the original rudder's retraction control was on the port side. The name, V-Trim, came to me after paddling for hours in lumpy seas along the west coast of Thistle Island: V is for Viking.

In Newsletter 45 Alan Byde mentioned a system with twin side mounted blades. V-Trim has no connection with that device, but during its development I did try some model experiments with bow mounted rudders. The best I could do was some diagonal slides, but no turning. Bow draw strokes work well with slalom boats, but compare the area of the blade with the immersed lateral area of the hull, and then make the same comparison with a sea kayak. Ships and sea kayaks work differently from slalom boats. Why is it that ferries sail in both directions have a rudder at each end?

V-Trim may or may not be the answer to your problems, but my Nordkapp now has its tail back.


70 cm
Actuating Rod shown dotted
12 cm
47 cm
Tension on Up line holds blade against deck.
Shock Cord stretched
c 20°
77 cm


Adjust this length to control blade rake.
P.J. Carter '85
Stop knot
VTrim
Shock cord holds Pivot forward. Down line holds blade in position.
14 cm


VTrim
Up
Down
P.J. Carter '85
Shock cord
Steering Cord
Pivot Rod
Threaded s/s rod, with nylon lock nuts.
Detail of Actuating Rod
Front Elevation of Mounting
Trial version on detechablemounting.
V-Trim Rudder System
Developed by P. J. Carter, 1984..85
This angle depends on deck. Is about 80° for Norokopp

RUDDERS: A SIDEWAYS VIEW CONT.

Yet I had misgivings about that hardware on the stern. It looked awkward, and what would happen if the boat was driven stern first into rocks? (To be fair, I have seen such a rudder dropped off a moving car with only minor damage). To me, it seemed that there must be a more elegant solution. There must be a way to retract a rudder flush against the deck so that it is more protected and oes not spoil the lines of the boat, yet still be effective and easy to maintain. The answer seemed to lie in the direction of a side mounted rudder, as usued by the Vikings and others. After all, if it worked on a Viking ship, why shouldn't it work on a microship?

The solution grew out of some late night doodles, and before long there was the first trial version perched on a removable 'shoe' on the deck. (You may prefer to go the same way first). There were some problems, but it worked. At first, the axis of retraction was transverse, and the blade was left projecting. I tried angling the axis in line with the deck, and swept back to allow the retracted balde to be in line with the gunwale. Alas, the geometry was all askew and the blade tried to retract through the boat rather than around it. The blade had first to be raised, and then brought inboard, and this required yet another axis of rotation, which meant that pivoting mount and the loop of snock cord. It was tried, and worked. The last problem was an effective method of securing the retracted blade. Perhaps it could be lassooed, but how does one lassoo something with water swirling all about? Answer: have the lassoo permanently in position, through a hole.

Finally, it all came together. At first sight it looks extremely complex, but that is only because it is very different from other systems. In any case, I do not believe that the simplest solution is necessarily the best solution. My KW7 was simpler than the Norkapp, but the Nordkapp is superior in every way at sea. (The less said about the intervening Sea Hawk the better!). To me, the KISS principle (Keep It Simple, Stupid) has no place in sea canoeing, because sea canoeists cannot afford to be simple (used in its original sencse) or stupid. To quote Niklaus Wirth somewhat out of cantext: 'After all, complicated tasks usually do require complex algorithms, and this implies a myriad of details'. (Programming in Modula - 2, page 86) Change 'algorithms to 'mechanisms' for our situation, designing a sea kayak and its systems is a complicated task. (For an excellemt discussion of 'simple' v 'complex' see 'The Perils of Being Simple' by Stephen Salter, New Scientist, February 25 1982).

Anyway, all the components are shown in the diagrams. For the blade, I use a marine plu core sheathed in grp. It doesn't need to be over strong if anything is to break you don't want it to be the deck, which will need some reinforcement anyway. If your boat is a few years old you may need to use epoxy resin for that task, and if you're rightly wary of the stuff, try to track down someone building one of the modern composite home-built aircraft, as the epoxies used in them are special low toxicity brews. Dimensions shown are for the Nordkapp version.

The mounting is laid up on the deck of the boat, 5 or 6 layers of mat for the part against the deck. Cut a bit of rigid polyurethane for the hole and lay up at least 6 layers on top, and as many layers underneath for the bit that overhangs. When it's set, pull it off, trim it and dig out the polyurethane.

NEWS

The name LINDENKRAFT may be new to many readers but growing numbers of outdoor enthusiasts are to be seen in the colourful range of handmade fibrepile jackets, polar sweaters and salopettes under the LK Logo.

All items can be personalised with colourful motifs or patches to order and the high quality clothing is not expensive.

Unusual items available include fibrepile mittens, balaclavas, waistcoats and all-in-one suits.

There are two new items this year. One is the cheap 'MAY DAY FLAG' an emergency signal ideal for canoeists, windsurfers and other water usuers costing only £1.50. The other, the expedition pocket tabard which quickly velcros over conventional buoyancy aid to provide two good pockets for flares, towline, chocolate and all those other goodies the experienced touring paddler and instructor likes to have to hand.

Details and Price lists are available from:

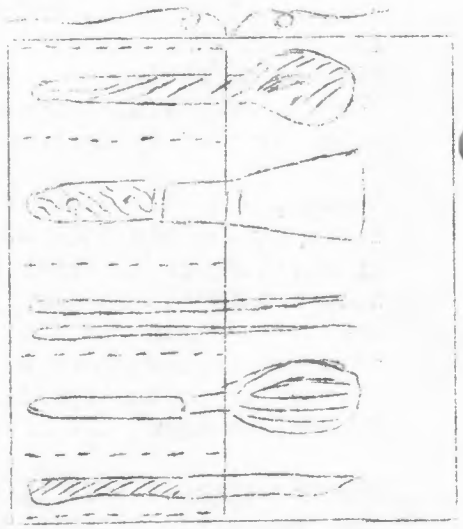
Linden Kuyser,
2 Walkers Lane North,
Blackfield SO4 1YA
Southampton.

Telephone: (0703) 892842

* *

MAKING YOUR OWN CAMP KITCHEN UTENSIL HOLDER BY Marsha Hodson
(Taken from Blue Water Paddler)

I'm making camp kitchen utensil holders for my paddling friends for Christmas this year (where's mine Marsha?!!). Linda Daniels introduced the idea of a handy carrying case for kitchen utensils in a class at the recent West Coast Sea Kayaking Symposium.



Start with a sturdy hard finish cotton kitchen hand towel, preferably a dark colour. It will absorb heat for quick drying and won't show soiling as much as lighter colours. Avoid using terycloth as it will retain moisture.

To sew: first lay the towel flat, folding the bottom of the towel back one third of its length. Sew vertical seams in the doubled towel to make individual pockets or compartments. The number of pockets you will make will be determined by the size and number of items you intend to put in your utnesil holder.

Midway along one side of the towel sew a doubled 12" piece of cotton or nylon cord to tie the rolled holder.

Fill the pockets with plastic and wooden cook ing utensils, such as spoons, chopsticks, a spatula for flipping pancakes, and a whisk for whipping up a well appreciated cheesecake. Fold the towel over the cooking utensils for protection. Roll the towel and tie the cord securely around the cookware. This also makes an ideal storage area for personal eating utensils. Everything is in one handy carrying case and therefore easy to find.

* *

From Oliver Cock, Wargrave, Reading, Berks.

Dear John,

Thankyou very much for the latest issue of the A.S.K.C. Newsletter, just received and as interesting as usual. I enclose renewal and look forward to further interesting letters.

In reference to page 4 of your last issue and to the two letters from Paul Belcher and Dick Richards, may I remind your readers that the Corps of Canoe Lifeguards now have a video-tape on this very subject, showing many suggested, different ways of helping helicopter crews effect a rescue of a canoeist in difficulties at sea. This is available from their honourary treasurer, Martin Douglas-Windsor at "Garth Cottage", 65, Harwoods Lane, Rossett, Clwyd.

Incidentally, referrings to Dick's letter and his comments about picking the patient up from the water rather than the raft of canoes, the Corps does not entirely agree with this because of the greater likelihood of his dying from hypothermia if he is in the water rather than in a survival bag lying across the decks of the canoes. We realise that the final decision lies with the winchman and the particular circumstances of the rescue operation, but whilst we were making this film, as you yourself are aware (since you were involved in the making of the film) our winchman did not have any great difficulty in straddling the centre canoe of the raft while he was dealing with the patient. After all, the primary object of the exercise is to rescue the patient alive, and one of the worst things you can do to him is to dump him back into the cold sea after you have got him out and made him as warm and comfortable as possible in the prevailing conditions

Best wishes, Oliver.

* *

From I.R.Cammish, 10, Ewden Close, Filey, N. Yorkshire, YO14 ODY

Dear Sir,

I would like to start by saying how much I enjoy the A.S.K.C. newsletter.

I am writing to enquire if you know of any member who might be interested in purchasing a kayak: it is red/yellow ICEFLOE, fully rigged with deck and foot pumps, and only used half a dozen times so it is as good as new. I would like about £200 for it.

Yours faithfully, I Cammish

* *

ALASKAN KAYAKS SR- 1 Box 2425, Chugiak, Alaska 99567, U.S.A.

Official Rules of Alaskan Kayaks "Name Our New Single Kayak" contest (see editorial)

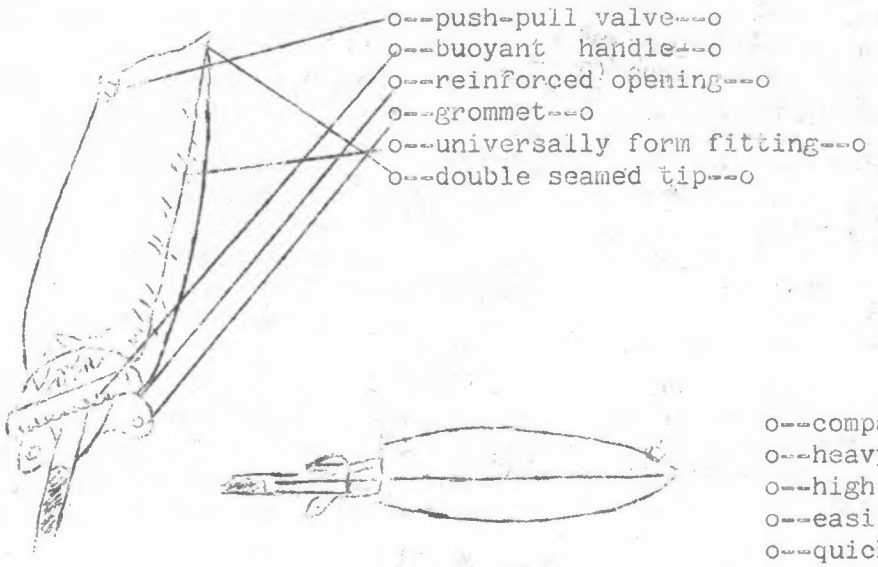
1. Follow these rules
2. Entry constitutes agreement that the one prize awarded to one winner will be the only pr mium, royality, or re-emibursement of any sort required for transfer of all rights and interest in all entries submitted to Alaskan Kayaks.
3. All names ubmitted, whether chosen or not, become the property of Alaskan Kayaks which may, without further compensation, use them as they see fit.
4. The administrative supervisor of this contest, including selection of the winning name, is by Alaskan Kayaks, whose decisions are final.
5. Entry constitutes permission to use winners name and address and likenesses for promotional purposes, without further compensation.
6. Each entry may only have one kayak name.
7. Entries must be on 8½" X 11" plain white paper.
8. Each entry must be hand printed.
9. Each entry must plainly show the entrants name and address, on both the entry and the entry envelope. 10. One entry per envelope
11. Entry envelope must be postmarked. 12. Closing date April 15th 1986
13. Prize is the current production single kayak manufactured by Alaskan Kayaks without options or customer accessories. These may be paid for as extras.
14. Prize is delivered to Anchorage, Alaska. Movement beyond Anchorage is at winners direction and expense. 15. The winner will be notified by mail.
16. Affidavit of eligibility to legally ceceive the prize and release of Alaskan Kayaks from liability for gift taxes, etc. is required of winner.
17. No substitution of prizes by winner. 18. Alaskan Kayaks reserves the right to reject all entries. 19. Winners name to be published in Sea Kayaker.

"Paddle Float" - Test Report by John Chamberlin

Product Information.

Manufactured by Sea Trek, the "Paddle Float" is marketed as a "self rescue aid for re-entering a capsized sea kayak".

Features:



As shown in the sketch it consists of an inflatable, heavy gauge vinyl sleeve which slips onto a paddle blade, in order to create an improvised outrigger. It is imported and sold in the UK by P & H Fibreglass Products Ltd., Station Rd., West Hallam, DERBY (Tel. 0602-320155). The retail price is £17.50.

PROCEDURES

Full instructions and much good advice come with the product and the manufacturer recommends two methods of use, namely, "Outrigger", and "Re-entry and Roll". In each case one is assumed to be swimming alongside the inverted kayak, with the paddle to hand.

Both of these are fairly self-explanatory but basically are outlined as follows:

1) To use the Float as an outrigger, the kayak is first returned to its upright position. The float is then placed on to the paddle blade and inflated. With the float end positioned out at 90 degrees from the kayak's cockpit, the other blade is positioned under deck lines, or alternatively, the loom simply held in place whilst swift re-entry is effected, first onto the kayak and then into the seat. The outrigger can be maintained whilst the boat is emptied, by one's own normal method.

2) The re-entry and roll method, recommended for rough sea conditions, requires that the kayak remain inverted, initially. After rigging the float on to the blade, one is intended to re-enter the upturned boat and use a "Pawlata" style roll, with the float as secure support.
The kayak can then be emptied, again maintaining an outrigger (if desired).

USE

My first impressions were, a) that the Paddle Float did in fact look well designed and produced, and that as an item of sea canoeing equipment it was long overdue, and b) that the outrigger method seemed both reasonable and adequate, and the re-entry and roll suggestion was a non-starter.

In the event I only tried it using the first method so that is all I can comment on. Being some distance from the sea I chose a nearby gravel pit to try it out and although the conditions were not rough enough to actually cause a capsize, the wind and water temperature were such that a speedy recovery was desirable.

I went through the capsize and re-entry sequence a couple of times, each without any significant problem. The device was comfortable to hold, went over the blade with little difficulty, considering no previous practice, and was easy to inflate using tongue-&-teeth technique on the push-pull valve.

On the first attempt I simply held the shaft over the near-side gunwhale with one hand, the paddle being forward of the cockpit, whilst the other hand gripped the rear combing. A swift push up and over the boat was relatively easy, following which I turned and straddled the boat, to the rear of the cockpit. From this position I chose to tie the shaft, as suggested, and then re-enter the seat to commence emptying. Tying the shaft obviously freed the other hand, to increase personal stability whilst operating the rear deck mounted pump.

On the second attempt I chose to situate the outrigger at the rear of the cockpit and again simply held it in place whilst I pushed upwards, over, and on to the kayak. With it in that position, underneath me, it was much easier to retain it to the kayak by hand alone, whilst I re-entered the cockpit. Once in the cockpit, apart from the instability caused by the excess water, it was then more convenient to temporarily secure the outrigger in order to complete emptying.

I found also that the float's support was such that it seemed equally safe to stay seated on the deck of the kayak whilst much of the water was pumped out, since this position allowed a more efficient arm action.

Prevailing wind and sea conditions would obviously dictate much of the procedure chosen.

IN ADDITION

Sea Trek make a number of recommendations which fully endorse. They are:

1) Use a paddle-park, or other method of attaching the paddle to the kayak.
2) Tie a wrist loop to the Float's "grommet" for easier handling - paddle leash plus snap hook?
3) Have the Float within easy reach, such as on deck or in a lifejacket pouch.
4) Arrange some fail-safe method of securing the inboard paddle shaft/blade to the kayak deck, whilst in use as an outrigger.
5) Have good taut deck lines.
6) The kayak should have flotation fore and aft, either float bags or bulkheads.

CONCLUSIONS

Many paddlers might already have a device, or system of this kind and more, myself included, may have used our personal buoyancy-aid in a similar way, if only to get out on to the deck temporarily for a rest and leg stretch.

All, or certainly most, serious accidents contain an accumulation of small circumstances, or errors of judgement etc. Removing one's buoyancy-aid in the wrong circumstances must surely be a prime contender. The only and permanent place for personal buyoancy is on the person. Apart from just removing the temptation to use something else the arrival of Sea Trek's Paddle Float on the sea kayaking accessory scene must rank as another step forward in the area of personal safety, especially when one considers the number of paddlers going "solo" these days. It could also prove beneficial in both learning and teaching Eskimo rolls.

The cost is in no way prohibitive, when one spends a few moments comparing it with other essentials, or non-essentials: Cag. £15; Buyoyancy-Aid £20; Paddle £30.50; a meal out for two; twenty pints of bitter (Marstons!); Kayak £300-500

Finally, if you get one, remember it can be damaged, ie punctured. Like, for instance, your flares, it's the sort of thing you hopefully will never need to use, or at worst only once, but it will need to work properly. "Need" takes on its absolute meaning. Consider a protective cover and look after it. It could look after you.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact: Deborah Easter (206) 682-5044
Pacific Search Press, 222 Dexter Avenue North,
Seattle, WA 98109

Derek Hutchinson's Guide to SEA KAYAKING by Derek Hutchinson.

Publication date: September 1985. $12.95, paper.

According to a recent poll of its readers, River Runner magazine found that sea kayaking ranks first as the new paddling skill to learn. Derek Hutchinson's Guide to Sea Kayaking responds to this rapidly growing enthusiasm with the most detailed and expert guidance yet offered to sea-bound paddlers. Published in September by Pacific Search Press, Seattle, the guide may be ordered by sending $12.95 plus $1.00 postage and handling to Pacific Search Press, 222 Dexter Avenue North, Seattle, WA 98109.

The author, a 20-year veteran of sea kayaking, is--by his own admission--a shameless romantic when it comes to the sea. But he is also a seasoned expert who stresses the importance of technical mastery, safety precautions, appropriate equipment, and informed common sense. With humour and precision, numerous photos and illustrations, and step-by-step instructions, Hutchinson guides the practicing kayaker through the complete array of strokes, launches, rescues, navigational exercises, survival strategies and many other techniques.

Whether evaluating kayaking equipment, which ranges from boats to radar reflectors, or offering valuable advice on leadership and group dynamics, this guide shares the confidence and expertise acquired by one of the sport's foremost authorities.

Derek Hutchinson is listed in The Guiness Book of World Records for his nonstop crossing of the North Sea in an unescorted kayak. The author of Sea Canoeing, he designs kayaks and is the senion coach of the British Canoe Union.

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DRAGON BOATING FOR FUN, FITNESS AND FELLOWSHIP

DRAGON BOAT REGATTA

A fast advancing wide front of foam and spray marks the progress of 12 metre long canoes each with a rampant Dragon figure-head ploughing through waves, propelled by 20 straining paddlers in time to the urge of a drummer and the exhaltations of a helmsperson. Pageant flags flutter on board these Dragon Boats as they race down the waterway with fully packed banks of excited, cheering spectators. Such is the scenario for celebrating the Fifth Day of the Fifth Moon, otherwise known as the globally popularised Dragon Boat Festival with its magnetism, vitality and brilliance that challenges all imaginations.

The custom traces back 2000 years to China when Qu-yuan, the patriotic poet and statesman of Qu, made the last of his relentless protests against misrule and his wrongful banishment. He flung himself into the Mi-lo River. The heroic action moved fishermen to race to his rescue, beating gongs and drums, and threshing the water, to scare fish and demons from devouring him. Re-inactments have since included casting "Jungs", rice dumplings wrapped in bamboo leaves, into the deep to succour Qu-yuan's spirit.

The Chinese veneration for righteousness and heroism keeps the tradition alive. Social, cultural and industrial enrichment potential of commemorative competition has prompted its world wide adoption. The Chinese Community and ardent patrons of multicultural Australia, inaugurate this event during our sesquicentenary celebrations for all to enjoy and benefit.