NEWSLETTER of the

Advanced Sea Kayak Club

AN INTERNATIONAL SEA CANOEING CLUB

OPEN TO ALL INTERESTED IN THIS ASPECT OF CANOEING

AIMS Promotion of sea canoeing · Communication · Organisation of events and conferences · Safety and coaching

ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB

NEWSLETTER NO.61

MAY 1987

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EDITORIAL

Our Canoe Exhibition was a great success. Yet again the interest in sea kayaking was most evident, not only at our ASKC Stand but elsewhere throughout the show. One or two things caught my eye. Derek's new sea kayak 'Orion' made by Hereford Glass Fibre Company; a new 'dry suit' top which breathes and is not adversely effected by salt water produced by Chris Hawkesworth of WILD WATER; and the 575 Super Cruiser by Granta Boats - a touring sea kayak for two (only £199.00 in kit form).

FOR SALE

We have obtained some cheap yellow sweat shirts (medium size only) and had them printed with the ASKC motif, price to you £3.50 (including postage and packing).

Charles Harrison of 'Wern Helgg', Llannor, Pwllheli, Gwynedd, LL53 8LZ has a Nordcapp sea kayak for sale.

Model HM with deck lines, VCP C-Trim rudder and 3 hatches. Hull red, deck yellow. VGC. Little used (mostly inverted). Offers or part exchange with VGC Sea Tiger. Phone: (0758) 613631.

6TH INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAK SYMPOSIUM

We are gathering a great collection of speakers for this event, Our star attraction, hopefully, will be Dr David Pelly, an internationally renowned anthropologist to talk on living and kayaking with the Canadian

We canoeists are notorious for leaving everything to the last minute and this makes forward planning difficult - so do please use the enrolment form provided to book your place now.

HEREFORD GLASS FIBRE COMPANY are now the only outlet for the popular Islander range of sea kayaks formerly available through WYE kayaks. Their address is Unit 3, Ravenswood Court, Rotherwas Industrial Estate, Hereford HR2 6SX. Tel. (0432) 57111.

1988 - A week on the Isle of Wight

How about a sea kayaking holiday on the Isle of Wight next year? I'll lay on a campsite, bar-be-que, a couple of evening lectures/talks and event a night paddle. The week 1st October to 8th October. (O.K. John Powell?!!) Let me know that you're interested and I'll organise.

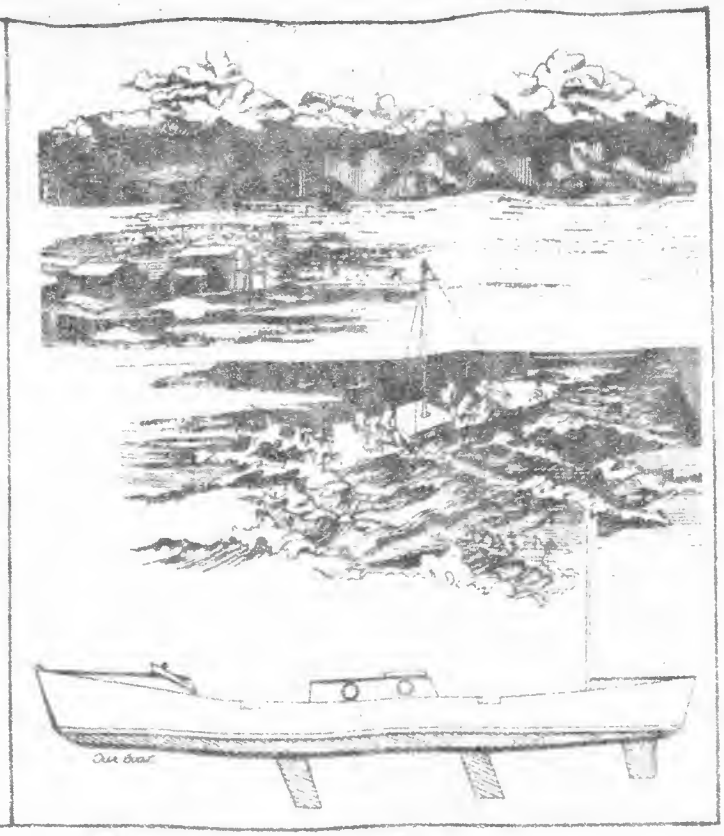
MARINE CALL

Dick Richards writes to say that Marineline is now discontinued and its place taken by Marine Call. I have enclosed a leaflet which explains all.

KAYAK de MER - RALLYE INTERNATIONAL des CALANQUES de MARSEILLE a la Presqu'ile de GIENS DU 13 au 20 JUIN 1987

par I'Ile du Friouf - Morgidu - Sugiton - Envau - Port Miou - CASSIS et son Port - La Ciotat - Bandol - Les Iles des Embiez - St. Mandrier - Giens.

105 Km en 7 etapes avec bivouac - material; transporte dans les kayaks - Gardiennage vehicules assoure pendant la semaine - Prix 350 Francs Francais - Cotact Guy Pisset; Chemin de Vacquerol; 30820 - Caveirac, France.



Report by Bob Hicks
Based on Patagonia
Research Foundation
Brochure

Rowing to Antarctica...

the goal, the people, the boat, the plan!

The December 15th issue included a report from Henry Szostek on a 28 foot aluminum dory specially built for a voyage to Antarctica to be undertaken by archeologist Charlie Porter. from Pepperell, MA. The boat had just been launched in late November and Henry was invited along as he had gotten to know Charlie well and was a serious oarsman himself.

Charlie Porter is a free lance archeologist and mountaineer. He apprenticed to an elderly archeologist a number of years ago doing research on the early indians of the southern tip of South America of 10,000 years ago. When his mentor no longer could travel to the wild areas involved, Charlie carried on, and spent 18 moths alone, for the most part, continuing his research and camping out or with the poverty level remaining indigenous indian population. He travelled by Klepper fitted with a Martin Oarmaster, the only boat rig he could take to that remote area by plane. During his stay, he indulged one day in "Rounding the Horn" in his Klepper, paddling from the mainland body of Tierra del Fuego out to and around the island peak that marks the absolute southernmost extremity of South America. It was a mellow day, and he was under surveilance during the trip by Chilean police from the station they maintain at Cape Horn.

Perhaps during that adventure, he cast a glance to the south, where 480 miles of the wildest water on earth separate Antarctica from South America. Whether it was then, or not, Charlie has conceived and is now organizing a voyage under oars across that forbidding strait. The boat Henry sampled is one step along the way.

The goal is pretty simple. Nobody has yet forced their way to the bottom of the world by muscle power. Early visitors travelled there by sail, later by steam, and today by air. Nobody has ever tried to row the furious fifties and screaming sixties. Charlie views this as one of the few remaining honest adventures, travelling from continent to continent crossing the world's wildest sea in the smallest craft ever taken into the Antarctic ice. The professional aspect of all this is to probe the theory that early man may have done the deed 6500 years ago. Charlie's research has convinced him that the indians of that time and place had the necessary sea going technology to do it, much as early polynesians travelled the vast reaches of the Pacific. Charlie's expedition will look for traces of early man on the frozen shores of the Antarctic Peninsula, an area not entirely covered by ice.

While Charlie has in the past funded his research from family resources, this adventure is budgeted at $172,000 and sponsors are being solicited. The sponsors are offered exposure based on the expedition's planned film and TV coverage. To this end, Porter, who is unknown outside his specialty, is but part of a four person team. Ned Gillette is an experienced mountaineering expedition leader with connections to the National Geographic Society, David Brashears is a film maker who filmed live video from the summit of Mt. Everest in 1983, and Jan Reynolds is Brashear's assistant with a long list of expedition credentials. This is not a group of idle fantasizers.

OK, that's the background, now how about the boat? This is, after all, a publication about boats. Charlie's description of the boat is as follows:

"We will operate in the toughest rowing boat ever built, a pioneering design. She must be seaworthy, able to survive breaking seas that could be (but hopefully won't be) sixty feet in height. She must have capacity to carry all our supplies. Yet she must be fast. Speed is the key to our success; durability the key for our survival.

The boat is 28 feet long. She is designed for rowing efficiency, like an overweight racing shell; yet, at the same time, for bombproof toughness, like a steel drum, structurally re-inforced to withstand the violent battering of wave and ice in the southern ocean. The hull is made of the highest strength marine grade aluminum. Positive flotation is ensured by an inner lining of foam. The boat is self bailing and self righting in the dreaded event of a capsizing. She is absolutely watertight above and below decks.

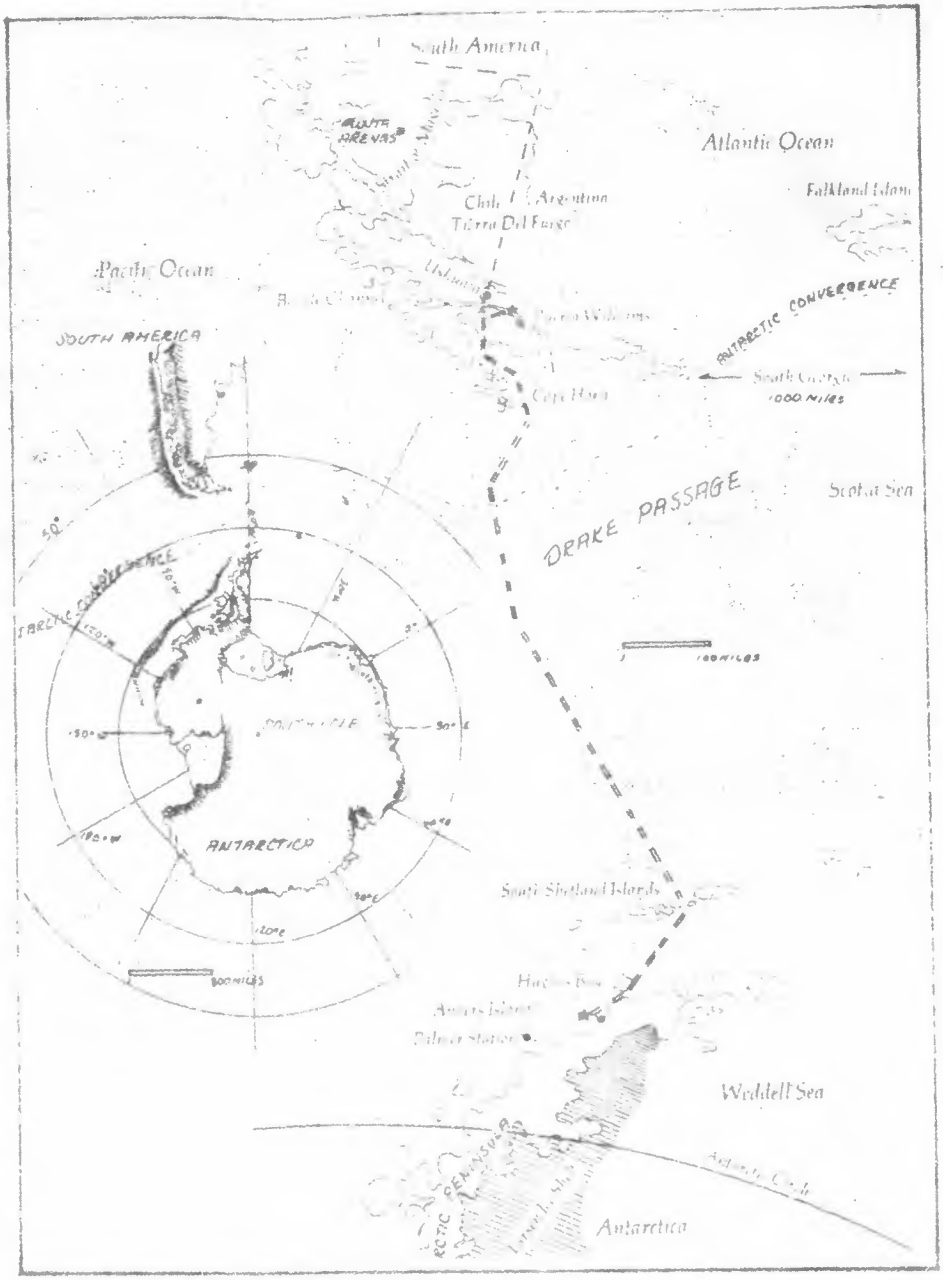
Two oarsmen on sliding seats will pull on sculling oars. They will operate from two separate cockpits located fore

and aft of a center cabin. The "coffin" cabin gives crew shelter. During the worst storms in these great cold seas the only way to survive is below deck. A short sailing rig can be raised in emergencies much as Sir Ernest Shackleton did in his epic small boat voyage from Antarctica to South Georgia in 1916 after his ship ENDURANCE was crushed in the ice. Master boatbuilder Bill Cooper and his son Douglas of Woods Hole, MA and aluminum specialist Jack Winninghoff of Ipswich, MA were in charge of construction."

The plan for the voyage has been developed by Porter, drawing on his experiences over 18 months of rowing some 3,000 miles in the Cape Horn area in his Klepper. The expedition will get set up in Beagle Channel and conduct final sea trials in the local environment in November of 1985. A 200 mile row to Cape Horn will be the final test of the boat and crew. At the Cape, they will await certain weather conditions. Porter found that an easterly gale, which blows about twice a month, when a depression passes north of the Cape, is usually followed by moderating conditions with the wind dying off into a northerly. As soon as such an easterly shows signs of blowing itself out, the adventurers will head off southwesterly running before the wind as it swings into the north. They plan to press on as fast as possible in this "calm" making distance westward and southward, so that when the normal fierce westerly winds resume, they can then turn into a southeasterly direction and head for the South Shetland Islands.

About halfway they expect to run into the perpetual fogbanks at the Antarctic Convergence where the cold southern water meets the warmer surface water of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. At this point, they will be committed, safer and more practical to carry on than to try to turn back. The major concern will be to avoid being blown too far eastward out of Drake Passage and into the south Atlantic ocean. If this does happen, they will set a course downwind to the island of South Georgia, nearly a thousand miles away. In all of this they will have a powerful radio onboard and emergency locator transmitters, but there will be no escort vessel of any sort.

From the South Shetlands, the expedition will row 200 miles to Hughes Bay on the Antarctic Peninsula, where the first recorded landing on the continent was made in 1821 by an American sealing ship. This peninsula is the only part of Antarctica accessible to small craft with its western coastline free of pack ice after the December breakup through into March. There will still be much ice about and the plan is to haul the boat onto the ice if it is threatened at all with being crushed. The course will pass by Deception Island where a still active volcanic condition exists in the collapsed, sea filled cone. Here the water is a balmy 100 degrees F and the crew could go for a nice swim if they chose!



Before the onset of the winter night comes, the expedition will press ahead to the Antarctic Circle where several year round scientific stations are manned by five nations.

If the journey proceeds without any major delays, time will be in hand after first landfall for Porter to search for archeological sites of pre-historic man having visited the Antarctic continent. Porter's prior research turned up many sites of camps of "natives" during a warming trend some 6500 years ago on the Tierra del Fuego Cape Horn land mass. Others have noted that arrowheads have been spotted on the Antarctic peninsula, but no organized scientific archeological investigations have followed. Porter theorizes that early man may have emigrated not only from Australia and Polynesia to South America but also to Antarctica by being carried too far to the south. Maori legend has it that around 650 AD some of their people visited the land of perpetual ice. So, Charlie Porter thinks all of this is worth the risk.

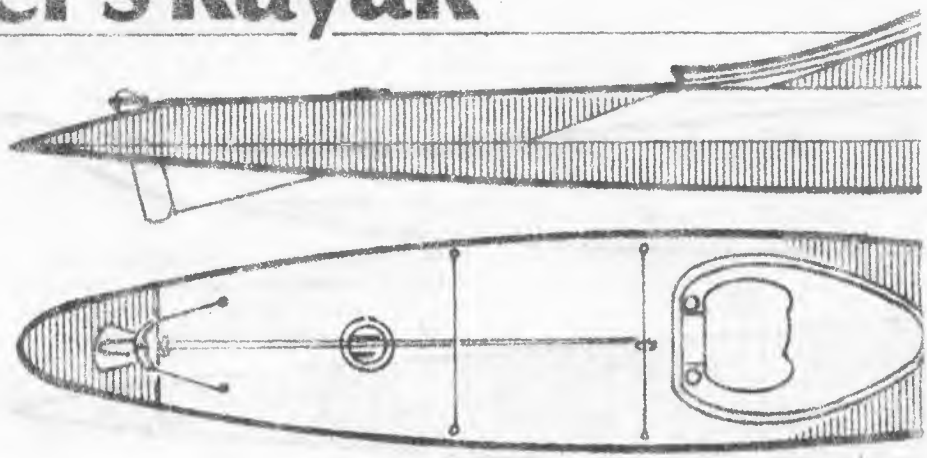
Well, this is some adventure. The scope would be regarded as a fantasy were it not for Charlie Porter's prior efforts in the area. And, this mid-winter of 1984-85, he has completed his 32 foot steel Tahitiana ketch which he will sail south to the Beagle Channel for the base of operations. Charlie built the boat in his yard in Pepperell, MA over the past several years. Not an idle dream.

Unlike most scientific expeditions, this one has no large institutional backing. Porter and his fellow adventurers are operating within the non-profit Patagonia Research Foundation, which Porter founded and heads. They are attemting to raise about $200,000 from corporate sponsors as the resources which supported his prior expeditions are apparently not up to this scale. Still, in this day of big buck research, this is not an enormous sum of money for so daring and potentially rewarding an expedition.

Rowing to Antarctica, it does boggle the mind, doesn't it.

The hunter's kayak

Tim Kidman presents drawings and construction details for a design whose original was tested in Arctic waters



Not to be confused with dugout canoes or the birch-bark open boats of the north-American Indians, the kayaks of the Eskimos use sealskin for the hull covering. This material may make economic sense for them, but for us there's no comparison with 4mm marine ply — on grounds of humanity, price or availability!

The Pacific Eskimos call their skin boats *baidarkas*; they use them in the towering waves of the icy north Pacific, hunting whales and sea otters. More common in Europe and the US, however, is the design developed from the Eskimo caribou-hunting kayak, whose curved keel gives it great manoeuvrability. This kind of craft is used in competition — hence the name 'high-volume slalom canoe' — but I am a sea-kayakist, and I was inspired by the Eskimo designs in the Liverpool Museum to create a boat that handles well in big waves.

I started with numerous cardboard models, trying out various keel and hull forms to get an idea of what shape would be best for sea conditions. This design is the mark 3 version; faster than the mark 2, it also handles better in high waves, and has various other improvements of detail. It needs a rudder because the chine makes it a little difficult to turn quickly.

Mark out one sheet of ply as in diagram 1, and cut it out with a Stanley knife or a jig-saw. An extra side panel with reverse transom should be marked out and cut from the second sheet of ply. If you butt the joints, cut 1in shorter and cover the join with a 2in piece. Mark the overlapping areas of the pieces carefully as shown; they will join over the piece bearing the same letter.

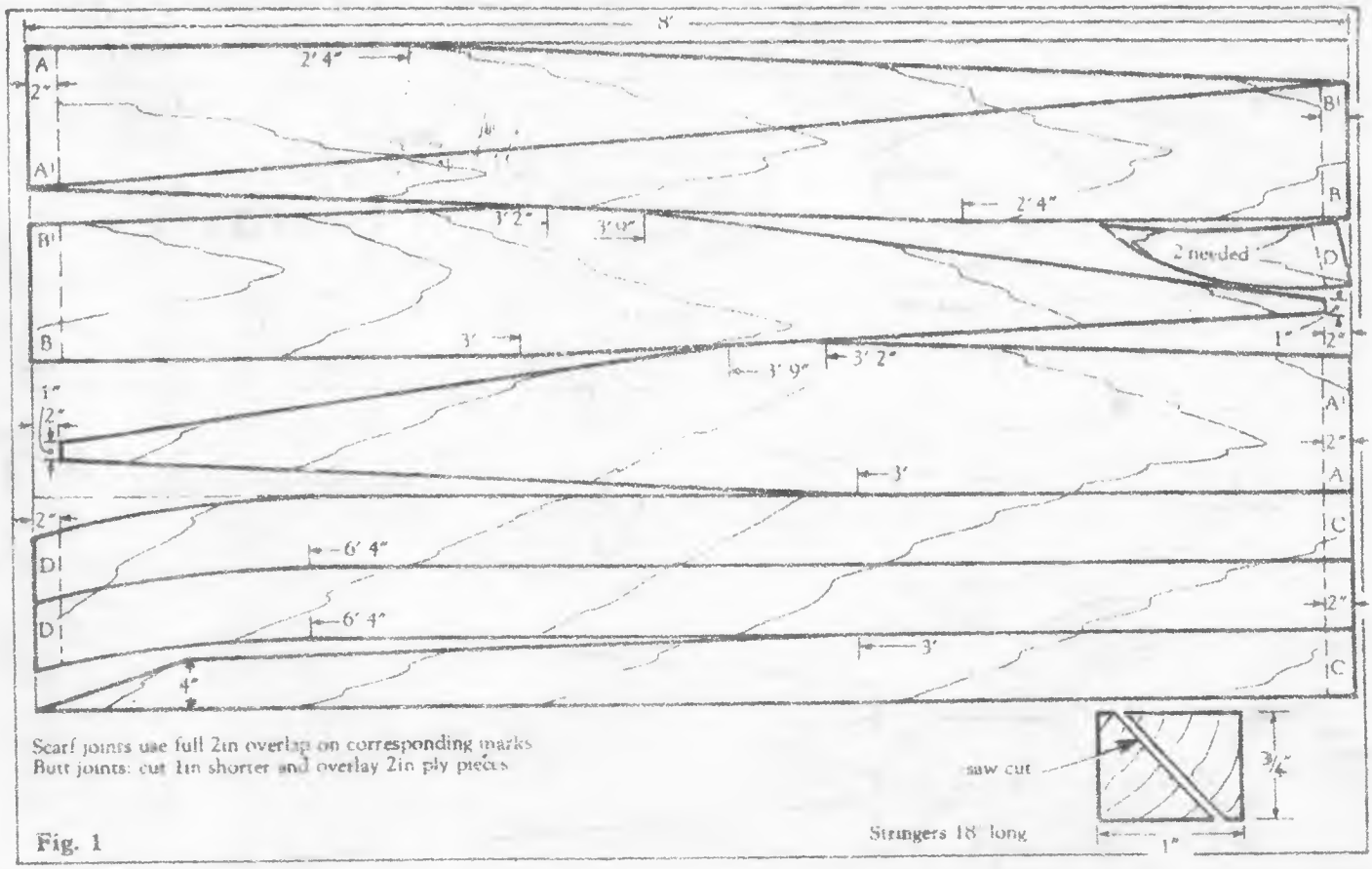
Prepare two pieces of 1×¾in clear spruce by cutting as in fig. 1. Steam the last 3in in a steam box, then bend to the curve of the bow side panels. Finally, pin and glue the spruce to the side panels.

Drill 7/16in holes at 3in intervals along the edges of the hull bottom pieces. Place 3in lengths of wire (Rytic) in the holes, and twist it tight to pull the hull sections together.

The side pieces (with spruce pieces attached) are now joined using a similar procedure, again 7/16in holes 3in apart, starting aft. The bows are joined for the first six holes before pulling in the bowside sections to the hull.

After joining the hull sides to the bottom, the bottom centre seam can be taped with 2in tape and polyester resin. When it has set the first bulkhead can be fitted 3ft from the bow. It is glued and brass-pinned from the outside. The forward bulkhead (fig. 2) can be fitted with a cut-out at the top for the lifting toggle. Glue two pieces of ply either side of the cut-out, drill a ¼in hole through both pieces, and push in a piece of ¼in brass rod to which you can attach the toggle.

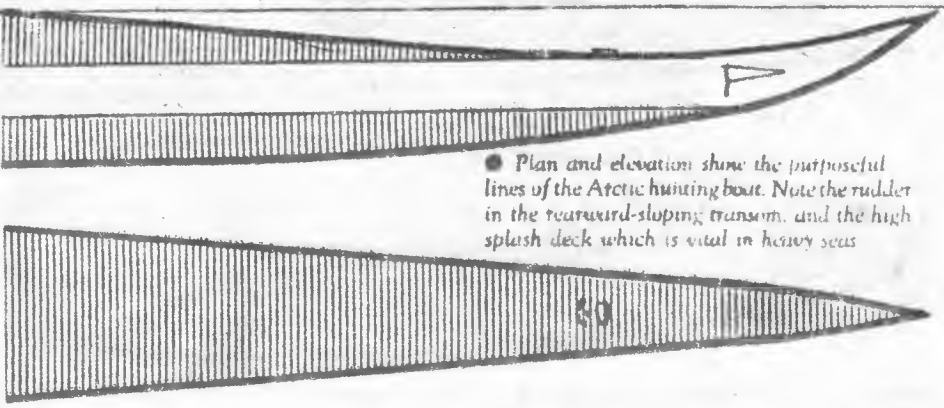
A piece of 1in square spruce long enough to give a total beam of 22in is pinned and



Scarf joints use full 2in overlap on corresponding marks
Butt joints: cut 1in shorter and overlay 2in ply pieces

Stringers 18' long

Fig. 1

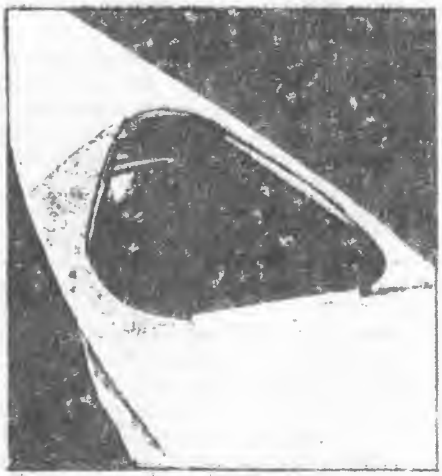


● *Plan and elevation show the purposeful lines of the Arctic hunting boat. Note the rudder in the rearward-sloping transom, and the high splash deck which is vital in heavy seas*

● *Looking forward before the decking goes on. The brace is to hold the hull in shape while the glue in the hull joints dries*

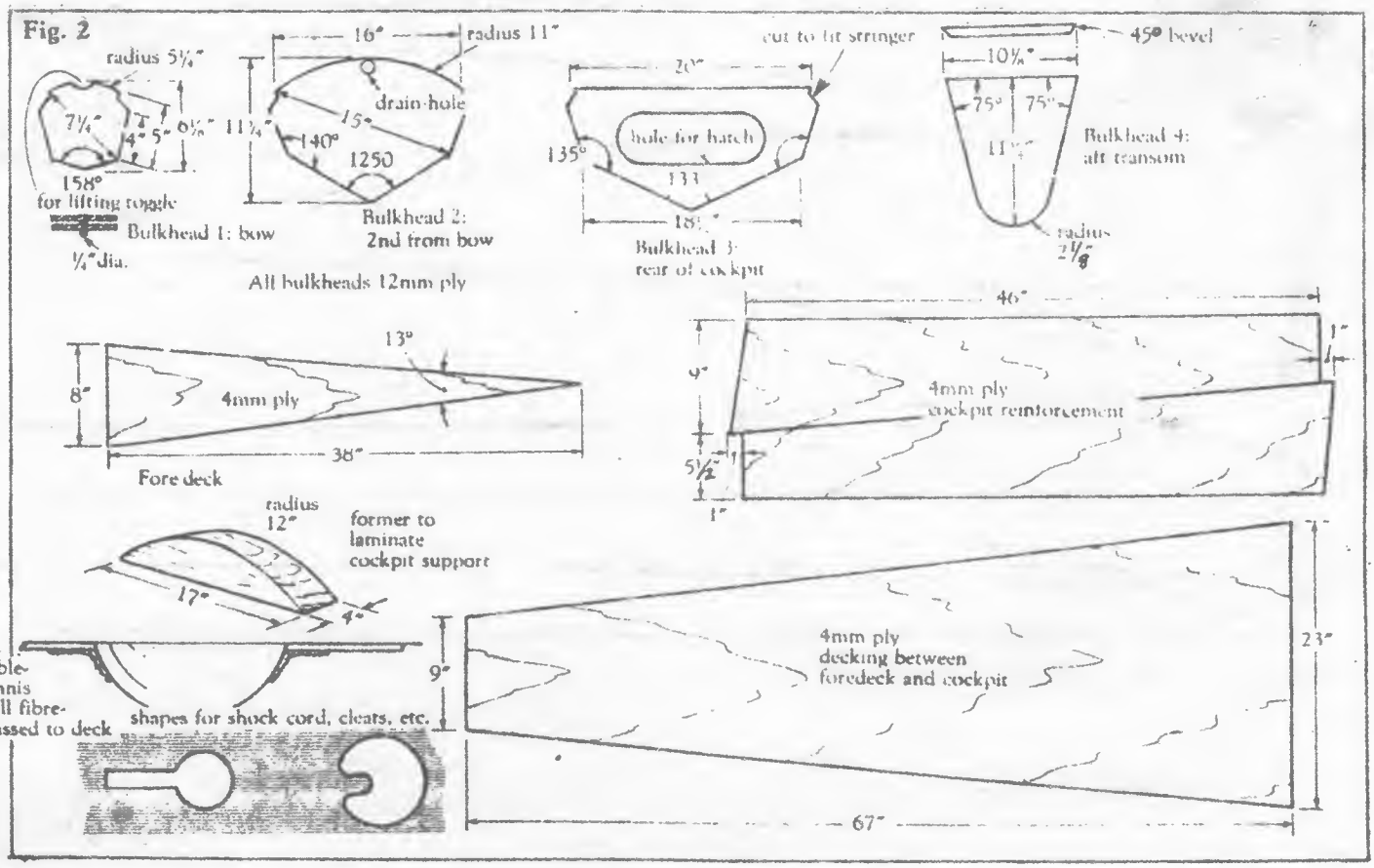
glued, 71in from the transom, into recesses made in the stringers. The rear of the cockpit bulkhead (fig. 2) can now be fitted to this piece and the hull by pinning and gluing. When the glue has set, the cockpit side is taped with resin to ensure watertightness. All the other seams can now be taped with glass tape and resin.

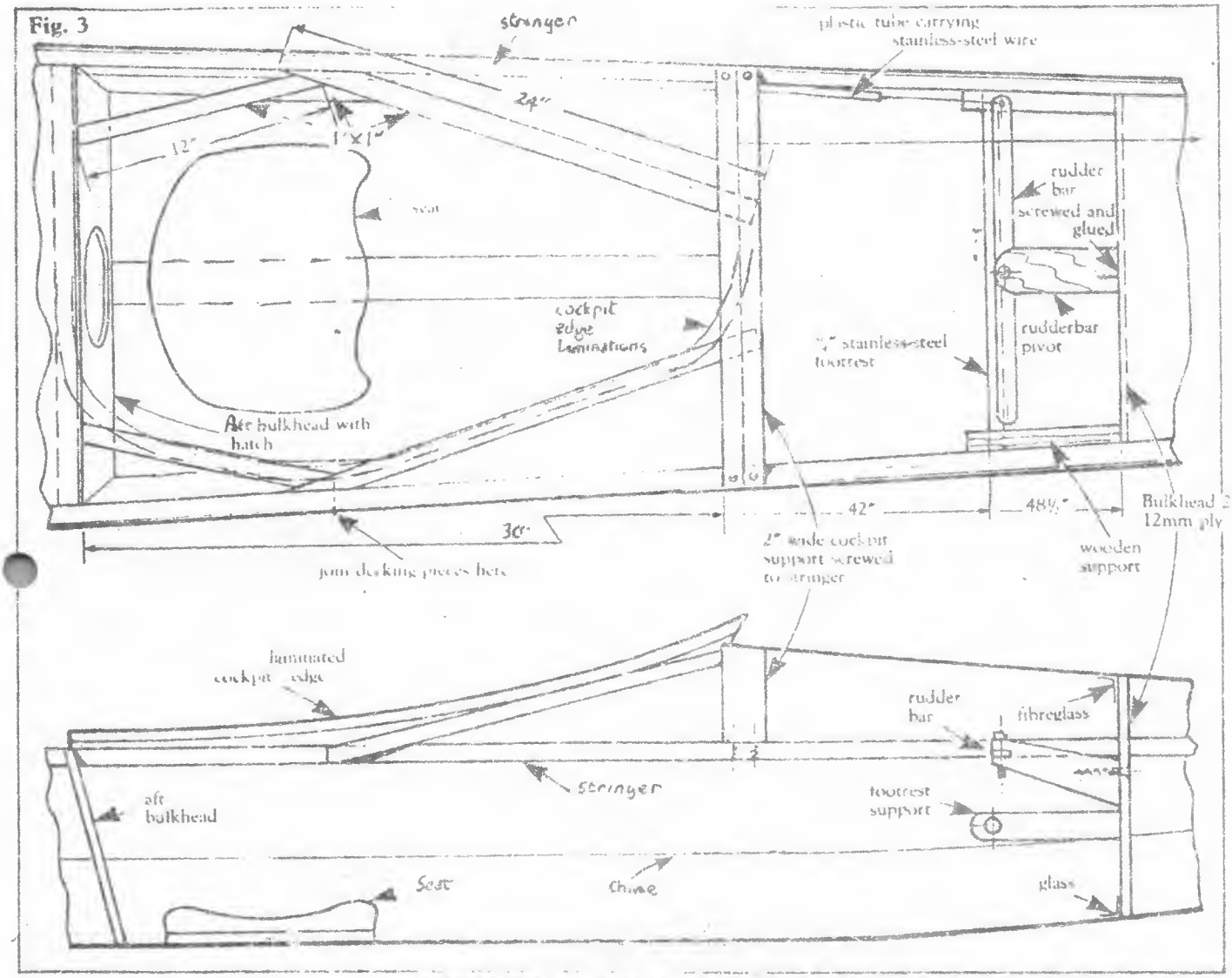
The forward cockpit support (fig. 2) is made by laminating pieces of 4mm ply over the mould shown. Two pieces of 1in, one piece of 1½in and one of 2in are used, the wider ply on the outside. When set the support should retain its shape on removal from the mould. It can then be screwed to the stringers 105in from the bow. The second bulkhead can also be fitted 86in from the bow, pinned and glued and taped with glass tape and resin on the cockpit side when set.



● *View into the cockpit before the coaming is fitted. The laminated forward cockpit support and spruce framework can be seen*

When the seams are finished, the transom (fig. 2) can be fitted, by gluing and nailing with copper boat nails. When this has set any pieces above deck level can be planed away so that the aft deck may be pinned and glued to it. The aft deck, cut from a piece of ply 22×60in, should be reinforced before fitting, by gluing to it smaller pieces of 4mm ply — away from the edge so as not to hit the stringers. The reinforcing is needed to stop the deck bending when you sit on it. Other fittings in the aft deck should be fixed before gluing. The foredecking can also be fitted; it is a difficult bend, so I used a piece of 3mm ply.





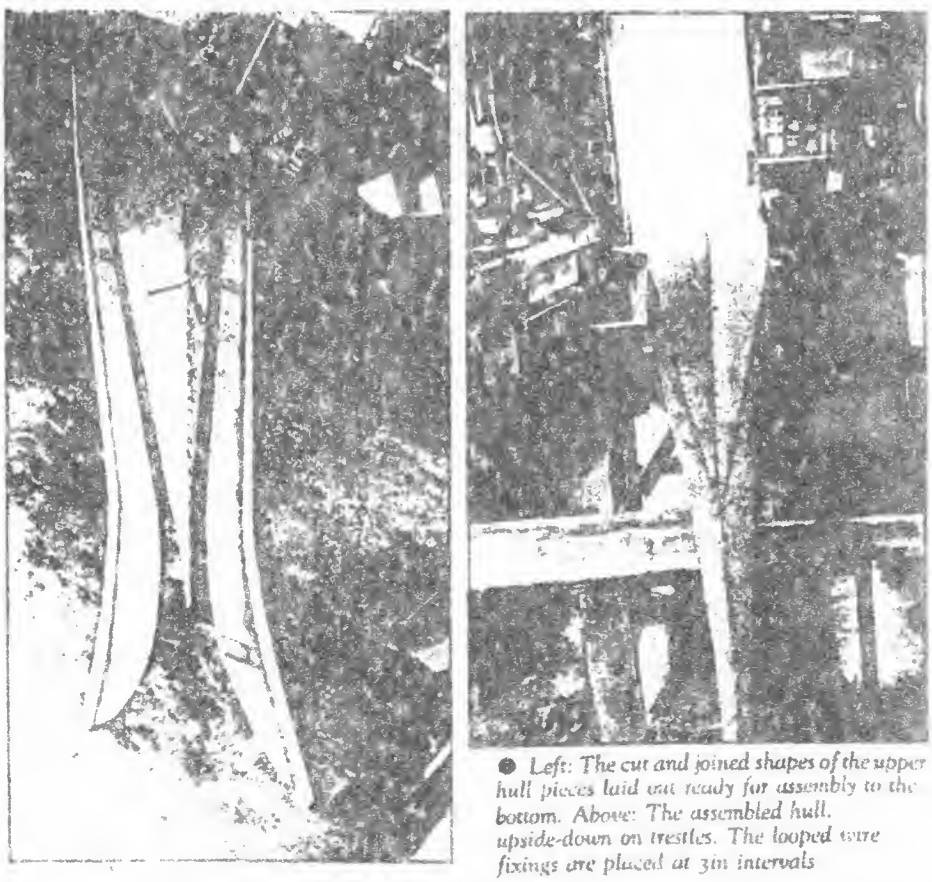
Do not forget to leave the lifting toggle free. At this point the wire pieces that pulled the hull together can be removed with side cutters and the wire centre pulled out with pliers.

The cockpit-reinforcing pieces (fig. 2) are glued to the hull bottom using polyester resin and held in position with copper boat nails.

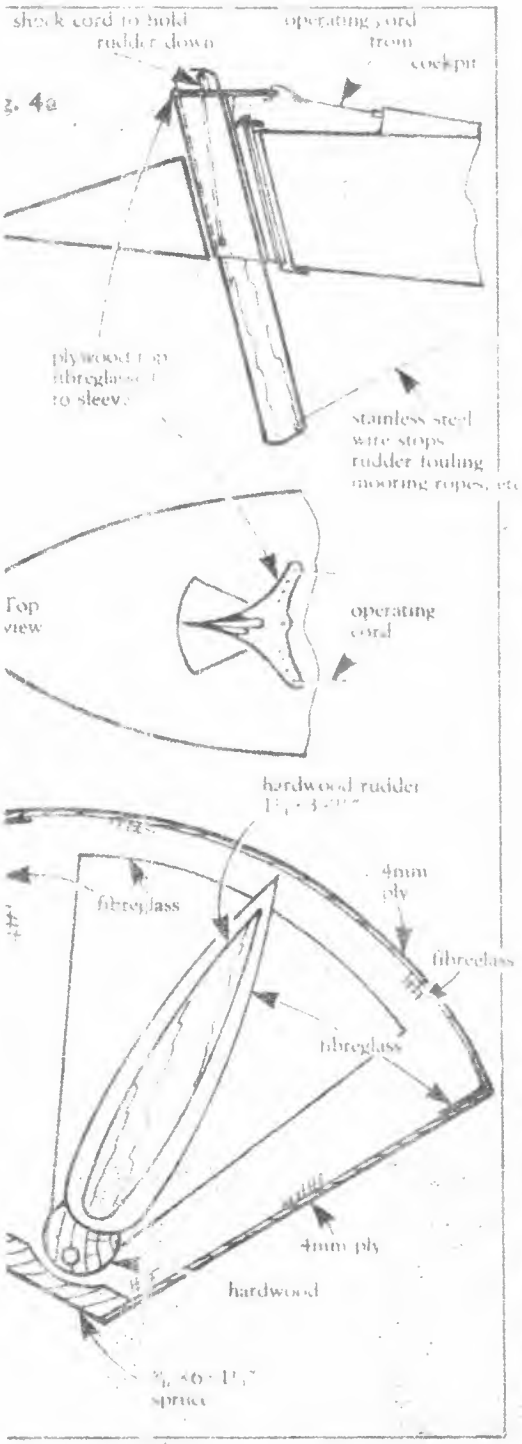
With the fibreglass seat taped with polyester resin to the reinforcing on the hull bottom 1½in in front of the cockpit bulkhead, you can sit in the canoe and get someone to measure you for the footrest. This is a piece of stainless steel ¾in in diameter, fitted into blocks long enough to just touch the bulkhead and wide enough to take a hole for the tube, placed to transfer thrust to the bulkhead and hull sides. A rudder bar can be fitted 4in above the foot rest (fig. 3).

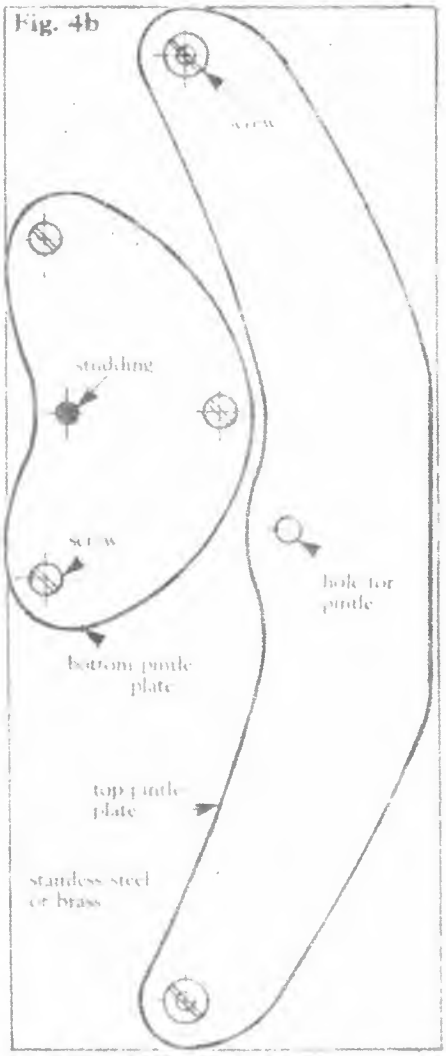
The cockpit is formed by a 1×1in spruce framework to support the decking. First a 2ft length is fitted; offer it up to the side 3in down from the mid-point. Shape the two pieces and glue and pin them. Pieces of spruce 1ft long are now fitted to the aft bulkhead 4in from the side to the pieces already fitted. A small piece can be fitted where the two join (fig. 3).

The decking can now be completed. Cut the rest of the foredeck from a piece of ply 67in long (fig. 2), and glue and nail it with copper boat nails to the second bulkhead.



● *Left: The cut and joined shapes of the upper hull pieces laid out ready for assembly to the bottom. Above: The assembled hull, upside-down on trestles. The looped wire fixings are placed at 3in intervals*





The bow without its decking, showing the footrest and two forward bulkheads.

the stringers and the cockpit support. The decking around the cockpit is fitted by offering up pieces of ply of about the right size, marking, cutting, and gluing and pinning (fig. 3).

The cockpit coaming is fitted by gluing ½in-wide pieces of ply, cut to fit, to the cockpit edge. Build it up to three pieces high and finish it with two ¼in pieces to form a lip for fastening the spray deck. If a thick spray deck is going to be used, another piece of ply 1in wide should be added.

All external seams are now taped with 1½in tape. Then the canoe can be sanded, primed, sanded, undercoated, sanded, topcoated, sanded and finished with a final topcoat.

During construction either keyholes or cleats can be cut into the plywood panels of the fore and aft decks. They can be waterproofed by glassing in half a table-tennis ball under the deck, and are used to fit fore and aft lines and athwart-ship shock-cord retainers for charts, paddles, compass, etc.

A rudder can also be fitted to be worked from the cockpit by the feet. This is in a well fitted into the reverse slope of the transom, the control can be either by cords operating through polythene tubing from the rudder bar to the rudder control on top of the rudder sleeve, or by a solid stainless-steel wire operating on one side of the rudder control. The polythene tubes need to be incorporated in the kayak during its construction.

A triangular tube 6in long is constructed of 4mm ply, using a piece of spruce for the apex (fig. 4a). The construction is similar to the canoe in that the ply-to-ply corners are constructed by sewing with Rytie and then taping with glass tape and polyester resin; the spruce is 1½in × 6in, with a bevel on the vertical sides (fig. 4a).

This tube is now used as a pattern to cut the hole in the reverse transom, with the spruce upright fitted at the top of the transom, just inside the aft deck, 12½in from the end of the transom. It is fixed with resin and tape at the top and bottom. Later a hole will be cut in the bottom to accommodate the rudder.

The rudder, 14×3½×½in, is made from hardwood. The sleeve to hold the rudder is made by wrapping four layers of newspapers round it, then a sheet of polythene, and then moulding fibreglass round the shape using glass tape and polyester resin. When the first moulding is set it is removed from the rudder along with the polythene and newspaper. A rounded piece of hardwood 5 × ⅝ × ½in is then fibreglassed to the front of the sleeve. A stainless-steel tube 5in long and of enough internal diameter to allow 2BA or 0BA stainless-steel studding is fixed into a piece of wood for the rudder pintle.

The pintle is a 6in-long piece of stainless steel or brass 2BA or 0BA studding, brazed to a piece of stainless steel or brass shaped as in fig. 4b. This is screwed into the bottom of the hull just before the hole for the rudder, and fixed so that the rudder sleeve can be pushed down the studding and turn in the triangular hole. The top fixing is a piece of stainless steel or brass as in fig. 4b. This is wide enough to absorb the shock if the rudder grounds and retracks. The studding is then held in place with a nut fastened down to the piece of metal.

Bon voyage! ■

Materials

Marine plywood BS 1088
- 2 sheets 8 × 4ft × 4mm (3 sheets for two canoe)
- Odd pieces of ½in (12mm) ply as required for bulkheads

Other wood
- 18ft × 1⅝ × ⅝in clear spruce for stringers to be cut as fig. 1
- 18ft × 1½ × ½in clear spruce for pit and bulkhead supports
- 18 × 4 × 2½in softwood for making forward cockpit support by laminating

Fastenings
- 4oz (approx 140) ¾ × 14 copper boat nails
- 4oz (approx 450) 1 × 17 brass boat pins

Glue
- Aerolite 306 500g
- hardener GBP 500g

Glass tape
- 1½in (38mm) 50m roll

Resin
- Polyester type A 1kg

Cooper wire or Rytie

Seat
- GRP obtainable from canoe suppliers or moulded

Hatches
- Hol Alan HA337 and HA 338

From: Keith Morris, YMCA National Centre, Lakeside, Ulverston, Cumbria,
LA12 8BD. Tel.: NEWby Bridge 31758 27th January 1987

Dear John,

Here's a report on the tent I bought last year which may be of use in the newsletter.

I've been "doing up" an Anas Acuta for my wife Ann to paddle and had to make a mould to produce a hatch recess for the front deck (so she can have two waterproof compartments and carry her share of the gear). It struck me that having taken the trouble to make the mould it would be a shame to chuck it away. So should anyone else need such a moulding (it might also fit other boats with similarly curved decks) they could get in touch and I could make them one.

Please find this years subs herewith. See you at Crystal Palace.

Keith Morris

Tent Report - Phoenix Phusion

In the words of the bumpf supplied with the tent it's a "Dunnel", "state of the art" design. In shape it's a cross between a dome (e.g., Phazor) and a tunnel (e.g., Peapod) and a long way removed from the traditional ridged form of tent.

Any tent design has both pros and cons. There is certainly an increase in usable space over a ridge form with good sitting headroom over most of the groundsheet area and plenty of space in each sloping end for wet gear, cooking, etc. But there is an increase in complexity with four sectional (23" collapsed) flexible tubular aluminium elastic-linked hoop poles and no less than 21 hooks to attach the inner to the outer (which is either pitched first or both can be packed up together - makes for much faster pitching).

The tent is symmetrical from both side and end, both sloping ends having two zips which in effect gives four entrances to cope with wind changes. This flexibility continues with well thought out inner zips, tie backs and mosquito nets being adjustable to provide a wide range of ventilation options.

In size (inner 83" x 50") the Phusion is comfortable for two; cosy but possible for three small people. Using only the outer, tent space is hugely increased due to the very generous gap between inner and outer. Four could be accommodated in this way but you lose the mosquito net advantage and the groundsheet of course.

The Phusion is made to withstand strong winds having ten built in guys. The Extrem version has a slightly heavier (4 oz. Neoprene) groundsheet and snow valances of the same material all round the outer so sand/rocks can be used to weigh down the otherwise free-standing tent. Though possible to pitch alone, having someone else to help makes things easier and quicker, especially in a strong breeze when temporary pegging down of the outer would be necessary while feeding the poles carefully through their sleeves.

In weight (9lb) even the Extrem version is back packable by two people and no problem at all in a kayak. In colour the tent is predominantly brown (with some yellow and red). All seams on the outer are taped; materials used and general finish are of top quality, which they should be on a product with a price tag-well over £200.

Overall the tent is strong, functional and definitely hi-tech - a far cry from a sheet stretched between two kayaks; but after all you get what you pay for.

From: Derek C. Hutchinson, 18 Marina Drive, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE33 2NH. Tel. (091) 4566155 21st January 1987

Dear John,

May I use your newsletter to say a word to my mate Frank, who 'went public' in your last issue.

Dear Frank,

It's a good job we are known to be friends but as you yourself say, "Making a living from canoe designing in the country is hard enough without money being snatched from the till by naughty stories!" How very true.

Of course I'm ready to accept all you say about the boundaries of Great Britain, about deck pumps and the movable deck fittings. But deck hatches and bulkheads, as we know them now, are a different matter.

Living almost on the beach, I first saw the lever operated aluminium hatches, on wrecked and decaying life-rafts towards the end of the war, while illegally beach combing with my pals - Yes I'm THAT old

Many years later when I was designing the "Baidarka", I decided I wanted it to have bulkheads and therefore hatches. Unable at the time to track down the manufacturers of the "lever hatch" I was obliged to have the first Baidarkas produced with large, not entirely satisfactory, plastic screw hatches. As soon as I'd found the manufacturers, however, the Baidarka was fitted with the proper lever-action aluminium hatch.

Fair's fair Frank. Credit where it's due. I'll allow you the rest but leave me with my bulkheads and hatches. (Yes I know Alfred Snodgrass probably had them in 1875 on his all lignum-vitae Rob Roy). When I was already paddling my "Baidarka" and when I suggested you might like to use the same idea for your new boat, you felt it was yet another scheme that would be more trouble than it was worth. It was a busy time for you however and you had a lot on your mind.

May I say a word about your VCP hatches. As far as I'm concerned it's the best on the market to date; indeed I have used them on my new ORION sea kayak design. Anyhow, whether in the baking heat of the Sea of Cortez, through Alaskan ice or the super heated waters of swimming pools, I have never known one of your hatches to blow off, pop off, suck in, gasp, wheeze or leak in any way - so there.

Happy new year to both my friends here and abroad - yes all four of them!

Yours sincerely,

Derek

From: Maggie Tookey, c/o Northern Ventures, West Yorkshire

Circumnavigation of the Isle of Skye - August 1986

Having spent the last four summers exploring the coast and islands off the West of Scotland, we decided this year to paddle the complete circuit of Skye over a two week period. Our departure point was Mallaig, an attractive working harbour, completely unmatched by the litter strewn streets of an unattractive town.

We had decided to paddle up the east coast and down the west, in the expectation that the unsettled weather pattern would bring us a prevailing north-westerly which would give us some shelter on the journey up and a following wind on the way down the other side. In the event we set off on a blustery wet morning, with a strong breeze funnelling down Loch Nevis and causing us an uncomfortable, quartering sea. Then we were able to turn and head due north and pick up our south-easterly wind that would take us up through the Kyles of Lochalsh.

Whilst approaching the narrowest part of this section, we found the Royal yacht Britannia bearing down on us quite rapidly, escorted by an even larger naval frigate. Despite the possibility that we might have posed a terrorist threat, we received an enthusiastic response from the frigate but only mild interest from some unidentifiable individuals on Britannia. If this narrow section is not timed right, a 5-6 knot tidal flow bars the way through into Loch Alsh. It is quite impossible to avoid it by trying to creep round the edge, such is the direction of flow from one side to the other, and a lengthy wait ensues.

Our journey up the east coast was lovely. There were at first some impressive views of the Cuillin ridge to the west, and to the east the remote mountains of Knoydart stirred up memories within us of our very first sea canoe venture into Loch Nevis, several years ago, using some leaky, borrowed slalom boats. We had been totally smitten by this first experience and had found ourselves returning with better equipment, on a regular basis, to explore the endless possibilities offered by the Scottish west coast.

Gradually the coastline itself became wilder and much less forgiving. From Portree onwards the cliffs became higher and indented with tiny hidden inlets that one imagined never to have been visited before, until we edged our kayaks in. They were dark, hidden places that could have no access from land, or be penetrated by any craft larger than a sea boat.

Staffin Island provided a welcome respite from a Force 6-7 north-westerly and a great campsite.

Paddling around the northernmost headland, Rubh Hunish Point, we encountered heavy overfalls. The confusion of water here was very strange and quite eerie. Within the overfalls we would suddenly come across large, flat, glassy patches of sea, in the midst of which we were enveloped in a temporary silence, before once again entering the crashing overfalls. We could afford no slight lapse in concentration.

We had a two day stopover on the largest of the Ascrib Islands at the south of Loch Snizort. These islands are uninhabited, remote and beautiful. There is evidence of a ruined settlement of four crofts which apparently were abandoned in the late eighteenth century. Since that time the islands have been left ungrazed to return to their natural vegetation. Their only occupants are vast colonies of assorted sea birds, seals and a number of sea otters.

We chose these islands particularly to visit, in order to carry out a very special task on this trip. The fourth member of our group who had shared all our expeditions over the years, and a member of the A.S.K.C., had died unexpectedly after a short illness, just six days before we were due to leave. We have built a cairn on a small hill looking out to Harris and Lewis, and have placed a waterproofed inscription within it in memory of our friend. If anyone is paddling in that area it would be nice to think that other sea canoeists might visit our cairn. Setting off to Waternish Point we were pleased to look back and clearly see it from a long way off.

The cliffs and sea caves become even more breathtaking from this point on and the tides become ever more localised and hard to calculate, particularly around the numerous small islands. We were managing to slip through the gales that seemed to be raging all round us and from this point on we mostly enjoyed hot sun and a steady north-westerly wind Force 4-5.

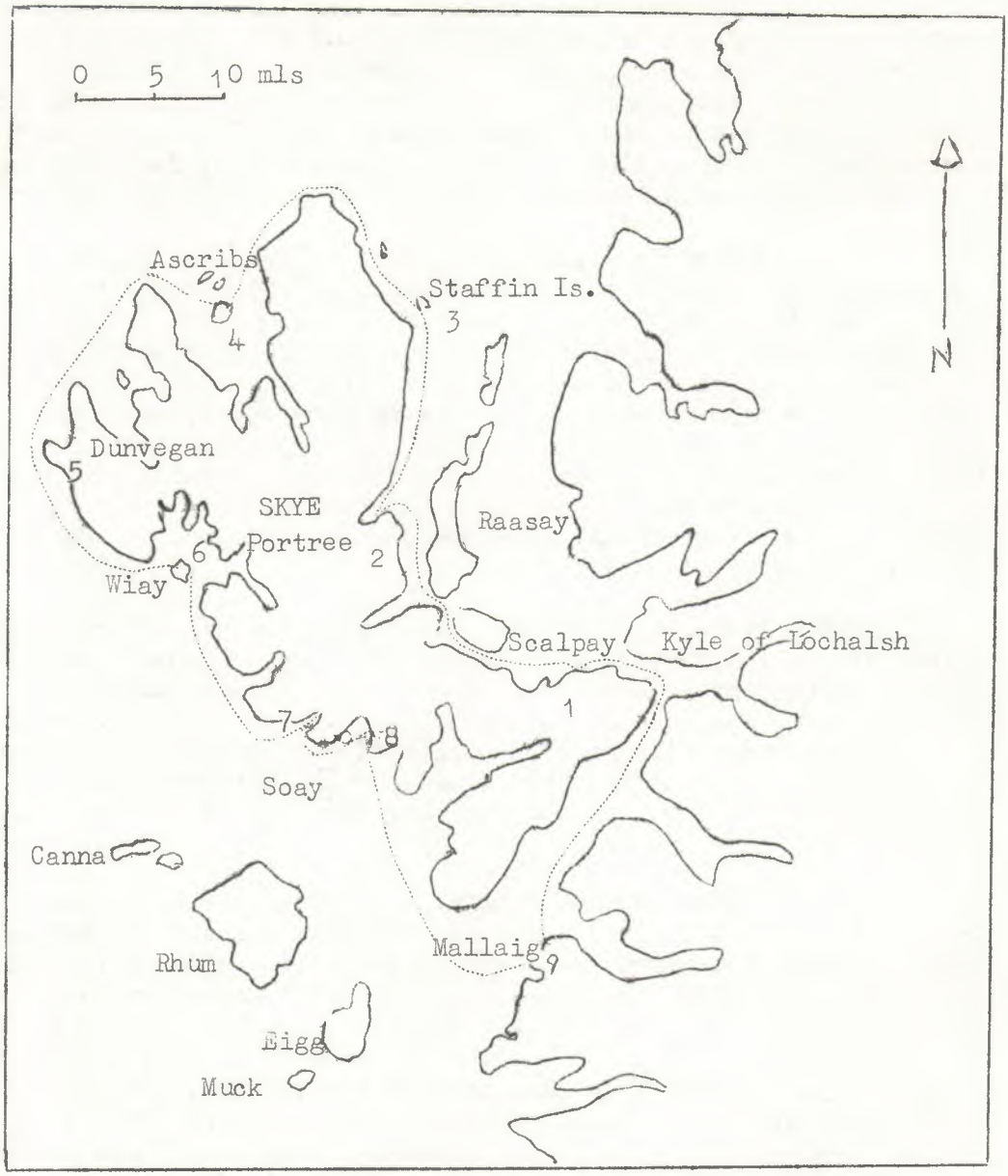
There is so much coastal scenery to take in that it is impossible to pinpoint which particular section catches the attention most, but the headland going into Loch Bracadale, Idrigill Point, is not to be missed. This headland boasts three large sea stacks called McClouds Maidens which are spectacular, as well as the deepest sea caves that we came across. The Island of Wiay lies within Loch Bracadale and has been inhabited much more recently than have the Ascribs. It offers marvellous camping and interesting exploration. The cliffs on the western end of the island afford a panoramic view way out to the far Hebridean Islands. At sunset this view was hard to draw away from.

Continuing our journey we couldn't resist the two mile detour into Glen Brittle and a stopover for three days to go once again onto the Cuillin ridge, the traverse of which we had managed to complete six years previously. It was certainly no less frightening than it had been then and we were quite happy to complete two peaks and come down We visited the Island of Soay nearby and were given a warm welcome by the eighteen or so islanders now living there.

The visit provided us with a fascinating insight into island life and we found it hard to resist the pressure of an invitation to stay the night and sample the regular evening entertainment. The islanders are all "incomers" and the population has gradually grown, the most recent addition being a schoolteacher for the tiny schoolroom with its one pupil. Being teachers from a large secondary school, we were interested to hear about his normal school day and any disciplinary and truancy problems! They rely on lobster fishing for their livelihood, and although they get good and bad years they seem to manage quite well. There were two new boats in the harbour. A rough track linked the cottages nestled around the small bay, and the whole scene on a sunny afternoon was idyllic.

After a night spent at the foreboding entrance to Loch Corruisk, we rounded the Point of Sleat on a beautiful hot summer day and crossed back to the mainland. We were hoping for a final glimpse of porpoises but they didn't perform for us that day. A lovely trip.

P.S. If anyone reading this would like any further information please don't hesitate to contact me: Maggie Tookey - 0535 34415.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The Morbihan, South Brittany - William Gardiner - January 1987

After the circumnavigation of the Isle de Re in June 1986 (see Eric Totty's article in the ASKC or Lakeland C.C. Newsletters) we went on to the Gulf of Morbihan en route for the North Brittany coast.

Our heads were full of conflicting information about the Gulf, mostly horror stories of extremely difficult tides and races reminicent of our swellies. These stories were backed up by a film Christian Gabard had shown of kayaks swooshing past the camera on evil black troll infested waters. A statue of the Madonna smiles across from the western shore of the narrows and clearly sailors for several generations feel strongly the need of a deity to benignly watch over them at this point in particular.

The day we travelled north from La Rochelle and Re was a day for the kayak and the smell of the open sea, instead our nostrils filled with that of hot tar, petrol and diesel fumes, capped with odours of hot tyres. Fate was equally predictable the following day, dawning wet and shivering cold and so English. No-one was in a hurry to canoe, we were thoroughly spoilt by our sojourn under Cote d'Azure type skies, we sought other amusement. When the sun did come out, the afternoon was well advanced and I was the only one with an appetite for the water. Camped as we were to the north of Arzon at Pointe de St Nicolas, with a lovely bay looking over to the largest island of the gulf, Ile-aux-Moines, it seemed an ideal spot well away from the 'dangerous' entrance.

I asked several locals for information all of whom told me that there were no local problems These statements seemed somewhat at variance to the evidence of my eyes, for there was a visible current showing on the surface as the spring tide eddied over the submerged concrete jetty. After a quick conference with Eric and Brian, I launched my Nanuk intending to take the end of the tide up the east shore of the Ile-aux-Moines and return on the early part of the ebb. I would be away less than two hours, in time to cook supper.

Off I went towards Vannes. I edged into the channel, with care, feeling for the stream and watching the shore lines. Quite suddenly I found myself speeding eastwards on a very fast current which apparently was not aware that high tide was now history and the time had arrived for the waters to return whence they had come. Two minutes later the bay of my departure was gone, left behind a headland. If I was to prepare supper on time a change of plan needed to be implemented toute-suite, pronto. I cut behind a sailing sloop, flat out under auxillary motor against the flow, picked up an eddy on the mainland side of the channel. This was fine and I thought I would find my way back up the southern shore aided by these eddies much as one can work them in the Kyle-Rhea between Skye and the mainland. The counter current brought me a paddles length from the shore but my further passage was opposed by a sill of rock over which the full flow of the main current fell. I was swept back into this flow and had to regain the aid of the eddy to land below the sill. Spray-deck released, I jumped onto the weed slimed rocks, then wading, slipping and slithering, I African Queened rather ignomiously back into the bay of the campsite. Ten minutes later, and as many metres, I slid back into the cockpit and pressed on against a lessened stream. Passing the jetty with its damp margin left by the falling water I edged shore hugging in a westerly direction this time, feeling I might yet use the time available for some more exploration.

Two islands and a kilometre later I watched a large catamaran, under sail, coming from the direction of Larmor-Baden. In the distance, two kilometres ahead, I could hear and see noisy overfalls. The catamaran,

GOLFE du MORBIHAN

breasting them was spun round not once but twice and sent heading back the way she had come. Enough! I returned to camp. As I slipped out of the kayak I noticed the sail cruiser I had passed during the early part of my eventful little trip, just half an hour earlier. She was raising sail and heading north up the Ile-aux-Moines, having made good about one kilometre during her passage. I wondered if she was making her planned passage or whether, like myself, she had modified her trip.

The day ended even better, for instead of preparing a meal, my "we're not paddling today" friends treated me to a splendiferous fish dinner in Port Navalo.

Next day we left for more adventures on the northern coast, the River Leff and the Ile Brehac, but I carried with me a challenge that I recognized - I would be returning to Morbihan!

COROLLARY - The Morbihan revisited, or once bitten, twice as interested

As it turned out, the challenge of the Morbihan was so strong and my delight in Brittany in general was so great that during the next month I managed to redirect the family's holiday plans. We returned first to Paimpol and Paul and Noella le Bouete's retreat, and after revisiting Breac and other superb waters together, we all crossed the region and joined other erstwhile members of the Ile de Re rally on the peninsula at the western entrance to the Morbihan at Locmariaquer.

The first day we headed west along the coast towards the peninsula of Quiberon. To the south Belle-Ile and Bouat looked most inviting. About six kilometres on we turned into the estuary of the Crach (pronounced Crack) and paddled slowly to the famous marina of La Trinite. Here we waited for the arrival of the paddlers of the South Finisterre rally. They straggled in lead by a most imposing eight metres centreboarded Canadian canoe under sail. The Hudson Bay Company would have given their eye teeth for this craft.

Then onwards in a tight and by now very large group led by M. Guilotin to a wharf serving the small town of Crach, where celebrations extolling canoeing were being held. These included grab as many ducks as you can and sea launch two slaloms at a time from a hydrollically operated farm trailer from the considerable height of the quayside. No one seemed to mind the two hour delay of the main event and the ad libs of the commentator went on inexhaustably.

There followed a week of trip into the Morbihan, the inland sea of perhaps 200 square miles of water all ebbing and flowing through a bottle neck, but one kilometre wide. The spring tides were a Godsend and the distances we were able to cover were greatly increased, while the disturbed waters were great fun.

The main channel could be very crowded, kayaks well grouped bucked and pitched, providing great entertainment to tourists and yachtsmen alike. The tourist "vedettes" added to the disturbed surfaces leaving one quite mystified as to where the next wave might be coming from. Our G.B. stickers on the aft deck occasioned some comments and we were quite proud of one skippers salute, his craft's jackstaff flew a White Ensign.

Many of the islands are private and you may only visit the shore as far as the high tide line unless invited; we were on one or two. Two of the largest isles have villages and the Ile-aux-Moines boasts itself a

commune with town hall and village schools. One the Ile d'Arz the priest lent us the key to the Church School's Hall where some of our number spent the night during one of our extended trips. Breakfast next morning was a different form of canoe-camping, a form Rebecca approved of heartily as she downed French bagettes with liberal quantities of butter and apricot jam, washing the lot down with one, then two, cups of hot chocolate. She, at least, would not be needing a midday snack.

For me the dragon of the Morbihan has been wrestled. Conditions do vary as a kaleidoscope does when shaken, but perhaps the essential point is that the waters are not overly dangerous for sensible groups. I had been over cautioned. Tides in the gul near Vannes and the northern end flood for eight hours and ebb for four.

I intend to return as there is more to see. The family agree. Anyone interested for August '87? The omens are good.

From: Nick Hodson, London

In your latest ASKC newsletter you have a piece about the problem of crossing a current or tidal stream. If my present spate of work at P. and O. S.N. Co. Head Office comes to a slack period, I hope to elucidate this problem by means of a computer model.

The cases I shall model are:-

(1) The trivial case of a steady current

(2) A weaker current near the shore than in the centre of the strait

(3) Time dependence of the current including reversal during the passage

(4) Eddy currents near the shore going in the opposite direction to the main current (as in the Solent)

A B

How exactly I would present the results I'm not yet sure, but my feeling is that it might well be possible to produce something quite useful and useable.

As a dinghy sailor I have several times made the passage from Teignmouth or Weymouth or Roole or Yarmouth, Isle of Wight to Alderney in the Channel Islands. Surprisingly the distance sailed across the tide is about the same in each case, namely, 54 miles. My fastest is 19½ hours but 24 hours is more like it, so you have two tides each way. What you need to make sure of is that you aim up tide of your destination so any errors can be corrected by nature and not human effort. This is rather important in the case of Alderney which has very strong currents in its vicinity and a great deal of fog. Even in fog you can often aim for the loom of the lights of Cherbourg at night, then turn right so as to pass with the ebb (i.e., after half tide down) at least four miles north of Cap de la Hague, and then aim north-west, going as hard as you can and keeping the horn of Quesnard Light always on your left until you hear the Casquets clearly. Then turn south (only when Quesnard would still be on your left). This normally brings you right up to the breakwater.

My piece on Barra will be with you shortly.

From: Peter Lamont, Oban

TAKEN FROM "SOUNDING" - NOVEMBER 1986

Canoeing to Cape Horn - Injury delays Kruger duo
By Esme Neely

Verlan and Valerie Kruger are well into their 21,000 mile canoe trip.

The Lansing, Mich., couple began the journey through 19 countries upon 36 large rivers, 75 lakes and two oceans June 8 when they dipped their two 17-foot canoes into the mouth of the Mackenzie River at Inuvik, a Northwest Territories, Canada, government town. The trip from there to Cape Horn is expected to take until February 1989.

Despite a delay in July for Verlan Kruger's back injury the trip is progressing as ordered. After falling on one of the canoes' rigid cowling, Verlan Kruger injured his back. A few days later he again injured himself while trying to avoid a large floating log. With help from a nearby hunter, he was taken to a hospital in Fort Simpson, about 35 miles from where he was injured, said Dorothy Webster, editor of the Two Continent Canoe Expedition Newsletter from Alpena, Mich. He tore muscles in his back and may have broken some ribs. Valerie Kruger reported that the doctor told them to quit the trip, but they weren't about to give up.

"They are absolutely determined to complete this trip," Webster said. "They are a few days behind schedule, but continuing after the accident proves their determination.

"After the accident, Verlan could not paddle so they bought a small six horsepower engine in hopes of making up some lost time. Six days later they sold the engine at Fort McMurray (Alberta) and continued paddling."

The Krugers were expected to reach The Pas, Manitoba, by September 6 or 7. The Pas, on the Saskatchewan River, is 2,867 miles into the voyage.

"They are paddling 12 to 15 hours a day," Webster said. "Sometimes they go 300 mile stretches without seeing any other human life."

A connection with the Krugers in late June had them averaging 22 miles a day up the north-flowing Mackenzie River. Paddling against a 5-mph current and 13-mph headwind was difficult. By last August when Valerie Kruger contacted Webster, the couple was managing between 35 and 40 miles a day.

"The mileage varies wildly though," Webster said. "They were wind-bound for two days in Peter Paul Lake and are now just a few days behind schedule. I am hoping they make it through the Great Lakes in good shape."

Webster was hoping to meet the Krugers during the second week of October at International Falls, Minn. From there they will continue through the Great Lakes in and around Michigan. The Kruger's trip is included as part of Michigan's sesquicentennial celebration. They are also doing acid rain and other environmental research for the Institute of Water Research at Michigan State University.

To: Mr Charles Sutherland, ANorAK, Box 444, Tuckahoe, NY 10707

From: Thomas S. Foster, Chairman for the National Instruction Committee
American Canoe Association - 7th January 1985

Dear Chuck,

While we understand Mr Matt C. Broze's concern with the certification of sea kayaking instructors, we would like to correct the misinformation in his letter to ANorAK. The National Instruction Committee of the American Canoe Association wants to clarify several issues underlying the proposed certification program.

First, members of the sea kayaking community came to the ACA in 1984 to seek assistance in developing a comprehensive, organised program for their sport. The ACA did not initiate the move, but the Organisation welcomed the request because it developed within the ranks of the sea kayaking world By 1985, the sea kayakers had reaffirmed their interest and drafted proposed goals and objectives for a sea kayaking committee. The ACA established the standing committee at its national congress at the year's end.

Mr Broze laments the loss of freedom which he envisions in certification program, but the rising popularity of sea kayaking is posing potential problems which need to be addressed constructively and responsibly. The ACA's goal in instruction, since its inception in 1880, is "education, not regulation". As sea kayaking becomes more visible to the public, a greater number of people will try this attractive sport. With the public's limited knowledge of safety and rescue skills, the likelihood of accidents increases. Tragic consequencies, like more drownings, are probable. The informal network now present in the sea kayaking world will be unable to meet the demand for information and education. Therefore, regulation by an external authority, like the federal or state government, is more likely. The sea kayakers' development of a program within the ACA enables them to regulate themselves with input from the general sea kayaking community and control the direction of the sport more strongly.

The ACA is not an exclusive organisation with a desire to "freeze out" skilled and competent sea kayaking instructors who are not certified. There will always be leaders who learned by their "bootstraps" and are excellent instructors. In its development of canoeing and kayaking programs, the ACA seeks to promote a sharing of information and skills between all instructors, regardless of certification. As the recognised governing body for canoesport in the United States, the organisation is able to serve effectively as a clearinghouse. The intent is to bring people together to share ideas and to help each other develop skills in paddling and teaching. The carefully assembled ACA programs offer prospective instructors an important vehicle for building their skills and then keeping abreast of current information in the sport.

Mr Broze suggests that "non-certified" instructors will always be the best qualified to teach sea kayaking. In some cases, such an instructor has the knowledge, skill and ability to share that information. But the "problem" instructors are the ones who may not have the information and skills Being ACA or Red Cross of "Broze"-certified does not guarantee that an instructor will always do a good job. But it does indicate that a person is open-minded enough to strive to improve his or her teaching skills. The instructor is making that commitment by seeking a wide diversity of opinion and assistance - the foundation of the nationally-recognised ACA program. Obtaining certification is not as important as obtaining teaching skills.

Mr Broze is concerned by liability issues surrounding the sport, but certification is our protection as instructors. Instructors assume the least liability when teaching under the mantle of a recognised program. Our best defense in the courtroom is to show that we have taken prudent steps with our instruction. Using a course outline and teaching methods approved by experts in the field - a recognised governing body - helps to support our defense. Mr Broze, teaching without benefit of certification, carries the total burden of proving that his program is a competent one in the eyes of the sea kayaking experts.

Sea Kayakers are free to do what they wish regarding course outlines and instructor certification. The ACA's only intent is to be of service to your community. We do not wish to force anything upon you.

Enclosed is an excerpt from The American Canoeist which outlines services that sea kayakers have already requested. The ACA is happy to be working with you.

Sincerely,

Thomas S Foster

NEW SEA KAYAKING COMMITTEE FORMED

At the recent ACA Congress, a new standing committee of the ACA, the Sea Kayaking Committee, was established. It will be chaired by Dave Getchell and already has representatives in six divisions. Goals and objectives for the fledgling committee are as follows:-

1. Put together a beginning sea kayaking course outline.
2. Put together a sea kayaking informational brochure.
3. Co-operate with other sea kayaking organisation.
4. Design rescue and safety training clinics.
5. Make sea kayaking videos available through the ACA Film Library and publicize them through the ACA.
6. Co-ordinate and make available sea kayaking programs at divisional and local levels.
7. Compile a source list for boats, equipment and rentals.
8. Establish an ACA presence at major sea kayaking symposia.
9. Establish By-Laws for the Committee.
10. Encourage and support competitive sea kayaking.
11. Make Sea Kayaker Magazine available to ACA members at reduced rates.
12. Provide input to the President's Commission on American Outdoors.

ENROLMENT FORM FOR
THE 1987 INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAK SYMPOSIUM

Date: 6/7/8th November 1987

Venue: YMCA Centre, Lakeside, Cumbria

Cost: £38.00

Send to: Chairman, S.T.C.
7 Miller Close
NEWPORT
Isle of Wight, PO30 5PS

with £15.00 deposit.

Name _____

Address _____

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_____ Post Code _____

Please find enclosed
£_____ as
deposit for the 1987
6th International Sea
Kayaking Symposium

Signed _____

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