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

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ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB

NEWSLETTER No 98

JULY 1993

Editorial

The tragedy at Lyme Regis on the Dorset Coast remains in the news. Only today the headlines are telling us that the families of the deceased are demanding a public enquiry following the discovery of a letter purported to have been written BEFORE the incident to the Outdoor Centre from which the party were operating out from. Apparently the letter makes comments about safety standards at the Centre. The very latest news ... in fact coming over the radio as I write ... tells us that the canoeists, when rescued or picked up, did not have their lifejackets inflated. I suppose the inference must be that someone should have explained to the youngsters that when in the sea and out of the kayak they should have blown up the lifejackets in order to keep their heads above the waves. Apparently they attempted to hold each others heads above the waves as they floated in the water. Perhaps one of the recommendations coming out of all this might be that we should use a check list to ensure that the basics are covered . We'll see. I know that the British Canoe Union has put an excellent team of competent and knowledgeable paddlers together in order to assist the police and the coroner in their search for the facts and expert opinion. It can't help matters when independent and well known paddlers write to the authorities with their own very biased views as to why this tragedy should have happened in the first place. Of course, in our free society, there is nothing to stop such correspondence and views being distributed. What should stop this sort of thing from clouding the issues is some basic common sense. It cannot help the BCU team, the police or the coroners officers in their search for the truth. By all means write to the BCU and feed their enquiry team with all the views and opinions; this can only help and will allow this unbiased and well chosen group the chance to consider all the angles before providing the coroner with good information which in turn will allow the coroner to provide us all with sound recommendations so that what ever lessons emerge from this tragedy are realistic, practical and reasonable. After all, we do enjoy an 'adventure' sport and adventure is synonomous with risk. We don't want our sport/activity to be so circumscribed that we all go off and play chess or something. This is why it irks me so that there are those among us who have taken this opportunity to climb onto their soap box in order to exploit the situation for their own ends.

Enough of all that. I was able to visit the recent Anglesey Sea Kayaking Symposium staged by the Nordkapp Trust at Nigel Dennis's place. It was in full swing and in the short time I was there I was able to meet with many old friends. I understand that the attendance was down. I know the cost of the symposium was up this year and with the recession this will have been a limiting factor for some. Though the event was consequently more manageable, this is not what the Trust wants and, though I haven't spoken with other members of the Trust, I suspect we may see a return to something like the old Nordkapp meets which was always so popular. Not that the current arrangements do not represent value for money, clearly they do. The Trust makes no profit and the expenses involved in bringing so many contributors together is not slight. Watch this space for news of any deliberations.

Just for the record, Didier Plouhinec, one of the contributors, stayed a while on his return journey from Anglesey to France and he was very positive about how successful it had been.

Did I tell you about our foray to Isle of Mull over Easter? I went with Keith Maslen, Vince and Di Smith and Peter Teasdale. The weather was OK in that it

did not keep us off the water but it was a bit cool. My bones are getting older and more sensitive!! Still, we had a great time and of course, at this time of the year, we never saw a 'mossie'.

You will be planning your kayak trips for 1993; indeed, you may have already ventured forth as we did. Do let the ASKC have at least a brief account of what you did, where you went and who went with you. Good news and bad news ... all is welcome. Even embarrassing news - though I'm not going to tell you of how we were responsible for flashing blue lights on the Isle of Mull. Di Smith will reveal all in return for a stamped self addressed envelope!

Talking of Coastguards ... I read in their magazine, the most recent one, that the number of incidents they dealt with last year reached an all time high at 8,500; an increase of 18% over 1991. The number of persons assisted rose to 14,500 - an increase of 11%. And the cost of all this to the taxpayer was one penny per week ... not bad value for money.

TIDAL STREAM ATLASES

Admiralty tidal publications of interest to kayakers are being updated and improved. New data and stlases re-schemed increase the area of coverage and show the information on a larger scale. For instance, NP222, 'The Firth of Clyde and Approaches' covers an area from Colonsay in the south of the Mull of Galloway in the south and from Inistrahull eastwards to the Clyde. Streams are shown diagramatically for each hour referred to, with the times of high water at both Dover and Greenock.

Another example is NP250, 'The English Channel'. It has been re-schemed to show the eastern and western parts of the Channel on facing pages, effectively doubling the scale of the chartlets. At the same time coverage of the Bristol Channel has been taken out of NP250, but remains in the new edition of NP256, 'The Irish Sea and Bristol Channel'. A new edition of NP264, 'The Channel Islands and adjacent Coasts of France' should be available soon. NP337, 'The Solent and Adjacent Waters', is also under revision and should be available towards the end of 1993. This atlas has been re-schemed and will show western and eastern approaches separately.

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A S K C S H O P

(All prices include package and postage)

Ties @ £6.50 each
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T shirts - small/medium/large/x.large @ £6.00 each (yellow or black)
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ASKC ski hats @ £3.50 each
'Qajaq' the book by David Zimmerley @ £12.50 each
'Sea kayaking' by Nigel Foster @ £9.95 each

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Anglesey Sea and Surf Centre ..... Sea Kayaking Expeditions

Circumnavigate the Isle of Anglesey. This expedition is scheduled for between 16th and 20th August, leaving and returning to Porth Dafarch. For those with Sea Proficiency standard, though not necessarily certificated. This expedition can be used to undergo Proficiency and S.I. Training assessments.

Cost is £199 per person, inclusive of food, camping accommodation and equipment.

For further details phone 0407 762525 or fax 0507 763636.

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Anyone going to the Shetland Sea Kayaking Meet on the 2nd July 1993. Chris Bolton is and he writes as follows "I am hoping to join this Meet and stay for the rest of the week, but unfortunately will be without transport. If any ASKC members are travelling up the M6 and have space for one person and a kayak, I would be very grateful for a lift in exchange for sharing costs. I live 5 minutes drive from the junction of the M6 and M62. Please give me a ring on 0926 823897.

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Didier Plouhinec writes ... "Soon I hope to have a waterproof hand held VHF radio as made in the U.K.; the NAVICO AXIS RT 200. I shall be giving it trials and will report back. It is made by Navico Ltd., Star Lane, Margate, Kent. Tel 0843 290290 or fax 0843 290471"

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UNALASKA KAYAK CLUB
Unalaska High School, Box 260, Unalaska, AK99685

Dear Kayak enthusiast

We are a group of students in one of a special group of classes called Inter-disciplinary Cooperative Projects (I.C.P.). Our I.C.P. is called Fundamentals of Coastal Kayaking. Our course has three parts. We study traditional uses of the Aleut kayak or baidarka here. We study safety and techniques of modern kayaking, and we're working to set up a club that will help others learn what we're learning.

At Unalaska, kayaking has been around for centuries. Interest in kayaking has started to decline over the years but we hope to be a part of replenishing the love for kayaking and helping its popularity to grow. Our club is only going to be for the students for now, but it will expand to the public just as soon as we can teach them and get them involved.

One of our first obstacles will be to acquire enough equipment so that we can get started soon and be safe. We need as much help as we can get with equip-ment. Do you have any used, damaged or otherwise discounted boats that you might be interested in making available to us? George Dyson, an Aleut bai-darka expert and author of the book Baidarka, will be visiting us in the first part of November and we are planning to do some press releases in the Anchorage Daily News and maybe other places about the return of the kayak to the Aleu-tians. We're hoping that by mentioning your help, we could actually create new customers for you, while you help us learn aspects of our tradition and culture.

If you're interested, or would like more information, please write to us at the address above or fax us at (907) 581-2428, or call Mr Tom McKenna at 581-1222. Thank you.

Sincerely

Tom Derrer

BAIDARKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Re: Unalaska Kayak Club

Dear Colleague

Having just returned from 5 days in Unalaska (upon the invitation of the Unalaska City School District and the Ounalashka Corporation) I am able to provide a firsthand report on the project you are being asked to support. In meeting with some fifteen classrooms over the course of four days, I was able to gauge the interest in kayaking at close to 100%.

I believe you do not need an introduction to the history of kayaking in the Unalaska neighbourhood - a tradition that may go back as much as 9,000 years. It is a tradition that came to an end only recently, with the economic and cultural disruption resulting from W.W.II. The Aleut kayak - or baidarka as it has been termed since Russian-American times - remains alive (just barely) in living memory, and it is of great importance that the Unalaska City School, the Ounalashka Native Corporation, and a growing community of like-minded interests are sponsoring a program to begin reconstructing the entire spectrum of kayaking skills in the Aleutian Islands at this time. There is no time to lose, and I urge you to give this undertaking all possible support.

The Unalaska City School has superb staff, students and facilities. Situated directly on the beach at Iliuliuk Bay, the school incorporates an Olympic-size heated indoor pool available for kayak training, as well as ample shop space for building, storing and maintaining boats. As the central education facility for the entire Aleutian chain, kayak skills that are revived in Unalaska will inevitably filter out among the outlying villages - Atka, Nikolski, Akutan, Falso Pass, Cold Bay and so on - in the years ahead.

As the future of sea kayaking unfolds, I believe that the community of Unalaska will continue a long-standing tradition as a focal point for the evolution of the craft. As a lifelong proponent of the baidarka, I am delighted at being asked to help. We can offer no greater monument to the achievements of the past than bring them back to life.

Yours sincerely

George Dyson

It Didn't matter to Ayrton

by John Chamberlin
April 1993

The river was high, flowing strong and dark brown with the silts of its scouring progress. It was hard work making the kayak go upstream against the current. I wasn't looking where I was going, too busy chatting to Ian and Steve behind me, when my left-hand paddle struck the high, eroded river bank to my left. The force I put into the stroke pushed me over so that the canoe tipped suddenly to the right and I slapped the blade down for support, reaction not response. The right-hand blade angle was wrong, probably a result of the other one snagging the bank. It knifed instead of offering support. The brown murk shot to meet my face.

Snap. I was awake like a mousetrap. It was Sunday night, 11 April 1993. Day of the first European Formula 1 Grand Prix at Donington since 1938.

I shifted my position in bed, physically still very tired from the day's canoeing, and closed my eyes again. Not for long.

The next dreamlet opened where the other left off, save a few seconds. My head hit the water but didn't go under. I had managed to arrest the capsize partly, but the blade angle was wrong so I couldn't get the purchase on the water. The boat hung momentarily on its side. I stopped the fall a second time only because the paddle blade had struck the river bed - it wasn't that deep a metre or two from the bank. I hung on to the shaft for support - panicking, truth be known - but the water flow pushed the boat away from the paddle and I started to go under again.

The correct thing to do was capsize fully and roll properly. But I wasn't thinking correctly. I was under the water, and scared. The darkness of the water, speed of its flow, the unexpectedness and that steep dark bank all combined quickly to destroy any rational thought. The paddle seemed to be stuck to, or in, the mud. I jabbed with it again and my head came back out of the water. Briefly. I gasped for air but took in liquid. My head went under again. It took my logic with it. I think I lost the paddle. I know I grabbed for the tab on the spray-cover, but for some reason it wasn't coming off. Once again I sank into the murk. I yanked and writhed. I had no idea what to do next.

Snap! A rat-trap this time. Wide awake once more.

Eventually I got to sleep. The deep sleep of the spent - I'd spent mine years ago!

We had been out training that day, aiming to paddle from Swarkestone, upstream for four hours, or to Burton on Trent whichever was the sooner. Setting off at 08.15 we could hear clearly the Formula 1 practice runs from Donington Park. Ayrton Senna would be amongst the roar, probably looking at the weather like we were, but in his case wondering about the tyres he'd require for the race later.

To us it was just a cold, miserable, drizzly day; ideal for numbing the mind and body into an automatic paddling machine. We rested for five minutes on each hour. The second was directly opposite the water intake to Willington power station. The capsize was about two-hundred yards upstream from there. In the event Ian had got his boat alongside mine, grabbed my hand firmly on to his deck, and I'd pulled myself up on his boat. I was grateful for that. Really grateful, if embarrassed at my lack of competence.

Two nights later, the Tuesday, I lay in bed dozing off to sleep.

The place was the river Trent, again, but this time, specifically, downstream from Beeston weir. It's wide there, no-one was around. The river must have still been flowing fast, faster than normal for there. The paddle stuck in the gravel, or the river bed, I'm not sure which. It was snatched from my hand and

I recall it being stuck there, sentinel in the centre of the river. The boat drifted on. I was alone. No capsize, nothing happened, but I knew it was going to ...

Bang. Awake again, like a letter-box after the dog's grabbed the paper.

The dreams mean nothing to anyone else. To me they are just symptomatic of the problem, normally full-blown and preceding rather than following some canoeing activity. In them all I'm about to drown before I wake up, but in these shorts they're more like the trailers at the beginning of a hired video.

I enjoy canoeing, at least the canoeing that I do, and I've done a fair bit over the years, but I have to approach it in a way different to those friends and fellow MCC members devoid of this hang-up. I do this, writing, in a continuous attempt to purge it. On that day on the Trent, none of the other three with me viewed the bends, the slight boils or ripples, in the same way I did. I'm confident they didn't see every overhanging tree we passed as a death trap, like I did, considering as I pushed past, the depth of water, if any, underneath, and whether or not a capsized paddler against the branches would be able to escape below and downstream, or not. I'm sure they didn't see the darkness of the water as the malevolent personal enemy that I did. They wouldn't realise that I'd chosen the launch spot specifically because it was fifty yards upstream from the rapids, even though they were inconsequential. I know it's irrational. But it's me.

The planned Scillies trip is especially important to me. We first planned it in 1974, but a broken arm then, not mine, blew it. It's always been there to do, and I'm now psyched up again to do it.

Back at Swarkestone the others helped me load my boat, and then rushed off in Tim's Sooty-van to see the Grand Prix on the telly. I changed more leisurely; cold, physically very tired and slow. We'd paddled for five and three-quarter hours. Not long enough to get us to the Scillies, but hard work in winds stronger than we'd go in. It had been enough to test our stamina. We were ready, and all we needed was the right weather on the day. The probability was low, but hopes were high.

14.00. I heard the race start at Donington - a five-mile radial roar as they flew up to Redgate corner. I got in the car and drove away, not pleased with the capsize, but pleased with the day's paddle. It mattered to me, even if it didn't to Ayrton.

THE USER FRIENDLY TRIP

by Mark Foster, Edinburgh

This was how our planned paddle around the Isle of Arran was described and sold to me by John. We had decided to take a recently acquired Aleut Sea Two on the trip. The first problem was getting this boat from my back garden and on to the car. This involved humping it over two six foot walls and was a bit like doing an assault course with a twenty two foot canoe. Combine this with a hangover induced by a beer appropriately called Dr Thirsty and some idea of the hassle factor can be imagined.

Due to its length, on the way to Ardrossan from Edinburgh we nearly parked the front of the boat in a van and lost the front of it at a junction resulting in two Aleut Sea Ones.

At Ardrossan the boat was rapidly packed but such was the luxury of having so much space that we could hardly lift it on to the ferry.

From Brodick we paddled around to Lamlash for the night. Holy Island provided a splendid panorama even with the torrential rain. Reduction of weight was now a prime consideration and with this in mind we got rid of large quantities of food and the cans of beer that had somehow found their way into the boat. The following day we set off for the south of the island. The canoe behaved well and is capable of covering a lot of distance. We made about twenty miles in reaching Blackwaterfoot. Here we were faced with the option of carrying the boat a hundred yards to a camp site or camping on the thirteenth green of the local golfcourse. The thought of what the penalties might be for the latter led us to opt for the carry. On the beach we also met the man who must be Vic Reeves original "Man with the stick". He described some of his canoeing exploits whilst making furious motions with his stick and proceeded to draw the present synoptic chart in the sand with it - most helpful and accurate but unfortunately you cannot take it with you.

The beach chart forecast gales and these were confirmed on the radio later, and the tent was reinforced with numerous rocks. These precautions at least meant we survived the force nine gales during the night.

The following morning the south westerly gales meant we would get some assistance up the west side of the island, as we surfed our way up to Loch Ranza. The gales by this time had been joined by violent rain showers and motorists on the island's coastal road slowed to view us in obvious disbelief. On rounding the northern point of the island our worst fears were realised as the gales moved to the south east. Slow progress was made as the weather alternated between strong headwinds and calmer periods of pouring rain, and the only compensation were the superb rainbows.

However, content in the knowledge that this was only a "user friendly" trip we pushed on to Sannox Bay. Here we were faced with the agonising choice between camping out again or booking into a nearby guesthouse.

Sitting in front of the television later that evening after a few pints of McEwans, sea canoeing didn't seem so bad. The people we met were incredibly helpful and ferried us to and from our boat and dried our gear out.

The winds the next day had miraculously moved to the north west which made the mornings paddle to Brodick quite pleasant. While changing near the Calmac Ferry we were treated to the abandon ship drills being practised by the crew. We were surprised to find that there were seven stages to this altogether as being a canoeist I have only ever needed one!

So ended this user friendly trip.

KAYAK VISITORS TO OUR SHORES

Abridged from "Who were the Finnmen?" by David Fergus, the Scots Magazine Nov 91.

In the 17th century and 18th century sightings of kayakers were made off the British coast, but where did these kayakers come from?

In his book "Description of the Isles of Orkney", the Rev James Wallace, minister of Kirkwall from 1672-1688, tells of visitors to the islands called Finnmen. He tells of sightings of men off Westray and Eday, seen sometimes rowing, sometimes sailing and how on attempting to apprehend these men, they would flee. Finnmen and Finnwomen appear in the islands' mythology, reputed to be human who could take the form of a seal or vice versa. The belief was that these Finn people came from 'across the water' in Scandinavia. The Rev Wallace had a different theory - he thought they came from the Davis Straits, off Greenland and were therefore Eskimos.

Wallace's son confirmed this theory in a note added to his fathers book. He added that although it was a little problematic as to how these men came to be on this coast, he guessed they were driven by storms from home and were unable to return. He wrote "they have this advantage, that be the seas never so boisterous, their boats being made of fish skins are so contrived that he can never sink, but is like a seagull swimming on top of the water. His shirt he has so fastened to the boat, that no water can come into his boat to do him damage, except when he pleases to untye it".

Apart from the details about fish skins this is an accurate description of an eskimo kayak.

In 1701 a Rev Brand held the view that the visitors came from Finland. He wrote "his boat is made of seal skins or some kind of leather, he also hath a coat of leather upon him, and he sitteth in the middle of his boat with a little oar in his hand, fishing with his lines: and when in a storm he seeth the high surge of a wave approaching, he hath a way of sinking his boat, til the wave pass over, lest thereby he should be overturned ... One of these boats is kept as a rarity in the Physicians Hall at Edinburgh!!

Although not frequent, at least four men in little boats were seen during the last 20 years of the 17th century. As early as 1681 a kayak was found with a dead eskimo in it. It was taken to Hull where it is still preserved. Two of the Orkney kayaks were captured, but there is no record of the fate of the occupants. One of the craft was kept as a trophy in the Kirk of Barray. The other was acquired by Sir Andrew Balfour, president of the Physicians College in Edinburgh. After a stay at Edinburgh University which already had "the oars of the boat and the shirt of the barbarous man that was in the boat", it ended up at the Museum of Science and Art. By then no-one was sure which of the two kayaks in their collection was the one captured in Orkney. Perhaps destroyed, there is a good chance it is one of the four now possessed by the Royal Museum in Chambers Street, Edinburgh.

In 1728 a kayak appeared off Aberdeen and according to the diary of a visitor it was "driven into the Don with a man in it who was all over hairy and spoke a language which no-one here could interpret. He lived but three days although all possible care was taken to recover him". One account describes him as an 'Indian' man, this was a common enough term for any non european. His kayak is now preserved at Marischal College in Aberdeen. It has been examined in great detail and is a typical eskimo kayak, 17' 9" long weighing 34 lbs and consisting of four seal skins sewn over a framework of Scots Pine. There are no Scots Pine in Greenland or any other trees but driftwood from Siberia ends up on Greenlands western shore. The evidence of the Aberdeen kayak confirms that the Finnmen who visited Orkney and Aberdeen were Greenlanders but this leads to the puzzling question - how did the eskimos make the journey from west Greenland to N. Scotland?

Cape Farewell, the southern tip of Greenland, is over 1100 miles from Orkney, an impossible journey for kayakers. Apart from the impossibility of carrying enough water and provisions, modern research shows such a kayak becomes water-logged if in water for more than 48 hours. Could the journey be done in stages? Greenland to Iceland is 200 miles, Iceland to the Faroes between 300 and 400 miles and from the Faroes to Orkney about 200 miles. If the journey was done in stages this presupposes the route and stopping points for food and water were known, the navigation was accurate with no aids and they could paddle at 7 mph - good going even for a fit Greenlander (who have been known to cover 80 miles in a day). The North Atlantic Drift would be setting the kayaker to the north east the whole time and there is no question as to why, after having come so far would they flee away and make no attempt to land?

We must assume no eskimo made the journey from Greenland to Orkney, yet they reached Orkney, Aberdeen, the North Sea and also the Netherlands, where the kayaks of eskimo voyagers are preserved at Hoorn and Zierikzee. Experts in Denmark and the Netherlands who examined this problem suggested a possible explanation.

Greenland was first discovered and settled by the Norsemen around the end of the 10th century. Contact was gradually lost between Greenland and Europe until 600 years later when Denmark 'rediscovered' it. At that time the only inhabitants were eskimos. Whaling in the Greenland waters began in the late 16th century, whalers from Hull were there in 1598 and by the mid 17th century ports in Scotland, England, Denmark and Holland were all regulars in these waters.

Some whalers brought back human cargo alongside blubber, whale fins, jaw bones and tails. Eskimos kidnapped or tricked into coming aboard, often with their kayaks and other artifacts were put on show in European ports as curiosities. In the U.K. there are no fewer than 30 eskimo kayaks in the posession of museums and other institutions in 10 towns all of which, with one exception, are on the east coast. Several were probably brought back as trophies. A Danish writer, Mikkelsen, has suggested that it is possible the Finnmen seen off Orkney, the 'Indian' at Aberdeen and the dead eskimo found in the North Sea had all escaped from whalers taking them back to Europe. Although in Holland there were laws against kidnapping or molesting of Greenland natives it is difficult to see how an eskimo could escape with his kayak without the crews help. As they reached Europe the kidnappers may have had second thoughts about their captured eskimo and decided to get rid of the evidence by putting their captive over the side, or perhaps feeling remorse, we can imagine Dutch or Scots whalemen releasing their captive on their first landfall - Orkney. The fact the Finnmen made no attempt to come ashore could be explained by their fear of recapture.

The question of these far travelled Greenlanders was most recently examined by the Dutch anthropologist Gert Nooter who's findings were published in 1971 by the Rijksmuseum. He points out the museum at Hoorn posesses not only a kayak but also the skin of its unfortunate occupant who was found dead in it off the Dutch coast, 400 miles further south than the Aberdeen 'Indian'. He therefore agrees with Mikkelson's theory that the 'Finnmen' were Greenlanders who had escaped or had been jettisoned from ships returning to Europe.

This theory may seem a far fetched theory, but is there a better one?

AT THE WATERLINE
by Dan Winters

Creeping Guruism

Every sport has got 'em. For that matter, every organized or disorganized group of people have them - gurus. Even in the military, the "old sarge" is often the guru - the advisor, the wise one, the sage, the spiritual leader, the voice of experience. Every youth group, yacht club, social club, church group, and school has one or more gurus.

We are seeing an increase in their number in sea kayaking, simply because our sport (in the modern sense) is still young and growing. Since so many sea kayakers are relatively new to the sport, gurus easily develop as our newcomers look for guidance. Almost anyone who sells sea kayaks, has done a significant trip, or writes with some knowledge of sea kayaking can become a guru either through self promotion or his accomplishment.

By no means are gurus automatically a negative influence. Indeed, they are vital where there is a lack of written information or organized instruction. But then, neither is "creeping guruism" all to the good. Gurus who earn their stripes through their accomplishments and freely pass on their accumulated knowledge with a minimum of personal bias serve the sport. But there are those who, having carved out their place in the sport, assume that they have the only clear view or understanding of how the sport should develop or be practiced. And, there are gurus and pseudo gurus who see themselves as a sort of royalty, to be treated accordingly. They are often identified as those whose every comment is directed at either bolstering their image or cutting down someone elses.

At this point in sea kayaking's development most gurus are trip leaders, instructors, designers, builders, and dealers. This isn't surprising since these are the people who are most interested, committed, and proficient. But this isn't always the case, nor should it be. But, until we have a larger number of experienced people who are just plain paddlers this trend will likely continue.

So, what's the danger in all this? The danger lies in taking an apparent guru's every word as fact. During the last few years I have heard gurus blow smoke over all sorts of newcomers. I've heard the gospel of one year replaced by the gospel of the next. And, I've looked forward to discussing kayak design with another perceived guru only to be told in effect, "There's nothing to discuss because I already KNOW what works!" Who knows it all? No one - not even the Eskimo. It's an interesting adventure to seek the wisdom of the ancients; but they were nothing more than men. As I am sure most of our members do, I read and read. Then I paddle and paddle. As I do my impressions and opinions change. That's not to say I'm so smart, but to say that once we are so certain of our own clarity of vision that we can no longer change our minds, we have either become senile, stupid, or victims of our own egos. If we hinder only ourselves with our closed minds, so be it. To misdirect others - that's another matter.

So, what gives someone a claim to guru status? Making a spectacular trip, writing a book, editing a magazine, building a boat, selling boats, or being a general B.S. artist - all lay the groundwork. Perhaps I'm preaching to the choir because most ANorAK members are thinkers, but creeping guruism poses two dangers. First newcomers tend to accept what an apparent guru says as fact. Second, those who are self-appointed gurus tend to believe and act as though they and they alone are the authorities on the sport, and become obstructions in the path of real progress. Is there a message in all this? You bet. Don't believe all you are told, regardless of who says it. Don't accept anything as fact because of the reputation of who said it. And, just because it appears in print, it isn't automatically factual. (That goes for this piece as well) Finally and most importantly, if what you have been told or read doesn't make sense to you, it probably shouldn't. The best defense against a false guru is a working mind.

I found the following article (nothing to do with sea kayaking) in a recent edition of the Zambia Airways In-flight Magazine. I know a lot of paddlers are attrcted by this new phenoneman.....

FIVE, FOUR, THREE, TWO, ONE.....JUMP

A few months ago, tourists walking over the Victoria Falls bridge would have beheld a startling sight. It was a young Zambian woman leaping off the 108m high bridge. Her arms were outstretched like wings, she was attached only by her ankles to an elasticated rope, and she ended up hanging upside down over the swirling Zambezi until winched down to the waiting raft.

Where on Earth did this daring new sport, now popular from Texas to Alaska, from New Zealand to South Africa, originate?
At one of the earth's remotest places - tiny Pentecost Island in the Pacific Ocean, according to Sobek, who runs trips there. Young Islanders, clad only in loincloths, prove their courage by mounting high bamboo towers and, bound round the ankles with thin liana vines, leap head first into space with a loud cry. Provided the 'ropes' have'nt proved too long or too stretchy, they end up hanging head-first a few feet from hard ground. This ritual is undertaken against a backdrop of ceremonial chantings and dances performed by admiring young women.

Although the 'purist' New Zealand method of angle ropes used in the case quoted above, aany operators opt for the more comfortable and suppostive American chest harness, which leaves the jumper hanging the right way up and being winched back to the bridge.

Bungee jumping is popular in many countries. Though mostly done less scenically from tall cranes at places like amusement parks, it invariably attracts queues of willing jumpers.

The Victoria Falls site offers unique advantages, being probably the highest commercial jump in the world - 40m freefall plus 40 further metres downwards as the rope stretches to its fullest length, then wildly up and down, up and down, until the elasticity wears itself out. The jumper hangs motionless between the vast grey rock walls of the Zambezi Gorge above the raging rapids and facing the roar and spray of the mighty Falls, can then appreciate a literally birds eye view of the 'Mosi O Tunya', the Smoke that thunders.

Do people REALLY want to do this? Certainly, judging by the testing company's Zambian drivers office staff and oarsmen, all lined up and keen to leap into the unknown. Were'nt they afraid? Not really, except perhaps at the countdown point of no return - "five, four, three, two, one .... jump" Would they do it again? Certainly. Any pre-jump advice? Yes, keep your arms outstretched as you jump, and don't tell you Mother till you've done it!!

One of the few places offering a spectacular bridge jump is Alaska, where the weather restricts the season and the price is high. Zambian tour operators hopes to launch similar jumps. The people who come to the country for the already famous white-water rafting would have added it to their adventures, as would intrepid canoeists who come to paddle among the hippos of the Lower Zambezi or Kariba Gorge. Enthusiasts from other countries who had hitherto jumped only from prosaic cranes would also have wanted to do it.

But the railway authorities were not convinced that their historic and beautiful bridge, with its graceful single span arching across the majestic gorge, was a suitable site for such excitements. And other problems intervened to postpone the final decision. So far it remains a tantalizing idea in Zambia, and an experience not to be forgotten.

For further information contact: Sobek Whitewater Adventures, Tel: 224248, P.O.Box 35058, Lusaka for rafting, canoeing and other Zambezi holidays.

* *

Wilsons Promontory Expedition, Easter 1992

Participants:

NSW	Frank Bakker	Pittarak (Organiser)
Vic	Andrew Cope	Pittarak (Day 1 only)
	Peter Dingle	Pittarak
	Adrian Mann	Pittarak (Day 1 only)
	John Stompe	Ice Floe
Tas	Mike Emery	Greenlander
	Mark Loveridge	Nordkapp
	Renate Schadack	Greenlander III
	Veronica Steane	North Sea Tourer
SAus	Peter Carter	Voyager 3
	Pat Irvine	Puffin

Day 6: Wednesday 22nd
Mike, Veronica and Renate arrive about mid-day. We learn that Renate had capsized close to shore, and that they had rafted up and returned to Biddies.

Port Welshpool

Little Snake Island

Day 5: Tuesday 21st (10.5 km)
The weather is not good: 25 kn NW, with squalls and showers, and a chop up to 1.5 m. We set out, and five of us meet up near a channel beacon. There is no sign of Mike, Veronica and Renate. From a dune on Little Snake Island we can still not see them. We decide that they must have turned back. With the tide behind us we make good time to Port Welshpool.

We huddle behind the rocks on Biddies for shelter from the rain. Over lunch, we decide to stop the night here. A wildlife inspector comes in seach of deer poachers. Peter Dingle heads for home, Pat stays in camp, and the rest of us climb Little Mount Singapore to watch the SeaCat arrive. We return to camp to find boats dragged into the bushes. The tide has risen and Pat had done the rescue job alone.

Biddies

There's an orange smoke flare in the distance, followed by a red flare. We reach the scene at the same time as two powerboats. Someone asks John why he fired the flares. He points to the disabled power boat, which is later towed away.

Corner Inlet

Day 4: Monday 20th (14.4 km)
The sky is now clouded over and wind rising as we head towards Corner Inlet and Tin Mine Cove.

Is it Johnny Souey or Sussie? Whichever, we camp near the mouth of the creek. The resident wombat visits Renate in the night.

Johnny Souey

Rabbit Is

Above the beach, Rabbit Island, where we stop for lunch, is porous with muttonbird burrows.

Darby Beach

Day 1, Friday 17th (5.2 km)
We drive from Port Welshpool and attempt to launch from Darby Beach. There are reverse loops and swims in the surf. Eventually, only Peter Dingle and John make it.

Five Mile Beach

We stop for a break on Five Mile Beach. The waves are dumpers, and Pat arrives inverted. John finds a yacht spinnaker pole, which he lashes to his boat. Peter Dingle and Frank try a towing method to leave the beach.

The rest of us launch from Tidal River at about 16:30.

Day 3: Sunday 19th (22.4 km)
It's another good day, weatherwise, as we head north.

Tidal River

Refuge Cove

Refuge Cove is crowded with yachts and power boats. The campsite is equally crowded.

It's near sunset when we land at Oberon Bay, and set up camp near the creek mouth. Andrew and Adrian return to Tidal River.

Oberon Bay

Great Glennie Is

Waterloo Bay

The beach in Waterloo Bay is infested with wasps as we take a break.

Anser Is

South East Point

We lunch rafted together by South East Point, leaving a trail of melon rind. On the other side of the point we meet the lighthouse keeper.

Day 2: Saturday 18th (30.6 km)
Conditions are good as we paddle along the impressive granite coast, around the southernmost part of the Australian mainland.

FOREWORD

The following transcript was made from cuttings pasted into a battered old pocket notebook which in the mid 1940s stood for many years on a book-shelf in Clyde Canoe Club room. The only alterations which have been made are to typographical errors and spelling where in doubt.

Knowing well most of the waters covered by these intrepid adventurers, it is amazing how much they accomplished so early in the history of canoeing.

A. G. C. Dunn, 1983

Canoeing - Cruise in the Western Highlands
"The Field" - 28th August, 1875

On Thursday, July 15th, the Lark (Mr Ferguson), Bothnia (Mr King), Dolphin (Mr Smith) and Locheil (Mr Robinson) were shipped on board the S.S. Clansman bound for Stornaway from Greenock. On Saturday afternoon we arrived in Stornaway at 3 o'clock and after a thorough overhaul, we started at 4.30 for Loch Erisort Previous to starting on this cruise, we had been warned and cautioned about the tremendous swell and rough and heavy seas we should have to encounter. To our satisfaction, however, the waters of the North Minch were as calm as they possibly could be A steady paddle of 20 miles brought us to the mouth of Loch Erisort and after an extra paddle and sail of 10 miles, we pitched our tents at the head of the loch. A quiet Sunday having been spent, a portage of four miles was commenced with great spirit on Monday morning. Two carts and several dozen Highlanders being found handy, the annoyances of land transit were smoothed over. Launching from the carts into Loch Seaforth we had again to make good use of the paddle till within 10 miles of Tarbert (Harris) when paddles were stowed away and lug sails and jiggers hoisted to a stiff breeze which soon took us to within half a mile of Tarbert harbour. The greater part of the day having been taken up in the portage, we found on reaching Tarbert that only 20 miles had been covered, so seeing a good-looking hotel, we got out boats hauled up for the night. The hotel being a good one, and next day very fine, we stayed ashore to ejoy a walk and a climb up the hill behind the inn from which we saw St Kilda.

Starting early on Wednesday morning, Loch Maddy (32 miles distant) was reached after nine hours' paddling under a scorching sun. While crossing the Sound of Harris we passed a school of whales some coming rather nearer than was comfortable.

Pitching our camp at the mouth of the loch for the night, we went next morning to its head and after taking advantage of the telegraph, proceeded again towards open water and on reaching Maddy More, said goodbye to Mr Robinson (Locheil), whose time was rather limited and who had to return home. Leaving all spare baggage and one tent with "Locheil", we directed our course towards Obisary which is what might be called a tributary loch to Loch Eynort. To our chagrin we had to wait about three hours for the tide to float us into Loch Obisary, but once in, a fair stiff wind took us quickly to the head of the loch, 15 miles from the head of Loch Maddy.

Next morning, after a portage of two miles, we had a sail and a paddle through the North Ford to the south-west end of Benbecula. The North Ford is very shallow (especially at low water) and several times we waited for the tide to float us through. When at last in sight of the Atlantic, immense water spouts were seen, as it were, on the horizon but a closer inspection showed that it was the heavy Atlantic swell breaking on sand banks

at the mouth of the ford. At last we were afloat on the veritable Atlantic whose swell was high enough to conceal a canoe, sails and masts when in the trough of a wave. Sailing past the west of Benbecula with a good free wind, we went ashore at one of the landing places marked on the chart and after a quiet night, pushed on next day through the South Ford past Carnan to Ushinish lighthouse, a distance of 21 miles. Taking a walk on Sunday and visiting the lighthouse on Monday, we quietly waited till the afternoon for the north-west wind to die away and as the barometer was rising, we paddled across the Minch to Loch Roag in Loch Bracadale, Skye, a distance of 29 miles of the open sea. For three days after we reached Skye the wind blew a gale from the south dead against us and the only work done was a hard paddle of seven miles to the south of the loch.

On Friday morning the wind had gone round to the west so a start was at once made for Soay. On Saturday morning, Lark and Dolphin who were in a hurry for home, left Bothnia at Soay and started for Tobermory, going by Rhum, Eigg and Ardnamurchan, a distance of 47 miles. At Tobermory they took a steamer back to Greenock, going by Oban.

Bothnia was now alone and spent three or four days visiting several lochs around the south of Skye, among others Loch Slapin and Spar Cave, Loch Scavaig, Loch Curuisk, also the Cuillin Hills and after four days longer in Skye than Lark and Dolphin enjoyed, reached the clubhouse at Roseneath within 24 hours of their arrival.

A few words may be said about our tents, etc. We carried two tents, each of them the same size, viz., length 7 feet, breadth 6 feet, walls 2 feet high, and 5 feet to top of ridge pole, weight 20 lbs. The ground sheet, walls and roof were one piece of cloth and we had no fear of damp floor as the whole tent had been coated over with boiled oil. Our cooking was done in the usual manner, driftwood being used for a fire when available, at other times spirits of wine and a Potter's five-wick lamp were used. Our sails were made specially for the cruise, booms 4 ft. 6in., luff 5 ft., leach 6 ft. 6 in. Spare paddles and booms were carried.

C. W. Y. King

NEAR DROWNING AND ITS MANAGEMENT

Dr Mark Harries

People have been taken from the water apparently dead after long periods of submersion. In some instances, however, perseverance with attempts at resuscitation have been rewarded with revival even though things may at first have seemed quite hopeless.

Once the near-drowned patient has reached hospital, there is little in the intensive care management which is different from the handling of other causes of adult respiratory distress syndrome or fulminating pneumonia. Nor does it matter particularly whether the patient has near-drowned in fresh or salt water. What matters greatly is the treatment given at the site of the accident and survival depends almost entirely on the quality of care given here, irrespective of the excellence of care in hospital later.

Improvement in the understanding of the special circumstances which surround cardio-pulmonary arrest caused by near-drowning has led not so much to a change in treatment regimen as to a change of philosophy in resuscitation. Appaling difficulties with making a firm diagnosis of cardiac arrest or even respiratory arrest in the field, coupled with the knowledge of miraculous survival following up to 40 minutes total submersion in water, make the decision when to abandon resuscitation one of the most difficult to take.

Facts about drowning

About two thirds of all deaths from drowning in the United Kingdom result from immersion in fresh water. This has led to the notion that fresh water is more lethal than salt water because (so it is claimed) inhaled fresh water causes massive haemolysis of red cells which in turn leads to hyperkalaemia and subsequently to ventricular fibrillation. In fact, more people drown in fresh water because the rescue services placed on inland waters are more sparse than they are on the coast.

Changes in serum electrolytes are seen but seldom require treatment. Contrary to popular belief, hypokalaemia is much more likely to be seen after fresh water immersion than hyperkalaemia, and hypernatraemia is a constant feature of salt water immersion. These changes probably result more from massive ingestion of water from the stomach rather than from aspiration.

Overall, male fatalities outnumber females by three to one but, in the age range 15 to 25 years, drowning is around ten times more common in men. Over one third of the deaths are associated with heavy alcohol consumption and the majority drown within just 10 metres of the shore-line.

Life after death

The most alarming fact and the one which has most challenged the physiologists is that people have been retrieved apparently dead after very long periods under water and yet have been revived without any obvious brain damage. The celebrated case of a Norwegian child who survived 40 minutes total submersion is frequently quoted, but adults too, have recovered after astonishing lengths of time under the water; 38 minutes in Lake Michigan, for example, or 34 minutes submerged in a silage tank.

It would be difficult to conceive how the victim of cardiac arrest due to coronary artery disease could possibly have survived apnoea for that length of time without intervention.

The diving reflex

Man can breath-hold underwater for around four minutes. On the other hand, aquatic animals similar in size to man can breath-hold for ten times that length of time! Since seals and dolphins have a brain anatomically similar to that of man and are similar physiologically in that (unlike skeletal muscle) their brain has no anaerobic reserve whatever, how is this possible?

Much experimental work on breath-hold in seals was conducted by Harrison and his colleagues. Using an accoustically transmitted electrocardiogram (radio waves travel poorly through water) it was shown that face immersion alone prompted immediate and profound slowing of the heart rate. If the seal was frightened or restrained during the dive, pulse rates as slow as eight beats per minute were recorded. In addition to pulse slowing, marked vaso-constriction of vessels supplying skeletal muscle led Robert Elsner, another early researcher in the field, to describe the diving seal as a living heart/lung/brain preparation: quite a physiological accolade! In addition to its ability to shut off the supply of oxygen to tissues that can metabolise anaerobically if necessary, the seal has another major advantage over man. It has a large reserve of myohaemoglobin which acts as a sizeable oxygen sump.

The mechanism of the diving reflex is complex. Principally, sensory afferents from the trigeminal nerve supplying the face and from the carotid body chemo-receptors via the ninth cranial nerve, stimulate the cardiac and respiratory inhibitory cerntres of the mid-brain. Increasing hypoxia enforces the diving reflex and increases still further inhibition of the heart rate and breathing. These reflexes are not peculiar to diving mammals and, although less marked, are still identifiable to dogs, sheep, rabbits and many other mammals studied.

Man represents a more challenging creature to investigate for reasons which must be obvious. Very little is known about diving responses in man. However, Brett Gooden showed significant pulse slowing and reduction of calf blood flow, measured with strain gauges, in a number of volunteers standing either totally submerged in water or at the pool side. Evidence that the diving reflex in man is sustained, or that it has any survival value in near drowning has yet to be demonstrated.

Hypothermia

Around 30 years ago the first open heart operation to be performed on a human subject was carried out by a team of American surgeons. To open the heart meant that it could not be beating at the time. Since there was no such thing then as a heart lung machine through which the circulation could be supported during the operation, this also meant arresting the supply of blood to the brain for a time. Much work had then been done on animals suggesting that if the creature was cooled sufficiently, circulation could be stopped and restarted after 30 minutes or more without any apparent lasting damage to the brain. The first human subject was a child and the operation to close successfully an atrial septal defect lasted 15 minutes. Thus it was proved that if the body could be made sufficiently cool, circulation could be arrested for a certain period of time and restarted without damaging oxygen sensitive tissues.

Cardio-pulmonary arrest due to a coronary artery disease, so commonly encountered in hospital, results first in circulatory arrest followed ultimately by respiratory arrest By contrast, in drowning this sequence is reversed Breathing stops the minute the head is submerged but

the heart continues to beat. Because water has a specific heat one thousand times greater than that of air and a thermal conductivity of about 26 times that of air, heat is lost from an immersed body very quickly indeed. The similarities between protecting the brain by deliberately inducing hypothermia under anaesthesia for open heart surgery and the physiological setting of a patient drowning in cold water are obvious. However, perhaps even more interesting are the remarkable stories of survival after long periods of cardio-pulmonary arrest in people who had not been immersed in water at all. The body of a young man dug from the path of an avalanche and found to be pulseless and apnoeic was taken down to the University Hospital in Berne. Sinus rhythm was re-established after four hours of external chest compression. Reports of similar circumstances of survival following prolonged exposure to cold after intoxication with alcohol or sedatives are numerous. How then, does the diving reflex explain survival in these cases?

Regardless of speculation on the possible mechanisms, people have been recovered from water apparently dead yet have been revived. The first aid books need re-writing. Fixed dilation of the pupils is a totally unreliable sign of brain damage, cyanosis may be obvious on the lips of the patient who is fully conscious and breathing and the doctor who pronounces death from drowning without knowing precisely the circumstances is foolish indeed.

Dry drowning

The old procedure of draining water from the patient's 'lung' is a waste of time. Hennen Ruben and his wife proved this by pouring a litre of water into the mouths of fresh cadavers with the aid of a funnel. Prompt inversion of the corpse resulted in recovery of water from the stomach but not from the lungs. Captain Fuller of the US Army described a number of instances in which post mortems performed on drowned individuals failed to reveal any water in the lungs at all.

Aspirated water can readily be seen on the chest radiograph. Jerry Modell, the doyen of drowning research in Florida, reported tha radiographs on 90 consecutive cases of near-drowning, 20 of whom showed no evidence of aspiration. It seems from this evidence that a proportion of patients near-drown without aspirating any water at all.

Transporting the patient to hospital

The temptation to speed away from the accident site will all lights flashing should be resisted. Studies of survival following shark attack show that the patient who is not properly stabilised before transport does badly. It is customary now for rescue crews to attempt to re-establish breathing and circulation on the spot, however long it may take, rather than transport the patient with breathing and circulation still in an unstable condition.

About half those who have been near-drowned vomit during resuscitation, a much higher proportion than in those receiving treatment for cardiac arrest due to coronary artery disease. If the skills are available, it is much safer to transport an unconscious patient with an endotracheal tube in place. Intravenous infusion is not essential at this stage.

Secondary drowning

A proportion of patients develop pulmonary oedema with normal left atrial pressure, a condition popularly known as secondary drowning, but more

correctly as adult respiratory distress syndrome. This develops only if water has been inhaled and usually within twenty-four hours of immersion. Fatal pulmonary oedema has been recorded in patients who initially were fully conscious and apparently well following recovery from the water. For this reason all those who have been immersed in water should be admitted to hospital for a period of observation. Signs of impending trouble include an abnormal chest X-ray, reduced arterial oxygen breathing air and a persistent cough.

This article is reproduced from 'Respiratory Disease in Practice',

FROM DAVE POWELL

There is usually a scarcity of articles about winter trips in the Newsletter - I enclose a brief account of a short trip around the island of Jura in early February. If any visiting sea paddlers would like to accompany me on any trips, any time, contact me, Dave Powell, on Tel: 0631 71 376 (Connel, near Oban).

Despite its proximity to the mainland, Jura is one of the wildest islands off the Scottish coast. Jura is twenty eight miles long by eight miles wide, and the Sound of Jura, the wild west coast, and the incomparable Gulf of Corryvreckan offers some of the most interesting and varied sea canoeing around.

Wildlife: sea canoeing is the best way to see the wildlife of the area - sea birds and seals are abundant, otters are relatively common, and sea eagles have been reintroduced and are making a comeback.

Jura circumnavigation, solo trip, February 1993

An early start, drove down to Tayvallich/Carsaig Bay, on the water about 9 am. Misty, drizzly, cool. Headed off across the Sound of Jura to Ardlussa Bay, then a long slog down the coast, against the tide. Skirted the Small Isles sheltering Craighouse Bay, one of the Paps grey screes visible above the cloud. Eventually, Islay appears on the horizon, distant and bleak. I round the corner and head up the Sound of Islay. Some close sightings of otters on offshore rocks. Pressed on in the dark, always against the tide. Past Port Askaig, on around the next point and camped near a little lighthouse.

Next morning, grey, mild, drizzle. Left late, paddled continuously up the west coast of Jura - to the south Rubha a'Mhail, to the west long low lying Colonsay. Across the mouth of Loch Tarbert, on past a coast of rocky headlands, occasional bays and grey raised beaches prominent on the hillsides. On the shore deer graze the kelp-they have eaten everything else on land! Ahead, the Garvellachs and the unmistakable mountain of Scarba on the horizon. Stopped early in a little bay below Ben Garrisdale, made camp in daylight to get myself together. I didn't fancy paddling through the Gulf in the dark!

Left early, not quite sure what the tide is doing! Paddled past Glengarrisdale Bay, on up the increasingly wild coast watched only by the ubiquitous deer, the massive bulk of Scarba looming out of the mist. The tide is high, flowing in through the Gulf. Went with the flow, smallish tide rips between the islands off the Jura shore. The inflowing race is not too bad, and the scenery here is sensational! Drifted through into the Sound of Jura, swirling around in a beautiful green haze, and found myself near Crinan. Finished the trip as I had started it, with a painfully slow bash down the Sound against the tide.

From: Alan Boulter, President, Boulter of Earth, 21 Dartmouth Crescent, Toronto, Ontario M8V 1W9. Tel. (416) 252-9747.

Dear Fellow Enthusiasts,

The DRIFT STOPPER, patent pending, consists of a parachute type sea anchor and the control and storage system that I have developed.

Probabably the most frequent occasion of use of a sea anchor aboard a kayak would be during rest stops. A parachute type drogue of sufficient diameter serves almost to eliminate backwards drift, even in a heavy wind, as well as keeping the bow headed into the waves. This is of inestimable value when paddling upwind. (Most conventional configuration sea anchors present a smaller area to the water and allow considerable backwards drift.)

A good case can be made for the inclusion of a sea anchor as necessary safety gear on any sea kayak venturing into open waters. A wellfound sea kayak is one of the most seaworthy of all craft, WHILE THE PADDLER IS AT FULL STRENGTH!! Exhausted, he or she is at risk. If a paddler becomes exhausted battling upwind back to shore, the sea anchor allows a rest without being blown back out to open water.

Yet the deployment and retrieval of a sea anchor from the cockpit of a kayak is an awkward business at best. At worst it can lead to an upset. The kayaker has to put down his paddle while the anchor is taken from its place of storage and launched. Worse, is in retrieval. When the sea anchor is pulled in, the kayak swings broadside to the wind and drifts, dangerously exposed to the waves, while the chute is being folded to prevent tangling.

The DRIFT STOPPER solves these problems of use.

In the DRIFT STOPPER, the sea anchor itself is a parachute type drogue of approximately 40 inches diameter, ruggedly made out of coated ripstop nylon or kite nylon The storage bag is made from pack weight nylon reinforced with climbing webbing. When rigged on the boat the sea anchor is secured in the bag, on deck, ready for use Two lines (anchor line and float line) run from the sea anchor in the bag back to the cockpit area. To launch: the float line is pulled, drawing the sea anchor from the bag. To retrieve: the anchor line is pulled in until the sea anchor is drawn back into the bag. Through both launch and retrieval the steadying force of the DRIFT STOPPER is on the bow of the boat. When the anchor has been retrieved, the kayaker paddles away, picks up the float line when it floats alongside and jam cleats it.

Simple two line use, it works. It has never jammed and it makes using a sea anchor quick and safe.

The DRIFT STOPPER comes with a pictorial instruction sheet. It requires the purchase of hardware (two loop cleats and a jam cleat) and a length of anchor line.

I think that this product is more than a convenient gadget. It is a necessary part of the list of safety gear that every well outfitted kayak should carry. I think that it is a product that your members would like to hear about.

For more information, or to order, call or write to me at the above address.

Yours truly,

Alan Boulter

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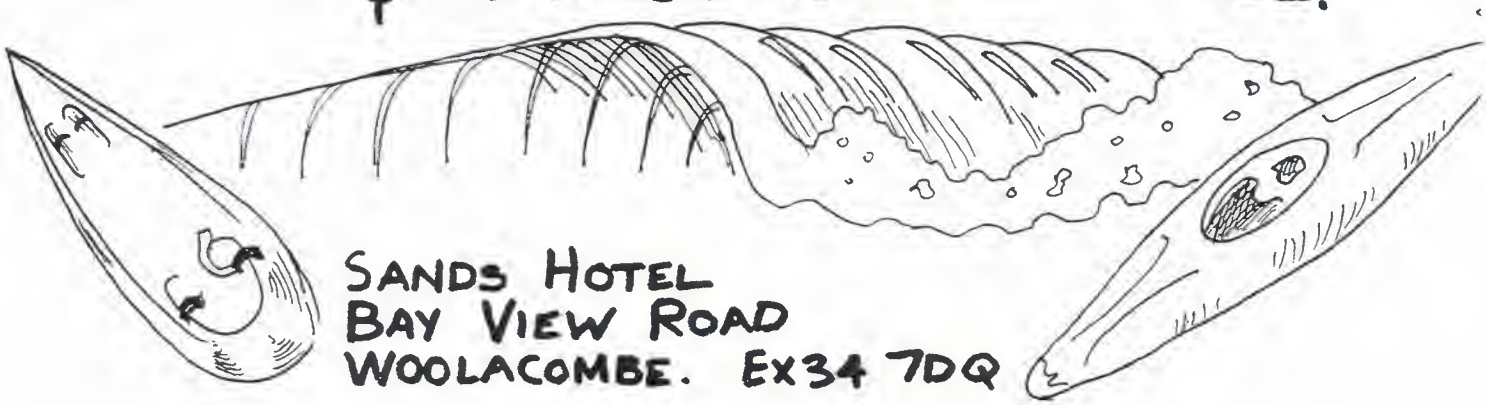

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