

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.

THE ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB

NEWSLETTER No 105

SEPTEMBER, 1994.

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Editorial

I have just returned from the International Meet on the Ile de Re as organised by Christian Gabard on behalf of PARIS - KAYAK International. Nine nations were represented and again it was a terrific event. Dave Ross has provided us with a first class account of what went on and I hope that it encourages you to come along to the next one in two years time. This event has grown so that it now represents the biggest international meet and brings together, as someone put it, the 'brotherhood of sea kayakers'.

I have to say that it was the Ile de Re that finally persuaded me that the ASKC should adopt a new title. I spoke with many who said they would like to join the Club but felt they were not 'advanced' enough. This is nonsense as you all know...that is, those of you already in the ASKC all know. I am a little jaded with telling everyone how the Club got its title. Let me tell it one more time. 'Once upon a time' a few people founded the ASKC. It was based in London and I joined as an early member. The two main characters who put a lot of work into arranging several of the early sea trips for the ASKC were Martyn Barker and Dave Elmore. They were both an inspiration to me and I have a lot to thank them for. Not long after I joined, both these founder members asked me to take on the Club; I agreed and they gave me £9 and nine members and asked I continue using the name of the Club they founded...the ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB. I agreed and here we are today, almost 500 members and 18 years later!

I intend to keep our logo and the new title, **THE INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAKING ASSOCIATION** will be associated for some considerable time with the Advanced Sea Kayak Club. With this in mind I am looking to a new redesigned Newsletter cover and will offer a years free membership to any club member who sends me some art work that I subsequently adopt. Come on you artists, of whom I know there are several....please send me some designs. At this stage in our career they need only be in black and white. In due course I hope to up-grade the newsletter with photographs and some colour. I retire from work in a couple of years time and will be in a position to devote more time to developing the Club (very soon to be an Association).

Through the pages of this Newsletter I wish to thank DAVE PATRICK of P & H, Derby for loaning us his trailer to transport our kayaks to the Ile de Re. Thanks a million Dave...it was generous and much appreciated.

I would also like to use this Letter (Editors' perks!) to apologise to the organisers of the Jersey Sea Kayaking Symposium, Kevin Mansell in particular, and to Keith Brigstock et al for my failure to attend both the Symposium and the CANOE '94 CANOE EXHIBITION. I am having to spend a lot of time in Scotland for family reasons and every spare moment is so taken up.

I was able to cut across Country to attend the recent BCU Sea Touring Committee meeting at Amble on the NE coast over the weekend of the 18/19th June. Here I was able to learn of the MARINE SAFETY AGENCY. This Department has set up a series of committees to review safety on inland coastal water of the United Kingdom. I am now the Sea Touring Committees' representative on the NW of England District Committee and will now attend their fourth meeting scheduled for 7th July, 1994. This is a major step forward in ensuring that sea kayakers are properly represented at these sorts of forums.

The latest on the legal proceedings regarding the Lyme Bay Tragedy is that they are due to start later this year between November 15th and December 9th. I am fairly confident that the BCU has been properly consulted and that the right people have spoken on our behalf. Of course we hope that there is no over reaction to this tragic event and that we will continue to have the freedom of the oceans as we have always had and continue to treat this right with respect and professionalism. The impact is likely to fall on centres and group leaders and it is no secret that there has been a rush of British Canoe Union coaching scheme members ensuring the validity of their awards!! For my money we need to see a reasonable yet adequate Code of Practice rather than any detailed legislation. This way there remains a great degree of flexibility whilst at the same time we will all be fully aware of how the Code of Practice will be quoted if we get it wrong. Combine this with existing Health and Safety legislation that already exists in abundance and I should have thought we were quite easily able to show we have the safety of the close to heart.

The British Canoe Union Canoe Exhibition will be held at Crystal Palace next February but I understand that the Canoe Manufacturers et al are flexing their muscles. Either the Exhibition and the costs involved are improved considerably or they will 'hot foot' it to the Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, and they list the

many advantages to the canoeing and potential canoeing public that accrue from this move.. watch this space.

SEA CANOEING SAFETY GUIDE by H.M.Coastguards is now available and I am hoping to include a copy with this Newsletter. I believe this leaflet to be an excellent piece of co-operation between this organisation and the BCU. Well done to all concerned.

You will recall that I wrote about the proposition that there should be a 'JOURNEY LEADER' award in my last editorial. I had several responses and I have published one or two. Meanwhile I can tell you that the BCU Council are considering the issue. Watch this space.

Some sad news. A French paddler was found dead in his upturned canoe, an Arius 2, off Fair Isle. The 57 year old mans' body was recovered by a SAR helicopter after he had died during his attempt to paddle from North Ronaldsay to Fair Isle. Apparantly he had been planning a trip from Canada to Greenland and I understand that he was an experienced sea paddler having paddled his double with his wife who had died since his last trip. This incident occurred early June. He was found with his PFD inflated and his marine radio appeared to have been used, though range from water level is very limited as you know.

Gordon Brown of Garnock Canoe Club has recently produced an excellent training video to complement the work of instructors. Entitled "Over.... and Out; Sea Kayaking Rescues". It is a practical video on group and self rescue at sea and is shot on sea conditions with wind and some choppy sea. Assisted by club members and coaching colleagues from the SCA/BCU, Gordon runs through the most common forms of deep water rescue in a workmanlike fashion. Most of the standard rescues are shown with one or two exceptions. Some many quibble over a detail here or there but the end result is a good alternative to diagrams in a handbook. Produced with the backing of Valley Canoe Products and Lendal Paddles it is available from me at £14.99.

Compass Marine who import the NICO SIGNAL flare/signalling system have advised that this piece of equipment is now classified as a Section 1 firearm. Apparantly this is due to that fact that it has a barrel. Some time ago, acquiring a Firearms Certificate was not difficult, now you are faced, so I am told, with £60 worth of difficulty!

Finally, a quick plug for the CALSHOT SYMPOSIUM scheduled for the 1/2nd October, 1994. The BCU Sea Touring Committee will be staging their AGM at this event. To attend the Symposium, write to Dave Evans at Calshot Centre, Southampton, Hants.

From Paul Trott at the East Barnby Outdoor Centre, Near Whitby, N Yorkshire.

Dear John,

Seldom do I write as I much prefer to 'do'. However, the current proposal for a 'Journey Leader' qualification to add to the BCUs' plethora of qualifications is questionable.

My personal opinion is that those wishing to qualify as such should follow the existing routeways for SI or Advanced Proficiency,

I say this with reference to the proposed pre-requisites for attaining the Journey Leader award. These are: Proficiency and First Aid (likewise for S.I. & Advanced.)

The training and assessment for the Journey Leader award could theoretically take place over one weekend (proposed 1 day training; 1 day assessment) whereas S.I./Advanced Prof. is usually two weekends,

However, the proposed number of proficiency level expeditions is 12 which I feel is quite high.

When you consider the requirements for S.I. and the Journey Leader, the only difference is the lack of coaching hours required.

I know very few paddlers who do not automatically offer coaching tips and enhance individuals performance as a matter of course when they are in a leadership/organisational role.

Please lets try and encourage people to paddle down the S.I./Advanced channel as I believe this has been proven. Similarly lets try and allay fears of assessment re: S.I. I don't believe it is the nightmare people perceive!

If people are dedicated enough to pass the proposed 'Journey Leader' award, then they should sail through an S.I.

And as for the collision regulations- when was the last time the readership really needed them? I feel that this is just a 'bee in a bonnet'! I personally have only needed their basics when crossing the Channel and Irish Sea and not as a matter of course.

Just thought I'd make the effort.

Paul Trott.

ASKC SHOP (all prices include post & packaging)
"Over...and Out", the video on sea kayak rescues @ £14.99
"Qajaq", the book by David Zimmerley @ £12.50
ASKC Ski Hats @ £3.50 each
ASKC letter headed paper @ 50 pence per 10 sheets
ASKC Stickers @ 50 pence each
ASKC ties @ £6.50 each

LIGHTWEIGHT TRAVELLING

by Eric Totty (The Ancient Mariner)

How light you travel depends, of course, on your reason for travelling: a short stay or weekend run or an extended expedition in a wilderness area such as can be found in Greenland, Canada or Finnish Lapland.

Some years ago, in the nineteen thirties, I used to enjoy cycle touring. I cycled many thousand of miles in this Country and abroad using lightweight cycle with a lightweight tent and sleeping bag and accessories pared down to bare minimum.

This was good preparation for canoe touring and expeditions such as the Northern Woods of Canada, Greenland and the crossing of the Baltic Sea from Sweden to Finland via the Aland Islands where the canoe or kayak had to be packed to capacity with the addition of flares and a supply of fresh water as well as quantities of food and all other necessary items.

Now, it is to be said that the Owl and the Pussy Cat went to sea in a beautiful pea-green boat; but to take no more luggage than honey, money and a small guitar seems to me to be going too far in this direction. But they obviously had matrimony in mind and looked at life through rosy coloured spectacles.

A 'travel light' situation confronted some of us in 1944 when we crossed over to France as part of the Army of Liberation. As it was clear that we might fall prey to German E boats which were patrolling this particular stretch of coastline we knew that we might have to swim and paddle ashore and probably have unfriendly people throw things at us into the bargain, we didn't wish to be encumbered with more luggage than we could conveniently carry on our backs, so again we travelled light.

Others travel light for fun. Students do it for the sake economy and some of those I have observed sleeping rough in parks and woodlands can travel even lighter than they used to because so few of them now seem to need room for razor, soap or hair brush!



The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat,

OVER THE NEXT HILL, ROUND THE BEND!

(La SEMAINE INTERNATIONALE DU KAYAKS DE MER)

'So what do I get for being a member?' I asked John Ramwell after joining the ASKC and buying the jersey.

'Well, I've organised transport for the Ile de Ré meeting in June'.....

'Two places please' and that was that!

So, on Saturday 4th of June, the team set off from John's house in Bolton. A couple of pickups on the way and we embarked with P & O from Portsmouth to Le Havre.

The team comprised John, Pete Roscoe, John Dalton (who turned up with a 20 foot, hand built wooden single), Vince and Di Smith, Ross Patterson and Tim Laurence from England plus Mike Dales, Harry and Chris Simpson and myself from Scotland.

Just over 24 hours later, we arrived on the Ile in the Bay of Biscay with John still at the wheel of the 12 seater and trailer. (and he drove all the way back!)

There we were met by Christian Gabard. This energetic Frenchman had organised this and the previous 5 week long international seminars for European paddlers. The seminars are organised under the twin flags of FRIENDSHIP and SAFETY. There was certainly no shortage of either with some 60 paddlers by the end of the week. They came from Germany, Spain, the Basque region, mainland Italy, Sardinia, France, Holland, Portugal and, of course, Scotland and England.

Once camped at L'Aile du Peux site, the 'Grande Flot d'Europe' set off for an initial paddle together. 52 of us set off down the coast heading for the port of Ars. Some surf on the way saw 6 or 7 in the water and Pete and I set about shoving some of them back into their boats (I got the pretty young French girl!)

Ars is a lovely town of white houses with green shutters unspoiled by the hotels and monstrosities seen in other tourist areas. It nestles at the outer edge of a saltmarsh which was once divided into long rectangles and used to produce salt but is now largely a peaceful nature reserve. On the way back we followed the southern shore of the reserve. 'Plop', and a Pollack landed right into my spraydeck. Grab, slither, grab, plop and my unannounced supper vanished again!

Later we were bussed to a reception given by the Mayoress of Ars and watched an amazing film from 60 years ago about a Greenland Eskimo love story! The source of the Anas Acuta was clear to see. That evening the excitement of the day sent us easily into the arms of Morpheus (aided by a little liquid friendship).

On Monday, the circumnavigation proper started. Each day, we were bussed to our boats, did a section, had a reception, then were bussed back. Due to tides and the short distances, we normally started at 2 to 3 pm thus leaving the mornings free for shopping and being tourists.

The first leg took us from camp NW up a lovely wooded coast where below our boats were the walls which enclose large areas of the inter-tidal zone. Here, oysters and mussels are grown and at low tide, the clinking of the sword-like tools and hammers which are used to prize them off the rocks can be heard.

Once on the N shore, large surf appeared at irregular intervals

and some of us went off to play. My deck imploded under one and I satisfied myself that paddle floats are viable in rough water! We had more fun landing and setting off in the surf under the Phare des Balines (Whales Lighthouse). We then paddled to the W side of Ars where our boats were kept in a garden.

Tuesday saw some of us off to the nature reserve on foot where I saw my first Little Egret (then many more) and a surprising number of birds of prey. Later, the afternoon paddle saw us battle against a force 1, in blistering sun, along an endless shore of dunes and sand. The occasional topless bather provided a break from the grind! We also saw a raft of Terns - literally. About 7 of them were floating along on an old fish box. Then, after turning several shades more brown we landed at La Noue campsite and headed for the reception.

Here we encountered Pineau, grape juice fortified with cognac. (This local speciality featured high on my list of pressies.)

By now, international friendships were being forged, boats studied and swapped, techniques discussed and trips planned. I tried a boat designed and built by Jacques (an Albatross). Mike and I decided to organise a Scottish International Paddle in '95 and had this announced in several languages. Salvatore also offered trips to Sardinia - most attractive!

Christian had several helpers of whom two merit special mention. Luis The Interpreter had the unenviable task of translating into Spanish, German and English while Christian gave out his orders. How much was lost in the translations I don't know but we never quite seemed to get things right! Florentine is the colour of ebony, 71 years old, looks about 40 and his main job was to talk to you (even though you hadn't a clue what he was saying) and to make everyone join in with his perpetual laughter.

A change came on Wednesday. The wind picked up to a 4 and the paddle back from the most southern lighthouse (Phare de Chauveau) was more like home - only warmer! The passage under the bridge which connects the Isle to the mainland was very confused and the secretly planned 'lets fall in and roll' demo was scrubbed. We landed at Rivedoux and washed the boats prior to housing them in a school.

We again reverted to being tourists on Thursday with a trip to the Phare des Balines (257 steps) and a walk past the old gun emplacements - tilted reminders to stay with our flags of friendship and safety. The paddle took us to another delightful town, La Flotte with its rows of yachts, then on to St. Martin for the reception. The journey, however, had been in a force 5+ and Mike and I went out twice to assist nervous colleagues while Udo (Germany) handled a capsized boat with some others. The reception was held in an old museum square, and we needed the 'fizzy stuff' to calm our nerves after watching boats stacked 4 deep in an old garage!

The last leg. We set out in a 4 - 5 and it stayed that way. This time we headed out across the Fosse de Loix bay and saw little but lumpy water and other boats. Turning the Ponte du Gravin we saw the home beach only 5 kilometres away. At this point I feathered the Nordkapp modified crank demo paddles which Lendal Products had given me and belted across the water. Eric (French) and I came in together, victory rolled and went for a swim (entente cordiale).

I thought I was finished but was again press ganged into lifting that ***** inflatable. Each day, the appearance of this little

monster coincided with the DIS-appearance of anyone lucky enough to escape.

The final reception was fabulous. Mussels and salmon were the favourites with as much wine as we could consume. Christian gave prizes for the oldest (Dick Faulder from the UK at 73!), the youngest (Davide - age unsure but perhaps 12) and any other reason he felt like. Most of us got something.

I hope Anne-Marie Booth got something for she certainly deserved it. After 2 years of severe illness and operations, she turned up to paddle - walking stick and all!

On Saturday, many farewells were said and many promises made. I hope they all come to pass. Our team again became cyclists, bird watchers and tourists, with Tim trying his new Sirius. At night we had one last bash at a local restaurant where the cook amused us by taking a trip and showering the floor with a mosaic of broken crockery.

Then it was 5.30 am on Sunday - up, in and away by 6.00 for another trip packed in like sardines.

CONCLUSIONS:-

As Harry Simpson said 'trips like this don't just happen'. This was much more than a kayak trip (in fact we did less than 90 k). It was a new experience, an international meeting, a holiday, a chance to make new friends and make plans. IT WAS EXCELLENT!

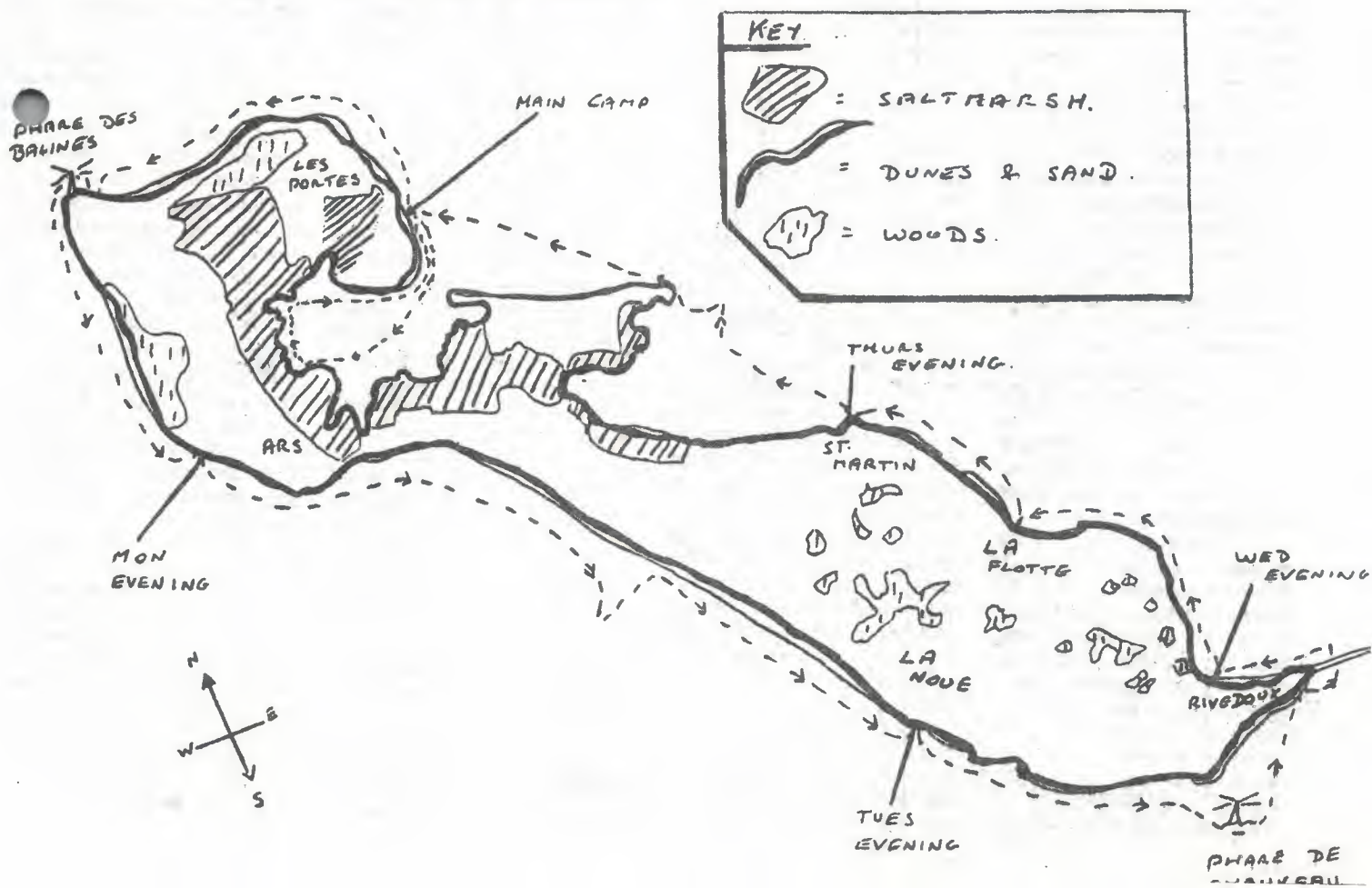
John Ramwell - 110% for staying awake at the wheel.

Ile de Re - lovely.

European paddlers - good fun, great team.

Christian, Luis and Florantine - MILLE PER CENT.

Dave Ross - ASKC and Garnock CC



Do hand-held GPS sets make sense? After all, they are really meant for back-packers, fell-walkers, the military and intrepid explorers. What use are they to yachtsmen?

With their fondness for eating batteries at a phenomenal rate when providing continuous position fixing, one would think that they would be of little use aboard a boat. In our trials, the worst drained its 'long-life' AA-size batteries in only an hour and a quarter and the best not much more than five and half hours — that doesn't get you very far on a world cruise! Luckily, all the sets on test can be connected to a 12V supply — often by simply snapping the set into a bracket.

This gives the hand-held an advantage over a fixed set since it can be taken home at the end of a day's sailing, safe from boat burglars and ready to be programmed with waypoints and route plans — saving valuable sailing time. At the same time, it gives you the chance to get to know your GPS in the comfort of your armchair!. Garmin even include a simulator program as part of their sets' software.

All of the receivers on test have been brought out in the last 18 months. Even the Magellan, which was in our first test (PBO 297), has been upgraded with more channels.

All of the sets, except the Garmins, have parallel multi-channels — i.e. they have several channels each dedicated to listening to a satellite. The Garmins use what they call MultiTrak, a patented single channel multiplexing system which switches rapidly between satellites. Advocates of parallel channel sets say they have to be better since effectively a multi-plexing set has to calculate moves in position lines to work out its position.

Selective Availability (SA), the deliberate degradation of satellite signals by the US Department of Defence to prevent 'enemies' using the system, is said to have a greater effect on single channel sets than those with parallel channels.

We decided to check if that opinion was true. Our trials therefore included plotting the position with the units stationary. The Ordnance Survey very kindly provided a position on the roof of our offices accurate to within a foot — we rounded up the figure to a third decimal place of a minute or about two metres. Our position is 50° 42.960'N, 1° 59.376'W.

We connected three of the



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If so, then you should join us!

The Association is open to all those involved or interested in outdoor education and training and in bringing together practitioners, advisors and policy makers acts as a channel of influence at both a national and local level.

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- Opportunities to meet colleagues
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WHICH HAND-HELD GPS?

Ten portable GPS navigation receivers on test.

Keith Colwell reports

FROM PRACTICAL BOAT OWNER APRIL 1993

sets — the Magellan and the two Garmins via their mounting brackets and using their remote antennas — to one of our Apple Macintosh computers running MacSea plotter software, recording the sets' position every five minutes. Several of the other sets could have also been connected to the computer but sadly either their mounting brackets/NMEA output cables were not available or they arrived too late to be wired up. Consequently, we recorded position manually — the reason why we recorded position only every five minutes.

As the plots show, the majority of positions fall within the 100m circle, in line with the SA system error of being within 100m for 95% of the time and within 300m for 99% of the time. Plots with fewer points, such as the Sony, simply indicate that the batteries ran out sooner. Indeed, sets with a long battery life are probably at a slight disadvantage in this test since there was a greater chance of large position errors showing up.

While the position plots in our table show Garmin to give as accurate a position as any of their competitors, we noticed when running the GPS 75 in separate trials, an occasional big error in position sometimes

as much as 1500m out. Sensibly, the machine sounded an alarm, stopped transmitting NMEA and asked to be switched off and on. Apparently, there's a slight software glitch which Garmin tell us is currently being rectified.

What the plots also show is the futility of receivers providing positions to three decimal places. Even if our charts were that accurate — which they are not, see PBO 301.102 — and if it was possible to plot to that accuracy, the position is probably wrong anyway by up to 300m. The moral is, to take into account the possible error of both your GPS and chart and to navigate accordingly.

Selective Availability also causes errors in speed and course over the ground due to the method of calculation based on change of position. Sadly, the pre-SA days where you could calibrate your log and check your compass are over. Errors tend to be in the region of one to two knots and $\pm 10^\circ$ to 20° — and can sometimes be worse.

Most sets provide some form of averaging of position, speed and course. Since the errors are random, averaging cancels them out though slows the set's response time. We tried our test sets with averaging switched off.

Our trials also included evaluating how easy each set was to use, how readable the screens were and how well each operator's manual conveyed its instructions. Most makers provide two manuals: a full length version and an abridged guide or at least an *aide memoir* guide sheet. Most of the main manuals are well written even if a bit lengthy. Those with an index are considerably easier to use than those without. Generally, the manuals from the Japanese manufacturers were not as good as those from the Americans. JRC's was awful; unclear, badly written and full of literals. Trimble was well written and informative but lost a point because of the lack of an index. Our favourite was the Motorola Traxar thanks to its simplicity. Our star ratings will give you some idea of what we thought of the others.

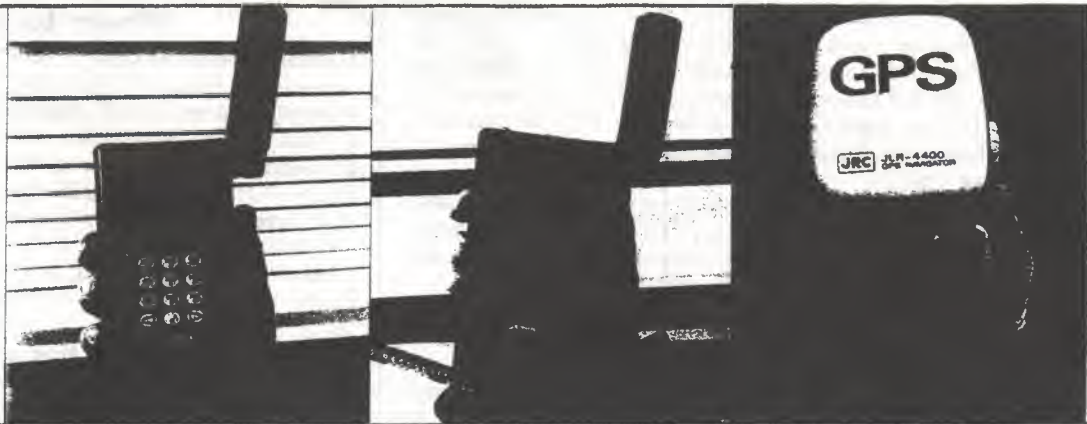
Screen clarity and readability varies considerably. Those made up of pixels or dots are usually easier to read than those made up entirely of number segments. The graphics on the JRC and Garmin 75 sets are superb, offering 'highway' or 'bowling alley' course deviation indicators (CDI's) which make steering to a course, even for the novice helmsman, a doddle. The

WHICH HAND-HELD GPS?

Star Rating

- * = poor
- ** = adequate
- *** = fair
- **** = good
- ***** = excellent

All prices include VAT



| Make Model | Garmin GPS 50 | Garmin GPS 75 | JRC JRL-4400 |
|---|--|--|--|
| Size (inc antenna) | 247 x 110 x 37mm | 247 x 110 x 37mm | 208 x 92 x 66mm |
| Weight (kg) | 0.552 | 0.564 | 0.866 |
| Display receiver type | 3-line, 9 character LCD single channel (MultiTrac™) | 42 x 55mm (64 x 85 dots) single channel (MultiTrac™) | 38 x 56mm (64 x 128 dots) parallel |
| No of channels | up to eight satellites tracked | up to eight satellites tracked | five |
| Fix update rate | 1 per second | 1 per second | 1 per second |
| No of waypoints | 250 | 250 | 99 |
| Alpha-numeric waypoint | Yes — up to 4 characters | Yes — up to 6 characters | Yes — up to 8 characters |
| No of routes | 10 — up to 9 waypoints each | 10 — up to 20 waypoints each | from 1 of 99 to 50 of 2 waypoints |
| Reverse route | Yes | Yes | Not directly but possible |
| No of map datums | 101 + user specified datum | 101 + user specified datum | 8 |
| Differential ready | No | Yes | No |
| No of batteries | 4 AA | 4 AA | 6 AA |
| Waterproof | waterproof | waterproof | waterproof |
| Remote antenna | Yes — £129 | Yes — £129 | own antenna with 7m cable |
| Mounting bracket | supplied as standard | supplied as standard | Yes + ext cable, ant. brkt — £49 |
| 12V power | Yes — via mounting bracket | Yes — via mounting bracket | Yes — standard fitting |
| NMEA output | 0180, 0182 and 0183 | 0180, 0182 and 0183 | 0183 via 12V box |
| Standard equipment | Soft pouch case, mounting bracket, wrist strap | Soft pouch case, mounting bracket, wrist strap | 12V supply box standard (Battery pack + pouch —£49) |
| Suggested retail price | £763 | £899 | £850 |
| Discount Guide Price | £539 | £645 | £599 |
| Distributor | Garmin (Europe) Ltd | Garmin (Europe) Ltd | Pumpkin Marine and Leisure |
| Ease of use | *** | *** | **** |
| Screen readability | **** | **** | **** |
| Quality of hand-book | **** | **** | * |
| Battery duration | 5 hours | 4 hours 27 minutes | 3 hours 4 minutes |
| Comments | Plasticky case but good display and back-lit keys. Key logic sometimes difficult to follow. Good value for money but check if set has latest software. Ours had latest version 2.03. | Good definition display but some might find figures small. Back-lit keys. Excellent graphics inc. plotter, sky view, satellite bar graph and 'highway' CDI. 'Soft' keys make it easier to use. | Awful manual. Clear large digit display, nine full pages of data. Buttons sometimes stick. Low price considering antenna can be fitted remotely. Battery pack extra. |
| Verdict | **** | ***** | **** |
| Polar plot | | | |
| Numbers refer to circle radii in metres | 50m 100m 150m | 50m 100m 150m | 50m 100m 150m |

Garmin went further with a plotter, a satellite bar graph and a sky view of satellite positions — none of which are essential but nice to look at. Again, we marked each screen's readability with a star rating.

Ease of use is perhaps the most important aspect of any receiver. Operating logics varied widely and to our mind sets which guided you with on-screen menus operated by a few 'soft keys' are less daunting to operate. With that in mind we found the Motorola Traxar and Trimble Ensign amongst the easiest to use. But there are exceptions to the 'soft-key' rule. Magellan's large buttons and obvious functions with more detailed data available through the 'AUX' button has its attractions as does Trimble's Transpak II rotary knob and toggle switch. Sadly space here prevents us from going into detail on the operation of each set — the makers write books about it — so again we've given each set a star rating.

All are capable of holding at least 99 waypoints — the Transpak II can store 999. The Sony has the unusual feature of allo-

cating 50 points in its waypoint memory to what they call markpoints — points saved by pressing the save-present-position button. This we felt was unnecessarily restrictive since it prevents all the memory space being programmed with lat and long entered waypoints though of course you could always edit unwanted markpoints.

Waypoints can be programmed by entering lat and long, present position or even sometimes by range and bearing from another waypoint.

Nine out of the ten can be programmed with route plans and all, except the Panasonic, can give waypoints and routes an alphanumeric name, making them easier to identify. Some allow you to search their waypoint libraries by number and by name.

Two out of the ten cannot provide NMEA output and therefore cannot be connected to other on-board instruments such as an autopilot, chart plotter or integrated instrument system. The Micrologic Supersport and Trimble Transpak II go even further. The Supersport is fully compatible with a Yeoman plotter and is able to 'up-load' as

WHICH HAND-HELD GPS?

Where to get them

Garmin (Europe) Ltd, Millbridge House, 3 Middlebridge Street, Romsey, Hampshire. SO51 8HJ. Tel: (0794) 519944.

Pumpkin Marine and Leisure, 100 The Highway, London, E1 9BX. Tel: 071-480 6630.

Magellan Systems, Elmcroft, 3 Elmhurst Road, Gosport, Hants. PO12 1PG. Tel: (0705) 585200.

C.J. International, Ellbridge Park, Hatt, Saltash. PL12 6PU. Tel: (0752) 845375.

Plastimo Mfg (UK) Ltd, School Lane, Chandler's Ford Industrial Estate, Eastleigh, Hampshire. SO5 3DG. Tel: (0703) 262211.

Shipmate Marine Electronics Ltd, 5 Elm Court, Crystal Drive, Smethwick, West Midlands. B661RB. Tel: 021-552 1718.

Trimble Navigation UK Ltd, Trimble House, Meridian Office Park, Osborn Way, Hook, Hants. RG27 9HX. Tel: 0256 760150.

well as 'down-load' waypoints. And, in common with the Transpak, is also capable of talking to IBM-compatible PCs allowing waypoints to be edited in a suitable word processing software, not to mention saving the memory when changing internal batteries.

To get the best from a hand-held it needs to be connected to the boat's 12V supply and an outside antenna which can add to the price (though some sets can work inside a glassfibre cabin). JRC and Sony receivers

have the advantage of being able to take the antenna and mounting it outside, saving the expense of an external antenna.

Our final verdict reflects not only the set's capabilities, ease of use, screen readability and the quality of the manual but also its construction and ergonomics. Some are extremely uncomfortable to hold because of their weight and shape. Others are evidently designed to fit the hand. A point which we would have thought to have been a prerequisite of a hand-held GPS! ●

matt goes canoeing



DOES A STEREOTYPICAL BEHAVIOR IMPROVE THE REACTION TO EMERGENCIES?

by Sergio Cadoni

I won't suggest you any new rescue or the latest tip on safety at sea, but I would like to share a few reflections about human reactions to situations fraught with danger. The following lines are intended to be only propositive. I don't claim to hold the absolute truth or the ultimate answer. Who does? Take them as modest reflections on an unusual subject, and let me know your point of view. Approach them with an open mind, free of prejudices, and weigh carefully every single word. The matter is complex and there are many different currents of thought, the literature is exhaustive and the search for the best answer to personal needs is quite a job. But if you will ever pursue it, you will discover interesting, exciting new horizons.

The reason sea kayakers debate so much about emergencies is probably that these are nasty experiences nobody likes to repeat. A lot of advice is given to avoid them. And a lot of ink is spilled trying to share the best way to deal with them. Emergencies, in the broadest meaning of the term, are dangerous and stressful situations in which one wishes to find a reliable and quick way out. Not always the solution to the problem comes so quickly and effortlessly, and not always the outcome is uneventful. Sometimes people caught in emergencies crack under pressure, and so they are doomed to failure. In principle we all agree that the best defense against emergencies is to avoid them in the first place. But, unfortunately, life reserves sudden surprises. And they are not always nice... Obviously the term "emergencies" encompasses such an array of different situations that the word in itself means anything but something "dangerous". The range goes from simple capsize, with no other consequences, to life-threatening situations in which one's desperately fighting against all odds. There seems to be a common ground in the reaction to stressful situations which can help to improve the outcome, other variables so permitting. The reaction to stress is stereotypical, characterized by anxiety, fear, sweating, dry mouth, tremors to the extremities, accelerated - but not necessarily improved capacity to elaborate - thinking. It is possible to build another stereotypical response to stress which can be used to one's advantage modifying the natural sequence of physiological reactions. This is achieved through psychological training, where surprisingly appearances help real facts to evolve toward the desired outcome. If you have ever spoken to personnel working in a First Aid Station, you will have realized that during a serious emergency the person in charge doesn't go around screaming names and dosages of drugs, like in General Hospital serials, but leads the team at work giving clear, direct orders in a calm and controlled way. What is important is to keep cool and react as quickly as possible, choosing between a certain variety of available options which are pertinent to the evolving situation.

The same point of view applies to policemen involved in escort services. When they are caught in a gunfire, apart from other variables, the winner of the shoot-out is usually the one who is able to keep calm. And that reloads quickly. In order to do that one must have control over one's ability to move adequately and to make the best use of one's hands and nerves. To be able to control the reaction can save one's life, and the life of those who rely on his skills. In order to achieve this result the policemen work out certain routine actions that have been mastered during their training drills. If one screws up is dead, it's as simple as that.

Aircraft pilots, both civilians and combat pilots, during an emergency have been trained to keep control over their nerves and to apply proper, well thought in advance reactions. Which is to say that if the damn thing doesn't blow up in their hands, they will make every possible effort to land the aircraft anyway, going through a step by step sequence of predetermined actions, usually with acceptable results, provided they don't have a major problem in the hydraulics.

And the list could go on for several pages. What do all these professionals have in common? They are exposed to emergency situations, which are not every day routine, but are anyway inherent part of their work. During these emergencies they have been trained to avoid to panic and to make the best of what they have got. They have learned to keep control over their nerves and mind, to think quickly and to apply pertinent "routines". The word routine identifies a sequence of actions rationally reunited in a "drill" which points to a specific result. This means that their training included the execution of certain drills, or a sequence of actions to be put in to practice in that specific situation. When a routine is not workable anymore, they will shift to another that partially or comprehensively works in a context similar to the same to which they are currently exposed. All this brings to a few reflections:

1. When in an emergency it seems to be absolutely important to keep cool. Even if rivers of adrenaline are flowing in the blood stream, one must assure a controlled reaction. To achieve this one pretends to be absolutely comfortable and to be able to master the situation, no matter how things are going. It's a typical ostensible behaviour. It is important to avoid to show fear. To be able to stand and to be relied upon

means to be able to take charge of a situation and to find a valid, rational way out. People become dependent upon and follow leaders who are able to show competency and determination, who are able to infuse a sense of reassurance and that have a good solution at hand.

2. These people avoid start shouting different orders, but they do not esitate to give them. They use a low pitch voice, also if obliged to shout, and remain coherent with the order given. Instructions must be clear, direct, easy, given step by step, if necessary.
3. Reassurance must be given to the people one is in charge of. Also if everything is pointing to a failure, give reassurance, be assertive. Start evaluating other available options.
4. It is important to have the widest possible knowledge of solutions which fit a particular emergency situation. One should not hesitate to shift from one to another when required, or to partly intermingle a couple of them if necessary.

Quite an experience to live in fear. Desperation, anxiety, renounce, hopelessness, all this contributes to failure. In an emergency things go to the dogs when nerves break, and the will to return to a stable, controlled situation irrationally drives all the remaining energies in the wrong direction. The ability to properly evaluate the situation is lost. Thinking is difficult, thinking clearly is extremely difficult. The capacity to absorb and process the information coming from the external environment is severely impaired. All reactions become frantically instinctive.

In this respect routines are the best way out. Their clear advantage is that usually the routines have been created learning from others's mistakes. They have been tested before in controlled and real situations and have been found to be effective. They are no-nonsense exercises. Their practice, time after time, make them a sort of ingrained response to a specific situation. The fact that they are routinary deprives them of their emotional content. A routinary action is void of feelings and emotions, it's just someting you do, point. In an emergency the best thing you can do is to avoid emotional responses, you must react impersonally and effectively. Just start apply a routine. The most difficult thing is to master this sense of confidence and of self-control. It usually comes natural to those involved in dealing with emergency situations in the workplace. It has to be slowly built up in others who lack this advantage. It comes through exercise, properly training in the routines needed, and from experience. The more emergency situations you have been exposed to - and mastered - the better. There are some preparatory courses to this particular behavior, mainly textbooks written for agonistic athletes of various disciplines, centered on what is called "autogenous training". Quite simple to follow, the instructions given in this books are very effective. In a couple of months it is possible to almost revert from a feeling of fear and impotence to a very positive reaction. The subsequent steps come natural.

The best thing to do would be to give instructions in a controlled way, explaining how to apply the routine itself. Show you are in control over the situation. Give reassurance that everything will be OK. Impart orders with authority and in a confident way. Repeat them, if necessary, always with the same tone of voice. The voice of a person which has been through all that mess already so many times, and has always made away with it. Take notice that the situation itself and the external environment are perceived as less hostile, or even familiar, by a victim motivated by this sort of support. Call it make-believe, suggestion, whatever... But the net result is a sure gain. There are so many mysterious processes going on and off in the human mind - so wonderful and so horrible at the same time - that its astonishing power should be out of question. But this is a completely different matter, philosophy is well beyond the scopes of this writing.

What has been said until now also applies well to the solitary unlucky seafarer. Here the stake is higher, meaning that you are absolutely on your own. In this case the routine is all the more important, due to the fact that you lack external help, that you have to reassure yourself, and that if a routine fails you must undergo that painfull process of assessing by yourself what is to be done in the immediate future. Start trying it again, or shift to another? And so on. No calm third party who tells you what to do. Nobody can help you to find the best option. Paradoxically, self-reassurance here works well too. And this is a blessing. As everybody will know, pushing oneself with positive thinking is usually effective, and helps boosting the moral and regain lost strenght.

I don't mind to have a lot of drills rolling up and rolling down in my mind.

I prefere to have the widest possible choice of routines to apply to a specific situation, also if I have to admit that usually a few sound options, already tested and proved to be good, are enough to make away with. But it sort takes the edge off your decision. Doesn't it?



II° GIRO DELL'ISOLA D'ELBA The International Meet of Sea Kayaks

7th - 11th September 1994

The Associazione Italiana Kayak da Mare (AIKM) gives notice, to sea kayakers from all latitudes, of the second edition of the international meet of sea kayakers "Giro dell'Isola d'Elba", to be held from the 7th to the 11th of September 1994. This year we will be circumnavigating the island in five stages. As always, the meet will be in the name of friendship and safety.

All participants will be solely responsible for their own safety and belongings.

THE AREA OF THE MEET.

Elba is situated a bit less than five and a half nautical miles of the east coast of Italy. It is the largest island in the tuscan archipelago. The island has a surface area of 224 Sq.Km. Its geographical coordinates are 42° 4' 12" N, 10° 16' 28" E.

The island's staggered shore with numerous bays, promontories, beaches and rocky outcrops develops a coastline of 147 Km, which is considerable if compared to the island's surface area. The ragged landscape and rapidly changing views of various mountain ranges, heightens the impression of the island being more extensive than it really is. The climate is temperate. The average annual temperature is 15.7°C. During the year there are 168 days with clear skies, 89 days are slightly overcast and 109 cloudy. In September the temperatures range from a minimum of 16.4°C to a maximum of 23.4°C. The water temperature is 25.5°C.

HOW TO REACH THE MEET. (ROAD NAMES and NUMBERS and PLACE NAMES are in bold type)

The easiest way is departure from **PIOMBINO** on the **VIA AURELIA**. FROM **PIOMBINO** take one of the ferries (Torembar, Navarria or Elba Ferries) to **PORTOFERRAIO**. Ferries also leave for **PORTO AZZURRO** or **RIO MARINA**. The crossing takes about one hour. Other ferries depart from **LIVORNO** to **PORTOFERRAIO** (three and a half hours navigation). There are also regular flights from **PISA**, **MILAN** and **FLORENCE** to **MARINA DI CAMPO** on **ELBA**.

The base camp will be the camping **LE CALANCHIOLE** (Tel. 0560/933488 or 933494, Fax. 0565/940001) in the **CAPOLIVERI** area. To reach the camping from **PORTOFERRAIO** follow the road signs to **PORTO AZZURRO** after about 10km (look out for signposts) turn right to the camping **LE CALANCHIOLE**.

THE RULES OF THE MEET.

EVERY PARTICIPANT HAS TO BE:

a) A member of the AIKM. The membership fee is Lit. 50.000, which also covers insurance against accidents. Each new member must present a medical certificate, for insurance purposes, that proves they are fit to participate in non competitive water sports.

Those who have not presented a medical certificate will not be permitted to participate in activities on/in the water.

- b) Able to swim proficiently
- c) 18 years or older.
- d) Properly equipped
- e) Able to paddle for at least three hours and have some experience in sea kayaking.

THE ORGANISATION:

It is strictly forbidden to paddle alone.

All the participants will be divided into groups according to their experience, with a maximum of eight in each group. Each group will be led by an experienced paddler who knows the area and can help others that might be in difficulty. The group leader represents the group towards the local authorities and has the *absolute right to veto* any decisions taken during the trip.

The meeting point is at the white tent at the **CIRCOLO DELLA VELA DI MARCIANA MARINA** (Marciana Marina Sailing Club) from 8.30AM onward- on Wednesday the 7th of September to enroll for the meet



Expedition to Helgoland?

Canoeing the German Coast

1. International German Sea Kayak Week

11.9.-17.9.1994



organized by SALZWASSER-UNION e.V.

Contact for further informations:

George Hartwig

Reinhäuser Landstraße 44, D-37083 Göttingen

Fax 0049-551-7703728

CIC

GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM (GPS) RECEIVERS

Andy Stamp

The NAVSTAR GPS (NAVigational Systems with Time And Range Global Positioning System) was commissioned by the US Department of Defense at a cost of \$10,000 million, and they have overall control of it. The system was designed to provide positioning information (Latitude, Longitude, Altitude) anywhere on Earth, 24 hours a day. The DoD have a policy of funding its military research through controlled civilian access to military projects. Income from the project is not trivial, World-wide GPS sales totalled \$100 million in 1990, whilst in 1993 it was \$420 million, and a conservative estimate for the expected return in 1994 is \$600 million.

Although details of GPS Systems appeared in specialised engineering texts as long ago as 1985 (R C Dixon's *Spread spectrum systems*), the first sensible system available in the UK civilian market place appeared about three years ago. At this time a Trimble receiver would set you back the best part of £1500.

In 1992 Trimble (UK) kindly agreed to let me use one of their receivers, for a trip Nigel Hingston and I undertook to the Channel Islands from Start point in Devon. I had not received the set when our weather window arrived so we did the trip without it. However, on my return to Plymouth I was able to use their latest model, a Transpack, which was smaller than the earlier versions, did more and cost less (of the order of £1100). It was an impressive piece of kit!!

At this years Sea Kayak Symposia (Anglesey and Jersey) I gave talks on electronic technology in sea kayaking. This covered the GPS equipment (suitable for sea kayaking) currently available. In my talks I demonstrated the Panasonic KX-G5500 receiver because it is representative of the best available today, With a little dealing it should cost you less than £400 (courtesy of Tolley Marine the sole UK importers).. This includes; a power pack for 5 AA cells, a rechargeable nickel metal battery, a mains charger, a 12V car outlet charger, and a case for the set. I found it easy to use (so did my children) and very reliable. A good piece of kit. General equipment suppliers (eg *Field and Trek*) currently advertise a hand held Trimble Ensign receiver for less than £450 (less than £400 with discount). Taunton Leisure offer the Magellan Trailblazer at a discounted price of £445.5.

The latest equipment, a unit the size of a compact 35mm camera, will tell you;

Where you are (more or less),
Which way to go on a planned course (or to an unplanned site)
When you should arrive at your destination (& how long before you get there)
How much off-course you are
Your speed over the ground
Your course over the ground
The precise time
Which way to go to correct any errors

Do not be misled by their compactness, these receivers are outstanding examples of communications engineering

Every operational satellite in the NAVSTAR constellation has three atomic clocks on-board. These have an accuracy better than 1 second in 300,000 years. Such outstanding accuracy is needed because position is determined on the basis of range, and range is calculated from the time the satellite's signal takes to get to the receiver. The signal travels at a fixed rate (the speed of light, 3×10^8 m/s or 161.829 nmiles/s), so a receiver (which can measure the time delay accurately) can interpret this in terms of distance to the known position of the transmitting satellite. The radio frequency (microwave) signals from the satellite are digitally coded to contain information on the time and current position of the satellite. In effect each satellite transmits *the time here is tttt hours and my position is x,y,z*. In each receiver channel, the transmission delay is measured by comparing a stored word (digital bit stream) with the same word from the chosen satellite. A 1ms timing error results in a position change of 161.829 nm).

To grasp the technology, consider this; a five channel GPS receiver is the equivalent of five satellite TV receivers (or 15 terrestrial TV receivers) operating under the co-ordinated control of a top quality personal computer. (more usually a GPS receiver will have the increased performance of a 32 bit microprocessor or a transputer). It is the most accurate timepiece available to the public.

The receiver can locate itself because it can determine the position of, and distance to, each transmitting satellite. The accuracy of the system is not in doubt, nevertheless the system accuracy causes most controversy. This is because of the number of different ways the accuracy is quoted and because the probable position is given.

HOW ACCURATE IS IT?

A good engineer will express the chances of something working in terms of probability (eg 99.999% I expect!). The basic GPS performance is quoted in this way (this can confuse the consumer, *caveat emptor*)

I think the best description of system performance is a graph (see Figure I). This shows comparative system performance. The Precise Position System (PPS) is most accurate, *but is only available to the military*. At best this has an inherent accuracy of around 8 metres, using the P (for precise) code.

Available to us is the Standard Positioning System (SPS), at best, this is accurate to about 11m. This is obtained from the C/A code (for Coarse/ Acquisition). The military select who will get this and deliberately degrade SPS performance for others using something called Selective Availability (SA). In this degraded form 95% of the fixes will be within 100m. Usually good enough for paddlers! The following values are interpreted from Figure I

SPS (using the C/A code) openly available (SA off)

Location is accurate to within:

11m in 50.0% of fixes (Circular Error Probability CEP)
12m in 68.3% of fixes ($\pm 1\sigma$)
22m in 95.4% of fixes ($\pm 2\sigma$)
23m in 99.7% of fixes ($\pm 3\sigma$)

with disruption (ie SA corrupting civil signals)

100m in 95.4% of fixes
300m in 99.7% of fixes

If you have recently used a GPS to find your speed over the ground, as I did on a trip to the Ecrehous, then you will have noticed the unsteady nature of the displayed value. This is because the position uncertainty produces a cluster of varied position values. Since each is used to calculate distance and bearing travelled from the last, any position error, although small, dramatically alters the displayed course and speed. In some areas, *pretend* satellites (psuedolites) transmitting from surveyed positions on Earth, may be used to improve system accuracy by working out the nature of error experienced. A Differential GPS receiver (in a DGPS service area) can use this knowledge to improve system accuracy. The speed and course over the ground displayed by a DGPS receiver can generally be relied on.

In Figure II, I compare various systems currently available (If you have more information I would welcome it). The multi-channel receiver is quicker and more accurate than a single switched (multiplexed) receiver (and not necessarily more expensive). Some systems take a little while to get a really good fix using 5 satellite signals, whilst others get a reasonable fix in shorter time. The data shown is accurate to the best of my knowledge and was gathered from; manufacturers specifications (1994), Scuba World (2/92), Practical Boat Owner (4/93) and Sea Kayaker magazine (Fall 1993).

As with hand portable VHF transceivers, I prefer to use a high quality water resistant set. I think that you get much more value for money, with better performance than a similarly priced fully waterproof set. One must however, take care to keep the water out. I use an aquasac for this (ie a transparent waterproof **dry** bag). As far I know aquasac have not yet produced transparent waterproof bags specifically moulded to GPS outfits, but an AQII will usually do the job (remember to check the bag regularly and renew in good time). Another plus with water resistant sets is that they will float when in the bag..

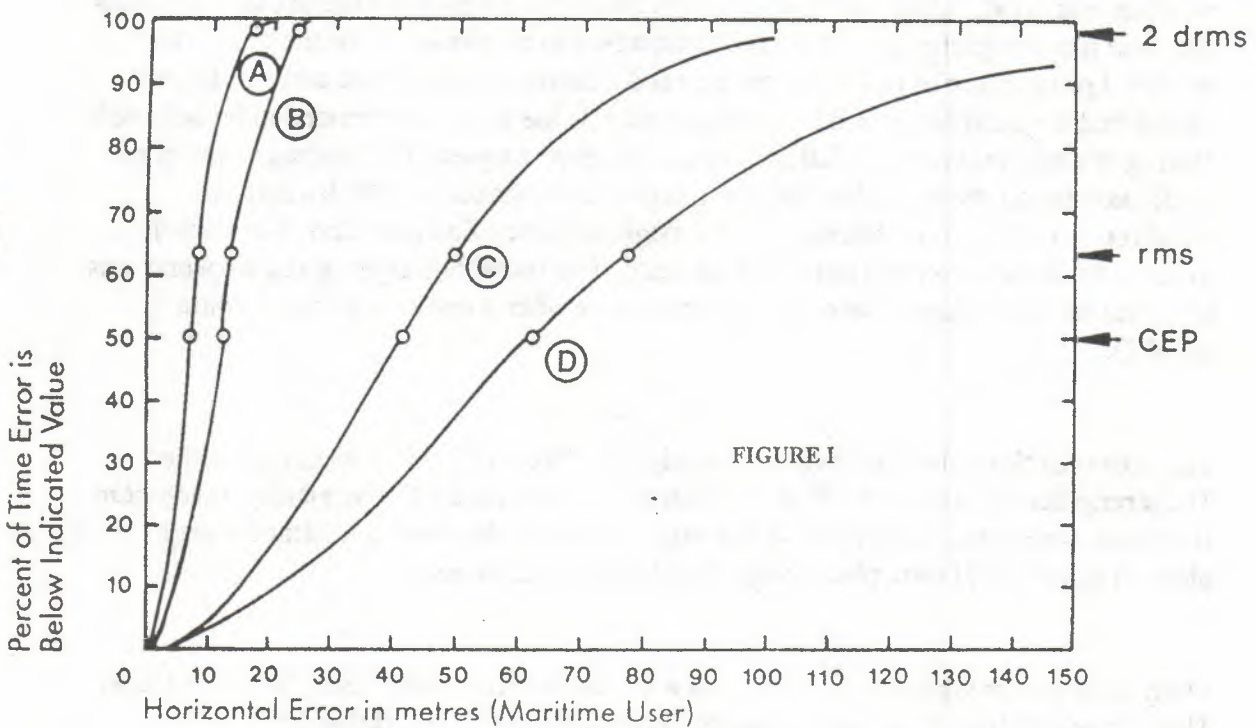
If you're thinking of an exposed trip, think about using a GPS receiver. Before you buy, talk to your dealer and borrow a range of sets to try out. Decide which is right for you. Its a good tool to complement navigation; it must not replace it, remember electronics can fail and the American DoD can turn the satellites off!

HAND-HELD GPS RECEIVERS

| GPS MODEL | GARMIN GPS50 | MAGELLAN NAV5000D | PANASONIC KX-G5500G | TRIMBLE ENSIGN | TRIMBLE XL | ICOM GP-22 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Size (in millimeters) | 81 x 163 x 38 | 123 x 224 x 54 | 65 x 131 x 35 | 84 x 173 x 33 | 84 x 173 x 33 | 65 x 131 x 35 |
| Weight (in grams) | 540 (+ battery) | 850 | 420 (inc AA cells) | 397 | 397+ | 330 |
| Receiver Type | Multiplex | 5 channels | 5 channels | 3 channels | 3 channels | 5 channels |
| Time to First Fix (in secs) | <120 | 55 | < 180 (ex Alm'nac) | approx 30 | approx 30 | up to 10 |
| Update Rate | 1/sec | 1/sec | 1/sec | every 1.5 or 5 secs | every 1.5 or 5 secs | 0.5 - 2 |
| Waypoints | 250 | 100 | 99 (+1) | 100 | 100 | 5 |
| Battery Life (hours) | approx 6 | 10(AA),5(NICAD) | 5(AA),1.3(Ni MH) | <8 | < 8 | <5 |
| Waterproof | case | yes | resistant | resistant | resistant | resistant |
| Floats | no (yes in bag) | yes (SG 0.8) | no (yes in bag) | no (yes in bag) | no (yes in bag) | no (yes in bag) |

FIGURE II

gpscomp



- A: Dual frequency, multi-channel, P code, PPS
- B: Single frequency sequential, C/A code, SPS
- C: Accuracy with Selective Availability implemented
- D: Accuracy of the decca system during 24 hours test performed in Stoevring, Denmark, February 6th 7th 1986. (The corresponding curve for daytime only will show greater accuracy)

2nd EUROPEAN SEA KAYAK SYMPOSIUM JERSEY (CI) MAY/JUNE 1994

After the unqualified success of the first Jersey symposium (held in 1992), the organising committee of the second such symposium have excelled themselves. Over one hundred paddlers from across Europe (and beyond) attended the second European sea kayak symposium as guests of the Jersey Canoe Club. The activities over the bank holiday weekend formed the core of the symposium, supported by an impressive midweek programme of paddling and social events. A splendid time was had by all, despite some testing weather conditions over the main part of the week.

The Channel Islanders (and especially Jersey Canoe Club members) made everyone most welcome. Every effort was made to meet all of the visitors on their arrival at St Helier, a nice touch, indicative of the care and planning evident throughout the week. On arrival, work hardened paddlers (excited by the prospect of a fulfilling selection of sea kayaking experiences) became strangely infected by the relaxed holiday mood of the island.

Activities began with a Friday evening reception at the Pomme D'Or where about 150 paddlers listened to Kevin Mansell's welcome and initial briefing. This chance to meet old and new friends also provided the opportunity to work out the logistics required to fully enjoy the superb range of activities on offer. For a Bank holiday, the weekend weather was great; sunny, but a little windy. Everyone seemed to *buzz* about the session they had just completed as they busied themselves in preparations for the next. The weekend programme of practical sessions and lectures was excellent and so full and varied that it would be foolish to catalogue here. It has to be experienced to be believed. During the day, mothers and fathers became carefree couples. This perhaps, was in no small part due to the extensive children's activities programme, which included; kayaking, abseiling, orienteering and the magic of Jersey Zoo (and Roy Woodgate). Sincere thanks to Tommy Turner and his team. The social highlight of the weekend was the Saturday night dinner dance (I can't remember when I last saw so many white suits!!!).

The activities throughout the week were slightly affected by the worsening weather. The strengthening wind came from the North East (not kind). Consequently, many *plan B* venues were used. It is a credit to the organisation of the event that almost every planned activity still took place. Some highlights of the week:

Many took part in what I am assured was a memorable trip from Anne Port to St Helier. This trip would have been unremarkable in itself, but was immortalised by an impromptu performance of traditional poetry (I'm told it was the ancient mariner??, well done Derek!). Despite all this, the party still managed to get to the zoo in time to enjoy the informative keynote lecture given by Chris Hare.

For me, (and about forty five others) a trip to that unique Island group *Les Ecrehous* became the trip of the week. Groups of about ten paddled reverently towards those atmospheric isles, thunder punctuating progress. A fascinating place, a super trip, sea kayaking at its best. Spare a thought for poor Kevin Mansell and his team (admire their resourcefulness). Sixteen people signed-up for this trip; and after a flurry of waterside management forty six were guided to Marmotier and brought back safely. From a personal viewpoint, Nigel Hingston and I had to abandon plans for our own special trip around the Channel Isles, thwarted by the weather! So this trip to Les Ecrehous was a worthy consolation prize.

For the social events, people came together from all parts of the Island, converging onto one venue for some serious relaxing (I must remember to check the answers to that quiz). Sometimes the journey to the event was special in itself, the lovely coastal walk from Bouley bay to the barbecue at Egypt (Wolf's Lair) is a good example.

This was a splendid symposium, with something for everyone. There was lots to learn and lots of fun. The people were great and the water was wonderful. When it was time to go back to work, the weather delayed several catamaran crossings (testing still further the organisers patience), but I think we all got home in the end. Thanks to everyone for all their hard work in staging the event.

Andy Stamp



British Canoe Union

Touring and Recreation Committee

108 East Street,
Olney,
Bucks.,
MK46 4DJ.
phone and fax: 0234-711833
19th June 1994

The Advanced Sea Kayak Club.

Dear John,

Re your editorial on event leaders.

The BCU ACRMC at its meeting yesterday approved a Good Practice leaflet for issue to event organisers. Geoff Good and Martin Meling have been involved.

Rather than going down the line that all leaders should be qualified we think it more practical and sensible to issue this leaflet as a Code of Practice which, if followed by an organiser, can be referred to as a first line of defence. An organiser who ignores the advice is of course on his own. The leaflet also incorporates other matters but the important part is the Good Practice section.

I hope that you will consider this to be the right way to go and be able to support our actions. There is no doubt that, whatever we write, someone can criticise the detail but I think this is a fair summary of what we all know to be sensible practice. It is implicit in any document of this sort that the organiser is a canoeist in his or her own right and knows a little about canoeing practice.

If you would like a copy please contact Carol Quafe at the BCU Office as he is arranging for the formal printing.

Yours sincerely,

Colin Kempson,
Chairman.

FOR SALE

Baidarka Explorer - hatches fore & aft, hand pump, deck elastics

@ £250.00

Contact George Barritt (Birmingham)
021-415-4957

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORT - LENDAL NORDKAPP PADDLES.

I have amongst my jumble of canoe related possessions a pair of wooden Lendal Nordkapp asymmetric paddles, circa 1975. I well remember using them for the first time. Precision jig and tooling had produced an engineered article complimented by a fine craftsman finish. They were a joy to use and handle, if some what heavy.

Some eighteen years on I have experienced similar pleasures with the nineties equivalent in technological advances from Lendal, namely their all carbon, modified cranked asymmetric Nordkapp paddles. The blades are based upon their tried and well tested Powermaster range. They are laid up marginally heavier to contend with maritime elements, and are available in a range of colours to suit all tastes. Loom colour is as Henry Ford's famous saying, ".:any colour so long as it's black".

It's in the loom design that sea paddles are likely to find the greatest benefits. The shaft can be supplied in a range of flexibility from that of a cast iron bar, grade 3, (without the associated weight), to the suppleness of a wooden shaft, grade 1F. A centre split joint permits an infinite choice of blade angles, mine are set at 80°.

To a "straight loom" paddler I initially found the Modified Crank concept hard to grasp, (please forgive the pun), but once handled and used the blades set into a natural position. A definite difference is noticeable around the wrist area. I've now used my blades during several races and on one memorable trip to the Eddystone Lighthouse (24 n.miles). The usual wrist fatigue associated with such trips and

racers, seems no longer noticeable.

Overall paddle lengths can be supplied to suit individual requirements. With a weight of around 970 grams (2 lb 2 oz) long hours in the cockpit with raised arms are made easier with these lightweights wonders. Drip rings, (an old idea rarely seen these days) makes a welcome return, if my dry sleeves are anything to go by.

Any criticisms ? The blades are brittle and will not take too kindly to rock hopping, but since most of my canoeing is of a touring nature, my days of boat bouncing are few and far between.

The paddles are a distinctive improvement over their wooden forerunners. The same precision craftsmanship is noticeable without the extra weight. Clearly a set of sea blades for the nineties.

PRODUCT INFORMATION. Available from Lendal Products Ltd, 30 Hunters Street, Prestwick, Ayrshire, KA9 1LG. Telephone 0292 78558. Fax 0292 671298.

PS. Lendal have advised they will be changing their blade production to an epoxy process in the near future. This will result in lighter blades, less prone to chipping.