

NSW Sea Kayaker

Newsletter of the NSW Sea Kayak Club Inc. 29 Westgarth Street, O'Connor, ACT, 2602.

Issue 29

January 1997

THE ROAD WILL TAKE ITS TOLL

By Arunas Pilka

"The road will take it's toll". This glib statement from the weedy character at the Moreton Telegraph Station was treated at the time with the contempt we thought it deserved, later we were to refer to the guy who said it as "the prophet", "the great sage", "the wise one" etc. Five days earlier John Wild, Gary Parker, Dirk Stuber & myself had set off from Wollongong in John's Toyota Landcruiser Troop Carrier towing Gary's big 4 wheel drive trailer loaded with the gear & the boats and with the intention of driving up to the tip of Cape York and then doing a double



Crossing the swollen Archer River

crossing of Torres Strait. We made good time to Mission Beach where we met up with Evan & Michelle and went for a nice day paddle out to Dunk Island & did a bit of snorkeling etc. In the afternoon a north westerly blew up which was good for us seeing as we needed a bit of a workout but poor Michelle couldn't make headway into it and so she & Evan landed on the southern end of Mission Beach. This necessitated John driving around in the dark for a while looking for them but after they were found we all had a farewell diner for them (Evan & Michelle are off overseas for a couple of years).

The next morning we set off with high hopes, slight hangovers and two extra boats (John had bought Evan's Vinea & Michelle's North Sea Tourer from them for the bargain basement/fire sale total price of \$900 including paddles, spraydecks & PFDs). Again we made

good time traveling North until we got slowed down by the Laura Pub. While having the first of what we were to find as the standard Cape priced \$3.20 cans of XXXX we were informed that because of the Papaya ruit Fly infestation fruit could not be carried past Laura. Our dinner therefore consisted of all the fruit which we had bought for the trip north washed down with a few more XXXXs.

After consuming all our fruit we traveled a little further to camp at the Kennedy River where we observed a distinctly fishy smell emanating from the trailer. The source of this was discovered to be my supply of tinned herrings which, under the influence of the vibration from the corrugated road, had opened themselves. A clean up and repack were in order.

The next morning we stashed John's

two spare boats in the scrub to be collected on our return journey. That day we crossed the Archer River (which had so little water in it that we had to search for a waterhole deep enough to get wet in), the Wenlock River which was about knee deep and were finally coaxed into camping at Bramwell Station by the promise of cold beer.

The next day was to see us reach our destination so we broke camp and headed off with enthusiasm. About an hour or so down the road our high spirits turned to despair when we were passed by the right hand wheel of the trailer. Although the trailer had been built with heavy duty suspension and big Landcruiser wheels the builder had used standard Ford stub axles, the added stress of the large wheels and the incredible pounding of the corrugations took their toll and the axle had sheered



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EDITORIAL

Happy New Year everybody and welcome to the January '97 edition, my fifth as Editor. As expected, no-one at the AGM stepped forward to take on this role, so here I am again for **one more year!**

First of all I'd like to thank the contributors for some great stuff, particularly the 'new' talent from the Sydney area. As a result I think that this issue is as good as any that I have seen. Apologies to those whose material did not get in this time due to space constraints (blame Andrew Eddy for organising such a huge trip calendar!).

You will have noticed that we have a new president in Norm Sanders. Rumour has it that Norm was voted in in an attempt to reduce his contribution to a single President's Report in each issue - well it didn't work, the Gear Locker goes on, plus, with Design Considerations, Norm yet again throws out a challenge to conventional thinking on the Australian scene.

Incidentally, given that the occasional article may push a particular point of view, I am keen to publish responses from members' who 'beg to differ' - let's

have some healthy written debate! So don't just sit there whinging about what a load of crap that piece was, put your thoughts on paper - short pieces for Dear Editor, longer pieces to stand alone - remember, this Editor loves controversy and will publish just about everything! And what a start! Bob Pearson (no relation), has provided a very interesting and spirited response to some of President Sanders conclusions in the article **Oz versus USA** published in Newsletter 28.

Oh, and a big thank you to all the crew who assisted in getting this newsletter out, particularly to Jim, Chris and Arunas, and to my lovely wife Kerrie, who apparently hates everybody and everything connected with sea-kayaking but still lends support and buys me gear!

Upcoming attractions in April Issue

6 years of discovery in Sydney Harbour by Rick Angel, **Tassie's West Coast in a dodgy sea kayak** by Major Doug Fraser, the highly erotic **AGM Minutes**, and last (and probably least), **Lessons from Nadgee 2** - will it disappoint like so many other sequels?

And all this for 20 bucks a year. You're kidding...!!!

This Newsletter produced with the kind assistance of Deloitte Touche Tomatsu, Chartered Accountants All State Capitals

The new, renamed, more humiliating!!! Members' Hall of Shame

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| Felon | Crime | Editor's Comments |
|-----------------|--|--|
| J. Croft | Provided interesting but useless hard copy material in November - then took two months to provide it on the all-important diskette! | Ahh Jim Croft - unreliable one day, frustrating the next.....! |
| D. Winkworth | Three weeks, yes, three weeks late with contribution. | This man must decide what is important - wife, family and employment or the club Newsletter coming out on time! |
| D. Stuber | Resigned as President. | Will grieve over lost opportunities to further slander this now former 'tall poppy'. However, I wish Dirk every success as he concentrates full time on an exciting new ' Body by Dirk ' power-paddling exercise video. |
| Shiryn Richards | Still no Women's Voice | Any other women with a Voice out there? |
| A. Eddy | Last minute pull out from the 4 day Nadgee Wilderness paddle | Cost the Editor \$6 in unnecessary camping permits! (that would have bought 6 Olive Cleat's!) |

*Between September and December 1996 nine NSWSKC members
made the momentous decision to change their kayak.
There was a good reason.....*



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...life's pretty good in an INUIT CLASSIC...



(Continued from page 1)

off between the two bearing halves.

After much use of expletives and a little head scratching we decided to unbolt the axle assembly, Pack, the axle, half the gear and two of the boats in & on the Land Cruiser, stash the rest in the scrub and go on to Bamaga to try & get the axle repaired. While unloading the trailer the aroma of curry spices permeated the air, we discovered that a can of Dirk's sweet curry had followed the example of my herrings and spontaneously unsealed itself.

About 60 km from Bamaga we arrived at the Jardine River ferry. We paid the \$80 ferry charge & entry permit, drove the Land Cruiser onto the ferry and then jumped in and swam across the river. On the other side we were greeted by a quarantine agent who commented that he was glad to see that we weren't afraid of the crocs, apparently in 1993 someone was taken by a crocodile while swimming the river.

In Bamaga we were told that our best bet for repairs was the marine engineer in Seisia, he wasn't there but Eric the mechanic next door agreed to speak to him so we left the axle with him and headed out to Punsand Bay where we were to depart for our paddle from. More \$3.20 XXXXs to soothe our jangled nerves that night then back into Seisia the next morning. Shell (that's not how it's spelt but how it sounds), the marine engineer wasn't there again and it was obvious that repairs could not be made that day so Gary & I drove the 200 km back to where the trailer was and collected the remaining boats & gear while John and Dirk stayed behind to make repairs to John's Greenlander which had sustained some damage from the trip up.

Back at Punsand Bay that night we soothed away the day's frustrations with a few more \$3.20 XXXXs and went to bed anticipating finally being able to get on the water.

The next day the 25 knot South Easterly that was blowing when we first arrived was still blowing. This was not part of the plan, we had delayed our trip from July/August to Late September/October to avoid the SE Trades and had been assured that the winds at this time of the year averaged 5 to 10 knots and from varying directions.

Our first leg was to be a relatively short hop from Punsand Bay to Little Adolphus Island about 28 km to the East. We delayed our departure till midday in order to get some assistance from the tide. The wind against tide had kicked up a fairly uncomfortable chop and so it was fairly slow going to Little Adolphus. Once we got there we became aware of our next problem, the tide was low and because of the fringing reef there was nowhere to land on the island without a long carry across broken coral. We opted instead for a small unnamed rock with a tiny beach that we could land on, at the top of the beach was a small flat section of sand that we hoped would be above the high tide mark. This is where we made camp and planned the next days crossing. Our destination was to be Sue Islet 49 km to the North East.

The next day dawned calm and clear and although a continuing South Easterly would have been of assistance for the days paddle it did seem to indicate that the winds of the past 3 or 4 days were a temporary aberration. We set off shortly after sunrise. After an hours paddling we checked our progress on the GPS, we were making good progress (about 8km) but contrary to our expectations we seemed to be under the influence of an ebbing tide and were drifting slightly to the East. We made allowance for the tide and paddled on checking the GPS every hour. At about the half way mark we discovered that the tide had changed and was carrying rapidly to the West, we made continuing corrections but after about 7 hours of paddling we were well to the west of our mark, fighting a strong tidal current and still had not sighted land. At this stage I began doubting modern technology but within the next half hour of paddling we sighted land. It was Poll Island about 5 km short of our destination. We decided not to push on and camped the night on Poll Island.

The next morning the tide was out and the edge of the reef was about one and a half kilometers away, we could carry the boats across all that broken coral or have a bit of a sleep in, we chose the latter. After breakfast we explored the island and at about 10am the tide had risen to fill the lagoon inside the reef

sufficiently for us to paddle around to the Northern side of the island where we had discovered there was a channel through the reef. We had already decided not to make much distance that day and so spent a couple of hours snorkeling on the reef prior to paddling across to Sue Islet. This was to be the calmest day we experienced the whole trip, the ocean was as flat as billiard table and with the heat haze there was no horizon giving the whole scene an eerie surreal feeling.

Sue Islet or Warraba as it is known by the locals has a community of about 100 living on it. We were met on our arrival by Walter, an enthusiastic quarantine officer who introduced us to the island's chairman. While Dirk & John stood in the sun chatting to the chairman Walter took Gary and myself to fill our water containers from the rainwater tanks, at least we could stay in the shade. After cold drinks at the IBIS shop we made the 6km crossing to Bett Islet where we made camp at the North Eastern tip where the reef only extended about 50 meters from the island. That night we lit a fire to cook the fish that Gary and Dirk had speared that morning at Poll Island. We had no idea what these fish were and so were a little worried that they might be poisonous but no one got ill and they turned out to be delicious, one fish of about 3 kg was particularly good, we discovered later on that it was a juvenile red emperor, mature fish growing up to 1.2 meters long.

The next days target was Gabba Island, a distance of about 45 km. We decided to go via Yam Island. An inhabited island about half way. It was another calm day but as usual the currents and tides didn't cooperate and we seemed to make slow time. We landed on Yam Island for lunch and assuming that the settlement was on the other side of the island (it was just around the headland) did not bother to visit the natives.

Gabba Island is completely fringed by reefs and most of it's shore is covered by mangroves. The only campsite we could find had a fair stretch of reef in front of it and we knew that true to our luck when we wanted to leave it would be low tide, we were right, the next morning carrying our boats across the reef took over an hour of backbreaking work. The South Easter had sprung up again (it was to continue virtually

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unabated for the rest of the trip) giving us a rear quartering sea for the Northerly crossing to Dauan Island. John with his sail was reveling in the 25 knot wind but Dirk began to succumb to sea sickness. With Dirk in tow John under sail was still going faster than Gary or myself! As usual the tide changed and we once again had to battle an opposing current to reach Dauan.

Dauan is a mountainous island of granite in contrast to the closest other islands of Saibai and Boigu and the Papuan mainland which are flat and alluvial in nature. The island has a small community of about 100 so we set off in search of their chairman. He was away and we were directed to the council office where we were told that we could not camp on the island but that we could stay in the guest house. The offer to stay somewhere with a shower and overhead fans seemed to good to be true until we were made aware, after about 3 days, of the tariffs; \$35/person/night, \$20/family/night, \$150/family/week or \$175/group/week. As well as making no sense these tariffs were on the expensive side for a 2 room shack with a hole in the roof.

Each night we went to bed with high hopes that the 25 knot South Easterlies would abate during the night but each morning was the same. We started considering our alternatives for getting out, we needed only 3 days of favorable weather to paddle back but it was looking increasingly unlikely that we would get them. The locals when asked what the weather would do would simply shrug their shoulders and smile and the weather reports on ABC Far North gave no more cause for hope. The only other reasonable escape was to put the kayaks on to the goods barge to Horne Island which was not due until the following Thursday and to fly to Horne From Saibai.

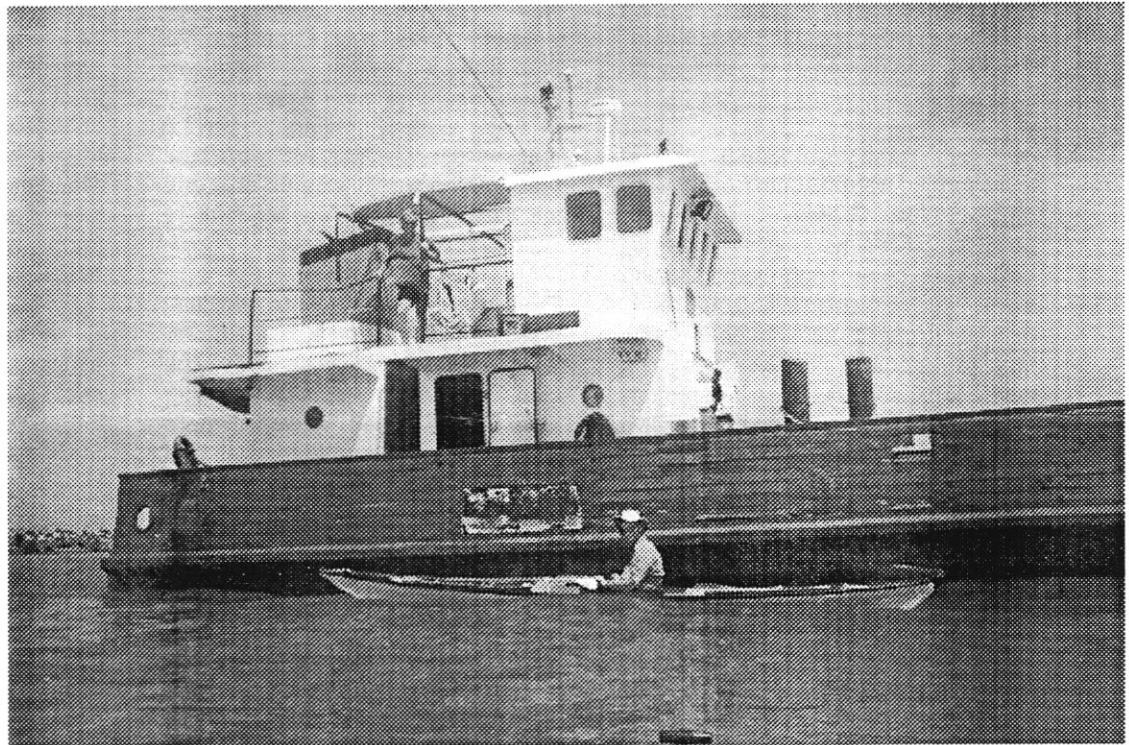
On the third day on Dauan we paddled over to Saibai and then across the

narrow channel to New Guinea where we landed among the mangroves. While we were on Saibai we checked out the "mud" airstrip which reputedly closes as soon as the humidity rises above 100% and the famous Saibai Canteen, the only place in Northern Torres Strait where alcoholic beverages are sold. The canteen turned out to be a shipping container with some fridges inside from which for one hour a day Victoria Bitter cans were sold at \$72/case.

On Sunday, our fourth day on Dauan I was looking out the window of the guest house and saw a barge coming

melancholy hilarious did not seem to improve his humor.

The rain stopped at about 4.00 am and with it's stopping the South Easterly returned. In the morning the locals were pessimistic of us being able to fly out but a few phone calls confirmed that the airstrip was still open. We were ferried across to Saibai by dinghy and flew to Horne Island which acts as the transport depot for Thursday Island. It was Monday morning and our kayaks would not to arrive till Tuesday night and not be available for collection till Wednesday morning.




John Wilde commences negotiations with the fuel barge owner

towards the island, it was the fuel barge and after some negotiation with the operators of the barge and discussions amongst ourselves we decided that we should not wait till the Thursday and put our boats on the fuel barge. After waving our kayaks goodbye we booked our plane fares at the council office and as we walked back to the guest house to await next morning's flight the wind turned to the North and it began to rain heavily. The realization that now that we no longer had our kayaks the winds had become favorable for a return crossing and that the airstrip we were to fly out from would by morning be a skating rink was enough to plunge Dirk into the deepest depression any of us had ever seen. The fact that we found Dirk's

Camping is not allowed on Thursday or Horn Islands and so we caught the ferry across to TI to look for accommodation. We discovered that TI was also an expensive place to stay and ended up opting for the Mura Mudh, a native hostel on the outskirts of town. A misguided tour of TI takes about half a day so the remainder of our time was taken up in one of the few pubs in town or gathering mangoes that had fallen from the street trees. Despite the fact that mangoes fall from the trees they are for sale in the shops at \$14.00/Kg.

Wednesday morning after haggling about the price of cartage we collected our boats from the docks on Horne Island for the 30 Km paddle back to

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Punsand Bay. Because we were paddling to the South East the wind was still blowing from that direction at it's usual 25 knots and so we had a long slow grunt of a paddle back to Punsand and the end of our Torres Strait kayaking adventure.

Just because we were back on mainland Australia did not mean however that our ordeal was over. We still had to get ourselves and the boats and the trailer back home. A phone call to Shell revealed that the trailer axle had not yet been repaired but he assured us that it would be by 3.30pm the next day. After some XXXXs that night to try and restore our shattered faith in humanity we spent the following morning somehow getting all our gear, 4 kayaks and ourselves into and on the Landcruiser.

In Sesia Shell's workshop was all locked up so we got some fresh bread, tomatoes etc. & went down to the beach to have lunch. While there we noticed a woman on the jetty catching small fish and then throwing them back in. On further investigation we saw that the water under the jetty was black with countless thousands of sardines and the woman was using them as live bait to try and catch one of the large fish that were occasionally feeding on them. We watched as she pulled the line up to avoid it being taken by a large fish, she explained that it was a large black trevally and that because she only had 60 lb breaking strain line that it would simply break her off and that she was trying for some of the smaller queenfish or mackerel. On seeing this I borrowed Gary's 300 lb fishing line, tied on his largest hook, borrowed the woman's sardine catching rig and with a fresh sardine on a hook almost the same size tried my luck. Within a few minutes a dark shape came up from the depths, took my sardine and disappeared. I braced myself for the tug of war that was about to ensue but with one huge tug the fish was gone and had taken the hook with it. Although I tried again I could not tempt another fish to take the bait.

At 2.30 pm we were back at Shell's workshop, it was still locked and Eric next door informed us that Shell's Step Father's funeral was to be held at 3.30pm. Despairing at the thought of not getting the axle that day we adjourned to the beach again for another hour. When we got back to

the workshop a little after 3.30 it was still locked but sitting outside on some saw horses was our newly repaired axle.

Faith in humanity restored we squeezed the axle in amongst all the other gear and headed South, crossed the Jardine and made our way to Elliot Falls to camp the night and have a refreshing swim in the river there.

While at Elliot falls we heard rumors that it had rained on the Cape and the rivers were rising. So it was with some urgency that we made our way to where we had left the trailer, reinstalled the axle and made our way to the Wenlock River. The Wenlock was only a foot deeper than when we had first crossed two weeks earlier and we were told that it was already falling. Having crossed the Wenlock we were sure that nothing would stop us now and we were in high spirits again until we got to the Archer River.

The Archer which when we first crossed it was no more than a trickle was now 8 meters over the causeway with the pub on the other side. John raised himself to hero status amongst the others gathered on our side of the river by paddling across and bringing back supplies for those not prepared for camping out. The next day the river had fallen to about 2m but by now was falling much slower and it soon became apparent that we would have to spend another night waiting. The following day at about 11.00am the river was down to 0.8m and traffic started to move. Surely now nothing could stop us.

Only 10km past the Archer we were once more plunged into despair as a wheel again fell off the trailer, the other side this time. By now we were well rehearsed in the routine of unloading the trailer, turning it over, unbolting the axle, etc. We took the axle to Cohen and being Sunday were lucky to find the mechanic at his workshop. He kindly made a temporary repair to the axle which allowed us to get the trailer to Cohen. The next morning a more permanent repair was effected by utilizing a second hand beam axle and we were once more on the road, now paranoid about the strength of the trailer axle to the point that we were quite often traveling no more than

5km/h over the corrugations. We retrieved the Vinek and the North Sea Tourer from the Kennedy River and late that night finally reached the sealed road.

The following two days we drove almost continuously and were back in Wollongong in the early hours of Thursday morning, tired, covered in red dust but happy that the odyssey was over. In almost 4 weeks we had done only 8 days paddling, the rest of the time being taken up with driving, waiting for the weather to change, waiting for the kayaks to arrive on TI, waiting for repairs to the axle and waiting for the river to go down. We had achieved our goal of crossing Torres Strait but had not been able to do a return crossing as intended. With repairs, flights and cartage the trip had involved us in far more expense than anticipated. On the positive side the frustrations of the trip had put the friendship between us under a good deal of stress but it had survived and I think was strengthened by the experience.

Some advice to anyone intending a similar trip: Don't take an insulated cup.



Dear Editor

Dear Editor,

My name is Richard and I went sea kayaking for 6 days with Stormin' Normin' (my name for him) into Prince William Sound near the Gulf of Alaska. Don't apologize, he was quite harmless though a bit out of his element. Kayaking it seem is a little different "up here" than "down there".

To begin with it's common for us to have 12' to 18' tides. In fact we have the second highest tides in the world, second only to Nova Scotia, Canada. Poor Norm was constantly either pulling his expedition loaded "yak" higher-up the beach or tugging it down the beach for a paddle. This did frustrate him.

Also, it appears the water is much colder here (a few degrees warmer than the huge blue bergie-bits that just calved off the glacier he was paddling next to). Also, we have many different styles of rock beaches, not sand like he kept telling me you have. Isn't rock an early form of sand?

We saw 5 black bears in 6 days. Two of them, both large adults, were within 100 hundred yards from his tent. This gave Stormin' Normin' some concern. The two Sitka White-tailed deer did not. Nor did the hundreds of seals, otter, eagles, jumping salmon and geese we saw. Nor the fields of wildflowers or dense forest that covered each mountain.

But, the hundreds of piles of bear poop on the other hand did. Go figure. And the nightly ritual of hanging all of our food high into a tree out of a bears reach seemed to wear on him. A clean camp is a bear free camp I told him each night before bed. Norm grunts a lot, and he did so each time I said this.

On our 3rd night out we made camp in front of an advancing glacier (one of a handful in the world). I warned him as we landed that a glacial surge could



sweep the beach and take his boat away. Looking down at the last high tide mark and feeling like he had the hang of things laughed then grunted and ambled up beach to find a tent sight for the night (one free of bear poop). Ten minutes later I heard him yell and watched him make fast tracks for the beach. Yes sir, just like I said, a glacier surge swept the beach and took out his boat! In fact it left a nice chunk of blue ice where his kayak used to sit. Thank goodness my "yak" was still at hand for a rescue or one of us would have gone for an icy swim. I did notice that later that night his boat had been dragged way up the beach and tied to a tree. Who said you couldn't teach Old Sea Dogs new tricks?

I had a wonderful multi-day paddle with Norm, he was full of wit and humor (between grunts) and a keen paddler. If the rest of you "down under" yakers are as much fun you're a dangerous lot to hang out with. If your ever up here in northern waters look me up, we'll go stroke a few miles and watch the whales play in the midnight sun.

Richard Larson

Dear Editor,

I have long objected to the

commonly held belief that sea kayakers are a 'bit behind' in the sense of humour department - this is simply not true! For instance, at the recent Rock 'n' Roll weekend, I secretly planted 'whoopy cushions' on the seats of several empty kayaks. Later, when the unsuspecting owners sat in their boats, they got the shock of their lives at the rude "fart" noises that occurred as the air was rapidly expelled out of these clever little devices. It was really funny and we all laughed and laughed!

Dr. A. McD. F.R.A.C.S. Ph D
Dorking, NSW

Dear Ed.,

Whatever happened to Gary Edmond? I can't believe I'm writing this - but I'm actually starting to miss his 'fingernails down a blackboard' literary style. Come back Gary, all is forgiven!

B.T.
Richmond, NSW

Yes, even I am starting to miss Mr Edmund's contributions! Unfortunately his scribblings have found a very receptive audience in the NSW Legal fraternity of late (what a disturbed masochistic clique this must be!). Hopefully Gary will soon feel the need to 'return to his roots' and write something so simple that even us sea-kayaking 'battlers' can understand it.





Headlamps

All sea kayakers and outdoorsy people need headlamps and a quick survey around the camp of an evening reveals that most go for Petzel of one form or another. These range from the cheaper micro models with standard powered by a couple of standard penlight batteries to the more up market halogen burners with expensive 4.5 v slab-like batteries. They are all excellent units, well made, and are sealed enough to be considered splash-proof and rainproof. The prices range from \$20-something to \$40-something.

But what is needed is really a combination of this range - the halogen models are blinding as you peer into the Trangia at your simmering noodles, and the smaller models do not have the grunt to pick out that cryptic campsite in the dead of night or to alert a drowsy fishing boat that is about to run you over. And wouldn't it be nice if the whole unit could be made really waterproof?

Well, Petzel must have listened to someone and a year ago produced a dual bulb waterproof headlamp that met all these requirements. Initially it was recalled as soon as it hit the shops because of some shortcoming in the battery pack seal but when it finally finally arrived earlier this year the temptation was too great.

Called the Duo (E60), it is claimed to be waterproof to 50m depth, takes 4 AA alkaline penlight batteries in an O-ring clamp-sealed pack that sits on the back of the head; the lamp housing on the front of the head is oval rather than round and has two reflectors and two bulbs which are selected by means of a switch on the left hand side (which can be locked ingeniously in the off position). The normal low wattage 6v bulb is fixed focus and the quartz iodide 6v bulb is variable focus with a small zoom lever on the right hand side. They reckon it weighs 200 grams, is effective for 20m and lasts for 12 hours with the standard bulb and 100 m and 3 hours with the halogen bulb. There is a spare bulb of each type mounted inside the housing. The lamp housing and battery pack are a rugged yellow plastic.

The combination of features works well and for most purposes



President's Report

Outgoing President Dirk Stuber has left the club in great shape -- lots of new members and an enlarged coffer. Congratulations, Dirk. I hope that my tenure will be as successful.

I will try to draw on all my years of experience gained messing about in boats. To give you some background, I started my seagoing career in 1935 on Lake Eire, Ohio at the age of three, paddling a raft constructed by my father out of a packing crate and four innertubes. (Contrary to popular belief, I was not found drifting down the Mississippi on a mat of bulrushes as a new-born baby.)

I have since built two racing multihull yachts, a single hull ocean cruiser, three Grand Banks dories and three sea kayaks - the most recent being the Inuit Classic. In 1974, I crossed the Pacific from California in a 29-foot fibreglass sloop. When my scurrilous crew jumped ship in Fiji, I sailed single-handed to Hobart where I bought and campaigned a Huon Pine ocean racer. I have now arrived at that pinnacle of sea-going sport, sea kayaking. I wonder why it took so long.

My view of the club is simple: The NSWSKC is a meeting place for people who want to have fun sea kayaking. Fun means different things to different people. To some, it is paddling all night into a howling gale or crossing Bass Strait in a welter of spray and adrenalin. For others (including myself) it is gliding along on a warm morning through a twinkling fairyland of sunlight reflecting off the chuckling ripples while dolphins play about the bow in the crystal-clear water.

rechargeable nicad batteries provide adequate power for evening use, although I pack alkaline batteries for serious overnight stuff. In most cases, the low power standard bulb is more than adequate.

Of course, to have fun, it is necessary to develop skills -- an important function of the NSWSKC which offers a number of training events. Other events involve graded trips. The club's grading system, devised under the guidance of Gary Edmond, generally works quite well, but only in one direction. Grade 2 or 3 paddlers are not allowed on Grade 4 trips. However, some experienced paddlers on Grade 2 events go paddling off in Grade 6 style, leaving the slower paddlers wallowing in their wakes. This is discouraging and can be dangerous. If it is a Grade 2 paddle, then EVERYONE should paddle at a Grade 2 speed.

We often bemoan the fact that there are so few women sea kayakers. However, when they do show up, all they see of the rest of the group is the occasional flash of paddle blades on the horizon. I once asked the famed Canadian professional sea kayaker Jaqui Windh why women were so scarce on our seas. "It's because of those macho Australian men," she replied.

I am therefore taking this opportunity to make a plea for togetherness on club paddles. I also plan to organise events for beginners (of any sex) and their families in the near future. Others will no doubt schedule more adventurous outings. There will be something for everybody. Think about what YOU would like to see on the schedule -- and then contact Andrew Eddy, the new Trips Convenor and make it happen. With your help, we'll have a great year.

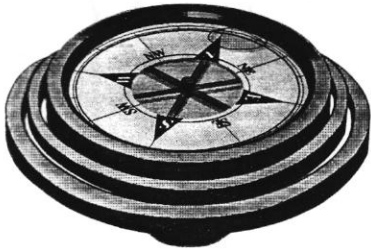
Peace and Semolina.

Norm Sanders

At about \$100 it is probably a bit frightening as Christmas presents for the kids, but it is a nice toy nevertheless, for those who wish to practice eskimo rolls at night.

Jim Croft





THE OLD SEA DOG'S GEAR LOCKER

by Norm Sanders

Summer is upon us, which means it is time to partake of that most delightful pursuits, kayak camping. This can involve cruising along rugged coasts or simply wandering on lakes and estuaries. The end result is the same: Paddling into a beautiful area which can only be reached by that most versatile of vehicles, the sea kayak.

But hold. What about gear? The OSD, in consultation with others perhaps wiser (but not older) has come up with a CHECKLIST, included in this Newsletter on a separate page. It probably isn't complete, but it is a start.

One item on the list is Bug Repellent. There are a lot of critters out there just itching to get a taste of healthy sea kayaker's blood. The OSD wouldn't begrudge them a small dollop each, except for the after effects. These can range from minor irritation to hospitalisation. Most mosquito bites are merely annoying, but some can introduce the Bahmah Forest and Ross River Viruses. The Ross River virus causes a disease called epidemic polyarthritis and is found in all states. On the South Coast of NSW, the important mosquitos breed in brackish salt marshes and freshwater swamps. They are vicious biters.

Symptoms develop within 2 to 20 days and include fatigue, headache, a general feeling of being unwell, joint pains and rash. The symptoms may persist for more than three months. Barmah Forest virus symptoms are similar, but less severe. The OSD, himself, suspects he has been afflicted after a Nadgee paddle. Treatment is aspirin and bed rest. Fortunately, once

a person has the disease, he or she will probably have lasting immunity.

Ticks are the other dangers to the sea kayaker's well-being. *Rickettsia australis* is responsible for the dreaded Queensland tick typhus and has been found on the Sydney Harbour foreshores and East Gippsland as reported by Patrick Dibben in a previous edition of the newsletter. The disease can be lethal, but generally only in the aged or infirm. Symptoms are flu-like, with non-itchy rash on trunk and legs, preceded by bluish purple bruises with a central black spot.

Ticks also cause Lyme Disease. This nasty was first recognised in Lyme, Connecticut and has now been identified in many other places in the world, including the far South Coast of NSW. Lyme disease is caused by spirochaetes in the tick's saliva. The tick must be attached to the human host for 36 to 48 hours before an infectious dose can be transmitted. Three days to a month after the infection, a roundish rash forms at the site of the bite, sometimes reaching several inches across. Again, there are flu-like symptoms - chills, fever, fatigue, joint and muscle pain. Sometimes one or both sides of the face can become paralysed for weeks or months. The heart rhythm may be affected along with meningitis and encephalitis (which may cause sleepiness, memory loss and mood changes.)

Treatment is by antibiotics, but prevention is far more effective: Expose as little skin as possible.

Limit the use of shorts and sandals -- wear shoes, socks and long pants instead. The wily ticks dive under shorts and climb hand-over-hand upwards. The OSD has been heard to observe that there is nothing worse than a tick in the crotch. Wear a shirt with a high collar -- the little devils drop off branches and head for the hair (including beards,) throat and chest. Douse the neck and all exposed skin areas with a good repellent. If a tick gets through all these defenses, remove it as soon as possible with a pair of tweezers by grasping the tick close to the skin and pulling -- making sure not to leave the head behind. Grabbing the body of the tick with the fingers should be done only a last resort. The tick will inject a large amount of saliva when squeezed (or heated with a match or doused with metho.) Once the tick is removed, the OSD has found Tea Tree oil soothing, as it is for other bites and irritations.

NEVER spread clothing to dry on bushes or trees. The OSD and fellow paddlers made this mistake at Merica River and ended up being tormented for weeks by itchy, mini tick bites caused by minute, newly hatched nymphs which leapt aboard the inside-out clothing.

With proper preparation and forethought, the sea kayaker can sally forth into the wilderness with confidence, anticipating a pleasant experience without bringing back life-threatening souvenirs of the trip.

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE BY DIK BROWNE





THE OSD'S KAYAK CAMPING CHECKLIST

Kayaking Essentials

Kayak
Paddle, leash
Spray skirt
Map
Compass
Signalling devices
(Flares, V sheet)
15 m. towline
Drinking water
(accessible on deck)
Snacks (muesli bars,
chocolate)
Deck knife
Sponge and bailer
Sunglasses, sunscreen
Hat, helmet

Additional Kayak Gear

Spare paddle
Repair kit (duct tape
pliers, screwdriver, 5
min. epoxy, needle,
thread)
First Aid kit
Dry bags

Kayak Clothing

PFD
Spray jacket (CAG)
Poly top
Shorts
Wetboots, sandals

Camping Clothing

*(To suit conditions—
expect the worst)*
Poly tops, bottoms
Pile jacket, pants
Pile gloves, hat
Raincoat, pants
Goretex, poly socks
Hiking shoes

Camping Gear

Tent, ground cloth
Sleeping bag
Sleeping pad
Sit pad (cut from old
foam sleeping mat)
Swiss Army knife
Grog*

Camping Gear (cont.)

Matches
Stove, fuel
Cook set, utensils
Food, semolina
Water in PET bottles
or wine cask bladders
(4 litres per day)
Water filter
Headlamp, flashlight
Candle lantern
Nylon cord, 30 metres
Toilet paper, trowel
Toothbrush, paste
Bug repellent
Small towel
Personal items

Camera, film

Watch
Camping/fire permits
Money, phonecard
Notebook, pencil
Map and itinerary of trip
including name of near-
est ranger station, left with
someone at home

*In moderation, of course

Other Gear: (To suit individual requirements, i.e. Fishkilling paraphernalia, Denkorub, etc)



South Coast News



by David Winkworth

Well, this will be my last "South Coast News."....I'll be devoting my time to the new section "Training Notes" from now on go if anyone would like to pick this one up then please....just pick up a pen and start writing!

Any pieces of interest to members that I come across I'll gladly pass on to the new writer. Can anyone remember Frank Bakker's excellent sea kayak survey which was published in "Wild" magazine about 5 years ago? There were about 10 models available on the market then throughout Australia. I remember seeing the Arctic Raider mentioned and wondering what it looked like!

How quickly times have changed! A similar survey today would probably be out of date by the time it was published - there are now SO many boats available from all over the world. Just a glance at the recent Editor's survey will show you what I mean. How many members know what the Southern Dungbeetle (affectionately known as the Southern Dung) looks like? It is actually a very nice boat but was unfortunately conceived in a cow paddock at Candelo - hence the nickname. This would be an advertising executive's dream (are there any out there?) - they would pluck it from bovine obscurity and launch it on the world stage with a racy pacy name like Needle or Lightning. Ahh dear, thank goodness for good ol' down-on - the - farm charm!

You know how it is in the doctor's waiting room - the waiting room is full of sickies, so you grab a good 1956

National Geographic or Woman's Weekly and settle in for a long wait? Just when you come to a really interesting article about kayaking around Tassie or building a skin boat you get called in by the doctor and you never ever find out how the story ended because the mag is never there the next time you front up! It happened to me recently so with the doctor's permission I took the mag and copied the article which interested me...

A Tasmanian inventor is creating an aeroplane which is designed to fly very close to the waves on windy days! His creation actually looks more like an albatross or a shearwater than a plane and this apparently is the key to it's design. Have you ever watched albatrosses skimming over waves on windy days?

They make use of a flying phenomenon known as "ground effect" which gives them increased stability and reduced drag within a certain distance from the water. Apparently racing pigeons released in Victoria often arrive in Tasmania with their toes crusted solid with salt - they fly so close to the water to catch the ground effect that salt spray builds up and solidifies!

Let me tell you- if this plane ever flies it will be something to behold. Mr Editor, can you scan in A picture for the magazine please (*sorry David, you've waffled on so much about this already there's no room for the picture!* - Ed))

The craft is being designed to fly at up

to 160 knots within 3 metres of the surface with a max. range of 2,600 nautical miles. If this thing gets off the water, make sure you have a low paddling stroke when crossing Bass Strait. ...mutter mutter. Sea kayaking will never be the same again! Weatherwise we've been getting the typically strong northeasters for this time of the year with the occasional squally southerly just in case you thought you could get away with only one headwind on an out and back trip - isn't that right Norm?

Did you know that sea kayakers in W.A. are required to carry full life jackets on board at all times at sea? Full life jackets have a flotation collar to keep your head out of the water. Paddlers over there wear a PFD 3 similar to ours and carry the life jacket on the rear deck. They are not comfortable to paddle in.

A tale of loose ropes! A sea kayaker from down Eden way carried his plastic sea kayak tied to the tray of his ute recently. The boat blew off the back and was run over by a following vehicle - extensive gravel rash, broken fishing rods and a big hole being the result. Oh dear, I can't resist. This really is crying out for a corny limerick. Bye.

There once was a paddler from Eden
Who said "At kayaking I'm succeedin'
But he really was a goose...
He left his straps loose
And now his freeboard is receedin' "



Following a request by a keen autograph hunter at the AGM, thank you John Wilde for providing the following list of the elite!

N.S.W.S.K.C. Qualified Members

Snr Sea Instructors

Frank Bakker
John Wilde
Dave Winkworth

Sea Instructors

Bruce Easton
Ron Mudie
Norm Sanders
Dirk Stuber

Trainee Instructors

Gary Edmund
Arunas Pilka
Don Andrews

Other N.S.W. Instructors

Snr Sea Instructors

Mike Higginson
Evan Shillabeer*
Mark Shrimpton*
Peter Carter (S.A - qualified in NSW)

Malcolm Cowell (Vic - qualified in NSW)

* currently overseas

Sea Instructors

Al Bakker
Helen Jacobson
Peter McCabe
Helen Murray
Jacquie Shrimpton

Kayak Review - Mirage Double/19

By John Holster

From the outset I must say that I am not an experienced paddler in terms of heroic sea-kayaking, and am an even less experienced kayak reviewer. But I saw a small letter posted on the net some time ago, title "Fast Kayak", referring to Mirage kayaks of various sorts, and it prompted me to put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard in reality) in an attempt to correct a few incorrect perceptions some people seem to have about Mirages.

I was surprised at some of the descriptions in the aforementioned letter, such as "narrow and hollow entries", "paddled by speed demons" to mention two. Actually "mystified" is closer to the mark. The impression in the letter was that Mirages are racing kayaks paddled by people only interested in racing.

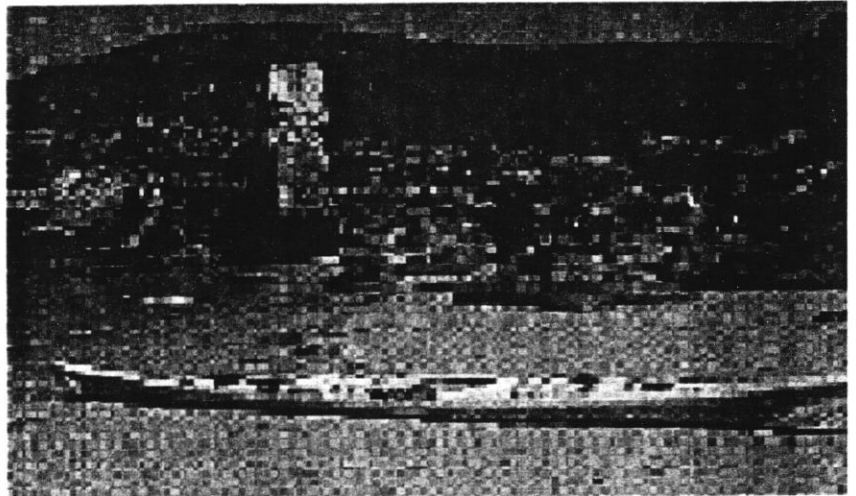
My wife and I now have two Mirages, a Double which we paddle together, and a single 19' which I paddle for exercise when she is having a day off. I regularly paddle with a large-ish subgroup of NSWSK club for exercise on Thursday nights throughout the year, unless there is a gale blowing, and again on most weekends. There are reasons why we have Mirages now, as opposed to other kayaks which so-called purists may prefer.

Our aim, as a couple on the water, is to go places, and see things, and not to have to worry about the weather too much, or the surface conditions. Anybody who has paddled a Mirage in bad conditions knows why there are so many devotees to the marque. Except for a small number of acquaintances who own the Sporting version (Mirage 22S), most of my kayaking friends now own a standard Mirage 19, simply because they are a great all-round kayak. We sold our "other" kayaks once we tried a Mirage, and we spend more time in our Double than in the car!

We had many good reasons for buying the Mirage double, which we call the "Queen Mary", but the name says it all, and the reasons had nothing to do with racing. It is a big, capable, comfortable and very safe

kayak. My wife is not a very experienced paddler, but when it cuts up rough she is confident that she won't get a dunking, because the Mirage takes all in its stride. It

rudder, as it is built to take it! The standard mid-sized rudder (they are available in three lengths) is probably not as effective as a typical long aluminium beaching rudder, simply



is quick for a given paddling effort, but at the same time we can both take our hands off the paddle, lean-back, close our eyes, and not have to worry about instantly falling out. The same thing applies in the single. Try that "lean back with eyes shut, and no paddle in hand" in an Arctic Raider and see what happens! The cockpits are quite roomy, and the entry has ample room for portly chaps like me to get in without a shoe-horn. I can even paddle "knees-up" when I'm feeling "happy-and-relaxed", which is most of the time, even though I don't vote Liberal. Eating a few Belgian waffles on a Sunday paddle doesn't cause me a problem getting back in either.

The fact that a Mirage has a rudder seems to bother some people. I can't imagine why. Because of the way the Mirage rudder is integrated into the hull design, it isn't vulnerable like the tacked-on aluminium things on most other sea-kayaks. I have never heard of one being broken off, or bent. The big plus is that you simply point a Mirage where you want to go, and add a little paddle power. If you want to "beach" you just paddle at the beach, and forget about the

because it only protrudes 6 or 7cm below the keel line. It is fine for most conditions although occasionally gets a little "air" on larger waves. For flat and protected-water paddling we sometimes use a short (flush) rudder, which has less drag and doesn't get caught up in weed and the like because it is flush with the keel line. Changing the rudder takes all of about a minute. It is a matter of releasing the two steering cables by undoing two small stainless steel Dee-Shackles, then pulling out the hinge pin to remove the rudder, then fitting the alternative rudder in reverse order. There is a very long rudder available for people who want to venture out in "Roaring-Forties" type seas, but I couldn't imagine myself ever using one, as I'm not that brave.

The fact that Mirages are fast in races is a reflection of how efficient the hull design is, not an indication that it is built for racing. It is even more impressive when you know how stable it is at the same time. The standard versions excel in ultra-marathon races such as the Hawkesbury classic which is 12 hours paddling through the night, not because they are faster than anything else (which they are not), but because one can paddle them while

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(Continued from page 12)

one is almost asleep... The actual average speed to do a good time in the Classic is quite slow, but one has to be able to continue cruising along without concentrating too much on the task at hand, as concentration for more than 10 hours is beyond most of us. Having a kayak which can be paddled without thinking too much is therefore a real plus, in this and most other situations.

Surely one would not argue that a Holden Commodore would be no good as a family tourer, just because one version of the same car wins races? The same applies to Mirages in general. The run of the mill 17', 19', and Double Mirage are a fantastic all-round kayak for people who want to tour without adrenalin rushing through their veins. The build quality is exceptional too. Our double is two years old, has travelled several thousand kilometres, yet it has never had a drop of water leak into the compartments, despite being buried in waves on numerous occasions, from every direction imaginable, with the decks well and truly awash. Of course it has never been rolled, because we have never found conditions bad enough to cause it. It may happen one day, but when it does, the deck design is such that one can re-enter with the kayak in the upright position, without assistance. It is in bad conditions where a Mirage shines, not racing.

While paddlers with lots of experience may like to fight with twitchy rudderless boats in rough seas, I, my wife and many other arm-chair paddlers prefer something we can rely on to get us from A to B and home again. Something that we can point and paddle allows us the freedom to go most places on the water, and see what we want to see. For this a Double Mirage is a remarkably friendly "tool".

I must confess that I have competed in the Hawkesbury Classic a few times, twice in the Mirage double. The reason for doing it is to keep my fitness at a high level throughout the year to enable more adventurous "social" paddling. Having a goal like doing the classic provides a good incentive to keep up the paddling week in, week out. Also, the social aspect of training paddles with friends is every bit as much fun for me as

poking around in rocks seems to be for many others with a different inclination. Each to his own.

The Mirage double is now our oldest and most travelled kayak, and I have tried to think of some bad points to bitch about. There are a couple of minor niggles. The pedal set-up is simple and robust, and the "surf-ski" type steering pedals are quite controllable, but the main bar is a little flat and low for the back-seat paddler. A little "adjustment" with spacer blocks and a twist on the bar fixed that problem. It is also awkward to adjust the footrests for other paddlers, and the taller they are the more difficult it is to reach into either cockpit to fit the wing-nuts.

Another niggle is the recessed area around the cockpit coamings. It doesn't have any natural drainage, so after taking water over the deck, the recess holds water, which is then always against the spray-deck seal. I suspect that some water then enters the cockpit thru' this way, but it is seldom very much. It would seem better to me if the water drained away in the first place. On the other hand, the current design does improve the strength of the kayak.

We have done some small modifications to the kayaks to make them more comfortable for extended paddling times. Strap type hip-rests have been added to all the seats which minimizes the development of numb legs, and I added a small light to the inside of the compass so it can be read at night. We bought the "19" with a pump fitted, and have subsequently fitted pumps to the double (just in case). The factory fitted pumps are a really professional job, and planned for in the original kayak mould. In fact, so many of the details in the original design are well thought out and planned. The deck fittings are all recessed, there is a nice flat spot for fitting the compass, the hatches are recessed so one doesn't get caught up on them, and so forth.

I am not saying Mirages are perfect, but they are better than anything else we have paddled or seen so far. I am so pleased after two years ownership that I have

ordered another single so Gisela can paddle on her own occasionally too. For all you techno-buffs, the standard fibreglass 19's weigh about 23kg and the doubles 34kg, which are easily manageable for wimpy paddlers like us. All-in-all we are very happy little paddlers with our Mirages, and have not been paid to say that.

(In spite of his desire to be labelled an adventurous social paddler rather than a speed demon, John Kolster and his paddling partner Kris Jaryn came in 4th in a field of 29 in the Open Doubles in the recent 111km Hawkesbury Classic, under the 10 hours with a blistering 9 hours 56 minutes and 54 seconds; also in the top 10 in this class were NSWKSC members Nevil Lazarus with John Wicks and Tony White with Andrew Philips, also in Mirage Doubles - Jim Croft)

Design Considerations (Continued from page 18)

wants them. I have always used bolt-ons and have never noticed any ill-effects. I did occasionally clip my knuckles on a pair on the foredeck which I had mounted too far aft. I simply removed the offending deadeyes and filled the small bolt holes.

Some kayak makers fasten the deck lines to massive stainless steel fittings at the bow. This heavy lump of metal acts like a battering ram in the surf. The best way to attach the deck lines is the method I first saw on an *Arctic Raider*: A loop of nylon webbing over the bow.

Given the list of design prejudices outlined above (and they are prejudices, open to lots of argument) it should come as no surprise that my optimum sea kayak is 4.7 metres long, has dramatic sheer, hard chines, moderate deadrise, and a Swede-form shape. When I distributed a draft of this article to the experts for comment, they said, "Aw. You're just describing the Inuit Classic." One unkind soul even called it an "Advertorial."

Hey, there's nothing wrong with building a boat based on personal preferences (or even prejudices.) Others will no doubt disagree with my views and I am sure their comments will be welcomed by the Editor. As for me, well, she looks right, so she IS right.



Rock'n'Roll Weekend Flotsam & Jetsam



the highly unofficial report of the events and personalities that made news at Honeymoon Bay, November 30 - 1 December by Correspondents

Sea Kites

Saturday afternoon - the almost unpaddleable 25 knot westerly gave intrepid salesman Ron Mudie the chance to demonstrate another facet of his hand crafted kayaks. Amazing as it may seem, these featherweight kevlar craft also make pretty handy kites, *yes you heard right - kites!* In an impromptu demonstration using tow ropes attached fore and aft, Ron and Gordon Carswell had the sleek white 18 footer *soaring and pirouetting* high above the trees, displaying manoeuvres impossible *even in the surf!* The 20 minute performance ended with the skilled duo bringing the 6.2 kg kayak gently down to earth in a perfectly controlled 'updraft-broach' to thunderous applause from the appreciative landlocked crowd!

Asked how he had made the discovery that his boats could fly, an exhilarated Mr Mudie replied "I left a new kayak out in the sun to cure one day when a southerly came through - found the thing weeks later a mile away half way up a tree - always tie 'em down now if it's blowing a bit". And how light does the designer think he can go with his new generation kayaks "I think that 4.5 kg would have to be the limit, otherwise there's the risk of kayak *and* paddler becoming airborne."

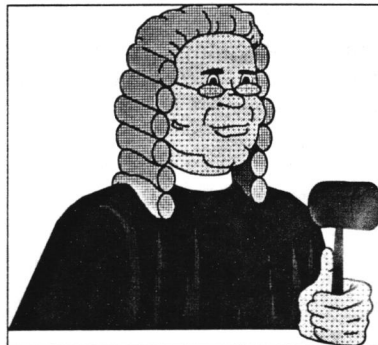
AGM Fury

Saturday night - the newly elected Executive underwent a baptism of fire at an AGM that threatened to get out of control as a group of aggrieved members attacked aspects of club administration in the past year. An established member of the Executive later stated that "if that motley assortment of *Pedants, Whingers* and *Rednecks* are representative of our members, then this Club is in deep trouble!"

Blasphemy!

Sunday afternoon - Club member John Caldwell brazenly questioned the nutritional value of Semolina (for those who have just joined the club - this is the definitive sea kayakers 'food of the 90's'). At a class B Trangia Site in the presence of a small group of relaxed fellow paddlers, the noted vegie-grower stunned the gathering with the bombshell "*I've researched this and there's nothing in the stuff that's any good for a sea paddler - you're better off eating porridge, even Home Brand...it's crap*".

Following an investigation of this serious incident by zealots of the Paddlers Inquisition, Mr Caldwell was arrested and tried before the NSWSKC Supreme Council on 14 December 1996. The following is a transcript of the President's Judgement.



"Semolina is the official club '*Holy Grain*', a standing befitting the primary sustenance for so many paddlers as they battle mighty oceans in puny vessels. No punishment can be too severe for those who seek to spread such malicious beliefs. Given the prisoner's refusal to repent on no less than three occasions at this hearing, it brings me no pleasure to announce that from this day forth, the accused, John C. Caldwell, also known as John the Herbalist of Mittagong, is declared a *heretic*. Befitting the magnitude of this crime, I hereby sentence

you to the ultimate and cruellest deterrent known to our kind - an eternity of paddling a *rudderless Arctic Raider* in *windy conditions!* May the Lord have mercy on your soul - take him down!"



The evil and unrepentant John Caldwell - Cereal Heretic

Straight and Narrow

Sunday afternoon - Internet Guru Jim Croft had a *humiliating* solo experience in John Wilde's rare Vynec. After paddling this very British kayak out into Jervis Bay in fine style, Jim found that, try as he

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

might, he could not convince the tippy, hard chined and rudderless craft to change direction. After much wasted effort invested in various combinations of sweeping, leaning and cursing, Jim eventually gave up trying and allowed the stubborn Vynec to maintain it's speedy course all the way to Huskisson, a full **12km across the Bay**. Here he alighted, turned the boat round, and paddled all the way back to Honeymoon Bay, again in a **remarkably straight line!** On his return to the sheltered haven of Honeymoon Bay, an exhausted Mr Croft growled "the worst boat on the beach, bar none - should be warning signs on it, pommy bastard!"

Low Acts (yes, even at the Rock'n'Roll weekend, there were some who let the side down!)

Shame on the person who proposed a 'payment for tuition

services' motion at the AGM which, if passed, would have financially benefited this individual **to the detriment of the club's limited finances!** Fortunately the membership **rejected** this attack on our club's tradition of honourable amateurism! Word has it that this individual (apparently a hairy, acne-infested, generally unattractive type!) was desperate for funds needed to maintain an expensive habit involving **performance-enhancing drugs!**

Shame also on the heavily built individual (a **100kg+ brute** according to witnesses) who borrowed another member's new and beautifully customised kayak and inevitably **shattered** one of the fibreglass reinforced hip pads. The heartbroken owner (incidentally of slim build) passes this message on "**lose weight or keep out of my boat, Bargearse!**"

FOR SALE

Waterproof camera. Minolta 35DL, autofocus, dual lens, auto-exposure. Waterproof to 5m, and camera floats if dropped in water. Ideal for kayaking. Complete "kit" including sports case, waterproof film canisters and underwater viewfinder. As new. \$310 o.n.o. Ph. John Holster (02) 9873 1857

Puffin

Excellent condition, 12 months old, including neoprene skirt, \$1300 o.n.o. Contact Chris Soutter (06)290 2204 (h) (06) 202 7000 (w)

Seafarer Solander

Good condition, with neoprene skirt, new VCP hatch, rudder, 24kg, \$750 O.N.O. Forced sale due to overseas trip. Call the Editor.

Secretary/Treasurer defends the honour of sea kayakers

Canberra Times, December 14

Good fortune favours kayaker on Friday 13th

MELBOURNE: An intrepid adventurer defied the superstition surrounding Friday the 13th yesterday to complete the first successful crossing of Bass Strait by kayak. Stuart Andrews, 34, of Canberra, began his adventure two days ago, but finished it on a date traditionally associated with bad luck and misfortune. On firm ground again, Mr Andrews declared: "I'd never do it again. I'd never think about doing it again." He felt he never wanted to see his record-setting kayak again.

He said he felt such constant seasickness on the voyage that he could not eat. In his 8.5m cycle-powered kayak, Mr Andrews travelled 100 nautical miles to arrive safely at 8.20am in Stanley, on Tasmania's north-west coast. "My legs feel like big lumps of wood, my eyes are stinging, but I've finally made it." He said. Describing the conditions he had to deal with during the journey, he said: "The weather was pretty heavy along the way, but ironically when I got off the coast of Tasmania, the water was like a mill pond." As Mr Andrews slept off his epic trip yesterday afternoon, his spokesman Bruce Johnson said: "He didn't even know it was Friday the 13th until I told him, but only Stuart Andrews could pull it off on Friday the 13th." The kayak was built around a state-of-the-art propulsion system and boasted a 130kg keel, solar panels for individual power and used the latest technology in safety equipment.

(Letters To the Editor, Canberra Times, December 21)

Congratulations, but it is no kayak!

WHILE I would like to congratulate Stuart Andrews on his recent crossing of Bass Strait there are a few points in the report ("Good fortune favours kayaker on Friday 13th", CT, December 14) I must take issue with. Firstly the vessel that Andrew made his crossing in can not, in even the loosest sense of the term, be called a kayak. Secondly Andrew may well be the first person to cross Bass Strait in a pedal boat but he certainly was not the first to cross in a kayak. Bass Strait has been crossed by numerous kayakers, three members of this club making the crossing over Easter last year.

Arunas Pilka
Secretary/Treasurer
NSW Sea Kayak Club
O'Connor ACT 2602

(for those who are interested the 'kayak' started out as a Tasman Twin - Ed)

SEA KAYAK DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

by Norm Sanders

Watercraft design is more of an art than a science. Bill Foster, a master craftsman and wooden boat builder in Hobart often told me, "If she looks right, she is right." (Boats are always "She." The reasons why are too complex to cover here.)

As human beings, we all have an innate sense of what looks right. Put a squat, flat bottomed rowboat on the beach next to a sleek kayak with sweeping sheer and see which one draws the crowd.

Sheer, the line of the deck from bow to stern, traditionally starts high at the bow, dips amidships and then climbs back to the stern at a point lower than the bow. There is a reason for this. The bow is high because it must climb over waves. The midship area is low to allow access to the water by paddles or oars. The stern is then upswept to rise over following seas.

Many modern power boats and yachts have flat or even reverse sheer and work quite well (except that they may be wet in a sea.) However, they don't LOOK right. Most sea kayaks have moderate sheer. Whitewater kayaks have pronounced reverse sheer which makes them very wet in the surf. They punch through waves rather than lifting. A big bonus with sheer is the fact that the bow and stern want to float to the surface when upside down. The kayak tends to initiate Eskimo rolls by itself -- leaving the paddler to furnish the finishing touches. Rolling is also easier in a kayak which has a low aft deck and a cockpit roomy enough behind the seat to lean well back. The secret of effortless rolling is to keep your centre of gravity as low as possible.

A roomy cockpit has other advantages. Self rescues are easier if it is possible to sit on the after deck with feet in the water, ooch forward and put the posterior in the cockpit. Then the legs can be pulled in, one at a time, and pushed underneath the forward edge of the coaming. The Inuit had small cockpit openings for structural reasons and were not concerned with wet exits or re-entries. In fact, their sealskin parkas were lashed to the coaming

and they were committed to being part of the kayak no matter what happened.

Another design consideration is the location of the greatest width of the boat, the beam. There are three basic choices: 1. Fish-form -- greatest beam forward of centre. 2. Symmetrical -- greatest beam at centre. 3. Swede-form -- greatest beam aft of centre.



Fish-form is hard to handle without a rudder. (Have you ever seen a fish without a tail?) Symmetrical is easier to steer and Swede-form easiest of all. The shape tracks well and is easy to turn, the result of sitting further aft with the paddle. Swede-form is also the fastest shape. Wherever the greatest beam is, it shouldn't be too large. Beamy boats are slow, hard to manoeuvre and difficult to roll.

The next consideration is the cross section of the hull. The theoretical best shape is round, like a log. This would have the least wetted surface and thus the least drag. It would also be unstable (like a single scull rowing boat) and require constant balancing with the paddle (or oars.)

Most Australian kayak designers have simply flattened the round shape on the bottom into a shallow arch to gain the necessary stability. Many American designers are now tending to favour hard chines, a

return to the original Inuit shape which was dictated by strips of wood covered by seal skin. Hard chines increase the wetted surface marginally, but return a major dividend in terms of tracking. They also act like surfboard rails which help manoeuvrability in breaking waves.

If hard chines are so great, why did they ever start building shallow-arch hulls in the first place? The answer probably is because of the properties of Glass Reinforced Plastics. GRP isn't at its best in flat sheets. It flexes. So, the obvious solution, for large boats anyway, is to have compound curved surfaces. Besides, hard chines are so *Old Fashioned*. It became stylish to have rounded bottoms. However, the flat sections on a kayak are so narrow that GRP works fine. In fact, better than fine. The sharp angles between the "planks" stiffen the whole boat considerably which means that less material is required to maintain fore-and-aft rigidity.

A related consideration is the way the deck joins the hull -- sharp, like a hard chine, or rounded. Most commercial kayaks have rounded decks which fair into the hull above the join to facilitate moulding and joining. This puts the widest point of the hull considerably below the deck level. I feel that the maximum beam should be as high up the hull as possible. The Inuit and other old-time boat builders traditionally joined the deck to the hull at the gunwale. Of course, they couldn't easily make the rounded curves now possible with plastics. In any event, the traditional method results in added stability where you want it most -- at extreme angles of heel. The extra flotation in that triangle area where the deck meets the hull acts like a built-in sponson.

Yet another consideration is deadrise -- the amount of "V" measured upward from the keel. A deep V hull with a lot of deadrise will track well and have less wetted surface, but be initially unstable. Again, compromise is necessary. I find that deadrise of about 12 degrees works well.

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Stability is a very slippery concept. Most sea kayaks are designed to attract newcomers to the sport and favour relatively flat-bottomed shapes which feel "safe" to beginners. However, these designs often have poor secondary stability and can suddenly capsize when leaned beyond a certain point. The flat bottom which is so stable on the dealer's carpet or a lake can be downright dangerous when waves coming from abeam get under the windward side of the hull and lift while the lee side is pushed under. I learned about this situation the hard way in Alaska's Aleutian Islands in 1957. A flat-bottomed skiff we were using for seal hunting

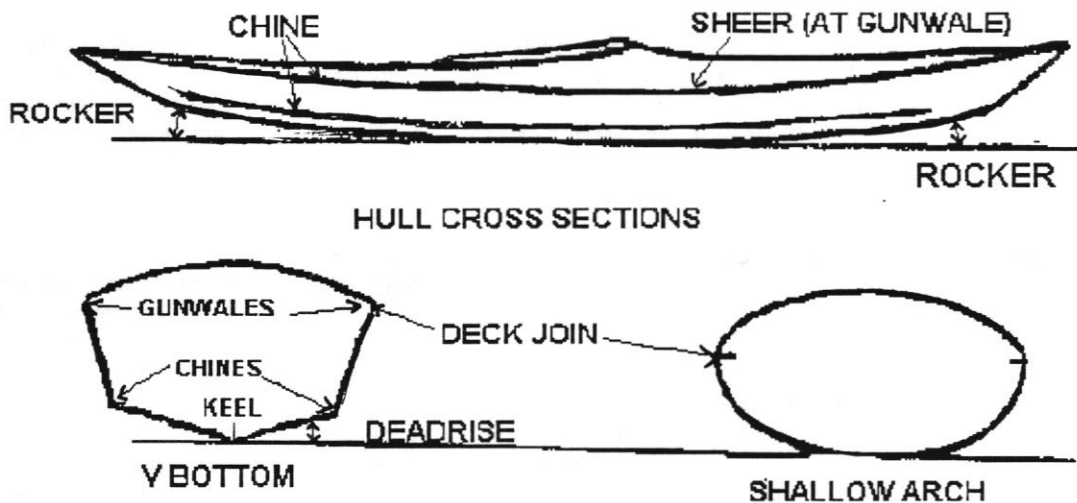
dealer's showroom but can raise the centre of gravity enough to become dangerous in a sea. Even a difference of 2 cm can cause a radical change in stability. The closer you can get your posterior to the bottom of the kayak, the better. I favour a 3mm EVA foam seat, with a 75mm back.

There is still another hull characteristic to consider: The keel line from bow to stern. For many years, racing kayakers and canoeists thought that a flat run was the most efficient. Now the trend is for the bow and stern to be raised in the form of rocker. Rocker yields less wetted surface and thus reduces drag. Pronounced rocker also allows the

to achieve this is through a moderate V hull with a pronounced keel, combined with hard chines and a sharp, skeg-like stern and lots of rocker. The chines, keel and sharp stern keep the hull tracking in a straight line until the paddler exerts a turning force. Then...the kayak turns.

Paddling downwind is where tracking ability is most important. In general, boats will lay broadside to the wind when not under sail, paddle or power. If the paddler wants to head further off the wind, the kayak will try to return to this position, or sometimes round up even higher.

This is particularly noticeable in



broached on a wave and overturned. My two friends died of hypothermia.

Experienced kayakers prefer a design which emphasises secondary stability over initial stability. A moderate V bottom with hard chines feels a bit tippy at first, but gains stability when leaned and feels predictable even with the coaming in the water. As noted earlier, secondary stability is increased further if the deck joins the hull in the typical Inuit fashion along a stringer rather than being rounded off and joined further down.

Seat height is another very significant factor in stability. High, comfortable seats may feel great when the kayak is sitting in the

bow to lift more easily over breaking waves. However, the main advantage for sea kayakers is the additional ease of turning.

Whitewater boats with a great deal of rocker are very easy to turn indeed, but can be frustrating when trying to paddle in a straight line. Some sea kayaks are equipped with rudders or skegs to help with directional stability. This comes at the cost of additional drag -- about 10 percent for the typical flat plate rudder. Skegs also create drag and turbulence around the skeg box.

The best of all possible worlds, good tracking with easy, rudderless turning, *IS* possible, even though the two sound mutually exclusive. I feel the way

fish-form kayaks where the long sweep of hull behind the cockpit acts like the tail on a weather vane. Swede-form kayaks behave better, with the bow tending to head more downwind. This is because the paddler's weight is well aft. Downwind tracking ability can be enhanced in any kayak on extended trips by loading heavier items in the aft compartment.

If the kayak is Swede-form and the bow is high due to pronounced sheer, the kayak may actually lay naturally almost downwind which means that the paddler can use far fewer course-correcting sweep strokes and concentrate on forward progress.

Kayakers can test their own craft
(Continued on page 18)

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for rounding-up tendencies by simply paddling out on a day when the wind is blowing 15 to 20 knots and then drifting without skeg or rudder.

The next consideration in kayak design is length. I tend to favour lengths in the vicinity of 16 feet. Many feel this is too short to carry enough supplies for overnight trips. I find it adequate. In addition very few kayakers actually take extended trips and pay a large penalty in weight and convenience for the mostly unused cargo capability when day paddling.

There is a commonly held belief that longer kayaks are faster. In theory, this is true. The effective top speed of any non-planing watercraft is a function of the waterline length and can be calculated in knots as 1.34 times the square root of the waterline length in feet. (For a 16 foot, 4.8 meter kayak, this is 5.36 knots or about 10 kph.) Try to go any faster and the boat is being forced to climb out of the water on its own bow wave. The energy required becomes very large, until the boat lifts enough to plane. Not even the legendary Dave Winkworth is powerful enough to get a kayak to plane on flat water. Very narrow hulls, like those on a Hobie Cat, are exceptions to the equation, but still require more power than a paddler can muster to really get moving.

So, longer kayaks are faster, IF the paddler has enough power to overcome the increased wetted surface and the attendant drag. For us mere non-racing mortals, the additional length means more resistance, more weight, less manoeuvrability and less acceleration.

At the speeds which most of us cruise (6 kph or 3 knots) all commercially available kayaks show much the same resistance figures in the *Sea Kayaker Magazine* reviews. For instance the Coaster by Mariner Kayaks is 13'5" long and has a resistance of 1.9 pounds at 3 knots. The racy Looksha II by Necky Kayaks is 20 feet long and has a resistance of 2.0 pounds at 3 knots. (Incidentally, both designs have hard chines.)

Less powerful paddlers reported that they actually found it easier to stay with the pack in the rudderless Coaster than in larger designs. However, if the pack happens to be racing down the Hawkesbury, things are radically

different. Resistance for the Coaster at 6 knots is 17.5 pounds versus 11.1 for the Looksha. The Looksha was conceived with speed in mind. The designer says: "Looksha II was designed as a rudder-controlled boat with no compromise intended." Frankly, I find the thought of putting to sea in a kayak which requires a rudder quite frightening.

Construction techniques for kayaks could and do fill books. As far as the paddler is concerned, hull-deck joins and bulkhead installation cause the most problems. Some paddlers could have built a new kayak with the time they spent just trying to track down leaks. Most common are the leaks caused by the use of the "H" shaped vinyl strip used to hold the deck to the hull for glassing on the inside with tape. It is very difficult to get the tape into the ends of the boat, leaving the vinyl to keep out the water -- which it doesn't do very well. Running a line of Sikaflex between the vinyl and the hull can sometimes help. Some manufacturers put a gelcoat strip along the join on the outside, which is mostly cosmetic. It is far better (and more expensive by about \$100) to run tape around the outside of the join as well as inside.

My own preference is to fasten the deck to the hull at the gunwale. The deck has a downturned rim which clips over the hull. This creates a lap joint which is then glassed with tape on the inside. It DOES NOT LEAK -- and is very strong...Strong enough to dent the bow of any Pittarak which hits me in the surf.

Bulkheads are another weak point. Many fibreglass boats use thin, lipped bulkheads which are pushed into place in resin. Water has a pernicious ability to find channels under the bulkhead. The best bulkheads are glassed both sides with tape. Bulkheads should be placed as closely together as possible to limit the volume of water which can enter the cockpit when swamped. The aft bulkhead should be located just behind the edge of the coaming so that the cockpit empties completely when the kayak is turned over and the bow lifted.

Many experienced paddlers favour using the forward bulkhead for a footrest rather than relying on adjustable pegs. A bulkhead is always there for firm support when you need

it during rolls or rough conditions. Rudder pedals are spongy and, like footrests can give way under pressure. A footrest which collapses in the surf could allow the paddler to slip forward into the hull and become trapped under the deck upside down, which could ruin his or her whole day.

So far the discussion has concentrated on basic hull design. Other important considerations are hatches and deck lines. In their haste to sell kayaks to novice paddlers, dealers extol the virtues of large hatches for easy access to compartments. In America, the sales pitch goes: "Large enough to take your two-burner Coleman Stove." For the kind of paddling most Yanks do, this is fine. However, take one of these easy access hatches to sea and the water starts pouring in.

I feel that there is only one hatch for a sea-going kayak: The Valley Canoe Products (VCP) 7 inch round hatch. It NEVER leaks and seals so well that it actually bulges upward when the air in the hull heats up in the sun. (Provided the hull itself is airtight.) There are some imitations floating around, so it is important to buy the genuine Pommy VCP article. Some may argue that a 7 inch hatch is too small for gear. To them I say: "If you can't get it into a 7 inch VCP, you shouldn't be taking it." It is certainly big enough for that most essential of gear, a Trangia.

Long items can be a bit of a struggle however. I solve this problem by mounting a VCP hatch in the aft bulkhead. I tie a line to one drybag and push it towards the stern. Then I load the rest of the gear into the hatch. To unload, I remove the gear I can reach and then pull the string. The bulkhead-mounted hatch has an added advantage in that spare paddles don't have to be removed to access the aft compartment. It is a mystery to me why anyone bothers to put a hatch on the after deck when the bulkhead-mount is so superior.

Deck lines on a sea kayak are a MUST. However, there is a debate over recessed versus bolt-on deck line fittings which has been raging for years. Recessed fittings are supposed to be less damaging to human bodies and other kayakers during rescues. They are probably cheaper to produce, being moulded into the hull, but are difficult to repair if they fail. Bolt-ons are stronger and can be placed wherever the owner

(Continued on page 13)

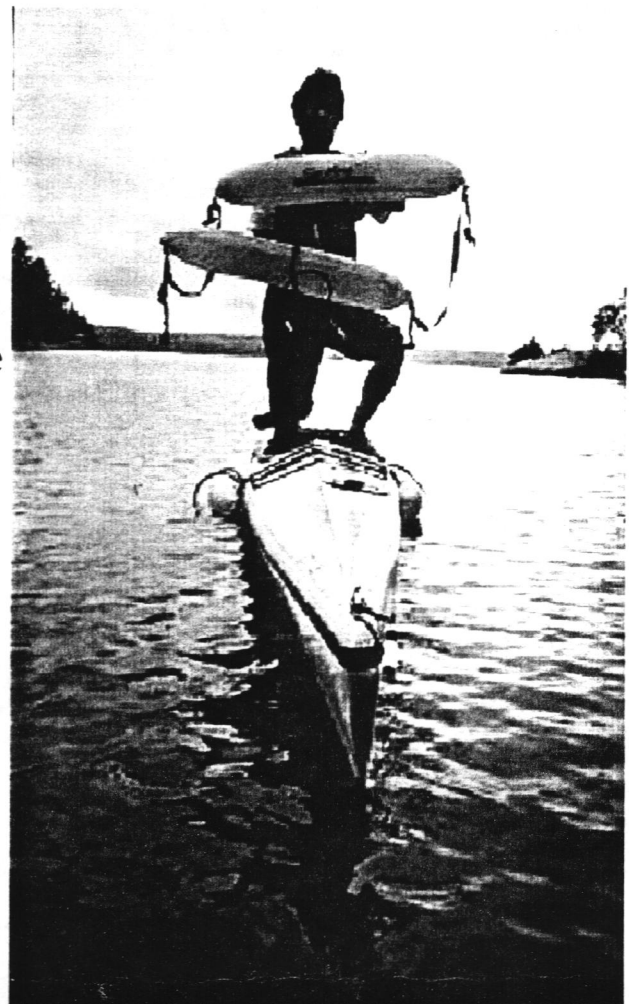
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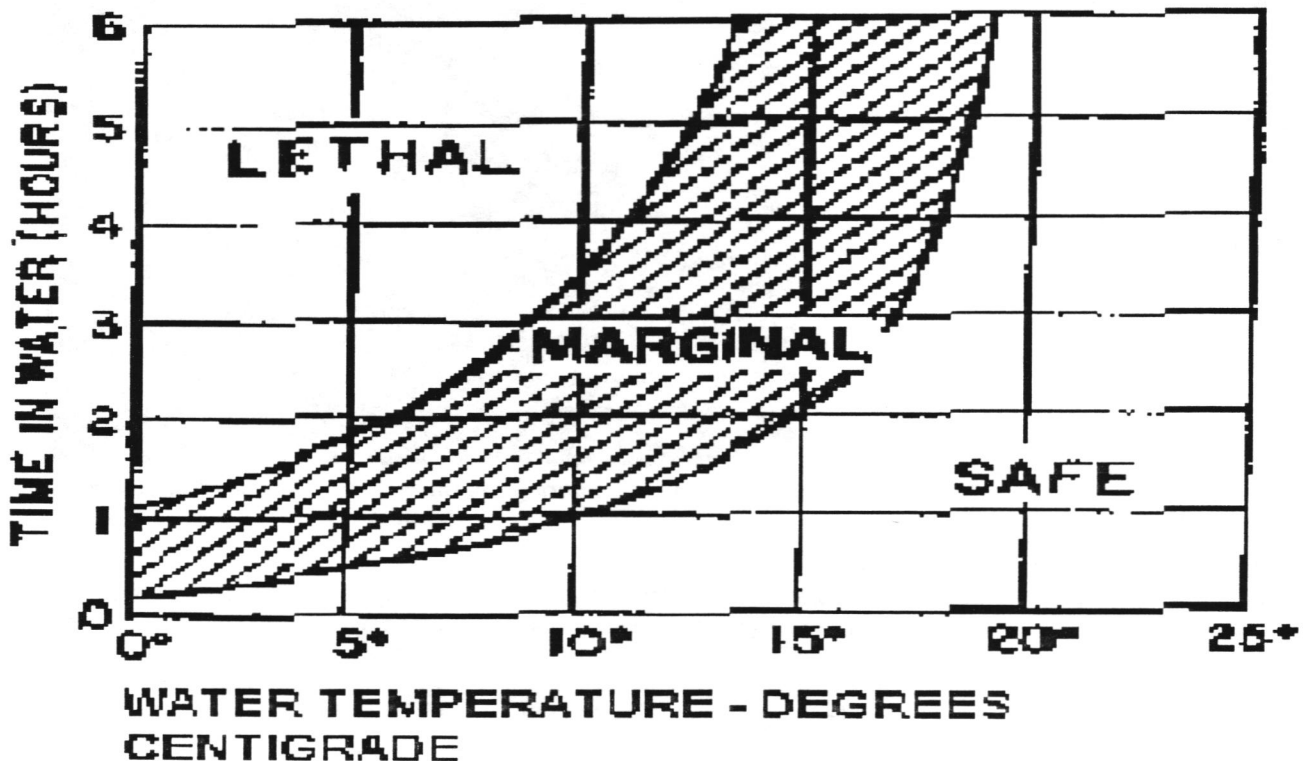


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APOLOGY

The following diagram on Survival Expectancy was supplied by David Winkworth and should have been included with South coast News in Newsletter 28.



Kayak Review - Dagger Apostle

by Jim Croft

The Dagger Apostle - another tupperware sea kayak.

Summary for Executives: It is a boat, it is plastic, it has a sharp end, and a not-so sharp end, and a hole to sit in, and it floats.

After a year of paddling a yellow plastic Puffin, why, you might ask, did I decide to buy another plastic boat?

Well I needed another sea kayak (it is a well documented axiom that sea kayakers can never have too many craft, paddles, spray skirts, cags, PFDs, tents, Trangias, thermarests, in fact, too much of any kind of gear) and had decided on a lighter, sleeker, faster, fibreglass or kevlar ensemble with charisma and that all important quality, 'cred' (I was getting an all too clear message from my pre-teen sons that this this last attribute was paramount, surpassing all other trivial aspects such as performance, responsiveness, seaworthiness, etc.). The thing about kayaks is that you need one (preferably more), or at least one cockpit, for each body in your sphere of influence. So, once more the bank balance was under siege, a battle of attrition that it could not possibly survive.

That ultimate cred machine, the Pittarak, was ruled out because I had noticed a tendency, that whenever a kayaker turned up with one of these, all other kayakers on the beach or on the water averted their gaze and moved away to a safe distance - to this day I not sure whether it is the boat or the paddler of the craft that inspires such fear.

The choice had come down to a toss up between the 'cult boat of the 90's' (the Arctic Raider) and a Mirage (probably a 19). The cultists derided my preference for the latter, but the lure of speed and an excuse not to be seen anywhere near the dreaded rock encrusted gauntlet was compelling.

Then, the infamous Mystery Bay weekend, a cusp, a pivotal juncture

in the arduous paddle across the ocean of life. Big seas, hard rocks, one fibreglass boat broken into three discrete parts, another with the bow ripped apart, and yet another with several holes punched through the hull. That was it; glad I had survived in a Puffin, I drove straight back to Canberra and bought the shop floor Apostle (hell, why buy a another Puffin when you already have one?) I had tried out the

quintessence Teutonic tupperware sea kayakery, the Prijon PET-bottle Seayak - no doubt we will hear of its virtues in a future edition. (The other plastic boat in the club at the moment is the British rotomoulded Valley Canoe Products Skerray, owned by several members - perhaps we will have a review of this one too?)

As I have only paddled two types of sea kayak at all seriously, enough to predict how they will behave in a



Jim Croft in action during the Hawkesbury Classic - Photo Jenni Marsh

wee k before. Why? A flash of panic and fear, I guess. I was not the only one shaken to the brink of irrationality that weekend - our noble outgoing president, Herr Stuber, was prompted to courageously acquire the

variety of conditions, this review will probably end up comparative, and definitely from a beginners point of view - roughly a year and a bit in a Puffin and six months in an Apostle.

(Continued on page 21)

*(Continued from page 20)***The hull**

Like the Puffin, the Apostle is rotomoulded linear polyethylene which is apparently repairable, after a fashion, but not as strong as the less obliging cross-linked polyethylene. The surface/finish of the mould is excellent and the suture along the gunwale is barely noticeable, unlike the rough as guts knife job on the Puffin. As far as I know, all Apostles are imported from the US (the Puffin was made under licence in New Zealand and seems to have had several evolutionary enhancements to the mould over the years). There wasn't a yellow one in the country so I settled for the dark red one in the shop. Apostles are unique in this part of the world in being offered in a variety of splash and splodge colour patterns; I have only seen a few - red body with black bow and stern, a serene white/aqua/turquoise pastiche guaranteed to be totally invisible on any body of ocean and a red/yellow/black monstrosity that was probably a failed Jackson Pollack original in a former life (actually the kids thought that this one was like totally cool, radical, awesome and all the right words). From a safety point of view, I question the wisdom of these colour patterns - as bright and striking as they might be, they break up the outline of the boat in the time-honoured tradition of battle camouflage. Not a good idea at sea when you hope someone is looking for you.

According to the catalogue blurbs, the Apostle is 17' (5.18 m) long, 23.5" (0.59 m) wide and weighs in at a substantial 69 lbs (31.3 kg). This compares with the Puffin's length of 4.95 m (16'3"), width of 0.61 m (24") and weight of 29 kg (64 lbs). The length overall is probably not all that important, as I suspect the waterline lengths are almost the same. Times in regular weekend 10 km time trials are virtually the same in both boats, but the Apostle 'feels' as though it is moving faster through the water and more satisfying to paddle in this respect.

The lines of the Apostle are distinctive and pleasing, and most agree it looks a nice boat. The bow rises more than the Puffin's and the forefoot is cut away and rises gradually to the stem in a gentle curve from a fair way back along the keel. The midships section

has a slight V to the bottom, obvious but rounded chines, and topsides angling out to the gunwale which is almost at the deckline. Fore and aft of the large cockpit hole (the spray skirts of the Puffin and Apostle can be interchanged, although the shape at the front of the cockpit is slightly different), the section tapers quickly to the bow and stern. While the Puffin appears to have no concave surfaces, the bow of the Apostle is very fine and cut away by comparison, and the keel is drawn and tapered out towards the stern almost to the rudder. The keel-line rocker is only moderate.

Handling and performance

The result of this hull shape is a boat that tracks better than a Puffin which tends to yaw and requires constant although subconscious corrective attention (we are talking without the rudder here). The fuller bow sections of the Puffin pounds through surf and chop; the file entry of the Apostle cuts through it, but the flared bow sections tend to spread the water and stop the bow diving too deeply. It is nice to paddle in waves.

Like the Puffin, the Apostle weathercocks as the wind speed increases on the beam. I don't think it is worse, but it is certainly no better. In both boats dropping the rudder when things get out of hand solves the problem. According to the blurb, the Apostle is available with and optional retractable skeg which I guess would make it comparable to the Skerray in configuration. I will refrain from getting into a skeg vs. rudder vs. nothing at all war here.

Probably because of the midships chine and topsides design, the Apostle has very high secondary stability. You can pop it right on its side and it stays there, quite firmly, without any feeling that it is about to go all the way over. This is especially so when unladen; when unladen, the transition to the strong righting action on its side is more gradual and not as pronounced. The rounded shallow V and relatively wide chines amidships provides excellent initial stability. Carved and telemark turns and braces are easy on this boat, even for beginners.

Rolling? I was surprised how easy it was to bring up. Even easier than the Puffin, which is said to be almost self righting by its detractors, people with real boats designed with stability in the inverted position in mind. The deck is very low on the hull, and the seat design makes it very easy to lean far back, so I guess this helps. However, I found the re-enter and roll more difficult than in a Puffin - this may be due to the low deck and cockpit rim that seems to scoop up the ocean, and the lack of the pod and a much larger cockpit volume - or maybe I just need more practice in this new boat.

Surfing? I have had both the Apostle and Puffin out in small to moderate surf and they are still in one piece and I am still here. Not being a crash hot surfer dude, I can not regale you with tales of cutbacks, reentries, enders, pirouettes and other macho stuff - just a 'straight ahead Fred' with no control of the boat once it is on the wave. I prefer the Apostle in the surf - it requires less oomph to catch a wave and is more fun on it. The bow does not dig in in spite of its fine lines and the flare throws the water aside nicely. Once on the wave, as the bow slides down the face and the keel-line at the stern lifts clear of the water, the direction can be controlled without too much difficulty with appropriate sweep and stern rudder strokes. Like most long boats, once you turn too far of the direction of the wave and go into a broach, things get out of hand. It handles a high brace into a breaking wave well and it is often possible to pull out of the broach and hop back on the breaking wave. Coming out of the boat in the surf is another story - there is a lot to be said for the low volume pod of the Puffin when it comes to removing water.

The deck

The deck is very close to the water, and relatively flat. It does not rise towards the paddler over the knees and when loaded, the boat appears very close to the ocean. At sea, it seems to take a bit more water over the deck than the Puffin. Initially the low deck gave an impression of exposure and vulnerability, but this sensation was emotional rather than real. The deck and sprayskirt shed waves and exclude the ocean well.

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The fore and aft hatch covers are neoprene with shock cord around the rim with a sealed hard plastic cover that is strapped down with Fastex buckles - they appear waterproof and do not look as though they would be dislodged, even by large waves or a tumble through washing machine surf. The day hatch is a hard plastic cover with a sealed rim and an internal neoprene seal, held in place with shock cord - it appears robust enough, but leaks (or at least I think that is where the water is coming from).

Dagger chose to use surface-mounted deck fittings on the Apostle, like the Puffin. Flush mounted fittings are possible on rotomoulded boats as demonstrated by the Skerray, so one can only imagine that Dagger were trying to save a few pence. There are stout grablines fore and aft of the cockpit extending the the bow and stern, and an excessive amount of bungee cord lacing one side of the boat to the other; these are attached to the deck fittings by an inordinate number of plastic clips.

The rudder mechanism of the Apostle is almost identical to that of the Puffin: blade raised and lowered by lines running along the side of the deck, held firmly in place and out of the way by guides. There is a piece of shock cord to hold the rudder plate in place in its rubber surface-mounted park in the 'up' position. This is nice for cartopping and messing about in the surf, but forgetting to unclip it when setting off by yourself is a real pain when you need the rudder later. The rudder bracket mechanism of the Apostle is lighter than that on the Puffin, but seems to do the job; it is held on to a small flattened area of the stern by several large pop rivets through the hull plastic - it is not showing any signs of working loose.

The entrails

Internally there are three bulkheads making four compartments: fore hatch, cockpit, day hatch, aft hatch. The bulkheads are c. 5 cm (2") slabs of dense closed cell foam cemented to the hull and around the metal strengthening tube that runs along the keel (more recent boats do not have this tube, perhaps to try and remove the small and cryptic leaks that occur

near the bulkheads - the importer said that the the hull was strengthened to allow this and that they were using a stronger plastic - if they just decided that the tube was not needed, I was going to rip mine out because it certainly makes the boat cleaner and neater inside).

As mentioned, the rudder mechanism of the Apostle is almost identical to that of the Puffin and that extends to the sliding foot pedals for control. The pedals are much more comfortable than those of the Puffin and the adjusting buckles are further aft in the cockpit and much easier to get at.

The seat? Fairly basic, wide, unpadded, not particularly sculptured to human rump shape, plastic, not unduly uncomfortable, fixed position with a padded, swivelled, adjustable lumbar support. It is quite wide so hip padding will be needed in almost every case. There is about 10-15 cm of space for storing water, food, first-aid kits, etc. behind the seat back rest.

Deficiencies or defects

What have I found wrong, deficient or defective in the Apostle? No boat is perfect and the Apostle is no exception. There are some real deficiencies that are not just a matter of personal preference. These are all fixable even the most manually inept, but I would rather we did not have to do it.

Decklines and shockcords. The numerous plastic fittings on the ends of the many pieces of shock cord are weak and prone to breakage. Three have snapped and need to be replaced - I am going to rethread the shock cord into a loop pattern and not use clips at all. The deck layout would have been much nicer and probably safer if they have used recessed deck fittings like the Skerray.

Rudder raising and lowering mechanism. The control lines are quite thin and difficult to handle at sea, especially when your hands are cold and wet, and there are no knots or knobs on the line to tell you which line to pull to move the blade up or down. These lines are

going to be replaced with some thicker cord.

Rudder Blade. Aluminium and much thinner than the Puffin's. I have bent it slightly in some rough seas, but it was a simple matter to straighten it again. Too much of this behaviour and it may have to be replaced. After a few months of use, the pop rivets that held the rudder bracket to the hull started to work loose as they were anchored only in the plastic; I solved this by replacing the pop rivets with stainless steel bolts and bolting through to an aluminium plate on the inside and bedding the whole unit in a layer of Sikaflex.

Day Hatch. This is one of the most attractive features of the Apostle but it leaks quite badly and the water then seeps through the bulkhead joins and along the internal stiffening tube into other compartments. I will probably end up cutting in out and installing a rubber VCP hatch (the size is just right); coincidentally, the VCP hatch cover itself fits over the existing rim deck moulding of this hatch but I have no idea how waterproof it is. The Apostle hatch looks as though it should be waterproof and I suspect it may be changes in air pressure with temperature and flexing of the hull that actually sucks the water in through almost undetectable crevices.

Bulkhead seal. The glue that bodes the closed cell foam bulkheads to the hull seems to be very good, and I suspect the strengthening tube as the weak point here. Will try to seal it with some kind of gunk.

Knee/thigh braces. The cockpit is very wide and low and you have to spread your knees to tuck them under the rim where there are some small neoprene pads. This might be construed as a safety attribute to prevent a paddler being stuck in the boat, but I would prefer to see some form of moulded thigh hook to enable you lock yourself in. When surfing once I was caught by a large wave, broached and held it for a while, braced and came back up using the wave, held it a bit more and went over again, braced and came up again, but on the third time was pulled out of the cockpit and lost the boat which was washed on the rocks (praise the lord for Tupperware!). If I had been able to stay in, the situation and pride might have been salvagable. It is possible to

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Mystery Weekend

by Jeanette Mill

Whale watching at Mystery Bay - that sounded tempting. Mind you, of the dozen or so times I have seen whales in my life, they have all been chance sightings. The only times I have ever consciously looked for them - well you know how it goes.

So, as the peripatetic Dr Sanders, Old Sea Dog, oracle, writer, boat builder and organiser of the weekend would prophesy, I decided to go with the flow.

To our collective delight our campsite above the tortured cliffs was hoon free. The ticks, however, were another matter.

The group of 20 or so comprised folk from as far north as Alaska, with a large Canberra contingent. What is this Canberra phenomenon I hear you cry. Bored public servants with too much money to spend? My humble theory is when you live inland the attraction of the coast is all the stronger, and it is delightful drive.

Late on Saturday morning a group set off to inspect the nonpareil in cliff design that nature had provided to the north of Mystery Bay. Others explored the area by foot. Caves, arches and a huge pile of smooth stones about two or three metres high on the beach south of Corunna Point bore testimony to the forces the elements bring to bear. The bizarre forms of the wind pruned She Oaks capping the cliffs and the cruising Sea Eagles added to the visual feast.

A casual lunch was spent renewing old acquaintances and forging new ones.



TOP: Rick Angel cleans his beloved Greenlander after a satisfying day
BOTTOM: Eager customers discuss payment terms with Norm Sanders

In the afternoon Corunna Lake was the paddling venue for one group, while another inspected boats, gear, kicked sand and imaginary tyres on the beach at Mystery Bay before cruising the coastline.

Corunna Lake provided a peaceful setting north from the put in point at the bridge on the Princes Highway. We followed the forested shoreline to the sea kayak turnable limit of Olsons Creek. Some were treated to the spectacle of a startled rabbit taking to

(Continued on page 24)

the water and "dog" paddling to the far bank. Iridescent Kingfishers played their usual game of keeping one tree ahead of us.

The gods held the rain off until the evening, but also provided us with the

a Puffin for Mark Cecil B de Fish Killer Pearson's video camera, combined with successful assisted rescue techniques with the coadjuvancy of Gentleman Jim Gear Trailblazer Techno Nerd Croft.

scars from fighting and from damage from prey (it's a tough life eating live calamari and un-chargrilled octopus).

This was one of two Risso's Dolphins which had died and washed ashore some months previously. The other had been retrieved by ORRCA *, and examined by Australian Museum scientists. This one was proving difficult to remove due to the rocky coast.

The Innuet Classic prototype created great interest, and was heavily booked for test paddles (Norm - my invoice is in the mail). Cecil B further tested his new splashproof toy by filming Andrew Eddy demonstrating his consummate rolling and bracing style to the awe-struck crowds.

So - no whales, but no shortage of interest, and a very pleasant long weekend.

Thankyou to Graham Ross, series manager for the Fauna of Australia and whale biologist, for identification and information on Risso's Dolphin.

(nice story Jeanette, but what about the bits you've obviously censored out. e.g.

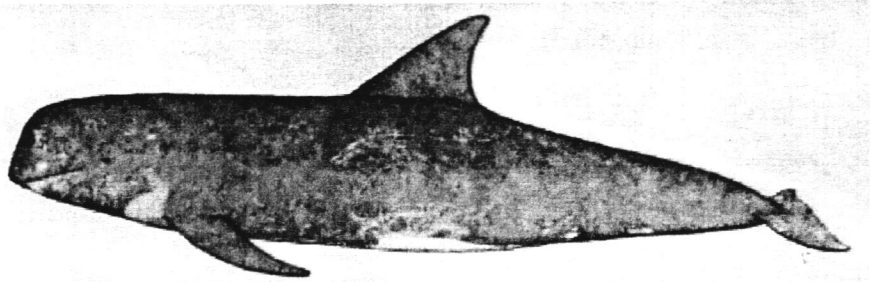
- the camp women jostling for the best viewing position as Andrew Eddy extracted a tick from his groin.

- the camp men jostling for the best viewing position when a tick was being extracted from any part of a camp woman.

- the furious old codger who declared to an uncomprehending Monty (an Alaskan) that he was sick of having to watch a "pack of Drongos dropping their Dacks all day " in front of his house. So beware where you change if you paddle at Mystery Bay! Incidentally, a later investigation proved that Andrew Eddy (that name again!) and Janet Sinclair were easily the most brazen Dack-droppers on this occasion.

These are the sort of details that the readership are really after!

Editor)



The Risso's Dolphin - Illustration: Graham Ross

camper of the moment and new club member - Tony Peterson. We huddled under his expertly erected tarp (even without real guy ropes this man is a bush comfort thaumaturge). The chocolate, Tim Tams and conversation flowed as the Laksa simmered on the Trangias and the rain pattered. the odd gust of wind emptied the accumulated contents of the tarp down the patient Belinda's neck.

A Satin Bower Bird delighted in reminding me I was on its turf by running through its entire repertoire of mimicry at dawn. I felt a rush of pleasure at greeting the day earlier than the venerable Old Sea Dog managed.

A fresh wind resulted in more extended rituals on the beach, followed by coastal exploration by land and sea.

The most interesting find of the morning was a dead whale thingy on the beach to the south.

After lunch the wind continued to pick up and no live whales were to be seen at sea.

The south-western end of Wallaga Lake proved a popular destination. We launched from the ramps at Fairhaven Point and explored the convoluted shoreline of the drowned river valley, whilst enjoying the serenity offered by the adjacent national park.

Feeling invigorated after a sprint back into a headwind, I obligingly and patiently demonstrated how not to roll

A fine evening provided the opportunity of cooking in the open. Those upon whom fortune smiled were initiated into the pleasures of port soaked Tim Tams.

Monday dawned warm and sunny. Many pairs of eyes scanned the sea out towards Montague Island. The water was enticingly blue, tempting many into coastal cruising. They were rewarded with seals and dolphins but no whales.

The dead "whale" on the beach provided a certain sighting. My photos of the aromatic, bloated 3m mammal allowed it to be later identified by a colleague, Graham Ross, as a Risso's Dolphin. Risso's Dolphins occur in tropical and warm temperate oceanic waters worldwide, generally in water deeper than 1000m. They occasionally venture closer to shore.

Up to 4m in length, they mainly eat cephalopods (squid, cuttlefish, octopus), but also fish. Sometimes they are seen as solitary individuals or pairs, but usually live in herds typically of 20 - 40, but up to several hundred. Colouration is dark grey or greyish black on the upper surface behind the dorsal fin, white and light grey in front of the dorsal fin and a white patch underneath. However colouration tends to lighten with age. The dorsal fin is tall and sharp. The head bulges distinctively and there is no beak. The lower jaw has 3 - 7 pairs of teeth, with no teeth in the upper jaw. Adults usually bear

Parramatta to Paradise

by Mark Pearson

After a brief but eye-opening river paddle in a touring kayak, Johnno has finally persuaded his mate Wozza to join him on an expedition in rented sea kayaks.....

"Ute locked?" asked Johnno.

"Yeah" said Wozza.

"Got everything?"

"Yeah".

"OK - lets get mine down to the water - grab that loop thing at the back!"

Wozza grunted as he lifted the rear of the Puffin.

"Geez mate, how many stubbies are in this thing?"

"Nearly two slabs in the back" said Johnno "stored the rest in the front bit with the tent and stuff"

"My Pirattak...."

"It's Pitt-ar-ak - it's Norwegian for somethin'"

"Weird friggin' name, anyhow, my Pittarak would only take a slab and a half, and even then had to leave me coat and radio out - is that why you got the Puffin?"

"thought you'd like the Pittarak, that's all"

"I s'pose I do - it looks mean - like a '57 Chev - you know, the one with the fins."

"You're right Wozza, front bit's like a big tailfin - sleek lookin' " admitted Johnno, "would've liked an Arctic Raider meself, but there wasn't one - they're pure filth - better than Pittaraks even."

"Well this friggin' Puffin weighs a bloody ton - you should've sculled a few tinnies first."

"Mate, where we're goin' we're gonna be miles from a grog shop - you gotta think ahead - 12 stubbies is me daily ration" Johnno said smugly. Wozza mused for a few seconds, surprised at his companions foresight.

"But I've got 24 Fosters, a dozen Reschs and even some Coopers, bugged if I'm gonna fart-arse around working out what piss to drink each minute of the day - besides, maths ain't me strong point!"

"Ok, but don't come sniffing after my grog when you run dry" warned Johnno.

They reached the water and lowered

the Puffin beside the waiting Pittarak. Johnno eyed his companion critically "Are you goin' to wear that?"

"Yeah - why not!"

"Parramatta guernsey's aren't made to get wet...".

"never feel the cold mate - I've worn this at Friday night footy in Canberra - no worries!"

"Bring any water?" asked Johnno.

"Ain't got room, anyhow, there's plenty in the beer"

"OK - so what've you got to eat?"

"Cornflakes, Mars Bars, Muesli Bars...err, and a few spuds and carrots that me mum put

any day - carry heaps of piss no worries and there's no friggin' waves! And this dumb skirt thing makes me look like a poofta in a corset!

"Mate, settle down... I'm just getting some things understood from the start OK. Every expedition needs a leader that sets out the rules and stuff - you'll read that in any Soldier of Fortune..!"

"Well you're starting to really piss me off big time, Captain Bligh, and we're not even on the water yet. Come on, lets get goin', were wasting friggin' drinking time!"

"Woz, once we're out there, it'll be good!"

Wozza squeezed himself into the Pittarak and pushed off unsteadily.

"Thought the sheilas' were coming to wave us off"

"knew they wouldn't get up this early"

"Yeah, they're not like us - no sense of adventure!"

Wozza suddenly looked worried "hey,

we won't be doin' any o' that Eskimo Rolling will we?"

"no mate - you'll be right."

"Mate, I'll tell ye somethin' - I'd rather roll me Ute pissed than be stuck upside down in one of these bastards!"

"Did ya bring bog paper" interrupted Johnno as he climbed into the Puffin. "Shit..."

"Christ you're friggin' hopeless..."

"I'll give ye two o' me Coopers if you let me share yours" shouted Wozza as he tried out a few hesitant paddle strokes.

"Four, but use more than six sheets a day and you'll be looking for seaweed."

"You're a deadset bastard Johnno. Just you remember what happened in that Bounty movie, that's all! C'mon, lets get rowing, I'm getting a thirst already....."

The boys paddled off in their sea kayaks headed for adventure...



in...what about you" grunted

Wozza as he tugged his spray skirt up over his ample stomach.

"better than that crap for sure - hope you like what you've got - it's all yours".

"but I thought we'd sort of share the tucker"

"No way! Don't expect to get your mits on my stuff"

"Geez Johnno, yer attitude's really pissing me off....I'm startin' to wish I'd stayed home or gone down the TAB or somethin'. Remember, this is your friggin' caper, mate, and far as I'm concerned I'm doin' you a big favour in coming along at all! And it's a big friggin' hassle, that's what it is - picking up the boats, tying them on, taking them off, loading 'em up with stuff that won't fit in, stuffing me friggin' back carrying the heavy bastards.. what a pain in the arse.....!"

"Give it a chance Woz"

"...and all this so we can scare the crap out of ourselves and get friggin' sea-sick! I'll tell you something Johnno - give me a Canadian up the Hawkesbury



Training Notes - Eskimo Rolling

by David Winkworth

At the Club's recent Rock 'n Roll/AGM weekend at Honeymoon Bay I was elected Training Officer Person so it's probably appropriate that I write something for each issue of the magazine on one or more aspects of sea kayaking skills and training.....

So, if there is anything members

I had been speaking to the Parks and they said nothing about the exercises.

While on the subject of National Parks, I asked the rangers about campsite degradation and damage at Honeymoon Bay. They said it really is a problem but no solution has been proposed yet. However,

kayaking, this weekend is a good opportunity to test out various boats.

Well, in the space I've got left for this issue I thought we'd talk a little about what began as the primary focus of the Rock 'n Roll Weekend five years ago: viz Eskimo Rolling!

Now, I can't tell you how to roll your kayak in a magazine column but we can talk about "resolve" and what I call "rolling progression."

Firstly...resolve. I know some members are a bit reluctant to continue with Eskimo rolling practice for one reason or another.

It is just something that sea kayakers MUST be able to do. So, go into the bathroom, look in the mirror and tell yourself this ... then hit yourself in the mouth and tell yourself there'll be another one if you haven't got it in the next six months! That might do it!

Rolling is timing and technique - not strength!...so everyone can do it. Practice is needed to coordinate movement that is the key... PRACTICE. The water is lovely and warm now and there are plenty of club members who can help so what are you waiting for? The Canberra Pod are getting together in a heated pool in the evenings - maybe you can arrange something where you live?

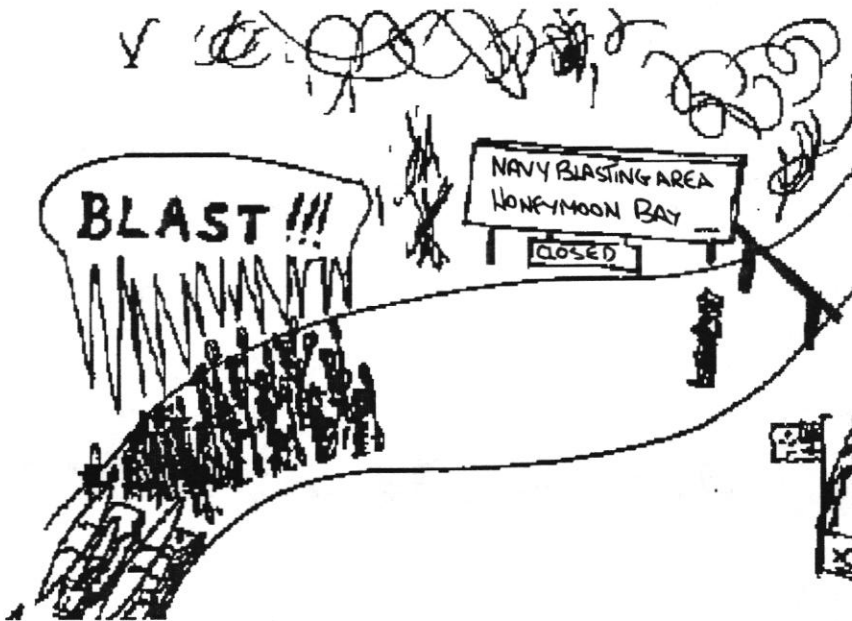
Just a couple of points about rolling that we can pursue at the next Skills Weekend...

* Pad out your cockpit - you need a good fit for bum, hips, thighs (not kneecaps) and feet. Your boat must respond to your movements.

*Wear a face mask or nose clip while practicing. Ear plugs also might reduce the dizzy feeling you can sometimes get.

*When you can roll on one side keep practicing at that in a classic "set up" position start. That way, if you ever bomb a roll in a real situation, you can revert to this start position and know that you'll make it right side

(Continued on page 27)



would like to see in this column please let me know - let your fingers do the walking... call me on (064) 941366. Also, if anyone would like to contribute to this column, please do. You are most welcome.

OK, as quite a few members know, our Jervis Bay weekend clashed with the Twenty Beaches Classic in Sydney. We'll make sure that doesn't happen again so you can attend both gatherings. Also, we're sorry for the members who tried to get into Honeymoon Bay on the Friday evening and couldn't because of Navy exercises. As it was, the area was unavailable until the Saturday morning for us all and we had to spend Friday night in the Currarong area. Was it a conspiracy between the Navy and Currarong Caravan Park? The Park Rangers told me that the Navy exercises were a last minute plan and even they didn't know about it till it happened. Earlier that week

don't be surprised if camper numbers are restricted there in the future! Those members who attended will, I think, agree that the open air slide show on the Saturday evening of Patagonia and Torres Strait was terrific. Our thanks to Eric Croker, John Wilde, Dirk Stuber and Arunas Pilka for the slides and commentary. We hope to do something similar this year so get out there and start snapping with the Nikon! In the "too numerous to mention" category, thank you to all the weekend helpers and talk presenters. It was fun.

For those members who wish to improve their kayaking skills, we have a "Skills Weekend" coming up in the next few months at Honeymoon Bay. Check the calendar for details. If you have any friends who may be considering taking up sea

up!

* It doesn't matter if your fall-back roll is a Pawlata screw or whatever or what it looks like. The important thing is that it WORKS FOR YOU EVERY TIME. When you have this one working reliably you can practice any other fancy roll and know that you can still surface with your Mr Reliable if need be. The key is; PLEASE REMAIN SEATED FOR THE ENTIRE PERFORMANCE.

* As you practise your rolling, exaggerate your movements - lean extra far forward, lean well back - this will aid your roll no end. Also, in the set-up with your body leaning forward, keep that paddle hard against the side of the kayak. Reason? This is probably the position you will assume one day when rolling over in front of a BIIIGGG wave. If you stay tucked in you'll be OK and the wave will pass over you...BUT if you "hang the paddle out to dry" (let it move away from the boat) you'll either have to let it go when the wave hits or get sucked out of the cockpit.

So, let's finish this by saying that rolling re-enter and smoothest, warmest and most efficient is. All other self rescue methods and gizmos should be regarded as rolling backstops. Make the roll your

primary self rescue method...JUST DO IT!

Rolling Progression? Well, what do you do when you can roll on one side?...keep practising.

I have a little personal rule that some members delight in keeping me up to in the middle of winter...do some rolls EVERY time you launch your boat. In winter, I usually do this just before going ashore so I can get warm quickly. Give it a try. When you can roll reliably on one side, practise stabilising upside down for a few seconds and then roll up.

When you can do that, it's time to practise re-enter and roll. Don't worry about trying to refit the sprayskirt upside down at first - your boat will still roll OK with the skirt off. Use a paddle leash so you can concentrate on somersaulting back into the cockpit first. Just pull on the leash to find your paddle! When you can do this, try it without the leash.

Your next step may then be a roll on the other side. It feels strange at first but only for a while. When you can do it, do 80% of

your practice rolls on this side for a while. Then you could try some rolls with your eyes shut. This is effectively what it's like in soupy surf - you won't be able to see much. By this stage you should be able to feel the angle of your paddle for the paddle sweep without having to see it.

Moving along...what about a few rolls during a night paddle possibly in a lake or river? If that's OK, the big test is to paddle out to sea - due east at night for a few kilometres and try some there. Take someone along with you. Also, if you're a gauntleer, try a few quick rolls in a rock garden. Wear a helmet if there is any danger of head conking.

That's about it for now. Would anyone like to contribute to this column on any training subject? Frank?, John?, Dirk?

Next issue we might have a look at Sea Kayak Proficiency Awards and what you need to be able to do. That could form the basis of sessions at the upcoming skills weekend. Good luck with your Rolling practice.



(Continued from page 22)

install the sort of cockpit rim thigh hooks seen on many white water boats; Dagger make a range of interchangeable thigh hooks for their white water boats that fit the Apostle perfectly - I have ordered a set.

Cockpit volume. Compared with the Puffin, the Apostle has a very large cockpit. There is big space behind the seat and in forward of rudder pedals; At just over 6 feet with a short torso and long legs, I still have 30 cm of dead space beyond my feet. One winter evening I intend to rip out that bulkhead and reclaim the space for the bow compartment. When I put my knees together they rub on the front rim of the cockpit and it would be better for people with long legs if this was a bit higher.

Foot pedals. With their sliding foot pedals both the Puffin and the Apostle lack any firm foot brace. Good forward

paddling technique dictates that you push with leg at the same time as rotating the torso and it is pretty difficult to do this in these boats without altering the angle of the rudder. A fixed brace bar or blocks would be a definite advantage.

The bottom line

All that said, would I recommend the Apostle? Certainly! For a beginner to an advanced paddler interested in short to extended touring, it is a nice boat that is satisfying to paddle and has ample room for storing supplies and equipment. It is even a nice long boat to play with in the surf. It handles unpleasant sea conditions well and the paddler does not feel as though they have to worry about the boat as well as the conditions. The plastic hull allows the paddler to be a little more cavalier when poking around rock gardens, gauntlets, sea caves and the

like. The deficiencies listed above are all rectifiable with a little time and a few tools, but it would have been nice if the manufacturers did it to start with. Would I recommend it above a Puffin? Difficult call - I use and like them both, even though they are heavy. The sleeker lines, responsiveness, fun factor and the day hatch (even though it leaks) would probably swing the balance toward the Apostle. The kids fight over who gets to use it, the loser taking the Puffin - I guess that says something (not sure what)...

Is it value for money? Who knows? Is the present price of c. \$1,700 (AUD) better in your bank or on the ocean? Would I buy another one? What for? I already have one! And I enjoy using it! The next boat? Something light, sleek, fast, kevlar and graphite with charisma and that all important quality 'cred'...





OZ VERSUS NORTH AMERICA

UNCLE SAM STRIKES BACK!

by Bob Pearson

Norm Sanders' comparison of Australian and North American kayaking hit on some good points, but judging North American sea kayaking on the West Coast scene around Seattle and Vancouver is like judging Australian food on lamingtons, pavlovas and vegemite sandwiches.

My wife Merry and I were introduced to sea kayaking 5 years ago by a trip along the east coast of Lake Superior. Some Australians may be under the delusion that we were on sheltered waters, but Lake Superior is big enough to create its own weather, which it does with a vengeance, particularly in the colder half of the year. Only an idiot would venture onto Superior without checking the weather on the Canadian Coast Guard VHF channel, and monitoring it regularly (at least twice a day).

I can recall standing on a beach near Eagle River on the Keweenaw Peninsula (south shore of Superior) in late September 1993. Tubey 6 ft swells were breaking about 100 yards out, and if it wasn't for the wind the surf could have been described as ideal. I turned to Merry and said: "A surf like this in Australia would have me thinking about challenging fun. Here, the only thing it makes me think of is death." Water temperatures around 4 degrees Celsius are not uncommon in Superior, especially if there's been an inversion.

After 5 glorious days in all kinds of weather, camping on pristine beaches, seeing the Aurora Borealis the first night out, passing no other vessels except a sailboat on the first day and a canoe on the last, we were well and truly hooked. As soon as we got back to Detroit we hotfooted it around to Great River Outfitters, sponsor of the Great Lakes Sea Kayak Club, and signed up for the Great Lakes Sea Kayaking Symposium held each year at the beginning of August at Grand Marais on Lake Superior.

Stan and Ema Chladek, owners of GRO, rented us plastic Skerrays for the symposium. At least half the

people there had VCP boats, and rudders were conspicuously absent. We had a paddling lesson from VCP founder Frank Goodman (who paddled around Cape Horn with 3 mates in Nordkapps in 1977); rescue, eskimo roll, and boat handling workshops with BCU qualified instructors; and tried out all the VCP boats plus some local product, including skin boats. By the campfires at night we heard war stories about the Gales of November. Each year around Halloween the hardcore members of the GLSKC celebrate the end of the paddling season by setting up camp at Agawa Bay on the east coast of Superior, opening their bottles of Captain Morgan rum, and performing mystic rites to induce Nanook of the North to send down the gales. Sometimes they get what they ask for. Storm surf on Lake Superior is not for the faint of heart, even when it's small. The water is bloody cold (dry-suits are the preferred mode of dress), the waves steep and close together, and there are a lot of rocks.

On our return to Detroit we bought a fibreglass Skerray and ordered a customised Pintail from the factory. Later that year we went to our first "Gales," but it was a quiet year. Some of the old hands blamed me for offending Nanook by using Ouzo in the rites. Maybe they were right - my kayak mysteriously flipped over on a ripple, and in the freezing water I was barely able to wet exit, let alone try to roll up. I wasn't wearing a dry suit. I wasn't even wearing my wet suit. I was wearing my warmest clothes, and rubber boots! I didn't die, but it took me 3 hours to get warm in the sauna. It was about minus 5 degrees Celsius on the beach. The water was warmer.

At the end of July 1993 we quit our jobs, fired up the VW camper, hitched up the kayak trailer, and headed off on a 21-month trip around North America, following


the coast as much as possible. That trip confirmed what we had been told about North American kayaking: in the east the tendency is to VCPstyle boats, and in the west, particularly the northwest, to wide, flatbottomed, ruddered boats.

But a tendency is all that it is, nothing more. There is a much greater variety in kayak styles and building materials in North America than there is in Australia, and the kayakers range from those who can (and have) paddled from California to Hawaii to those who shouldn't be left alone in a bathtub.

Some of Norm's observations are certainly valid, but only up to a point. We would probably agree with him about a lot of things, particularly the skills of some kayakers. For example, at the West Coast Sea Kayaking Symposium at Port Townsend we observed what was to us a very strange and puzzling phenomenon, until we hit on the reason for it. We were helping a west coast outfitter demonstrate VCP boats (this was a small sideline for them - their primary product was their own boats), and at least half the people trying them out would step into the small VCP cockpits, then try to sit down, and get very confused when they couldn't. Apparently this was the method they used to enter the huge cockpits in some of the locally made boats. But - and this is a very big but - at the same symposium there were people handrolling my Pintail.

The so-called west coast style of kayak developed because a lot of the waters around Seattle and Vancouver are sheltered, and deceptively calm. This can be a real trap for the unwary. This area is home to some of the world's strongest currents, and anyone who ventures out on them without carefully consulting tide tables and current charts and checking on the weather can easily get into serious trouble. It's also a good idea to consult the Canadian Government publication on the local weather

(Continued on page 29)



patterns, a real eye opener for anyone contemplating paddling anywhere around Vancouver island or anywhere else in the "sheltered" coastal waters between Washington and Alaska. I'm rather surprised that Norm calls these waters benign. It's a great place for paddling, but it bites when you aren't looking.

Despite the apparent predominance of big beamy kayaks (people actually take webbers and bags of charcoal on trips), there are a lot of serious sea kayakers in the northwest. Our first kayaking experience in Washington was at the invitation of some people we ran into in a campground parking lot. We joined them for "Babette's Feast," an annual surfing/feasting event on the Pacific Coast of the Olympic Peninsula. The surf wasn't huge, but it was big enough to be challenging and good enough to have some fun. About half of the paddlers used whitewater kayaks, and the rest used sea kayaks. It was the first time I'd been able to compare the Pintail's surfing performance with a variety of boats. It won easily.

Just like the Great Lakes kayakers, the west coasters have their crazy time. It's called the Surf Pummel, and it's held in the middle of winter on the Washington Coast at a place called La Push. This is serious stuff - Hawaii size waves, usually accompanied by a storm. And they use real kayaks, not wimpy sit-on-tops like the Tsunami Rangers paddle.

The waters of the Pacific Northwest are magnificent for sea kayaking, but it starts raining in mid-October and doesn't stop until March. By mid-November there was mould inside the VW, and we suspected it would soon start growing on us. So we headed south for some cleansing sunshine, stopping only to resample the amazing variety of hand-made cheeses and ice cream at the Bandon Cheese Factory in Oregon and some of the magnificent ales at the many microbreweries along the way. (Believe it or not, some of the best beer in the world is now being brewed in the home of Schlitz and Budweiser!)

The coast of Oregon was being pounded by huge storm waves, and by the time we got to California the surf was awesome. (This was early December 1993, when Mark Foo, one of Hawaii's top big-wave riders, was killed at Mavericks near San Francisco). There were hordes of board riders wherever the waves were accessible, and we suspected they wouldn't take too kindly to having a sometimes out-of-control 17 ft kayak in their midst. We kept heading south, hoping the surf would still be up when we got to Mexico.

But then one afternoon we were sitting around writing letters at the San Clemente marina, one of the few sheltered spots between LA and San

Diego, and a couple of greybeards rolled up in an old Chevy with two serious sea kayaks on the roof and said: "Why are you guys sitting around here? The best surf in 20 years is rolling in!" "Didn't think there was any room for kayaks in the surf around here," we replied, "so we're heading for Mexico. We figure it won't be so crowded down there." "Well, we've been surfing all day, and a bunch of us will be hitting the waves again tomorrow. If you're not doing anything more important, like writing a letter to your mother, go to the state park at San Onofre, just south of here. It's only six bucks to get in. The board riders let the kayakers have the section at the south end near the nuclear reactor. We'll be there about 9."

And they were. About 50 of them. And the surf was great - beautiful 12ft swells - and those septic sea kayakers really knew how to handle it. And the water was actually a little warm near the reactor, so we didn't have to worry about the Great Whites.

I've been kind to Norm so far because I can understand how he got the wrong impression he was distracted by all those women sea kayakers. But there's one thing I'm not going to let him get away with - "In North America the waves are smaller." Bullshit Norm. Pure unadulterated bullshit.



layer around the complete blade edge.

I have recently found that the tape on one paddle needed replacing because it was split in a couple of small places, but I also know how roughly the paddles were treated to do that small amount of damage. It really is a miracle tape for kayakers. Others also use it to protect the bow keel line on their expensive glass/kevlar sea-kayaks from "beaching" damage.

You can get it from Fibreglass Material Services in Sydney (Ph.(02) 624 2511), where it is sold in 1.5m packs for about \$20, which is enough to do 2 paddles (4 blades). They are very helpful. As you can see, it is not cheap, but fixing or replacing paddles is a lot more expensive, so I think it is excellent value for those fragile paddles we need to move forward.

John Holster



Chipped Blades

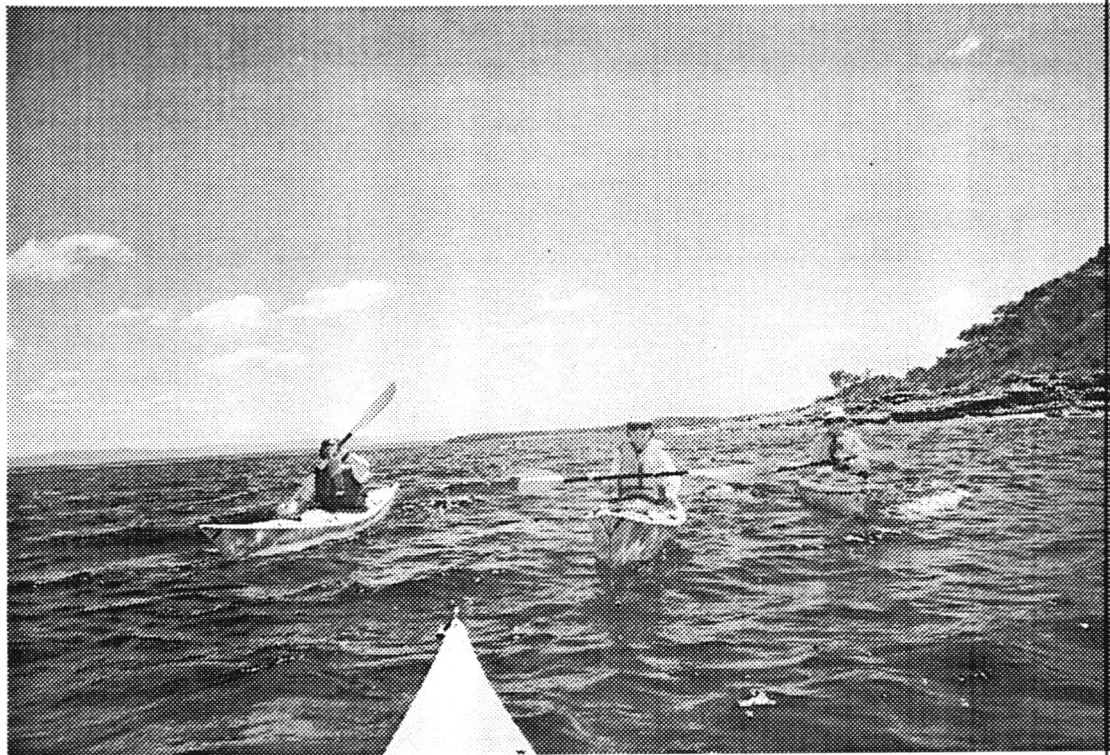
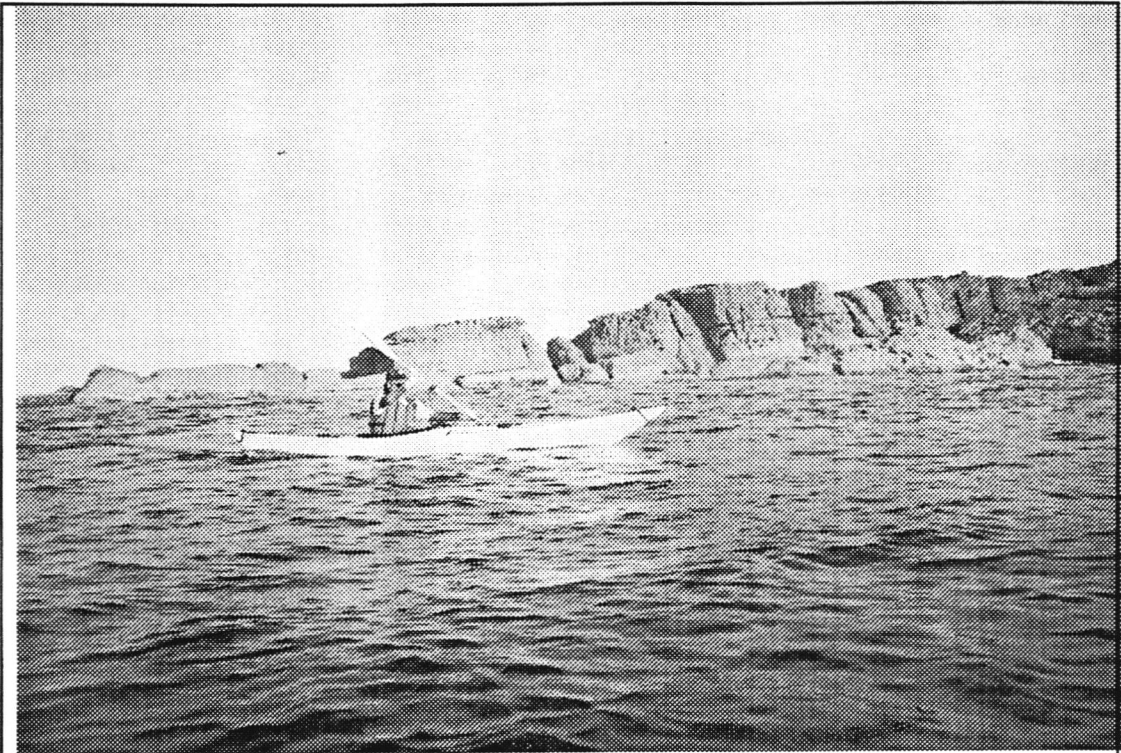
If you keep accidentally chipping the blade edges on your expensive (or cheap) fibreglass paddle blades, and want a solution, then I have a "tip" for you. Because chipped edges can lead to de-lamination of the paddle blades, it is better to avoid the problem in the first place, and here is how I do it.

One of the wonders of modern technology is a special stretchy-sticky plastic tape commonly referred to as "Helicopter-tape". It was developed to stop chips and abrasion damage to the leading edges of helicopter blades, but works extremely well on paddle blades too. I have used it on both paddles used with my double, and after about 2000+km of paddling the edges are just as good as the day the tape was applied, about 18 months ago. Prior to that the edges had quite a lot of small chips, and one had started to de-laminate.

The tape is about 50mm wide as supplied, and the first step is to cut it lengthwise into two strips about 25mm wide.

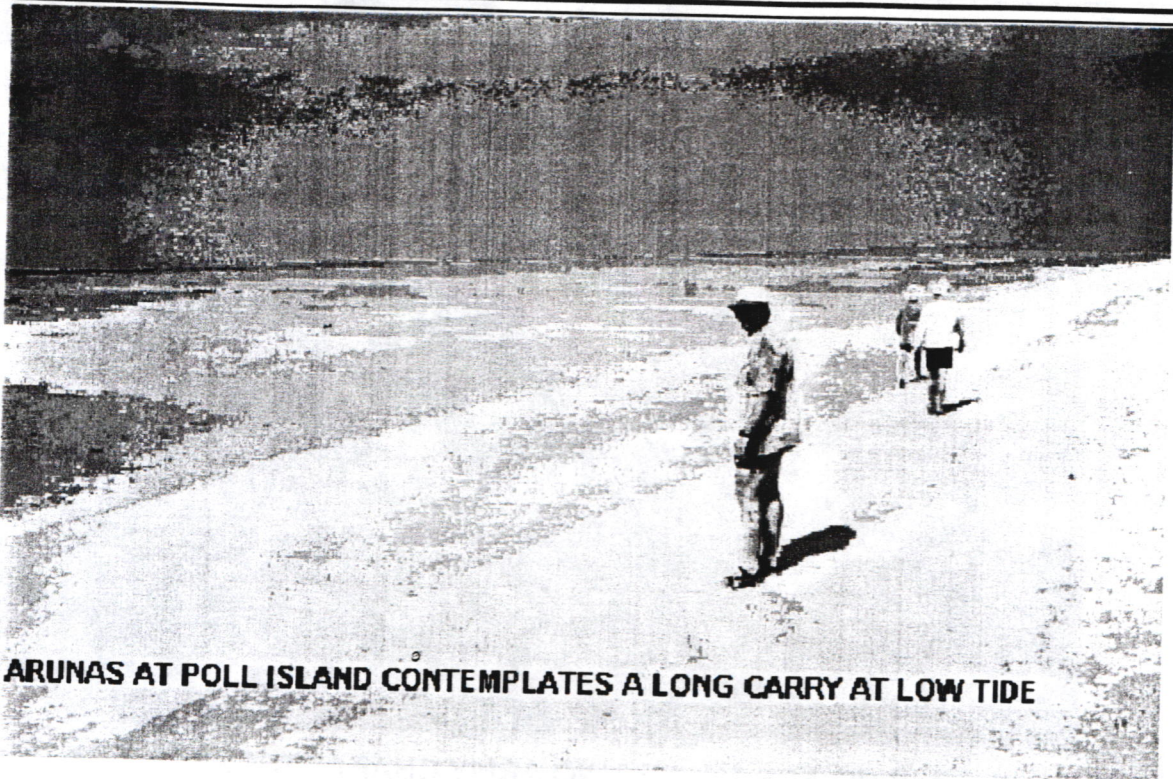
Step two involves cutting the tape to the right length, allowing for the fact that the tape is stretched when fitted.

Step three is to heat one piece of tape in a bowl of hot water for a minute or two, to make it nice and soft. Then quickly remove the tape, strip of the backing paper, and start applying to one blade edge, near the shaft. The tape is folded over the edge such that equal parts (about 12mm) are on each face of the blade. The trick is to apply some lengthwise stretch to the tape as it is tracked around the edge of the paddles blade. Then, when you get to the "corners" the tape miraculously folds over both sides without any creasing, so you end up with a beautiful smooth protective



ROCK'N'ROLL WEEKEND ACTION

TOP: Chris Soutter tries out his new Classic at Long Nose Point
BOTTOM: Chris with 'campwomen' Kerrie and Susan Hall near Honeymoon Bay



ARUNAS AT POLL ISLAND CONTEMPLATES A LONG CARRY AT LOW TIDE

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11 APRIL 1997

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Honeymoon Bay, Jervis Bay National Park

Commencing at 10.00am Saturday 20 April and Sunday 21 April

In line with its ongoing commitment to paddler education and instruction, the NSW Sea Kayak Club extends a warm welcome to members and prospective members to the first scheduled training weekend for 1996 on the 20/21 April at Honeymoon Bay. The weekend has no pre-requisite kayaking ability and is ranked as a Grade 1 paddle on the Club's grading system. The training will be conducted on the sheltered waters of Jervis Bay. The weekend is primarily aimed at people with limited kayaking experience though we would encourage people of all ability to attend either helping with instruction or contributing to the various forums and social activity. The weekend endeavours to combine practical training with discussions of issues which have been seen to be relevant to the local paddling community. Not only is participation free but all the sessions are optional and substantial free time has been scheduled for people to interact, paddle and/or do their own thing over the course of the weekend.

We will be camping adjacent to Honeymoon Bay. Toilets are provided but there is no fresh water available. Could those planning to attend please call Gary Edmond on (042) 840 836 (H).

Saturday

| Time | Session | Presenters |
|-------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 10.00-10.30 | Welcome & Introduction | |
| 10.30-12.00 | Personal Kayaking Safety | (N. Sanders G. Edmond) |
| 10.30-12.00 | Choosing & Fitting out a Sea Kayak | (D. Winkworth) |
| 10.30-12.00 | Basic Kayak Strokes | (A. Pilka G. Parker) |
| 12.00-1.00 | Lunch | |
| 12.00-4.00 | Beginner's Bracing and Broaching | (G. Edmond D. Winkworth) |
| 1.00-3.00 | Eskimo Rolling | (A. Pilka G. Parker N. Sanders) |
| 3.00-3.30 | Beverage Break | |
| 3.30-4.30 | Trip Planning Forum | (N. Sanders A. Pilka G. Parker) |
| 4.30- | Free time | |

Sunday

| Time | Session | Presenters |
|-------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 9.00-1.00 | Beginner's Bracing and Broaching | (G. Edmond D. Winkworth) |
| 10.00-12.00 | Group Safety and Communication | (N. Sanders) |
| 10.00-12.00 | Rescues and Towing | (A. Pilka G. Parker) |
| 12.00-1.30 | Lunch | |
| 1.30-3.30 | Choosing & Fitting out a Sea Kayak | (D. Winkworth N. Sanders) |
| 1.30-3.30 | Rescues Towing and Basic Strokes | (A. Pilka G. Edmond G. Parker) |
| 4.00-4.30 | Conclusion/debrief | |

Description of Sessions

Personal Kayaking Safety. This session addresses approaches to kayaking on an individual level with the aim of enhancing safe paddling. Participants will discuss an array of topics including weather, navigation, equipment, ability, the NSW Board of Canoe Education's training scheme and understanding the Club's grading system.

Choosing & Fitting out a Sea Kayak. This session is designed for paddlers who have recently purchased a sea kayak, are considering doing so or are wishing to modify or repair their existing kayak. Attention will be given to design differences between the many sea kayaks available to the consumer. Strengths and weaknesses in design and construction will be considered. In addition there will be some discussion of modifications such as moving and tailoring boats to individual requirements, including: thigh support for rolling, back support, water tightness, shifting bulkheads, rudder and skeg configurations as well as materials and equipment to use in modifications and repairs. There should also be opportunities to paddle a variety of kayaks both during this session and throughout the weekend. Just ask someone politely.

Basic Kayak Strokes. This practical skills based session is aimed to provide the paddler with an assortment of basic strokes which will equip them to deal with a variety of conditions. Those strokes to be discussed will include an efficient forward and backward technique with adjustments for wind, turning the kayak, basic support strokes such as low and high braces, stopping the kayak quickly and the draw stroke.

Beginner's Bracing and Broaching. If you are concerned about surf and are tentative about landing or getting out from the beach this session is for you. *Beginner's Bracing and Broaching* assumes no prior knowledge of the surf and very limited kayaking experience. It is not aimed to teach surfing but rather practical techniques for beach entries and exits. Instruction will focus upon means of identifying and avoiding the most difficult places to land and potential problems with technique regularly encountered by paddlers. Beside capsize, the most common problem experienced is paddlers having their kayak uncontrollably pushed sideways (broaching) by a wave. The practical session will provide demonstrations, instruction and opportunities to practice, under supervision, a simple stroke (brace) which can radically reduce the tendency to capsize or lose stability in this event. Because of problems with congestion on a relatively small beach this session will be limited to a maximum of 10 participants on each day and will run for about four hours (not all in the kayak).

Trip Planning. For paddlers who may have been limited to short paddling trips to those considering extended expeditions, this forum is designed to discuss a range of issues which invariably require consideration. The discussion will encompass means of obtaining local information about places to paddle, selecting suitable paddlers with similar expectations, organising pick-ups or car shuffles and the equipment needs which trips of various duration might demand. The discussion should give some insight to how to adequately plan and prepare for those overnight paddles from the Club Calendar and allow easy opportunities to answer all sorts of concerns and curiosities.

Eskimo Rolling. This hardly requires any introduction. A reliable eskimo roll is a ticket to more challenging paddling and/or a powerful confidence booster for a paddler in any conditions. The tranquil and shallow waters of Honeymoon Bay afford a great environment for the provision of practical assistance to those who have never attempted to eskimo roll or who are still mastering the technique. The NSW Board of Canoe Education has recently added the eskimo roll as a compulsory component of their sea kayak proficiency course: a course which the NSW SKC encourages its members to undertake. Participants might like to bring a face mask and a wetsuit.

Group Safety and Communication. Another discussion of kayaking safety. This forum is aimed at exploring group rather than individual concerns. It will consider such issues as managing group spread, negotiating the different objectives amongst paddlers, the type of equipment which a group of kayakers should carry on short paddles and/or longer trips, technologies for communicating, the issue of leadership, the determination of abilities - especially where paddlers are unknown to each other and contingency plans if something goes wrong.

Rescues and Towing. Another practical session which provides paddlers with the extremely important skill of being able to rescue another kayaker or facilitating their own rescue. Those who are competent eskimo rollers will, in addition, be encouraged to attempt a self-rescue known as a *re-enter and roll*. For those who are not able to roll other approaches to self rescue such as the use of a 'paddle float' will be demonstrated. In addition to rescues there will be practice in towing another kayak. This will include an assisted tow where two or more people tow a paddler who has lost (hypothetically) balance or co-ordination. Again these are skills which are mandatory for the Board of Canoe Education's Sea Proficiency Award.

NSWSKC Paddle Grading System

ABILITY

Sea kayaking is by its nature dangerous. The sea does not suffer complacency kindly. Paddlers should, therefore, aim to minimise their risk. The paddle grading system is provided as a guide for members to **SELF-ASSESS** their suitability for club paddles. The various grades are a reflection of ability, experience and fitness. Through inspection of the grading system and/or discussion with the particular 'paddle coordinator', prospective paddlers should determine whether they are competent to attend. With the exception of grade 0-2 paddles; where very little experience and ability are expected, prospective paddlers should determine their suitability of their **OWN ACCORD**. You should not expect strangers/others to simply assess your competence and stamina. If you are in doubt then don't go.

The NSWSKC reserves the right to prevent people from participating in club paddles. Authority is vested in the paddle coordinator and/or senior/experienced paddler(s) and/or instructor(s). The occasion may arise where a co-ordinator(s) and/or one or more of the senior/experienced paddler(s) and/or instructor(s) may prohibit a person from paddling on the 'club paddle'. Such an exclusion does not constitute an implicit approval of remaining non-prohibited paddlers. For the exclusion might, for example, be generated from a personal knowledge of the excluded individual's deficient paddling ability or equipment. Such a vetting process will be exceptional as paddlers will be expected to exclude themselves. **ALL RESPONSIBILITY** lies with the individual contemplating participating in the paddle to comply with the advertised standard.

Paddles of grading 0-2 will usually have a 'paddle leader' to offer both instruction and leadership where required. Paddles ranked >2 (greater than 2) may or may not have an identifiable 'paddle leader'. Often there will be a consensus achieved through negotiation. No one person, including the 'paddle coordinator' assumes responsibility for paddlers. In such circumstances paddlers are obviously committed to communal safety and well-being but they should be prepared to care for themselves in the event of complications.

EQUIPMENT

Any paddler anticipating attending a club paddle should, unless otherwise stated, possess as a minimum the following equipment.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Essential: | Well maintained sea kayak with bulkhead(s) and buoyancy. |
| | Fitted decklines |
| | Personal Flotation Device (PFD) |
| | Tow rope (>10m) 15m |
| | Cagg or paddle jacket |
| | 1st Aid Kit (group) |
| | Spray skirt |
| | Whistle |
| | Compass |
| | Paddle and paddle leash |
| | Warm clothing, matches, food and water. |
| | Spare paddle (group) |

Recommended: map(s); flares; knife and relevant personal items eg. medication.

Possession of this equipment and enforcement of these requirements are not the responsibility of the 'paddle coordinator' for paddles Graded >2 (greater than 2). The individual paddler is expected to conform of their own accord. Obvious failure to meet the standard may lead to prohibition from the particular club paddle by the coordinator(s) and/or experienced paddler(s) and/or instructor(s). Where an individual fails to meet the required minimum standard of equipment and/or competence and yet undertakes to continue, the paddle coordinator(s)/experienced paddler(s)/instructor(s) assume no responsibility for that action. The individual is most familiar with their own gear and ability. Emphasis is upon **SELF-REGULATION**.

Definitions

'Club paddle': a paddle advertised in the NSWSKC calendar or on the *Infoline*.

'Paddle coordinator': member who disseminates information about a particular paddle. There is no imputed onus of leadership.

'Senior/experienced paddler': member with considerable paddling experience.

'Instructor': a person with sea kayak instructor qualifications recognised by the ACF or NSW Board of Canoe Education.

'Paddle leader': person(s) who formally lead paddles Graded from 0-2. On paddles Graded >2 a leader is a person who has formally nominated themselves as such through the paddle advertising. In both instances they may be distinct from the paddle coordinator. It should be remembered that in the second instance (grade >2) there may be no leader.

* All advertised paddles should clearly identify paddle co-ordinator, paddle leader (where appropriate) and base grade.

The grading system is intended as a rough guide for members to self-assess their suitability for club paddles.

| Grade | Description & Pre-requisites | Scaling Factors | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|--|--|-------------|-------------|----------------------|-------|-------|-----|---------|----------|-----|---------|-------|-----|-------|-------|-----|
| 1 | Beginner - Closed or protected water - instruction available. No experience required. Might not be influenced by bad weather. | For grades 1 & 2 <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Wind</td> <td>Seas</td> <td>Add(for each)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><10kn</td> <td><1.5m</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10-15kn</td> <td>1.5-2.5m</td> <td>0.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15-25kn</td> <td>>2.5m</td> <td>1.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>>25kn</td> <td>>3.0m</td> <td>1.5</td> </tr> </table> | Wind | Seas | Add(for each) | <10kn | <1.5m | 0 | 10-15kn | 1.5-2.5m | 0.5 | 15-25kn | >2.5m | 1.0 | >25kn | >3.0m | 1.5 |
| Wind | Seas | Add(for each) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <10kn | <1.5m | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10-15kn | 1.5-2.5m | 0.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15-25kn | >2.5m | 1.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| >25kn | >3.0m | 1.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Novice with some paddling experience. <15km paddling day(s) primarily along accessible coastline or on protected water. Pre-requisite: able to perform assisted rescues. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Proficient . <25km paddling day(s). Possibly short open water crossings or non landable stretches: up to 5km. Pre-requisites: able to perform assisted rescues & surf entries & exits. | For Grades 3 & 4 <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Wind</td> <td>Seas</td> <td>Add(for each)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>>20kn</td> <td>>2.5m</td> <td>1.0</td> </tr> </table> | Wind | Seas | Add(for each) | >20kn | >2.5m | 1.0 | | | | | | | | | |
| Wind | Seas | Add(for each) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| >20kn | >2.5m | 1.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Intermediate . <40km paddling day(s). Longer open crossings and non landable stretches: up to 10km. Pre-requisites: able to perform assisted rescues and rescue others; surf entries & exits; reliable eskimo roll. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Advanced . Long open ocean paddling in large seas and adverse conditions. Pre-requisites: very reliable surfing skills & eskimo roll, ability to self rescue & rescue others. | For Grades 5 & 6 No weather modifications. Paddlers know their limits. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | Expedition . Potentially very challenging conditions. Only for experienced advanced paddlers. Probably invitation only. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

To obtain modified grading add the value for wind & seas.

eg. For a grade 2 paddle on a weekend with forecasted 12kn winds & 2m seas the new grade would be:

$$\text{Grade } 2 + 0.5 (\text{wind}) + 0.5 (\text{seas}) = \text{Grade } 3$$

1995/1996 CLUB CALENDAR

(Call Gary Edmond on (042) 84 0836 to notify events)

Jan-96

| WHEN | WHAT | WHERE |
|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| WEEKLY | | |
| Sundays ② | Michael Maleedy usually does a 30km paddle from Hunters Hill to North Head & return. If other experienced paddlers are available he occasionally paddles from the Spit out the Heads to somewhere north & return. Ideal for anyone interested in building or maintaining fitness. Contact Michael on (02) 816 2428 - home or (02) 332 1122 - work. | Sydney Harbour |
| Weekends ② | The Wollongong pod usually go for a paddle. If you would like to join them please call Gary Edmond on (042) 84 0836 -home or Dirk Stuber on (042) 68 1001. Instruction available. | Wollongong Area |
| Tuesdays ② (evening) | Paddle, Surfing Practice or a Barbecue. Meeting at either Clontarf or Long Reef around 5pm. A fairly casual affair and usually a lot of fun. contact either Dave Malcom on (02) 970 7633 - home or Chris Welsh on (02) 977 7356 - home. | Sydney Area |
| Tuesday ① (evening) | The Canberra pod usually go for a paddle on the Lake for an hour or so, sometimes followed by a Bar-B-Q. Meet at Black Mountain Peninsula at 6.00pm. Contact Arunas Pilka (06) 248 7828 (h) or (06) 283 5404 (w). | Canberra |
| Thursdays ② (evening) | Nevile Lazarus and friends paddle on the Harbour regularly on Thursday nights, leaving from Roseville Bridge Boat Ramp at quarter to seven and paddling to Balmoral Beach and return. Nevile would welcome other club members to come along , so if you are interested give Nevile a call at home on (02) 498 1706 or at work on (02) 624 2511 | Sydney Area |
| MARCH <i>Melt</i> | | |
| 30-31 ③ <i>30-31</i> | Broughton Island. Paddle to and camp on this popular kayaking destination. Call Paul Hewitson on (043) 241 922 (H). | Port Stephens |
| APRIL <i>April</i> | | |
| 20-21 ① <i>20-21</i> | The Next Step. NSW Sea Kayak Club Skills Training Weekend No 1, 1996. As the name suggest this weekend is designed for new and inexperienced paddlers; offering a variety opportunities to see and practice paddling techniques and discuss important kayaking issues such as safety and design and construction. We would encourage everyone, both competent paddlers and novices, to attend and contribute to the training, discussions and social activity. The weekend kicks off at 10.00am on the tranquil waters of Honeymoon Bay, Jervis Bay, via Currarong. Contact Gary Edmond (042) 840 836. | Jervis Bay |
| 27 ③ <i>27</i> | Terrigal - Pearl Beach. Day paddle of 22km - direction will depend upon conditions. Features include imposing cliffs and wreck of the "Maitland". Call Paul Hewitson on (043) 241 922 (H). | Terrigal or Pearle Beach |
| MAY <i>MAY</i> | | |
| 11-12 ② <i>11-12</i> | Royal Banquet. Consummate decadence. Gourmet overnight paddle through the Royal National Park. Contact Gary Edmond (042) 84 0836. | Bundeena |
| JUNE | | |
| 8-10 ③ & ⑤ <i>8-10 June</i> | Geroa to Ulladulla (3 days) or Jervis Bay to Ulladulla (2 days). This paddle offers paddlers a choice between (1) paddling for three days from Geroa to Ulladulla or (2) joining the other paddlers for the second and third days of their paddle from Jervis Bay to Ulladulla. The first day of the three day trip will be ranked Grade 5 as it will involve a paddle of 50km across open ocean including paddling some 12km offshore from Seven Mile Beach and finishing along the Becroft Peninsula. Alternatively, option (2) will be graded 3 and will consist of two days of coastal paddling around Wreck Bay and precincts. The two parties will arrange to meet on the morning of the 9th at a pre-determined location and will continue together. After the first day the whole paddle will be considered grade 3 and the emphasis will be on relatively leisurely touring. Contact John Caldwell (048) 622-818 or Gary Edmond (042) 840836. | Geroa & Jervis Bay |
| JULY | | |
| 13-14 ③ | Narooma to Batemans Bay - After the excitement of the Narooma Bar a fairly leisurely two day paddle to Batemans Bay. Camping on a deserted beach somewhere along the way. Participants will need to carry camping gear and be self sufficient. The paddle involves a car shuffle of approx. 60 km so an early start on Saturday is essential. Contact Arunas Pilka h: (06) 2487828 w: (06) 2835562. | |
| SEPTEMBER | | |
| 3-4 ① | Lindsay and Janice (who spoke at the AGM) would like some help with their important work. The banding will be at night on a bird sanctuary and the tagging from the back of a speed boat. Opportunity to explore the Five Islands off Port Kembla. Contact Dirk on (042) 681001 at home or (042) 952250 at work. Southern Ocean Seabirds Study Association (042) 716004. | Wollongong |

Prijon Sea Kayaks

We are the distributors of Prijon Kayaks in Australia and are about to import a container of whitewater and sea kayaks. Details of the two sea kayaks being brought in are as follows.

SEAYAK

The Seayak is reminiscent of the Greenland style open water kayak, and blowmolded using Plijon's worldwide exclusive HTP polyethylene. The Seayak has proven itself to be one of the best open water kayaks ever made. The trihedral hull is narrow at the waterline for high speed, flat at the bottom for stability, and the bow and stern are upturned for excellent rough water handling and continuous glide. This is a very easy boat to master, capable and comfortable for discerning paddlers as well as beginners. In the Seayak's cockpit there is considerable room for any size paddler, and comfortable functional foot and thighbraces giving fantastic body control to the craft, so with the Seayak it is easy to carve turns, eskimo roll and even play in the surf.

There are various levels of outfitting options for the Seayak however it is our intention to bring to you the ultra-light expedition model which has front and rear watertight foam bulkheads for extensive storage. The storage areas are accessed by hatches with inner neoprene covers with bungee seals and hard plastic covers sealed by two 15mm polyester webbing straps with side release buckles. Other technical data is as follows;

| | | |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Length & width | 490 x 610 cm | 16'1" x 24" |
| Weight | 26 kg | 56 - 60 lbs |
| Volume | 380 litres | 101 gals |
| Cockpit Size | 81 x 45 cm | 32 x 18" |
| Paddler Weight | 50 - 110 | 110 - 240 lbs |

Other features include ergonomic polyethylene seat, padded adjustable and detachable backrest, toglegrips, perimeter deck lines, gear nets and Prijon Seayak rudder, all inclusive for the reasonable price of only \$1,550.

ODYSSEE

The Odyssee is a compact double sea kayak with which you can reach a fast cruising speed without a great deal of effort. The Odyssee has many of the features of the Seayak including front and rear bulkheads with water tight hatches in the bow and roomy stern plus a deck with elastic gear storage web fore and aft and a new full perimeter deck line. The Odyssee comes with a Prijon rudder, cable guides, and pedal footbraces. It has detachable and adjustable backrests, toggle handle carry grips and comprises the following technical data;

| | | |
|----------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Length & Width | 490 x 67 cm | 16' 1" |
| Weight | 34kg | 75lbs |
| Volume | 440 litres | 116 gal |
| Cockpit Size | 81 x 45 cm | 32 x 18" |
| Paddler Weight | 50 -110 kg | 110 - 240 lbs each |

The all inclusive price of the Odyssee is only \$1,650.

Both Kayaks have cockpit sizes that accommodate Pnjon's double sided neoprene spraydecks with internal support bar to avoid sagging. The decks are watertight and come at an additional cost of \$110.

A limited number of Seayaks and Odyssee double sea kayaks will make up part of the container, so to ensure your boat please contact **Peter McIntyre** on **(043) 682438** or **Bob Pike** on **(02) 9982 4524**. A deposit of only \$200 will secure your boat with the balance payable upon delivery. Deposits can be made by cheque payable to **P. McIntyre & R Pike, C/- Lot 41 Bundaleer Crescent, Bensville. NSW 2251.**

FLORA

RACE SERIES - 1996

MANLY-WARRINGAH KAYAK CLUB Inc.

FLORA and Manly-Warringah Kayak Club Inc. presents two open water and two flat water Marathon Championship Races. With \$2000 sponsorship, each race will have major prizes and or trophies for class winners and placings. All competitors not winning a prize will be eligible to have their name in a draw for a prize.

RACE 1 : Saturday, April 13 1996 - BAYVIEW

Bayview; 10.30am, starting at Bayview Park, Pittwater Road to Barrenjoey and return; 20km.

For Surf Skis, Outriggers and Sea Kayaks.

RACE 2 : Saturday, May 25 1996- MIDDLE HARBOUR

Manly; 10.30am start at 16' Skiff Club East, Esplanade to Flagstaff, North Harbour, Bombora Bouys, Spit Bridge, back to North Harbour then to finish at club; 16km.

For Surf Skis, Outriggers and Sea Kayaks.

RACE 3 : Saturday, June 22 1996 - NARRABEEN

Berry Park, Narrabeen; 10am start at Berry Park to Mactier St. Bouy, Wimbledon St, Split Rock, Academy and return around Boat Shed Island, Football Oval, through the Slot, back to the Academy return to Boat Shed Island, Football Oval and finish at the Kayak Clubhouse; 19km.

For K1's, Outriggers, Surf Skis, TK1's, and Racing Sea Kayaks.

RACE 4 : Saturday, August 10 1996 - ROSEVILLE

Point Park, Roseville; 10.30 am start at Point Park, Roseville to Bantry Bay, Carrol Creek and return back to Point Park, then return to Carrol Creek, then finish at Point Park; 16km.

For K1's, Outriggers, Surf Skis, TK1's, and Racing Sea Kayaks.

Racing Requirements

- All K1's, TK1's, Surf Ski's and Outriggers to conform to relevant regulatory requirements.
- All craft to be robust and have positive bouyancy to prevent sinking
- Open Water races require all sea kayaks to have electric and or foot pumps.
- All craft to conform to MSB water safety requirements.
- MWKC reserves the right to determine whether any craft or competitor is unsuitable.
- The course and number of classes may vary depending upon the weather conditions and number of entrants.

Classes

Open, veteran (over 40), ladies and juniors.

Entry Fee : All single craft \$10.00 (each race)

Outriggers \$50.00 (each race)

For further details call Race Secretary Shane Tagg 9999 1849