

# Advanced Sea Kayak Club

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



## NEWSLETTER

### AIMS

1. PROMOTION OF SEA CANOEING
2. COMMUNICATION
3. ORGANISATION OF EVENTS AND CONFERENCES
4. SAFETY AND COACHING.

Secretary: John J. Ramwell.  
32, Glebe Road,  
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Huntingdon,  
Cams, PE18 0DG.

John J. Ramwell,  
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West Perry,  
Huntingdon,  
Cambs, PE18 ODG.

I usually give an introduction to the contents of the Newsletter here in the Editorial but as I have quite a bit of material to choose from I am not sure what I can afford to include. I do know there is a lot of correspondence and so this section is quite interesting. I thought the letters from the Victoria (Canada) Newsletter regarding John Dowd's views on sea canoeing particularly interesting and I hope you enjoy Raymond Rowe's account of our recent trip round some of the islands off the west coast of Scotland. I am not sure whether I'll be able to include the articles on WIND, FOG and MITTENS - and I am also keen to include the details of the COASTAL ADVISORY SERVICE, but, if not this time, then next.

YOUR contributions are crucial to the success of this Newsletter - so do please consider sending me articles, letters or accounts for inclusion.

SUBSCRIPTION Future subscriptions will be £3.00 per annum (January to January) and not £5.00 as muted in the last Newsletter. Having taken advice - (or at least some of it.....I'm not 'getting lost' for anyone!). I am keeping this Newsletter modest and with it the subscription also. I can maintain the quality and quantity of this letter without loss at £3.00 per subscription, - so start saving now.

4th. NATIONAL SEA CANOEING SYMPOSIUM

DATE November 20/21/22nd., 1981  
VENUE Eurosports Village, Ipswich, Suffolk.  
COST £45.00 inclusive of luxurious full board and lecture fees.  
DETAILS The weekend is based on lectures and discussion. For a change we have the added facility of a swimming pool on site.

This event has always been well attended in the past and I am waiting to see what sort of response I get for this year's symposium before I decide whether to move to a cheaper venue or knock it on the head. So far I have two dozen or so applicants and some complaints that it is too expensive - see correspondence section of this and previous newsletters. Let me know whether I can count on your support if I find a cheaper venue or whether you are prepared to come along as it stands at Ipswich - I do need to know.

Good Paddling,  
John Ramwell.

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A.S.K.C. SHOP

ASKC Ties £2.50 each inc. p & p.  
ASKC Stickers .30p each inc. p & p.  
ASKC Letterheaded paper @ 5p per sheet (orders in multiples of 10 only)  
The last Sea Canoeing Symposium Reports @ 75p each inc. p & p.  
ASKC 'T' shirts small/medium/large/X.large.....@ £3.00 each inc. p & p.  
ASKC sweat shirts small/medium/large/X large.....@ £6.00 each inc. p & p.  
ASKC woollen sweaters (see order form below and letter from Sharon in this Newsletter.  
Neoprene spray deck/vest (mention cockpit size when ordering as well as chest size) £25.00 available from Sharon Rowe.

Except for the woollen sweaters and the neoprene spray deck/vests, all available from me. John J. Ramwell, 32, Glebe Road, West Perry, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE18 ODG.

----- Please tear off -----

ORDER FORM FOR A.S.K.C. WOOLLEN SWEATERS

NAME..... Measurements.  
ADDRESS..... CHEST.....  
..... ARMPIT TO WRISTS.....  
..... ARMPIT TO HIPS.....

Send to Sharon Rowe, Siabod Cottage, Plas y Brenin, Capel Curig, N.Wales, LL24 OET.

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NYLON MITTENS by Roger Pratt from Kenilworth.

As a result of dissatisfaction with commercially available mittens suitable for sea canoeing I tried to think of the basic requirements of such an item.

I decided that a mitten should:

1. keep the hands warm.
2. give contact with the paddle
3. give easy entry and exit for the hands.

Warmth

Not as restrictive a requirement as first thought since most regular paddlers have adapted to the cold up to a point.

Contact.

Good control of the paddle clearly depends upon contact between hands and loom.

Exit and entry.

Existing nylon and neoprene offer excellent performance under conditions 1. and 2. above. I have sacrificed some of the margin under 1. to enable the paddler to:-

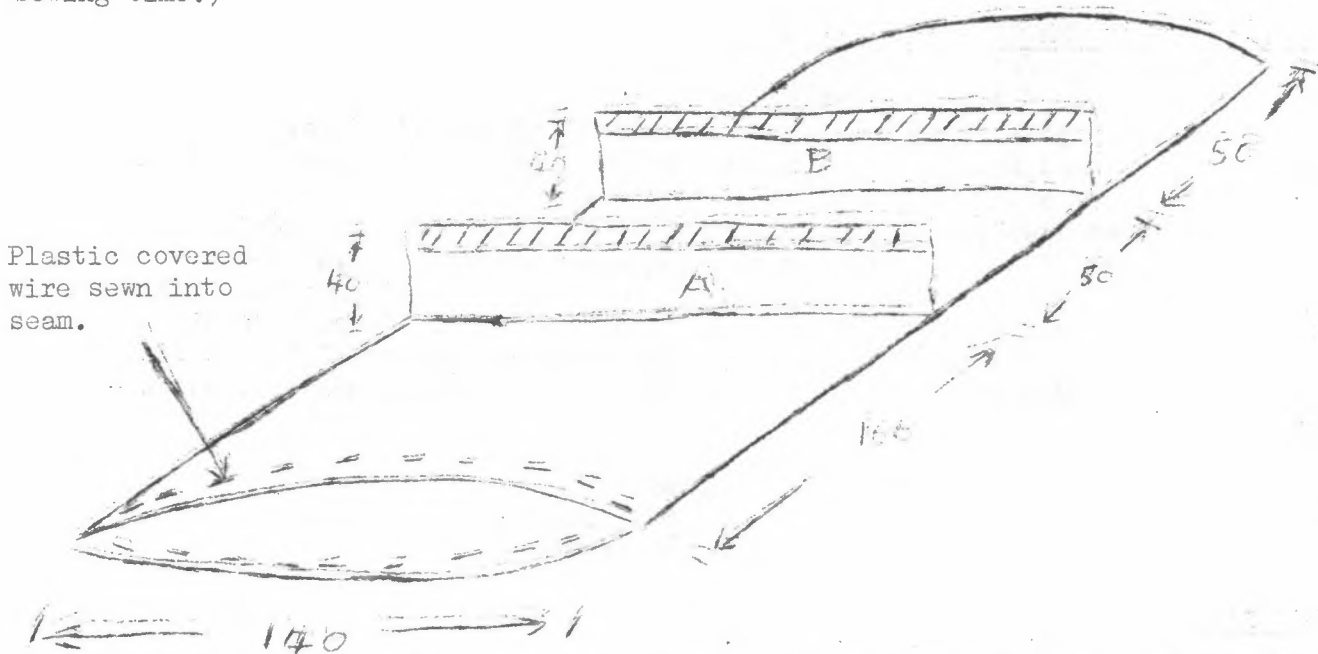
1. fit the second mitten with ease.
2. remove hands for rafting up, feeding, etc.

This important modification is achieved by sewing a piece of plastic covered wire (electric) into the wrist of the mitten. The opening may then be pinched closed to minimise the gap.

Additionally I find it easy to fold the mittens and stow them in the chest pocket of my bag.

Materials required

Nylon material, strong thread and velcro. Approximate cost £1.00 a pair (plus sewing time!)



Paddle fits between the flaps A and B which are folded over loom and held by velcro. All dimensions (in mm) are approximate. Allowance needed for seams.

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WANTED

SEA KAYAK Preferably Anus Acuta or Nordkapp.

Contact D.Wolfe,  
c/o Brockwood Park School,  
Bramdean,  
Hants, SO24 0Lq Phone Bramdean (096279 228)

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FOR SALE

SEA KAYAKS. Baidarka Explorer  
Fully rigged with deck lines and elastics, pump and bulk heads.  
Price £200.

Contact J.Ramwell  
32, Glebe Rd.,  
West Perry,  
Huntingdon, Cambs. Phone Huntingdon (0480) 811582.

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A few of us recently completed a weeks canoeing round some of the islands off the west coast of Scotland. Here is an account of this exped. by one of the members, Raymond Rowe.

"LEMON SORBET? WHAT THE HELL'S LEMON SORBET?!"

"I meant to tell mankind to aspire to a new state about which I could tell them little or nothing, to teach them to tread a long and lonely path which might or might not lead thither, to bid them dare to encounter all possible perils of nature unknown, to abandon all their settled manners of living and cut themselves off from their past and their environment, and to attempt a quixotic adventure with no resources beyond their native strength and sagacity."

Aleister Crowley - The Vertical World of Yosemite.

The hardships experienced by the intrepid explorer are as diverse as the adventures themselves. Life at the Crinan Hotel, (Base Camp for our attempt on one of the great Scottish classic sea trips.) is just another example of the purgatory we subject ourselves to in the name of the noble cause of Sea Paddling.

A padded elevator swept me to my room on the second floor with it's dark teak door labelled with gleaming brass numerals. Trying to tread lightly over the bowling green, nine inch pile carpet I made for the window to try to drop the room temperature to a cool 90 degrees F. It was rough but it would have to do.

At dinner we tucked into soup starters - an exhausted, half resuscitated mini lobster tried to claw out of each bowl - perhaps trained to return to the kitchen to decorate further dishes. Steaks, Lemon Sorbet, desserts all followed as the menu had promised - but it was food and we were glad to have anything. After the meal we briefly discussed the trip. Corryvreckan! The name alone causes a twitch in even the great names of this sea canoeing world. The Grey Dog! "Oh, yes, I've heard stories about that." Staffa! "Somewhere near the edge of the world is'nt it? Is'nt that where the fire-breathing dragon comes from?" Too many stories,- too much food and it's off on that long elevator ride to the second floor. Pre-warmed sheets, covers carefully folded back by the chamber maids and a final effort to shut off the bedside radio and flick the well-within-reach light switch, and it's a long, hard night of sleeping.

Actually the hardships of Expedition breakfasts no longer bother me - I just occupy my mind with plans for the day. I must say, however, that although my egg was OK, the bacon was a little overcooked. The porridge was fine - anyhow, it's only food - fuel for the human machine - so what if the grapefruit juice is a little overchilled. Just what do you expect for £50!!

On top of the misery of a night in a five star hotel, Sunday morning dawned very wet and grimsville looking. "It's going to OK, Ray, I've got a good feeling about this one" (J.R.) It took a while to decipher this declaration as it was stifled by a deluge of rain water running off his anorak hood. My mind drifted back to the last time John said this to me. It was Aberdaron beach, dawn, grim and in the background a Nordkapp with paddler was being quietly back looped in dumping surf.

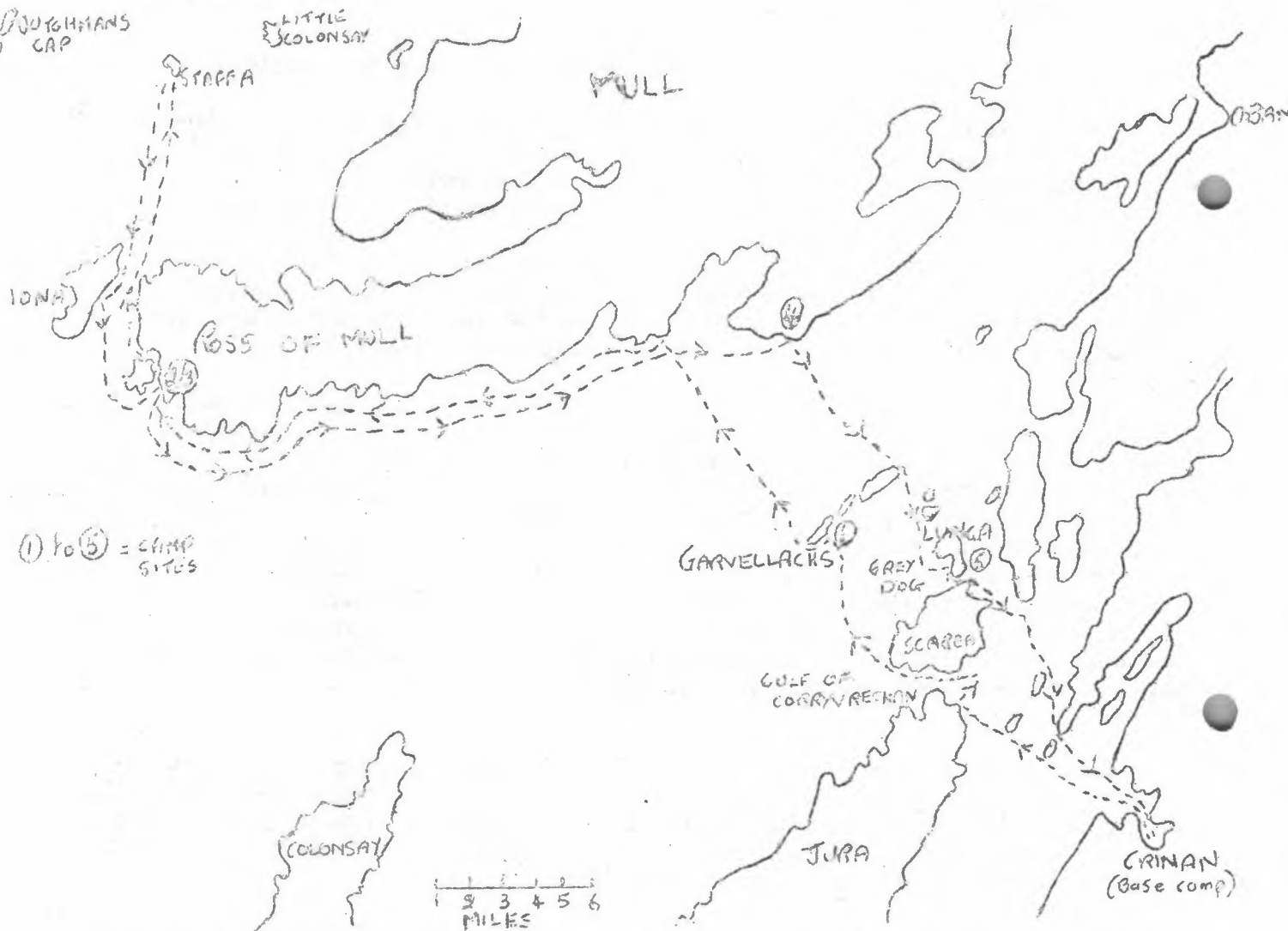
Anyhow, blow me if this time the sun did'nt come out and the wind drop as soon as we put our kayaks on the water. Nice one J.R.!

It's about six nautical miles from Crinan across the Sound of Jura to the northern tip of Jura itself, an island well known to the Scottish seafarers. It's conical triple peaks, "The Paps" can be seen clearly from the North of Ireland and



were used by ancient sailors for transits on their passages across the dreaded Northern Channel to Ireland. The Gulf of Corryvreckan is a narrow channel just over half a mile wide between the northern tip of Jura and the much smaller island of Scarba. The constriction, combined with a sudden underwater shelf stretching into the narrows from Scarba is the cause of the famous 'whirlpool'. Recent investigations have shown that the water movement is not in fact a whirlpool but an upsurge combined with the usual overfall effect and resulting in a heavy breaking sea.

We flopped onto the dried heather on the high ground overlooking the Gulf and watched the slack water turn rapidly to the north-west going flood stream, wondering about the horrors that lay in wait for us. Into the second hour we paddled through, close to Scarba's south shore, too close in to tackle the hollow slapping waves in the main stream of the overfall. The same north going stream helped us on our way to the rugged uninhabited little string of islets known as the Garvellachs. On these, partly standing bee-hive type dwellings are in evidence to show that once monks led a stark existence on these islands. Don't ask me why they chose these remote stark islands to make their landings after crossing from Ireland.



Our first camp was set up, stoves lit, driftwood gathered, long before the sun did its splendid 'orange orb sinking on the horizon' bit. "Enjoy this weather, there can't be much more of it. Red sky at night - shepherds house on fire." Frank added, as we all pictured the inevitable tempestuous Scottish weather surely still to come our way. "Midges?" you ask, nope. A slight breeze and one of Bruce's small fires seemed to keep them at bay. Bruce, a Scot and a latent arsonist, deserves mention at this stage. For six days he waged war on driftwood and beach debris. His fires were small, at least, that's how they looked seen from half a mile away. To go closer was to suffer bombardment from sparks, rock shrapnel and spitting plastic. Eyes streaming, hands, face, legs spotted and mottled from the heat, Bruce would pile on lobster creels, fish boxes, whole trees, - he even tossed on a deadgoat one night.. No one knows is he would really have thrown on a Nordkapp given the chance, in his state of half-crazed dementia.

So that was how it went on, -day following day. The next day was an eight nautical mile crossing to the Island of Mull with it's impressive solitary Munroe-Ben More, 3164 feet and along it's wild southern shore to the entrance to the Sound of Iona. Continuous sun and only slight head winds made it an easy twenty mile day.

Mull is a wild but very beautiful island with many sheltered bays on its seaward southern shores. Bruce drooled over the piles of driftwood and drinking water was plentiful following several weeks of wet weather.

The Sound of Iona was sheltered with little tidal movement as we paddled out of it towards the island of Staffa. This little island is about five nautical miles from Iona and around it are scattered similar geometric-shaped islands - fascinating in name as well as profile. Lunga, Dutchmans Cap, Fladda, Geometra. The whole area is a rambling sea canoeists paradise. As we closed on Staffa we saw the striped effect of the basalt columns forming its cliffs and the black yawning mouth of Fingals Cave.....and also people. Yes! People! We awakened from 'Sea Canoeist trance' to find boat loads of tourists, sightseers lined up like cormorants on the cliffs....and worst of all, canoes. "But I though nobody else in the world had ever been out here!" J.R. was quietly flicking through his book of 'explanations for awkward moments'.

A handrail sweeps round the cliffs and into the cave - a sort of miniature Giants Causeway. The island itself is haunting and beautiful, but how soon before it gets a chip shop and space invaders machine? Nice island - shame about the crowds.

Bruce - now salt encrusted and sun burned, was still smouldering with desire and powered off towards Iona saying we must see its Cathedral. It is a superb historic building with a commanding view of the islands, and Bruce savoured the stories of Viking plunder and .....yes, you guessed, - burning.

Celtic crosses and American tourists everywhere.

That night back at camp on Mull, Bruce celebrated the days journey with a conflagration that would have shaken even Red Adair.

In yet another day of sunshine we leisurely retraced the southern shore of Mull in an absolutely flat calm. What did we do to deserve that weather? No wind, no swell, - the kayaks mirrored on the sea and Razorbills and Guillemots floating on invisible lilos giving Costa del Sol.

At the end of that day - a storm beach campsite, its boulders tossed into terraces by pounding waves and.....guess what was piled at the back of all this. If you could have seen Bruce's eyes, bulbous, pulsating, rolling like radar scanners, - drinking in the mountains of beautiful crisp, dry driftwood. Like a child at Christmas, he ran amongst the stuff, playing with a log here, jumping on a plank there, trying to gather it all and knowing that twenty lorries could'nt hold this lot. He was deliriously happy. The rest of us were happy for Bruce and pleased with the trip so far. Frank led some community singing - three miles away and still roasting from that nights towering inferno.

Another sunny day saw us across to the Garvellachs and on to Scarba. The campsite that night was midge city. We were beside the Grey Dog Race. The weather was fantastic, the midges were awful - we retired early hoping for an early and exciting run through the race next morning. No rough water, perhaps it needs more wind, we glided through the race and south to Crinan Lough.

Next morning saw us back at Crinan Harbour and in time to see a weather change moving in. The brave adventurers returned, sunburnt, midge bitten, driftwood scorched and still confused about Lemon Sorbet. Those taking part: Raymond Rowe, John Ramwell, Frank Maguire, Bruce Cook, Mark Attenburrow, Bob Murray.

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The following is taken from the Newsletter of the "OCEAN KAYAKING ASSOCIATION OF B.C., Canada.

I am sure most of you will know the characters mentioned, but just in case..... John Dowd is a well known sea canoeist living in Canada and is author of SEA KAYAKING; Derek Bamforth runs Pacific Canoe Base in Victoria, Canada; Frank Goodman is a Director of Valley Canoe Products, England and a very experienced sea canoeist; and Derek Hutchinson has designed sea kayaks, written one of the best books on sea canoeing and is among the most experienced sea canoeists in this country.

FROM JOHN DOWD, CANADA.

I am concerned that the 'Ocean Kayaking Association of British Columbia' agrees with my suggestion that sea kayak assessment should be based upon experience yet seems to be continuing to follow the British system of set tests. These tests run the risk of being more than just innocent props for hesitant egos - someone might begin to take them seriously. If they do we will be encumbered with wrong and wholly inappropriate guidelines. Worse; they could lead school administrators to believe they could safely hire somebody on the basis of the certificates, and this could be disastrous.

The British took what they knew about white-water and re-applied to the sea. The so-called deep-sea rescues (X, H, HI, etc) are an example of this application being very bad advice for touring kayaks on the sea. I suspect a legal case could be made against anyone teaching such methods. They simply don't work with loaded canoes - even in flat water and certainly not in the sort of sea conditions likely to cause a capsize in the first place.

As sea kayaking grows in popularity, more ambitious trips are going to be undertaken by less experienced paddlers. If they follow the British infatuation with narrow boats and the idea that all they need as a back up to rolling is two companion boats on which to rely for an assisted rescue, we can look forward to some more serious accidents among ocean kayakers.

The Washington Kayak Club's brush with death last February and a certain epic off the West Coast last summer highlights the dangers of relying on such rescue methods as the deep water techniques. (In really rough seas, the last thing a kayaker wants nearby is another kayak!) It also demonstrates another potential time bomb; this is the number of tippy kayaks being sold to inexperienced paddlers - Eskies, Nordkapps, Baidarkas. Some of these boats are sold as 'expedition kayaks'. This is misleading. A Nordkapp or Baidarka is about as good for expeditions as a TR7 sports car is for overland travel. They can do the job. They don't do it well but they do it with style. There the innocent comparison ends. There have been too many close shaves with narrow boats being used by novices or being used for journeys beyond the limits of their design. I wonder how much trouble that Washington group would have been in had they been using stable kayaks with a good double in the group.

John Dawson, for five years program director of the Outward Bound School, pointed out that certification systems generally lead to exactly the opposite effect from that which is intended. It protects those people you would otherwise wish to eliminate - the certificate collectors - who would often be unable to find such employment on the basis of their experience and judgement ability alone.

I don't claim we will make sea kayaking completely safe by drawing up our own guidelines, but the British rules have been around long enough for their flaws to become apparent - even to the British themselves. I suggest we gather the most experienced ocean kayakers from Washington and B.C. then lock everyone in a room 'till they come up with a set of safe guidelines. Associated with such a conference could be a professional association of companies and schools which run tours or courses on the sea to act as watch-dogs against unsafe practices or the hiring of ill-qualified personnel by their own members. The warning to the professionals is clear: regulate yourselves or risk having inappropriate standards imposed upon you business.

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FROM DEREK BAMFORTH, PACIFIC CANOE BASE, VICTORIA.

Re: John Dowd's letter. I am surprised to find out from him that Nordkapps are 'tippy', after selling them successfully for three years it sure came as a shock. Personally I would rather travel across Canada in a TR7 than a dump truck.

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FROM FRANK GOODMAN, VALLEY CANOE PRODUCTS, NOTTINGHAM, ENGLAND.

Dear John,

I was really surprised to read your comments on sea boats in relation to the formulation of tests and assessments for sea canoeing. After talking to you at length back in '77 and chatting again with you in '78 at Crystal Palace, I found it almost impossible to believe that the out-of-date, ignorant and totally 'head in the sand' comments could be coming from you.

Sea canoeing is an on-going sport. It has grown continually as people have learnt from mistakes, and have proven points in practice that started as theory. It would be a tragedy if we stopped looking at all aspects of the sport and learning from all the very different ways of tackling safety problems. An open mind, receptive to new ideas is a sure way to improve standards; dogma and bias are in themselves dangerous as they preclude imaginative thinking.

I'd like to comment on your comments, and I'd be glad to hear your comments on my comments!

Your first paragraph sets a strange emotional tone.....of course experience is important, but to pretend that tests can ONLY be for the immature is pretty strong! We all know of the 'bits of paper' merchants who are a pain in the neck, but some basic standards, drawn up by mature people, and applied with humility, must form the basis of any sport with an element of danger built in to it. I have seen many immature people with a host of trips behind them who are totally incapable of making sensible sea trips! In fact, two articles in the current issue of CANOEING (No 41, April, 1981) underline the point. Read the article titled HEBRIDES and compare it with the one called KINGUSSIE TO HELLS MOUTH. Where do you place the value of experience between the two?

Deep sea rescues of the X, H, variety, used very successfully for unladen kayaks have been dead since 1975....six whole years.....as a method to be used for laden sea boats. Only you are saying that they are used with laden boats.....I've never heard anyone in the U.K. suggest that they work, so there is no danger of a court case over here! Since 1975 any expedition carrying a lot of gear has used the deck pump-out method, and most leaders of trips for beginners have a pump on their boat with a tube long enough to reach the other boats, so that he can pump out his charges if they get into trouble. With the right kayak it is not necessary to have a pump, and with a bit of thought it is quite reasonable to rescue a heavily laden boat.....I'll leave that one with you.

Paragraph three is just a self-fulfilling prophecy.....and the basic premise is a figment of your imagination.....we're not infatuated with narrow boats.

On to paragraph four.....

You really ought to check out your boat types more carefully before lumping them all together as 'tippy'. I don't know what the definition of tippy is, but certainly there is a world of difference within the three designs you mention. I certainly wouldn't call the Nordkapp tippy, and how you can say it is 'nt an expedition boat...!?

Here is a short list of some of the expeditions made by the Nordkapp

British Nordkapp Expedition

British Expedition John O'Groats/Lands End.

Kayak Konnexion Mainz am Rhein - Watford Expedition.

Welsh Expedition to West Greenland.

British Expedition to Spizbergen

Circumnavigation of South Island New Zealand.

British Kayak Expedition Cape Horn.

Circumnavigation of North Island, New Zealand.

Circumnavigation of Ireland.

Circumnavigation of Tasmania.

British Alaskan Expedition

Circumnavigation of the British Isles.

British Baffin Island Expedition.

I doubt whether any other single design can match this list over the last few years.

Surely we must look at the total design of a kayak, and not just one aspect. As a boat designer as well as a boat paddler, I know that stability cannot be dismissed by rudimentary terms like 'tippy'. You might as well say 'All canoeists are twits!'. Lateral stability cannot be increased 'ad infinitum', and any increase in stability will bring with it certain undesirable features. This is true, not just with canoes, but with ANY TYPE OF BOAT. For example, a lot of care has to be taken with cargo boats of many thousand tons displacement to make sure that they are not too stable. If they are, they follow the water-line of the surface they are floating on and if the waves



are of just the wrong shape the ship capsizes ..... a capsize caused by stability! Exactly the same applies to kayaks, and we learnt a long while ago that in really bad conditions the most stable boat was one with a 'stable' cross section but with a narrow beam. The boat can be sat upright regardless of the slope of the water surface, at least this tends to protect against sea-sickness. What other advantages does this give? It means a kayak can be paddled safely in a breaking beam sea, and it means that even a boat loaded with 150 lbs. of gear (enough to be self-sufficient for one month) can be paddled at a reasonable speed. Let me remind you of your letter to me of August '78. You were talking about the chaps who paddled around Ireland and were amazed at their average speed of 33 miles per day ..... "which is three times what I can maintain." (your words) Now in fact that figure of 33 m.p.d. was wrong and was, as I remember, only 23 m.p.d. However, Paul Caffyn, circumnavigating the U.K., a distance of 2,200 miles, made 32 m.p.d. This means, as I know myself, that an average touring speed of three knots is reasonable, and without much gear I have timed myself regularly at 5.25 knots over a two hour paddle. These speeds are not high compared with racing kayaks, but at least I know that I can breast all but the strongest tide races. Since most people on the sea in Nordkapps spend a lot of time seeking out tide races...! the boat is paddled in the toughest of conditions...far worse than open crossings. Would wide barges survive? I doubt it. Certainly, a turn of speed can be a canoeists saviour, not only for trouble caused by adverse currents, but also in keeping journey time down to the minimum. In my experience the biggest danger for any canoeist is fatigue .... novice or experienced. Paddle too far for your strength ....horrendous.... capsize, with speedy rescue .... a minor incident.... capsize with Eskimo roll..... forgotten in a few minutes. Most narrow beamed boats roll easily, yet I remember you saying that you never countenanced a capsize, as there was no possibility of ever righting the beamy boat afterwards. I didn't think you were joking at the time, but surely the fact that you cannot even THINK of a capsize without distaster means that you cannot do other than head into wind in bad conditions. If this is the price you have to pay for not having a 'tippy' boat, it is an extremely dear one.

What is this about tippy boats and novices anyway? What happens, in my experience, is that a boat is only tippy when the paddler cannot deal with it, or is used to a 'barge'. In Baffin Island this summer, an Eskimo who had never been in a kayak in his life, climbed into a Nordkapp, set off across the bay, and returned with three seals in line astern that he had shot from the cockpit of his kayak. We took out to Baffin a young lad of very limited experience who paddled in adverse conditions without difficulty and one of the Eskimos we paddled with had only about three hours practice before we left ..... he never thought the Nordkapp was tippy, because it wasn't. He'd never paddled a beamy boat, so accepted the normal balance of the boat as standard. You mention all these 'close shaves' due to tippy boats. You must have a funny set up in Canada because I don't think we have any accident details of any description in this Country where the narrowness of the canoe has been the cause of trouble. I'd like to see more details from your side of the world.

I agree with John Dawson when he says that certificates often lead to opposite effects from those intended. Of course they do ... this is the result of badly designed tests, and often poor people who examine. Even so, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility to devise tests that are basically sound, imaginative and generally capable of giving a general picture of a canoeists ability, at least as valid as listening to the boasting of the extravert paddler and the hear-say evidence of the hero-worshipper.

I've taken you to task here, not because I happen to like fast, narrow highly controllable kayaks as opposed to wide beamy plodders, or that I prefer coastal interest trips with exciting tide races rather than open crossings; they are equally valid, and as long as they are based on sound safety standards, perfectly acceptable. But I do think you have let yourself down badly here with this thoughtless series of statements. Like you, I've been involved in several canoe trips that have gained publicity beyond the normal usually accorded to canoe journeys. This means that people tend to give more credence to our utterances than may be justified, and I feel that there is a responsibility to the canoeists and to canoeing to measure our statements a little more carefully than might otherwise be necessary.

Your final paragraph is fine.... let's have groups of experienced kayakers drawing up the safety rules, though I'm glad I have't the task of deciding who is 'experienced' Certainly I would find myself in the invidious position, in the light of your dogmatic statements, to say ...."sorry, not you."

As you know, I'm a canoeist first and a builder of canoes second, so I hope you won't decide this is just an attempt to safeguard my commercial interests. However, I do wonder how you can attack these types of kayaks so vehemently as unsafe when you were asking for an agency to sell them in B.C. only a few months ago. FRANK GOODMAN.

From Derek Hutchinson, author of 'Sea Canoeing' and designer of 'Baidarka', 'Umnak' and 'Umnak Ice Flow'.

Dear John (Dowds),

Hope you don't mind but I was so surprised by your remarks and general outlook with regards to sea canoes (kayaks to you) and the British Canoe Union Tests, that I thought I'd better drop you a line and let you know what at least one person in the U.K. thinks and feels.

Some years ago, although it feels like a million, I wrote, "...the word kayak in my vocabulary is reserved to mean any sea boat which has it's obvious origins in the skin boat of the Arctic." As you well know, the word Kayak is Inuit in origin and means 'hunters boat'. I'm afraid as far as I am concerned the Klepper range of canoes have never really fallen into that category. This is in no way meant to belittle this type of craft or the people who find great pleasure in paddling them. Let's face it, some day I might well go back to paddling a Klepper myself. Their versatility is legendary. They can be paddled, rowed, lined, sailed and driven by an engine. They can be slept in or under... in fact there's not a lot that can't be done either in or under a Klepper canoe. Their stability is a byword, but when all is said and done they are only a means to and end.

The Baidarkas, Nordkapps, Ice Floes and Anus Acutas of the kayaking world are an end in themselves. You don't have to be going anywhere to reap a rich reward and bond is continually building between the kayak and it's occupant. These boats are worn, not sat in. When I sit in my kayak, every ripple, every movement of the sea is transmitted through my nervous system. Through the medium of the kayak I have become one with the sea and I get a feeling of power that can only be compared with the driver of a customised Porsche ..... he does'nt have to drive fast, he gets the same feeling as I do, if he drives slowly along a crowded street.

Although these kayaks are narrow by Klepper standards (my Ice Floe is 24"), we paddle these delightful boats by choice. We all know the address of the Klepper factory and where to buy one should we ever wish to return to those days I remember so well, when we were so limited by the materials and dimensions of the lathe and fabric boats. In those days a man was limited by the canoe he sat in, but in the modern glassfibre sea kayak the performance of the boat is limited only by the paddler who sits in it. Scything through the water at 4 knots, (5 to 6 in the hands of a determined or frightened man!) thirty miles a day is an easy paddle, giving time at both ends of the day for packing and exploratory wanderings. The hull shape...you call it 'tippy', means that the paddler is always sitting upright even in steep seas on the beam which have been whipped up by high winds. Of course people pursue risk sports by choice. Some of the more adventurous rock climbers ascend without the use of ropes, although perfectly good ropes can be purchased. Hang-gliders could be built with protection from the weather and have engines and landing wheels to save the feet!.....lets call them aeroplanes. With a bit of thought I'm confident that I can design a boat even more stable than a Klepper. It could carry a sail - perhaps even two. I could protect the occupants from the weather and could make provision for an inboard mounted engine. In the event of accident, smaller boats, propelled by men facing the rear of the craft and rowing, could be lowered in the event of the main craft becoming swamped.....!

It is perhaps rather silly to compare Kleppers with the sea kayaks we now use in the U.K. There are really two distinctive branches to our sport, viz. Ocean Kleppering and Ocean Kayaking and it is no good trying to apply the rescue techniques for sea kayaks to their beamier, more clumsy cousins. In our search for efficient rescue, we did not, of course, re-apply whitewater skills. We are a maritime nation; nobody in Britain can live more than 100 miles from the sea...I know, the sea rots my car. All the deep water rescues which are used by proficiency standard paddlers have all been tried and tested and proved on the ocean first.

However, it would seem that you are determined to start from scratch again with your sea paddling and rediscover all the things that we've already found out the hard way. For instance, deep sea rescues for fully laden boats went out in the mid 70's. We use kayaks fitted with watertight bulkheads and pumps, which takes the trauma out of any fully laden capsized. As I said, it's as if you are starting from scratch again. For heavens sake learn from our mistakes. We don't use back up boats....God forbid!, and may I say this about eskimo rolling: - TO MASTER THE ESKIMO ROLL IS A SIGN OF SUCCESS- BUT TO HAVE TO ROLL ONCE YOU HAVE LEARNT IS A SIGN OF FAILURE.

You talk of inexperienced paddlers buying sea kayaks. Novices here do not paddle out

into the middle distance unsupervised, no more would the inexperienced be encouraged to leap from cliffs with hang-gliders, parachute from planes or strap bottles on and plunge into the depths of the sea. We have a well structured coaching scheme in this country ...as you are obviously aware. It is not stocked with certificate hunters. Tests or examinations, call them what you will - are a necessary yardstick of attainment. Perhaps a few people are motivated in the wrong way and the collection of that important piece of paper is all important to them. Whatever the motivation, you are going to finish up with paddlers and instructors who have some sort of uniformity of standard. It also means that the ONUS OF THEIR SUITABILITY RESTS ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE GOVERNING BODY and not in the hands of the man with the wildest imagination, the biggest mouth or the largest following. So long as the individual has the necessary PAPER qualifications however, I find the three other qualifications I mentioned more acceptable.

With suitably qualified coaches and examiners you will know just what a man is capable of NOT WHAT HE SAYS HE IS CAPABLE OF, the onus of his suitability is the responsibility of someone else who is qualified to assess him. I was interested in your words..... "it protects those people you would otherwise wish to eliminate." Who is this nebulous you, and what are his qualifications for eliminating people?

Why don't you have a U.K. coach out in beautiful B.C. sometime. At worst you can only roll about laughing before you tar and feather him and at best....well, who knows. I love B.C. by the way.

I look forward to reading your book John, but if it is all about paddling Kleppers then for Heavens sake don't call it Ocean Kayaking, otherwise Canadian paddlers will get a completely wrong impression of the sport. I wrote this in the introduction to the second edition of my little book....."Britain .....has only the Celtic coracle as it's indigenous skin boat whilst the North American continent has the full range of Eskimo kayaks to call it's own" This is your heritage, don't neglect it.

Your sincerely,  
Derek Hutchinson.

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FROM THE 'SEA CANOEIST' Published by the Tasmanians  
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.  
Dear Sir,

Here in Tasmania we have a club full of people who have a lot to offer others interested in sea canoeing, but, because of one rule, some people will be denied being exposed to their knowledge. These people are the 'loners' - the people who do not like organised sports such as football, cricket, slalom canoeing etc. The rule is... the passing of a Sea Proficiency Test to gain admittance to the club.

What sort of sport do we have? I consider it is a non-competitive sport designed for 'semi-loners', people who like to do their own thing in the company of others. Some canoe to see parts of the State they could not otherwise see, others to find an isolated diving spot, and still others for the sheer exhilaration.

Then, why with a non-competitive sport do we need an entrance test? I am not sure! I have heard many reasons, none of which I accept completely. I feel it is probably that clubs attract people who like to be competitive. These people can give a lot to the club and if they need three stars and not one, well that's okay. It gives a purpose to their sport, but let's leave the club open to everyone interested in sea canoeing, not just 'star-getters'.

I am not against knowledgeable sea canoeists. Let's have training and formal certificates for those who want it, but don't discourage the people who don't want formal training. Let them join the club where they will be in a position to absorb the knowledge of others in the club. To discourage these people would be to leave them to canoe without the help of the many good canoeists in the club.

Many of us who have been canoeing for some time might see this test as minor, but for people contemplating sea canoeing, it might not seem so. Personally I would not be canoeing now if this rule had been in when I first joined.

Let's not regiment our sport, give everyone a chance to enjoy it.

DAVID McINNES

ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB COASTAL ADVISORY SERVICE.

THE UNDERMENTIONED HAVE OFFERED TO HELP VISITORS TO THE AREAS LISTED WITH GENERAL INFORMATION AND IN SOME CASE ASSISTANCE.

PLEASE REMEMBER...1) THEY ARE ALL VOLUNTEERS.

2) BE SPECIFIC WITH YOUR ENQUIRIES.

3) ALWAYS SEND A STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.

4) THERE CAN BE NO LIABILITY. THESE COASTAL ADVISORS WILL REPLY IN GOOD FAITH BUT THERE CAN BE NO GAURANTEE ABOUT THE ACCURACY OF THEIR INFORMATION.

NAME & ADDRESS	AREA COVERED.
Nick Padwick Quarry House, Colwinston, S. Glam. CF7 7NL	North Bristol Channel
*****	
Peter Harvey, 36, Britten Crescent, Gt. Baddow, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 7ER. Phone Day/Chelmsford 61733 Even/Chelmsford 71044	Burnham on Crouch to Harwich, including Rivers Stour, Crouch, Blackwater and Orwell.
*****	
Bob Burson, The Prill, Clodock, Longtown, Herefordshire. Phone Day/ Longtown 225 Even/ Castle 629.	Gower Coast.
*****	
Jim Fletcher, Bryn Bygeiliad, Nebo, Gwynedd.	Barmouth up the coast to Porth Ceiriad on end of Llyn Peninsula.
*****	
Mrs C. Dean, 23, Meadow Rd., Heacham, Norfolk. Phone Day/Kings Lynn 61144 Even/Heacham 71301	Area 10. Wash, Kings Lynn to Wells/Cromer area.
*****	
Ron Rymer "The Lodge" Kirk Hammerton York, YO5 8BX Phone Day/ 0901 30323	Flamborough Head and North Humber.
*****	
Brian Sheen, 92, Par Green, Par, Cornwall. Phone Day/ St. Austell 2381 Even/ Par 3602.	South coast Cornwall.
*****	
John Kuyser, 2, Walkers Lane North, Blackfield, Southampton, SO4 1YA. Phone Day/ Fawley 892077 Even/ Fawley 892842.	Solent Area 6.
*****	
Ian Tatum, Sycamore Cottage, Tredrizzick, St. Minver, Wadebridge. Phone Day/ Trebetherick 2522	North Cornish Coast.
*****	



COASTAL ADVISORY SERVICE (Continued)

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AREA COVERED.

Mike Fennessy,  
Mount Pleasant,  
Stoke Rd.,  
Noss May.,  
Plymouth, PL8 1DY.

South Devon and North Devon Coast.

\*\*\*\*\*

John Drew,  
35, Wraysbury Park Drive,  
Emsworth,  
Hants, PO10 7UU.

Langstone, Portsmouth, Chichester,  
Bognor Littlehampton.

Phone Day/ Cosham 379119  
Even/ Emsworth 5899

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Tony Mullinger,  
32, Winsford Gdns.,  
Westcliff on Sea,  
Essex, SSO ODP  
Phone Southend 47326

Southend.  
Thames Estuary.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ken Tulley,  
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Barby,  
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Salcombe  
South Devon.

\*\*\*\*\*

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Even/ 051 625 9544

Dee Estuary  
North Wirral Coast.

\*\*\*\*\*

David Rushfirth,  
44, Bleasdale Ave.,  
Staining,  
Nr. Blackpool,  
Lancs, FY3 ODW.  
Phone Day/ St. Annes 728151  
Even/ Poulton le Fylde 836668

Fylde Coast between Ribble and Lune.

\*\*\*\*\*

W.O.1 A.J.Ford,  
SSO Munsterlager,  
B.F.P.O. 104,  
Phone 01049 5192 139 289

North German Coast.

\*\*\*\*\*

Roger Irwin,  
'Abingdon Lodge',  
West Street,  
Ryde,  
Isle of Wight, PO33 2QQ.  
Phone 0983 64537.

Isle of Wight.

\*\*\*\*\*

Don Harding,  
72, Bleaswood Rd.,  
Oxenholme,  
Kendal,  
Cumbria,  
Phone Kendal 26777

Morcombe Bay and Walney Island area.

\*\*\*\*\*

John Thorburn,  
9, Crumston,  
Seahouses,  
North Shields.  
Phone Day/ 720398  
Even/ 720496

Farne Islands.

\*\*\*\*\*

COASTAL ADVISORY SERVICE (Continued)

NAME & ADDRESS

AREA COVERED.

Tom Hughes,  
Stag Inn,  
Cemaes Bay,  
Anglesey,  
Gwynedd.  
Phone 0407 710 281

Anglesey.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ian Fawcett,  
Rhyl High School,  
Grange Rd.,  
Rhyl.

Rhyl.

\*\*\*\*\*

John Ramwell,  
32, Glebe Rd.,  
West Perry,  
Huntingdon,  
Cams, PE18 ODG.  
Phone Huntingdon 811582.

South West coast of Scotland.

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THE COASTAL ADVISORY SERVICE is a scheme devised by the A.S.K.C. and adopted by the British Canoe Union.

It is a simple scheme consisting of volunteers who live by or know well a defined area of our coast line.

The idea is that the volunteers and their appropriate area of coast is made known through the Canoe Press occasionally and those wishing information are invited to write (with a stamped envelope) to request it.

The extent of the help, information and even physical assistance given depends entirely on the Coastal Advisor, and this level of help must be accepted by the enquirer.

The sort of thing we have in mind is the provision of straight-forward information regarding location of camp sites, shops (and pub), access points, C.G. station, etc. etc. up to the advisor actually getting involved with a visiting party, for example, buying in stores, booking camp sites or even leading the party on the water. The level of involvement lies entirely with the Coastal Advisor.

So how about letting me add your name to the list. There is no obligation, if you are too busy at the time of receiving an enquiry, just reply to that effect.

If you feel that you know an area of the British coast line reasonably well and would like to volunteer, let me know your name and address (and if you have telephone number) and the area of coast you are prepared to advise on.

COME ON - LET'S BE HEARING FROM YOU.

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NAME.....

ADDRESS..... TEL. No. ....

.....  
..... POST CODE.....

I am prepared to advise visitors on the following area of coast.....

Return to J.J.Ramwell, A.S.K.C.

A Book Review by Drew Delany.

'SEA KAYAKING' A MANUAL FOR LONG DISTANCE TOURING'. by JOHN DOWD.....

.....is an attractively presented book with glossy colour cover, photographs in black and white, and diagrams, running to 240 pages in all, packed with information on ocean paddling, camping from the Tropics to the Arctic, sailing a canoe, fending off sharks, sleeping afloat, fund raising, food collecting and much more. It's fascinating, informative, controversial, refreshing, and occasionally inaccurate.

John begins by pinpointing the fact that dogma has quickly arisen associated with half understood principles in sea kayaking, and admits his own lack of knowledge in certain areas and has drawn on the experience of others frequently in his text. The book is typified by this frank approach and balance in comments.

He advocates wider boats, and double boats, (remember he is a Blue Water paddler, with several extended crossings to his credit), but also extols the more traditional British Designs for their merits.

He recommends sail as a back-up, but recognises that 'paddles are for the purist'. Stimulating, too, are the arguments for unfeathered paddles, and for a rudder. It's not a book for the narrow minded, but it is an interesting exercise to read it pencil in hand.

So who is this 'cuckoo in the nest', disturbing all the sea canoeists who have a Nordkapp and a pair of Sea Masters and an Expedition Buoyancy Aid and a Log Book filling up nicely with coastal day trips thankyou!

John has been paddling over twenty years, beginning in New Zealand, and now based in Vancouver, Canada with the wild waters of British Columbia in his back yard. He's paddled from Patagonia up the coast of Chile for six months; from Singapore to Java; in the Adriatic and from Venezuela, 2000 miles of island hopping (some very large hops too) across the Caribbean to Miami, Florida.

When he talks about sleeping in the boat, lying to a drogue in a storm, not really needing to roll because you just don't capsize, or performing self rescues in the ocean, and how to 'sniff - up' the land, - well, you've just got to accept what he says. Take a pinch of salt by all means, but the man does have a rich background of personal experience to draw on.

Overlook the reference to 'Lendal of England' and the occasional similar inaccuracy of a fairly minor nature - lifejacket specifications not complying to the B.C.U. (it is a Canadian book after all), radar reflector incorrectly hung, stern rudder described as intended to turn the boat towards the paddle side only.

Less acceptable is the reference to Frank Goodman who 'established a world wide organisation of sea canoeists to spread the faith and sell his Nordkapps.' Just not true John. It's disappointing to find in a book on sea canoeing that the Advanced Sea Kayak Canoeing (sic) Club gets little more mention than the fact that it is run 'complete with necktie and pins'. The acknowledgements page of the book reads like a 'who's who' of A.S.K.C. members and it is the only group of sea canoeists in the world, to my knowledge, which has the depth of experience and range of expertise in it's collective membership to qualify it as the foremost International Sea Canoeing Organisation.

It's to be regretted that there is no glossary of terms used - the vocabulary is in good plain readable English, stripped of some of the more unfortunate gloss of North American style hyperbole - but nevertheless, some technical terms are likely to be beyond the knowledge of the lay reader.

Also useful would have been an index of addresses of organisations and manufacturers referred to.

Taken warts and all, this is definitely a book for the sea paddler with an interest in his sport. It contains a great deal of interest to the general canoeist as well, and some of the book must also be highly readable to the non-canoeist with an adventurous frame of mind.

At £3.50 plus £1. p & p. it is a bargain. Order from John Dowd at Ecomarine Systems Inc., 1666 Duranleau Street, Granville Is. Vancouver, B.C. CANADA, U6H 74.

DREW DELANY

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In June 1939, in Hitler's Berlin, there took place one of the last International meetings before the war. In view of the approaching storm, they seem in retrospect a curiously relevant body - the International Meteorological Committee. Among their tasks was the standardisation of the Beaufort Scale.

The story goes back to 1806, when, during a previous war, Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort proposed a descriptive scale of wind strengths - there were no anemometers then, just as it's a rare canoeists who'll possess a wind gauge now.

Beaufort's descriptions are worth quoting, for that ring of a sea going age now lost to us. Winds progress from 'that in which a well conditioned man of war with all sail set and clear full would go in smooth water from 1 to 2 knots (Force 2), through 'that to which she could just carry in chase 'full and by', Royals etc., then reefed topsails, top gallants, double reefs on topsails, jibs, then courses, then at Force 10, 'scarcely bear with close reefed main topsail; then storm stay sails, until Beaufort's final wind strength, Force 12 'that which no canvass could withstand'.

In the Met. Office Observers Handbook, descriptions are brought up to date - well, nearly. Fishing smacks careen (whatever that means!), fill their sails, carry all canvass with a good list, smacks shorten sail, double reef the main sail, and by Force 8 'all smacks make for harbour, if near! Where, no doubt, somebody plays a hornpipe and everybody sings sea shanties.

The world of the Met. Office Handbook and its careening fishing smacks, now that Russian and other factory fleets have scoured our seas, seems as remote as the world of Admiral Beaufort and his 'men o'war.

However, both were essentially descriptive. This is the essence of the Beaufort Scale, and a canoeist is well supplied with suitable correlations to the sea state for canoeists in the Coaching Handbook in 'sea canoeing' and in Sea Touring.

I don't intend to repeat what has been well covered in these books, but at the same time there are a number of points not generally appreciated by sea paddlers, nor mentioned in canoeing literature.

First, Beaufort is not international. If you're paddling elsewhere, bone up on local definitions - most likely metric - and memorise the equivalent Beaufort Scale. In the Faroes we found ourselves conducting 'conversations' with fishermen in broken Danish/english/Norwegian, while doing mental acrobatics to translate 10 metres per second into miles per hour, and racking our brains to remember what the MPH related to in Beaufort. (It was all a waste of time anyway because the definition of 'gross unreliability' must be 144. Faeroese weather forecasts.)

Briefly, mean wind speed in metres per second (at 10 m above ground level) related to Beaufort is: FORCE 2 = 2.4 mps. FORCE 4 = 6.7 mps; FORCE 6 = 12.3 mps and FORCE 8 = 18.9 mps

The most useful Force to remember is Force 6, which equals approximately 12 mps, or 24 mph. All multiples of 6, and Force 6 is about the level at which you decide whether the forecast means you stay in your tent or not.

A second point worth noting: Beaufort wind speeds depend on height above water. The International height was 6 metres, British and American standards were at 11 metres. The difference is not just academic. The current Met. Office scale is measured at 10 metres, and the canoeing books give these wind speeds. However, going down to 6 m one subtracts 10%; at 3 m 20% and down to 2 m above sea level subtract 30% of wind speed. By the time you reach the canoeist whose body is not over a metre above the sea, the reduction of wind speed is considerable. (One only need watch sea birds swoop unconcernedly at water level amongst wind blown wave crests to see the application of this reduction in wind strength)

Conversely, at 30 m above sea level, add 25% of the forecast speed, so if you're standing on a cliff surveying the sea scale (24 mph) wind may be hitting you at 30 (or more) mph. Near water level though, it will be 16 mph or less - half the apparent speed. So don't give up your trip until you've considered the other factors.

Beaufort's scales describe 'the fully developed sea generated by steady winds of the forces indicated'. In other words a Force 6 which has been blowing all week is going to create a very different scene to a Force 6 which has recently begun to blow.



## WIND (Continued)

Bear in mind that Beaufort assumes there are no swells to affect the sea - and most importantly that there is no land nearby. There is a lag in response to wind changes - calm winds can still be accompanied by heavy sea, heavy rain flattens the sea, and both water depth and tidal streams affect sea state.

All these points (and the various other points mentioned in sea canoeing books) need to be borne in mind when listening to the radio forecasts at home, trying to imagine what that south westerly Force 5-6 will be doing to the patch of coast you plan to visit at the weekend.

And one last point: if all the above has seemed to complicate the issue, consider yourself lucky Beaufort only goes up to Force 12 here. In the U.S.A. it reaches Force 17. The U.S.Coastguard has confirmed what we've always suspected. Americans have got more wind than anybody else!

As a post script it is interesting to note some facts about Beaufort himself.

He held the post of Hydrographer to the Navy longer than anyone before or since, he completely revitalised the Hydrographers Office to become a foremost scientific body; perfected the Admiralty Chart (some of his charts are still standard 170 years on); was a war hero - wounded nineteen times in one action alone; had a three year incestuous relationship with his sister; directed the Arctic Councils three years search for Franklin lost seeking the North West Passage; he secured Darwin a place on the Navy's survey journey thus indirectly assisting in the development of the Theory of Evolution and he left over 200 diaries and notebooks in his own code which has only recently been deciphered. Truly a fascinating character.

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### THE INTERNATIONAL LONG RIVER CANOEIST CLUB

Would YOU like to be a member of a canoe club that has no AGM's, no committees, no rules or regulations and which in fact has no restrictions, but instead is only interested in giving the canoeist what they want from their sport, i.e. easy access to canoeing information - to be able to contact the people 'in the know' - to hear about canoe expeditions around the world - to read about new developments...and so on. This club can give first hand information on hundreds upon hundreds of canoeing rivers and seaways such as:-

Rivers: from Amazon to Zaire  
Seaways: from Adriatic to Zeeland  
Lakes: from Athabasca to Zurich

This Club is fully independent, with no affiliation to any official canoeing body, and is run for canoeists by canoeists.

Each member of this unique International Club gets:

1. A complete membership list, not only giving name and address, but also telephone number and full details of what areas/rivers/ seas/ etc. they have canoed or have information on.
2. An international membership card, which by possession gives that member 10% off organised wilderness canoeing trips in Canada; 33% reduction on New Zealand River Guides; 10% off Survival Equipment; 25% off Expedition Reports.
3. A Newsletter, 'Paddlers World' issued every other month, of approx. 8,000 words (12 sides of A4) giving details of expeditions, trips, members required for ventures, equipment and news from the four corners of the canoeing world...and ALL this for just £1.50 per year. (You can even pay three years in advance, - saves being bothered for suds every year ) Do not be misled by the word RIVER in our title. When the Club was formed in 1971, sea canoeing was a relatively new branch of the sport, but now, with canoeists all over the world being driven towards the sea, we have an interest in this also, and in fact about 1/3rd of each Paddlers World is reference Sea Canoeing.

If you would like to know more about this informal club write to:

Peter Salisbury, ILRCC,

238, Birmingham Road,  
Redditch, Worcs. or Telephone Redditch (0527) 65339

N.B. The mentioned membership fee of £1.50 covers the delivery of the Newsletter by air mail only. If you wish your Newsletter to be sent to you by air, and you live by Australia, New Zealand, Canada, U.S.A. South America please make your annual sub. up to £2.50 a year. Also please make payment in sterling notes or cheques on an English Bank, as the changing of foreign currency is very costly.

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CORRESPONDENCE

From Alan Byde, Middleton-in-Teesdale, Co. Durham.

Dear John,

This may interest you and the members. It follows on the continuing development of the Sea Tiger Mk. 3, and the cockpit pod. It is now built, the third boat is on its way, and the cockpit offers some possibilities which didn't exist before, and about which I have not previously heard anything said, or seen written.

The latest cockpit allows one to lie right back so that the shoulders are just about level with the gunwales, and the head lies easily on the rear deck provided some padding is used, say a lifejacket. Imagine some touring journey with overnight stops. With a tent, one needs at least thirty minutes morning and night to take down the equipment and stack it away, and then to get it all out, pitch the tent, and inflate the airbed, etc. An hour each end of the trip would be more likely. The tent takes up valuable space and weighs a lot, the air bed is not too bad and can be used for buoyancy. The sleeping bag is bulky too. Soft ground into which pegs can be thrust is preferable, although rocks can be used. In general one requires some very limiting conditions for tenting.

Suppose one considers the North Face of the Eiger sort of rock climber. These people recognised that really extended climbing required nights spent on the rock, suspended on hammocks above vertiginous drops. They didn't use tents, and they accepted some risk in completing really hard climbs. They lived on bare rock, and most of it was vertical. They accept the 'No Foe' challenge, nothing too hard to overcome. (North Face Of the Eiger). I've heard rock tigers being patronising about canoeists, a sort of soft option. I know they were not entirely right but there was some truth in their assertion.

Now with the latest ST3, one can drag it up from the HW mark, beyond the limit of the waves. Any moderately level or nearly level place will do, between boulders if that must be so, although sand would be better. No pegs, no tent, no air bed. Some may prefer a sleeping bag. No ground sheet even as the canoe is waterproof. The cockpit is really very comfortable when lying back. I have't tried sleeping in it all night yet, but the back lawn may see me out some summer night soon. Think of all the space saved. Think of all the time saved. The double walled cockpit works like a thermos flask and one can become quite cosy under the spray deck. The effect is quite noticeable for people used to conventional cockpits. This now permits No Foe paddlers to get out and make very exposed journeys, so long as offshore skerries are available, or small shelves of beach or rock under impossible cliffs.

There are problems in use. I have just written this up for the Coastguard Magazine. I hope they print it. Imagine some Coastguard at his station come the early light of dawn. The boat out on some rocks a mile or two away he can just make out some canoes, apparently cast up at HW mark. No sign of life. He gets out the binocs, and searches. No tents, no sign of life. Are they dead! or dying? What to do? He reaches for the phone, alerts helicopter base, informs H.Q. and gets out the local I.R.B. Then returning to his viewpoint he is in time to see several lively paddlers launching and making off on the favourable tide for which they have been waiting this last six hours. Dismay and consternation!

How does one deal with that problem. IT IS NOW POSSIBLE. One has only to imagine a situation for it to happen. Wells and the 'Land Ironclads' in 1906 foretold the tank battle of Cambrai in 1916 (I could be out a year or so). He foretold laser death rays, and radar sighting of guns. I don't put myself in that class, but watch out! The liberating possibilities of the determined No Foe paddler and the latest equipment make mockeries of frontiers. (Is it all politics?)

ALAN BYDE.

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also from Alan, dated the 7th. January, 1981

Dear John,

For the newsletter. Confession is good for the soul it's said.

I'm old and fat and it's early January and summer is a thousand years and miles away. These first few days in the New Year I throw up ideas....possibly I have eaten too much! Now one of these, which really is crying out to be done is as follows. Not by me, methinks, but by someone who reads this newsletter and maybe has'nt thought of it yet.

1. Circumnavigation of Portugal. 750 Km approx. Rio Minho to Tio Guadiana. Well, not a circumnavigation but a semi-circ.

.....continued 2.

2. Suggested route, Plymouth - Santander, by Brittany Ferries.
3. Contacts already established in Portugal through the sports council there, the D.G.D., or Direcao Geral dos Desportos.
4. Probable involvement with Portuguese paddlers. Nay, certain. Almost certainly many public engagements.

Why should I suggest this notion? Well, I've been there and made contact with the people involved. All it needs is setting up. If anyone cares to contact me with a view to going there in either 1981 or 1982, please contact me now. There will be no problems such as France and her political use of the 300 metre rule. The cost of going there is not astronomical. The welcome is certain. Portugal being Britains oldest ally unlike France and Spain. It still counts. The sport is just beginning out there, they've been at it for about 5 years and now an injection of experience such as this would provide would be magical.

Sincerely,  
 Alan Byde.

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From Drew Delany, Cowes, Isle of Wight. May, 1981.

Dear John,

I wrote a while back with some news and comments, and at that time promised you a few articles for the magazine. As it happened the mag. that month was filled up! In consequence I didn't send in the articles - though I've since had correspondence asking about Solent tides. However, I have enclosed some news and notes on John Dowd's book for the next issue. I've prepared something on 'WIND', and also an article on 'LIGHTSHIPS', both of which you may wish to use at some future date.

I plan to write you something from Japan. I will be there for three months, so expect I'll have something to get pen to paper for.

Although my absence abroad means I will not be an hand to set up any elaborate plans for a real 'sea meet', I intend to have a small scale group of paddlers together for three very casual days paddling round the Isle of Wight....29/30/31st. August (Bank Holiday), after meeting at my house Friday night, or off the Royal Yacht Squadron, Cowes by 10.00am Saturday. The aim is to paddle, fish, photograph, sun bathe, go sight seeing, paddle, explore creeks, have barbecues, camp, etc. This is an open affair, all are welcome. I ask only that a) participants accept their responsibility to the group as a whole - no mavericks, and b) that anyone interested write me at 32, Cross Street, Cowes, Isle of Wight, for details, enclosing £1 to cover correspondence, telephone calls, admin. and prizes.

All the best,  
 Drew Delany.

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From Chas. Warren, Chilton, Co. Durham.

Dear John

.....I like the idea of using a disc of 'karrimat' foam inside a hatch cover to catch the drips. In case anyone has'nt heard of it, here is a tip I've recently been trying very successfully.

In order to seal round the cockpit rim, i.e. spraydeck to deck, simply use a cycle inner-tube of circumference slightly less than the circumference of the cockpit. The tube seems to be best partially inflated so it is stiff but still flexible. It helps to push the tube into the deck/cockpit rim gap. This both secures the spraydeck firmly and stops water working it's way under the rim. It's worth checking you are happy about getting it off too!

All the best,  
 Chas Warren.

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CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF TASMANIA Watch this Newsletter for information regarding the showing of this slide/tape presentation. I am expecting delivery as soon as Earle 'pulls his finger out!!' Once it is to hand I shall be pleased to visit your club/organisation to show it.

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From Verney Cresswell, Ministry of Education, Seychelles.

Dear John,

Please find enclosed newspaper clipping on my canoe trip in these tropical waters. It was in fact the worst weather on this island for twelve months. No local boat would go out in it. However, it was very similar to British weather, - overcast skies, heavy rain, strong winds and huge seas. So it suited me really, although I had trained for a trip in scorching sun.

There are some twenty species of shark in these waters. I was pleased that I did not encounter any. For one awful moment I thought I was running into sharks when I was near one of the islands, but they were only porpoises which have a similar dorsal fin to sharks. It is the hammer-head species in these waters which have been known to attack people.

All the best,  
Verney Cresswell.

N.B. Should anyone want a copy of the above mentioned newspaper clipping, just send me a stamped and addressed envelope. Ed.

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From Joan Busby, Liverpool.

Dear John,

.....  
I am really writing to ask for advice. My Alaskan friends say I MUST have a wet suit this summer. To date I have been wearing thermal underwear, Tog 24 fibre pile suit and Henri-Lloyd racing suit. They make a fine combination, but since we are kayaking well into Prince William Sound, in order to reach an unexplored area for mountaineering, I'm told (after last summer's Force 10 gale!) that a wet suit is a positive must. So ..... I have no idea at all how to set about it - I don't even know who makes really first class ones with seams which stay put etc. Please could you send me some advice re: a good make; a stockist who won't overcharge; the best weight to get; whether to have two-piece; any refinements which, in your opinion, you consider important. I know why my Alaskan friends are insisting. We could be extremely tired after a month of exploratory mountaineering, and immersion in glacial water in a state of tiredness would increase the risk of hypothermia; and the return journey could be protracted and beset by bad weather. I think thiers is very wise advice.

My plans are almost complete. Our big venture is the one I've mentioned. We are then going north to run the Forty Mile River which is good white water, and through wilderness country. I'm then climbing from the Matanuska Glacier - some first ascents, before going north to Fairbanks to do a big climb in the Alaskan Range, and another Artic river, probably the Porcupine. These last two trips will be testing, for by late September temperatures are becoming distinctly wintery. I have also been invited to join someone in the Yukon who wants a companion to run the Tatshenshini - he is an expert and what I lack in skill I'll make up for in nerve and determination! I hope I can find the time to join him. A lot will depend on whether we get snowed up on various trips and thus lose valuable time

.....  
Best wishes  
Joan Busby.

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In case you might be interested in my reply to Joan re: the question of clothing....

Dear Joan,

.....as for clothing - this is always difficult to advise on, - what suits one often does'nt suit another! I would not have thought that a wet suit should be an absolute MUST, for several reasons, viz.

1. thermal underwear and fibre pile is warm and comfortable ( a combination I favour)
2. Wet suit, unless you are well accomstomed to it, can be restrictive and sometimes cause hyperthermia if used on a warm day and it is not easily removable (e.g. whilst out at sea).
3. The real advantage of a wet suit lies in the length of time it can sustain you in the water, - but think about it....for how long do you want to be sustained for in the waters you will be paddling in. Either you will be pulled out very quickly after capsizing or you'll be there for some time. Either way a wet suit is not going to be such an advantage.

I shall be taking Lifa wear (see the last ASKC Newsletter) and thermal under-



CORRESPONDENCE (Continued)

wear together with a Windbreaker Jacket with polyurathane sleeves, The jacket is made from 3mm rubatex neoprene and is avialable from INSPORTS, 31 High Street, Newcastle u Tyne. If you do settle for a wet suit I suggest a two piege so that you can at least remove the top if necessary. I rather like the spraydeck and vest combined made from neoprene by Sharon Rowe at Plas y Brenin (see A.S.K.C. 'shop' on Newsletter) This helps you to keep dry and if the going gets warm you can always drop the vest down by undoing the velcro strips. As for which company makes the best. I'm not sure that I can answer this - though I suppose, with competition being so strong, there must be little to choose from the commercially made suits. Dolphin Wetsuits of 2, Ashwell Street, St. Albans, Herts, are OK. I've dealt with them and found them satisfactory.

.....  
With best wishes  
John Ramwell.

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Whilst publishing my letter I thought you might be interested in this one of mine to a teacher anticipating some sea canoeing with his students this summer and who has stated his intention to have an escort boat accompany.

Dear Bill,

I've been reading the last letter you sent me regarding your proposed trip with the boys this year and the use of an escort boat and I've been giving the matter some thought as well as discussing it with fellow paddlers. Without exception it is the considered opinion that escort boats are out; that they do not extend the scope of novice/intermediate paddlers; they detract from the adventure aspect and can quite often be a liability in themselves.

What is more important, an accompanying escort boat detracts from the very spirit, the very essence of sea canoeing expeditions. A sea kayak in reasonably proficient hands is as safe and sound as most ocean-going yachts- safer in some conditions. I've just returned from paddling throught the Gulf of Corryvreckan between Jura and Scarba. We went through it on Flood and on the north side. An escorting boat would not have attempted this without some danger and discomfort, whereas we had an exciting and safe passage.

Perhaps the length of paddle out to sea might merit an escort boat. I don't think this is ever the case. No trip should be that long it is out of the 'comfortable' reach of all concerned. If concerned over changing weather.....well, here one should leave for long trips on a reasonable long range (24 hr) forecast and should the winds blow and a storm brew up, it often becomes impossible for an escorting boat to reach the distressed canoeists.

I hope that you don't think I have gone on a bit but I do think it is important for your boys and all those being introduced to sea canoeing to discover for themselves 'what it is all about'. An escort boat will prevent all but the most imaginative from finding this out ..... making a seatrip into little more than a slog.

Progression to advanced sea canoeist status must come from sticking one's nose out a little further each time under the guidance of others, not 'jumping in at the deep end' and hoping an escort boat will compensate

To summarise. I feel it is safer, more exciting, more satisfying, more educational and much more pleasurable to go off on the sea with a properly equipped sea kayak with the right leadership, competent party (for the exped. being undertaken) and NO escort boat.

All the best.  
John Ramwell.

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From Nick Padwick, Colwinston, S.Glan.

Dear John,

Again many thanks for the latest Newsletter. I was particularly interested in your notes on your unsuccessful crossing of the North Sea with Pete Midwood. I often feel it is a pity that we don't hear more of the failures because it is from these that many lessons are to be learnt. I would like to ask you some questions based on your experience and the following:

As you are aware, I paddle a Sea Tiger fitted with Alan Bye's safety cockpit.

CORRESPONDENCE (Continued)

I can paddle this boat for hours without a spraydeck in any conditions with perfect control. For seasons of comfort I do not choose to do so, but that is another matter. There is a plug in the bottom of my cockpit so that any water that may get into it can be released into the hull. The hull area has no bulkheads and hence any water can be pumped out from the entire boat with the single pump. Whilst the reason for Pete Midwood's boat becoming waterlogged is unusual, things like leaking hatches are more common. If you had had this capability of completely self-contained pumping, would you have been able to complete your journey? If not, would your crisis have been less and your return journey made easier? Although fitted to most sea boats, are sealed bulkheads, as such, the right answer? And finally, do you agree that if an exit has to be made then single handed re-entry with immediate roll up and full control is important when dealing with craft with a loaded weight of a sea kayak?

Cheers,  
Nick Padwick

P.S. Since writing this, Newsletter No. 25 has arrived - they are coming thick and fast! I tend to agree with Mike Mills on the cost of the Symposium. Whilst I don't just sit around talking about canoeing for the bulk of the year, I certainly don't have my expenses paid and I have no aspirations of joining 'who's who'. I do think that these weekends provide an opportunity for people to meet one another whom they would no other opportunity of otherwise chatting with. It does provide a first class point of sharing experiences and a platform for getting opinions on new ideas. For example, there is a pool at this venue - how about a comparative demonstration of 'rescues at sea' One good starting point could be your North Sea predicament and how you would get out of it with a sealed cockpit craft and a conventional bulkhead craft. Another could be the resume of the rescue procedure of an exhausted patient who has had to make an exit. Another could be a straight-forward single handed rescue following an exit.

Yes, it is expensive, but if everyone agrees with the idea of both giving and receiving experiences, ideas, etc. it can be of great benefit. My canoeing would be finished if I had nothing to learn.

Nick.

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From Gerard Diependaal, Amsterdam.

Dear John,

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I am reading the Newsletter with great interest. In fact I am surprised about the vigerous handling of some topics (tow lines!) I'm paddling a Nordkapp H M with which I have mastered except in Force 3 winds and over. (!! Ed.) The boat turns off to wind and breaking waves over on your side. This is a serious non-safety aspect, at least to me! I wonder if other members have the same difficulties with directionally stable boats in strong winds. By the way, it's not my habit to paddle in these winds, but things can come over you when you're on your way.

Sincerely,  
Gerard Diependaal.

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From Sharn Rowe, Siabod Cottage, Capel Curig, N.Wales.

Dear John,

.....we had a couple of members of the A.S.K.C in for dinner a couple of weeks ago and they asked what the sweaters were like. I just happened to have one handy to show them and they implied that they might have had one if it had some stipes incorporated - what is it about these stipty sweaters? My artistic husband has made a couple of drawings and I am suggesting that I make them available. What do you think?



Sharon.

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I replied to the effect that the customer was always right...so order yours now stating your chosen design. See the ASKC shop in this newsletter. Ed.

CORRESPONDENCE (Continued)

From John Hicks, Macclesfield, South Australia.

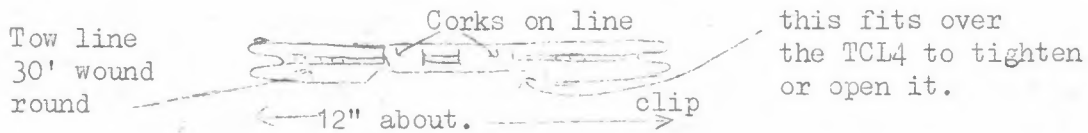
Dear John,

I have recently received your recent ASKC newsletter and read it with interest. The list of members is most helpful.

I enclose a draft for a couple of large ASKC T shirts and a tie please.

A couple of minor points:-

1. Towing. All we do is use a parrot beak (stainless steel) and clip it behind the cockpit, rope attached to the clip - very simple, easy to release and no nonsense. I attach mine to a hand made aluminium tool for removing TCL4 hatch covers, coil the tow line round it at the same time so it makes a weight for a throwing line and have attached a couple of yellow painted corks to the whole lot so it is visible and floats



Peter Carter designed the hatch tool, works very well.



The line is threaded through holes drilled in the 1/4" flat section aluminium and knotted off to stop it slipping.

In a previous issue Joe Lamb was taking my name in vain about some nonsense about a diving platform. All I did was to join paddles fore and aft of the cockpit under the deck lines fore and aft and that held the boats together simply, firmly and more sufficiently stable for us to exit, stand up on the decks a foot on each boat, etc. very simple. Joe tried to develop that by adding flexi straps under the boat but that does not work. Jamming paddles does.

Regards.  
John Hicks.

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ARTICLE

RESUSCITATION FROM DROWNING IN COLD WATER Taken from the 'New England Journal of Medicine.'

Recent experiences with persons nearly drowned in cold water has shown that victims, though cold, pulseless and areflexic, have survived without neurologic deficit after total immersion for as long as 40 minutes. We have heard about persons surviving for as long as one hour. Since warm ischemia is the lethal lesion to vital organs, adequate cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) must be started immediately on removal from the cold environment. If core warming is indicated, the best methods for achieving this goal are the use of heated oxygen (44 degrees C, 110 F) and peritoneal lavage with warm balanced salt solution (54 degrees C, 130 F)

Unfortunately, there are reports of adequate CPR performed at the scene and en route to the hospital, with termination of the effort on order of an ill-formed physician who stated that the immersion had been "too long". The purpose of this article, therefore, is to emphasize three vital points about the treatment of victims of cold water near drowning. First of all, a patient who is not both warm and dead should not be considered dead. Secondly, immediate CPR and rewarming should be begun at the scene and continued in the emergency department. Finally, heated oxygen should be used initially, and peritoneal lavage with warm solution should be added on arrival at the emergency department.

We recommend that ambulances be equipped with heated nebulizers so that heated oxygen can be delivered during the CPR effort. We further recommend that all emergency-dept. physicians work closely with emergency medical technicians and para-medics in developing the protocols for the management of all near drowning victims. Cold water near-drowning is a treatable condition.

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