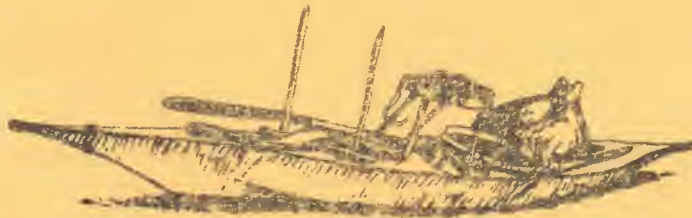


# NEWSLETTER of the



## Advanced Sea Kayak Club

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



ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB

NEWSLETTER NO. 60

MARCH 1987

EDITORIAL

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Not a lot doing at this time of the year. A flurry of preparatory work for the Canoe Exhibition, due as I write in a few days time, is keeping Jenny and I busy. The Canoe Exhibition heralds the start of the kayaking season for many of us. For others hard training continues through the winter - certainly D.W. competitors will have been hard at it. I remember (here we go!!) Ian Bourn and I going on a training paddle on the River Medway with the freezing fog so thick we kept bouncing off the river banks. I shudder to think of it all now as I spend my winter evenings in comfort at home growing old and decadent, to emerge like a chrysalis at the first signs of warm weather. In fact I have been out a few times this winter on the Solent. I had a great day out last Saturday in fine weather. There was plenty of bird life and unusually quite a lot of shipping either moored up or moving in and out of Southampton.

I have just received an excellent book on camp cooking entitled KAYAK COOKERY by Linda Daniel. Hopefully, space allowing, it will appear in this Newsletter. There have been several books reviewed or mentioned in this Newsletter and I have been asked by one or two of you how they may be obtained. PACIFIC SEARCH PRESS, 222 DEXTER AVENUE NORTH, SEATTLE, WA 98109 is the answer.

Christian Gabard from France has written to the ASKC inviting us to participate in their expedition to Ile de Re in 1988. The dates are 4th to 12th June. Eric Totty always speaks highly of this event (see his reports in previous ASKC Newsletters) and I have penned it into my diary for next year.

Gratefully I am able to report almost 100% renewals to the ASKC - very encouraging. Once the Canoe Exhibition is over and I have the vast majority of members gathered in I shall publish the 1987 Membership List for distribution with the May Newsletter. Do let me know if, for whatever obscure reason, you do not wish your name and address to appear in this list.

Finally to remind you of the forthcoming 1987 INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAKING SYMPOSIUM scheduled for 6th to 8th November. It is to be held at YMCA National Centre in Cumbria and will cost £38, inclusive of meals, accommodation and conference fees. Applications to me before 25th September.

A.S.K.C. SHOP

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Ties at £6.00 each

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4th National Sea Canoeing Symposium Report at 75 pence each

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T-shirts - small/medium/large/X large at £4.50 each (in yellow and black)

Sweat shirts - small/medium/large/X large at £8.00 each (in yellow and black)

Information Sheets on Tides and Buoyage at 75 pence each

H.M. Coastguards Paper on Safety at 75 pence each

ASKC Ski Hats at £3.50 (available from M. Clough, 46 Main Street, Normanton, Loughborough, Leics. LE12 5 HB)



From: Quarry House, Colwinston, Cowbridge, S. Glamorgan, CF7 7NL  
Tel: Bridgend (0656) 56580 - 16th September 1986

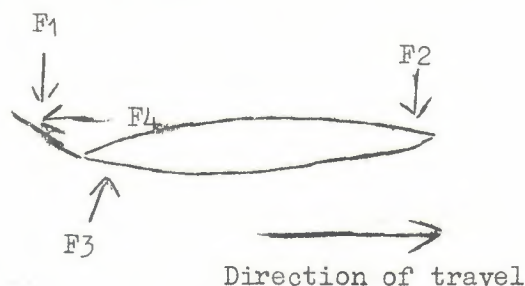
Dear John,

Many thanks again for your latest newsletter, this time No.57. I was very interested and grateful to read Duncan Winning's comments on the notes which were included, particularly when he said my comment 'no self respecting designer of small craft would use a rudder as the main element of directional control' does not stand up to inspection. Having made the comment Duncan then went on to describe examples of precisely why the statement was made. I can only assume that if someone of his experience did not grasp the argument then I did not explain it as I should have done. Perhaps I could have a second go.

In my latter schooldays and early time at university I was the number one coxswain on the Thames Tideway for rowing eights. I knew every twist and turn of the boatrace course in whatever conditions and it was here that I first became aware of the severe detrimental effects of rudders. The sideways drift that they cause, apart from the major breaking effect, is no better shown up than when racing these craft. The minimal use of the rudder and the maximising of power variation on one side of the boat or the other were the order of the day. Over-use of the rudder could lose races by considerable distances.

The next lesson came from dinghy sailing. Here the source of power was only the wind and it immediately became apparent that, unlike rowing there were two additional elements which tended to take one off one's desired course. These were the wind and the tidestreams. When rowing one was only going with or against the stream and often the wind. If the wind was to a beam quarter it did not have a major effect on drift. With sailing it is the combination use of sail setting, keels (or centre boards) and rudders which provide the steerage. The most important element is to minimise the use of the rudder and maximise the use of the keel or centreboard. I understand that there is currently great interest being shown in the use of variable geometry keels in larger sailing craft at the present time. So why is it important to minimise the use of the rudder?

The diagram shows a craft travelling from left to right. The water passing the boat is deflected by the rudder and produces a force which has a component parallel to the keel of the craft ( $F_4$ ) and one at right angles ( $F_1$ ).  $F_4$  is the breaking element and  $F_1$  the turning element. The boat will resist this turning effort due to its keel and underwater shape and these forces are represented by  $F_2$  and  $F_3$ . Now if the moment produced about the centre of turning by  $F_1$  is greater than the sum of the moments produced by  $F_2$  and  $F_3$  then the boat will turn. If they are equal then it will hold its own against the prevailing conditions. In both cases  $F_1 + F_2 - F_3$  represents the force due to steering by rudder which causes the sideways drift. The more rudder that is used the greater becomes the rudder drift and the greater  $F_4$  - the breaking effect.



Leeway drift is caused by the combined effect of the wind on the superstructure and the water momentum on the hull and wherever else it hits. The effect of the latter should not be underestimated. As Duncan correctly

states this can be reduced by lowering a centreboard or skeg. If the design of the hull and keel is good in relation to the size and position of skeg and the superstructure this reduction of drift can become dramatic and, as in the case of a kayak, can also provide steering control. The less the drift, the less the craft has to be steered into the elements to overcome it and the less the rudder has to be used, hence there is a further reduction in rudder induced drift. There is less breaking effect and less effort having to combat the elements.

Turning to kayaks, if a kayak tends to turn to broach when the wind is up then the surface area presented to the elements is maximum, hence greatest drift. The bigger the area presented, particularly if that area is distant from the centre of turning, and the longer the keel the greater will be F2 and F3 and the greater will be the use of the rudder to make F1 large enough to overcome problem. This increase in drift from both sources results in having to face more into the elements and increase the breaking to the considerable disadvantage of speed. Incidentally, for kayaks without rudders, the same forces are at work. F2 and F3 are present, F1 is replaced by the paddlers effort on one side only. F4 is not there. However, the main disadvantage is that during the times of returning the paddle forward to the next stroke the elements have time to counteract the turning effort. This, coupled with the fact that the effort comes from one arm, and not both as for a rudder, is the reason why it is more tiring and takes longer to perform the turn. The same, if not greater, drift due to the turning effort is also present.

It was for these and other reasons that we considered the very unconventional shape of the SEA TIGER and further developed it to the point where it was possible to control its direction by skeg alone. I would never claim to be the first to use a skeg to prevent or reduce drift although I do not know of any others who have used it to such great effect in modern day canoeing. If there is someone I would be very interested to know and to see how they have overcome the problems. In the meantime, I repeat and underline the comment that no self respecting designer of small craft would use a rudder as the main element of directional control. It is far better to overcome the cause of the problem by sorting out the profile than to design a system to overcome the effect caused by the problem.

With Best Wishes,

Nick

17th September 1986

Dear John,

One of the most enjoyable aspects of sea canoeing is that of the unexpected. When you set off you have no idea what might happen. It could be meeting a challenge, seeing some marvellous scenes or wildlife, experiencing amusing incidents, dealing with a survival situation - you name it, it could happen. In theory, if one works for oneself, one should be able to have time off when you like - ha, ha! However, having worked all over the August Bank Holiday whilst the tail end of Hurricane Charlie did its worst, I decided to leave at midday the following Friday to pick up my son and a friend at the weekend from Iain Garland's Outdoor Centre in Kingsbridge, Devon. My aim was to paddle the Salcombe Estuary - a long term ambition as yet unrealised.



For those who do not know it the Salcombe Estuary is truly beautiful, situated on the South Coast of Devon with the magnificent cliff line of Bolt Head to the west of the entrance and the less imposing Bolt Tail and Prawle Point to the east. Rolling hills and woodland surround the estuary and the town of Salcombe is situated a mile or two inland on the west bank. It forms a natural harbour much frequented during our so called summer by beautiful motor cruisers and yachts, most of which are owned by monied gentry whose main intention seems to be to impress and outdo one another.

It was 7 p.m. when I launched from North Beach, just south of Salcombe, and went rock hopping towards Bolt Head. Although there was a strong westerly breeze and a clear sky I was protected whilst in the estuary. I found a beautiful, but very small, cave system under Bolt Head which finished in a small beach. A blow hole was working superbly. I paddled into the breeze around the outlying rocks, looking at the lines of cormorants, some drying their wings, and watched the sun setting in the west. As I paddled and surfed across the estuary entrance to Bolt Tail a screeching above attracted my attention to a Herring Gull being harried by an Arctic Skua. To find one this far south at the end of August is a rare and exciting sighting indeed. More rock hopping up the east bank of the Estuary yielded a trophy in the form of a magnificent football, before I came across the first of the moored craft. Paddling between them in the dusk and flat calm there seemed to be few people on board. They were probably wining and dining in Salcombe, by now just across the water. Then I saw a figure come up on deck and stroll across the boat to the side away from me. Ah, someone to talk to, I thought. I stopped paddling and silently rounded the bow of the yacht.

'Good evening'.

'Oh, my Gawd', came back the reply.

'No, worry not - it is only I, a mere mortal', said I realising at the same time that the purpose of this early evening appearance on deck was for a bit of light relief. Now, this was my first experience of an acutely embarrassed Snottie Yottic, literally with his trousers half down - it appealed to my warped sense of humour. I could almost see the spark from his brain as he tried to determine what to do next. Tie a knot in it? ... Squeeze it, form a jet and see me off? ... Put it in his pocket? .... No, in full flow, not possible. Even turning round was no good - it would mean having to swab down the deck! Stay humble, Nick, I thought. Make a joke about it. 'Aye, there is a time and place for everything - you have found the place and I would guess just made it in time'. We were not amused. After all, urinating in the Salcombe Estuary is just not done: being caught at it by a pleb, well it might just as well have been his Almighty. Without a word we returned below, zipping up as we went.

I continued up the Estuary; it was almost dark and the stars were out. As I crossed to the west bank someone else was on deck.

'A beautiful evening', I said.

'I suppose so', was the somewhat grump reply. Well I was only trying to be friendly. Perhaps his bunk had got wet and the thought of a damp night was not appealing.

Paddling close to the steeply walled Salcombe waterfront, suddenly from above

'Ooh, look George, there's a canoe.'

This seemed too good to miss. Having been almost peed on by one the thought of potentially extracting it from another seemed too good to be true in my present state of mind. My half-hearted emergency stop in the stillness must have seemed quite a commotion.

'Ooh, I thought you had fallen in.'

'No, just stopping so that George could have a look.'

'Ooh, George, do come and see.'

Dutifully the silhouette of George's head appeared over the wall. He grunted and retired. In true BCU propoganda style I said, 'Would you like a go?'

'Ooh, that would be fun.'

'Come down then. There is a ladder here.'

'Well, not now, it is dark and I may fall in.'

'Don't worry, I will come up and help you.'

I secured the boat and paddle to the ladder, climbed out and up the ten or twelve feet. What a marvellous situation. A patio with tables and chairs, Snotties in tarty T-shirts and slacks with blue and white canvas and roped soled shoes sitting there and sipping their gin and tonics - no doubt impressing one another immensely. And a grotty, stinking, water-proofed pleb, complete with spray deck, etc., peering over the wall for all the world like a trowl or lost chad. Sadly, after many very amusing attempts at persuading someone to have a go, I accepted a few crisps and nuts and said goodbye.

Now the way I normally get into my boat from a steep access is to put it into the water, jump in after it, turn it over, re-enter and roll up. It is much easier and faster. I didn't really think about it except that I did feel a bit hot and sticky and a swim seemed a good idea. So I took a couple of steps down the ladder and jumped in. Before I hit the water I heard several screams. On resurfacing, 'He's fallen in the water' - and, yes, believe it or not - 'Man overboard'.

'Are you alright?'

'Yes, thank you.' I heard a couple of glasses hit the deck. Silhouettes of faces appeared over the wall and I could imagine several Corporal Jones's from Dad's Army belting round in circles shouting 'Don't panic, don't panic' as I unclipped the boat, turned it over and rolled up.

'Good night', I said as I took my first stroke and shaking the water out of my nose. Just then - splash - and a lifebelt landed behind me. I was glad I had taken a stroke!

'He's alright, he's gorn.'

'Well, pull the lifebelt up then.'

'I can't - the rope slid over the wall.'

Retrieval is a mere nothing for experienced Yotties. If any of you are out there and should find a lifebelt I wouldn't mind it as a souvenir. I must say it would be nice to have too much money for a week, be miserable, have no sense of humour or even sense for that matter. Perhaps not, it is more fun to have fun with them since most of the time they do not realise what is happening - such is the instinct of one-upmanship.

Cheers,

Nick

H.M. COASTGUARD - INCIDENTS INVOLVING CANOEISTS AT SEA - 1986

1	2 Jan	Largs, Scotland	NE 5	Slt sea and swell	999 rept capsized canoe boy in water. ILB despatched, FV responded to CG broadcast, boy managed to reach the shore unaided
2	3 Jan	Milford Haven	NNE 4	Smooth sea slt swell	Canoeist reptd by friends overdue on coastal trip. Initial search by CG cancelled when casualty contacted CG having come ashore unaided but exhausted
3	14 Jan	Southsea	W 7	Mod sea and swell	999 rept two canoeists in difficulty. Pilot boat diverted, B/C despatched. Both managed to reach the shore, pilot boat recovered canoes
4	26 Jan	I O M	SE 5	Mod sea slt swell	Rept of canoeist offshore in broken water but lost sight of in squall. Search by LB, CG, H/C. Located by H/C off Port St Mary not in need of assistance
5	30 Jan	Sidmouth	NE 6	Slt sea and swell	999 rept of canoeist being blown offshore. ILB and CG despatched found part only of smashed canoe waterlogged. Area searched with negative results.
6	2 Feb	Whitley Bay	NE 8	Rough sea heavy swell	H/C on exercise reptd persons attempting to launch through heavy surf. CG and Police attended and dissuaded those concerned
7	15 March	Porthcawl	SE 5	Slight sea and swell	999 rept of capsized canoe. ILB despatched and H/C diverted from exercise. Canoeist recovered by ILB and hospitalised suffering from hypothermia
8	29 March	Poole	W 7	Mod sea slt swell	Harbour tug reptd finding drifting canoe with paddle nearby. Immediate search by small craft negative but local enquiries established canoeing party safe ashore having lost one boat and paddle
9	9 April	Portishead	E 5	Slt sea and swell	Report of upturned canoe below Severn Bridge. IRB, H/C, CG conducted extensive search with negative results. Following a subsequent media report the owners contacted CG to confirm that they had lost two canoes (no occupants).
10	27 April	Gower	WSW 3	Slight sea	Yacht recovered canoeist with suspected appendicitis. ILB despatched and landed casualty to ambulance
11	4 May	Strangford Lough	E 5	Slight to mod sea	999 rept two boys in difficulties from capsized canoes. ILB and CG proceeded but boys recovered by a second group of canoeists
12	4 May	Colwyn Bay	SE 6	Slight sea and swell	999 rept of two canoeists in difficulties. IRB despatched and recovered one the second reaching the shore unaided. Both suffering from hypothermia. Both boats had insufficient buoyancy and were waterlogged with only the sterns above water.

13	4 May	Plymouth	S 5	Mod sea slight swell	999 rept of capsized canoe off River Erme. LB attended and searched; canoeist managed to reach shore having found conditions too extreme for his experience
14	12 May	Greenock	S 6	Slight sea	Two capsized canoes off Clyde MRCC. Yacht responded to broadcast and recovered both occupants landing them to ambulance suffering hypothermia
15	13 May	Barnstaple Bay	SW 5	Rough sea mod swell	999 rept of capsized canoeist off Saunton Sands. ILB and H/C despatched with CG to search area until night-fall finding only paddle and helmet. First light search recovered canoe and tracksuit trousers. 17 y.o. occupant last seen in surf hanging onto canoe. Decomposed body found one month later off Ilfracombe
16	4 June	Robin Hood's Bay	NW 4	Slight sea and swell	Two canoeists reported as overdue. CG search discovered both ashore but cut off by tide and unable to launch through surf. Recovered by CG up cliff. Father and son with previous experience only on canals
17	7 June	Appledore	WNW 3	Smooth sea	999 rept of boy in sea calling for help. H/C and ILB despatched. H/C recovered 14 y.o. boy; boy taken to hospital suffering from hypothermia. ILB recovered canoe. (Borrowed boat and inland only experience.)
18	21 June	Anglesey	NNE 6	Mod sea and swell	999 rept of canoeists off North Stack in difficulties, several capsizes in tidal race. One group of four managed to land with one man suffering hypothermia; second group managed to land near lighthouse and raised the alarm that two canoeists were unaccounted for. LB and H/C and CG despatched to scene to search and evacuate the one to hospital. Yacht responding to CG broadcast located missing canoeists some four miles from the scene
19	22 June	Barra	S2	Calm sea	Fishing vessel reported canoeist marooned on islet, unable to close. Recovery effected by small local boat. Had stolen canoe, got into difficulties and capsized. Managed to reach rocks and spent an uncomfortable and cold night before being sighted
20	28 June	Southend	E 4	Slight sea	ILB launched to canoe in difficulties near pier - recovered by local boat - no detail as ILB diverted to a second incident
21	29 June	Littlehampton	NE 2	Calm sea	ILB launched to capsized canoe. 15 y.o. youth recovered by passing craft
22	30 June	Southsea	WSW 5	Slight sea	Police rept of capsized canoeist. Police launch and CG proceeding. Recovery by local boat



23	12 July	Ullapool	SE 1	Calm sea	Capsized canoeist recovered by local boat. Completely inexperienced 50 y.o. man
24	13 July	Cromer	S 2	Slight sea	Empty canoe washed up - concern felt for possible occupant. Extensive search negative, enquiries established that it had capsized much earlier in the day and been abandoned by its owner
25	24 July	Poole	SW 4	Slight sea	Capsized canoe sighted by harbour ferry, occupant recovered by local boat
26	24 July	I.O.M.	SW 4	Slight sea	Two capsized canoeists in difficulties off Mossyard. ILB and CG despatched and recovered both
27	27 July	Barmouth	S 4	Slight sea	Two men in double canoe reported as overdue on trip up River Mawddach. Shore search with ILB support commenced. Missing men located ashore, unable to paddle against flood tide
28	31 July	Bantham	W 4	Slight sea	999 rept of several canoeists in difficulties - three persons concerned assisted by lifeguards
29	11 Aug	Firth of Forth	NNE 3	Calm sea	Lady reported husband's canoe apparently capsized but no sign of occupant. Local boat responded to CG broadcast and located man aboard a nearby yacht. Had lost spraydeck, become waterlogged and capsized; swam to anchored yacht
30	15 Aug	I.O.M.	SW 5	Slight sea	Canoeist reported to be being blown seaward off Peel. LB and CG despatched. Two canoeists located; one escorted back, one landed and returned by road
31	16 Aug	Dover	SW 4	Slight/mod sea	Flares sighted near S Goodwin L/Vsl. LB despatched, Channel Ferry responded to CG broadcast and recovered canoeist (no details available)
32	22 Aug	Anglesey	ENE 5	Slight/mod sea and swell	52 y.o. man expressed intention of canoeing solo from Caernarfon to Ireland. Reluctant to accept any advice. Concern felt as no sightings had been made and weather conditions deteriorated. Initial search prior to darkness by H/C, LB and CG - one fishing vessel advised that he had been sighted making heavy weather but declined assistance. Second search commenced at first light with all units and LB and fw aircraft from Ireland. Yacht responded to CG broadcast and sighted canoe (waterlogged) with occupant face down in water alongside some 15 miles west of Caernarfon. (Cardiac arrest due to hypothermia.)
33	31 Aug	Gower	WSW 4	Slight sea	Two canoeists reported in difficulty off Oxwish. ILB and CG attended. Both canoeists swam ashore, ILB searched and recovered boats

34	24 Sept	Gower	WNW 2 Calm sea	Person making solo crossing Worms Head to Lundy and back against advice. Sighted off Lundy but became overdue on return ETA. Shore search commenced with H/C on standby for first light search when canoeist reported in having missed his landfall and landed North of Rhossili
35	10 Oct	Croyde	WSW 2 Slight sea	Two canoeists rept in difficulties. ILB and H/C despatched. Assistance rendered by nearby canoeists
36	19 Oct	Anglesey	Wly 8 Mod sea and swell	Canoeist reported in difficulty. H/C and CG despatched but stood down when other canoeists provided assistance
37	7 Dec	Ramsgate	S 7 Rough sea mod swell	Report of six canoeists overdue at Pegwell Bay. Initial shore search commenced when red flares sighted from a group of canoeists off Ramsgate. LB and ILB despatched, four canoeists reached the shore, two recovered by LB and landed to ambulance suffering hypothermia

As at 7 January 1987 I have no other reports of 1986 incidents involving canoeists though there may be a late report or two not yet processed (though this is unlikely). In addition to the above, 17 incidents occurred which can be classified as 'false alarms' where canoeists were reported to be in difficulties but were found to be quite safe with minimal investigation

The totals compare almost exactly with 1985 and although the popularity of the sport apparently continues to increase the fact that poor weather during the summer months probably kept the less experienced ashore possibly accounts for no increase in the number of incidents.

Two lives were lost (15 and 32) both could be put down to inexperience and a lack of awareness of the inherent dangers of sea and surf. The gentleman who undertook the solo crossing to Lundy (34) might so easily have bitten off more than he could chew had the weather deteriorated. Once again the serious sea kayakers acquitted themselves well and demonstrated mature professionalism.

S. R. Richards

H.M. Coastguard, MRCC Swansea

BCU/SIC Liaison Officer

7 January 1987

Abbreviations: CG - Coastguard. LB - Lifeboat  
 ILB - Inshore Lifeboat  
 HC - Helicopter

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Compiled by Eric Totty

Please let John Ramwell know if you find this Index useful and would like to see it each year as a regular feature.

E.B.T.

From: Doug Van Etten, (907) 243-1550, P.O. Box 10-1387, Anchorage, AK 99510

ALASKA SEA KAYAKING SYMPOSIUM 1987 -  
12TH, 13TH AND 14TH JUNE

Sea kayaking instruction and a selection of related activities will be offered again this summer, at the second Alaska Kayaking Symposium, at Seward, AK, on 12th, 13th and 14th June 1987.

The objectives of this Symposium are to:-

- (i) bring together people who share an interest in the Alaska coastal environment;
- (ii) provide instruction, participation and fun for both new and experienced kayakers;
- (iii) provide water safety skills training and education;
- (iv) feature the uniquely Alaskan elements of sea kayaking;
- (v) emphasise minimum impact travel and camping; and
- (vi) introduce paddlers to a variety of boats and other equipment.

Only a 2½ hour drive southeast of Anchorage, Seward is located at the head of beautiful Resurrection Bay. There, a protected ocean environment is ideal for on-water instruction and fun. Within the community are all of the other resources for a grand weekend; meeting and assembly rooms, camping or indoor lodging and good eating places. On the Bay kayakers can find adventurous paddling, abundant marine and avian life, and access to some of Alaska's most majestic mountains and glaciers.

Water skills and safety will be a primary emphasis of the Symposium, including such instruction as: paddling techniques for safety and stability; personal and group rescue; reading the water; and, hypothermia and cold water emergencies. Participants are encouraged to bring kayaks and extra appropriate paddling clothes, or wet or dry suits, for on-water and in-water rescue training.

Other topics will include kayak sailing, in both folding and rigid boats; glaciers; bears and bear protection; weather patterns for kayakers; pitching a rain tight camp; navigational resources and trip planning; radios and ELP's; morning warm-up exercises for paddlers; birding; and intertidal zone life.

Friday night we'll all join hands for a lively square dance. Adventure slide shows and live musical entertainment are planned for Saturday evening. Sunday afternoon will afford time for the good natured "Mayor's Cup" race, between contestants specially challenged by his honour.

Kayaks and equipment will be available for the use of Symposium participants with time to try new and different boats, meet the manufacturers and see the latest in equipment for safety and paddling comfort.

You need not have a kayak to participate at ASKS '87!

For experienced paddlers, trip leaders and sea kayaking guides there will be the Alaska Open Ocean Paddling Workshop, also at Seward 9th, 10th and 11th June 1987. British Canoe Union coaches and authors John

Ramwell and Derek Hutchinson will be featured instructors for this special on-water workshop. Topics will include surf landings and launchings, kayak surfing, coastal and open water navigation, group dynamics and leadership, emergency kayak repair, emergency situation management and discussion of off-season training techniques. Instruction will take place in the classroom, swimming pool, on the beach and at sea.

Advanced registration is a must and the workshop is limited to only 40 participants. Kayakers will provide their own boat, wet or dry suit, camping gear and food.

The deadline for registration for both events is 15th May with registration being limited to 350 participants for ASKS '87 and 40 participants for the Open Ocean Workshop. Registration forms are available after 15th February at kayaking retail shops, in the April issue of Blue Water Paddler, or by contacting:

ASKS '87, P.O. Box 10-1387, Anchorage, AK 99510 (907) 243-1550

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The book QAJAQ: Kayaks of Siberia and Alaska by David Zimmerly, accompanies an exhibit of Arctic kayaks organized by the Alaska State Museum in Juneau. The exhibit, which runs through September 1987, features full-sized kayaks, models, gear, historic photographs and artwork.

In the book, Dr Zimmerly, an anthropologist and curator of the exhibit, examines the Arctic kayak, its uses and its importance to historic Arctic cultures. There are few watercraft with a history as old as that of the kayak. Some experts suspect kayaks date back more than 5,000 years. Zimmerly's studies of lines and construction details provide a rare look at traditional kayak design. Some of the finest known kayak specimens from museums in the U.S.S.R., Europe, Canada and the United States are featured in this book

Qajaq contains 96 pages, 115 black and white illustrations, a bibliography, index and glossary. The book may be ordered by sending \$12.50 to the Alaska State Museum Shop, 395 Whittier Street, Juneau, Alaska 99801. Posters and notecards also are available.

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Brenda Beeley of 556, Vincente Ave.,

Berkeley, CA 94707 U.S.A. writes:

"I'll be vacationing in England this July and would love to paddle with others (especially those with families - though I can do day trips without my family). Could you send me any information.

Thankyou.

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From: John Brand, Bramble Tye, Stanway Green, Colchester, Essex, CO3 5RA  
Tel. No. 0206-330348 27th January 1987

Dear John,

First of all, many thanks to Duncan Winning for his generally sympathetic remarks in Newsletter No.59 but there are some points I would like to comment on:-

(1) The reference to Aleut kayaks: "It is a pity that no examples of such craft exist . . ." - all due respect to someone of Duncan's eminence but I know that he has different information because I sold it to him.

(2) "..... the Russian sea otter requirement had a retrograde influence on the designs resulting in larger, heavier and slower vessels." I cannot imagine a source for such a statement, all the evidence points in exactly the opposite direction. Early Aleut singles were tiny - 3.6m x 450mm at the time of Captain Cook's visit in 1778, 37 years after Russian traders started taking over the Aleutians, and, whatever the rights and wrongs of early sea otter hunting, surely it was the scarcity of the animal that caused such pressures to be put on the Aleuts. I, for one, am glad that they were able to make great advances and that I did not have to suffer for them, but taking the main dimensions of representative specimens, the lengths increased as the hundreds of hunters swept the seas, 5.85m x 1845, for a single. When it was no longer commercially viable to hunt sea otters, lengths decreased slightly, say 5.28m x 496mm about the time the Russians sold their American holdings, and, soon after that, worsening weather conditions started another trend - 5.09m x 517mm in 1934. In 1987 our problems are different and the way the Aleuts put things together can be studied calmly and with a balanced attitude but let us make no mistake about the central fact - the information is being handed to us on a plate and the minds of the Aleutian designers can be read through the baidarkas in museums. Certainly the BM Aleut is the envy of several North American experts, David Zimmerly's surveys of the Russian early C 19th baidarkas have been available in various forms for eight or nine years and before 1975 we only knew of that type through early illustrations. If it is felt that the old-time baidarka-men were unfairly treated then I suggest that the best way of honouring their genius is to take up where they left off. If we are able.

(3) "It is to be hoped that further research comes up with details of the older superior types" - please see (1) and (2) above. Also it is debatable if the earliest known full length baidarkas were superior, say, to C 20th models, using British sea conditions as a standard for comparison. The early flat lines indicate use in calm conditions to me and the early straight bifid stems caught everything that came their way, the stick that was tied across the jaws was not a success because it frequently became untied: the turned up out-water was 40 or 50 years away.

(4) "..... John is unreasonably critical of the Greenland kayak" - I hope not, or one might start to re-arrange any historical event, but I am being presumptuous enough to be critical of the people who insist that Greenland kayaks are suitable for conditions they were never intended. We ought to see all kayaks accurately. My own opinion is that Greenland kayaks will not be assessed for the same league of sea kayaks as W. Eskimo types. I think that sea canoeists have already lost a great deal because of the myths officially fostered about Greenland kayaks, e.g., there is no such thing as "the Greenland kayak",

that is an abstraction which might sound good on the telly or in the pub, when you are sure you have an ignorant audience but it means nothing if it is intended to convey information accurately; there are five Greenland kayak types and each one changed constantly throughout their known and unknown histories. Similarly "the sea kayak shape" is another idiocy passed on by careless people from before World War 2. Sea canoeing has now reached the stage when words must be taken seriously to avoid the old confusions and if an elite like the ASKC cannot sort out the basics like comparing Greenland, modern and Aleut performances then I will gladly get down off my soap box. In the meantime I will say again that scientific research seems likely to benefit sea canoeists and if this means challenging the BCU's entrenched, negligent and unbusiness-like attitudes then so be it.

(5) What I actually wrote about the difficulties of adapting Greenland kayaks was: "Everyone, rightly, admires the beauty of the best Greenland specimens remaining in our museums but theirs is a beauty which shatters at our touch - as soon as we try to adapt one the lines go." I would not have thought that obscure enough to merit reference to the many varieties of Greenland kayaks listed in Petersen's book: Greenland kayaks were worked out to very small margins of error and if we like them enough to make replicas of them then I should have thought that to destroy their beautiful lines was the last thing we wanted. If we were merely set out to adapt a Greenland kayak, or amalgamate several Greenland kayaks, the result is not a Greenland kayak but a piece of European sentiment which is useless in terms of practical testing. In one way it is an excellent thing that we shatter the beauty of the things we admire because no-one who has glimpsed a classic kayak will mistake an arrogant piece of plundering for the real thing, on the other hand to pretend to an Eskimo connection that never existed because of the glamour of some parts of Eskimo culture, is bad because ultimately we lose the trust of the next generation of sea canoeists. If canoes with Eskimo-sounding names bear as much resemblance to real kayaks as the "Red Indian" canoes on Colchester Council's boating pond do to the birch-bark shapes, I am not only concerned about the lack of research, the facile approach, the resultant hotch-potch and the self-deception I also wonder why any sensible designer ever gives himself such an impossible task: what seems to be missing from our understanding of Greenland kayaks is that most of us are too big for them, our height is not a critical factor, neither is the supposed small average height of Eskimos important, Eskimos may be fat faced but they are slim elsewhere and being adapted to cold have shorter legs, they are not, even now, often large boned as a result of their contact with Europeans and they are trained from childhood to bend their legs backwards a bit, - hence the question - if they went to their design limits, what chance have we of getting through their hoops? I know that all this is beside the main point of suggesting that ASKC members would be better off looking at W. Eskimo designs and learning about Aleut baɖdarkas but those are the craft that are cunning because of their stems and sterns, the hull sections intended to be partly concave in the water, the simple rudders and, most important for greedy people like me, simple but longer cockpits!

Happy Paddling,

Yours sincerely,

John

KAYAK COOKERY BY LINDA DANIEL

A handbook of provisions and recipes. Soft back 200 pages.  
ISBN 0-914718-74-6 at £9.95 + £1.50 postage from the publishers:

Pacific Search Press, 222 Dexter Avenue,  
North Seattle, Washington 98109

Linda Daniel's credentials for writing this excellent book on cooking in the wilderness are excellent. She is a journalist in her own right, she is a keen kayaker and actually teaches cookery through the University of Washington.

This experience shows through Daniel's book. Her advice and her tips and recipes are all very relevant and useful. I have always wanted to know how Sourdough was made. Now I know, thanks to Kayak Cookery, several ways of using it to make pancakes, dumplings and biscuits, as well as actually making Sourdough.

I particularly like the way the recipes show what can be prepared in your own kitchen before leaving on your expedition. Once out on the beach, final preparations can be made quickly and easily.

There are two aspects of this book that might concern U.K. paddlers. First, Daniel is very generous with her list of cooking utensils. There is a general assumption that kayaks have so much storage room that there is little limitation on packing a whole range of bulky food items.

On longer expeditions with our less room kayaks we would have to select menus from Daniel's book that demand less space. This would be easy enough, there is a wide selection.

The second concern is the reference to various products by their American names. A glossary to help us translate would be very helpful.

I cannot easily discover what constitutes dried frijoles mix, nor can I be certain as to what the British equivalent is to Peppy's Fish Batter mix.

This book is in two parts. Part One covers all you need to know before you actually get as far as cooking. How to get what you need from a Supermarket, what is best in the way of foreign groceries and speciality foods, how to dry food and prepare it, and how to pack it and store it both whilst under-way and at your campsite. Part Two ingeniously divides out into sections on salads, easy to make dinners that travel up to a week and dinners that will last longer. I particularly like the 'Mindless Meals' section, which are easy to fix.

Kayak Cookery should have a place on your bookshelf.

If you are fond of innovative camp cooking (and if you are not you should be - dull meals on top of a bad weather trip can be dreary) this book will become well thumbed and will continue to serve as an invaluable guide to adding a fresh dimension to your sea kayaking excursions.



From: Dave Youren, 25 Millfield Crescent, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF8 4LU

Dear John,

Thank you for the recent edition of the ASKC Newsletter and the gentle reminder about membership which you will find enclosed. Also thank you (although it's a while after the event) for organising the summer meet up at Ballachulish, it is nice now to look back from the warmth of home to the enjoyable expeditions made during that week.

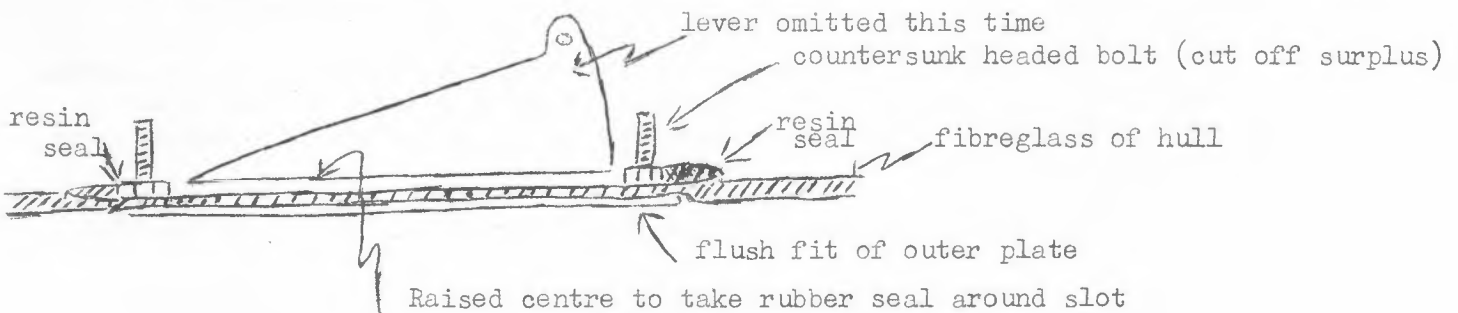
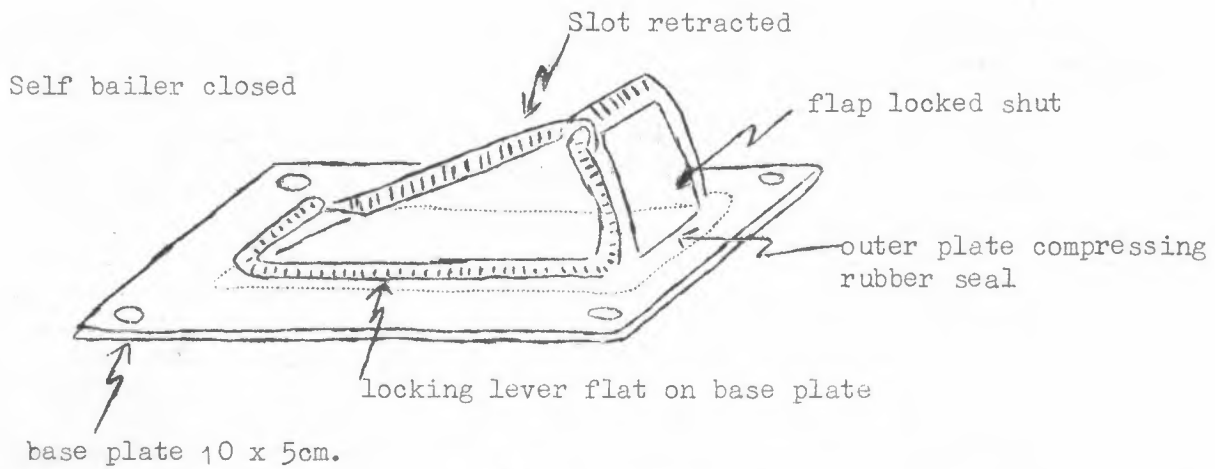
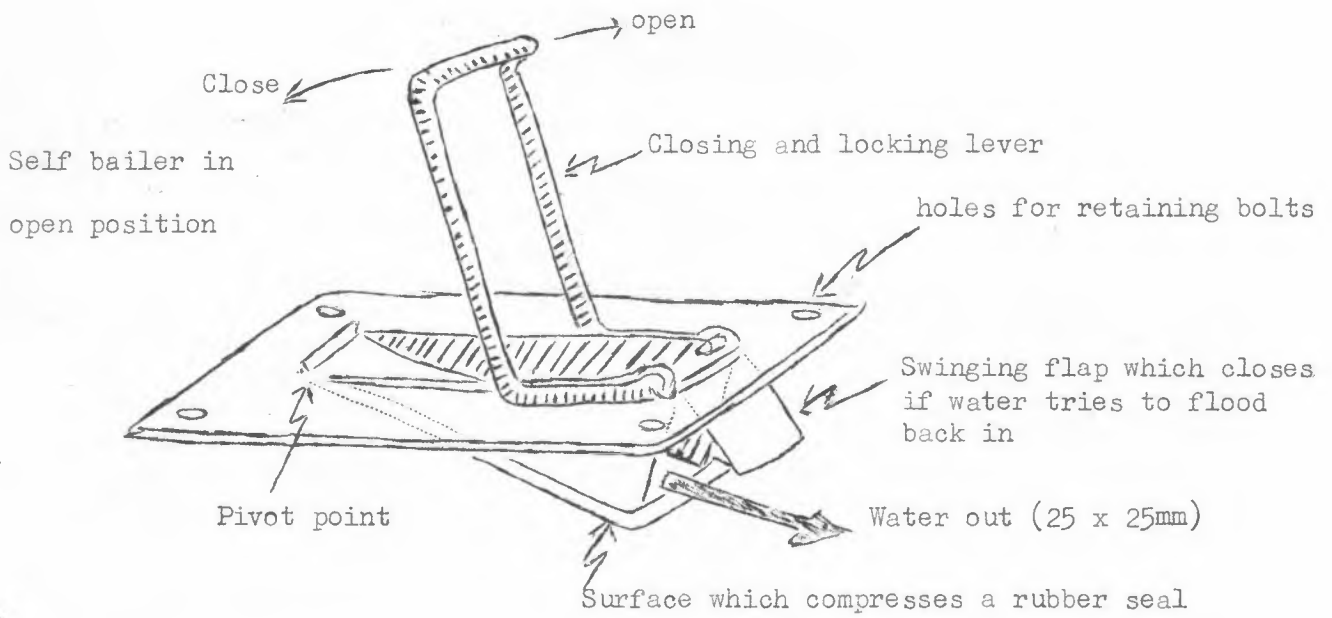
Since then I have been up to boat modifying tricks and have come up with one of the worst kind - i.e., cutting holes in the bottom! No I'm not crazy! There is a purpose for this hole. I have on a number of occasions broken the cardinal rule of solo paddling and in the quiet moments later, have pondered on the advisability of such actions and the likely consequences of a capsize and my ability to self rescue. At the baths I have practiced until I've been blue in the face, the famous 'Hutchinson Horror' and although I can do it I'm sceptical that I could achieve this in rough water and further I find it very difficult to maintain balance and pump out the boat once I'm back in. Hence I have cut a hole in the bottom to let the water drain out. (Now you are convinced I'm a loony!) Actually I have installed a dinghy self bailing device - quite simply, a stainless steel opening slot, which when the boat is moving lets water drain out by creating a low pressure point behind the slot which sucks the water out. It still requires Mr D Hutchinson's entry, but once back in the boat efforts are concentrated on paddling and support, a much easier object than pumping in a rough sea.

I have found that even with the cockpit area really swamped that slow forward progress allows the water to drain quite quickly and as the water load decreases then your speed increases. Once the cockpit is dry the slot can be closed again by inserting a hand under the spraydeck. On my boat, a Sea King, the spraydeck can be loose at the side and still stay in place; this may not be so for all boats.

The device was obtained from a yachting chandlery (Northern Chandlery Mart, Thorpe Arch Trading Estate, Wetherby, Yorks.) for £5.00 and as shown in the drawings is simply a stainless steel plate with a pivoted triangular slot held in place by a lever. A swining flap prevents water from flowing back up the slot if forward motion ceases. It is the drag of the slot protruding below the boat which causes suction to remove the water. I emptied a deliberately overfilled cockpit in  $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile of paddling in trials on a lake near where I live. On the sea in waves of 4-6' it took a little longer than this.

The fixing was easy enough once the courage was found to cut a hole in an otherwise well watertight boat. I found that I could flush fit the steel plate within the thickness of the fibreglass, resin and bolts then secured it in place. So far I have had no problems with leaks or with sand clogging the action of the device.

Overall I feel it has definite advantages in that no pumping in difficult conditions is needed. It is very simple to operate; when in use in a boat amongst other people no rafting is needed, no stationary boats which may also capsize and once back in your boat you are mobile again and making some progress towards your destination.



LOCH SCAVAIG - MAY 1985 -  
DICK EDIE, BALERNO, MIDLOTHIAN

As I turned the corner past the turn-off for the Mam-Rattigan I came across the sad sight of police and ambulance getting down to the grisly task of removing the body of a motorist from the remains of his car. I hoped that this was not a bad omen for the long weekend.

I am a member of the J.M.C.S., one of the major Scottish Mountaineering Clubs and as such I am responsible for the maintenance of the climbers hut on the shores of Loch Scavaig. Once a year the club mounts a weekend meet to the hut, during which we almost totally refurbish the hut, calor gas, water pipes, paint and supplies are taken in for the year. Logistically the organisation of this weekend is horrendous. The major difficulty being that if anything is forgotten it can be months before a particular job is finished. It was the forward planning of this meet that inspired me to spend the early May holiday up at Coruisk.

"Are you travelling alone?" asked the Cal-mac ticket collector at Kyle. "What do you call that type of boat?" he went on, not waiting for a reply to his first question. I explained that it was a sea kayak and passed the time of day with him.

At last the ferry pulled into Kyleakin, swinging against the strong spring tide.

The first part of the island of Skye is not the most beautiful, low moors and scattered cottages with the scars of new road building tending to make the scene rather drab.

When I reached the Broadford Hotel I turned left onto the Elgol road. This is to me the most beautiful stretch of road anywhere. Again starting in drab scenery of peat bog the first sight to break up the scene are the small lochans which line the road. Then I came across a lonely graveyard with ancient yew trees and a ruined kirk. By day the churchyard with the red Cuillens towering behind is lovely, by night it must be one of the spookiest places around. Further down the road I reached the village of Torrinn; written language cannot do justice to this village. The view across to Blabheinn would leave anyone lost for words.

Seventeen miles after leaving Broadford I reached the end of the road at Elgol. Again the familiar calendar picture greeted me.

I got out of the car and began to load the kayak with the equipment which I felt was necessary for the weekend. An old man came out of his house and chatted to me about the sea conditions and about the seaworthiness of a kayak.

"When will you be back?" he asked doubtfully.

"In three days time, weather permitting", I replied, trying to feel confident. It is always the case before I do a committing solo trip, that I feel very nervous. I regard these nerves as a healthy respect for the dangers of the sea.

Nerves and butterflies always disappear as soon as I'm in the water. This day the sun was shining and the sea was fairly calm. In view of this I decided to go four miles straight across Loch Scavaig, rather than skirting round the shore. I had paddled straight across before but never solo. Paddling the kayak was an even, steady exercise and soon I found



myself at least two miles from the nearest piece of land. It always amazes me that distances at sea are very hard to judge. There is no foreground and little to relate the passing of the miles. The only way I could tell if I was getting any nearer was passing the many lobster bouys and the Black Cuillins slowly looming up in front of me.

Since I have been the Custodian of the Coruisk Memorial Hut I am always very nervous when approaching, will it still be in good repair?, will there be any damage after the winter storms? All my fears dissipated as I rounded one of the islets at the head of the loch and got my first view of the white hut. Seals spotted me and edged nearer the water ready to dive if I got too near. As I closed in on them I tried to count the number of splashes as they panicked and made for the sea. I lost count at fifty. Eider ducks raised their bottoms in unison as they either dipped for food or showed their disappointment at being disturbed.

I am biased but I do feel that there is no hut in Britain can rival the Coruisk Memorial Hut for the sheer splendour of its situation. It stands on the banks of Loch Scavaig or more correctly Loch na Guilce and is only 200 yards from the lonely Loch Coruisk. Walter Scott once visited this spot and wrote of its splendour. It is an area of stark, magnificent contrasts. The blue sea, the green valley, the black mountains and the amazing lighting as the mist and clouds interchange with sun and clear blue sky.

I pulled the canoe up over Gabbro slabs trying not to scrape the bottom. Gabbro is the roughest rock known and it is this which makes Skye a mecca for climbers.

That evening I spent in the pleasant company of the Clyde Valley Mountaineering Club enjoying their tales and banter and more than a drop of whiskey.

The next day was calm and sunny, perfect weather for either a canoe trip or a day in the hills. I'd first got certain chores to do. Painting the wall of the hut is not my idea of fun, but it did look better afterwards.

I didn't finish my work until almost afternoon. This made me decide that I would prefer to do a canoe trip as it was really too late to start up any of the hills.

I packed a cagoule and a snack and climbed into the boat. The poor seals once again had their sunbathe disturbed as I skiffed through the water heading for the Island of Soay. Rhum and Eigg seemed very close. The western shore of Loch na Guilce has some fascinating inlets and islets where the wildlife is seen at its best. One of the best aspects of sea canoeing is that you glide silently through the water and don't disturb the wildlife unless you get really close.

I rounded a corner and watched with delight as two otters played among the boulders. I was spotted, a splash and they were gone. Towards the southern part of the loch I paddled into a tall cave. The walls were covered in shags standing to attention.

On the east side of Soay the sea cliffs meant that the situation was once again a no landing zone. Again I felt very committed. Further round I noticed just how close the island of Rhum was. I decided that I'd try to go there and pointed the bow for Loch Kinloch. Reluctantly I changed my mind as I looked at the map on my chart deck and realised that Rhum was eight miles away. Too far to go there and back in one afternoon.

An hour or two later I was at the entrance to Soay harbour, it was from here that Gavin Maxwell ran his shark fishing company. The full story of this was told in his book "Harpoon at a Venture" Tex Geddes, one of the shark fishermen who worked for him still lives there. I passed by the harbour without stopping; it was almost evening and I wanted to get back to the hut for some food.

The junction between Loch Scavaig and the Sound of Soay is at a promontory called Ulfhart Point. Being Spring tides there was unusually a tide race running off this point and overfalls soon had the kayak bouncing too and fro. I had noticed that throughout my trip there had been about twenty seals following me the whole way. They are curious animals but quite shy, always staying behind me and diving every time I looked behind me.

Suddenly the seals all overtook me and disappeared very quickly towards the islands in the loch. I looked round to see what had scared the seals, their behaviour seemed so unusual. Freezing with horror I watched a tall black dorsal fin break the surface. A shark, I thought. The fluted tail then curved out of the water and I realised that I was seeing a killer whale at very close quarters. The killer whale is probably misnamed, but it was amazing to see the effect of the word 'killer' on my tired muscles. I am told that the fastest possible speed for a kayak is about six miles an hour. Personally I don't think I could have gone faster with an outboard motor.

The whale circled me, showed me its underside as it gave me a good look over. Then it disappeared under the waves and I never saw it again.

Arriving back at the hut I really felt that I had a story to tell that evening.

I spent the rest of the evening making up a list of everything needed for the maintenance of the hut.

The next morning I had an uneventful if apprehensive paddle to Elgol. On landing the old man came out and welcomed me back. Its always a boost to a solo traveller to come across such a friendly reception.

The final event of the weekend was when I was driving down through Kintail. There on the road was a large brown wild goat. I don't think I've ever seen an animal with such evil eyes. Strangely enough the only other time I've seen a wild goat so close was nearby in Cluny three weeks before.

The rest of the trip home was uneventful and it was with a certain amount of relief that I finally arrived. After all, it's not everyone who has a brush with a killer whale.

Dick Edie