

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.86

JULY 1991

J. J. Ramwell
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NEWPORT
Isle of Wight
PO30 5PS

EDITORIAL

The last few weeks have been dominated by the ANGLESEY SEA KAYAKING SYMPOSIUM which lasted one week from MAY 4TH to MAY 10TH inclusive. This event was staged at the Anglesey School of Sea and Surf (ASSS) close to Holyhead near Porthdafach and was organised by Frank Goodman of VCP, Nigel Dennis of ASSC, Howard Jeffs and myself. My own contribution was fairly modest but I can tell you that a hell of a lot of effort went into making the whole week a great success. Sea kayaking has truly arrived and is here to stay. The Symposium seemed to me to be the final 'rubber stamp' that sprawled 'APPROVED' right across the whole sport. This was particularly emphasised by a forum put together following the helicopter rescue demonstration involving all the local rescue services. Here were represented H.M. Coastguard, R.A.F. Valley, Inshore Rescue Service and RNLI. It was not that many years ago that sea kayaking was seen by the uninitiated as a risk activity worthy of little merit. Now, thanks to the responsible behaviour of you lot out there we have full credibility - we have approval.

Our plan was to model the Symposium on the American model where beginners were encouraged to participate and mix with the more experienced paddlers and where there is a choice of several lectures, clinics, trips and demonstrations. The plan worked and the number of new paddlers was most encouraging. We have it in mind to publicise more widely in future and bring in those who may not even have previously thought of sea kayaking.

One of the highlights of the Symposium was the presentation by GEORGE DYSON on the history and evolution of the BAIDARKA. The Baidarka is a unique kayak. Dyson is a unique man and his account of these kayaks - part history, part culture - showed his passion for this ancient Aleutian style kayak that is the Baidarka. Wonderful!!

Of course an event of this magnitude and the fact we were organising it for the first time meant that there were some teething problems. Nigel Dennis seemed to be handling more of his fair share of these, he being the 'host' for the event. I know that by the end of the week Howard Jeffs was a nervous wreck as he juggled with matching available resources to requirements as both changed by the minute.

There were many mightier moments. Frank Goodman teaching George Dyson to roll. "Eureka - he's done it" shouted Frank and all eyes in the crowded pool fixed on George as he went for a roll. Will he - won't he? He did and cheers were heard in Holyhead. I particularly enjoyed paddling Howards double - the Aleut Sea II on a final days paddle round Puffin Island. Alf (Heyan) and I took one of Howards' daughters with us and Howard and Shirley in another double took his other daughter and together with a fleet of other sea kayaks we set off in brilliant weather from Beaumaris. I have to report that Vince and Di Smith led this expedition and brought us back safely to Beaumaris having enjoyed a leisurely lunch break and a whole fruit and nut cake produced by Di.

If I started to thank all the contributors to this Symposium I would end up with a 'who's who' of sea kayaking and would undoubtedly omit a name or two. You all know who you are and a mere 'thank you'

seems hardly sufficient . . . so we are, as agreed, paying expenses. If you have not filled in a claim form send details to either Frank at VCP or Nigel at ASSS.

Correspondence about the centre of gravity of a kayak between Frank Goodman and Peter Carter is included. I am often asked why I encourage argument that becomes so vitriolic, There have been such letters about bulk heads, pods, etc., and it is a pity they become so personalised, but when people feel strongly enough about something then such letters are the outcome. My rationale for publishing is that in all the correspondence there is much of genuine interest to us as sea kayakers and I am not prepared to edit material unless there are legal reasons why I should.

I have a bunch of glossy brochures on the ARCTIC SEA KAYAK RACE, AUGUST 5TH-10TH 1991. Send a SAE for this and the Race Registration form.

Until the next newsletters have a great summer (or winter if you are way down south).

A.S.K.C. SHOP

Ties @ £6.00 each
ASKC Stickers @ 35 pence each
ASKC letter headed paper @ 50 pence per ten sheets
6th International Sea Kayaking Symposium Report @ £1 00 each
QAJAQ book on kayaks of Siberia and Alaska by D. Zimmerly @ £12.00
T-shirts - small/medium/large/X large @ £5 50 each (in yellow or black)
Sweat Shirts - small/medium/large/X large @ £11 50 each (in yellow or black)
ASKC Ski Hats @ £3 50 each

*Please line through as appropriate.

ALL PRICES INCLUSIVE OF POSTAGE AND PACKING.

From: Henry Monaghan, 10 Caernarvon Close, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 3QL
6th March 1991

Firstly may I thank you for your efforts in producing a very readable magazine on a regular basis. I get much enjoyment from reading it

Secondly, I hope/wish to build a sea kayak myself and I wondered if you knew of anyone with a mould for sale. If so, could you put me in touch with them?

From: Vince Smith, 3 Rossall Road, Ansdell, Lytham St Annes, Lancs.
FY8 4ES 21 May 1991

I would like to thank all those who were involved in the organisation and presentation of the First Nordkapp Symposium. The event was most enjoyable and I can speak for several of my friends who echo this conclusion. Special acknowledgement should be given to yourself, Nigel Dennis and Frank Goodman.

In detail, the Symposium was very interesting, even provocative sometimes; I remember the discussions over the life-jacket versus buoyancy aid! Still this did not detract in any way whatsoever from the Symposium, it was quite a healthy thing to see that there was not a monopoly of ideas coming from one person's viewpoint.

The demonstration of the rescue organisations was most effective and very enjoyable to watch (at least from the clifftops!). The vista of John's pristine white boots being lifted up with him in them was a sight to behold! Significant was the failure of several flares to go off during the exercise. This again reminds me of another discussion which took place over the flares/EPIRB/VHF radio usability.

Saturday night's lecture by George Dyson was very well attended and I am sure that everyone found it stimulating and very well presented. Judging from the questions raised and number of interested parties, it cannot be very long until we see similar baidarkas in British waters.

The most abiding memory of the Symposium will be the sheer number of people who came, many old friendships were renewed and fresh ones developed. I certainly came away knowing more people than before, some of which have already helped me and my wife in our kayaking.

Thank you again for all your hard work, it was worth it!

INSTRUCTOR EXCHANGE

Wayne Horodowich, Editor

I have heard that "absolute power corrupts absolutely." I still have not received any input for this column from all of you knowledgeable kayakers out there. Therefore, I am here doing a one-man show on my way to corruption. Please save me from myself by contributing your experiences.

All input is valuable. You do not have to be an instructor to write. We have all learned some aspect of sea kayaking from someone. As a student write and tell me what worked for you and why. Why was your instructor so great or not so great? Please, don't be shy.

I wish to thank the following clubs and organizations for agreeing to include this column in their newsletters: Bay Area Sea Kayakers (BASK) in California, University of Montana-Dept. of HPER, and Advanced Sea Kayaking Club (ASKC) in England.

The more clubs that include this column in their newsletters, the greater the distribution of our collective experiences.

Reflections From the Cockpit

— Editorial

As an instructor and avid kayaker I believe that the forward stroke is the most important stroke in sea kayaking. I have often counted the number of strokes I have done per minute and those of my students. Multiplying that number by the number of minutes to cover a mile, I have told my students that one paddles at least one thousand strokes in a mile while touring. If a person is going to repeat a movement ten thousand times in a simple ten mile day tour, then I think great emphasis should be placed on teaching that skill.

There have been many articles written and portions of books dedicated to describing the components of the forward stroke. There have also been articles describing the overuse injuries (wrist, elbow, shoulder) due to incorrect paddling techniques. I want to focus our attention to the "hows" of what we teach, not to review the fundamentals of the forward stroke.

I believe all beginning students should learn how to paddle and maneuver a kayak without the use of a rudder. What happens if the rudder breaks or malfunctions?

Students should be taught to correct their course with the use of forward momentum strokes rather than using a paddle rudder unless the need is immediate. Why waste energy and slow yourself down if you are trying to cover distance?

Due to the frequency of strokes while

paddling I strongly believe that one cannot say enough about overuse injuries to sea kayakers. Read up on those articles in *Sea Kayaker* and "relax that death grip."

We should emphasize pacing to the students when they are touring. Our bodies are more efficient when they are in "steady states." Bursts of energy should be saved for the surf zone, rock gardens or emergency situations.

What percentage of your class is devoted to the forward stroke? I am not trying to minimize the value of rescues, oceanography, equipment, or any other aspect of a basic kayak class. However, sea kayaking primarily consists of a person doing the forward stroke. Are you spending adequate time on the stroke given its extensive use?

I ask you to please re-evaluate your classes. Does the class content meet the final goals and needs of the level of kayaker you are trying to create?

Topic of Focus: "Teaching the Forward Stroke"

The following are techniques I have used over the years for teaching the forward stroke.

Have the students sitting in the kayak, with the kayak on shore, while learning the forward stroke. Even though the paddle blade will not go as deep as it should I think it better simulates the feeling than standing with the paddle. By practicing before entering the water I have decreased the frequency of the missed stroke scenario. If a student misses a stroke because the paddle slices through the water sometimes that student will follow the blade into the water.

Emphasize a relaxed grip from the very beginning with the class. I have seen some difficulty with some students if I discuss the completely open grip too soon. I save that for later in the class.

The land drills are used to get the student comfortable in the kayak before they get into the water. I know that they will be able to paddle to the basic rendezvous point if they get some land practice first.

I believe that the class should see the forward stroke correctly being modeled by the instructors and assistants. Demonstrate the stroke from the front, back, and side views.

My assistants and I follow the class from behind when they are doing the forward stroke and give constructive criticisms as needed.

A drill I have found to be very useful is the "Star Drill." I call it the star drill because if you were to look down from above, the formation would resemble rays of light protruding from a center. Have the students surround your kayak with their bows facing you. Have them back paddle, stop, forward paddle and stop before hitting you. Their goal is to keep you as the center of focus and keep their bows pointing at you at all times. You have a good front view of their forward and back strokes. The drill gives students a chance to practice two strokes, stopping and starting, keeping straight and paddle signals if you include them in the drill. This is an excellent drill to practice the skills needed in landing & launching in surf.

The forward stroke is a repeated focus in our basic class. Throughout the class each new skill and drill is sandwiched between forward stroking to another location. Each time we move locations we emphasize a different element of the forward stroke (grip, pushing vs. pulling, hand height, body movement, etc.)

Yakisms

Definition: Yakism – a word, phrase, saying &/or wisdom used to explain, relate, describe &/or justify experiences, thoughts, insights, &/or observations of a paddler's view of the kayaking world.

"All kayaks are as stable as a catamaran."

— *Unnamed kayak salesperson*

"It's not my technique, it's the kayak that isn't going straight." — *Beginning paddler*

"Up is a relative direction to someone doing a roll." — *Zen Kayaker*

Instructor Exchange Committee

If you are interested in putting some time and energy into expanding the scope of the committee from beyond the instructor exchange column in the *TASK Newsletter*, please contact me with your ideas.

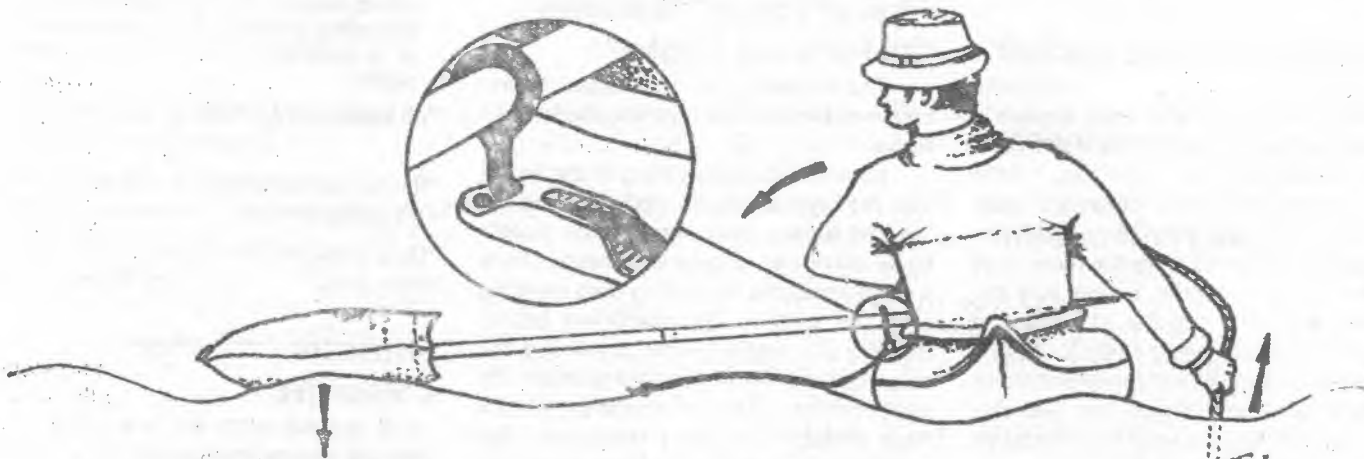
From : Trevor Lockie, Woodhenge, Drumbeg, By-Lairg,
Sutherland, Scotland, IV27 4NW.

In reply to Peter Lamonts letter in N/L 84, I was sorry to hear that he found lobster creeling an unproductive practice in the kayak. One hundred miles further North on the Sutherland coast where I am, I find the opposite. During the season, from one lift on a dozen creels, I often return with three good sized lobsters plus a couple of crabs and rock cod, and all welcome on our table!

Perhaps the Argyll area is fished more intensively by commercial creelers in comparison to here, and accounts for your disappointment.

Bear in mind, I only found the full potential of this pursuit when I seeked out those heavily reefed area of the coast where only a small vessel with little draft can slip in at high water, the larger motorized fishing vessel not daring the dangerous pinnacled rocks. This is where the sea kayak comes into its own, and on virgin kelp beds too.

Concerning stability while lifting creel..... I thought your swing-arm outrigger was a potential hazard for creel ropes in an unforeseen capsize and might make a roll impossible. It would worry me. Another solution is to use the paddles (no feather) extended out from one side of the kayak cleated down via an 8mm. dia. paddle leash to camcleat



on that side of cockpit/gunwhale area, and I sometimes further the stability by the addition of a Sea Trek paddle float (when the creel sticks to the sea bed). In the event of a disaster one pulls the trailing end of the paddle leash and the paddles are free for any manoeuvre or rolling. This solution worries me less!

You are right of course, wildlife does exist in spite of our activities and has done ever since we decided to eat it, but with the pressure of high tec. commercial fishing making its ugly presence felt, we all feel there should be some kind of restraint made in our hunting/ fishing methods, and , on a strictly personal level, the kayak again comes into its own. Kayak (the spear) v. M.F.V. (machine-gun)..... Look again.

Yours in a very special kind of pursuit,

Trevor Lockie.

THE BRITISH CANOE UNION SEA TOURING COMMITTEE
A SUMMARY OF WHAT IT DOES by MICK HODSON

The Sea Touring Committee is not a Canoe Club, nor is it a social club. It is in fact a working Committee of the British Canoe Union.

The Advanced Sea Kayak Club is a list of names of people who receive a newsletter from John Ramwell, who runs the ASKC. It doesn't have many meetings either. Some confusion exists over the two, since John Ramwell was for many years the Chairman of the STC as well as running the ASKC.

It is a sad fact that each year a number of incidents occur involving Sea Canoeists, a few of them fatal. The principal function of the STC is to report to the BCU on matters affecting safety, whether concerning boat design, equipment, training, awards, public awareness. One of the most important aspects of our work is the liaison with the Coastguard, through which we have the opportunity directly to study every reported mishap, so that we can learn, and perhaps help the public to learn, how to avoid that mistake again.

It quickly becomes clear that training is of the utmost importance, especially for the beginner going on the sea. It is a very easy mistake to think that because one has some experience of canoeing inland, one will be alright on the sea. Not at all! It is a very different state of affairs. Of course canoeing skills are important, but at sea there is far more to it than that.

It is therefore down to the STC - and the BCU as a whole - to bring it home to people that the sea must be treated with extreme caution, and to make available to them the training they need to canoe on the sea.

Someone wrote recently that the Sea Touring Committee exists for the benefit of its members. This has never been true, but it is possible to see how people could get that impression, especially if they were unaware of how very seriously one has to take the venture of putting a kayak on the sea, and how even more seriously must be taken the training of those who would lead others on the sea.

Through the Sea Touring Committee the BCU and its members have the ability to tap the skills and knowledge of some of the most capable Sea Canoeists.

During the year very many enquiries come to the Sea Touring Committee, from questions about starting out as Sea Canoeists, to very detailed discussions of expedition plans. We may be asked for mundane help such as the provision of synoptic weather chart blanks, or exotica such as the provision of charts of the coast of Papua New Guinea, to all of which we do our best to respond as quickly as possible.

Come along to the next STC meet - The Farne Islands weekend of 22nd and 23rd June. Write to Martin Meling, Chairman of STC at 20 Windermere, Cleadon Village, Sunderland SR66 7QQ, for details and to let us know you are likely to join us.

SEVEN SISTERS SEA KAYAKING MEET - JULY 19TH-21ST 1991

This is an informal weekend get-together for people who would like to paddle in the Seaford Head, Cuckmere Haven, Seven Sisters and Beachy Head area. Nothing too demanding is planned, although trips to the Royal Sovereign light tower (7 miles off shore) might be possible for more experienced paddlers.

The base will be at Seaford, where a camp site (with hot showers) will be available. Participants will arrive on the Friday evening and we will plan appropriate trips for the Saturday and Sunday, in the light of the prevailing weather and sea conditions. It should not be necessary to paddle only expedition sea kayaks as trips can be arranged with different sorts of boats in mind.

Participants can of course paddle in their own groups, but leaders can be provided for those who would like to join organised parties. This is intended to be a fairly relaxed, enjoyable touring weekend and you don't have to be an 'expert' to take part. Nevertheless, paddlers will need to have a reasonable level of competence (about proficiency level) as landing at the base of some of the cliffs may not be possible at all states of the tide.

A nominal administrative charge of £1 per paddling participant will be made for BCU members, but this will have to be increased to £3 per head for non-BCU members (in line with BCU policy for touring events and to cover insurance). No charge will be made for family members, non-paddling friends, etc. Camp site fees for two people and a car will be in the region of £4 to £5 per night (still subject to negotiation).

In order to make the necessary arrangements (booking the campsite, etc.) we really need to know in advance who is coming and it would be appreciated if you could fill in the attached form as soon as possible. If you return the form with a SAE further details, including directions will be forwarded to you.

NB. Although no deposit is required, if you book a place and fail to turn up this could cause severe embarrassment - both financial and diplomatic - to the organisers. So please let us know in advance if you can't make it.

BCU SEA TOURING COMMITTEE

BCU LONDON AND SOUTH EAST REGION

SEVEN SISTERS SEA KAYAKING MEET - JULY 19TH-21ST 1991

I would like to attend the sea kayaking meet.

Name _____

Address _____

'Phone No. _____

BCU Membership No. (if applicable) _____

I would like to reserve camping places as follows:- _____ Tents
 _____ Cars
 _____ People

Please indicate numbers

(If you wish to make your own arrangements for accommodation please enter zero in the three boxes above.)

If you are coming with a group please indicate how many people will be paddling in addition to yourself _____ paddlers

Please return this form together with a STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE to:-

Mr C. R. Childs, 8A Holland Street, BRIGHTON, Sussex BN2 2WB

I can also be contacted on Brighton (0273) 690976

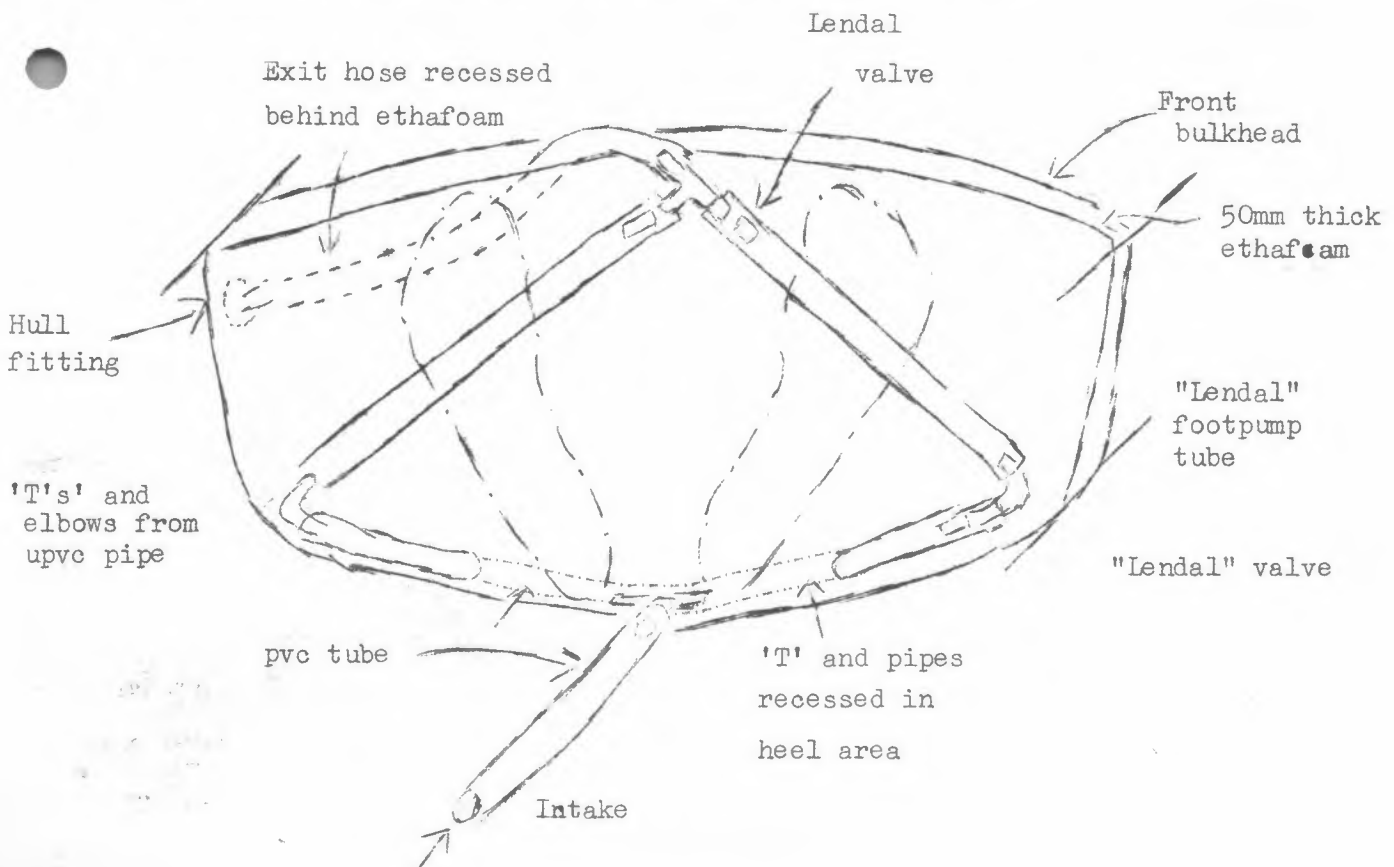
From: Chris Bolton, Little Heath, Delenty Drive, Birchwood, WARRINGTON
WA3 6AP 26 February 1991

First a comment on Newsletter No.64 - two people wrote articles on Lewis. I agree - it's a superb place to paddle. Relative to England, however, it is a foreign country, and we need to respect local custom. When I was there as a guest of Stornoway Canoe Club, we never paddled on the Sabbath, at their request. It is quite acceptable to take a walk, however, and there is plenty to see. The tides in the mouth of Little Loch Roag, by the way, really do run at 5 knots, making it like river paddling. The only pub for miles is on the loch shore, and a visit by water is well worthwhile.

I was telling you about the variation on the Lendal footpump which I've built. It's based on the principle that there's no pint shooting a small jet of water half a metre away from the boat - why not have larger jet that just reaches the outside of the hull?

I've used the standard Lendal tube, although if I could have found a larger diameter tube from the same rubber I would have used that. I've also used the Lendal valves - two pairs, to give independent action on each foot, and also a larger throughput of water. The rest of the tubing is about 20mm diameter pvc, available from Yacht Chandlers except for the exit hose which was from a car radiator and had the right sort of bend in it already. The connectors are upvc overflow pipe junctions - the Lendal elbows are too small in diameter. The joints between the hoses and fittings are a push fit, secured by binding tightly with thin nylon cord. The whole thing was built on a slab of ethafoam, which fits up against the bulkhead and forms a footrest.

In use, it is possible to push with alternate feet, which avoids pushing oneself backwards in the seat, so is faster than both feet on the same tube. It shifts about 1.5 gallons a minute. Anyone trying the idea will need to adapt it to the cockpit shape and material available, so I have avoided giving precise sizes - experiment and you may come up with an improvement. (If so write it up!)



From: Duncan R. Winning, 22 Brisbane Glen Road, LARGS, Ayrshire KA30 8QX
8th January 1991

Thanks for Newsletter No.83. I am pleased and relieved to see that the technical debate continues and that the language has moderated even if not as much as I would prefer for my own taste.

Enclosed is a long overdue review of the video "Greenlanders at Kodiak", I trust you can use it. A comment of John D. Heaths during correspondence about the tape rings bells with some of the recent letters on copyright, royalties, etc. When John was trying to get details from the Greenlanders of some of their rolling techniques a few of them were not willing to reveal such an important part of their culture because they remembered that "Edi Hans Pawlata got more money and glory out of describing their standard roll in a book than they got out of it".

Now, your correspondent Vince Smith and killer whales. I spent part of my childhood at Cour on the Kilbrannan Sound, i.e., on the east coast of the Mull of Kintyre opposite Arran. I and many of my canoeing friends have paddled this stretch on more than one occasion and while the area used to have a reputation for basking sharks I have not heard of any similar connection with the killer whale although the beasties have been seen round all parts of the Scottish coast. Otters are common on the west coast although they are shy and not seen all that often. I have watched a mother otter and two young swim along the edge of the shore from my caravan while I enjoyed breakfast.

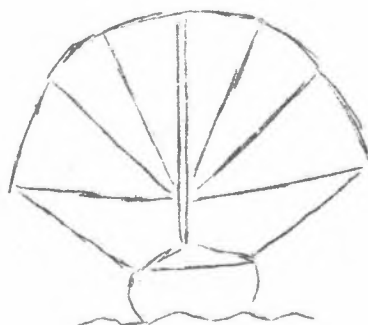
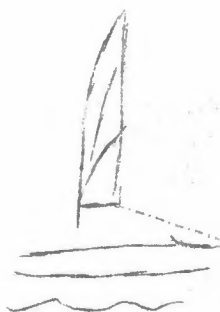
The Summer Isles in Loch Broom are worth a visit but water is not easily found other than on Tanera Mor, likewise camping. It is some years since I paddled there. Priest Island was a summer home, very steep with limited landing. Tanera Mor was visited daily in the tourist season by trip boats. The best time for the west of Scotland is May to early June as far as the usual weather pattern goes. Tidal streams round the Summer Isles are not strong.

From: David Miller, 69 Rosehill Drive, Bransgore, Hants. BH23 8NR

I hope you can help me for contacts and/or information on the following:-

(a) Sails - Is there anyone in U.K. using them much, and if so what sort of design/size?

(b)



This design sail has been seen in a photo from Alaska/North America.

Design is fan shaped and can be reefed or furled from a lower batten to the mast in one batten steps.

In section it is curved (like a bowl). Does anyone have any more details on this sail, i.e., is mast pre-bent or bent under tension from the sail?

From: GTE Discovery Publications, Inc., 22026 20th Avenue S.E.,
P.O. Box 3007, Bothell, WA 98041-3007 (206) 487-6100

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Rick Paul or Deborah Easter, Marketing Communications,
1-800-331-3510

Summary: Joel Rogers' **The Hidden Coast: Kayak Explorations from Alaska to Mexico** invites you to explore the seldom seen havens of the spectacular Pacific coast shoreline.

"I greatly enjoyed **The Hidden Coast** for its sense of adventure and wonderful pictures." Paul Theroux, author of **The Mosquito Coast**.

"**The Hidden Coast** is an inspiration to paddlers and dreamers" John Dowd, author of **Sea Kayaking**.

Begin a journey. **The Hidden Coast: Kayak Explorations from Alaska to Mexico** introduces you to remote Pacific coastal spaces - the secluded edge between civilization and the Pacific Ocean. Joel Rogers' dramatic photo-essays take you on 12 sea-kayaking adventures, from paddling the ice-choked lagoons of Alaska to winding through the sun-baked mangrove swamps of Mexico's La Manzanilla. You paddle with killer whales in British Columbia's Johnstone Strait. glide through the gentle estuaries of Washington's Skagit River flood plains. and watch for unpredictable waves in the mammoth sea caves of Northern California's Channel Isles.

The book's narrative describes locations Rogers has paddled over the last decade. His stunning four-color photography and gift for risk, observation, and reflection upon upon cultural history and the natural world lead us to savor this fragile and pristine marine landscape. **The Hidden Coast** is for all readers seeking adventure - from experienced kayakers to sea-dreaming travellers who can muse over this gorgeous book. The book includes a practical access guide for those who wish to travel in the author's wake.

A Seattle native and son of a sea captain, Joel Rogers is an internationally published photographer and writer. His work has appeared in such publications as *Outside*, *Audobon*, *Sierra Calendar*, *Sports* (Germany) and *BE-PAL* (Japan).

The Hidden Coast (U.S. - \$19.95, softbound; Canadian - \$24.95; 72 color photographs, 15 maps) is available in bookstores or from the publisher, Alaska Northwest Books, P.O. Box 3007, Bothell, WA 98041-3007, 1-800-331-3510.

From: Richard Last, 26 Merrow Avenue, Branksome, Poole, Dorset BH12 1PX
24th February 1991

I am responding to the letter from Rick Jones - ASKC Newsletter No. 84 1991, and your editorial, Newsletter No. 82 1990, on the type of newsletter readers would like to receive.

I too, I suspect, am a fairly infrequent paddler compared to many of your subscribers. Family, work and involvement in our local christian fellowship have priority. My paddling is on the occasional Saturday or evening. However, with Poole Harbour close by, it is good to get on the water and enjoy the pleasures of paddling such a beautiful harbour.

Canoeing is a relatively low cost pursuit and enjoyment is out of all proportion to the cost of equipment. I am reminded of chapter one of your book Sea Touring - 'Why go Sea Canoeing' which for me sums it all up very well. Also Robin Lloyd-Jones in his book Argonauts of the Western Isles refers to the fulfilling experience that can be obtained, be it a sense of peace, solitude, adventure or even danger by simply paddling only a short distance away from the shore.

There is a degree of skill and knowledge required which provides a stimulus and sense of achievement. Providing the paddler paddles within their own abilities they can enjoy canoeing pleasures whether in company or solo. If solo, the emphasis is very much on 'paddling within ones ability', and of being aware of 'escape routes' and 'plans' both in terms of navigation and personal safety. For example, with the latter, having an 'escape plan' in the event of coming out of the boat. I am not advocating solo canoeing, but recognise many of us do it. Do you recall the article by Bill Farthing (1988) on the subject?

Canoeing for me started in my teens, paddling the Rivers Deben and Orwell in Suffolk. I recall attending what I think was the inaugural meeting of the Orwell Canoe Club (I think that was the title) in a meeting room in Tower Street, Ipswich circa 1963. Is there anyone out there who remembers that? I don't know if the club is still in existence.

My canoe was a glass fibre boat, made by a firm, I think, called G. L. Mach. The model was, I think, called a 'Rob Roy'? I have since realised it was probably one of the first grp boats to be built along sea kayak lines (no doubt someone will correct me if I'm wrong!) - long with a hint of turned up ends (not very narrow though!). After 20 or so years dabbling in sailing boats I returned to my 'first love' in 1985 and now paddle an Anas Acuta which I find a pleasure to paddle, comfortable and aesthetically pleasing.

I enjoy the articles and letters on design and 'ways of doing things' and very much enjoy reading accounts of people's paddling adventures and expeditions. Through such articles and letters I am able to enter into something of what the writer must have experienced, but which in all probability I am very unlikely to undertake.

Can I finally recommend Poole Harbour Canoe Club. The club is planning to move to a new site adjacent to the harbour, and develop new premises. The club aims to cater for a wide range of abilities and interests. I have found club members to be always welcoming and friendly (they even remember my name!) even though I am an infrequent paddler with them.

References: Lloyd-Jones, R. (1989) Argonauts of the Western Isles. Diadem. PP 136-137
Farthing, B. (1988) Going out Alone. In 'Anorak'. The magazine of the Association of North Atlantic Kayakers - August 1988. Reproduced in ASKC Newsletter No 72 1989.

From: David G. Martin, 107 Ashdown Road, Chandlers Ford, Basingstoke,
Hants SO5 1QH Tel C/F (0703) 268404

Thanks for the latest newsletter and the enclosed note. Unfortunately I shall be sailing (yellow wellies and all) in Scotland in May so shall have to pass on the Sea Kayaking Symposium, but wish you success and good weather - with just a little wind for my sails!

I am glad to see you have set an end-date for your book. Bet that you spend most of Christmas working on it! Seriously though, I and many others will look forward to it. It's encouraging to see sea kayaking books which no longer look amateur. Have you noticed how many really well-written and gripping titles have come out recently - Argonauts of the Western Isles, and Commitment and Open Crossings, to name just two.

If you'd care to print, the following are my thoughts (some not wholly mine, I guess) on various topics in the last two issues

ELECTRIC PUMPS, CHART CASES AND WATERPROOF FLARES

I'm a believer in electric pumps, and glad to see Harry Simpson publish his ideas. I will describe my pump system which has seen six years use.

1. Rechargeable cells are (a) heavy, and (b) expensive. In a kayak environment they are prone to early failure and hence an expensive replacement bill. For that reason I use 3 x 4.5V Alkaline Manganese 'flat' cells in a pack to provide 12V (actually 13.5, even better!)

2. No need for a fuse with this type of battery - one potential source of failure eliminated.

3. I replace the cells annually, no matter how little used. This seems extravagant, but (a) gives one wonderful peace of mind, and (b) forces one to minutely examine the whole system for leaks and damage each year while replacing the battery.

4. The batteries are in a suitable-sized tupperware type container with a hole drilled for the wire. The container is held by elastics to eyelets glassed to the bulkhead behind the seat. The pump (Rule 200 I think) is held to the bottom of the canoe by more elastics and eyelets, and hard up against the bulkhead. The outlet goes (via an adaptor to modify diameters) via a very short length of hose to an identical outlet to that used by the hand pump, and situated just a couple of inches away. This takes up surprisingly little space.

5. The problem of the pump not having a non-return valve is solved by an external bung in the outlet. The bung is attached by a short cord to the nearby deck line. While doing this, fix up a bung for your hand pump outlet too. Not all hand pumps have efficient non-return valves and you may cure that mysterious leak! Of course don't forget to remove the bungs, when necessary, with a quick tug on the string! My Chimp hand pump can easily shoot out its cork, popgun-style!

6. The switch is a 'marinised' toggle switch. This means waterproofed at the front but not at the back (connections). So it mounts neatly through the deck, at a point near the hand pump, and protected by it from accidental damage or activation.

7. The final magic ingredient is silicone bath sealant. I have discovered that there is at least one other type of bath sealant which is more 'Pollyfilla' like and no use here, so take care. Bath sealant seems very resistant to seawater provided all surfaces are clean to start. Use it on: (a) the back of the switch and connections - liberally covering everything, (b) as a seal around the lid of the battery box (it will peel off when the time comes to replace the battery) and around the wire exit hole.

Chart Cases - Richard Gregory pondered about chart cases. My solution uses 'lay-flat polythene tubing', which I believe is sold for use in the gardening trade (cloches?). It is essentially a long polythene tube on a roll. Ask for the heavyweight grade polythene - it's about the strength of a commercial map case plastic. The 12 inch wide variety is best. Buy 50 or 100 feet. Cut about 4 inches longer than your chart (don't forget to put two charts back to back) and seal the ends with a clothes iron running fairly cool. Do this on an ironing board, and put a piece of aluminium cooking foil both under and over the plastic. Then carefully iron just the last 2 inches on each end. Peel off and re-use the foil when the plastic has cooled.

I have had mixed success with sealing the ends with tape; the ironing process, though lengthier, is much more waterproof.

With this system, you can have charts of nearly any length! Handy on straight bits of coast. Just unroll as you proceed!

Gear bags - Richard Gregory also wondered about carrying wet tents and generally keeping wet things wet, and dry things dry. Yes, you guessed it! Polythene tubing to the rescue again. Do your sums and you will see that a 12 inch lay-flat tube just fits (when full) through an 8 inch hatch. Magic! Cut a few 4 foot (or so) lengths of the tubing and seal one end. Hey-presto: a bag for tents, sleeping bags and all else. Keeps the wet in wet tents, and the wet out of sleeping bags!

Waterproof flares - Why do we still advocate storing flares in plastic tubes and all sorts of housings? At least one brand of flares (Schermully) is sufficiently well designed that I find it needs little extra protection. Here's what I do

Parachute rockets: remove both end caps carefully. Apply vaseline to the caps, the o-ring and to the operating mechanism. Replace the caps. That's all.

Hand-held red and white pin-points: Carefully remove the top cap, apply vaseline where it seals and replace. I then tape the cap in place, but be sure to leave the end of the tape exposed for easy removal. This is sufficient to waterproof the flare. However the following step can help to prolong its life: Remove the firing handle. This can be done with care by prising the plastic lug backwards. Then apply a small amount of vaseline inside the flare and also on the metal firing pin on the handle. Replace carefully.

Hand-held smokes: Nothing needs doing, except possibly inside the handle as above.

I expect that similar treatment would be beneficial for other brands of flares.

The above assumes that the flares are not stored or regularly left in water. I believe the waterproofing is adequate for those carried in buoyancy-aid pockets or inside kayaks (but not rattling around on the floor please!). That's it!

From: Peter Cairns, Lochgilphead, Argyll

I would like to add my comments to those of Mike Taylor's and your reply to them.

There have been too many adverts, some of which appear under the disguise of objective articles - many of these have originated from 'Sea Tiger'.

I believe the problem with many expedition reports is their brevity. To have two weeks reduced to two pages can do no justice whatsoever to the area visited or to the characters undertaking the trip.

If you do have contentious issues sent to you why not print the original and the reply together - or seek opinions from other paddlers.

I think the pace of development has slowed down, it may be cyclical and we could see an upsurge in a year or so. (Have CODE and/or the mags stolen some of our thunder).

Why are so few major figures in sea kayaking members of the club.

My solution, in part agreeing with Mike's would be

More equipment reports - especially objective assessments of new kayak designs. I haven't seen a truly objective assessment of a sea kayak since I started the sport.

A few years ago you had a 'tent issue', why not bring back similar themes.

I think the ASKC should be taking advantage at least of modern photocopying techniques. This can be very cheap and with photo reduction would at least reduce the cost of paper by 50%.

I think the time has come to decide the direction.

I would like to see a few more meets in a year, perhaps spread around the country a bit more than at present.

I believe that when members get to meet others then perhaps more correspondence, etc, might surface.

I also think you were right to print Frank Goodman's letter.

Can I also take this opportunity to raise the spectre of qualifications which you mentioned in the last newsletter.

Whilst I believe it is correct that those who wish to teach minors, or for financial gain should be properly qualified, I am worried where this leaves the ordinary paddler (no SI cert) who occasionally introduces others into the sport. It seems to me that many SIs are beginning to believe that they should have sole responsibility for the induction of beginners. If that had been the case then I and many others would never have taken up canoeing. Whilst the coaching scheme is excellent for those who wish to learn how to teach others it offers little to the recreational canoeist, who is either unwilling or unable to spend the required hours assisting an SI in a non touring/expedition

setting Surely there is a place for an intermediate certificate between proficiency and advanced, as well as other specialist courses run by the national organisations, e g , Kayak Navigation (as per RYA) handling Sea Kayaks, Surf, etc The problem here of course might be the fact that bits of paper would be redundant, yet the national bodies seem to revolve around them.

May I raise another contentious issue. Is it right that our national bodies should actively encourage people to take up canoeing when we have so much pressure on our natural environment? By all means help those who come to us - but to actively promote and seek?

If it's not too late to put an announcement in your newsletter, would you please inform your readers that three men from the States are looking for a fourth paddling partner for a trip to the Uummannaq Fiord area of Greenland from August 3rd through August 25th. We have a Klepper double and a Nautiraid double. We have optimistically made reservations for a fourth person on the coastal freighter Disko on August 3rd from Nuuk. Besides myself, participants include Tin Smith, whom your readers may remember from Bill Farthing's report on our 1988 Labrador trip, and Doug Hardy, who teaches marine ecology at New York University.

North of the Nuusuak Peninsula, Uummannaq Fiord is 22,000 sq. km. in area, and less densely populated than the south-west coast of Greenland. Most of the inhabitants are engaged in fishing or seal hunting. The area is an arctic desert environment with more stable weather than the south-west, and is rich in marine life, with numerous whales and sea birds. The fiord reaches the massive Greenland ice cap in places, so small bergs float about in great profusion. Besides kayaking, we plan to fish and hike, or considering the precipitousness of the terrain, engage in non-technical mountain climbing.

All costs will be borne equally by participants, except for personal luxuries, and the estimated cost per person is \$1200 US from Nuuk. Icelandic Air flies into Nuuk (formerly named Godthab). SAS also flies into Sondre Stromfjord, but the short hop from there to Nuuk is ridiculously expensive. From Ottawa, First Air flies to Nuuk. Tin Smith and I will be kayaking around Godthabsfjord from July 14 to August 3, if anyone with a boat would care to join us. For more information, write to me at Box 55, Birchrunville, PA 19421 USA, or if you're really feeling flush, call (215) 469 0975.

From: Rod Slaughter, 79 Wefare Crescent, Newbiggin by the Sea,
Northumberland

Although canoeing for 10 years only for the last year have I been a member of ASKC. I now realise what I have been missing and find myself watching the letterbox when the newsletter is due.

I have enclosed possibly some useful information to fellow members with an account of one of my first trips for publication in the newsletter if you see fit.

With the start of the sea touring season I would like to bring to the attention of canoeists coming up to the Farne Islands in Northumberland there are no longer lighthouse keepers on Longstone Island due to the automation of the light.

In June 1982, I was involved in an incident off Longstone which convinced me, although not always appreciating the capabilities of sea canoeing groups, the keepers were important to safety in the area.

As a group of four, I was quite new to sea canoeing. Glen had been canoeing for some years, Malcolm a qualified instructor and Shaun the youngest of the group at 15. Conditions were perfect, flat seas and sunshine; after spending some time going around the islands we decide to circumnavigate Longstone Island and then return to the mainland. Passing the seals on the eastern side of the island we proceeded on to the southern tip.

Overfalls, spring tides, tidal streams were all unknown to me but as it happened we were in a big one; Malcolm capsized and in a matter of seconds was drifting out of sight. Glen gave chase, I was left to watch over Shaun. My idea was to get out of the overfall as quickly as possible and land on the Island, once safely on dry land we waited only a matter of minutes for Malcolm and Glen to return after a quick X rescue in calmer waters.

Sitting on the Island drinking tea and watching the overfall we noticed a small inflatable bouncing across the water towards us, coming through the overfall it was swamped by a big wave and killing the engine. Seconds later it fired up again and the RNLI Inshore Lifeboat from Seahouses was pulling into a quiet channel beside us. Over a shared cup of tea they told us the lighthouse keeper had witnessed the capsizing incident and called out the lifeboat.

We convinced them we were alright so they called in to the lighthouse before returning to Seahouses. Our return to the mainland was quite boring after that incident.

Since that trip I have visited the Farne Islands on numerous occasions each year with the feeling I was being watched. This year I am afraid that feeling won't be there.

From: F. R. Goodman, 72 Whittingham Road, Mapperley, Nottingham NG3 6BH
Tel.: 0602-609931

So Peter Carter thinks that the centre of gravity of a kayak "is something that can usually be ignored". (ASKC Newsletter No.85, May '91.) In fact, as a boat designer, I can assure Mr Carter that it is the most important element in the design of any kayak. Before he took the Weekender and called it a Voyager, I spent a lot of time during the design stage of the boat theoretically determining the C of G and then verifying this by sea trials. The only people who can afford to ignore the C of G are people who have had the real work done for them. Normally people pay for expert help.

I may be wrong about bulkheads in Puffins, they may not be fitted during manufacture, I simply remarked that of all the Puffins I have ever seen, they had all been fitted with bulkheads, but I am quite certain that to say that the fitting of a bulkhead to a Puffin "would negate one of the prime safety points of the boat" is highly irresponsible, and is based on the same lack of knowledge Carter brings to bear on Centres of Gravity.

His second article in the same copy of the ASKC Newsletter is the most amazing I have ever seen published anywhere!

It is such arrant nonsense, that I don't want to spend too long on it, as it can take a long time to disprove rubbish. However, here goes!

A kayak receives energy from its environment, usually wind and water. In absolute calm, the energy is supplied in a continuous manner: in other words, the water holds the boat stationary and the boat as Potential Energy, by virtue of its position on the surface. (If the water wasn't there, the kayak would fall to the sea bed.) If energy is given to the boat in regular packets, it is surprising how much can be absorbed. Waves of huge dimensions can throw the kayak about, yet it remains seaworthy a kayak in surf may survive waves of five metres plus, if the paddler is skilled. If the energy is presented to the kayak in irregular packets, as when a craft is being paddled in clapotis (chaotic, reflected waves) or in very gusty wind conditions, then things become increasingly difficult for the paddler. The removal of energy from a boat has similar repercussions as you slide down into the trough of a wave, you are losing energy. The ultimate loss of energy occurs when you paddle over a waterfall so that the kayak becomes airborne. But of course, as you fall, Potential Energy is being converted into Kinetic Energy, albeit in a smooth way which is fine ... you only get your come-uppance when you reach the bottom!:

If you remove energy from a system in a chaotic way, you will achieve similar results as when you add energy to a system in a chaotic manner.

To start an experiment with a single massive input of energy (starting the pendulum swinging) and expect this to represent the effect of waves giving periodic inputs of energy to a boat, seems naive, to say the least, but to then watch energy being absorbed from the closed system by water swilling around in the boat and come to the conclusion that this makes for a quieter ride for the canoeist is just utterly stupid. By his own description, the experiment had to be aborted because of the chaos that ensued! Exactly - if you paddle a boat with water swilling around the inside, the chances are that your trip will have to be aborted.

Peter tries to cover the tracks of his own ignorance by quoting other sources. He hints darkly about Froude . . . I don't know whether he means the general work of Froude, or his lasting contribution to hydraulics - Froude numbers (these deal with the relationship between gravity, water velocity and depth). If Carter wants science, I commend to Peter Carter the following well-known formula for calculating the effect of free surface within any boat (assuming the water inside is the same density as the water outside). The virtual loss of metacentric height:-

$$GM = \frac{i \times l}{V \times n^2}$$

i = the second moment of the free surface about the centre line
V = the craft's displacement
l = the length
n = the number of compartments the length is divided into

Notice that if you apply this formula to a sea kayak with just two bulkheads, (three compartments) n becomes 3 and n² becomes 9. Nine on the bottom line means that three compartments reduces the loss of GM by a factor of nine!!!

This is not the whole story, as this is statical analysis and there is still the dynamic effect of the water transmitting energy to the walls of the vessel as it careers down the length of the boat.

All ship designers know it.

People with misgivings about the design of roll-on, roll-off car ferries know it.

The crew of the Spirit of Free Enterprise didn't know it.

The designers of petrol tankers (on the road) know it now and before they knew it there were some nasty tanker accidents.

How is it that this Peter Carter, self-styled expert, doesn't know it, and actually sets up an experiment to prove black's white? Maybe it's true that everything in Australia is stood on its head.

Well, there we are. I've tried to point out over a number of years, the folly of a little knowledge applied to a risk sport. It can be dangerous. However this last piece of stupidity from Peter Carter makes me realise that I'm wasting my time. I shall not waste any more writing letters to ASKC trying to correct utter bilge, whether it's in one compartment or three.

If John Ramwell decides to publish any more nonsense from Carter, I implore him to just add a header that says: This is a Peter Carter article, and should be approached with extreme caution.

GREENLAND KAYAK BUILDING COURSE
TO BE HELD AT ANGLESEY SEA AND SURF WORKSHOP ON
23RD NOVEMBER - 3RD DECEMBER 1991

The Course - A group of no more than eight people will work together to build eight sea kayaks in the 10 day period.

The kayaks' frames will be made of timber and covered with a canvas skin. Simple hand tools will be used by all participants. The exact specifications of the boats will depend upon the dimensions, experience and requirements of the intended user.

The teacher, Svend Ulstrup, will come from Denmark. During the last 10 years he has built well over 1,000 kayaks. He has taught in Scandinavia, Greenland and U.S.A. Svend is president of the Danish Seakayak Union. West Greenland type of boats are the most popular of a wide range.

Participants will take away their own kayak. Aspects of using such craft safely will be both discussed and demonstrated on the course, with opportunity to practice being available for all participants.

The cost of instruction and materials for the kayaks will be provisionally set at £500. Enquiries and booking details are available on receipt of a sae from Rich Lennox. Other courses for schools and groups can be arranged for the autumn of 1991 or other periods.

Rich Lennox, 42 Hill Road, Benfleet, Essex SS7 1HL

Accommodation and camping will be available at various prices. Booking should be made direct to Nigel Denis:

Nigel Denis, Anglesey Sea and Surf, Porthdafarch,
Trearddur Bay, Anglesey, Gwynedd LL65 2 PL

Example prices:

Camping with showers -	£1.50 per night	Packed lunch -	£2.00
Self-catering unit -	£6.00 per night	Evening meal -	£4.75
Bed and breakfast -	£12.00		

From: Alan Bye, Middleton in Teesdale

10 January 1991

The book "Skinboats of Greenland" by H. C. Petersen, Roskilde, 1986. ISBN - 87 85180 084, has beautiful line drawings and illuminating text. Kayak history is traced back roughly 800 years to the time when the Vikings settled in Greenland. "The kayak has been shaped and developed ... adapted to the environment in which it was to be used."

Length (p.43): "In Greenland experience has shown that a kayak length of 5-5 $\frac{1}{2}$ metres is best." Sealskin availability and size limits kayak sizes. Different breeds of seal influenced regional designs.

Width (p.43): "The kayak should not be so snug that the kayaker's legs are pinned and he cannot use them to counteract the movements of the craft, nor so wide that he cannot press his thighs against the sheerboards." (Gunwales) Narrowest measured 47 cms., widest 51 cms.

The characteristic raked overhanging bow and stern of the Greenland kayak is discussed on p.45. Long: 1.3 metres fore, 1 metre aft. Short: 80 cms. fore, 40 cms. after. Story: Both kayaks in a pair had a long raked bow but in one the change of angle between stem and keel was abrupt and angular. The other had an easy curve from stem to keel. "The new ice lifted up my father's kayak and in a matter of seconds he was on top of it. . . But the ice could not slide under the kayak of my friend. It pressed the kayak under and came down on top of the ends of the stringers. It cut through the skin and my friend was lost."

The use of high end posts on the kayak owed something to use, to style and to religion. The Moravian Bretheren 1731 influenced the hunters in their locality and a particular form of kayak profile with high rise end posts was associated with them. With the introduction of guns in the early nineteenth century, high rise end posts were often shot off: they went out as guns came in. Removal did not affect the purpose and use of kayaks.

So far as I am concerned, the Greenland seal hunting kayak is admirable, a thing of beauty, a joy for ever, in its place. That the traditional seal hunter's kayak is a beautiful artefact cannot be denied. Long raking end profiles curving smoothly into the keel are for riding up onto ice. Drifting ice around British shores is so rare as to be inconsiderable.

If I were a kayak seal hunter in ice haunted waters, I'd insist on a high raked bow for my own safety and survival. But I'm not.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Attorney: "Now, Mr Smith, you were the leader on this trip?"

Smith: "No, I wasn't."

Attorney: "But you were the most experienced member of the group?"

Smith: "Well, yes, but I wasn't the leader."

Attorney: "But you did take it upon yourself to look into how well the other members of the trip were prepared?"

Smith: "Yes, I felt obligated to do that."

Attorney: "Were they all, in your judgment, safely equipped?"

Smith: "No."

Attorney: "Did you so inform them?"

Smith: "I did."

Attorney: "And?"

Smith: "Well, several simply hadn't brought the appropriate safety gear with them."

Attorney: "If they weren't safely prepared, why did you allow them to go?"

Smith: "I repeat, I wasn't the leader! I was in no position to force a decision on the others."

Attorney: "Yet you went along with the trip even though you knew that it was a dangerous situation that could have become life-threatening?"

Smith: "I felt that it would be better for me to be there in case trouble did develop rather than to simply refuse to go along in protest."

Attorney: "Well, Mr Smith, it is my opinion, and, I trust it will be the opinion of this court, that as the most experienced member of the group, as the one person who could be expected to recognise the potential danger, and having known of Mr Bloggs inability to roll or perform a self-rescue, you are equally at fault along with both the trip leader and the club. Accordingly, you are being named in our suit on behalf of Mr Bloggs' widow."
