Newsletter

of the

INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAK ASSOCIATION • ISKA •

An international sea canoeing association open to all interested in this aspect of canoeing.

Aims:

Promotion of sea canoeing • Communication • Organisation of events and conferences • Safety and Coaching

John J. Ramwell.
5, Osprey Ave.,
Westhoughton,
Bolton,
Lancashire.
BL5 2SL

Tel/Fax 0942 842204

INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAKING ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER # 5

SEPTEMBER 1995

EDITORIAL

It is getting close to renewal time - how the year has flown. I have enclosed a renewal form for your use so that you can renew for 1996. Subscription rates remain static @ £7.50 for U.K. members and £8.50 for those beyond the U.K. Membership of the Association continues to grow and there is obviously even more interest since we changed our title from A.S.K.C. to I.S.K.A..

I am expecting the 1996 Canoe Exhibition, which as you know is being staged at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, to generate an even greater interest in the Association as we will be reaching out to a different audience. Unlike the Crystal Palace, London, venue which, in my view, has always been a bit of 'an old boys canoeing club', attracting in the main committed paddlers, Birmingham N.E.C. will give us the chance to reach out more successfully to the general non canoeing public.

Which neatly brings me to the theme of a recent American sea kayaking newsletter editorial, (ANorAK), which is about ensuring new comers to sea kayaking stay safe and are not sucked in by glossy pictures of classy paddlers on glassy seas.

I quote from this editorial; "Once upon a time a group of people discovered a relatively unknown sport. It was a sport that involved potential danger when practised in extreme environs and moderate danger for anyone who was careless or unaware. But the beauties and benefits made the sport appealing. Most of these people were the type who, upon coming upon such a discovery, simply had to spread the word.

Some devoted their attention to education and others became commercially involved. The educators sought to define, demystify and teach and retailers concerned themselves with putting their customers into boats that best suited their needs.

All taught, preached, led events and gave of their time because it needed to be done and it was a satisfying effort."

Then, so their argument goes, "Marketing agents and professional promoters manipulated, changed and re-arranged [the scene] until it was no longer recognizable. The danger was down played. The difficulties were minimised or ignored. The magazines went full colour and the ads. filled with beautiful, smiling people enjoying the glorious danger-free outdoors. An increasing number of retailers and manufacturers were less concerned with giving the customer the 'right boat' and more with 'what can I sell'. Sea kayaking was being turned into just another pursuit for the Disneyland crowd who go from diversion to diversion looking for canned thrills without the danger."

Well, you may have your own views on this issue. I can't say I have seen too many 'instant sea kayakers' who buy all the gear to then get afloat and head off over the horizon never to be seen again. I suppose the point is that we are moving towards this general direction as sea kayaking has now become one of the glamour activities (whether we like it or not) and as we attract new-comers we do need to keep their safety, comfort and well being very much in mind. All very well so long as legislation is not wheeled in on the stage like a huge blunderbuss to force this safety upon us all.. I have always defended the right of anyone to launch him or her self onto the ocean in a zinc bath tub with no restrictions. But let too many try this with lots of capsizing resulting requiring shuttles of helicopters to pick them up.....then the voice of officialdom will be raised against us all -**and here lies the real concern.**

To date we have adopted a professional approach to our sport and have (with some exceptions unfortunately) lived on to enjoy all it has to offer. Such at attitude to safety has impressed officialdom (e.g.H.M.Coastguards) and they remain our guardians both on and off the water. The Jamieson Bill could then be the edge of a very thick wedge.

David Jamieson is Member of Parliament for South Devon, the constituency in which the victims of the Lyme Bay tragedy lived. He introduced a private members bill in Parliament seeking to require that Centres offering potentially hazardous pursuits would be required to register and conform to nationally agreed guidelines for the conduct of such activities and be subject to inspection.

The Bill was at first resisted by H.M. Government but it had cross-party support and so finally won government acceptance. It is anticipated that the Bill and its' regulations will be published for consultation late 1995 and there will be a phasing in period of 12 months with full implementation by 1997.

The Bill is to "Provide for the regulation of Centres and providers of facilities where children under the age of 18 engage in adventure activities and for the establishment of prescribed minimum standards of safety in the provision of such activities and the maintenance and use of equipment and premises for the purpose of such activity".

Efforts have been made to keep the Canoe Clubs outside the scope of this Bill on the basis that a club incorporates a body of expertise and competence in the activity (regardless of formal qualifications) which is not necessarily the case with Centres.

We need to avoid the situation which could arise if the scope of the Bill becomes too wide; that is, no one could go on the water without a 'qualified' person present. Already we have situations where elite paddlers are not supposed to train unless an Instructor is with them - often struggling to keep up and upright!!

<u>Volenti non fit injuria</u>
It is accepted that adult members of clubs automatically accept

the inherent risks of the sport, and are unlikely to succeed in an action against the leader (or presumed leader) of a journey or activity should they fall foul of one of the known hazards of the activity - such as capsizing and being swept out by a tide race. This principle is known in law as Volenti non fit injuria.

The situation is not as clear cut where juniors are involved and it is important that parental consent is obtained and that parents understand the inherent risks.

So, to finalise, let us continue to enjoy our sea kayaking without restrictions. Let us continue to earn this freedom (I read recently that freedom is not free - how right this is) by a professional approach to safety, to equipment, to technique and to an understanding/awareness. Let us ensure that those who join us as new comers are provided with this opportunity and accept the obligations.

See you on the water - and remember the pass word, "Volenti non fit injuria"!!

* *

Here comes a letter from a good friend (I'm holding his name to spare his blushes) who has recently gone out to live in New Zealand.

Dear John,

.....Every weekend I've been off paddling for one day, - even if its only for a few hours. There are several islands just off the coast of Auckland (the Hauraki Gulf on the east), which provide refuge from the stresses of city living. They are very beautiful, with limited inhabitants - with some protected reserves. The tides are weak and the prevailing westerly winds have only a small fetch, so the seas are not too rough.

The result is that one million Aucklanders have all decided to try sea kayaking. There is a 'family' approach to it out here. Nom one bothers too much about compass bearings and the effect of the tides. Open crossings are'nt really planned, more sort of 'arranged'. Using parallel rules, vectors and tidal calculations are not the done thing.

Touring doubles and big volume, ruddered boats are popular. Typical boats are Puffins, (plastic) and Sea Bears with the Skerray (plastic) and Nordkapp being the specialised boat. I lent my Vyneck to a paddler - he lasted two minutes before hastily coming ashore with very wobbly abdominals.

Then there are the 'multisport' enthusiasts. Now here is a different breed altogether. These insane people do everything to the max. The brighter the colours of their gear and the more ridiculous the course, the more they love it. Certainly the more they love to train and talk about it.

Now we're talking about running over alpine scenery, paddling down alpine rivers, cycling up the other side, then starting over again, - and that's just before breakfast!!v These guys and girls paddle multisport boast which are very light hybrids of racing K1s and whitewater boats. Long and thin with rudders and built up decks - they are fast and furious. Now some train on the sea and are trying to introduce sea kayak races. I'm not in favour of encouraging a competitive attitude to the sea, especially if it encourages people to use boats only suitable for moderate conditions. But being open minded I can see that I'll have to start training - just so that some jumped up multisporter does'nt think that he can thrash us sea kayakers."

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From Andrew Wright; The Croft, Berrington Green, Tenbury Wells, Worcs.

Dear John,

I'm sorry I'm so late in replying to your kind letter of 23rd April, when you sent me some names of people who might help me with a Greenland Kayak.

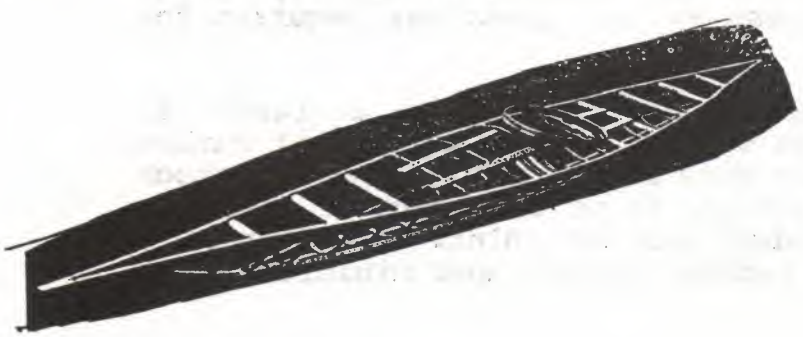
In fact I had simultaneously contacted John Brand at Colchester and he lent me a copy of Petersons book on building them, and put me in touch with Mike Morgan in Wales who had built one. I suddenly found myself with enough information and did not contact anyone on your list.

I thought you might be interested in the outcome, so herewith two photos. She took me 100 hours, or two and half months, to build and was great fun to do. If you know anyone similarly inclined, I will happily tell them what I learnt on the way.

Mt boat is a little large in volume, and accordingly rides a couple of inches too high. I was afraid of making her 'un-get-in-able', so erred on the side of caution. She would suit a 14 stone person and would be OK for expeditions as there is plenty of room 'between decks'. I hope to make a second - perfect -one sometime.

I am hoping to write an article on the construction in due course.

Thankyou for all your help,
Andrew Wright.



Sea Kayak Group UK

BRITISH CANOE UNION

Sea Kayak Group UK
&
BCU Southern Region
Presents

Come & try it sessions
at Calshot Activities Centre on the Solent

Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd September 1995

Two days of sea kayaking open to all. If you want to try sea kayaking for the first time or are looking for a new boat then these are the days for you! Beginners and the more experienced paddlers will have ample opportunity to try out a variety of kayaks in a supervised environment. Demonstration boats will be available from a variety of manufacturers including Valley Canoe Products and the P & H Company.

Camping and indoor accommodation will be available at the Calshot Activities Centre throughout the weekend

For further information contact

Nick Hamilton
17 Ryves Avenue, Yateley, Camberly, Surrey GU17 7FB
Tel : 01252 870373

WRIST RISK

One mans problems and solutions.

Having heard so many moans about IT, read about IT, suffered from IT and (hopefully) beaten IT, I thought that I might pass on my experience in a simple manner. I hope it helps.

When I started canoeing I heard about tennis-something. It was to be avoided, but everyone knew somebody who had it! It was a creaky, sore wrist and death to paddling aspirations.
After a while symptoms uncomfortably familiar began to appear. I persevered - so did the symptoms. I changed to unfeathered blades - great for rivers and following or beam winds - murder in a headwind. Eventually sense intervened and I decided to get proper help - but what kind?

I questioned 3 things:-
* Me the machine - did I need repairs?
* My technique - was I paddling efficiently?
* My equipment - was it right for the job?

My physiotherapist, Mrs. Simmie, checked my wrist. Yes it was suffering but the problem really started with a mountaineering accident when the bones 'popped apart' after a fall. Nevertheless, treatment was needed. I was given that plus instructions not to use my wrist at all! Absolutely no paddling!

Months later I was allowed gentle paddling until I tried it out and got some strength back. Results? - it felt much better; a few twinges but worth the months of sulking.
My pal John had tenosynovitis with very similar symptoms, treatment and results so we constantly compared notes.

Gordon Brown, my coach, then undertook to improve my technique and correct faults. A proper upright posture, small of the back supported; reach forward to place the blade with some trunk rotation; pull the shaft back - I was habitually pushing. Bingo! This key shift in emphasis made a big change. Now, instead of having to grip fairly tightly to hold my wrist straight, it straightened of its own accord. And, because I was pulling the bones apart as opposed to pushing them together, the pressure on the joints and subsequent grating virtually vanished.
(Grab your own thumb now. Push then pull to see what I mean) It was so obvious, but as I had been taught to push, I never questioned it!
He also advised a shorter paddle shaft. Again, I had equated length with lower paddling rates and greater efficiency. True, but it also meant greater stress as more power was required for each of the strokes.

This led me to go to Alister and Marriane Wilson at Lendal to discuss paddles. In due course we decided on a mid weight carbon shaft with some 'give' in it - very strong but without the shock as the blade stalls in the water. It is 8 cm shorter than the last one and it has a variable feather joint. I was able to experiment with feather to reduce windage and minimise wrist

twist on my control side (the one with the problem). The combination of the pull v's push action and the modified crank was great! The modified crank virtually means that you don't need a control hand - the blades set themselves as they start to bite. (I have had to convince some modified crank paddlers of this as they were so used to their control hand).
The grip is much more relaxed as the shaft does not have to be held tightly. The crank 'leads' the blade which has to follow (as it is behind the pulling force) and up and down as well as side to side wrist movement is reduced.
I had used modified crank paddles before and thought that the cranks were too wide for sea paddling. Lendal supplied a width tailor made for me and that made a worthwhile contribution also. (PS. Having the shaft oval at both sides simplifies setting the paddle for rolling on your 'non control' side).

So? Well, now I paddle with the big boys again. I'm not fast (never was anyway) but my fear of having to give up paddling is gone.

I think that the questions I asked were the right ones. Certainly, the advice given was good though the 'no paddling' regime was a bit hard. The effort in getting the equipment right was well rewarded (including an interesting tour of Lendals production unit).

I have avoided long, detailed descriptions. The basic 3 questions remain the same but the real benefits come from finding the answers to YOUR specific problem. I hope your sources turn out as good as mine!

Many thanks to Mrs. Simmie, Gordon Brown, Alister and Marriane Wilson.

Dave Ross, SCA Touring Committee.

Review by Kevin Danforth, B.C.U.

Performance Sea Kayaking: The Basics .... and beyond

Kent Ford, the producer of several good instructional videos previously featured in these review pages, has now turned his talents to sea kayaking. As a long term salt water addict I began to view this offering with some scepticism. I have to say that I was more than pleasantly surprised. This video hits the mark quite neatly as a promotional tool for this eco-friendly branch of the sport. As a tool for self-learning it is also better than I expected. Any one watching this could not fail to pick up the most important points of long boat handling, navigation skills, and some basic rescues. The arguments on high versus low forward paddling styles are presented in a reasoned, balanced way and, importantly, rough water and surf techniques are not ignored.

The video is so good overall as an incentive to go and sea paddle, that it seems churlish to pick fault. However, minor flaws for me are the coverage of rescues (see 'Over and Out' video for a more comprehensive European perspective) most of which would be dubious in rough water, and the absence of good advice on the importance of weather forecasting and understanding of weather patterns.

From one of latest new members .....
Hello out there!
My name is Grant Lockerill and I live in Penarth near Cardiff on the south Wales coast.
I paddle regularly around Cardiff with its' interesting (muddy) water, and sometimes further afield.
In May last year I attended a memorable weekend at the Gower organised by the A.S.K.G. (as was) and paddled with Robert, Tony and others.
Since then I have been out on the sea as much as possible but as most trips are either solo or with another intermediate paddler we stick close to the land.
I'd like to do some longer trips/expeditions and recently bought a second hand sea kayak.
In May I'll be off to the Anglesey Sea Symposium to do instructor and sea proficiency. Perhaps I'll see some of you there.

All the best, Grant.

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BRITISH STANDARDS INSTITUTE - CANOE STANDARD.
B.S.I. has issued a draft code of practice and specifications for the safe construction and design of canoes and kayaks.
The draft standards give guidance and specifications for essential safety features such as carrying capacity, buoyancy and material strength. They also take into account the wide variety of weather conditions and environments in which this equipment may be used.
Although the standards should help to reduce accidents, they emphasise that paddlers skill and experience are of vital importance when it comes to safety issues and advise that those who participate in either canoeing or kayaking should recognise that it is a risky sport and be trained and supervised properly.
I am pleased to note one particular statement in the Standard, viz. "that there is no evidence that provision of a large safety boat will necessarily make a journey by a sea kayaking group more safe". Hurrah!!

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Criag Wightman from Malta writes:
Dear John,
..... a tip for I.S.K.A. readers who are building in wood. Instead of using copperwire or sewing up a ply hull in nylon, it is possible to tack the hull into a rough shape with strong sticky tape and then use a hot glue gun. This gives a strong base to work from and also fills the gap between panels at the same time, saving materials, time and mess.
P.S. Can anyone out there supply details and/or experiences with rescue skis. (If so I'll pass them on to Craig).

The Scripts Institute of Oceanography proposes to blast the Pacific with 195 decibel sounds (that's ten million times louder than 120 decibel that causes damage to human hearing), 20 minutes each 4 hours for 2 years, after which they will increase the number of loudspeakers and blast for another 8 years on the same schedule. The idea is to measure global warming by using sound to check the temperature of the ocean. The U.S. Department of Defense is putting up much of the $35 million the project will cost.

Scripts admits the project will deafen (and thus kill) 26,000 whales of 10 species, 406,000 dolphins of 8 species, and 245,000 seals, sea lions, and elephant seals in the first year alone.

To express your opinion, please write or fax:
National Marine Fisheries Service
Attn: Carol Fairfield
1315 East-West Highway - Rm 13121
Silver Springs, MD 20910, U.S.A.
FAX: (301) 713-0376

HM COASTGUARD - CANOE INCIDENTS 1994

No.	Date	Wind	Sea/Swell	Location Scenario	Outcome	Primary Response
1	23 Jan	S1	2/2	Taf, Cardiff - Police required CG & RNLI assistance for 3 persons from canoes.	All well	CG Penarth ILB Police
2	17 Feb	S1	2/1	Lowestoft - CG initiated search for 4 sea scout canoeists	All well	3 CG 2xLBs 1 x Helo
3	29 Mar	SW5	3/2	Menai Straits - 999 call sailboarder drifting, old canoe, nobody involved	All well	Beaumaris ILB CG
4	02 Apr	SW6	5/2	Anglesey Trearrdur Bay - 999 call canoeists in difficulty at Ravenspoint. Helo recovered	**FATALITY**	CG Helo Trearddur ILB
5	27 Apr	S5	3/1	Sunderland - MOP reported to Police a yellow canoe S of Hendon Docks, abandoned	All well	CG & Sunderland ILB
6	14 May	E6	3/1	Morecambe Bay - 999 call 2 canoeists overdue, search commenced and found	All well	CG x 2 Barrow LB
7	04 Jun	WNW5	3/1	Fair Isle - French canoeist considered overdue N Ronaldsway to Fair Isle	**FATALITY**	Numerous resources
8	23 Jun	SW2	1/1	Aberystwyth - 999 call expressing concern for lone canoeist	**NOTHING FOUND**	CG and Aberystwyth ILB
9	09 Jul	SW5	2/1	St Bees, Cumbria - 999 call reported canoeist capsized	Man made shore unaided	CG and St Bees ILB
10	09 Jul	SW5	3/2	Fishguard - concern for overdue canoeists, changed destination	All well	CG
11	10 Jul	SSE5	4/2	Rhyl - 999 call reporting capsized canoe - towed by dinghy	All well	CG
12	Jul	SW6	2/2	Aberystwyth - 999 call, canoes overdue on passage, turned up safely	All well	CG
13	16 Jul	NW3	2/1	Bradda head, IOM - 999 call, 2 canoes in difficulties	All well - declined assistance	CG Port Erin ILB
14	17 Jul	NE4	2/1	Wells, Norfolk - parent concerned about canoe group now overdue	All well	CG
15	19 Jul	NE4	3/1	Lowestoft - 999 all reporting capsized canoe, MOP rendered assistance from beach		CG Southwold ILB
16	24 Jul	S4	3/1	Whitley Bay, Newcastle - 999 concern for lone canoeist in fog and rain	All well	CG
17	28 Jul	NNW1	1/1	Lowestoft, Suffolk - concern for 2 canoeists as light fades	Returned safely	
18	30 Jul	SE3	3/1	Farne Is - Vessel reports canoe party with 3 missing in fog	All well	CG
19	08 Aug	N2	1/1	River Humber - 2 canoeists from party of 3 not arrived	All well	CG and Seelhouse ILB
20	09 Aug	E5	1/1	Aberavon, S.Wales - 999 call canoeists in difficulties	Found safely	CG Humber ILB
21	12 Aug	NW5	2/1	Holyhead - vessel reports canoeists in difficulties	All well	
22	Aug	E2	1/1	Lowestoft - CG initiated check for canoeists who had not reported back	Made shore with help	CG Port Talbot ILB Hel
23	23 Aug	SW5	4/2	St Davids, SW.Wales - 999 call capsized canoeists now on cliffs	Airlifted to safety	CG Helo
24	31 Aug	E2	1/0	Llanstephen, S.Wales - 999 capsized canoeists off Llanstephen	All Well	CG
25	08 Sep	S3	2/1	Hornsea - N.Humberside - 999 call reporting a distressed man set off in canoe	Rescued	CG
26	10 Sep	SW6	3/2	Lydstep, Tenby S.Wales - CG and public 999 report of PIW and dinghy canoes	Gained safety unaided	CG
27	15 Oct	E4	2/1	Anglesey N.Wales - 999 call, canoeist overdue -	**NOT FOUND**	CG Lifeboats helo Police
28	19 Oct	SE3	3/1	Coombe Martin, N.Devon - concern expressed for canoe party members experiencing difficulty	All recovered	CG Helo L/Bs Ambulanc
29	23 Oct	WSW5	4/2	Redcar. Tees - 999 call 2 canoes in difficulty off Huntcliff	Found Llanfairfechan safe & Well	CG Beaumaris ILB
30	24 Oct	SW6	3/3	Solva, SW.Wales - 999 call dinghy in trouble having recovered capsized canoeist	Made shore safely	CG
31	24 Oct	SW2	1/1	Gareloch, Clyde - Police advised of report of canoeist in difficulty	LB found - no problem	CG Redcar ILB
32	30 Oct	SW4	3/2	Ogmore, Swansea Bay 999 - canoe being swept out to sea from river	Safely recovered	CG St Davids L/B
33	10 Nov	SSE5	2/2	Great Ormes Head N.Wales - 3 canoeists appeared in difficulties. Party of 13 from military	Made shore unaided	CG LB
34	13 Nov	SSW4	2/1	Llanelli beach, S.Wales - 999 call stag party pranks with canoe	Made shore unaided	CG Portcawl ILB Helo
35	19 Nov	SW3	2/2	Criccieth, W.Wales - 999 call overdue canoeist	Safely recovered	CG Llandudno ILB
					Found safe & well severely spoken to	CG Burry Port ILB Polic
					Returned safely unaided	CG

No.	Date	Wind	Sea/Swell	Location Scenario	Outcome	Primary Response
36	03 Nov	SW4	1/1	Minehead, Somerset - concern for 2 canoeists who had not returned	Found safe & well	CG
37	07 Dec	SW8	4/3	Aberystwyth, W.Wales - 999 call reporting canoeists separated from capsized canoe	All well	CG Helo
38	10 Dec	SW6	2/1	Conwy, Anglesey - 999 call reporting canoe in difficulty,	Escorted by ILB to safety	CG ILB

Dear John,

Enclosed is a clipping from the local paper. (See below). After suffering a near fatal immersion in the North Sea back in the early spring I thought I had lost my boat, an Islander, especially as it had as slight leak through the hatches. I had intended at some point to take it over to Norway but unaccompanied by a paddler and upside down was not my plan!

At some point this summer I will go and claim it and hopefully paddle it north to its' new home in Adesund in west Norway.

So if any of your members has a boat for sale around £400/500 I may be interested.

Richard Bryant.

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Wanted - sea kayak medium/large volume boat for 6', 13 stone paddler with hatches/ pumps if possible @ £400 to £500 contact Richard Bryant on 013398 81076

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■ *Gunnar Sulrud (left) and Magnus Fjelheim, who found the canoe*

Canoe owner lands lucky

A CANOE washed up on the Norwegian coast after drifting unmanned across the North Sea from Arbroath is to stay put.

Amazingly, it turned up in the town where the owner's brother-in-law lives.

The 10ft kayak was feared lost after geophysicist Richard Bryant (34) was forced to let it go in a heavy swell between Montrose and Arbroath in January.

He thought it would be washed up on the Fife coast, but it was found on Tuesday in Bergen, where his brother-in-law, Ula Grytten, lives.

"There was still a fresh apple and banana on board and some cheese-and-tomato sanwiches — it must have been freezing cold out there," said Mr Bryant's Norwegian wife, Annette (29).

Mr Bryant, from Tarland, was picked up by a lifeboat crew after spending 45min in the freezing water.

The capsized canoe — worth £500 — could not be towed ashore because of the swell.

Police in Bergen contacted mother-of-two Annette on Tuesday after they found a rucksack aboard with the couple's address in it.

"We always wanted to take it to Norway but we couldn't find a way," she said. "We spend a lot of holidays there."

Mr Bryant has yet to hear the good news. He is on business in Egypt.

Nualla Mullholland sent this Inuit Poem to Canoe Focus

"And I thought over again
My small adventures
As with a shore-wind I drifted out
In my kayak
And thought I was in danger,

My fears,
Those small ones
That I thought so big,
For all the vital things
I had to get and reach.

And yet there is only
One great thing,
The only thing:
To live to see in huts and on journeys
The great day that dawns,
And the light that fills the world.

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Making Sense of Kayaks

By

Frank. R. Goodman. 1992.

I received a letter back in May this year from Al Ysaquirre asking me to write an article for "The Drift", about my kayak designs and the thinking behind them. I retired last July after almost thirty years designing kayaks, and paddling kayaks and had organised a season of paddling for my first summer of leisure. The North Wales coast in early May , the west coast of Ireland and a visit to Jersey in the Channel Islands in June. Then the main coast was to the be followed by the Great Lakes symposium in July and finally a trip to the west coast of Vancouver Island in September which would allow me to call in at Port Townsend Sea Symposium as well.

I was obviously far to busy to write article, but at the end of this letter I noticed Al called meGENTLEMAN. To be honest he didn't actually call me a gentleman , but he said that he's once talked to a man who had referred to me as a gentleman. Well that's not bad, is it ??? That sort of flattery can turn a fellows head, so I had to be careful that I wasn't swept away into Maelstrom of spelling mistakes and syntax just because of a few kind words. But of course it had its effect and I relented. I didn't give in to easily though . Oh dear no! I accepted gracefully , but included a stem warning that I was too busy wielding a paddle all summer and couldn't wield a pen as well - he'd have to wait until late summer before he could expect any thing from me. Well it's the 27th day of October, the clocks are back to what used to be called Greenwich Mean Time and it's dark by 5 o'clock, so what else is there to do?

Here goes," I was a sickly child"..... " No too personal, and who cares anyway, who cares? " I turned away with moist eyes as the Eskimo pulled on his paddle to send his kayak speeding towards the setting sun..... "Who would believe such twaddle? I'd better at least start with something with a ring of truth in it. One final try.

I was standing on the beach at Port Townsend five weeks ago watching paddlers trying out scores of different kayaks on loan from dozens of manufacturers all anxious to please potential customers. Suddenly fifty yards off the beach I noticed a kayak being peddled. Yes Peddled, not paddled ! Lying down almost supine in the kayak was a man gripping the coaming with his hands , but with his lags flailing in the air - twirling a pair of pedals connected to a propeller. What intrigued me most about this madness was that the kayak had a couple of outriggers fitted to prevent capsize. I mused on this - how come a boat with a low centre of gravity needed(paddler lying down) needed outriggers, yet a kayak with a high centre of gravity (paddler sitting up) didn't?

I suppose it was only at that moment , after decades of involvement with kayaks, that I appreciated the genius of the Eskimo. what a brilliant invention the kayak is. Not only a craft, virtually unique, where the centre of gravity is so high that it is above the deck, but also a boat with a unique method of propulsion - the double bladed paddle.

We shall never know who it was, maybe 10,000 years ago who fashioned the first kayak from a flimsy combination of driftwood and animal skin. May be he tied the middle of a thin

log to the gunwale and used it as an oar. may the oar, stressing the gunwale at one point only, was to much for the lightweight timber , snapping the frame in consequence. What next? Strengthen the boat or think again? Did a moment of inventive genius follow that gave rise to the double ended paddle - a type of oar that could be used without any attachment to the craft at all. An oar passes huge stresses to the gunwale via the oar spreads its energy smoothly and gently to the boat through the paddler's body backside knees, thighs and feet; and it doesn't waste the return stroke either! A slight twist of the blade and it becomes a rudder, change its position a little and an outrigger is created which can disappear again instantly as the blade becomes a propeller again. Add to this beautifully simple mechanical system an engine that not only provides power but is controlled by a biological computer that can make instant decisions about the amount of power to be applied and also has a feedback mechanism that detect minute changes of balance and direction and corrects them automatically.

After the wheel , the kayak combined with the double bladed paddle must be high on the list of great inventions.

It has been suggested that the growing popularity of the bicycle pushed Henry Rushton out of the canoe business in the nineteenth century, but it would be a brave man who would predict the demise , of the peddle in favour of the paddle in 1992.

The development of the kayak over thousands of years has never over ridden the brilliance of its simplicity. Maybe the scarcity of materials available to those pre-historic builders was a necessary ingredient for the development of the lightweight , speedy craft they needed to survive. Certainly, when the Victorian pioneer MacGregor Built his first kayak using English Oak and traditional boat building techniques. The basic shape of the kayak was altered , but even in the last thirty years , with the advent of glassfibre and plastic materials so far removed from the skin, bone and driftwood available to those early hunters, the basic kayak more closely resembles once again its ancestors built in Disco Bay and the Aleutians.

In my own case, designing a kayak , just like those nomads, was a necessity: not because I had literally to hunt for my supper, but because I wanted a kayak very badly indeed, but I hadn't the gall to steal the money out of my wives housekeeping purse (the only one with money in it at the time). So I decided foolishly, that I could design and build my own kayak more cheaply.

I'd already become obsessed with kayaking after a chance encounter with the sea in 1960 (" Seven Tales for Seven Lives " seekers of the Horizon. Ed. Will Nordby. Globe Pequoit Press) but my background and approach to designing must have as different from the Intuit as it was possible to get. Although I was a lecturer in the art department of a college of Education where I was responsible for the three dimensional work , I also ran a technology and design course for groups of students who wanted a more mathematical approach to design than the main course offered. When the idea of designing a kayak was mooted by a group of students, I went away to the library to see what could be learnt about their design. In fact there was nothing at all about kayaks - this was the early sixties - and I was forced to hunt the shelves in the library dealing with basic hydrodynamics, yacht and cruise design . These crumbs of knowledge coupled with a mathematical /technical background levened with a modicum of aesthetics was in fact a reasonably fertile field in which to nurture the seeds of the career that was about to overcome me.

What I was able to do very thoroughly though with the help of the students and the college facilities was to look closely at how different hull shapes performed hydraulically.

What became clear was that it was the combination of shapes that was most important rather than any single feature that gave rise to the to a particular response in a craft. It is easy to list the main features that affect the performance of any craft, and I'm sure that the table I've compiled below is similar to many that have appeared in boating magazines form time to time. The list is quite basic. There are many other , more subtle considerations . For instance, I did some simple tests recently that showed that the height of the cockpit rim had a marked effect on the lateral stability of a kayak simply because a high rim reduced the effective lean of a paddler trying to prevent capsize. Also the table does not give any data on windage, the most neglected but very important attribute of a kayak. It is very difficult to determine, as the wind resistance of the kayak is fairly small compared to that of the paddler's torso - and paddler's come in all shapes and sizes.

Design Feature of Hull	Effect on Performance
• Long waterline length • Unrockered hull • C. and G. forward (fish-form hull) • Deep keel • Narrow beam	Increase in directional stability.
• Short waterline length • Rockered hull • C. and G. astern (Swedish-form hull) • No keel • Flat-bottomed hull in cross section • Broad beam	Increase in manoeuvrability.
• Long waterline length • Unrockered hull • Fine bows • Vertical stem • Semi-circular cross-section • Narrow beam • Low displacement	Increase in speed.
• Wide beam • Flat-bottom or shallow cross-section • Blunt bow and/or stem – like a punt • High gunwales • Unrockered hull	Increase in lateral Stability.
• Upturned bow • Buoyant bow • Rockered hull	Resistance to purling (paddling forward).

The table shows that each basic feature will add a performance factor to a boat, but also that they can be compromised by other opposing features, for example it is obvious that speed and manoeuvrability are incompatible. It is possible to show in theory that the top speed of a boat is dependant on its water-line length, but this holds true only if all other things are equal: to get a genuine result by testing two boats of dissimilar length , the hull forms would have to be geometrically similar, and their weight must be proportional too. It is no good expecting a very long kayak of excessive weight to travel as fast as a lightweight, shorter boat, especially if the energy output limited to one paddler . Experienced sea kayakers

know that the cruising speed of their unladen kayaks is much lighter than when they are taking along camping gear and food for a month: this is true not just when they are accelerating at the start of a journey , but while they are steadily paddling along at normal cruising speed too.

So it should be possible to choose different designs parameters , yet combine them in different ways, to produce two dissimilar shaped craft that have essentially the same performance. For example if I wanted to design a medium - fast boat with good tracking ability , I could start with a Swedish form of hull for speed. This would not track too well, but I could improve this by keeping the hull unrockered . On the other hand I could start with a fish form boat that will track better than the first design but then add rocker to this hull to make its tracking ability similar to that of the first. But the rocker will slow down an already slower boat. (Fish form is always slower than Swedish form. Because by definition the bows of a Swedish - form boat are finer.) To speed the boat up I must either reduce the beam , or add to the water-line length. I could tank test both kayak designs in the hydraulics lab, and modify them bit by bit until their performance was to be identical, and even check the results out mathematically. But after going to all this effort and expense, could I be sure the results were valid? My guess is that the differing components used in the design will each add a subtle variation that will pass undetected by normal test procedures. You may recall some quite expensive tests conducted by *Sea Kayaker* Magazine some years ago. If my memory serves me right , every single result was hopelessly flawed - even though the test methods employed and the equipment used , were expensive they were not capable of detecting the subtleties of performance a paddler would notice immediately.(Kayak Tests. *Sea kayaker Magazine* . Fall/Winter issue 1986.)

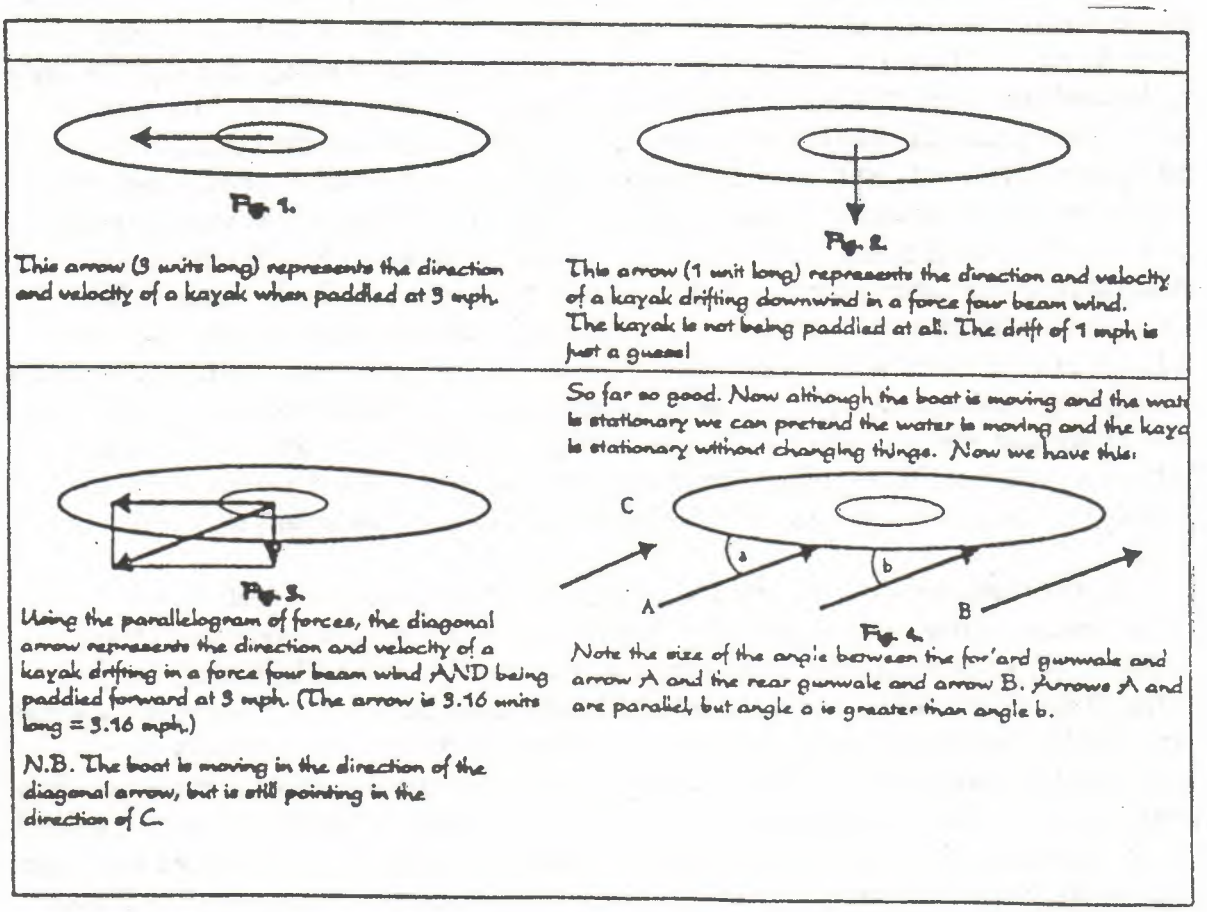
Put the two designs in the hands of competent paddler's, and quite a different story would emerge. They would immediately feel distinct "differences" though individuals would disagree as to which was "best ". Different people have different needs and expectations of kayaks , and indeed perceptions change from time to time as paddling fashions change!

Subtleties of performance can only really be detected by a sensitive paddler, and even then they cannot be quantified . Yet, as a designer , it is my job to blend many differing design features that to together will solve , as far as possible , the intractable problem of moving about safely on the surface of the water. All I can call the end result is "Sea Worthiness" which, goodness knows is vague enough term , yet it is a valid quality with tangible effects. It is probably undetectable in calm conditions , when virtually anything from an air bed to an oil drum can be paddled around to some extent , but becomes apparent when conditions deteriorate, the seas increase and the wind becomes a force to be reckoned with. The only way to be sure is to design it , build it, and then try it out - not on the calm waters of Port Townsend waterfront but in as many varied conditions as possible up to and including those moments you occasionally meet by accident when you wish you were safe at home and had never even *heard mention of kayaks* !

And even if there are competent paddler's in the cockpit , can they test and then hand on that information when kayaker's performance is in fact a reflection of paddler's skill ? What may be a very responsive kayak in the hands of a skilled paddler may be too quick for the for the untrained reflexes of a beginner. And what does a paddler want ? Does a paddler need, say , a high performance or does he want to carry a more luxurious amount of

equipment and food? Since both his strength and stamina have limitations he certainly cannot have both. Does he want the safest possible boat in a strong quartering wind or when running before a breaking sea? Are his skills greater than his strength or visa versa? The compromises of design are endless. It subtlety of compromise in design features and the difficulty of obtaining meaningful data on performance that gives the marketing man such an easy ride in the kayak world. They can do anything they like - and do!

I have seen many brochures over the years that claim a particular boat is the fastest, most manoeuvrable , best tracking etc, all in one design, and each attribute backed up by pseudo-scientific explanation plus, of course a whiff of commuter technology background! At port Townsend only this year , I was told how fast a particular boat was and as it was short and stout, I didn't believe it. Being polite I tried to turn the conversation by wondering aloud what the point of the pronounced flat bottom of to the hull was supposed to achieve. The reply staggered me - "Oh! that is to make the boat come up on a semi plane so that it goes faster", Jorgen Samson , easily the finest sprinter- Kayak designer in the world , together with other designers worth their salt , go to endless trouble to make sure that they rid their kayaks



of any tendency to do this is the best way to make them go faster. At that point I gave up.

In the end , I think seaworthiness for me means predictability . I want a kayak that does not change its tune dramatically when conditions worsen. A boat that will do as it is told equally well in light airs and gales. When we came of the water after the first circumnavigation of Cape Horn in 1977 , I said coyly to my companions" What did you think of the Nordkapps?" There was a pause and then they said , " We never noticed them " I took the remark as a great compliment.

Many points of design appear simple - but in fact are more complex than at first appears. For example . I thought it would be easy to design a kayak that is "neutral" in wind so that it neither weathercocks nor points down wind when paddled in a beam wind. I set about with great enthusiasm and felt that I'd made good progress at calculating the hull performance in the water and the more difficult problem of deck and paddler windage. After putting the two together I had the first Nordkapp design. Six months later the prototype was on the water . What a disappointment! It didn't weathercock a lot , but weathercock it did - and much more than I thought it would . Back to the drawing board. I began to think more carefully . What actually happens when a boat is paddled in abeam wind?

There are three parts to the problem:

1. The direction of travel owing to the boat being paddled.

2. the direction of travel owing to drift by the beam wind.

3. The relationship between the two.

Figures 1-4 are self explanatory I think , and what is clear is that the water hitting the for'ard quarter at a steeper angle than along the stem quarter will turn the bow to starboard. Or you can say the converse of this : the stern moves faster downwind because it meets less resistance than the bow. Whichever way you look at it, the kayak is pivoted to starboard by the pressure of the water hitting it. Thus, theory tells us that a neutral craft will weathercock. Can it be proved? I waited till there was a nice steady force four blowing, then took the kayak to the local lake. I paddled it forward in the beam wind . The bow turned into the wind .I reversed and paddled it *backwards* the same beam wind. Eureka! weathercocking is simply one system of forward paddling. It does not necessarily mean the boat is unbalanced. QED . But I wanted an expedition boat that would be balanced in the beam winds up to gale force. So I was still at the drawing board The result was the Nordkapp H.M.(H = hatches; M = modified hull) with astern deepened and lengthened to compensate for the turning effect of the wind . It worked very well indeed when at last I got this new design on the water - but only at a price! the boat was less manoeuvrable than before .But for sea-worthiness capable of making long crossings regardless of the strength of the wind, reliable in remote areas far away from civilization where a rudder or skeg repair might prove difficult , then the Nordkapp H.M. is a good boat. That is why ,even though we've never sponsored an expedition yet , Nordkapps feature very strongly indeed in the list of "firsts" by sea kayaks since 1975.

The last sentence does not mean that I think the H.M. is the best kayak for all circumstances , certainly for lengthy expeditions I think it probably is (some slight bias here, no doubt) but I sometimes feel that a more manoeuvrable boat would be better when I am turning it in the confines of a sea cave or negotiating a rock garden. For messing about at the base of cliffs(one of my favourite pastimes) I'm very fond of my skerry, which is more manoeuvrable , though a little slower than by Nordkapp but also has another advantage : in a following sea, its fish form hull holds position very well when surfing down a wave , and as I am always looking for free ride , I like this very much. Sometimes I can out distance stronger fitter paddler's when we are running before a sea . I don't indulge in competitive behaviour usually , but as I get closer to the day when I'm admitted to a Twilight Home for the Geriatric Paddler's, it is becoming a rare thing to be at the front end of a paddling group.

A good kayak design must have predictable performance. Its response to the paddle should be free from any nasty little habits , but what I really want from my kayak is a craft that will allow me to get very close to the primeval forces of nature without putting me to much at risk.

A great many paddler's spend a lot of time apologizing for their sport.

Ask for reason for paddling , and you 'll get answers like, "I like to kayak to keep fit" ,"I like to kayak to see the wildlife", "I kayak to see the wilderness"

To me, these are not reasons but bonuses. The reason I am a paddler is that I enjoy paddling . I enjoy the smooth thrust of a blade through the water; I enjoy the response of the boat as it carves a wave ; I appreciate the roar of a breaking after the hiss of wind blown spray is exiting . Even the splash of water drips from paddle blade onto a perfectly quite water surface during a summer evening foray is a delight.

Fundamentally, paddling a kayak allows the most intimate relationship of all between paddler and water. I've swum, dived, rafted, canoed, rowed, sailed and power boated over and in lakes and oceans, and for me paddling wins hands down! This is why I don't want a craft that will carry an inordinate amount of equipment or ice boxes full of wine: I can get these anytime I want on land. What I want is a craft that will allow me to sauver the primeval forces of nature all around me, and it follows , since a kayak is only as good as the occupant , that my craft must allow me the full range of paddling strokes. "Advanced" strokes to me are those twiddly extended bits of nonsense that some paddler's use to show off with. I'm sure you've seen them at it : one hand on the paddle blade , wrists twitching madly the other end of the paddle churns the water to foam. If you have to move your hands along the paddle shaft to gain leverage , it isn't an advanced stroke ! No , I believe that the most advanced stroke (and the most neglected one) is the forward paddling stroke. A well developed forward paddling stroke provides the speed and duration a paddler needs, and grafted onto this sound foundation are subtle variations of paddle angle and position that create steering and bracing responses to changing conditions. This idea of the forward paddling stroke as the basis of everything means that even a capsize and Eskimo roll can be looked at as an extension of forward paddling.

The "advanced kayak " , to go with advanced strokes , is nothing very esoteric. It is simply a boat that promotes healthy feedback from ocean to paddler ; paddler to ocean. It allows me to perform efficiently. For example , I don't think it is possible to paddle properly in a kayak of more than 24" beam because you cannot reach the water effectively . And any kayak where the deck , cockpit coaming , seat back-rest, etc restrict a good paddling style is not a good thing . I don't want a "stiff "kayak that does not respond to input from the paddler in any of the three planes of stability - pitch, heel and yaw, or to say it in kayaker's terms: purling, capsize and broach. A kayak that responds to the paddler's skill will tend to respond to the oceans whim! One important task of the designer is to maximise the former and subdue the latter, while making sure this response is predictable and comprehensive . As we know , in a contest of brute strength , the ocean will always win, but two advantages - knowledge and skill , and third one should be a seaworthy craft . with this triple advantage over the mindless ocean , we should be well able to make safe journey's by kayak.

I was staggered a few years ago when I heard a sea kayaking lecturer state , " Learn to Eskimo roll , but don't rely on it - take your paddle -float with you " in my opinion, the Eskimo roll is just part of forward paddling technique. I rely on it just the same way as I rely on all my paddling strokes - that's what gets me there, in the right direction and upright! We ought to say" practice your paddling skills. learn a few rescue techniques - but don't rely on them "

Personally , I find we could do without a lot of the "safety equipment " that festoon paddler's these days. Much of this invention, and as the paddler's I mentioned at the

beginning discovered , the more stable you make the kayak , the more unseaworthy it becomes - which makes an interesting thought. Anyway ,I've come full circle, even though I've tried to keep straight to the point , so it's time to stop. thanks to Al for asking me to writing this article.

Frank Goodman of Valley Canoe Products is the designer and builder of the Nordkapp. he has paddled in the Irish sea , English Channel , Farne Islands , Inner and Outer Hebrides , the coast of South Wales , Cape Wrath Australia, Baffin Island , North shore of Lake Superior, and the Cape Horn Expedition.

VHF Marine Radio Transceivers in Sea Kayaking

Why Use a VHF Radio?

If you choose to paddle to escape from the buzzes, whirs and clicks that seem to punctuate modern life, and never want to make contact with another human soul while you're out; a radio is not for you. Alternatively, when you go offshore, you might get a little peace of mind and enjoy yourself more if you take a VHF radio with you.

Modern marine hand-held radio transceivers (transmitter/receivers) are compact, water resistant, easy to use, and affordable. Designed for (point to point) transmission and reception of speech, they make remote two way conversations on pre-set channels easy. This system is dedicated to maritime users, its operating procedures are well proven and very effective. As a VHF operator, you become part of a network of seafaring people who look out for one another and can relay open distress calls to the rescue services. If you have an emergency, you can talk directly to the rescue co-ordinator; who is familiar with the sea, and will understand what you say and your situation (the international language of the sea is English).

Although basic sets now retail at less than £100, you get what you pay for. A much better option is a modern synthesised transceiver. In early 1995 you can buy a fully synthesised, water resistant (splash proof), reliable and versatile piece of kit for something under £200, its waterproof (submersible) equivalent will set you back around £400. Although you need an operating licence there is no operating charge (except for radio telephone link calls). VHF radios can be used for many things, including:

- Making calls to other boats (including other kayaks)
- Obtaining weather information
- Obtaining traffic information
- Leaving passage plans
- Updating passage plans (whilst on the water)
- Making `telephone' calls
- Obtaining position advice (by request or in emergency)
- Distress calls

Getting Licensed

You need to go on a course to get trained and take a test before you qualify for a licence. These courses are very straightforward and are aimed at the ordinary person. They are non-technical, and include all the training you need, including all the operating procedures, and the necessary test. A typical course is usually only one day long (often a Sunday). Yacht clubs actively encourage their members to get licensed, so lots of cheap courses are available. Don't be put off from using a radio because you need a licence, if you can get yourself around on the sea you'll have no problem qualifying for a licence.

Calling Other Craft

With a radio you can keep in touch with other groups in the area and out on the water at the same time. Before you go on the water, it helps to agree on a working channel (after checking on availability and suitability) and the rest is simple. If you want to talk to a boat you encounter on the water (and assuming you both have radios), you make a brief initial contact on channel 16, the called vessel then nominates an appropriate operating channel for your traffic.

Weather Reports

Your VHF radio can be used to get a weather forecast for a particular sea area, or details of the current weather out at sea. Coast guard stations, Maritime Rescue Co-Ordination Centres (MRCC's) and Maritime Rescue Sub-Centres (MRSC's) give scheduled weather forecasts covering the usual sea areas. The forecast is broadcast at a time published in almanacs, broadcasts are repeated every four hours (or every tow hours during gales). In general an announcement is made on channel 16, and the forecast follows on channel 67. Similar arrangements are made for warnings about shipping hazards and shipping traffic. Examples:

- Brixham CG (Devon) MRSC, gives forecasts at 0050 and every four hours afterwards
- Holyhead (Anglesey) MRSC issues forecasts at 0235 and every four hours afterwards.
- The coast guard will also issue warnings of severe weather, as dictated by the weather, by means of an All Stations broadcast on channel 16, the actual forecast will usually follow immediately on a named channel, usually channel 67.

Making Telephone Calls

British Telecom International (BTI) operate a number of coastal radio

stations and offer many services including the facility to make telephone calls from your kayak. These are known as YTD calls, for Yacht Telephone Debit, or link calls. Other services offered by BTI coasts stations are weather forecasts, and sometimes radio direction finding. The following are a few examples of BTI stations and services offered.

Lands End Radio:
Operating on channels 16, 27, 64, 85, 88 Weather on ch 27 or 64

Anglesey Radio:
Operating on channels 16, 26 28, 61, weather on ch 26 at 0703 & 1903 and on request

Skye Radio:
Operating on channels 16 and 24 weather on ch 24 at 0703 and 0903 and on request.

Passage Plans Via VHF

Many paddlers drop route card into the coast guard or telephone to advise them of a particular trip. Remember that this will not be used to initiate a rescue, your shore contact must do that if and when needed. However, using VHF radio is even simpler and more effective. Use the radio to call the coast guard as you are about to set off. You can then be sure of the number of people in the group; the number/types and colours of boats, the prevailing conditions and the final passage plans.

If your circumstances change, you can easily call the coast guard to tell them. If you are on an extended trip or engaged in an open crossing, a quick call ashore or to a 'mothercraft' to say that all is well and you're just a little late will out concerned minds at rest.

When you end your journey and before you go ashore, a radio call to the Coast guard to confirm that you're safe is efficient, quick and simple. It is also courteous to thank them for their vigilance. This also avoids the risk of getting comfy in the pub and forgetting to make the call.

You may see some unusual traffic, and suspect a rescue or search is on going. With a radio, you can actively help by switching-on and listening-in to channel 16. You can call back if and when appropriate, to eliminate your group from the search. This releases the rescue services to focus on the real problem.

Two features are useful for this, the dual watch facility (which lets the receiver share its time between two channels) or alternatively prioritised scanning (which lets the receiver share its time between many channels but with half the total time set to a priority channel (usually channel 16), typically about one tenth of a second is spent on each channel).

VHF Distress Calls

We take great care to minimise the risks involved in kayaking. However, some day we might be in real need of outside help and want to raise the alarm. On sea trips, I carry a number of distress flares for use in an emergency. However, it has to be said that each flare is a primitive firework, a one-off device, which may not be seen and is only really tested in anger.

In comparison, the radio can be tested whenever you like. The battery on a VHF radio usually lasts abut six hours if left on standby, but will give about 30 minutes of continuous use when transmitting full power. If you limit each mayday call to 30 seconds, you have up to 60 opportunities to raise the alarm. You can tell someone else (not necessarily the coast guard) of your problem and it is a great relief to have your call acknowledged, you know that you have got through! No system is perfect, so take flares and a radio; they complement one another.

Position Advice

Did you know that the Coast Guard can quickly and easily get a bearing on your VHF transmissions ?. The equipment used for this is a DF (for Direction Finding) receiver. This facility is always available for use in an emergency and is sometimes available by request.

Some Technical Questions Answered

Q How Far Out Will It Work?

A *A good transceiver will have a performance which complies with the appropriate European Telecommunications Specification. Most handheld sets offer two transmitter power settings (Low: about 1 Watt, and High: about 5 Watts).*
Using a VHF radio, the normal maximum communications ranges from a kayak (with a 3' aerial height) are:

- *4 nmiles to another kayak (3' aerial height)*
- *15 nmiles to a large cargo vessel*
- *23 nmiles to coast guard stations on high cliffs (aerial at 300')*

This assumes fair weather conditions! Sometimes the weather may help the signals along a bit, giving unusually extended range (this is when we have those special announcements about getting continental TV on top of our favourite domestic TV programmes.)

Q How Many Channels Should A Receiver Have?

A *There are 57 separate channels in the mobile maritime band, but you can get-by on much less. All sets must have Channel 16 and Channel 6.*

- *Channel 16 is the maritime distress and safety channel, it should be used wisely and sparingly.*
- *Channel 6 is the working channel on a set with only two channels.*
- *Channel 67 is the intership channel and most usefully, the small craft safety channel.*
- *Channel 12 and 14 are often used for port operation, so these are highly desirable.*
- *Charts produced for yacht cruising (eg Imray, Laurie et al) show the recommended channel for coast guard stations, Port Authorities and marinas. A quick look at the chart for your area will be a useful guide to the channels you need, alternatively look in that old standby, the nautical almanac. Even the most basic modern sets offer 12 channels, and this is often acceptable. Some radio transceivers have frequency synthesisers to create the signals. These synthesised receivers are very stable and accurate and are push button operated (less chance for operator error when tuning). By design, these actually have all the available channels. Synthesised sets are worth having and are now very competitively priced.*

Q How Waterproof Should It Be?

A *an ideal world your set would float, be waterproof and cost next to nothing. Several good, ruggedised, waterproof sets are available, and even some of these float, but they cost a fair sum. As more waterproof sets enter the market, their price is steadily dropping. A good alternative is a splash proof (water resistant) set in an aquasac (ie see-through dry bag). The bag keeps the nasty salt water out, makes these buoyant and offers some protection against sand, fuel and the like. You need to take reasonable care with the radio in a dry bag, but I think a little respect and a regular check on condition is a small price to pay. In general, and for about the same specification, a splash proof set will cost you less than half the price of its submersible counterpart. You pay you money and take your choice!*

Q What About the Mobile Phone?

A *Mobile or portable telephones are an option which is becoming popular with inland paddlers and some centres. Probably because you don't need a licence and because of the low cost of sets. The VHF marine radio system exists exclusively for the seafarer, the mobile phone system does not. In my view the mobile phone is not an ideal option for sea kayaking. The main disadvantages of the mobile phone are:*

- *- No Safety Network*
- *When in distress, no one other than the number called can hear your call. If your signal is weak and cannot reach the called number, tough luck. Call relays via nearby users are not an option.*
- *-No Direction Finding Facility*
- *Your transmissions won't be used to find our where you are!*
- *-Uses the overloaded public telephone system*
- *Now that Ford are giving mobile radio telephones away with new cars, the utilisation will boom. As a result, you may be put on hold because the system can't cope (eg whilst Del boy closes his latest deal from the back of the Capri Ghia).*
- *-High System charges and call charges*
- *You pay to call-up the weather, you pay to call the Coast guard. . .in short the more you use the phone the more you pay.*

Summary

Sea kayakers would be wise to adopt the modern synthesised hand held VHF transceiver. The sets are very useful and affordable, complementing the range of equipment good paddlers already carry. You can; keep in contact with other paddlers, contact the authorities to tell them of your journey, find out about the weather, find out about traffic, find out where you are, and raise the alarm in an emergency. These days there are fewer working coastal look-out posts, but lots of eyes and ears aboard boats on the water, including yours. This radio network exists for you, become part of it.

Andy Stamp
Senior Lecturer in Electronic Communications Engineering
University of Plymouth.

Invitation

for those who participated in SISKA´s sea-kajak adventure in May 1995.

After our lovely and for me very instructive week of paddling in Scotland, I started making plans for a similar round in the Swedish archipelago.

I am planning on a round of approximately ten days, in August 1996, probably during week 33 or 34.
Our paddling round will take place in the archipelago of S:t Anna and Gryt on the east coast, about 150 kilometers south of Stockholm.

The intention of this letter is to be an advance notice, to make it possible for You to plan in good time.
I don´t demand any replies or applications right now, but of course I´d be glad to hear from You anyway!
On towards October - November You will receive more detailed information and an application form.

If You know for sure that You will not participate, maybe You know someone else who might be interested? I hope for twenty or so participants in all, like last time.

Welcome to Sweden in 1996!!

Warm summer greetings from....

Karin Mentzing
Ludgo, Bergholm
S-611 91 Nyköping
SWEDEN
Tel: country code + 0155 - 24 00 30

ASAMAT (Rescue Systems)
PLB7
THE PERSONAL LOCATOR BEACON

PLB7 EPIRB PERSONAL EMERGENCY BEACON
Transmission is on the frequency 121.5MHz used by International search & rescue (SAR) services to provide a homing capability for location and rescue in all weather conditions.

▼ The new system provides a high level of safety at sea for individuals without restricting their freedom of movement in any way.
▼ Simple to operate, each person wears a small transmitter, smaller than a packet of cigarettes.
▼ In the event that an individual should fall overboard, the transmitter can be activated manually or automatically and immediately sets off an alarm on board.
▼ The PLB7 works in conjunction with either, Watch Receiver WR121 providing a loud alarm. Or Homing Receiver HR30 alarm with direction finding on a simple illuminated compass display indicating the PLB transmission bearing.
▼ The PLB transmits on the International distress channel 121.5MHz capable of homing by rescue services.

The Purpose
▼ To equip MARINERS with a low cost personal safety system that assists rescue if lost overboard. There has always been a problem of locating persons lost overboard, in severe weather a person in the water may not be sighted only a few metres away. It can be some time before the person is discovered missing, and even then larger vessels can take up to a mile to turn to begin a visual search. Remember in poor light a person in the water is almost impossible to find even liferafts make poor radar targets, but with a Homing Beacon System rescuers can go straight to them.

Features
- PLB7 small size
- Robust, waterproof, fire resistant
- Low cost
- Uses standard available battery
- Manual or automatic activation
- Transmitter indicator
- Inbuilt test facility
- Easily attached to person
- Compatible with existing search and rescue (SAR) services

Patent pending

Specification

Frequency	121.5MHz
Power output	25mW radiated minimum
Modulation	Swept tone
Duty cycle	2-1
Temperature range	-10°c - +60°c
Battery	PP3 High capacity replaceable
Endurance	Minimum 6 hours at -10°c Normal 12-24 hours
Immersion	Waterproof, buoyant
Dimensions	73mm x 70mm x 29mm
Approval	Complies ETS 300-152 European Telecommunications standard (Man Overboard)

USE ONLY IN AN EMERGENCY

Asamat (Rescue Systems)
ASAMAT INTERNATIONAL Ltd.
Kingston Road, Raynes Park, London SW20 8DR
Telephone: 0181 543 3838 Fax: 0181 543 3830