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# Ocean Kayaker

INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAKING ASSOCIATION

MARCH 1999



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# editorial

by John Ramwell

For almost thirty years I have managed this Association on your behalf. Now I have been joined by a small group of friends who are bringing special skills to allow us to improve the services we can offer.

**Keith Maslen** is our Deputy Editor and gear and services test and review editor. His address is : The Hall Bungalow, White Edge Drive, Baslow, Derbyshire, DE 4 1SJ and can be contacted on 01246 582274

**Graham Edwards** is our designer and will advise regarding the preparation of copy for this magazine, be it from you as reader or as an advertiser. His address is 34, Maple Ave, Audenshaw, Manchester, M34 5SG and can be reached on 0161 370 0501.

**Peter Hatt** is our Events Co-ordinator. If you wish any event that may be of interest to sea kayakers mentioned in this magazine then send the information to Peter at 7, Saxon Close, Elton, Bury, BL8 2RY. He can be contacted on 0161 762 9594. Peter also manages the North West Sea Kayakers (NWSK) if you are interested.

**Chris Pearce** is also part of the team and has agreed to assist with business matters.

I am still in touch with the International Canoe Federation regarding the implementation of an international canoeing skills instructional scheme which will give access to all, where ever they may live, to an instructional award scheme similar to that operated by the British Canoe Union. I have heard good arguments both for and against such an international scheme but am clearly persuaded by the case for. I know there are many sea kayakers scattered around the world who are working hard to achieve B.C.U. coaching awards when they would be better employed acquiring such awards as provided by their own national canoeing governing body.

Finally, you will doubtless be impressed by this much improved magazine style ISKA newsletter. Since I resigned from editing Ocean Paddler magazine it has been the intention to build ISKA up in both terms of membership and in quality of what it can offer sea kayakers around the world.

Now, more than ever, I am in need of material for inclusion in this newsletter. It does not matter that you have never written for magazines before; just send your stories, your views, and your questions (Frank Goodman has agreed to answer these for you). Your items wanted or for sale and your letters. Please let us hear from you.



Until we meet at the International Canoe Exhibition in February or until we send out the next ISKA publication, this is John Ramwell signing off.

My address is, for copy for this magazine:

**5, Osprey Ave., Westhoughton,  
Bolton, Lancs, BL5 2SL and I can be  
reached on 01942 842204.**

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**Graham Edwards**

## events co-ordinator

**Peter Hatt**

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**Chris Pearce**



# The BIGGEST

Solent assignation —  
by Lester D. Matthews



It was to be our biggest sea crossing ever. The first leg from the Needles of the Isle of Wight, to Swanage, approximately 27 Kilometres. The second day was double that, a round-trip to Portland Bill and back, returning on the third day via the Solent, up through the Medina River to the Medina Valley Centre near to Newport. For most of the first days' journey we also paddled in a sea-mist that reduced visibility to about 100 yards and although we didn't know it at the time, Brian was just about to go down with a 'Bug'.



*Drink and a biscuit at 6 knots, tied to Bathsheba.*

Brian worked as Host at the Centre and there were several other parties in, and one group were just about to set off in "Bathsheba" an ex-Royal Yacht Squadron boat, 45 foot of sleek nautical grace. We discovered that they too would be in the Solent on the Sunday of our return trip and jestingly said "...so we'll drop-in on you for a cup of coffee on Sunday then!"

The Sea Kayak I paddled, was an 'Enterprise Ventura'. Long, sleek and weak! A poor design had resulted in a somewhat flexible keel that was now also rather 'thin'. The footrest, a 'bar' design complete with integral pump (it would have taken a mere 6 or 7 hours to empty a flooded cockpit later estimated) was also solidly rusted in. It was just possible for me to get in, so I left it where it was and then set to reinforcing the boat.

### No catalyst

With night setting in, I was making good time. Deck lines and Elastics checked, Paddle-Park and Compass added, I left my completed works and went for a drink. Returning 30 minutes later the Resin had still not "Gone off". Still later I resorted to pouring neat hardner/catalyst onto the still fluid gunge but to little avail. All was revealed when another Instructor mentioned "Oh that can no longer contains catalyst..." it was indeed a thinner base Resin. It is at times like this that I thank my parents for bestowing genes pre-disposed to humour and not to violence!

The next day our wives saw us down to the beach access (north east of the Needles) and waved us goodbye (with our insurance policies clutched fondly to their bosoms), a touching scene. Last minute instructions as to what to do if we were never heard of again and a photo-call delayed our departure by several minutes and cost us a close encounter with the QE2, that steamed around just as we set off.

Brian had timed his invitation so that we would be paddling 'on Springs'. Slight disadvantages (chances of bigger swell and waves) have to be taken as they come, but our first day was paddled in an almost flat calm, at near double normal speed.

It was sunny and warm, but due to a mist it was a bit of a 'bore' until we reached Harry's Rocks at Studland Point. The 'Compass bearing and timing trick' had worked again and we hit Old Harry's Rocks almost spot-on. We then made camp on the rocky beach about a kilometre away from Swanage.

As ever, we had lots to yarn about and a very pleasant evening party for two was enjoyed on the beach. The plan was that we would set off early on Saturday and head around St Alban's Head towards Portland Bill/Weymouth, returning to the same campsite if possible on Saturday night. The planning was good, so were the conditions but, the bug beat Brian! During the night he started calling for that long-lost mariners friend.

### Whatever you fancy

"Hughie...Hughie!! First Aid can only do so much, and is really limited to fluid replacement. Poor Brian was very rough on Saturday and the swell had picked up so we decided that a short trip to Swanage was in order. Brian encouraged me to ignore his plight and to eat "...whatever you fancy." I mentioned that I really fancied a Pork Dripping Sandwich followed by Streaky

Bacon and Fried Mushrooms on Fried Bread. The rock he threw at me was easily avoided.

So Saturday was a fluid replacement and Andrex day, leading to a stabilisation of both ends of the digestive tract. By the evening Brian was his old self and I moderated my humour accordingly.

"Time and Tide wait for no man". Our window of opportunity for tidal assistance to return was 5.15am to catch the returning Flood tide. An early night was had and Brian slept well. We rose and packed in the gloom and noted that the Tide appeared to have turned early, perhaps due to the low pressure system coming in and the rising South Westerlies.

The launch was tricky at lower water and I prayed silently for the weak keel on my Ventura. The plan was that on this return trip we would head well into the Solent (till the Tide changed), and we would then paddle close into the shore avoiding the Ebb Tide until we reached the Medina River.

In the distance I saw Bathsheba. She was heading away from us. We waved our paddles and paddled like stink. Brian was pulling away in his Nordkapp and I had to use all my strength and every bit of technique to keep up. They saw us and Jim the Skipper put on the engine in reverse rather than lower sail (a good trick to remember).

We caught up and agreed a cunning

plan. They threw us a rope and quickly Brian and I tied each end to our Prow Toggles and we then paddled up again to Bathsheba. This was an engrossing and dangerous manoeuvre. They caught the rope with a hook and pulled us alongside, making the line fast.

At this point Charlie switched the engine off and we reached a speed in Sea Kayaks that people only dream of Brian being Brian, just had to cap it all by 'boarding' Bathsheba and he did. I held the boats together and he passed me a mug of orange juice and a biscuit or two. After a while things were getting a little 'bumpy' and I called him back. We were also slowing Bathsheba down!

Getting him back into the cockpit was

really interesting and I reflected on the sequence of events if he fell in...

'Throw Buoy overboard, turn Yacht around, Lester capsizes, adenoids and sinuses exit via ears, Lester does reverse screw roll at 12 knots and dislocates both shoulders and thumbs. This was not acceptable and I jammed him in.

They released us into their bow-wave which was a lot of fun and we then untied the rope and kept it. Bathsheba quickly disappeared into the mist and we headed into the shore to miss the worst of the Ebb. The rest of the journey was an enjoyable 'bimble' up to and along the Medina for a shower and hot meal.

I seem to very rarely do exactly what the plan originally intended! Changing



Above: Departure from the Isle of Wight. Below: Campsite north of Swansage on the shingle beach

weather, individual health or fitness and unexpected opportunities seem to be the 'norm' but I think that is what characterises Sea Kayaking!

Perhaps after friendships and technical achievement, it is in overcoming and enjoying the unexpected that ranks most highly on a trip.

#### "Jester"

Lester D Matthews: a scout leader who has led many hike-camps and spent as much time outdoors as possible. currently developing and running courses and consultancies in Finland and the U.K. Co-editor of the new *Adventure Tourism Handbook* to be published in 1999. Presently Head of Leisure Research at Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies

## Kiwi Corner



# Do real boats have rudders?

by Glynn Dickson

Differences in paddling techniques and technology have evolved throughout the world, which is well evidenced by the diversity even in Inuit kayak design. Down here in our island nation of New Zealand we are isolated geographically from the rest of the kayaking world, and have our own kayak culture design trends.

## Anti-rudder lobby

Now, some years ago Paul Caffyn upset a lot of people by putting a rudder on the back of his Nordkapp, after hearing good reports from Australian paddlers using them. The debates raged as to whether this was sensible, let alone moral, and it seems to me that most paddlers firmly subscribed to one theory or the other. It would appear that there is still a strong anti-rudder lobby based in the Northern Hemisphere which is a huge contrast to New Zealand. As far as I am aware, there isn't one commercially available Sea Kayak currently being sold here without a rudder. So, while there are a few paddlers not using them, following 16 years of development since Paul's first overstem rudder was fitted during his Australian circumnavigation, the rudder is king here!

Now it's easy to get one-eyed about such technology, but the arrival of a BCU qualified sea kayaker from the "Olde Country" has been a good opportunity to test these theories. Now Jonathan Iles is a thoroughly decent sort of bloke, so he became the unappointed Chief Judge in the rudder case. His credentials were impressive with all manner of the aforementioned BCU indoctrination qualifications., personal acquaintance with a number of

the leading lights in the UK sea kayaking community, and (the trump card) he brought his rudderless Vynek 12,000 miles around the world with him. I personally suspect that with his armed forces background, and appetite for adventure he might have considered paddling it from England, but that the sheer number of sweep strokes and stern rudder strokes required put him off. Jonathan instructed commercially here in Auckland for nearly 12 months after his arrival, and our local sea kayaking network received a shot in the arm from his input, and the weekend courses for trip leaders he ran. To say that he was operating at a skill level much higher than most of us is understating things, and while not involved to the same level now, his influence has been and is significant. Jonathan was heard muttering "real boats don't need rudders" under his breath shortly after his arrival, and it was apparent that he considered these aluminium foiled kayaks second best.

## Times change

Funny how times change though. An incident I well remember was during a 2 day sea kayak race last February (1997). With a tail wind we suddenly had some waves, and as I surfed up behind Jonathan, I marvelled at his superb zig zag course. I realised that he was using sailing skiff tactics (I believe he's looking to purchase a small yacht - with a rudder I guess) to increase his apparent wind and maximise downwind VMG (Velocity Made Good), but most observers would merely have suggested he needed a rudder. As I whistled past, I suggested he should get a prize for the most distance travelled during the race, but even if they had presented it, he couldn't have collected it after pulling a muscle through too many sweep strokes.

On another occasion I paddled a K2 with him during a mid-winter race. I should have recognised the signs then as he insisted on paddling from the front cockpit which had the rudder controls. He recently enquired about cutting the stern off the Vynek and installing a rudder (I can almost hear Nigel Foster shuddering from here). For someone highly skilled and used to paddling without, the change in attitude has been dramatic.

Like any issue of boat design there are always pros and cons for a particular feature. Paul Caffyn found that his average daily runs increased significantly with a rudder. The conclusion is that the extra energy savings from eliminating sweep strokes etc to steer the kayak, overcame the extra drag from the foil. Retracting the rudder saved drag if it was not required. And on that note I had always found that racing sea kayakers on flatwater it was an advantage to raise the rudder. Recent speed testing during development of a new design indicated that at seven knots, retracting the rudder would add an additional 0.2-0.3 knots. Strangely enough at a steady five knots I couldn't discern any difference. My observation is that in anything other than flat calm conditions the rudder is clearly more energy efficient, particularly over a long period when tired muscles complain about forward paddling strokes let alone a steering stroke. Hip steering/railing while easy when you are fresh, becomes an effort at the end of the day. The effort required to push one's foot forward is manageable (barely perhaps!). That rudders have proven their efficiency both in sea kayak racing, and also for relatively slower paced cruising, highlights their benefits. Those opposed to rudders will always find argument against them, whether because of the extra drag and hence speed loss, complication of a relatively simple piece of equipment therefore giving more likelihood of problems, or because the aesthetics of a rudderless kayak with graceful up swept ends is more pleasing to their eye, and of course because the Eskimos refrained from such dalliances".

Glyn is a leading kayak designer and manufacturer, partner of a firm called "Paddling Perfection" based in Auckland. He has developed a reputation for professionalism and innovation and regularly contributes to our outdoor magazines here.



# The complete coastline of Finland in kayaks

29 June - 27 July 1997

## The Bluwhite Ribbon

by  
Sverre  
Slotte

**f**olklore has it that Sir Edmund Hillary climbed Mount Everest because it was there. If these few words prompted Sir Edmund to embark on his arduous journey, my wife and I thought, they would certainly be reason enough for us to paddle the Finnish coast from end to end.

The coastline did not seem too bad when sitting in a comfy chair looking at the charts. We were somewhat hesitant about the length of this trip, as we remembered three weeks of continuous head-winds and the never-ending rain of our previous expedition. This trip would be double in length but it would have to be done during a normal Finnish four-week summer holiday.

### Optimism

Optimism finally got the better of us, and we decided that there simply cannot be two bad summers in a row and that this trip definitely can be done.

We set out from the town of Tornio on a sunny Sunday afternoon in the end of June. Tornio is situated at the mouth of the border-river between Finland and Sweden, and it took us a few hours to get out of the estuary area and onto the sea. We there found our old friend Mr Horizon who was to be our right-hand companion all the way along the coast.

We kept pushing until close to midnight that first day and pitched our tent on a small island. The sun did not behave in its expected manner, but stayed quite stubbornly high up in the sky. We were used to light summer nights, of course, but this still came as a surprise to us. There was no need for a torch, even if one had wished to read in the middle of the night.

We had thought that following the coastline should not present any navigational problems; it would be just a matter of keeping land on the left

hand within sight at all times. We had not thought about fog, however. When we woke up the next morning and peeked out from the tent we could hardly distinguish our kayaks ten metres away! The fog persisted throughout the day and did not clear until late afternoon. We quickly broke camp, packed our kayaks and hit the road, but we did not get far before we saw grey banks of fog rolling in from the sea. We had no other choice but to head for the shore. We were lucky enough to find a fishing harbour and camped in the car-park.

For the next few days we had clear skies and we were back to easy navigation. The water was very shallow with sand-banks stretching quite far out from the shore. We could really feel how the "pull" of the sea-bed slowed us down, and at some places we had trouble getting the paddle-blade completely submerged. A few times we saw odd-looking fences going straight out from the shore. A closer inspection revealed them to be fishing-nets hanging on poles sticking up from the bottom of the sea. Getting across them was not always easy; we had to paddle along the fence until the net hung low enough for us to be able to paddle over it.

The population of Finland is concentrated to the southern parts of the country, and this was clearly noticeable in these northern areas. A few larger towns every now and then and a couple of major harbours interrupted the otherwise very quiet

coastline. We met very few boats and the ones we saw in the small fishing harbours were all veterans of the sea. In fact, we did not see any flashy cruisers for our first 500 kilometres of our trip; a very nice change from our (Finnish-wise) crowded home-waters.

As we approached the town of Kokkola the scenery gradually changed from a lonely coastline and a horizon to that of a fairly dense archipelago requiring more attentive map-reading. We were approaching the "waist" of the Gulf of Bothnia, where the distance between Finland and Sweden is at its smallest. This area raises from the sea with approximately 1 centimetre every year, and this leads to very rocky waters and islands.

The charts show places like "Birch island" and Pike Bay" well up on dry land. One can still meet older people who remember rowing across a sound that is now a pasture. If the land keeps raising at this rate for a couple of millennia it will be possible to walk from Finland to Sweden without getting one's feet wet.

### Interesting

This is an interesting opportunity for sea paddlers to study the birth of new islands. A group of rocks emerge from the sea and gradually raise high enough above the water level for plants to gain foothold. This phase takes several decades, because the summer waves and the winter ice are good at shaving off everything that gets in their ways. Eventually humus starts forming between the rocks and bushes and trees start appearing, and the distinct features of an island start appearing. We saw hundreds if not thousands of islands in various stages of development. Unfortunately they are not very good for camping purposes: it is virtually impossible to penetrate the defence line of thorny bushes along the shore, and the mattress that would let you lie down



(let alone sleep) on the rocky ground has not been invented yet.

When we got out into clearer waters a week later we were pleased to see Mr Horizon waiting for us. We pushed further south along the coast in continuously good weather. After a good week of that I almost wished for a spell of bad weather. When the rain finally came I immediately started wishing for sunshine again.

After almost a week in the comforting company of Mr Horizon we arrived at Finland's largest archipelago in the south-western corner of the country. We disappeared between the islands and had to start paying attention to navigation again. The islands in the south-west of Finland are quite different from the ones we passed through earlier on our trip. These look like big, rounded cliffs sitting in the water. They are fairly big and there are lots of them we had no problems finding suitable campsites.

As we rounded the cape of Hanko, a town situated at the southernmost point of mainland Finland, we were in for a nasty surprise: large areas of the sea was covered by a greenish, revolting substance. It turned out to be a poisonous alga that normally appears in very limited quantities, but that due to the sunny and calm weather had multiplied enormously. Blaming the weather is not quite fair, of course. It is above all the actions of mankind, that lies at the core of this problem. The Baltic Sea with its brackish water is very vulnerable, and the countries surrounding it are busy blaming each other for its deteriorating state.

### Baltic sea

The salinity of the water in the Baltic Sea is low, and it can be used for e.g. cooking and teeth-brushing. We had been using sea-water for cooking all along, but this had to stop now. The sun still shone from a clear sky, and we had to start looking for places to replenish our water supplies every other day or so. This slowed us down somewhat, but we were on the home-stretch now and we were not about to let some yucky green stuff prevent us from reaching the Russian border.

We started meeting more boats here; in fact it sometimes felt crowded on the water. It is never nice to have a speed-

boat coming right at you when you do not know whether the driver has seen you or not. We tried to choose less frequented routes and managed to keep out of harm's way. The passenger ferries go back and forth between Helsinki and Tallinn (the capital of Estonia) from dawn to dusk. The best time to cross their route is early in the morning when they still lay at their moorings.

### Last morning

As we got closer to the Russian border the weather started to change, and we had to work hard to make progress. On



the last morning of our trip dark clouds started gathering in the east. The rain started pouring down, and it was soon accompanied by lightning. We were careful to stay on close to the Finnish shore as we paddled in to the bay that marks the end of Finland and the start of Russia. The Russians are a hospitable bunch and invite all trespassers to stay for a few days in nice rooms with bars for the window, and that is an offer you really cannot refuse!

We paddled all the way to the end of the bay and even a bit up a narrow creek until there was no more water to paddle in. We had done it, we were finally there! We had managed to paddle all the 1269 kilometres of Finnish coastline in 29 days. The rain was still pouring down, so we did not feel like popping the champagne. Instead we quickly stowed our gear into my brother's car and disappeared into civilisation.

## Finland

Finland is one of the most northerly countries in Europe: one quarter of its total area lies north of the Arctic Circle. The climate is considerably better than one might suppose, however, due to the west winds from the Atlantic warmed by the Gulf stream.

To the south and west, Finland is bounded by the shallow Baltic Sea, the world's largest basin of brackish water, the Gulf of Finland and the Gulf of Bothnia. The pressure of the continental glacier of the last ice age caused the land to sink, and when the glacier retreated the landmass started rising again. This process is still continuing, along the Gulf of Bothnia by as much as 1 metre every century, and this results in some areas in a very fragmented coastline with thousands of islands and skerries, with new skerries emerging from the sea.

The sea surrounding Finland freezes over in winter, but is still open and kayakable for the largest part of the year. The length of the coastline is approximately 1250 km, ranging from the town of Tornio on the Swedish border in the north-west to the small community of Virolahti on the Russian border in the south-east.

## Bluewhite Ribbon

Anyone who paddles along the complete Finnish coastline between Tornio and Virolahti according to the rules defined by the Finnish Expedition Paddlers kayaking club can be awarded the Bluewhite Ribbon (named after the colours in the Finnish flag). The trip has to be done in single-seat kayaks without the help of sails, kits etc. The paddlers are not allowed to rendezvous with a support car or otherwise receive help from the outside, but buying foodstuffs etc is OK. For more information, please write to:

Seapaddlers' Bluewhite Ribbon,  
c/o Finnish Expedition Paddlers,  
P.O. Box 36, 002441 Helsinki, Finland.





DODGY VIRGINS AND TINY TENTS by Adrian Mould

A tale of great daring danger thrills and spills does not follow this was a quest yes an odyssey, definitely odd and sea.

Never before have so many people gathered to paddle smug in the knowledge that if it rained then my tent would be the smallest and most miserable. People even came to wish me goodnight just to see a large man in a very small tent.

The camp was at the place searched for in maps of the world R-Dooney was the place! It did not exist directions a translation and eventually a spelling was sought. Then as if the road atlas was ready to reveal its secret there it was Arduaine so we drove there pitched the tents and went to the pub.

Saturday dawned in the cliché'd way it can only do in canoeing stories, some hours later we awakened, breakfasted etc.: then there were twenty-four or twenty six of us paddling out from R-wotsit toward Shuna to the bottom of Luing and through the Grey Dog to Bel Na Hua camping near Cuan sound. The man who timed the tides did it perfectly, the man who timed the sunshine also did it perfectly. It seemed to be my day for finding brushes and combs neither of which I use, polish and a rag would have been more useful for my shiny pate but no one seems to toss those overboard.

Saturday evening was spent on a sofa made of rock and springy turf with a suitable view of the sun setting over Mull, eventually most of those without Therm a Rest chairs came to join me on my rock sofa, chilling out and feeling well full whilst compiling our English Scots dictionary. A hunt for firewood was begun the best firewood being found up a cliff across a bog. (This was to be the first and last time I swapped walking boots for trainers in the quest for a lighter boat)

The following morning the sun was still shining probably because all I had to paddle in was a dry suit it shone all day so boil in the bag was certainly off the menu. The wind had changed direction overnight not enough to bother us on the water but certainly enough to convince those camped downwind from the dead sheep to be ready for the water good and early. On to Easedale for a quick mooch in the harbour and then a slog to catch up with the group. Someone had obviously seen us in the rear and decided to halt the group for swimming and rescue practice but to be fair swimming was the only option, especially helmetless as we were back down through the Clachan sound. Alas the pub was shut so it was to another mooch and play in Cuan sound before arriving back at Arduaine for the long drive home. As for those dodgy virgins, well there was a prince by the name of Brechan who after several nights of legend making required a rope made of virgin hair so to anchor in the Gulf of Corryvreckan and sit out the tide proving his love for the tide races. You can guess the end of this tale the only survivor being his dog a grey old thing that came ashore at the other end of Scarba!



Efficient, small and lightweight, are the vital ingredients for an extended wilderness survival expedition. The food carried for any time over a week has to be very carefully thought out, and is a matter of personal choice. With today's dried food the word 'hardship' loses its meaning.

The equipment needed presents less of a problem than in days gone by. Space-age materials and modern design give strength and safety as well as ultra lightweight gear.

The ready packed meals in the outdoor shop are not only highly over-priced but hold no more nutritional value than the great choice found on the high street supermarket shelf. With a basis of pasta, rice, noodles and Smash, tasty meals can end each day's paddling and become commonplace. A variety of flavours with Oxo cubes, packet soups, dried meats, sultanas, Parmesan cheese, curry, chilli and packet nuts makes bland meals a thing of the past. The light solo tent or Bivi Bag are items of personal choice.

The efficient cooker is reliant on the fuel availability in the region being voyaged. The most efficient cooker is the Coleman lead-free petrol model with the fuel being available in any part of the world. The penalty for the Coleman is weight and size. The most convenient stove is the Micro Burner; a 500 gas container will last about ten days but is not always replaceable. The choice of sleeping bag is very important. For all year round camp use and Arctic trips there are no corners that can be cut and the expensive bag more than pays for itself in minus conditions. A quality compression bag makes the unit fore hatch friendly - lightweight sleep bags for summer use can be upgraded in cold conditions by always carrying longjohns and sleeve thermal wear with thick socks and balaclava, easily stored in plastic bags and made compact with masking tape, emergency use packets that are well worth the room they take up.

A lot of our sports have become a

# Lightweight

## Sea Kayak Expedition

Pete Beard, Quantock Wilderness Survival

fashion conscious game for the young, with true values being lost. Nevertheless, life-threatening experiences are commonplace - our sport holds more potential problems than most and one's knowledge is never complete.

Over the past few months I have taken long-term solo trips and pass on some of the useful tips:

Night light candles in the alloy cup made the long nights so much more pleasant. Small AM/FM radio, gas cooker, small battery shaver and P Bottle beats any B&B accommodation. The Thermarest mat is as comfy as any mattress and packs so small the expense is well justified for the serious explorer. A good sharp knife is an important part of my gear. I find the wood handle French Opinel folding model meets all needs, from cutting a loaf of bread to foreshore bits of wood. Small roll of masking tape.

A number of supermarket carrier bags kept on board have a variety of uses - paddling in the rain or cold, the bag held in place with a rubber band at the wrist not only keeps gloves dry but also has thermal properties. They make the best storage bags, taking the thin shape of the bow or stern. Wet socks and clothing, rubbish, food, cameras etc etc. Small First Aid kit made up with your ideas - plasters, tube of Germolene, strong lozenges for that sore morning throat after fog or cold, aspirins.

A midge hood and mittens for areas with biting insects and sand flies. Squares of Velcro glued on deck to hold parts with Velcro backing - compass, torch, storage bag with sweets, lighter, cigarettes, radio, small alarm clock, while under way, makes life easier.

Eyes held in place with pop rivet or self-tap screws along gunwale with rubber shock cord zig-zagged over the deck to hold map case, clothing or stores is a very efficient outside help. Heading into wind and rain a plastic visor protects the eyes and takes up no room when not in use.

A good woolly head over to retain body heat in adverse weather. In these conditions thermals come in useful.

A squab of foam rubber - 18" x 12" x 1" - makes a comfy seat cushion. It also doubles as an emergency bailer and keel protector pulling craft over rocks.

A non-stick alloy frying pan with half the handle cut off, with an aluminium plate as a lid, makes the most efficient cooking unit. A mug of water boils quicker, it can make toast and cooks all types of food. It can even be used for frying !!!

In place of a mug or cup, a 1 pint straight beer glass has more than one use. Hands are soon warmed up on cold morning, but for winter camping it makes a good lamp. Kitchen foil taped on one half acts as a reflector, the night light will not blow out in a strong wind and it can once again be used as a bailer. 35 mm film cases taped together at the bottom make salt and pepper pots. Packing food in military style individual day ration packs saves a lot of problems while underway.

Isotopic day's drink - herb teabags in a variety of flavours. Before settling down for the night boil a mug of water, put two tea bags in with a quantity of brown sugar or tubed honey, a pinch of salt and a few squeezes of Jif Lemon. In the morning put into your water bottle and top up - a tasty nutritious drink on hand throughout the day.



# You want supper?

# catch it!



**George  
Thompson**

**Dukeshouse  
Wood Centre  
Northumberland**

There can be few more satisfying feelings than paddling all day at sea, landing on some deserted beach, putting up a shelter for the night and sitting cooking a meal gazing out over the sea to distant islands as the sun sets behind them. How much more satisfying, though, if on the way, you've caught your evening meal, unless of course you're a vegetarian, in which case you'd better read no further.

Fishing from your kayak adds a new dimension to your trip. It's fairly easy, doesn't require expensive equipment and, once you understand how fish behave, can be done on most sea trips.

Fish eat other fish. Big fish eat smaller fish, smaller fish eat tiny fish and so on. Most fish worth eating are bottom feeders. No, you don't find them in your underpants, they hunt at the bottom of the sea particularly near

reefs, sea cliffs and over kelp. Among the common bottom feeders you'll catch around our coasts are those of the cod family which includes codling (smaller cod), pollock and coalfish. Mackerel are different. They feed at all levels. In the late summer and autumn if you happen on a shoal of mackerel, you don't need to worry about which bait or lures you're using, you can catch them successfully on bare hooks!

The equipment you need is cheap and readily available. Most coastal towns will have fishing tackle shops which have an amazing array of packs of lures which range from a set of hooks and simple feathers to fluorescent squid with tinsel and sparkling beads.

Most of these consist of about four hooks and lures already made up and ready to fish for about £2.50. You'll need some sort of handline to wind your line around and you can either

buy one ready made or make your own. A short length of old paddle shaft will do but something which gives you a higher-gear effect is better so that one twist of whatever you're wrapping your line onto takes on or off a fair bit of line. Monofilament line is best. You can get various thicknesses, indicated by the breaking strain but 100 metres of 40 or 50 pound will be all you would ever need. Wind about 50 metres onto your handle making sure it is well secured to the handle at one end. Keep the remainder as spare and for tying on weights (See below). Tie a simple loop at the other end and attach your lures. Swivels and specially designed fasteners are available for a few pence and they not only make attaching the whole lot together far easier but the swivels prevent the line getting twisted and tangled. Lastly, you need a lead weight to make the end of the line sink. Get a weight that is heavy enough to sink the lures fairly quickly. A number 7 is about right. The torpedo-shaped ones are best because they don't snag on the bottom as much as the more complicated shapes. The weight should be attached to the end of the lures with about half a metre of line. The correct knot for tying on your weight is a blood knot, sometimes referred to as a barrel knot. The whole of your fishing tackle made up in this way shouldn't cost more than £8 or £9 but, be warned, it gets compulsive and when you're in the shop, standing in front of their dazzling display of feathers, tinsel, fluorescent beads, rubber worms and day-glo squid it's easy to get carried away! I always have a spare set of lures already made up with weight and swivels attached so that if you snag and lose a set or you



*Daughter Kathy catches her first fish*

*Farne Islands Oct. 97*



get them badly tangled, you can attach them quickly at sea. If you can't be bothered to make a system up in bits, you can buy one of the ready-made Scandinavian handlines with a plastic, moulded handle, line, lures and weights already for use. They've even got a strip of rubber to push each hook into to avoid snagging. One of these will set you back about £16 - £20 or there are the ready-made ones with the rectangular wooden or plastic handles and orange, nylon line for £3.99!

Once equipped, you'll want to catch your first fish. I wouldn't bother with bait. Normally the lures are sufficient. Pick your spot. Remember the fish are hunting for food and so you're only going to catch them in places they're likely to find a meal. In deep water by rocky cliffs are generally good places. In the eddies formed by the tide behind an island is also a good bet. Normally, I wouldn't bother trying in the middle of a large sandy bay. Don't worry about mackerel. These "wolves of the sea" could be anywhere. You soon find out if there are mackerel about. There are good places round most of the British coast but ask around among local fishermen for favourite places. In my local waters in the North East there's good fishing to be had round the Farnes, off Eyemouth, St. Abb's and the Bass Rock. About half a mile out between Seahouses and Beadnell is "Cod City".

It's always best when fishing to have someone else fairly close by to raft up to if you need it. Your tackle can be kept in a small bag on your deck or in a buoyancy aid pocket when not in use. An ordinary polythene bag or a Safeway carrier will do. A mesh bag with a draw-string top for your catch is very handy but another Safeway carrier will be fine. Carefully unwind your gear, weight first. Don't let it run through your fingers or you'll end up with a hook in your hand. A small piece of rubber or closed-cell foam is useful to push each hook into when not in use. You then simply pull them out one at a time as you unwind your gear over the side. Unwind your line until you feel the weight hit the bottom then wind it back a metre or so to prevent snagging. Then, gently jiggle the line up and down. People develop their own



*Above: Ready to eat. Below: A good catch of mackerel*

"jigging" styles. Tillman, in one of his sailing books, describes an old Cape fisherman unconsciously jigging away with his hand over the pew during a boring sermon.

Don't persevere with a particular place if you don't get a bite in the first five minutes. Move on somewhere else and try again. If a fish takes the hook, you'll feel it through the line. It's amazing how sensitive to activity on the line your fingers become. In a short while you'll be able to tell not only when fish are investigating your lures but also whether the bottom is rocky or sandy and whether there is much kelp around down there. When a fish takes a hook you need to jerk upward on the line but be careful because cod particularly take

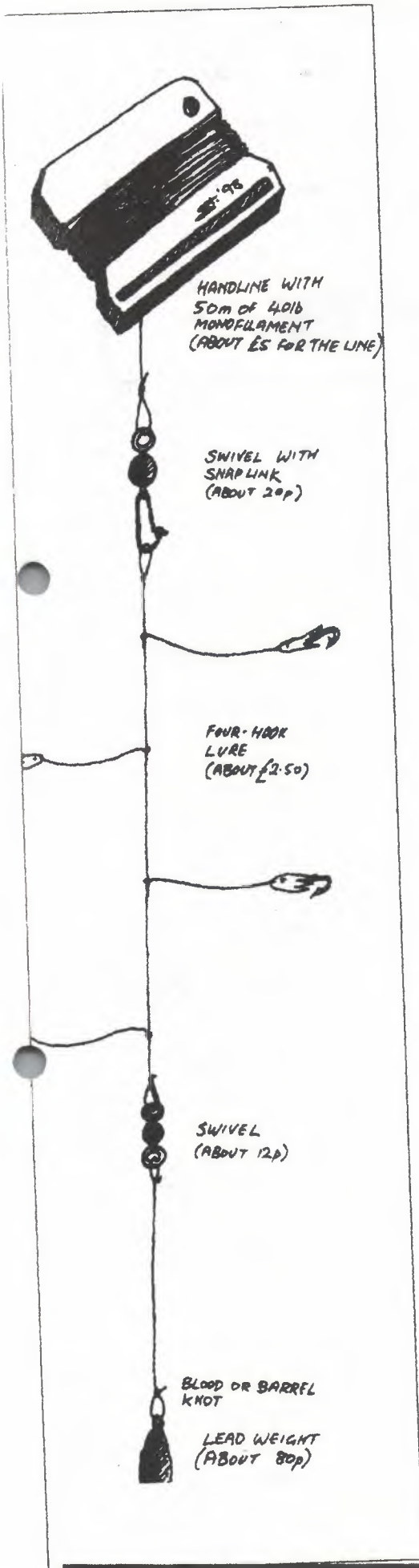
the lure fairly slowly and if you jerk too hard and fast you'll pull the hook out of its mouth. A short pull when you feel if nibble and, with a bit of luck, you'll have got your first fish. This can be a bit alarming the first few times. I've seen people spend ages catching nothing, getting more and more despondent as others pull in the fish and then they get a fish and suddenly it's "Help, I've caught one", and they want to hand the whole thing over to someone else.

Landing the fish is not always as straightforward as you might think. The cod family of fish don't put up much of a fight. You can bring them up easily, even quite large ones. Mackerel on the other hand can really pull, zig-zagging under the boat and bearing in mind that it's not unknown to get four, five or even six mackerel at a time, you've got your work cut out landing them all at once, especially if there's a bit of a swell running. Last year off the Farnes, I was in the middle of landing five enormous mackerel when my daughter in the front of the double kayak announced that she had just caught her first fish and could I help. In fact she had two good sized ones too. I was trying to get the camera out, make sure I didn't lose any of mine and help her with her catch at the same time. As I mentioned earlier, it's always a good idea to have someone handy to raft up to, especially if it's choppy.

Being careful not to hook yourself, pull your fish up and give it a good tap on the top of the head with some suitable implement. The handle of your knife will normally suffice. Make sure whatever equipment of that sort you're using is attached to something otherwise sooner or later you'll see your precious (and usually freshly sharpened) knife slide in agonisingly slow motion off your deck and disappear for good to the bottom. Unhook your fish and put it into your catch bag and you're ready for the next one. Some people simply pull off the front of the spray deck and put the fish into the boat but I've never really fancied this. Your saloppes quickly acquire a certain je ne sais quoi as it is without adding the stink of fish.

Never take more fish than you can eat and if it's too small to eat, unhook it





and throw it back. (Miss out the bash on the head stage, above.) When they're really biting there is a temptation to carry on pulling them in, especially as it soon becomes competitive within a group. When you've got what you need, stop. If you're within a few hours of home you can put fresh, cleaned, individually wrapped fish fillets into the freezer for another day but any longer than that and they just aren't fresh enough, especially if they've spent half a day kicking around the back of the car among your wet gear.

Last year on Mull I lived on fish for ten days, managing to catch two or three each day. I would have two for the evening meal and one smoked and wrapped in foil for lunch the next.

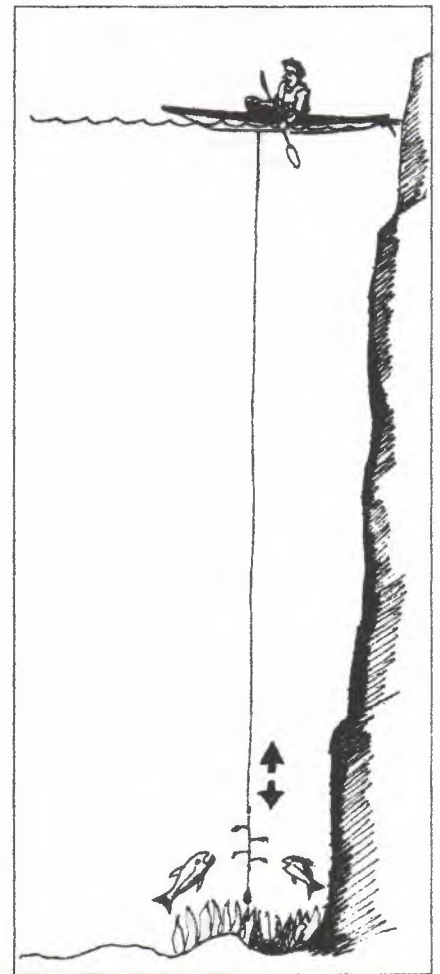
As soon as possible after landing you'll need to clean your fish. "Cleaning" is a euphemism for getting rid of all the guts and messy bits that you don't eat. Always clean your fish in sea water and well away from crowded holiday beaches. Make a single cut up the middle of the underside of the fish starting underneath the gills and pull out and dispose of all the bits. The gulls will normally assist with disposal. Precisely which bits you eat and which you discard depend on what you're used to. A Portuguese friend, Helena, was appalled to see I'd cut off and discarded the heads. "The brains are the best bit," she told us. "When the fish is cooked, but the head off and suck the brains out from the back." She also invited us to try the eyes. "Hmm....," frowned the adventurous person who accepted, "Very...er eyeey."

Fish is amazingly easy to prepare and cook. If it's a good size codling or pollock, you can cut steaks by simply cutting it into pieces across the body, at right angles to the back-bone. These can be fried or baked. Remove the heads and tails from smaller fish and cook them as they are or fillet them then cut into smaller pieces. Coalfish which are the least good of all the ones you're likely to catch can be curried quickly with Thai curry paste. Add some coconut milk for a real authentic taste. Most fish can be wrapped in foil either alone or with a few chopped mushrooms, onions and herbs and cooked in the oven, on a barbecue or over an open fire. I've got a smoke

box. These metal boxes smoke fish over oak chippings in about twenty minutes. Smoking your own mackerel fresh from your days trip leaves it succulent and moist with that unforgettable smoked taste. A real gobblegasm. Despite what some people tell you about mackerel they are delicious eating. Straight out of the frying pan between two slabs of wholemeal bread has to be one of the all-time best breakfasts.

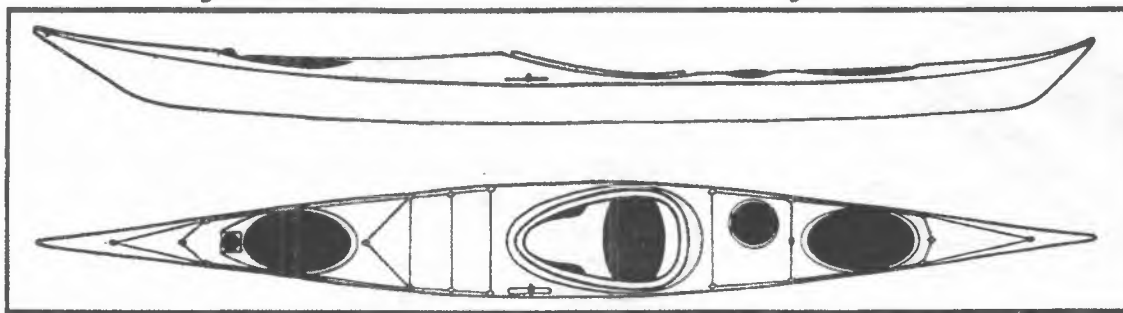
One August on Staffa we were talking to a fisherman operating out of Loch Sunart. He recommended that we try slicing a thin fillet of fresh mackerel, squeezing half a lemon over it and eating it raw. Nothing if not adventurous, we tried it as soon as we got back. During the summer a lemon is now an essential part of the paddling gear. Reading this will never convince you just how delicious it is so you'll just have to go and try it for yourself. But first, catch your mackerel.

**Happy fishing.**



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Italy	ARENA	16137 Genova , Via Montaldo 59 33	010 883 501
Iceland	ULTIMA THULE EXPEDITIONS	P O Box 5153 , 125 Rvk	0872 1920
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Norway	PLATOUSPORT	Smastrandgt 8 BOKS 948 5001 BERGEN	0 55 31 12 90
Singapore	TROPICAL FIBREGLASS	Yishun Industrial Park A #01 - 134 768757	0752 7611
Spain	KAYAKING COSTA BRAVA	C/Enric Serra 42,L' Escala, 17130, GIRONA	0972 773 806
Sweden	SVIMA SPORT	Box 300-34 10425 STOCKHOLM	0873 0131
USA	GREAT RIVER OUTFITTERS	4180 Elizabeth Lake Road, Waterford, MI 48328	248 683 4770

## VALLEY

Valley Canoe Products Ltd. Road No.4 , Colwick Estate, Nottingham NG4 2JT 0115 9614995

I have the dates for

this years Papa Stour sea kayak meet in Shetland. The event starts on Friday the 13th through to Monday 16th August and the guest speaker is Brian Wilson. Shetland is also hosting the Tall Ships race 9th to 15th August with the Papa Stour event on after this. The organizers of the Tall Ships in Shetland are expecting it to be busy so if there are any interested its time to show interest sooner rather than later. Anyone with any inquires could contact me by writing, phone or e-mail.

Kevin Linklater,  
Waltham,  
Ireland,  
Bigton,  
Shetland,  
ZE2 9JA.





From childhood they learned . . .

# Navigating

by  
**Charles  
Sutherland**

**W**e leave the shore, with our compass and charts, to find our way at sea. It doesn't matter, that for us, the challenge and risk are minimal. If we miss the mark, we may waste time and pay with extra effort, but we are unlikely to face death on an empty sea. Navigating is too easy for us; we are not compelled to get it right.



## No compass

Suppose we had no compass and "charts" were only what we carried in our minds. How would we do it, instead of making short crossings between vast landmasses, the survival of our clan required that we find tiny islands across hundreds of miles of open sea?

On September 7th 1946, John Caldwell was dismayed in a hurricane as he crossed the central Pacific in a 29 foot cutter. From there on, in a wreck that required pumping every few hours, he sailed under jury rig with no charts, compass or sextant. He knew Sirius, the Dog Star, passed over the centre of the Fijian chain of islands. His plan was to head south until under Sirius and then west to the islands. By that plan, without food or water much of the way, and finally, near dead from starvation, he came to land in the Fiji Islands (his book, *Desperate Voyage*, 1949).

The Pacific Islanders were Navigators. They knew nothing of charts or compass. The book "We, the Navigators: The ancient art of

*the navigators studied all their lives to enable them to make great crossings between the island clusters of the great Pacific*

Landfinding in the Pacific" by David Lewis, describes how the Navigators in each clan studied all their lives to enable them to successfully make great crossing within and between the small island clusters scattered across the great Pacific Ocean.

They navigated by the stars (the sidereal compass) and marked the position of the sun at dawn and dusk. They took note of the wave patterns relative to the sun and stars. They estimated speed and distance by watching their progress across the waves. The feel of the pitch and roll of their boats over the waves assured them they were on course in overcast weather.



## From childhood

From childhood, they learned the sets of stars that successively rose over the points of the sidereal compass. As each star in a set rose too high or disappeared at the horizon, they knew which stars replaced them in endless succession. When clouds partially

blocked their view of those marks, they steered by their knowledge of the relative positions of the stars that remained visible. We can scarcely imagine the thoroughness of their knowledge of the night sky. In their minds, the islands moved across the sea relative to the horizon points fixed by the stars.



## The pole star

The star Alnilam in Orion's belt marked true east and west at its rising and setting points. Altair, at 80°30' north of the equator, lies at the zenith over the latitude of the Carolinian Islands. To these navigators the Pole Star was known as "The star that does not move."

The Navigators of the Pacific were considered to be primitives, but they found their way among the islands with a level of precision that was not achieved by European sailors until the mid-1700's when precision time pieces (clocks) finally went to sea. The Navigators were students of the marine environment. Birds and their behaviour at dusk, and reflected wave patterns, told them when islands were near but still beyond the horizon. The shapes of the waves told them when they were crossing currents, allowing them to make compensating course changes. Their sensitivity to every subtle aspect of the marine environment as navigators parallels the complete mastery of paddling skills we have found in the Inuit kayakers of Greenland. Next to these ancient mariners, it is our paddling skills and knowledge of the sea that are primitive.



Here in the U.K. this summer the weather has been wet and windy and has hardly enticed us out to quite the same extent as last year when the conditions were much kinder. None the less the sea kayak had its spring time overhaul and once Easter was over and I was free of a commitment to the Devizes/Westminster Canoe Race, I took it out for a solo paddle across the Solway Estuary.

### The Solway

The Solway lies between England and Scotland on the west side of the country and I chose to leave from Workington on the English side and paddle the 18 nautical miles to Ballcarry Point on the Scottish side. Here I set camp in the lee of the headland, cooked some supper and grabbed an early night ready for a prompt start the next morning.

A paddle between Scotland and England has me considering the issue of federalisation. Scotland wants greater autonomy over its affairs. This has been a major political issue and Scotland, like Wales, is looking to greater dependence from the seat of Government in London. The British Canoe Union has had to face this debate and the Scottish Canoe Association now has a much greater say over its own canoeing administration. The links between England, Wales and Scotland remains strong but there are strong nationalistic feelings which are leading to a measure of separateness. Is this good or bad? Time will tell but I cannot help feeling that it may well be a case of 'divided we fall, together we rule'.

It intrigues me that there is an important debate over our growing associations with Europe as we continue to devolve ourselves.

The Sea Touring Committee of the British Canoe Union has traditionally thought of itself as caring for the interests of sea paddlers in the United Kingdom. The Welsh and the Scots might think they are better placed to take care of their own sea paddlers.

Of course many issues are not restricted by national boundaries but there are concerns that affect us

Some thoughts  
whilst

# Paddling Alone

John Ramwell

differently and bear local reaction rather than a united one.

After breakfast I stow all my gear in the kayak and head off out of the bay to be greeted by a strong south westerly breeze. My little transistor

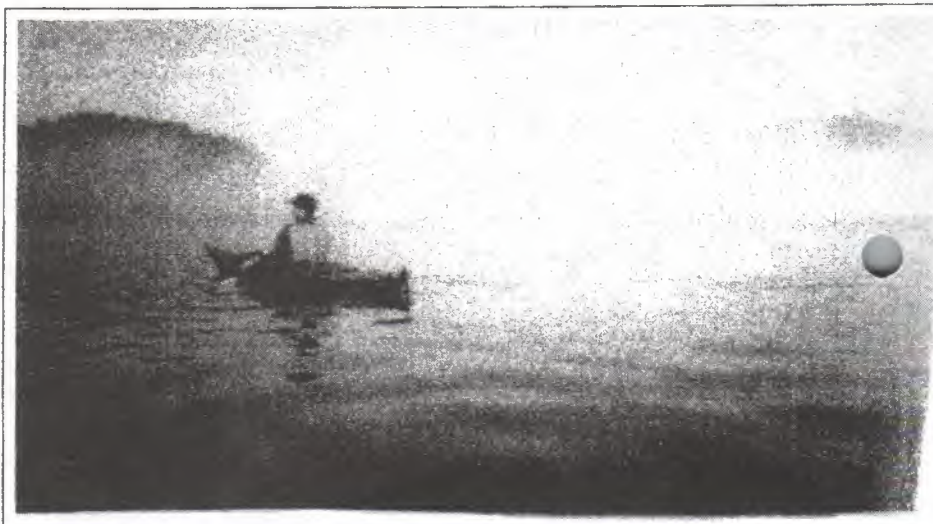
due to turn. I had to guess at the effect of wind and tide on my progress and decided to take a different compass heading and hope for the best. Every so often I would get a glimpse of the coast. It refused to get any closer so I increased effort and continued to hope for the best. I did not consider my position at the time. The only priority was getting back to the safety of Workington harbour. Later I was glad that I was carrying relevant safety gear including two way VHF radio and flares.

Of course this raises the vexed question of relying on rescue services when undertaking an extensive journey. I know which side my argument runs. Rescuers are happy to rescue (you try and stop them!) and there are lots of people like me who intend carrying with adventurous activity sensibly (I hope) undertaken.

At last the Cumbrian coast took on a permanent outline and by early evening I was able to alter course to head into Workington.

### Solo journeys

These solo journeys are always a risk above the average. My son took his



radio warned of Force 5 'later' but this was now and I bet it was gusting 5. Still the sea was manageable and I headed out, hoping it would deteriorate no further. By mid-day I lost sight of the English coast and the Cumbrian hills as sea spray obliterated the view. The waves got bigger and I got too busy to worry about much. Then came mid afternoon and I knew the tide was

kayak along the south coast only a few weeks ago and had to head into the beach because of deteriorating sea conditions. He was dumped and before he had chance to grab his kayak it was blown beyond swimming distance and out to sea.

The tale of how he retrieved his kayak is worth telling - I'll get him to give me an account of the whole episode.







# ISKA EVENTS WORLD WIDE

DATE	EVENT	ORGANISER
<b>March</b>		
<b>April</b>		
18	Dee Estuary Run	1
16-18	East Coast Canoe & Kayak Symposium, South Carolina, USA	13
23-25	The Canoe Event Expo '99, Mineapolis, U.S.A.	20
24-25	Northwest Skin Boat Gathering, Bowman Bay, Ancortes, U.S.A.	21
<b>May</b>		
1-2	15th Annual Cedar Key Small Boat Meet, Florida, U.S.A.	22
1-3	Anglesey Sea Kayak Symposium	12
1-3	Anglesey Outdoor Alternative, Rhoscolyn	1
15-16	Dorset Coast	17
15-16	San Juan Challenge, South Harbour Oark, Anacortes, U.S.A.	23
21-24	13th Annual Coast Kayak Symposium, Thetis Island, BC., Canada	24
22-23	Pewsey Canoe Show	16
22-23	Bay Area Paddling Festival, San Francisco, CA. U.S.A.	25
29-31	Fifth Scottish Sea Kayak Symposium, Island of Cumbrae	2
29-31	Tenth Annual West Michigan Coastal Kayakers Symposium, USA	15
29-5 June	NWSK Summer Expedition to Inner Hebrides around Jura	3
<b>June</b>		
1-6	Guided trips based at Arduaine (SCA Meet - open to all)	2
4-6	Chesapeake Bay Paddling Festival, Lewes, DE. U.S.A.	26
5	The Conwy Ascent	4
12	Night Paddle, Fylde Coast	5
12-13	Coquet Canoe Club, Salt Water weekend	6
17-20	Newfoundland Sea Kayak Symposium, Corner Brook, Newfoundland	14
<b>July</b>		
11-12	Mawddach Estuary, Barmouth area	7
30-31	Fame Island	8
<b>August</b>		
14-21	Annual holiday, Pembrokeshire day trips to suit all levels	9
28-30	Southend Water Sports Festival	19



# ISKA EVENTS WORLD WIDE

DATE	EVENT	ORGANISER
<b>September</b>		
3-5	Round the Isle Of Bute (SCA Meet- by invitation)	10
11-12	Sea Kayaking Festival, N. Wales Llynn Peninsula based at Cwm Pennant Outdoor Centre	11
17-19	West Coast Sea Kayak symposium, Fort Worden, Port Townsend, WA. U.S.A.	27
17-19	Second annual Newfound Rendezvous, Pemigewasset Lake, Meredith, NH., U.S.A.	28
25	Armside, Kent Estuary	5
<b>October</b>		
1-3	BCU Sea Touring Committee AGM and Symposium	18
2-3	Southern California Paddiefest, Newport Beach, CA. U.S.A.	29
22	Night paddle along Blackpool sea front to view the illuminations	5

From: rtaylor@technologist.com  
 To: John <jramwell@provider.co.uk>  
 Subject: Site  
 Date: 14 October 1998 01:45

Hello John:  
 Hoping this reaches you in good health and spirits!  
 Here is a site I thought might be of interest to yourself and your friends.  
[www.solomax.com](http://www.solomax.com)  
 A 4 year sea-kayak expedition!  
 Regards,  
 Rod Taylor



# EVENTS ORGANISERS

## CONTACT DETAILS

I.D. No.	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
1	Adrian Mould	22, Milner Road, Heswall, Lancs, L60 5RZ 0151 342 7938
2	Gordon Brown	'Blairview', 1, Hillside Cottages, Dalry, Ayrshire, KA24 4DP 01294 832745
3	Ian Pudge	20, Southworth rd., Newton le Willows, Merseyside, WA12 0BG 01925 227419
4	J Foulger	01492 593226
5	Peter Roscoe	15, Delaware Rd., Layton, Blackpool, Lancs. FY3 7JZ 01253 302209
6	Vic Brown	27, The Turn, Loansdeane, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2DU 01670 513 544
7	Simon Phipps	29, Harlech Rd., Shoreheath, Willenhalm, West Midlands WN12 5QS 01922 478325
8	John Ramwell	5, Osprey Ave., Westhoughton, Bolton, Lancs. BL5 2SL 01942 842204
9	Peter Hatt	7, Saxon Close, Elton, Bury, Lancs. BL8 2RY 0161 762 9594
10	Roddy McDowell	1, Clarendon Court, High Rd., Port Bannatyne, Isle of Bute 01700 503126
11	Dave Evans	Cwm Pennant Mountain Centre, Garndolbenmaen, Gwynedd, L51 9AQ 01766 530682
12	Nigel Dennis	Anglesey Sea & Surf Centre, Porth Dafarch, Trearddur Bay, Holyhead, Anglesey, N Wales. LL65 2LP 01407 760495
13	Gerald Kolb	Charleston County Park, 861, Riverland Drive, Charleston, SC 29412. U.S.A. (843) 762 2172 Fax: (843) 762 2683
14	Ed English	P.O.Box 2305, RR#1, Corner Brook, Newfoundland. A2H 2N2, Canada. (709) 632 4677 Fax: (709) 634 3187
15	J Van Wyk	WMCKA, P.O.Box 557, Jenison, MI 49429-0557, U.S.A. 616 669 1565 <jjvw@iserv.net>
16	Keith Brigstock	9, Vale Rd., Pewsey, Wiltshire, SN9 5HG 01672 564562
17	Graham Dore	8, Heytesbury Rd., Bournemouth, Dorset, BH6 5BN 01202 431617
18	Arthur Watts	3, Barley Croft, Hemsby, Gt Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR29 4NS 01493 791333

# EVENTS ORGANISERS

## CONTACT DETAILS

I.D. No.	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
19	Lisa Tidder	Southend on Sea Borough Council, P.O.Box 6, Civic Centre, Victoria Ave., Southend on Sea, SS2 6ER 01702 215166
20	Jan Fast	Midwest Mountaineering. (612) 339 3433
21	Corey Freeman	Web Site: www.skinboats.com (360) 299 0804
22	Mac McCarthy	(941) 355 6736
23	Port of Anacortes	Web site: www.sjraceandexpo.org (360) 299 1801
24	Mercia Sixta	Email : <ladybug@dowco.com> (604) 597 1122
25	Trade Ass. of Paddle Sports	Website: www.gopaddle.org (414) 242 5228
26	Trade Ass. of Paddle Sports	Website: www.gopaddle.org (414) 242 5228
27	Trade Ass. of Paddle Sports	Website: www.gopaddle.org (414) 242 5228
28	Newfound Woodworks	Website: www.newfound.com (603) 744 6872
29	Trade Ass. of Paddle Sports	Website: www.gopaddle.org (414) 242 5228

From: Paul Edward Schur <Mexpes@nottingham.ac.uk>  
To: jramwell@provider.co.uk  
Subject: RNLI - Shrewsbury challenge  
Date: 28 January 1999 15:54

Dear John,

Because I am still studying hard, back at 'school' in Nottingham, I shall be boring and run my Shrewsbury challenge again this year. It'll be from Shrewsbury weir to Bridgnorth, Easter Monday, 5.4.99. I shall set off about 10 or 11 am and aim to beat 4hr 30min actual paddling. I shall be grateful if you would help to promote this as a fund raising activity for the RNLI. I raised about £350 last year. Even if no-one is up to paddling, perhaps they could pledge money to the RNLI or send them a donation.

TOURING CALENDAR 1999

DATE(S)	AREA	KAYAK / CANOE	GRADE	ORG. NO.
<u>MARCH</u>				
SUN 7	TAY ESTUARY	K	A	1
SUN 28	RIVER EARN	C	A	2
<u>APRIL</u>				
SAT 10 / SUN 11	LOCH LOMOND	K	A	3
SAT 17	LOWER SOUTH ESK	C	B/C	4
FR 1 23 / SUN 25	RIVER SPEY	C	A	6
SAT 24	LOCH AWE	K	A	5
SUN 25	KERRERA	K	A/B	5
SAT 24 / SUN 25	A WEEKEND BASED AT COLDINGHAM	K	A	32
SUN 25	A DAY OUT FROM HELENSBURGH	K	A	7
<u>MAY</u>				
SAT 1 / MON 3	THE GREAT GLEN	K	A/B	8
SAT 8 / SUN 9	ISLAND HOPPING ON THE FIRTH OF FORTH	K	A	9
SAT 8 / SUN 9	LOCH AILORT / SOUND OF ARISAIG	K	A/B	10
SAT 15 / SUN 16	LUING AND SEIL	K	A/B	11
SAT 15 / SAT 22	A WEEK OUT FROM ULLAPOOL	K	B	3
SAT 22 / SUN 23	ROUND LISMORE	K	B	12
FR 1 28 / MON 31	MCCORMAIG'S, JURA, GIGHA	K	B	11
SAT 29 / MON 31	SCOTTISH SEA KAYAK SYMPOSIUM - ISLE OF CUMBRAE			13
<u>JUNE</u>				
TUE 1 / SUN 6	FOLLOWING SYMPOSIUM - GUIDED TRIPS - BASED AT ARDUAINE	K	A-C	13
SAT 5 / SUN 6	BANFF COAST	K	A/B	14
SAT 12 / SUN 13	BALQUIDDER / STRATHYRE	C	A	15
SAT 12 / SUN 13	ROUND MULL OF KINTYRE	K	C	12
SUN 13	DEE TOUR	K	A	16
SAT 19 / SUN 20	TRIPS OF ALL STANDARDS - BASED AT ARDUAINE	K	A/B	17
FR 1 25 / SUN 27	RONA / RAASAY	K	B/C	18
SAT 26 / SUN 27	LOCH LOMOND FAMILY WEEKEND	K	A	19
SAT 26 / SUN 27	GARVELLACHS	K	B	20

TOURING CALENDAR 1999 (Cont'd)

DATE(S)	AREA	KAYAK / CANOE	GRADE	ORG. NO.
<u>JULY</u>				
SAT 24 / SUN 25	FIFE COAST	K	A/B	22
SUN 25 / FRI 30	CELTIC WATERSPORTS FESTIVAL, LARGS			23
MON 28 / FRI 30	OUTER HEBRIDES	K	C	24
SAT 31 / SUN 1	INNER SOUND	K	B	25
<u>AUGUST</u>				
SAT 7 / SUN 8	NORTH COAST CRUISING WEEKEND	K	B/C	28
SAT 7 / SUN 15	NORTH COAST	K	B	17
FR 1 13 / MON 16	PAPA STOUR MEET - SHETLAND ISLANDS	K	A/B	21
SAT 14 / SUN 15	EAST COAST WEEKEND	K	A/B	1
SAT 21 / SUN 22	CRAIGNISH	K	A/B	27
SAT 28 / SUN 29	2 DAYS ON THE FIRTH OF CLYDE	K	A	28
SAT 28 / TUE 31	WEST COAST WILDERNESS TRIP ( open to suggestions ! ) <i>introduction to journeying skills</i>	C	B/C	4
<u>SEPTEMBER</u>				
FR 1 3 / SUN 5	ROUND ISLE OF BUTE	K	A/B	29
SAT 25 / MON 27	AROUND TAYVALLICH AND THE CRINAN CANAL	K	A	30
<u>NOVEMBER</u>				
FR 1 19 / SUN 21	2 LAKES TOUR - LAKE DISTRICT: ULLSWATER AND WINDERMERE	K	A	31
<u>DECEMBER</u>				
SAT 18 / SUN 19	LOCH ETIVE	K	A	33

GRADINGS : A = UP TO 3 STAR B = 3 STAR C = 3 STAR +

From: Chris Redwood <REDWOODC@mersey-tec.co.uk>

To: "<jramwell@provider.co.uk>" <

Subject: ISKA SUBS & FOR SALE

Date: 20 January 1999 10:05

Dear John P ( Fiord, red , good condition, hatches watertight, retractable skeg, handpump, fittings for towline - ideal expedition kayak  
Cost £ 300 : Chris 0151 608 1305 or Mobile 0958 929188



## TOURING CALENDAR ORGANISERS 1999

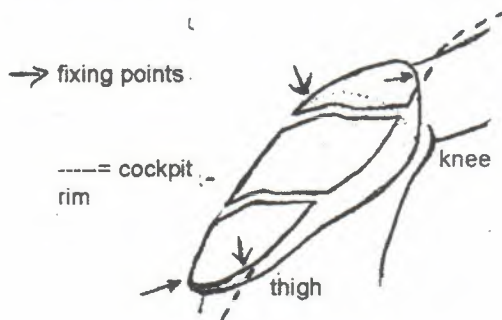
<u>ORG NO</u>	<u>NAME / ADDRESS</u>	<u>TELEPHONE NO</u>
1	MIKE DALES, BEAUTYFIELD HOUSE, ABERARGIE, PERTH PH2 9NF	01 738 850776
2	MARY CONACHER, 81 DUNDEE ROAD, WEST FERRY, DUNDEE DD5 1LZ	01382 776021
3	IAN WEBSTER, 29 RENSRAW ROAD, BISHOPTON, RENFREWSHIRE PA7 5HN	01505 863885
4	STEFAN JANIK, 31 MERTON AVENUE, LOCHEE, DUNDEE DD2 3LY	01382 611374
5	SANDY DONALD, 15 SMEATON AVENUE, TORRANCE, STIRLINGSHIRE G64 4BG	01360 622541
6	PAUL CROMEY, 14 ALMOND GROVE, PERTH, PH1 3NA	01738 583043
7	JIM MCCULLOCH, STONEFIELD, SHORE ROAD, CLYNDER G84 0JH	01436 831664
8	CHRIS DICKINSON, BLA BHEINN, 4 ALBERT DRIVE, HELENSBURGH G84 7HF	01436 676089
9	JOHN YOUNG, 21 CRAIGLEITH DRIVE, EDINBURGH EH4 3JT	0131 667 8277
10	LYNNE WALKER, 41 CAMMESREINACH CRESCENT, HUNTER'S QUAY, DUNOON PA23 8JZ	01369 702607
11	HUGH KERR, 14 BRIERIE AVENUE, CROSSLEE, HOUSTON PA6 7BQ	01505 612687
12	JIM WEIR, 6 TURNBERRY DRIVE, BRIDGE OF WEIR, RENFREWSHIRE	01505 613048
13	GORDON BROWN, "BLAIRVIEW", 1 HILLSIDE COTTAGES, DALRY, AYRSHIRE KA24 4DP	01294 832745
14	ALAN SPENCE, CORONADO, INVERUGIE, PETERHEAD AB42 3DW	01779 838424
15	GRAHAM SMITH, 70 KENMAY GARDENS, DUNDEE DD4 7TU	01382 462504
16	ABERDEEN KAYAK CLUB c/o BILL TELFER 25 OAKHILL ROAD, ABERDEEN	01224 314259
17	RON MATHER, 11-REDWOOD CRESCENT, BISHOPTON, RENFREWSHIRE	01505 863694
18	MALLAIG & DISTRICT CANOE CLUB, c/o ROGER BARNES, DRIMSALLIE MILL, GLENFINNAN PH37 4LT	01397 722355
19	GARNOCK CANOE CLUB c/o DAVE CLEGG GARNOCK SWIMMING POOL, KILBIRNIE, AYRSHIRE	01505 683304
20	ALAN HUNTER, 40 MORAR CRESCENT, BISHOPTON, RENFREWSHIRE PA7 5DZ	01505 862085
21	KEVIN LINKLATER, WALTHAM, IRELAND, BIGTON, SHETLAND	01950 422325
22	IAN MILLER, 42 VICTORIA AVENUE, MILNATHORT, KINROSS KY13 7YE	01577 862600
23	JOHN JAMESON, 41 BARNHILL ROAD, DALGETY BAY, FIFE KY11 5LL	01383 822311
24	STEPHANIE SARGENT, 4a BROCAIR, POINT, ISLE OF LEWIS HS2 0EZ	01851 870716
25	DONALD THOMSON, MILL OF FOCHEL COTTAGE, BARTHOL CHAPEL, INVERURIE, ABERDEENSHIRE AB51 8TH	01651 806230
26	BOB SILVERWOOD, SHEPHERDS COTTAGE, BARROCK MAINS, LYTH, WICK, CAITHNESS	01955 641367
27	COLIN BROWN, MILL COTTAGE, SLOCKAVULLIN, LOCHGILPHEAD PA31 8QG	01546 510319
28	TIM & LINDA GODFREY, 43 COLL GARDENS, DREGHORN, AYRSHIRE KA11 4EA	01294 216273
29	RODDY McDOWELL, 1 CLARENDON COURT, HIGH ROAD, PORT BANNATYNE, ISLE OF BUTE PA20 0PP	01700 503126
30	DREW MANZIE, 15 HIGH ROAD, PAISLEY PA2 6AP	0141 887 2401
31	NIGEL LONGWORTH AND ALISON SMITH, STAG COTTAGE, MELMERBY, NR PENRITH, CUMBRIA CA10 1HB	01768 881066
32	TIM CARNELL, MILLDOWN COTTAGES, COLDINGHAM, EYEMOUTH, BERWICKSHIRE TD14 5QD	01890 771262
33	ROBERT HILL, 7 ALTON WAY, WEST KILBRIDE, AYRSHIRE	01294 822473

Thanks to Karel Van Schoor from Temse in Belgium for the following article.

**F**inally I succumb to your plea for material for the ISKA newsletter.

I never felt sure in my Nordkapp (sorry guys, I'm a 42 year old amateur) or indeed any sea kayak until I finally decided to craft a foam thigh/knee brace - and boy, what an improvement!

However, it is nearly impossible to sculpt the ideal form and after a few months it began to tear apart. so I decided to make myself the 'ideal' glassfibre (actually I used epoxy plus fibre mat) brace. I recognise that my cockpit is now a Valley keyhole and that I like to have my legs and knees as much spread out as possible. The main problem was how to make the mould. This was resolved by preparing plaster in a large plastic sack. I used old plater because it hardens rapidly. I required about 5kg per side. I let it harden whilst seated and I worked on it by pushing and squeezing. It became extremely hot and stone hard in the sack before I stepped out. Then I went back many times to rasp and adjust. I had to build up occasionally using more plaster to get the eventual desired form. They cover three quarters of the knees and half the thighs but still allow exit. I found the margin between either too much or too little. Using these plastic forms and some wax I produced something which looks like this:



- \* underside is full and like a shell
- \* the side is full and leads your leg in and out
- \* the upper side, against the kayak side/deck is partial only (weight reductions) : just two bands.

The whole is glassed into position using a minimum of fixing points - but first required further adjustments as did the plaster form.

This process took me three full weekends! - but then I was not experienced in working with these materials and I had to improvise.

Personally I find the position very comfortable and should it be necessary I can move my legs out and position them in the middle. Capsizing in this position means that by holding the cockpit rim firmly I can bring my legs back under before rolling up again.

Never before have I felt so at one with my kayak and it feels as though my paddling has improved overnight. I have tried everything in the swimming pool including re-entry and roll and my techniques have definitely improved. None the less, the next paddling season might expose problems in which case I will let you know.

As I am living in the provinces where there is an acute shortage of fellow paddlers I would like to hear from any of you ISKA readers as to what solutions you have found to comfortably secure yourself in your kayak. I would also like to know about other kayak layout issues including the use of specialised equipment (eg drogues). It is not always possible to find out about these sort of issues from books and videos.

### \*\*\*\*\*

## **NOTICE FROM THE BCU SEA TOURING COMMITTEE**

The Committee are holding their annual Sea Symposium and Annual General Meeting at the Millennium Activity Centre, Norfolk. October 1st to 3rd 1999. This event is being organised by Arthur Watts and will include lectures, practical and theory workshops. For further information about both the Symposium and the STC AGM please contact:

The Millennium Activity Centre  
The National Trust  
Dial House  
Brancaster  
Kings Lynn  
Norfolk

or Craig Addison at 96, Recreation Rd.,  
Poole, Dorset, BH12 2AL on  
01202 259371



I have been alerted to a fuss that is being made by boatmen who take sightseers out to watch seals. I have copied from the press material.

The introduction reads "*Wildlife caught in crossfire between boatmen and kayakers -No seal of approval for traditional craft*"



He may look like a man out for a peaceful paddle but the kayak he pilots is capable of scaring seals in their hundreds.

Ferryman who shuttle thousands of trippers to popular seal watching sites claim kayakers are scaring seals off the shores - because their craft resemble killer whales.

According to boat operator Jim Temple the paddle craft cause the creatures to flee the Blakeney Point banks - leaving visitors with nothing to see.

"The problem is that seals are terrified of the kayaks. The only predator a seal has got is a killer whale. When they see the paddles in the water it awakens some natural instinct and they get into the water as quick as lightning. These boats are our worst nightmare".

Members of the Norfolk Sea Kayak Group have dismissed the claims as "utter nonsense" and they say they are fed up with boatmen who try to keep them away.

"We have as much right to be out there as they do and it can be a bit intimidating when we are shouted at to keep away", said sea kayaker, Dick Foyster.

"Seals are very inquisitive and we appreciate that if we go within 100 yards we draw them off the bank.

"They are not frightened of us, they just want to have a closer look. In other parts of the country

boat operators give us a cheery wave, here you get snarled at.

But seal expert, Ian Robinson, veterinary manager at Norfolk Wildlife Hospital, said seals found people more scary than killer whales.

"If seals leave the banks it is because they are scared. Man is far more frightening to them than the killer whale. And it is because they recognise the kayaker as human that they leave the banks.

"You don't need to look for fancy reasons as to why they are scared. The ferries run at the same times and the seals are used to them. The canoeists are more erratic", he added.

John Bean, whose company runs four boats to the Point said boatmen had got "a bit abusive" with the sea kayakers.

"The seals see the paddles flapping and feel threatened. We don't want the seals disturbed but if they get too close they put themselves off the bank.

"I don't mind them going down there one bit, as long as they keep a fair distance away", he added.

Kayak Group joint founder, Dave Casselli, said it's members were careful not to draw seals from shore.

"Seals are inquisitive creatures and come to see us. How anyone can believe that a large noisy boat full of people and belching out fumes is less frightening than a silent kayak with half a person visible is beyond us".

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

Thanks go to Roger Taylor for keeping me informed about this dispute between kayakers and sightseeing boats off the Norfolk coast.

\*\*\*\*\*

**N.I.S.K.A. 31st July to 15th August, 1999**

**The Norwegian International Seakayak Adventure**

This international group of sea kayakers meets every year in a European country. There are a hard core list of members but all are welcome.

The aim of this group is to get together to share our enjoyment of the sport of sea kayaking - to chat about sea kayaking and other associated matters. We visit local landmarks; in the evening we sit around the camp fire and drink what ever we find lurking in our kayaks.

We have met in France, Scotland, Holland, Germany, Sweden and this year we meet in Norway. Further info. from Jurgen Fitger, Bohmskamp 11, G-23569 Lubeck, Germany.



# BITS AND PIECES

*SEND ANYTHING FOR THIS*

*PAGE, INCLUDING YOUR*

*LETTERS, TO THE EDITOR*

Anne Marie Booth of 78, Willow Way, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 9QF, has written to say that she has not been too well of late and is out of action for the time being but she would be pleased to hear from any of you out there. So give her a call or a note.

\*\*\*\*\*

Jan van Wyk <jjvw@iserv.net> writes to remind us of the Tenth Annual West Michigan Coastal Kayakers symposium at Muskegon, Michigan. There is to be Greenland and European instruction and there will be women and children's classes with lots of demos by manufacturers.

Contact WMCKA at P.O. Box 557, Jenison, Mi 494429-0557, U.S.A

## THE ECLIPSE 1999



Frank Goodman of 72, Whittingham Road, Mapperley, Nottingham, NG3 6BH.

Tel 0115 960 9931

<frankg@proweb.co.uk>

## **Total Eclipse of the Sun, August, 1999**

“Less than seven months to go before it happens! If the general hysteria that is being generated in the media is true, we’ve been very lucky. Accommodation in Cornwall is booked up and prices have reached crazy levels. It has been suggested that people take their own drinking water as there is a danger of taps running dry. Those travelling without confirmed accommodation are likely to be turned back from the county border. Estimated attendance is currently 2.5 million and this estimate is rising. We have booked a hotel and those interested in joining us should get in touch.

\*\*\*\*\*

by  
**JOHN  
RAMWELL**

## **FOR SALE**

Nordkapp HF Brand new White and yellow. £650 Contact Ginge Beard on 01538 723559

\*\*\*\*\*

Bruce Bell of 4, Broadlee Bank, Tweedbank, Galashiels, Selkirkshire, TD1 3RF  
Tel 01896 750257  
<Bruce.D.Bell@btinternet.com>

My boat, complete with roof rack was ripped from my car by a freak gust of wind on the A7 south of Edinburgh in October. I was forced to leave the boat but on returning both the boat and the roof rack were gone, despite being well hidden.

The boat is a plastic Skerrey, red in colour with my name and address written inside the cockpit on the port side. It also had a distinctive graze to the tip of the bow where it landed on the road. I believe the kayak will eventually turn up and ask that your members keep a look out for it. I am offering an award.

\*\*\*\*\*



## COQUET CANOE CLUB

*Salt Water Weekend*

*June 12/13<sup>th</sup> 1999*



All Canoe Clubs and paddlers are invited to a weekend of paddlesport at Amble, Northumberland, this summer.

Camp next to the River Coquet Estuary or just turn up on a daily basis. There are several activities planned, designed to provide something for everyone.

For juniors: a minislalom and obstacle event.

For touring paddlers: an opportunity to paddle the Coquet Estuary, guided trip around Coquet Island to see the wildlife, information to help more experienced paddlers plan their own trip to the Farne Islands or up the local coastline (Craster, Dunstanburgh ...)

For racers: The "Round Coquet Island" races, comprising:  
Saturday....a 10 mile seakayak event for experienced paddlers only.  
Sunday....a choice of shorter courses, 5.5 miles/ 3.5 miles/ 2.5 miles - sea kayak and GP classes.

There is always an extensive pool of prizes for these events, donated by many generous sponsors.

(Not all competitors take the race seriously, many do it just for fun.)

For everyone: BBQ on Saturday night, and a lecture/slide show on Sea paddling

We hope also to offer coaching sessions, try a boat sessions, trade stands, Bell boating etc.

**If your club juniors are part of the BCU Paddlepower scheme, this weekend offers them a chance to meet many of the challenges they need to try.**

More details from: Vic Brown, 27 The Turn, Loansdean, Morpeth,  
Northumberland, NE61 2DU (01670 513544)





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