

Ocean Kayaker

**INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAKING ASSOCIATION
and NORKAPP TRUST NEWSLETTER**

JULY 1999



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

**Aims: Promotion of sea canoeing + Communications
Promotion of events and conferences
Safety and Coaching**



£1.50

editorial

by John Ramwell

In the last issue of 'Ocean Kayaker' I recognised the retirement of Geoff Good as Director of Coaching for the British Canoe Union. On Saturday 8th of May, whilst at home with his family, Geoff died. Many have been the tributes paid to Geoff. I attended his funeral and was really proud of the farewell he was given by the canoeing fraternity - so justly deserved. Geoff leaves his wife, Mary-Ann, and two sons. We also remember them at this time.

I am sorry that this July edition of Ocean Kayaker is late being published. I have been out of the UK for five weeks and try as I may I failed to get this out to you before I left. Hey Ho!

I spent two weeks in Canada helping out at a sea kayaking symposium. You should see the slides, ice bergs, whales and a great coast line. As they say in Ireland, it was a good crack. And talking of Ireland, Jenny and I have just returned from three weeks touring the southern part of this beautiful country. So there are my excuses.

One of the major attractions of sea kayaking is the opportunity it gives for travel. Not that you need to jet off round the world. Right on our own door steps there is always the opportunity to enjoy the marine environment. I often get the K1 on the local canal for an evening's paddle and if I'm lucky get a bonus sighting of the Kingfishers.

I recently met up with Peter Bray and his Manager, Jim Rawlinson. Peter intends to paddle from Newfoundland to Ireland next May and I mentioned their plans in the last issue of this newsletter. They tell me their plans are well underway. They have a huge task before them as they arrange the logistics and raise a huge amount of money for charity. I will keep you informed.

I was hoping to include an account of the Scottish Sea Kayaking Symposium. Duncan Winning tells me one is on the way so watch for it next issue.

Finally to offer hearty congratulations to Stuart Fisher on the publication of the 200th edition of "CANOEIST" magazine

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Sea Kayak Symposium

Just what does it take to get to sea symposiums?

7th Anglesey Sea Symposium -
Observations from a couple of
Kiwis.

by Roy Dumble

(taken from The Sea Canoeist
Newsletter: Issue 73 February -
March 1998)

Well, O.K. the fact that they were in Wales and Scotland meant a bit of travel, but bomb scares? Buried in the London A-Z we had just got onto the A40 and heard on the radio that it had been closed courtesy of the IRA! 10 hours of sweltering in an atypical May heat wave later we were crossing the Menai Straits and heading into Anglesey, north west Wales. Two years of planning suddenly coming to fruition.

Typical of a bank holiday weekend, the sun soon gave way to rain, then hail, then snow. the prospect of getting wet here was not inviting - and most of the kayaks here were short, round bottomed and tippy, we had fun trying them all out but were more than pleased that we had gone to the trouble of shipping our own Southern Skua and Blue Marlin across from New Zealand.

WORKSHOPS

The symposium was held at the Anglesey Sea and Surf Centre -just out from Holyhead. It had its beginnings as a Nordkapp reunion weekend but has developed into a broad sea kayak symposium, we got the feeling of expectations of knowledge through assumed previous attendance and although com-

munication and some on water management was not great, there were some interesting workshops and presentations. Kayak trim, glass and plastic repair demonstrations and some interesting day trip destinations were well balanced with theoretical workshops.

Although there was little in the way of new concepts, they gave us the opportunity to catch up on important local considerations such as weather, sea states and coastguard operations. In fact our coastguard work-shop was cut short because of the nature of the weather in our area. Winds approaching Force 8 were keeping the officers on their toes, with 10 call outs by midday alone.

It made us feel glad we had chosen a shore based option! The most spectacular workshop/demo was a helicopter rescue using a Wessex from the navy. Simulating a lost kayak, and a medical emergency, various 'bods' were winched up into the chopper, whilst many others took the opportunity to test their stability under the downdraft of the huge machine. The ironic part was that 100 metres away from the exercise, a lone paddler had capsized by the chopper and was unable to get back into his kayak. Luckily the wind was onshore because it was 20 minutes before he made it to shallow water! The keynote speaker. Sam Cook. was part of the first sea kayak expedition to Greenland. He gave an interesting slide presentation on both the trip and the development of the Nordkapp which was used for the First time.

SKEGS

One of the key reasons we travelled over to the U.K. was to network with the sea kayak fraternity and discover first hand the differ-

ences in their sea kayak culture, the most obvious difference is in kayak design. Many kayaks are short with a minimal flat section in the hull. Rudders were non existent, although about half of the kayaks had skegs. some of which were adjustable. We had interesting discussions, comparing our kayaks with theirs. I supposed you like what you are used to but, I don't know there was just something aesthetically pleasing about our kayaks which were missing from any other boat there. We had ample opportunity to try their boats out and came away wondering why they persist with skegs or even worse, with nothing. To adjust the skeg, you have to take one hand off the paddle and they seem intent on finding a design that would minimise this - but not eliminate it. Railing the kayak was a necessary skill to assist turning but also into maintaining straight line paddling. Every change in course and wind shift would require adjustment of kayak and skeg trim. Many people we spoke with had a begrudging acceptance of this when ever they went paddling, but would happily pronounce it was only a problem when the wind was not from directly astern or on the nose. I don't know about you, but I find this to be quite a large percentage of my paddling time! "Why not use a rudder?" we asked. "It would certainly make the kayaking much less wearisome." Many would look at us quizzically and shrug or say simply, "We don't use rudders here." One learned kayaker with BCU qualifications dripping from his drysuit made a most profound reply... "If we had rudders, people would use them to steer with!" Hilary and I looked at each other then slowly nodded. confessing that, yes, that's what we

did with them. I had to sneak a look at the Oxford dictionary to confirm the definition of a rudder, a breathed a sigh of relief that we had got it right during all these years of paddling!

CULTURE

But their outlook on rudders is a key concept in coming to understand their sea kayaking culture. With restricted access to rivers, let alone wild water like New Zealand can offer, kayakers take to sea. Surf kayaking was a big sport in the 60's and 70's (and is only recovering its numbers today). It didn't take long for some paddlers to take these surf boats along the coast in search of adventure and what they found were stretches of coast that were more like white water conditions. And what's more, it was free access! The large tidal range in some areas created overfalls and races that enabled these paddlers to strut their stuff - the only difference it being a marine environment. Gradually, kayak design changed to suit this this environment. Today, sea kayaks in the U.K. fall into one of two design ranges - traditional and shorter play boats. The shorter play boats enable comfortable paddling to get to the technical water they seek, while allowing a performance edge over the longer touring kayak. Rudders however, remain heresy! The purist will not even use a skeg! BCU & NVQ's Commercial operations are nonexistent in England and Wales. The club scene is very strong and has a long tradition, the BCU reigns supreme, although we we heard numerous rumblings of discontent with the push to change their training and assessment scheme over to the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ's) system. They have about one year

left to requalify into the NVQ awards and there is no recognition of prior learning. Some assessors have the system tied up and are making money but the majority are having to commit money and time, and are questioning their future involvement (does this sound familiar?).

Alongside the tradition of the BCU there is a long standing fascination with 'cold climate paddling'. Greenland And Scandinavia are on most paddler's destination lists, added to a historical interest with traditional Greenlandic kayaking, there is the draw of isolation that these destinations offer the intrepid English paddler. Any combination of good weather, weekends and holidays draws crowds of people to the local coast so Greenland 'becomes an attractive place - even if it is covered with ice and snow.

Perhaps the most interesting distinction with the U.K. sea kayaking culture is their attitude to the physical nature of it all. Club instructors/leaders have an expectation of taking new members and visitors on long paddles to find either wildlife, isolation or races and overfalls. Little consideration is made on route planning to suit the beginner, which is compensated for by an expectation of leaders to be towing paddlers home. And beginners go out with an expectation of being towed! Mind you, out of this situation they have developed great towing hardware and systems!

I think the whole English macho relationship to sea kayaking was best summed up for us by the editor of Paddlers International, Peter Clark. as he stooped looking into the mechanics of our rudder systems he said, "There's something

about the English, everything in life has got to have a goal and be a challenge. If it scares them shitless - so much the better. They're very arrogant about it."

From: Paul Edward
Subject: Shrewsbury challenge 1999

Dear John,

Just a wee note to keep alive interest in the RNLI and the grand work they do.

The Shrewsbury Challenge - 31.25 miles from Shrewsbury weir to Bridgnorth bridge in 5 hr paddling time - was met again this year by myself in the company of four stout blades: Chris, Jill and Andrew Bolton and Nicola. All of my companions performed exceedingly well in supporting a doddering old fool on his pilgrimage down the Severn. My time was 4 hr 45 min paddling at about 65% V02 max which is probably why I blew up, as usual, at Apley Forge and needed a carbohydrate boost for the last 3 miles. Maybe should train harder in future? The overall time was a bit slow because of the stops - I blame the excellent company.

Birds seen were the usual water dwellers including a few kingfishers plus a feral Carolina drake, oystercatcher, cormorants, sandpipers, sandmartin and perhaps a goosander flying over in the haze of the last 3 mile 'sprint'. Twas a great day. almost £300 raised for the cause. Who's prepared to take us on next year? Best wishes, keep up the good work, Paul Schur.

A MYSTERY TRIP

by John Ramwell and John Chamberlin

John Ramwell

Do you want to join a mystery trip? Well, you're too late; it has already happened. Anyway it was a solo trip so you would not have got an invitation.

But it is not too late to tell you all about this mystery trip, perhaps even the 'trip that never was'. We can only tell it in any detail with the help of the paddler himself, Ric Freeman, Sir Ric Freeman, FRGS to give him his full title.



Of course Ric has already published his account in Stuart Fishers' magazine, CANOEIST. Stuart serialised it over five issues starting last October, 1998. As they say, "the devil is in the detail" and it is this detail, more precisely, answers to the questions regarding some of the details, that we now seek to set our minds at rest.

Does it matter? I think it does. If anyone purports to have made a particular achievement they deserve all the plaudits going. On the other hand if such claims are

not founded or at least appear unfounded, then it is right we know about it, if only in fairness to those who genuinely succeed.

I first heard of Richard (Ric) Freeman when a publisher wanted me to provide confirmation that I knew Ric and supported his plans to kayak solo around Britain. I had to admit that I only knew him as a member of ISKA. I subsequently met him at the International Canoe Exhibition, Birmingham and found him adorned with badges and sponsorship logos.

Later I received a long letter from Ric giving me his account of his solo expedition as it started from the south coast. He was given a send off by his old school but he soon aborted due to crashing waves and an over weighted kayak.

Then I heard he had started again, this time from Scotland. He wrote asking for 'silly money' for his accounts to be included in 'Ocean Paddler', a magazine I was currently editing. I wrote back to suggest his 'expedition' sounded more like a series of kayaking holidays as he had previously explained that he had to leave the expedition for a variety of reasons. Any kayaker will tell you that it is commitment that makes an expedition. I lost interest at this stage.

John Chamberlin

Ric Freeman first told us he had given up on his 'Solo Round The British Isles' attempt at the Midland Canoe Club Annual General Meeting in October, 1998. At this same meeting he apologised for not having photographs of him rounding Lands End "because the sea was so rough the lifeboat crew who accompanied me were too busy holding on to take any".

On top of what I had already started to pick up, it was this description of his rounding Lands end that really sparked off serious doubts. So much just did not add up.

I could have left it there. "Does it really matter? who cares?", I thought.

My conclusion was that I cared. I had all these questions running around inside my head. If only for Ric's sake I needed some answers. I also felt there was a danger of the integrity of our sport being undermined. This is a sport that I have been involved with for nearly four decades, a sport held dear and a sport I do not wish to see besmirched by false claims of 'records'. Not, you understand, that I am saying Ric did not achieve all that he said he did. Perhaps I have got it all wrong.

I needed to put it right. I agreed to interview Ric Freeman for the ISKA newsletter. Once a number of questions were satisfactorily answered I was quite prepared to apologise for my doubts. My request for this interview fell on 'stony ground'. Ric no longer felt we could relate. He agreed to John Ramwell doing the interview, but at a cost of £1,000 plus £600 per article.

So, in the absence of said interview I am raising my concerns now, here in this article for ISKA. John Ramwell has agreed to give Ric Freeman every opportunity to reply through this same newsletter - in full. We await any response with great interest.

I have completed a considerable amount of research into Ric's trip and every line of research has left

with imponderables, with questions and at best, some bewildering deductions. It is tempting to publish this research so that you may share my confusion. Instead I will ask the pertinent questions in the earnest hope that Ric will put our minds at rest.

Here they are:

1. Did you paddle, completely and without interruption, the whole distance between John O' Groats and Land's End, between 23 July and 12 September, 1998?
2. Will you let us see your actual log of the trip, and your 'road map'?
3. What do you say to the RNLI's categoric statement that they had 'no contact' with you or your 'kayak', and that they were 'not involved in this enterprise'?
4. Why did your 'losses' in the Dorset 'accident' go unreported in your accounts of that incident?
5. Did you re-insure (ie, with N. W. Brown?) the replacement equipment?
6. Why is there a discrepancy between your published 'finish date' and the one on the 'Certificate No. 503' from Land's End?
7. What can you say about the obvious confusion over the so-called 'Sea Princess (Stena)', i.e. Stena do not have a 'Sea Princess', and the 'Sea Princess' belonging to 'Princess Cruises Inc' was not launched until December, 1998?

8. What was your actual average paddling rate on the days you paddled?
9. What was the actual number of 'days out', when were they, and for what reasons?
10. Why, again, did you not use or refer to any 'charts'?
11. Was your 'daily routine' as you stated it at the MCC slide show on 18/3/98, (i.e. the 06.00 start)
12. When you returned from your trip to 'the dentist' in Derby, did you resume your trip at 'Sheerness', or 'Whitstable'? Why does that discrepancy exist on the THCG log entries?
13. Why did you write that 'The Lizard' was followed by 'Plymouth Sound'?
14. Are you a 'Knight', or a 'Baronet', and if not, why does your card portray you as 'Sir Richard Freeman'?
15. Were you at any time a 'Fellow' of the RGS (ie 'FRGS')? Since you are no longer entitled to use the suffix 'FRGS', why do you continue to do so?
16. Why have you stated that you 'have been requested' to loan the P&H 'Capella' to the 'Hall of Fame' museum at Land's End, when the evidence clearly shows that it was you who initiated that request?
17. Why did you claim sponsorship money from P&H when you had not completed the trip for which you claim you had gained that sponsorship?

18. Why do you think so many people doubt that you completed the trip you have claimed to have completed?
19. Do you think that a trip, as interrupted as your was, should count as one, continuous 'expedition'?

20. In considering your description of the 'Toughest part' (*Canoeist*, January, 1999, pp 15/16) - 'Orford Ness' to the 'Thames Estuary' - how did your 'van' come to be at 'Titchmarsh' at '15.29' on '18/8/98' (THCG Log)?

Four weeks ago I sent Ric a copy of this article with a request for his response. I added that Chamberlin and I would be the happy to apologise for doubting the veracity of his expedition if he were able to put our minds at rest.
To date Ric has not responded.....

FOR SALE

Jim Harison from Walton in Peterborough has the following for sale:
Never used Feathercraft K1 '98 Expedition single folding kayak (yellow deck) with split 4 part Feathercraft paddles; a large repair kit; compass; light-weight trolley; spare hatch covers; instructional video. Al this cost almost £3,000, He is open to offers.
Jim's address is 43, Churchfield Court, Walton, Peterborough, PE4 6CB

I (John Ramwell) have a Baidarka Explorer and an Eskie sea kayak for sale. Am looking for £250 each for them. Give me a ring if interested on 01942 842204.



The New Zealand Scene

by
**Ian
Divin**

a RECENT, brief trip to New Zealand's North Island gave me the opportunity to assess first-hand, the state of the sea-kayaking scene there.

Upon arrival in Auckland, I picked up their 'yellow-pages', and flipped to the "Canoes and Canoeing" section. I jotted down a few addresses and checked where they were on my map. As good fortune would have it, the closest - the Auckland Canoe Centre - was just a short drive away.

Entering the cavernous store, my eyes feasted on at least a dozen different sea-kayaks - all different models to those I am familiar with in Australia. A sea-canoeist's Mecca!

Favourite boats

It was a relatively quiet Monday morning and I was therefore able to talk at length to the amiable Peter Sommerhalder. He showed me some of his favourite boats, and we discussed their relative features. One of the "biggest selling boats in NZ is the X-Factor". I particularly liked a detail feature, which was a groove in the top deck near the stern to allow the rudder to sit more snugly in its parked position.

Until recently, about the only NZ kayaks I had seen were high quality ones built by Sisson, and I hoped to see some here, but I was told

that now they are now only available directly from their factory.

The "Slingshot" was suggested as being the current ultimate performance sea-kayak. It has evolved from a racing surf-ski design, and has already notched up some impressive ocean race wins. In its lightest form, it tips the scales at just over 16 kg, though a standard (kevlar) build weighs some 24 kg.

Virtually all the glass boats I saw were kevlar-based builds, and all had very high quality finishes. Many featured impressive gel-coats, with

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phased colour-transitions, and innovative designs. Later I saw that even some of the NZ roto-moulded boats are now being made with two and three colours skillfully merged to give an artistic result. Some Australian manufacturers should take heed. (I am currently

commissioning a new sea-kayak from a Sydney manufacturer, and have been told that just "two, maybe three" solid blocks of colour "might be possible").

Strong and rigid

Each of the kayaks I sat in felt strong and rigid - the kevlar apparently being used more for strength than for weight saving. However, light builds are available, as a 28 kg build of a large sea-going double showed. It was a superbly fitted-out "Arctic Bear 2". This particular craft had a price slightly in excess of \$5000 (NZ), which makes it easily the most expensive kayak I have seen. Despite the hefty price, in my opinion it still represented good value for money due to the superb equipment fitted to it.

I was surprised to find that it was fitted out with manual foot-operated (Henderson) pumps. Had it been an Australian build, I feel sure it would have used twin electric pumps. At first I was dubious, but learned that each pump has a typical throughput of 18 litres per minute, is arguably more reliable than an electric system, and - best of all - is about half the weight. I have since purchased one of these pumps but have yet to install it.

Outrigger canoe

Another craft I could barely keep my eyes from, was a very narrow

sit-on-top outrigger canoe. It was clearly built with speed and excitement in mind and had a relatively modest \$2300 (NZ) price tag. It has proven itself to be amongst the fastest of ocean racers, and - if time allowed - I would dearly have loved to paddle it.

Plastic kayaks

As in Australia, plastic kayaks are becoming dominant. Probably this is because they can be produced more cheaply than the labour intensive fibre-glass versions. Plastic boats have higher impact strength, which is why they dominate the white-water market, but this aspect seems less important for sea-kayaks because many of them never touch a rock.

With a few exceptions, the first-generation of plastic sea-kayaks were uninspired designs, but new, higher performance models are now appearing. The most interesting I saw was the "Squall". To my eye, its hull resembled an "Arctic Raider" - one of my favourite designs. The "Squall" is a narrower, and slightly shorter, version of the "Storm", itself a plastic incarnation of Current Designs "Solstice" series. Each of these models has an interesting lever system that seemed to raise and lower the rudder in a very positive manner.

"Storm" and "Squall"

The "Storm" and "Squall" are both roto-moulded locally in Auckland, and I was fortunate enough to time my visit to the Pacific Kayak factory while some kayaks were being made. It was interesting to see the moulds being filled, tilted slightly "for better heat distribution" and rotated. Even while cooling out of the moulds, the fresh kayaks continue to be rotated to ensure they retain their shape integrity.

A short distance north of Auckland, we stopped off at

Waiwera, on the East Coast. I had earlier learned that sea kayaks could be hired from beside the hot springs there.

It was easy to find the hire business, for a colourful sea-kayak atop a vehicle is hard to miss! I met Mike Hayes, whose name had been mentioned by Peter back in Auckland. In fact it turned out that

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the warm
environment of
thermal springs

the magnificent "Arctic Bear 2" that I had admired back in Auckland was actually one of Mike's boats. We discussed kayaks, kayaking, and the NZ scene in general and - almost by afterthought - arranged to hire a double sea kayak for use the next day.

That evening I watched a young group being taught the rudiment of controlling a kayak. Nothing unusual about that, except that here, they were being taught in the relatively comfortable environment on one of the thermal spring's large, warm pools. What a great place to practice Eskimo rolls. One of the other pools there has a big video screen at one end, so it is possible to swim and generally loll about, while watching a film.

Fitting sails

Mike reaffirmed the local liking of foot pumps, and reinforced my impression that the application of

sails to sea-kayaks is still in its infancy in NZ - especially when compared to the Australian scene. Later, I was shown a photograph of a canoeist using a hand-held umbrella as a sail!

Our paddle in the double the next day started some distance up a nearby estuary, because very strong winds were forecast. Unknown to us, these winds were to bug us for the rest of the week, and this was to be the only paddle we managed for the trip. We kayaked down the mangrove-lined waterway to the sea, seeing several kingfishers and other interesting birds along the way. Despite the strong offshore winds, we decided to round a local headland and landed on some deserted beaches before returning to Waiwera. Mike met us at the water's edge. He was mildly concerned for our safety and said that - while we were on the water - some very strong wind gusts went through the township and "almost took the fence out".

High winds

The high winds kept up for the rest of the week, wreaking general havoc in other parts of NZ, and certainly curtailing our own plans for some coastal paddling. Winds to 120 kph were forecast for the Milford coast during this week! Wind is the bane of all sea-canoeists, but Mike said that, from his experience, late-summer through autumn is generally calm, and is the best time for planning extended coastal trips.

A glance at a map of NZ shows a wonderfully indented coastline, which seems to offer a limitless range of possible trips. Up at the Bay Of Islands - one of the premier destinations in NZ - we noted several sea-kayak hire places right at the water's edge. There, the scope for interesting sea-kayak destinations seemed vast. Pity about the wind - but from what I saw, my appetite is whetted, and *I can't wait to return!*

Questions and Answers

by
**Frank
Goodman**

**Peter Hatt
from Elton, Bury,
Lancashire, writes:**

"What are the advantages of fitted pumps?
Do you have any views regarding the best position of pumps?"

Do you think that we even need fitted pumps, with the smaller volume sea kayak?"

Frank replies:

I have been accused of being totally biased in favour of pumps... but only by people who have never performed a deep-water rescue in difficult conditions without one!

Pumps are so high on my list of safety priorities that I would place them second only to the Eskimo Roll in importance for sea paddlers. I think a few statistics and a bit of history will show that my attitude is well-founded.

Even a small-sized sea kayak will carry 75 kg of equipment plus its paddler, say another 75 kg. With this weight on board the gunwales will still be well above water, and the boat will be stable and easily paddled. We call this weight (150 kg) the displacement of the boat, and we'll remember from our schoolday science that a floating body displaces its own weight of water. But actually, only about half of the boat's volume is used to store both paddler and equipment. If we fill the boat completely with water until it is waterlogged then the volume is just about double. Here "are the volumes of a typical sea kayak.

Front hatch compartment 70 litres

Rear hatch compartment 100 litres
Cockpit 130 litres
Total.....300 litres or 300 kg.
Don't forget the weight of the kayak itself, say 40 kgs.

After a capsize then, we could have water in the cockpit weighing 130 kgs, though it's unlikely to be hill to the brim, let's say it has only taken in 60 kgs of water... less than half-full. We're still dealing with a weight of 100 kgs. If it's a fully laden kayak (Two dry compartments with equipment inside) then we're talking about at least 150 kgs. This is more than one person can lift!

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So I don't think it is unreasonable to suggest that to design a rescue method of emptying out a kayak in deep water by LIFTING THIS HUGE WEIGHT CLEAR OF THE SURFACE, is not very smart. Well I know it isn't quite like that, we can halve the weight lifted by only raising one end of the kayak - leaving the other end floating on the surface. We use another boat 'as a lever and we

scrape and cajole one kayak on top of another until the unwanted water has gone... and much of the surface on the deck of the rescuing boat too!

But that's not the end of it. Just when we've our paddler back into the cockpit, a small wave comes along— "not a big wave look, quite small in fact, still get the spray deck on, quick, here it comes, look out, it's funnelling up between the kayaks *!.*??#!/~*^!?! You wouldn't think such a small wave could have that 'amount of water in it would you? Jump back into the water, and let's start again. "

I know from bitter experience that performing three rescues one after another can leave a team of strong paddlers pretty stressed out. But how different it is with a pump:- even with a cockpit brim-full of water, no lifting is required. Choose a paddler of ample proportions and push him firmly back into the cockpit. Hey presto! half the water has been tipped away 'already. Here comes a bigger wave right over the kayak - no extra water in the cockpit - it was already full of water and paddler! Now, on with the spraydeck. Start pumping. If the deck sucks down onto the paddlers legs, make sure that there is an air vent down the body-tube. You can even push one half of your spare paddle down between paddler and spraydeck to allow air to enter as the water is pumped away.

Well don't be fooled, it sounds so simple, but it can seem 'an age before the pumping out is complete. Although it often takes less than three minutes, if you are doing the pumping you soon learn the meaning of the expression 'the expansion of time'.

Add to these scenarios less than perfect conditions, turbulent water, high winds, frightened paddlers, and I think it is clear that the only sensible way to go is with a pump. Before 1974, kayaks didn't have water-tight bulkheads, deck hatches or pumps. When Colin Mortlock was preparing for his 1975 British Nordkapp Expedition, he thought he'd test the current deep-water rescue techniques of fully laden boats with his hand-picked team. They could not manage it - even though they were some of the strongest paddlers in the country! This wasn't surprising really. What was surprising was that no-one had ever tried these methods for real, even though they had been on the books for long enough. Coldstream set about thinking how to do things better, and a Hatch - Bulkhead - Pump system was the result. These were incorporated into the kayak that I had designed especially for their trip, and the basics of the modern sea-kayak were in place.

Originally, because the Nordkapp Expedition was very much a team effort, the pump was put on the back deck: the swamped canoe being pumped out by a team member leaning over the rear deck, supporting the kayak and muttering soothing words of

comfort to the cold and wet paddler who'd lost control. It could be used by the owner, once he'd climbed back in, but it was a bit awkward, and needed some practice to use it effectively.

Foot pumps can be fitted as an alternative and these have the advantage of leaving both hands free to brace with a paddle if you hadn't stout companions to steady the craft. But with a footpump it is difficult to pump out another kayak, with a deck pump it is easy to fit a long hose so that it can be passed into another boat - ideal for a group leader. I would suggest foot pump if you make solo journeys, deck pump if you normally travel with a group.

Electric pumps

Fore-deck hand pumps are available too. These have a detachable handle and are bigger... meaning they shift more water. There is no doubt some people don't like forward pumps as they do restrict leg, or should I say foot-room. An electric pump means that you can switch on and paddle away - no wasted effort to pump out - all your energy available to keep your balance while the boat is still fairly unstable with that extra water on board. The down-side of course is

the horrid combination of sea water and electricity. So often poor maintenance or just plain neglect to charge the battery can spell disaster.

I don't think there is a 'best' place for a pump. Try different systems, they need a bit of practice anyway, and then decide what suits you best. One thing that is remarkable is the durability of the pumps themselves. With a minimum of maintenance they seem to be good for the life of the boat. I cannot ever remember a diaphragm splitting or even a pump ceasing to function, and we've fitted thousands of pumps over the years. If you haven't a pump fitted permanently, then at least carry a hand pump clipped to the deck.

The method of forcing water out, by forcing the paddler in, then pumping out the remainder with the spraydeck already on, is so superior to any of the lifting' methods that I'm surprised any other way is bothered with. These other methods are good for building confidence, maybe, if they are practiced with unladen boats in sheltered conditions, but to pretend that they are viable for fully laden sea kayaks in tough conditions... just when you're most likely to be in need of them, is bordering on the irresponsible.

From the Australian Board of Canoe Education
"Some means of removing water is required, and it must be capable of 'hands off' operation."

It would be best to be able to get the water out:

- while in your kayak
- with the spray skirt on, so more water doesn't come in (remember the breaking waves that capsized you?)
- while paddling out of the area to somewhere calmer, or at least staying upright and bracing against that next set of waves or the wind.

Table I discusses the different equipment available for emptying the cockpit (and other flooded compartments) with the good and the bad for each piece of gear.

Sq how do other people do it?

Within the Sea Kayak Club, different members use different combinations of gear. Many members are well equipped; some are able to look after themselves and help out their companions when they're in

difficulties.

The most popular combinations are:

- a high capacity (350 gallon per hour or more) electric pump together with a sponge and bailer
- a foot pump and sponge or bailer
- a yabby-pump type of bilge pump and a sponge or bailer

Check the pros and cons of each.

Think about what can go wrong with each, the spare parts you might carry. Think about how they might work in rough conditions.

Owners of folding kayaks are especially restricted as to the pump system they can use. They're limited to portable electric pumps, 'yabby-pumps', bailers and sponges. Some of these boats are sold without a cockpit sock, so the whole kayak can flood in a capsize. Try bailing out 700 litres of water in big waves!

The last thing to consider is: how would you deal with a hole in the hull? Rocks and other peoples' kayaks can do some spectacular damage. Many paddlers, who never expected to damage hulls at sea, have had to deal with holes, and leaks, in their boats. In

some instances these people have been well off-shore. It helps a lot to have secondary buoyancy behind your bulkheads. Flotation bags, gear in drybags, inflated wine-cask bladders are all good options for excluding some water from the kayak's compartments. A roll of duct tape comes in handy too. My typical belt-and-braces approach is as follows (copy it or chuckle, as you wish):

- an Arctic Raider, with its podded seat - somewhat-reduced cockpit volume
 - a foot pump, mounted in the foot plate- this will empty the cockpit in about three minutes from start of the re-enter and roll, meanwhile *I'm outta here...*
 - a sponge, for the mud
 - a 'yabby-pump' for the rest of the group, or to empty my own hatches
 - flotation bags in the bow and stern, gear in dry bags
 - a roll of duct tape and a Chux, to dry the fibreglass ready for patching
- Now I can paddle and relax. Provided that the kayak isn't broken in half, I should stay afloat and get back home okay. What about you?

Sea Kayaking

by
Tom
Hall

with Chicago's Inner City youth

CHICAGO'S inner city had hundreds of thousands of children with no expectations of paddling good boats. We had a fleet of 70 paddle craft by a long lagoon next to Lake Michigan. We saw the opportunity for inner city children to come and paddle many good boats.

It wasn't really a new idea. We'd had recurring visions of training children for future Olympics. Now and then we had recruited young street athletes, and they had paddled sprint kayaks until lured away by baseball or gang mayhem. The difference now was that we would expand the vision beyond an athletic endeavour to a social outreach. We would reach out and create the world's greatest summer camp for all inner city children whose water prospects otherwise would be limited to open hydrants.

Been condemned

What we had was the Lincoln Park Boat Club. What it had was an old, cavernous concrete boathouse lying under such deep camouflage as to be virtually invisible to passers-by. It was a weathered stone bunker that looked to have sunk into the earth and let the wilderness grow over. It had existed in obscurity by the lagoon since sometime after it was built in 1910: its history as enigmatic as its presence. Old, sketchy, half-credible

stories had it evolving variously as a sailing club, a canoe club and a sculling club. It often had been condemned and ordered demolished; and then it was declared a landmark—surely the most obscure landmark in Chicago—and thus was granted immortality and would endure, theoretically forever as a sanctioned sanctorum appreciated by those of us who found the way in through a gate in the wilderness.

The boathouse, having survived 85 years, was indeed full of boats. The boat club, having evolved just as long, was indeed a fellowship of boaters. By natural selection, we were

curiously divergent cadres of 300-odd paddlers and rowers who had found our separate ways through the gate—sweep rowers, scullers, flatwater kayak racers, sea kayakers, surf skiers, marathon canoe racers and some rare high-kneelers. And we had derived an equally curious, polyglot fleet of 100-odd blade-driven water craft. Eight-oared shells were 65 feet long. Children's plastic sit-on-tops were 8 feet long. In-between were sculls, canoes, kayaks and other boats of many lengths and configurations and levels of performance, some boats verging into the esoteric. When all the boats were on their racks in the house, they extended deep into dim, damp catacombs. There couldn't have been another such assemblage of boats anywhere. Certainly not in a setting like this.

Summer evenings

On summer evenings, we launched shells, sculls, and sprint kayaks and did fast laps on the lagoon, which measured one kilometer in length. The paddlers went up the lanes that the rowers came down: the idea being that the paddlers, who could see where they were going, would avoid collisions with the rowers, who could only see where they had come. The sea kayaks and surf skis went under two bridges and into Lake Michigan, which was measureless, though menaced by cigarette boats, which didn't much care what they saw ahead or astern. People on shore asked where we

came from with the boats, or where we went with them at dusk. We tried to tell them how to find the gate. but there was a great metaphysical divide between people on land and people in boats.

Altogether we had a good thing—a secret place, a cloistered existence, a discipline both athletic and aesthetic. We were wholly insulated from the boatless multitudes that crowded the park. In a formal sense we were one of the eleven yacht clubs on the Chicago lakefront, though we were the odd one, without yachts. We rowed and paddled strenuously where the others motored and sailed grandly. We paid dues that were trivial by comparison. And as a group we were younger cockier, poorer and much less influential: though we could expect to mellow with age. and aspire to wealth and power. What really allied us with the yacht clubs was just that we and they were favored together being on the same side of the great metaphysical divide between people with boats and people without. We once had felt a rather smug camaraderie in being among the favored few, but lately we'd had to take some long looks across at such vast multitudes without boats, and we had to consider reaching out.

Really wanted

It was something we really wanted to do, and would do regardless; though just now the timing and motivation could have seemed suspect. The Chicago Park District—which held authority over boathouse and lagoon and 17 miles of lakefront. and held the power of continued existence over all of us—had been brooding portentously over inequities between its overprivileged and underprivileged constituents, including those with boats and without. And this ominously democratic sentiment was testing the public spirit of the yacht clubs, which in effect had private use of some of the choicest public property in Chicago. The writing on the wall—not yet scripted but grimly hypothesized—could say,

**It wasn't paddling
school in any
established sense.**

**God's Gang,
having endured
Bible Class, never
would have
tolerated further
schooling.**

in substance. to boat and yacht clubs alike: "Reach out to the city or get out of town."

Father out

By now we already had the boat club fairly well committed to serious reaching out anyway—if not in public spirit then just because we liked children—so the dreaded, disarticulated manifesto may not have been meant for us as much as the yacht clubs. But the Chicago Park District looked to be fixated on such all-consuming reforms that we couldn't be sure it would acknowledge such fine distinctions. So we reached farther out to where we would so far outreach everybody that nobody could possibly mistake our good citizenship.

Of course it couldn't happen as simply as we would have liked. We had the boats, and the inner city had the children, but bringing boats and children together required understanding protocols and procedures and going through channels and knowing people and trying to be intuitively streetwise. We couldn't just openly recruit inner city children from the streets: try that in Chicago neighborhoods, and the local enforcers would break knees with righteous relish. Children playing in city streets, even in the poorest areas, represented convoluted

interests of social orders, alternative agencies, urban bureaucracies, power structures, and political forces, within and without authorized establishments. And through all this and through many meetings—was the way the children would come to paddle kayaks.

Fiscal factors

There also was a fiscal factor. We entered a sphere where everyone else seemed part of an intense game of writing substantial grants to finance visionary projects with cryptically potent buzz names and high-risk marketing projections. We were caught up in the tempo of the game before we even imagined the scope and complexity of it: we were quickly recruited to play volunteer backup to U-Can (as in Urban Canoe, potentially abbreviated), which then existed entirely on a visionary plane as a Utopian grant proposal-in-progress. On one level U-Can sought funding to launch flotillas of canoes and escort children on environmentally-enriching explorations of the Chicago River. On another level it proposed to employ occupationally-impaired inner-city youths to train to be professional river guides. U-Can had no canoes; it talked canoe expertise in a metaphysical context. It attracted prospective guides by the power of the proposal and promised them payment once they were trained and guiding. And it inspired us to train the guides and anticipate a higher reward in having a backup part. The guides showed up once for training. Most never returned: some came only to sleep in their van by the lagoon. The promoters of U-Can became hard to reach. Phone calls to U-Can from a disillusioned inner city eventually found us.

Whatever happened

U-Can turned into a whatever-happened without ever happening, even as its grant came through with full funding.

The odd thing was that nobody seemed much perturbed at such

casual disaster, as if the game was played purely on principle, and any presumption of winning was too presumptuous to count for points: and no foul was called. Even in the inner city, people seemed only bemused at a broken promise of canoeing: they had become so wise to the process of promises made and broken that they could dismiss one vision in anticipation of the next, which would be along momentarily. For our part, we too were now wiser from the U-Can experience and could have accelerated play and spun out our own grant proposals with even more Utopian fantasies of curing the urban malaise by paddling. But we still liked children. We were anchored to reality by having real boats. And we were still pragmatic about reaching out. We were too new to the game to be jaded by it.

Park politics

Then we almost got into a variation of the game with our elders in the yacht clubs, who skewed the premises only slightly. There arose a suggestion (from obscure origins) that we might manifest our public spirit in concert with a distinguished yacht club which just this once might allow inner-city children to paddle in its harbor. Thus there could be reaching out at both its place and ours. Bertie, an eminent emeritus commodore and yacht club emissary, allowed that the yacht club was attentive enough to the Park District's democratic mood that it would make this extraordinary concession to community outreach: though it would not actually risk being a partner in an inner city experiment—except it might host a picnic, for a price, provided the experiment proved successful. He laid down terms that our kayakers must not touch their yachts, our children must not trespass in their clubhouse, and we would teach their children to paddle, for no charge. Bertie dwelt sagely on Park District politics, on cultivating officials with power to terminate the yacht club way of life, and on understanding that the ultimate survival of all yacht clubs

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could depend on a convincing show of reaching out. So if the boat club raised favour as inner city children paddled, then the yacht club would claim favour by being there. We had to pause and fathom the sheer enormity of the deal to realise it meant we would be used and they would take credit. It was as if they thought us so impassioned with public spirit that they would favour us even by using us. When we said no it was as if we betrayed them and left them to a tenuous fate with the Park District.

Dedicated people

In time we found where game and players were serious—where people understood essential needs and proposed intelligent projects and envisioned within reason (using each other but making deals work to mutual advantage.) We met dedicated people who were undaunted and indefatigable while being confounded daily by urban blight. We gained one energetically in Tim Goosby, who was young and intense and had charge of Green Summit, an umbrella organisation of social and environmental programs in Chicago's public housing projects. And we found another in Carsella Pritchett, who was wise and resourceful and oversaw AmeriCorps programs of the US Department of Agriculture (which seemed an odd agency to encounter crusading in

Chicago's inner city, but there it was.) We learned basic things, like not to be too surprised at being constantly surprised at who turned out to be the actual movers and shakers, and how they would not necessarily be the ones in charge. And just doing things was not the same as getting things done; and just putting out the word didn't mean it would be heard in a similar language, if heard at all. And the game, even at its finest, gave the advantage to moneyed places—talking it being almost equally advantageous to having it—and there was money, and talk of more-money, in the most remarkable places.

Streetwise?

Once we might have fancied ourselves passably streetwise, but when the game got real we hadn't enough of the right kind of smarts even to bluff with. We stayed in by staying honest and keeping our offer simple and getting help from friends who believed us. We weren't talking money: we weren't even about to seek a grant until we tried an actual outreach and made sure it really worked (a naive notion to most players.) But we could talk boats where others talked hypothetically, and we came down to making an offer so far off the game's standards of goodness and plausibility that anywhere else it could not have been refused—bring children and they paddle for a price less than trivial at what could be the world's greatest urban summer camp. It was not so much refused as negated: ignored as if it weren't real, or dismissed as if it were too real for the parameters of the game.

We made the rounds and told of our 10 new Scupper sit-on-tops: all wonderfully stable-ye sprightly craft donated by Ocean Kayak to the US Canoe and Kayak Team and then to us. We introduced Steve Marfilius, our articulate paddling coach and best flat-water sprint racer who had amazing rapport with children and dogs. We raised initial enthusiasm wherever we went—everyone

wanted in—but strange silences followed. Calls weren't returned, boards had second thoughts, supervisors balked at liabilities, staffs had other obligations or didn't care to take on more responsibility. We wondered if we might be scaring people by reaching out with a program that was fully equipped and functional without a grant or even a buzz name, as if it required a more daunting commitment than would a pure Utopian vision. We hoped a lot of groups were holding back, waiting for one to go first, and surely someone would muster the courage to bring inner-city children to paddle. We kept hoping.

Then Mike Thomas brought God's Gang.

Mike was the sole success of U-Can: a laconically self-motivated guide who completed training while others slept in the van. He kept paddling even after the U-Can vision muddled, and one Sunday afternoon after church he brought along a Bible class of 15 or 30 inner-city children who were too frenetic to be counted more accurately and were called God's Gang. They came to push limits, not to paddle. They had no particular wish to paddle, nor even much interest in boats, except as primordial power toys. But they had high energy, and they felt the natural synergy between children and water, and the boats were catalysts that raised the experience to expectations of high adventure—which caught their attention.

So after many months at the game of outreach without ever seeing a child, we now saw the program begin to work. It wasn't paddling school in any established sense. God's Gang, having endured Bible class, never would have tolerated further schooling. It was mob control on shore and bumper craft on the water, and it worked so long as children learned directly from boats. They got the knack of the Scuppers within seconds, and thereafter they had

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productive, if rebellious, fun: first just paddling and later fomenting piracy: crowding on, standing up, and capsizing (with some effort) and paddling while straddling overturned Scuppers, all the while growing braver and more skilled and being coached though not lectured—to where some children eventually progressed through anarchy to higher performance boats toward mastering even the profound balances of Olympic sprint kayaks, the fastest and least forgiving of all paddle craft.

200 children

God's Gang returned regularly. The word got around. And other institutions, which had held back, brought their children to paddle, as we had hoped. We had invited about 700 children: 200 ultimately took part during the summer (which was reckoned a good turnout); and so on balance our program worked—not perfectly, nor even close, but inevitably. Groups usually arrived outrageously late, with more children than we had boats, and with many children who couldn't swim and had to sit ashore: we never could really convince the inner city that paddlers

had to be swimmers. We made our own mistakes and learned from some of them. We spent more money than we had budgeted. But children had more fun than we dared expect, which far transcended the rest.

Renewed hope

U-Can came back with renewed hope and resolve and looked to be playing the game with new wisdom derived from old follies. It sought more grants, took on a dedicated young volunteer who returned phone calls, and it invested grant money in one of the best and most forceful paddling coaches in Chicago—Marge Cline who could make U-Can work if anybody could. We took heart and privately admonished ourselves for past cynical sentiments.

The distinguished yacht club adopted a Sea Scout troop and refit a donated sloop and took the scouts sailing. It also founded a club for forsaken windsurfers when local windsurfing went into severe decline. All the while it continued to be vigilant to further democratic crusades of the Park District. We admired its consummate skill: at its version of the game. We stayed in the game (there was really no getting out of it without going out of business altogether) and we gradually learned to play smarter. We got four more Scuppers, five sprinters and eight Kahunas. We set up a mobile program in which we provided a trailer load of boats to USDA AmeriCorps, which dispatched Mike Thomas and his crew on regular rounds to parks with lagoons. We wanted an outreach program four times larger, so we gave it a buzz name—OPEN BOATS—and set about seeking grants from philanthropic foundations, which were proving less generous than they looked, but we persevered: being mindful that Chicago's inner city had hundreds of thousands of children who might paddle good boats after all.

—Tom Hail is a free-lance writer and kayaker from Chicago.

LONE MADSEN'S LAST JOURNEY

by Tore Sivertsen

The rain was drumming on our tent. It was early in the morning on September 30, 1998, by Danell Fjord, near Iluileq, in southeast Greenland. "Another day of bad weather," I thought, and crawled down deeper into my cozy sleeping bag. I could hear my friend and expedition partner Lone Madsen sleeping heavily. There were still a few hours until the alarm clock would sound. After a while, I heard the sound of the alarm, but I didn't want to get up as long as it was raining. The previous day we had paddled hard on the last 43 kilometers down toward Iluileq and Danell Fjord, and had been up late into the night as Lone told stories about old Greenlandic kayak hunters.

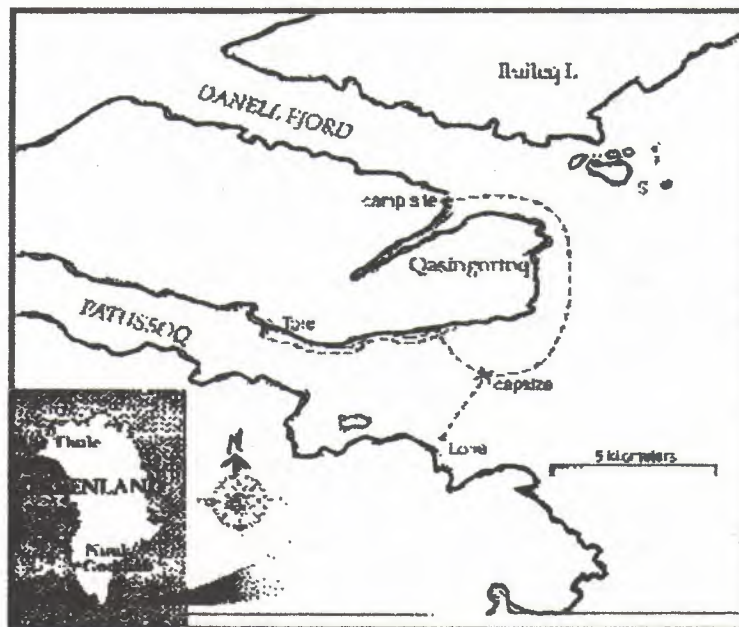
I drifted back to sleep, to be awakened by a friendly pat on the shoulder. "Get up. Tore! It's time to paddle before winter brings the fjord ice," Lone said. In the next moment she served me a steaming cup of hot chocolate and a big, tasty piece of marzipan. Lone was fresh and ready to go. "I hope we get real snowy weather at our next camp," she said. "It would make for some exciting pictures." I answered, "If it's up to me, the winter can just wait until the dog sled season starts in January."

By eight o'clock it had become completely quiet and I could see from the shining red colour on the

nylon of the tent that the sun was back again. We stuck our heads outside and breathed in the fresh, clear air of fall. High up on the mountain peaks I could see the first snow of the year. Winter was on its way. By the campfire site our little stove was under water. Pans and cups were moving around in a little pond of rainwater from the night's deluge. We ate breakfast in a hurry, then climbed up a hill close to our camping spot to get a better view of the horizon and the conditions out in the mouth of the fjord. I told Lone I felt a little insecure about the development of the weather, due to last night's heavy rain, and the look of the grey-coloured horizon out over the

of mercury) for the last eight hours. Danell Fjord was like a mirror, without wind or waves. Out by Iluileq's southern islands there were only calm and glossy waves to see. We looked at the map and discussed a reasonable route for the day. We decided to paddle out to the mouth of Danell Fjord, then make a stop on the Qasingortoq headland. Once there, we would make a final decision on whether to paddle farther south or stay, depending on the weather conditions. We gathered our gear and packed in a hurry. We put on our Goretex™ dry suits, launched our kayaks and pushed away from the shore. We put on our neoprene pogies. The air and the water temperature were both rather chilly at

1° or 2° Celsius, so it was pleasant to warm up with these on. At about eleven thirty in the morning we paddled out of our little arctic lagoon and into Danell Fjord. As usual, Lone was paddling with energy and enthusi-



Atlantic Ocean. It seemed like a low pressure system was somewhere out there. We both had hand-held VHP radios, but from our position it was not possible to get in contact with the coastal station in Angmassalik for a weather report. We had a satellite telephone in my kayak, but we intended to use that only for emergencies. With the binoculars we studied the horizon and the movement of the sea. The air pressure had been stable at 1018 millibars (30.06 inches

asm from the very start, and soon she was a short distance away from me. I always spent the first fifteen to twenty minutes of the day on a slow warm-up. After a while we were paddling through passages with small chunks of ice that had come out with the tide from Inniandice's cobalt blue glacier arms, farther into the fjord. After a good hour of paddling we were approaching the mouth of the fjord. The one-meter-high waves were smooth and

reflecting the light. By now Lone was two to three hundred meters ahead of me, and we were getting pretty close to Qasingortoq, our agreed-upon meeting spot.

All of a sudden, I could see and hear a wind coming out of the north at about five to ten knots. The surface of the water in the mouth of the fjord changed from glossy to gray. I sensed that bad weather was on its way, and I stopped paddling. I stayed there, drifting with the waves and looking out over the sea to the north-east.

The water on the north side of the fjord suddenly changed colour from gray to black—a sign of strong wind. Shortly after, the waves started building up from the north, tumbling whitecaps toward us. It was definitely time to turn around and get away from there, and to seek shelter back in the fjord.

I held my paddle in the air with both hands and shouted as loud as I could to Lone, that we had to turn around. She didn't hear me. (In her childhood Lone had lost the hearing in one ear.) Our VHF radios did not have hands-free operation and were carried in the cockpit, turned off. We had an agreement not to continue paddling if we encountered whitecaps anywhere along our route. From a distance, it seemed like she was busy studying the ocean and the horizon toward the south, where we were actually heading. I started paddling and raced to warn her about the change in weather and the danger that was approaching from the north and north-east. I wanted to turn around and seek refuge as fast as possible. Now Lone had also noticed the drastic change in weather. She stopped, looked toward the north, and then back toward me. I stopped again and held my paddle

in my right hand and signaled with my left hand that we should turn around.

The high winds were suddenly on us. I had to lean forward and brace with all my strength to keep from capsizing. I could see that Lone too was paddling very forcefully, in order to keep from being blown into the breakers and cliffs along Qasingortoq's shoreline to the south of us. I paddled as hard as I could and went after her. I could feel from the motion of my kayak that we were in an area of very strong currents. The waves were breaking all around us. I judged the wind speed to be around 25 knots, with gusts of up to 50 knots.

Due to the extreme weather, we could not get our kayaks turned around quickly. (Lone's Skerry by Valley Canoe Products was equipped with a skeg and my Prijon Seayak was equipped with a rudder.) We had to focus our strength on getting away from the breakers and the waves reflecting off the cliffs at the shoreline. I couldn't see any landing site anywhere nearby, only steep, vertical black cliffs.

The waves grew to four to five meters high and were breaking forcefully around us. We were now about one kilometer beyond Qasingortoq and struggling in the unprotected ocean a kilometer offshore. Along the shore to the south, I could see gigantic surf building up and the waves slamming against the cliffs, sending water flying 15 to 20 meters into the air. We had been completely surprised by a full-force north-easterly storm, combined with powerful fall winds from the Inniandice plateau near Iluileq. Our situation was becoming critical. I worked feverishly to keep control of my kayak and my wits. Several times I shouted to myself both to

push myself mentally and to stay calm. I was in a life-threatening situation, and it had come surprisingly quickly. I realised that if I were to lose my focus and concentration and stop paddling, everything would be lost. We were pushed south and rapidly found ourselves two kilometers from shore. It seemed a little less noisy offshore, but the waves were gigantic—six to seven meters high. I felt at first oddly like a passenger in the middle of all of this, and remember thinking that this was pure madness—how the hell did everything get that far out of hand?

I felt like a complete idiot for getting into this situation, but I had to fight the waves.

I had by now lost sight of Lone, and was becoming worried about her. I focused intensely on how the ocean was behaving around me. The wind and waves were now coming from behind and to the right. Big chunks of glacier ice sometimes popped up ahead of me, and I had to work hard to steer clear of them. Often I found myself surfing on big waves. It was difficult to balance on the crests of waves six to seven meters high where the wind pushed strongly against me, threatening to capsize the kayak. I felt like my life was hanging by a thread. "Tore, you can handle this—now you just have to play with the ocean," I said to myself and felt a great rush of self-confidence, self-control and power. I followed the movements of the waves and shifted constantly between paddling and bracing. In the chaos I somehow managed to find a comfortable paddling rhythm, which gave me a feeling of calmness and inner strength. In the sky above me there were now a lot of mallernuks, or storm petrels. Fifteen to twenty of them stay

ed with me and flew around me for a long time. I felt safer seeing other living creatures. I thought about my son and my girlfriend, about my Greenlandic husky dogs, and my family in northern Norway. The wind stayed very strong, and it pushed the big waves with enormous power. The wave lengths were getting bigger—I was now gaining speed and almost accelerating down from the crests with too much speed. Many times I had to try to brake and slow down, because I was

about to fly into the air while on top, and often I would land ahead of the wave with a big splash.

Frequently I was engulfed in foam and water up to my head.

I tried to read the map in front of me to find a possible landing site in the area. The only common-sense alternative seemed to be in the next fjord to the south—

Patussoq Fjord. I hoped that the high mountainside at the north side of the fjord would slow the wind and waves and give me some shelter against the storm.

All of a sudden, I caught sight of Lone three or four hundred meters ahead of me, to the right. I tried to catch up with her. After what seemed like an unusually short time, I was only ten to fifteen meters behind her. I shouted over to her with a somehow relaxed voice: "Hi Lone—how are you doing?" She looked surprised and answered, "My God, Tore, I thought you were lost!" I could see from the look on her face that she seemed very tense, probably feeling the same way I was. "Don't get too close to me—we could collide!" she shouted. I shouted back, "This is nasty weather—we have to get away from here before we get carried too far to the south. Let's go into Patussoq Fjord up close to the mountainside, on the north side and away from these waves!" As I

spoke, I noticed that it had started to rain and snow, and the visibility toward the land was only three to five kilometers.

I paddled into the lead. I noticed that Lone was paddling more slowly than usual. In smaller waves Lone would normally have been paddling a lot faster than I. I was riding high on a big wave about 50 meters ahead of her when I heard a loud scream. Quickly turning my head, I could see that she had capsized. Lone had worked on rolling, but hadn't become proficient at it or practiced it for a long time.

Just as she capsized, the wind increased in speed and I was again bracing, coasting at high speed over the top of the next wave. I glanced over my shoulder to find out what was happening to Lone. In short glimpses I saw her heavily loaded red kayak upside down, with Lone three to four meters behind it, swimming toward it. Her paddle was six or seven meters ahead

of the kayak and her red fleece cap was floating on the water. We both had paddle floats, but we had not practiced assisted rescues together. An icy cold feeling of horror swept through me. I tried to stop, but the strong wind and big waves continuously drove me farther away from Lone. I made several attempts to turn around, but I nearly capsized every time the waves and wind slammed into the side of the kayak. Lone's screams for my assistance were continuous: "Tore, Tore, you must help me! You cannot paddle away from me!" I knew she was in a life-or-death situation if she couldn't get out of the cold water fast enough.

I thought about how cold the water must be. During a winter two years previous, I had tested a GoreTex™ dry suit similar to the ones we were wearing. I had jumped into the ocean in

Nuuk/Godthåb to find out how cold the water felt and to see how long I could function normally. I was wearing a fleece suit, neoprene head cap, life vest and neoprene gloves. Even in calm water I stayed in only 15 minutes before I couldn't take it anymore. I shook violently from the cold, and spent about an hour on land before I felt myself again. I knew that Lone was in terrible circumstances.

Terror, shock and grief flooded my consciousness as I realised that I was unable to do anything for her. I believed, however, that I had done everything that was humanly possible in the conditions.

Lone and I had on several occasions discussed our expeditions. We knew the risks and we both took responsibility for our own lives—and, until now, we had been living life to the fullest.

The wind and waves pushed me farther and farther away from Lone. Every time I was on top of the waves, I could hear Lone shout my name, her voice growling more and more faint. I tried to fight my way into the lee of the mountains at the north side of the fjord as fast as possible, so I could turn around and get out to her again. I fought with the unpredictable stormy winds and breaking waves for over 45 minutes while I struggled to turn the kayak in a big half circle. I was finally turned around, and was around four kilometers from the place where Lone had capsized. I loosened my cramped grip from the paddle shaft and for a brief moment tried to thaw my frozen, white fingertips by putting them into my mouth. The snow and rain were whipping into my eyes. I realised it was impossible to paddle back out against the wind and waves, and I had to abandon hope of assisting Lone.

Reaching the cliffs at the north side of Patussoq Fjord, I was over-

whelmed by a painful feeling of sadness. Tears ran down my cheeks. I knew that by now Lone would be losing consciousness. In a few moments I experienced a strange feeling, as if I could actually sense that the energy was on its way out of her body, and that she sent me her last thought. For about an hour, absorbed in grief, I drifted in a somewhat stable position among waves around three meters high. I continued to try to see what was going on out there, to see if she would somehow turn up after all. But the storm kept raging as strongly as ever, and I could see that the bad weather was hitting the cliffs on the south side of the fjord with enormous power. I had to regain my composure and get ashore to use our satellite phone to initiate a search and rescue. I paddled into the fjord to find a place where I could land. I could see that the water was calm far inside the fjord. I found a landing site and went ashore, pulled out the necessary equipment, erected the tent and got the satellite phone warmed. I called emergency headquarters, "Grønlands Kommando," located in Gronnedal, in southwest Greenland. They were very surprised when I called. "Are you guys still alive?" they asked. I gave them the essential details of our situation and my position. They had already picked up Lone's 406 Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) distress signal shortly after she capsized. Since it had been such a long time since the PLB started transmitting, they had assumed that the worst had happened to both of us. Our "Kayak '98 Expedition" was officially filed with the Danish Polar Centre (DPC) in Denmark, so Gronlands Kommando knew that the distress signal was coming

from us.

I walked up to a high point on top of a hill and fired a series of green flares with my signal pistol, just in case Lone somehow had survived and was close by. I then placed a call on my hand-held marine VHP radio on emergency channel 16, in the hopes that Lone might answer on her radio. I wanted to believe that she might still show up as she had always done before. I couldn't accept that my friend and travelling companion was gone.

After a while, I heard the sound of an airplane in the clouds overhead. It was Greenlandair's Twin Otter airplane searching for us. They were at an altitude of 21,000 feet above the clouds. It was impossible for them to get down between the mountains to conduct a visual search for Lone. I briefed them over the marine VHP radio, but neither they nor I managed to contact Lone. They finally had to return to Narsarsuaq Airport. The last transmission I heard was, "Let's hope for the best."

It grew dark, and the darkness and bad weather would prevent a rescue helicopter from coming right away. Gronnedal Kommando informed me later on the satellite phone that all available resources would be dispatched for a search and rescue the next day. During the night I asked Gronnedal for an update on the position of Lone's PLB signal. I entered the coordinate into my GPS unit to see where she could be. According to the GPS, the distress beacon was coming from a position in the mouth of the fjord toward the southeast, about seven kilometers from my camp. During the night, 15 centimetres of fresh snow fell on my lonely campsite. Thinking of Lone out in the ocean somewhere, I could not sleep. At eight-thirty the next morning I was picked up by a

Greenlandair S-61 Sikorsky helicopter from Narsarsuaq. We spotted Lone in about 15 minutes. She was lying within the area that her 406 PLB had reported, a hundred meters from her kayak, surrounded by a lot of glacial ice. A nylon tether line around her waist was frayed through by the ice. After her capsizing she had apparently managed to reach her kayak and tied the line from her waist to her kayak. She had put her neoprene gloves on and had activated her PLB. Eventually she had succumbed to the cold and the awesome power of the North Atlantic storm. When we approached her kayak, we could see that its bottom was torn open from being tossed against the rocky shoreline and the glacier ice. I was relieved that we had found her, and that I could take her home to her family and friends in Denmark. On the way back to Nanortalik, due to bad weather with strong winds and rain, we had to fly around Kap Farvel. In this way Lone and I came around the big Kap of Greenland, which we had planned to paddle around on our expedition. I sat beside her in the helicopter on the way home. I thought about all of the good and happy moments we had had together during the last month's time, about sharing our thoughts, ideas and experiences, about her generosity and friendly open-mindedness toward the people of Greenland and Denmark, and about all of the unconditional understanding, respect and helpfulness that she had given me. The flight around Kap Farvel was the most difficult and sad journey of my lifetime. When the accident happened, we were only about three kayaking days or 100 kilometers from Prins Christian Sund. Because our planned expedition deadline, the

first of October, was so close, we had agreed to use the satellite phone from the next campsite to call our contact persons to inform them that we were a bit delayed, and that we would soon show up. Neither Lone nor I were experts at doing Eskimo rolls with our kayaks. We had had several discussions about rolls during our journey. Lone felt that it would be doubtful that we could manage to do Eskimo rolls under demanding conditions with high seas and a heavy load aboard. Personally, I believed then, as I still do today, that an Eskimo roll might be your only hope. I told her that my first goal, after rounding Kap Farvel and reaching Nanortalik, was to perfect my Eskimo roll. We had agreed to take an intensive course in rolling after our expedition. We planned to practice rolling with and without cargo, and in rough water with a rescue boat standing by. We had also discussed looking into some one- person life rafts that are used aboard military aircraft. I have since found some that are only around three kilos, measuring 36 x 36 x 18 centimetres. Next time I undertake a paddling expedition, I will do so earlier in the summer. Earlier in the summer there is still a lot of sea ice in southeast Greenland. While it is important not to get too far offshore or to get trapped and crushed in moving ice masses, the ice dampens the waves a lot, and was of great comfort to us during the first part of the expedition. After I become competent at rolling, I will eventually return to Patussoq Fjord to complete our expedition and to pay my respects to Lone, a woman of uncommon courage, strength and human warmth. I remember promising her to build a memorial out of rocks, in case she should happen to lose her life somewhere along that

rough coast of southeast Greenland.

Tore Sivertsen lives in Sisimiut, West Greenland, and for the last ten years has worked as a helicopter pilot for a Greenland aviation service. In the winter, Tore spends his time off dog sledging, skiing and hunting with his Greenlandic huskies. In the summer he sails, backpacks, canoes and kayaks, which he combines with hunting and fishing. Tore, 40, is Norwegian, born in Mo i Rana in northern Norway.

by John Ramwell

The following notice recently appeared in the July 99 edition of "The Canoe Camper" the magazine of the Canoe Camping Club

From: Ocean Paddler Worldwide Ltd. To: Whom it may concern.
It is with regret that we have to inform you of the demise of the publication 'Ocean Paddler'. The company has been forced into voluntary liquidation due to the non payment by our debtors. It is saddening to see two magazines go the same way, maybe a sign of the struggling state of the commercial side of the sport.
However, to those companies and individuals who have supported us, may we wish you well and thank you for your support.
We have been attempting to gain new financial backing but without success which brings us finally to minimise losses and stop future publications.
Thank you,
Jon Blackburn
Ocean Paddler Worldwide Ltd.

The above does not paint the full picture. Many of you will know that I edited Ocean Paddler for a publisher, David Hart, who started up this magazine at the International Canoe Exhibition, February, 1998 and it went to three issue before I resigned. I brought Jon Blackburn on to the voluntary staff to assist Keith Maslen who was in charge of gear testing and reviews. David Hart and Jon Blackburn son began concocting deals with commercial concerns that I could not possible agree with. Both Keith and I attempted to check these activities and our failure to do so led to both of us resigning from

Ocean-Paddler, leaving Jon Blackburn to take over the editorship - a position he had clearly been angling for with the connivance of the publisher. I was becoming a thorn in both their sides. I resigned at the time with as little acrimony as possible as I was keen that *Ocean Paddler* continue publication.

I was pleased to see Blackburn and Hart at the International Canoe Exhibition this year taking subscriptions for future issues of *Ocean Paddler*, although I had some misgivings as there was no sign of the February issue being available. I and many others have tried to contact Hart and Blackburn to discover the future of *Ocean Paddler*

Hart maintains he has sold out to Blackburn and Blackburn appears to hide behind his answer phone machine, ie. not returning calls.

I do not feel that a short note in an obscure house magazine exonerates either Blackburn or Hart from their responsibilities to paddlers, particularly those who took out subscriptions last February. Then maybe I am biased!

**CLOTHING, FOOD AND
FLUIDS FOR THE SEA
KAYAKER**

by Bill Robinson

I have been asked to write this article because of my practical and theoretical experience with the subject. My theoretical experience is that I have studied nutrition, physiology and biochemistry as part of my training as a veterinarian, and also as my daughter Jane is an Olympic rower. I have spent some time discussing nutrition in particular with Jane and her colleagues at the Australian Institute of Sport. However my greatest practical learning experience has been to compete in 8 Murray Marathons (400 km) and 5 Murray 200s (200 km) in conditions varying from 43 degree heat to 10 degrees with 25 knot winds, as well as my regular training sessions on Port Phillip throughout the year.

I plan to stick to the basic essentials and to describe what has worked well for me. In brief, the main purpose of one's clothing and food is to keep the body in a balanced state of warmth, electrolytes and energy needs in what at times can be a challenging environment. To fail to do this can result in situations that can range from being uncomfortable to life threatening. The dreaded "Hypo Twins" of hypoglycaemia and hypoglycaemia are not to be taken lightly.

CLOTHING

In conjunction with all the following, it is assumed that the paddler has a well fitting spray deck.

HEAD

(a) Warm Weather

Sun protection is vital and the most common options are either a

straw hat or a legionnaire hat which has a peaked front and a flap on the back to cover the ears and back of the neck. A chin strap is suggested for either type of hat.

(b) Cold Weather

A very large amount of heat loss can occur from the head, and a good woollen beanie is recommended. It can be covered by the parka hood in wet conditions and is easy to store in the cockpit if it is not required.

EYES

I feel that that it is necessary to carry and wear Polaroid sunglasses at all times, as there is a lot of evidence of the damage that prolonged exposure to sunlight can do to the eyes.

UPPER BODY

I have found through bitter experience that the secret is layering and how to adjust the different layers according to the conditions.

(a) Skin Layer One of the great advances in recent times has been the advent of thermal clothing made of man made fibres. I consider that thermals should be an essential item of clothing for all sea kayakers. Thermals have the unique ability to retain body heat, to wick sweat away from the skin and to still feel warm even if wet. Many paddlers are not aware of the effectiveness of a thermal singlet in extreme heat, as well as in cold, in the Murray Marathon where the temperature can often exceed 40 degrees most experienced paddlers wear thermal singlets which wick sweat and spray off their skin, as well as providing protection from the sun. The brands of thermals that I have found to be good are Intertrek, Wilderness and Thermax. I feel that cotton has very little place in a sea kayakers paddling wardrobe ~ I have experienced hypothermia as a result of wearing cotton T shirts and

have observed other experienced paddlers do the same on both marathons and Club trips. I am of the opinion that cotton should only be worn when out of the boat.

(b) Intermediate Layer

In cool conditions it is necessary to have one or more layers of clothing on top of the thermals.

Neoprene - I have found that a neoprene wet suit of the Long John type, or a waistcoat can provide excellent heat retention in cold weather. The arms are not covered by the neoprene and are free to move, yet still covered by the thermals and if necessary a parka.

Neoprene is the best thing to prevent immersion hypothermia in the case of capsize or exit.

Fleece Synthetic fleece is a remarkable fabric which has the warmth of wool, yet is much lighter and is able to wick moisture. My preferred fleece layer is a long sleeved jacket of Polartec 100 with a full length front zipper for ventilation as required.

Wool A light woollen Jumper is the traditional middle layer. Wool is warm even when wet, but has the disadvantage of being heavier and taking longer to dry when wet, which can be a problem when touring.

(c) Top Layer

The purpose of the top layer is to provide an impervious layer to prevent wind and water getting in, yet preferably to allow sweat in the form of water vapour to escape, it should be a parka with a hood and should either be worn or kept in the cockpit or foredeck so that it can be worn when necessary.

Nylon Bike Parka

These are cheap and light and provide some wind protection, but are not very waterproof.

Waterproof Parka

Several moderately priced brands of waterproof parka are available, such as Rainbird. They are made of proofed nylon or dry waxed japara, but can get very steamy due to sweat build up.

Breathable Parka

These are generally considered to be the best option, but are more expensive. I have used Gore-Tex over the past 3 years with only mediocre results despite following all the manufacturers instructions. It is not totally waterproof and delamination is starting to occur. I am currently trying a Macpac jacket which has a different breathable fabric - Reflex Nova which is reputed to perform well in salt water.

LOWER BODY

Following my avoidance of cotton, I always wear Lycra swimming togs (Speedos) which are then covered by the wetsuit in very cold weather, or thermal long underwear in less cold conditions. In hot weather I wear baggy nylon board shorts over the Speedos which are great as they dry rapidly and do not absorb water. On my feet I prefer to wear neoprene wetsuit boots in cold weather and bare feet in hot weather with Teva sandals in the cockpit for walking when out of the kayak.

FOOD AND FLUIDS

The choice of the correct food and fluids is vital particularly on a long trip or a marathon and my suggested choices are the result of many good and bad experiences over the years.

Sports Drinks

(eg Power Ade, Iso-Sport and Gatorade) A great deal of research has been carried out on sports drinks and it has been shown that 8-10% carbohydrate combined with sodium and potassium and a small amount of magnesium and calcium is necessary. They are pre-

pared to an Australian Standard. I prefer Gatorade, and buy the powder and mix it with water to the correct dilution. When touring I use a 1.75 litre soft drink bottle fitted with a push/pull top from an old Adams Ale bottle filled with Gatorade which is stored in my mesh foredeck bag. I aim to drink 3-4 times per hour.

During marathons I use two separate 2 litre containers—one with water and the other with Gatorade, in the rear compartment, which are connected to a neck harness by polythene tubes. This enables me to drink at will without taking my hands off the paddle. The volume of fluids required in hot weather can be up to 1 litre per hour.

Alcohol

I believe that alcohol should not be drunk for several hours before sea kayaking and never on the water. On the other hand there is nothing like a drop of red on a beautiful beach at sunset after a long days paddle, provided there are several hours before paddling again.

Caffeine

Some paddlers swear by flat Coke as a pickup, but I had a spectacular "Hit the wall" when I tried it. Instead I have found that Big M Coffee is excellent for a lift after 5-6 hours paddling. I use the 250 ml packs with UHT milk which does not require refrigeration and are easy to store in the cockpit.

Rehydration Fluids

Are what we use after a full day on the water during marathons. Although not listed in the textbooks, I have found V8 vegetable juice and skim milk to be excellent. On a hot day I have found 750 ml of V8 followed soon after by a litre of skim milk to be fantastic.

FOODS

Naturally, we all have different preferences in foods, but the basic

requirement is to have adequate carbohydrate intake before, during and after paddling. There are two types of carbohydrate - *Simple carbohydrate* which is in sugar, glucose tablets and barley sugar. It is not advised to eat simple carbohydrates alone when paddling as they can temporarily raise blood glucose levels, which can then drop later due to the "Rebound effect". It is preferable to eat mainly complex carbohydrates.

Complex carbohydrates are found in starchy foods such as potatoes and grains which when eaten create a lower but more sustained elevation of blood glucose.

Before paddling

It is wise to carbohydrate load for several days prior to paddling as this lays down extra glycogen in the muscles and liver, which is converted to glucose and energy during exercise. The usual method is to increase your consumption of cereals (particularly oats), pasta, rice, potatoes and bread.

During Paddling

Sports drinks provide some carbohydrate, but I have found solid foods to be also necessary on long paddles - I have found the following foods to be of value:

- (a) Bananas - Either dried or fresh are invaluable for both complex carbohydrate and potassium supplementation. During marathons I carry many under my foredeck elastics where I am able to pick them up and put them in my mouth without even stopping paddling.
- (b) Dried Fruit - We have a food dehydrator and dry our own fruit in to rolls which are very easy to eat when paddling. Also commercial fruit bars such as Uncle Toby's Muesli Bars are very good.

(c) Boiled Potatoes - Small boiled potatoes are used by several experienced marathon paddlers. I used them in the 1997 Murray Marathon and now am a confirmed convert - I ate one small potato every 30-45 minutes during the race, combined with adequate water intake, and found that I achieved my best result without feeling that I had ever done a marathon. I strongly suggest that fellow members of the VSKC give the spuds a try on a reasonably long paddle and see if it suits their metabolism.

(d) Parsons Rice Cream - This is one of the most valuable food that I use when paddling. It is widely used by marathon paddlers and can be eaten either on its own or mixed with stewed fruit. It appears to be the ideal mixture of complex and simple carbohydrates and I always carry a tin of it during marathons or several tins on long trips.

After paddling

Pasta, rice, spaghetti or noodles mixed with vegetables, fish, meat or eggs seem to be what most experienced paddlers choose for their recovery diet.

I hope that the above suggestions will, if you will excuse the pun, provide some food for thought.
Bill Robinson

Rimouski, ie 17 mars 1999/March 17, 1999

International Sea Kayaking Association 5, Osprey Avenue Westhoughton Bolton, Lancashire BL5 2SL

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QUALIFICATIONS —31 juillet •

1 aout MONTREAL

LA GRANDE TRAVERSEE FORESTVILLE - STE-LUCE

Monsieur,

We are pleased to invite you to the 1999 edition of the «Sea Kayak World Championship») which will be held on August 8 between Forestville and Sainte-Luce, Quebec, Canada. The international qualifications will take place on July 31 and August 1 in Montreal.

The first three editions of the race, known as La Grande Traversee, or the Great Crossing, have already gained a worldwide reputation and have attracted competitors from Canada, the United States, France, Australia, Africa and elsewhere. With \$100,000 worth of prizes at stake, this year's competition promises to attract considerable interest.

Kayakers from around the world are being invited to meet the challenge of the majestic Saint Lawrence River. During this top-quality competition, they will experience the challenge of their lives, testing their physical, psychological and strategic abilities on one of the mightiest rivers in the world.

You will find details of the event in the enclosed brochure and on our internet site at www.traversee.com where complete information about the competition, including safety, race classes, prizes and services, is provided.

We are counting on you to invite and encourage your members to attend this top-quality event. If you require additional brochures don't hesitate to ask. Thank you in advance for your collaboration!

Bill Gleeson Race director

Denis Senechal President
E-mail: info@traversee.com <http://www.traversee.com>
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P&H Umniak sea kayak, 2 bulkheads with VCP hatches, chimp deck pump, full expedition deck including tow cleat; blue/black complete with wild water twin seal spray deck.....all in excellent condition @ £350.

You can phone Ian on 01723 513319 (work) or 514569 (home)

Letters

From Craig Wightman
Malta

Dear John

With regard to your last editorial, although I am sure that many paddlers hold the BCU Awards in high regard as we do, here in Malta, the fact that they feel the need for them points to two factors.

One, their own national canoeing body may not have awards of a similar calibre and two, they may feel that their national body either fails to support them as a non medal winning of the sport or as in our case the national body is non-existent (or simply so ineffectual that it appears to be so) due to external circumstances. For instance Malta does not have a national body, although I have tried my hardest to start one. Sadly the scouts, girls guides and cadets here are not interested so the canoe club is the only champion of such a body. Therefore we currently rely on the BCU scheme to set the standards; standards which include European Union bureaucracy which like many other countries is just not applicable. (And I assume BCU qualifications would be directly transferable).

An ICF standard would be useful and is an applaudable step in the right direction. Will it cover countries where canoeing populations are so small that those countries neither have national bodies and/or are not members of the ICF? I am not, you understand, trying to be obstructive - just objective. Would ISKA become an umbrella for small fringe countries to band under, on an individual member basis. This surely would boost membership.

To a certain extent we do this already under the banner of the BCU and I would rather spend my hard earned cash on an Agency that supports me and my sport rather than some Eurocrat! I honestly hope you succeed.

The other problem facing smaller nations is financing visiting coaches for assessment and I implore you to avoid the broken strategy of the BCU and go back to the training and assessment in one course. Imagine the costs involved to low income tiny states such as ours. Flying out for a training course and then later on for an assessment!

Also is the lack of a national body a stumbling block for other countries and paddlers? I would be interested to hear your views (ISKA readers, please take note and respond, Ed) and that of other experienced members. Perhaps if the ISKA cannot support small nations, could a Small Nations Canoe Federation be an idea?

The ICF recognised coaching syllabus is a great idea. I hope you get the support you need from others members. Now, if only someone could do the same for my marathon coaching award.....

By the way, I'm scouting around for an old K1 or K2 sprint kayak or an Espada mould, a surf yak boat or mould would be useful too, as a small fun boat for teaching basic to our youth group it's a lot more relevant to sea kayaking than our current fleet of BATS, although a largish cockpit here is useful. Has any one of these languishing in their garage perhaps?

Happy Paddling

Craig Wightman

BOOK REVIEW

"The Seamanship Pocket Book"

A really handy shirt pocket sized booklet which is physically very durable, being made from waterproof paper with a cellophane front and back cover. It has some blank pages for your navigation/weather notes (or what ever). I've included a list of essential gear to take on expeditions.... The booklet sets out to be a quick reference and includes sections on
Planning
Weather
Rules of the Road
Lights and Shapes
Buoyage
Signals
VHF Radio Channels
Distress

So it is fairly complete and one of the headaches when putting this together must have been what not to include. Personally I would like to have seen some reference to the Twelves and Thirds Rules and their application as well as a short section on 'handy hints' such as use of transits, how best to use tidal flow and how to gauge the effect of wind on course. But then you could go on for ever and this is only a quick reference guide.

I know you will find it very useful when trip planning and it is available from me here at ISKA for £7.50 or from
Pesda Press, Elidir, Ffordd Llanllechid, Rachub, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 3EE, Wales, UK.

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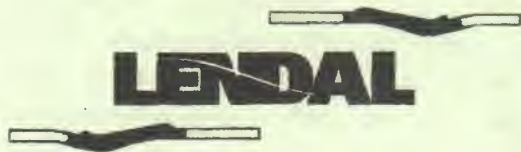


VALLEY SEA KAYAKS

- * **NORDKAPP JUBILEE**
- * **SKERRAY**
- * **PINTAIL**
- * **AQUILA**
- * **AVOCET**
- * **SKERRAY RM/RMX**
- * **ALEUT SEA 2**



- * **FOUL WEATHER CLOTHING**
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WATERMARK

SEA KAYAKS

Designs by Nigel Foster:

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