

INTERNATIONAL

SEA KAYAKING ASSOCIATION

including

NORDKAPP TRUST

NEWS LETTER

The Nordkapp Trust

**AIMS: PROMOTION
OF SEA CANOEING &
COMMUNICATIONS
PROMOTION OF EVENTS
AND CONFERENCES
SAFETY AND COACHING**



THE NORDKAPP TRUST

The Trust was set up in the U.K. by Frank Goodman, Nigel Dennis and John Ramwell.

In 1997 Stan Chladek joined the team with the view of helping to develop a North American arm of the Trust.

The Trust decided to form a network of centres that would agree to set standards of equipment and instruction. The Trust monitors all awards and indemnifies BCU Coaches when working for the Trust in the US. The idea was developed and the following Premier Centres were set up to run BCU coaching and trust courses:

NORTH AMERICA:

MAINE ISLAND KAYAK CO, ATLANTIC KAYAK TOURS, SWEETWATER KAYAKS AND GREAT RIVER OUTFITTERS.

GREAT BRITAIN:

A.S.S.C.

Tom Bergh, Bill Lozano, Dave Ide and Scott Williams joined to form a working committee in the US.

Bill Lozano accepted the position of Trust Secretary and we have now developed further having three levels of centres.

- Premier Centres.
- Trust Centres.
- Associate Centres.

This enables Centres to join the Trust at any level and with Trust help and support grow and develop into Premier Centres.

The Trust also offers self employed Coaches the opportunity of joining as Pro members, this will enable them to take advantage of buying into the Trusts Insurance scheme, offering liability cover.

The Trust has decided to use the British Canoe Union Coaching scheme, but also recognises that there is a demand for instruction in other areas of sea kayaking ie., Traditional methods (Inuit), Guiding and Expeditioning etc.

The following courses and awards have been developed by the Trust:

- The Rough Water award. (None tidal advanced)
- Inuit awards
- Navigation awards to include an advanced award.

TO FOLLOW:

- Expedition and Guiding awards.

TRUST AIMS:

The aim of the Trust is to promote safe sea kayaking worldwide using a high standard of guides, expedition leaders and coaches. This is being achieved through Trust appointed sea kayaking centres on an international basis.

The Trust also works hard in developing and running sea kayak events.

Events currently being run in North America & Great Britain. Plans are developing for future events in Newfoundland, Israel and Germany.

We aim to locate our Centres in prime kayaking areas. All will have unique areas of operation to offer sea kayakers at every level from instruction to expeditioning.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT:

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INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON:

EXPEDITIONS.
GUIDED TOURS/HOLIDAYS.
INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUMS.
TRUST CENTRES.
PRO-MEMBERS.
TRUST COURSES & AWARDS.
BCU COACHING COURSES.

editorial

by John Ramwell

The 3rd Newfoundland Sea Kayak Symposium was a great success. Keith Maslen, Nigel Dennis and I went over to assist with this event earlier this month and had a great time. The enthusiasm from all concerned was tremendous. The setup over there on the west side of Newfoundland can only be described as near perfect. We operate out of Marble Mountain Cabins which is right on the banks of the Humber River. Across the road is one of the finest Ski Lodges I have ever seen anywhere in the world and we use this facility including a lake within their grounds. We have access to swimming pools, one on site, and to the beautiful Bay Of Islands a short distance down the road. The symposium is followed by a BCU course and some leadership experience. If any of you are interested in taking part next year you can email <marblemc@nf.sympatico.ca>



Hopefully this newsletter will be going out with our new cover which has come about by a joint effort with the Nordkapp Trust. In future there will be a small section within this newsletter devoted to Nordkapp news so should you be interested in the rationale and objectives of this Trust, then watch this space.

So Peter Bray did not make his crossing of the North Atlantic. I spoke with Peter after his failed attempt and he assured me he would be looking for sponsorship support to repeat his attempt next year. Apparently one of the outlet valves from a pump became faulty. This was discovered after Peter had been sleeping and so the flooding was too far gone to effect a pump out. He had to abandon his kayak and swim for a nearby buoy from which he was rescued some 30 hours later. His kayak was also 'rescued' by local fishermen but I understand the damage to it is such that a new kayak may be required to replace it. I have asked Peter for an account of his adventure for this newsletter and he has agreed so perhaps more of this story in the next (Sept) issue.

My address is, for copy for this magazine:

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

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*Check out the ISKA web site
<www.seakayak.co.uk>*

*From Udo Beier,
Islandstrasse 1,
D-22145 Hanburg
Germany*

Dear John,
in the German sea kayaker scene there is a hot discussion about the best tow-line system for sea kayakers. The arguments are very different. One group likes to refer on the British sea kayaker scene. So it is told, that the Brits have agreed, that the length of a tow-line should be 8 m, and everybody should carry along one (for "solo-tow") or two of such tow-lines (for "V-tow") on his sea kayak.

I would be glad to read in your newsletter if someone know something of such an agreement or others.

By the way, my friends and I prefer to use a "multifunctional tow line": This is an elastic line (16 m long and 4 mm diameter). During a "solo-tow" we use the tow-line as a double (2x8 m). If there is a sea kayaker, who wants to support the towing-action, he will get one part of the tow-line (1x8 m), so that it is possible to change in a very short time from a "solo-tow" to a "V-tow".

One advantage of such a tow-line-system is, that as a group leader I have no longer to check my friends, if they have stored a tow-line on deck (which is as long as mine), because with the help of multifunctional tow-line-system I can tow as well "solo" as together with another sea kayaker.

Another advantage is, that the elastic-line is a very good "damper". When you tow, the other "tower"

and the person, which will be towed, will not feel any jerks. Maybe the line can tear, but I think this will happen only in such conditions, when a stiff tow-line will capsize you.

The tow-line I have wrapped up in a small bag, which I have store behind me on the after deck. When I tow I have fasted the tow-line with the help of a quick relase buckle alongside my life vest.

Best wishes from Germany: Udo

From Peter Hatt
North West Sea Kayakers are running their annual Pembroke holiday 5-19 Aug. A 'cheepo' holiday. There will be guided trips for all levels on this spectacular coastline. There is some spare capacity on our exclusive sheltered site. For further details contact 'Hattie' on his e-mail <PHHattie@aol.com> or ring 0161 762 9594

Whilst working with Raleigh International earlier this year I made pals with Olaf, a co-adventure project manager. I thought his recent email to me about his subsequent activities worth including in this newsletter. Ed.

Just a short update from me: after a rewarding four months work for Raleigh international I was still in Chile in April, trying to make a dream true, the crossing of the Northern Patagonian icefield. quite a strange idea, and not the easiest way to find out ones limits. I got an awful lot of support from ventures and staff here within Raleigh, so the plans became more real. one of the mountain leaders, Yvonne Cook was interested in

attempting the crossing with me, and three of my brave 'kunchafters', Andy Pillai, Michael Garnett and Eli Fu were keen to support us carrying loads for a couple of days. They went onto a training mission to Cerro Castillo, which they circumnavigated in a few days and came back ready to go.

Meanwhile Yvonne sorted out her flight changes with quantas, which almost turned out to be a real nightmare, since they first wanted the ridiculous amount of US\$500 to change the date of her out-bound flight. With help this problem was mastered and we continued in preparing the trip. finally all equipment was ready and a huge food bill made Multimas, the local supermercado, a 125000 pesos richer.

The expedition leader Stephen Jones was so grateful that he gave us a lift to the Bayo Lake, the start of our trip and about 150 km south of COYHAIQUE.

We reported our trip plans to the CARABINEROS (we also had permission from CONAF, the National Parque Institution, through whose territories we would go), and continued to the road camp at km 43 along the road to Bayo Lake, where Michael got us a perfect accommodation due to his Spanish skills.

The next morning, we packed the gear and went the remaining 6.5km to the end of the Lago Bayo and the road. We parked the vehicle there and walked in. For the wet third phase the name 'exploradores' river will mean something. For all the others, this is a glacial meltwater river, which means the water temperature rises not above 2 degrees celsius, chunks of ice floating by.. this wouldn't be so bad, but this river was to cross only via its 12 branches, which

were up to waist deep and had a more or less strong current.

Wellingtons are highly recommended, as our crew

soon admitted, crossing **Suddenly, he lost his footing and was swimming. I was kind of foolish and went after him. this was not the smartest way of dying.....**

in sandals. especially Eli was very brave, since when the water reached the thighs of Stephen,

Eli was up to her waist in the wet stuff. But we mastered all of the waters without a problem, which took us only one hour. we continued on a horse trail to reach the northern end of a moraine, coming from the exploradores glacier. Eli had a lot of pain and cramps in her legs, so we decided to make it an easy day and camped. throughout the night eli was in much pain with her legs and we decided to bring her back to the vehicle. she was very brave and tried to walk on her own, but when we saw that she made only 150m in 20 minutes time, we decided to carry her in turns to the river crossing. Eli is quite light and so it wasn't a big deal to carry her in turns. Eli's comment: "I think Yvonne's back is the most comfortable, and Olaf's the least"!! What a compliment. Michael and Andy were eager to help and carried Eli, as did Stephen. it was kind of interesting for me taking a person on my back over the rivers, but the team supported me, so we mastered this challenge. whilst the others picked up a food cache, eli and I walked out the remaining km to the vehicle. Stephen already had some hot water ready, to make us delicious hot drinks (did I mentioned we had torrential rains all the time/well, you would probably expect it, otherwise it would not have been a real challenge ...)

Stephen and Eli went back to COYHAIQUE, where the doctors finally removed her tension from her legs. She was then

transferred to Santiago via private ambulance lear jet for further surgery, and is now back in

Hongkong, doing rehabilitation for her leg. She will be able to walk again, and this gave us a satisfaction. What means a little stress and effort, if one can save a humans legs? We wet bunch crossed the rivers another time to reach camp again. Yvonne must have been quite tired and worn out as the rest of us was, but on this night she was not well and had problems with her stomach. The next three days she got weaker and weaker from not eating and drinking much. We were quite worried and even built a stretcher to carry her out, but just the attempt of doing so made us hope for her quick recovery so she could walk out unaided. We brought part of our gear to the road on day 4, and finally, Yvonne was able to walk on her fifth day of her sickness. So we left the jinxed campsite. She did very well and we had camp this day near the river. the next morning we reached the river, and Andy and I took Yvonne over the first four branches in turns in order to keep her dry. When we reached the fifth branch, Michael tried to explore a new way to cross in order to avoid the waist deep cold water. He was already five meters away when I decided to follow him. Suddenly, he lost his footing and was swimming. I was kind of foolish and went after him. this was not the smartest way of dying. Did I think as the same hole let me loose my footing as well, and my big mama backpack floated nicely and kept me under

the water. Very wise I had not closed my hip belt for this crossing, so it was possible, to get off the pack in seconds. even tough, I struggled. I had the weird impression of seeing myself from the outside in completely clear water. this is

kind of strange when you know that the glacial waters have a lot of silt in them and one can see only inches through them.

Anyway, the cold was coming to me and I seemed to have lost the fight against exploradores in a few seconds, or so I thought. By pure luck I found my footing and made it to the river bank. After about a minute in the water I was near to hypothermia but still alive and kicking. Michael was rescued by Andy, who did react in a much better way, that was helping from the shore and without pack. The two were running down now to catch my pack, which was floating at quite some speed around the next corner. Suddenly, I was interested in having my sleeping bag back as well and sprinted to the 200m away beach, shortcutting a bend. But big Andy took care of this problem as well. Just a lekki walking stick was lost by Michael, 'Patia Mama' had been good to us again.

We continued the river crossings this time at the old trail, and in a row, to withstand the current. The evening saw us at the end of the road, and Michael and I went to the road camp, to ask for help or a lift to the next village, Puerto Rio Tranquilo, 50km away... the road warden was quite helpful and told us that on the next day a lorry was expected. We walked back, did I mention the weather? if in doubt, just assume it has been pissing down cats and dogs at all times and you are more or less correct. we made a equipment shuttle trip

the following morning, and met some of my colleagues, surveyors, who gave us a lift back to get the remaining food and pick up Yvonne, who managed to walk 5km on her own. We then got a lift to Tranquilo, and put up tents near the beach. The next day was wasted because of miscommunication with our helpers from the road company, who were not able to give us a lift to COYHAIQUE. so we took the colectivo the following day and approached COYHAIQUE in the evening. Did I mention the weather?... Michael called up El Verdin and there was a Lucia answering the phone and telling us, that there is no lift to El Verdin. So Michael and Andy chartered two taxi's, of which we heavily abused only the one which had a roof luggage carrier to save some odd pesos. since I was full of energy and Yvonne was under the proper 'Graham/Carmen Gloria' safety umbrella by now. I decided to go to kodkodland. This is a land of mystery, rain forest, whinjas, Rachel, and do I have to mention the weather? Basically, kodkodland is situated in the reserve of queulat, about 181 km on the carretera austral north of COYHAIQUE. I was going to support the biologists Rachel, Lucia and Linda for their hunt for whinjas. What in all world are whinjas? It is a kind of cat. It is not a cat, but looks like one. Kodkods have been studied in the Laguna San Rafael recently, and this work is to be continued under the helping umbrella of Raleigh for at least another two expeditions. Andy and Michael have both been in kodkodland on this expedition, and their warnings were not quite amusing. Avoid the river and swampy trail, there are tons of leeches. It rains all day, it is boring to radio track the cats all day, and

the campsite floods once in a while...Well, I packed my gear the next morning and left with the three scientists and Juan, our driver. We had beautiful weather and Juan explained the countryside for us. The rapids of the Rio Cisnes (swan river) were grandious, as were the mountains nearby. Finally, we arrived in kodkodland, and precipitation was already waiting for us. We put up camp in the normal weather, and Juan left us the next morning. There I was, alone under 3 women. Okay, I decided to put my efforts into something pragmatic like a 'long-drop' (*toilet hole!!*) for the first day and a combined shower,sauna for the second day. By then we already knew that of the bridges leading to the cat observation area, one was gone due to the high waters of the previous weeks. I was to build a Tyrolean for my team, some ropes going over the river and some pulleys to get across. We called for help to Raleigh and we were sent ropes and some interesting looking pulleys as well. It took a day to rig the 'rope bridge' up, but finally we went the first time across without getting our feet wet. We fine-tuned the system the following day by building some ramps and launching areas. One basically had to climb a tree, attach to the ropes with a doublelocked Italian hitch and a French prussik and then trust a German engineers work, swinging the buttocks into the void... at the other side, one could now lower down with the help of the Italian hitch. Good to have the safety prussik on a second rope, I thought.

Anyway, we caught a kodkod in one of Rachel's cages as soon as the tyrolean was finished. The little cutie had long fur, like a Persian cat and was quite scared when we released it (it already was tagged).

The days were full of sun, much to our delight. We wandered on the cut trails through the observation area, trying to radio track the four collared cats. We could only find one of the gang, with name tango. One day, when I explored the area, I found some puma tracks and we did not know if this were good news. Maybe the cats moved out of the area, so we went with our transceivers onto the road, trying to figure out where they had gone. We had no luck. Even 5km away I could still hear a distinct beep beep from tango, but this was it. just one cat left...We concentrated on this cat and I improved the tyrolean with some new gadgets sent to me with the weekly colectivo. Yesterday, for the first time in three weeks, it really rained loads and the boss decided to hitch hike back to COYHAIQUE, in order to have a meeting with an important person from CONAF. We took the hard option in the back of a pickup truck, and don't even dare to ask me for the weather... my next intention is going to El Calafate, trying to meet up with Yvonne. I will stay in the Albergue there, until Silas from Seattle arrives. We are then hoping to get a permit to climb in the national parque. this will take another 3/4 weeks, so don't bother to reach me. I will check this account when I am back from the ice... this was it for now. I hope you are all well and still kicking.

From deep within my comfort zone...

Olaf.

If you are interested in joining Raleigh you can contact them at Raleigh House, 27, Parson Green Lane, London, SW6 4HL (Tel 0207 371 8585)

A Race Against Autumn

by Mike Dales

September can provide prolonged spells of calm weather on Scotland's west coast, but it can also witness the transition of summer into autumn and be the time for equinox gales. The only thing that is certain about September's weather is that you will know what it was by October 1st. Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards. That just about sums up the climate in that part of the world.

In looking for a two-week window to kayak around the Isle of Skye, predicting the weather and change of the seasons is a secondary consideration compared to timing the decline of the "midgie" season. The combination of factors suggested that mid-September was the time to attempt the trip. Now it was just a matter of picking the right year when the seas would be calm and the midges, hopefully, zapped by an early frost.

Ewan Gillespie from Dingwall agreed to attempt the trip with me, and others would join in for the second week. The direction was going to be clockwise so that the exposed west side would be paddled south to north, now all we needed to decide was where to start. A number of starting points were considered, and although Armadale was the favoured option, our thinking was that we wanted to be at Armadale at the start of the good weather, as opposed to the start of the trip. The two might not be the same thing.

Our luck was in. The two were exactly the same thing. The weather on the day we travelled across to Skye was wild. The rain in Kintail was more like you would expect in Fiordland or some other candidate for wettest place on earth. Still, the forecast said clearing from the west and as we reached Kyle of Lochalsh the sky was clearing and Skye was trying to dry out after the deluge. Armadale it would be then.

With supplies for two weeks the first packing of the boats was a major task. After 10 minutes of carrying gear down to the beach I glanced at my watch and it was already gone 3 p.m. Loading the kayak, and more to the point deciding

what was going to have to be left behind, would take another hour and a bit. Should we stay the night in Armadale and set off early tomorrow? I thought it but didn't say it to Ewan. His packing was going better than mine was, and I knew that we had to break contact with the vehicle. As long as that lifeline remained we would cling on to it, so best we got a few miles under our belt on that first afternoon.

We finally launched at about 4.30. I glanced back at the beach from where we started and tried to memorise the scene so I would recognise it from a couple of miles out. I noted the painting on the wall of the shop and as we rounded the ferry pier I called across to Ewan "we're looking out for a white building with a black bird painted on it". I forgot to give an estimate of the distance before we would reach it

As they teach you on Time Management courses the key to tackling a big task is to break it down into bite size chunks. Skye is an odd shape, but we identified the four corners and discussed the character of the sections joining them together. Within the first six miles we had turned the first corner and left the Point of Sleat behind us. We paddled about seven and a half miles before the end of the afternoon, and we could play with figures and percentages to make it feel as if we were well on our way, but the reality was that we now had the whole of the exposed west coast of Skye in front of us. We had always said this would be the crux and we should hit it at the right time. Time would tell if we had timed it right.

Sunday morning suggested we might just have got that timing right. We had stayed the night at a friend's house and as we slipped into the kayaks to start the day, Ewan made the comment that "there's a lot of water in the water today". High tide it was, and as stunning a morning as it is possible to find. The morning sun on a calm sea and the Cuillin Mountains draped in a band of cloud at mid-height. One of Scotland's finest seascapes and we were hitting it on what was promising to be a perfect day. We had to pinch ourselves and remember where we were and

not forget how quickly the weather can change in that area. One eye kept a watch on the weather and we used the good conditions to get the trip off to an impressive start.

With all its indentations and sea lochs Skye has a coastline that would take several months to explore properly. The approach we took to the wide sea lochs was to "straight line" them in order to keep the mileage down and to increase our chances of achieving the circumnavigation. The first straight line was early on the Sunday when we paddled across the mouth of Loch Slapin to the tip of the Elgol peninsula. In one respect it was a shame to miss the miles of coastline within the sea lochs, but the open crossing has its own rewards and provided some spectacular views of the coast from far out at sea.

Loch Scavaig is an amazing place to paddle, given its position at the foot of the mighty Cuillin mountains, but time spent exploring such places could have cost us dearly further up the west coast, so we straight-lined Loch Scavaig and aimed for Soay Sound. As straight lines go, this has one of the best views in the world. The early mist around the Cuillin had thickened and was now burning off rapidly to expose the full grandeur of Britain's finest mountain range. The views from the Cuillin ridge are well represented in my slide collection, but today was for taking shots looking up at them from the sea. A different angle, but the Cuillin are worthy of exploration from all angles.

Well, all angles that it is possible to view without causing disturbance to other people that is. Just as an aside, in 1997 I was involved in the campaign to prevent a London based helicopter company from operating tourist flights over the Cuillin ridge. After a six-month battle the campaign was successful and helitourism failed to get its foot in the door on Skye. As we paddled alongside I looked up and shared the enjoyment that all those climbers and scramblers high on the ridge would be feeling. Quiet enjoyment of a magic range of mountains. The constant clatter of helicopters would have ruined it and this inappropriate form of tourism

must never be given the chance to succeed in such precious places.

We stopped for lunch beside Gavin Maxwell's old shark oil factory on the neighbouring island of Soay, and wandered around the derelict buildings wondering what it must have been like when it had been at the height of its production in the late 1940's. The lunch stop was also an opportunity to look at the maps and decide what was a realistic target for the afternoon's paddle. Ewan and I hadn't paddled as a pair before and weren't quite sure how much the other was willing to push the distance. We needn't have worried, because whenever we came up with more than one target, it turned out that we were both thinking the same way. "Let's go for the furthest one".

The afternoon took us across the mouths of Loch Brittle and Loch Eynort and saw us take a quick "Scooby-Snack" in Talisker Bay. We had left the mountains behind now, but the magnificent scenery continued, with the cliffs along this section being some of the best on Skye. It was simply a matter of select your distance from the foot of the cliffs and enjoy the view of your choice. The weather remained sunny and calm all day and we could not believe that the notorious Skye climate was allowing us to get off to such a flying start. Maybe it was lulling us into a false sense of security, only to seek revenge later in the week!

At the end of a long day we pulled into Loch Bracadale and found a comfortable spot to camp. Tents up, stoves burning, warm dry clothes on, fantastic view, golden sunset and no midges. Bliss! We were two contented paddlers. The distance for the day had been 34 miles and we were savouring the evening light and re-fuelling ourselves for another big day to come. The shipping forecast gave a small front passing to the south of us, but that would, hopefully, not cause us any problems.

Monday morning dawned clear and still. At this rate we could soon have the west coast cracked in one good spell of weather. However, today was the day for rounding Neist Point, the most westerly point on the Isle of Skye. The various paddlers that had given us advice for this trip had warned of Neist and the confused tidal streams. "Neist is the crux", was a comment we had heard many times.

We left the shelter of the small island of

Wiay and headed for Idrigill Point, and soon started to feel a noticeable swell coming at us from the south. There had obviously been some bad weather to the south of us during the night and we were feeling its effect. By the time we reached Idrigill Point the sea was wild. The half-mile section from the Point to MacLeod's Maidens was a rough ride as wave after wave hit our port sides. We picked a line through the chaos and braced on our paddles whenever a really big wave broke across our decks. MacLeod's Maidens are three distinctive sea stacks in the shape of dunce's hats. We threaded the gap between the first and second maiden and made a dart for the relatively calm water behind them. I caught up with Ewan and said, "If that was Idrigill, what was Neist going to be like?" Nobody had mentioned problems at Idrigill, and certainly hadn't placed it in the same sentence as crux!

The next section has some spectacular caves, but the clapotis and crashing waves ensured that we were too far out to sea and concentrating on survival to be taking any interest in sea caves. We were concerned about the conditions along this section because dark clouds were approaching from behind and Neist was ominously coming into view. We had aimed to reach Neist at slack water, but the rough sea was causing us to lose time and we were now more likely to be rounding it at the worst possible time - in the middle of the ebb with it running full force against us. To make matters worse the clouds caught up from behind and it started to rain. We had been hoping for the kind of prolonged settled spell that can occur on Skye in September, but we felt that a fine Sunday, enjoyable as it had been, did not represent a prolonged settled spell.

We arrived at Neist like river paddlers approaching an awesome rapid. We got out, walked across the neck of the peninsula and checked it out from the land. It looked OK within about 10 metres of the cliffs, and beyond that was World War 3. So that was it - keep the starboard blade on the wall and sneak round whilst it wasn't looking. The plan worked a treat and we had an amazing view of water going every which way to port. Neist was meant to be the crux, but on that day I would say Idrigill took the title. Either way, they were both behind us.

After all that adrenaline pumping around

our systems we were relieved to paddle quietly into the calm of Loch Pooltiel where we found an idyllic camp spot with a magnificent view out to the Outer Hebrides. The mileage for the day had only been 21.5 miles, but we felt like we had been through the washing machine. Still, the forecast was for a better day to follow, and that evening's pasta was as good as it gets.

Dunvegan Head represented the end of the west coast and the second of the four corners. An early start saw us around Dunvegan Head by 8 a.m. and we turned east to tackle the north coast. To circumnavigate Skye the north coast requires a reasonable day so as to be able to get down to some serious straight-lining. Loch Dunvegan and Loch Snizort separate the three great peninsulas at the top of the island - Duirinish, Waternish and Trotternish. The conditions looked perfect, so we left Dunvegan Head and headed straight for Waternish Point. The tide pushed with us and we packed in the miles, although we ended up a little too far to the south of the straight line and hit a back eddy, but otherwise made a quick crossing.

The next crossing would be longer, although we could take a break en route. We crossed to the Ascrib Islands and landed for lunch. The Ascribs are a collection of remote islands at the mouth of Loch Snizort, and a remarkable place for a sandwich and some juice. The clouds of the previous day were gone now and the visibility restored, so the views to the Outer Hebrides were at their best and we were able to watch the movements of all the large craft including the Cal Mac ferry sailing into Uig from Tarbert on Harris. The lunchtime shipping forecast suggested that the following day might not be as good. In fact, it was forecast to be force 8 southerly, so we were probably looking at an enforced rest day. We decided to push the pace that afternoon and find somewhere sheltered on the east coast.

Ascrib to Trotternish was the last of our major crossings, so we set off to clear this psychological hurdle. As we left the islands a squally cloud from deep in Loch Snizort started to track our way. Half way across the loch it caught us and lashed us with rain and a wind that instantly picked up the surface of the sea. We were heading north east by now and the south westerly wind gave us a welcome push. The wind rose to a steady force 5, but this was

to our advantage and we headed straight to Rubha Hunish, the most northerly point on the island.

The north end of Trotternish is about two miles wide and is another superb stretch of coastline. Seacliffs, stacks and shelter from the south-westerly. After pushing so hard on the open crossings it was reassuring to be following a line of cliffs again, and we were so impressed by this north facing stretch that we slowed right down and took a close look at the geological features. Eilean Trodday, a mile off the north east corner of Trotternish looked very tempting, but we had to concentrate on the circumnavigation and remain aware of the wind that was threatening to pick up even more.

By turning our backs on Trodday we rounded the third of Skye's four corners, and our second of the day. We were heading south, we had broken its back and had the relatively sheltered stretches in front of us. Skye was ever present to our starboard, but the land to port was ever changing. The Small Isles of Rum, Eigg and Canna had given way to the Uists, then Harris and now the mainland of Scotland. The evening views were inspiring with the mountains of Torridon and Applecross across The Minch to one side and the jagged outline of the Quiraing rising above us on Skye's Trotternish ridge to the other. The low sun was playing tricks on the base of the cloud above the Quiraing and the end of that day's paddling will forever be remembered for the special colours we enjoyed as we paddled towards Staffin Bay.

As we pulled up to the rocky beach at Staffin I made the statement that for me it had been the best day's paddling of all time. There was no exaggeration in saying that, it was simply a day that had such a variety of scenery and conditions. Once the tents were up and the stoves on the boil we measured the distance. 39 miles and a day to treasure.

After those distances a rest day was quite welcome. The southerly gale arrived bang on cue during the night and prevented our progress the next morning. At least our camp spot was sheltered and the day was dry so we washed and dried clothes, read books and walked around the Quiraing. Life returned to our shoulders and arms, and we began to psyche ourselves up for the remaining days. Three more days should do it, and we planned

our camping spots accordingly.

On Thursday morning we pulled out of Staffin Bay and into the southerly wind, which although well below force 8 was still at least a 4 and was refusing to drop any further. Before long the rain came on and we were facing a long laborious slog. By now our progress was slow and if anything the wind was strengthening. Just as we slipped into auto-paddle we met the only other paddlers we saw on our trip. We sat and chatted to the couple from North Wales who told us they had seen the TV weather forecast and Saturday was to be the beginning of a very windy spell lasting several days. We thanked them for that depressing news and within the next half mile had altered our plans. Instead of three more days, we would finish in two. By now it was late Thursday morning and we decided to make it back to Armadale by Friday evening. Instead of staying the night at Camustianavaig we would paddle to Broadford and stay in the youth hostel. From there it would be a good paddle to Armadale for the Friday.

Lunch was taken at Camustianavaig in the shelter of an upturned rowing boat to avoid the lashing rain. Morale was low and the memory of the clear views on the west coast were temporarily forgotten. Even on the hardest of days there are sights that make it all worthwhile. There had been several Golden Eagles and a Sea Eagle on the cliffs north of Portree and as we left Camustianavaig a pair of otters were playing in front of our kayaks, and again we saw otters off the coast of Scalpay later on that day.

The rain did ease off towards evening and as the islands of Raasay, then Scalpay, closed in from our port side we at last felt an element of shelter from the continual wind. We reached Broadford in the last of the evening light, and a night in a youth hostel, with the promise of a shower and proper bed, was very welcome. We thought we might feel guilty not camping, but the hostel enabled us to finish late, start reasonably early, and use the telephone to contact others that had been planning to join us for the weekend or the second week. As it turned out they all said they had seen the forecast for Saturday onwards and were seriously questioning whether it was worth travelling to Skye.

We paddled out of Broadford Bay the next morning, passing a school of por-

poises within the first mile. The wind appeared to have dropped overnight, but before we had gone two miles it was back, and once again it was right on our bows. It didn't matter which way we faced over those last two days, the wind just funnelled and hit us on the nose. By the time we passed under the Skye Bridge it was becoming a major pain. We had slowed right down and estimating a time of arrival at Armadale was increasingly difficult.

Following the coast into Loch Alsh we turned the island's fourth corner, shortly afterwards we passed through the for once calm narrows at Kylerhea. We were soon able to see the Island of Eigg, which we hadn't seen above our bows since the first day. As we inched towards it though, the winds kept picking up a force and by the time we reached the island of Ormsay our arms were just about popping. Skye had a final sting in its tail and was not going to let us get round it without a fight to the end. We must have seen every inch of the coast along the last four miles of the Sound of Sleat as we clawed our way into that wind. Eventually though we spotted the black bird on the white wall. The finish line was in sight and it was a race against time to reach the beach before darkness descended. We hit the shelter of the bay, crossed the line we had taken as we had left the bay the previous Saturday and we ran our bows onto the beach.

A celebratory meal in the Ardvasser Hotel was our reward for a successful trip. To our surprise we cleaned up quite well and felt comfortable sitting in proper chairs. Already the memory of the last two days of slog was fading and we were remembering the earlier part of the journey. We calculated that we had paddled 164 miles and rounded the island in less than a week. It would have been good to take a bit longer and I wanted to link the circumnavigation with a trip along the Cuillin Ridge. We had, however, been racing against the start of the autumn, and we had crossed the line with minutes to spare. The wind the following morning was far worse and had we still been out there we would certainly have been stormbound. September can be a settled month on Skye, but not in 1999. We just managed to be in the right place at the right time, and all those extra miles gained here and there enabled us to go around before the weather broke. The fact that we had managed to start on the Saturday

John Ramwell writes with a question from Robert Craig for FRANK GOODMAN. "A question for Frank's Q & A section. **Could he discuss the effect of positioning the point of maximum beam in a sea kayak? Should it be near the bow or near the stern? I can understand that if it is aft of the cockpit the kayak is easier to paddle as the kayak doesn't get in the way of the paddle, and that if it is forward of the cockpit it provides more room for the paddler's feet. This sounds a triviality, but I'm faced with the problem that the boat I bought when my son had size 5 feet doesn't fit now that he has size 10 feet. There must be hydrodynamic arguments as well.**

Frank replies;

I don't think it is a triviality at all! Anyone who goes from size 5 to size 10 shoes is growing fast. Whether he's your son or not is beside the point. He's BIG. While I don't know him personally, I suggest you keep on the safe side, and humour him. or at least keep up your circuit training so that you can outrun him if things ever turn ugly.

Seriously, I doubt I can answer this one in the space of one article, as the positioning of the widest cross-section of any boat is probably the most fundamental point in its design. Almost everything to do with its performance starts from this one decision.

O.K. let's suppose we have a kayak which is narrow in front of the cockpit that had been excellent for the size 5 little fellow, but now he is size ten we've been bullied into making the boat fit his feet. Since we dare not say no, we increase the width in front of the cockpit and soon find that the boat is very flat in front, as we've not altered the depth. So we add a little to the depth too and fair everything off - smoothing the new shape into that of the original boat, until it looks as though it had always been that shape.

Man-mountain pats us on the head and gets in the boat for his first paddle. Disaster! His position fore and aft in the boat is the same as when the gunwales were narrow, but now there is a huge amount of buoyancy in front of the cockpit. There he goes, the stern is almost under the surface, and although the bow is not completely out of the water, it is riding high; so high that the bow is shovelling water under the hull and the kayak paddles very sluggishly indeed. However, here comes a puff of wind from the

north, and suddenly our paddler is going south - fast. When he manages to get ashore, he tells us in no uncertain terms that the windage on the bow is now so great that the kayak is virtually out of control, even for a big strong paddler. The only way to adjust the trim without adding more buoyancy to the stern is to move the position of the cockpit forward so that the weight of the paddler trims the boat. The new trim position of the cockpit can be calculated accurately from a carefully made drawing of the kayak, but you have to make the drawing first! This is a huge job in itself, and then the new boat has to be made. In reality this is beyond the amateur boat-builder, and in fact beyond the professional designer too - it would be far simpler to sit down and design and build a new boat from scratch. Let's suppose for the sake of argument, we actually do the unthinkable and modify the kayak as discussed above. We can make a few intelligent guesses about its hypothetical performance, which can help us to generalise about boat design. This can be useful and interesting, especially if you're thinking of buying a new kayak. Actually paddling a boat on flat water will only give a limited feel for its handling (I once paddled a strange kayak continuously for ten days before a very unpleasant quirk in it's design came to light and gave me a nasty turn, luckily without any serious consequences) so it is a good idea to know something of the basic design features of kayaks and how they affect its sea-worthiness.

A word of warning though: good design is the art of compromise, so a thoughtful designer will design one feature into the craft and then modify its effects with a contrary idea, which, he hopes, will give the best of all possible results - that impossible craft - a perfect kayak for all sea conditions and all paddlers! However, back to our modified boat: A kayak in trim will always try to pivot about the paddler, because that's where the weight is. And of course the hull design will resist this to a greater or lesser extent - at its simplest, a long hull will not spin as easily as a short hull. When the paddler sits forward, there is more kayak behind him and the hull will be more directionally stable. However the bow is now much blunter (the kayak is 'fish-form') so the cruising speed is definitely slower. This often surprises people, as they think that the blunt nose and tapering form of fast-swimming underwater creatures is the most efficient shape.

Well it is, if you are completely submerged, but sadly kayaks are at the surface and create waves. Waves can only be kept to a minimum if the water is parted as gently as possible. a very finely angled bow that only allows the size five-footed paddler on board! (This type of design is called 'Swedish Form' and produces the fastest of all racing boats.)

Having a lot of buoyancy up front sounds as though the boat will shed water well, and in theory it should rise well to big waves. Don't forget the long stern though. It may well be that the stern will ride up on the back of a wave that has just passed, to the point where it actually pushes the bow into the base of the next one approaching. The boat could be wetter than before in a swell. To get round this problem it may be a good idea to add rocker to the hull so that it 'fits' the trough of the wave - it will be a sweeter boat for the added rocker, but more rocker means less speed.

Well, I could go one, but I've said enough.

It's clear that one modification will set in motion a whole host of further mods. that will stretch to the point where the boat has become an entirely new design. It is not on. Face the inevitable Robert, your son needs a new boat and you're going to have to pay for it. Do it with good grace. Remember he's a big chap now, and with a new kayak, more paddling and therefore more experience, he'll be in a better position to help you if you ever get into difficulties. Check your bank balance. Take his old shoes to the Oxfam Shop. Job done.

Best,

Frank.

If you have a question for Frank that pertains to sea kayaking then send it to me here at ISKA, 5, Osprey Ave, westhoughton, Bolton, Lancs, BL5 2SL or Fax it on 01942 842204 or email it to <framwell@provider.co.uk>. I know Frank will answer most queries but there is a host of resources out there in 'sea kayaking land' and if Frank feels unhappy about tackling a question I can always leave it open to our readership. So let's be hearing from you. Ed



Paddlers International

To let you know that Neil Chance has taken over the editing of 'Paddlers Int' from Peter Clarke. Peter is recovering from his illness. You can reach Neil on <Neilchance@compuserve.com>

From: "Tony Brunt"
<tonybrunt@clear.net.nz>
To: "John Ramwell"
<jramwell@provider.co.uk>
Sent: Friday, June 30, 2000 11:14 AM
Subject: Dusky sound

Hi John ... long time no hear from
How's life in the sea kayaking lane treating you? Are you still producing your newsletter? If so, you may be interested in a wee write up on a trip I did with Fiordland Wilderness Experiences, a Te Anau based sea kayaking company into Dusky Sound an extremely remote, wilderness area accessible only by boat or helicopter pretty damn rugged place to paddle ... very changeable weather ... friends went in after our trip and spent 5 days trying to get out, stuck on the coast ... one day they tried it and were met by 5 metre swells they wisely retreated we spent five days trotting round and went from Dusky through to Breaksea sound where we were picked up by a helicopter (two days late) \$15,000 worth of sea kayaks hung by rope from below a helicopter and yes, we had the owner of the kayaks with us put it this way, he was very careful tving them into the

net really neat trip, although pretty full on ... camping sites pretty rear and long spells in the boats as landing places are very few and far between let me know if you think you can use something

.....
I have attached a few photographs to whet your appetite ...

Regards

Tony Brunt



From Sean Morley

John,
Looking through back copies I note a reference to Dan & Karen Trotter's journey to and round the Faroes. Do you know where I can obtain an account of their journey?

Also I am planning a trip to circumnavigate South Georgia. Do you know of any trips to this remote island. I am aware of the Royal Anglican's expedition in 1991. Do you know of any others? Please note my email address has changed from the directory to.....

<seanlin@4unet.co.uk>

I would be grateful if you could place that ammendment and a request for any info on South Georgia in your next newsletter.

I look forward to hearing from you.
Thankyou for your time.

Regards,
Sean Morley.



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The following is taken from 'SEA TREK', the newsletter of the Victorian Sea Kayak Club, Winter 2000 issue

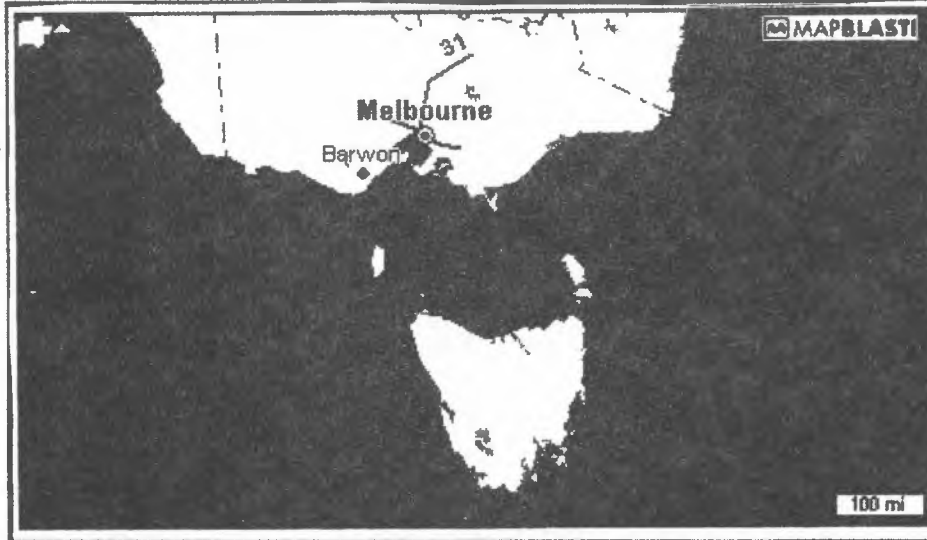
This is an account of the 14 day trip from Tidal river to Little Musselroe bay Tasmania, via

must be thinking the next time we hear of these 4 people will be the evening news. The weather is hot

Bass Strait Crossing by VSKC Members

The highlight of the year and a great milestone in the history of the VSKC was the crossing of Bass Strait by Ian Dunn, Peter Provis, Julian

Smith and Tina Rowley. I am very pleased and proud to be associated with



Hogan group, Kent group and Flinders Isle. The information,

and sunny with northerly wind. 11am sees us on the water with a rising tide, lunch is at Fenwick Bight before striking north headwind around lighthouse point with moderate rebound from small swell. We land at Waterloo bay 3.30pm feeling a bit dehydrated. Along the way we spoke with the water police who weren't overly

BASS STRAIT, channel connecting the Tasman Sea on the E with the Indian Ocean on the W, and separating Tasmania on the S from Australia on the N. The strait is named for the British explorer George Bass (d. 1812?), who in 1798 sailed through the channel, proving that Tasmania is an island. The channel contains coral reefs and many islands, chiefly in its S section. It runs almost due E and W, is about 290 km (about 180 mi) long, and has an average breadth of about 225 km (about 140 mi).

these four outstanding paddlers. A Bass Strait crossing to sea kayakers is like climbing Everest to mountaineers and I believe it was an epic achievement for them as a group and also as individuals. I was involved with them in several training sessions and was also their land contact during the crossing, and was most impressed with the standard of preparation of their gear, kayaks and bodies.

I find it amazing that our mass media is happy to devote pages of newspapers to a footballer's strained groin, but they are just not interested in telling their readers about an achievement of this magnitude, so I suppose we will just have to get out and spread the word ourselves.

BASS STRAIT CROSSING- YEAR 2000

By Julian Smith.

thoughts and views are from my personal notes taken daily and is not necessarily the views of other trip members whose accounts I'm sure you will find in other articles and future Sea Trek newsletters. The month before going, hundreds of hours were spent on gear and kayak preparation, including the fitting of a rudder to my Selkie, which is a horrid looking abomination as are most rudders, however I'm not completely stupid as it will save a lot of energy which is important. A new sail was also fitted and provisions for extra water storage in the cockpit.

Saturday 19-02-2000 Day I

We arrive Tidal river 9.30am and catch up with Peters friend Mick the ranger who allows us access to beach with Peters vehicle and trailer. We pack the kayaks in front of an increasing inquisitive crowd who

concerned with our trip plans and were pleased we all had EPIRBS, GPS and VHF radio. We also spoke with fisheries who were slightly more shocked about our plans and wished us well, both authorities were very interested in the sleek racing hull type vessel that had waved to us at Norman bay, they seem to be concerned about their activities. Set up camp at shady spot at the quiet end of beach and are immediately set upon by rampaging march flies, which even follow you in the water. Spent rest of day body surfing and resting. Weather forecast indicated s/w change delayed till late tomorrow, get early night for tomorrow as it will be a big day, first leg to Hogan Isle which can just be seen from beach.

Sunday 20-02-2000 Day 2

Up at 6.45am packed and on water at 8.00am. No wind, slight swell forecast for weaking s/w change Hogan visual after one hour. Peter feeling very seedy 29km's from Hogan towing Peter short distance before recovering slightly, we then stop, raft up Peter vomits. This helps and he makes good recovery, last 15 km's becoming sore and uncomfortable. We finally land in bay in front of hut built by Alf Stackhouse on Eastern side of Hogan Isle. Total distance today is 53km's. Fresh s/e wind soon comes up, could be here for a while, Peter's problem seems to be his drinking water or container. We check water tank at hut, is full to the top, tap not working inside so we repair it.

Decide to camp in valley near hut as we heard about the native rats that bite.

Monday 21-02-2000 Day 3

Up at 7.00am, realize we are not going anywhere. Today, forecast is strong wind warning upgraded to gale warning for all coast from Cape Otway. Walked all over Isle checked out the solar lighthouse and disused weather station. Went fishing caught only parrot fish, most by Tina, tasted as I remembered like salt water carp. Swell increasing all day, wind 20-30 knots, watched penguins come up beach at night in tents by 9.00pm.

Tuesday 22-02-2000 Day 4

Long sleep up at 8-00am sea moderated a bit, lan thinks we will be out of here tomorrow, nothing to do on this Isle any more except find and eat mutton birds, but seems to be out of season, 4pm wind up again, gusts to 50knots on wind meter at top of hill.

Penguins seem to have stayed in today. Tried to plug VHP and marine radio into disused weather station but no success. Wind dropped offlate today, swell no longer crashing into bay, raising our hope to get out tomorrow.

Wednesday 23-02-2000 Day 5

Up at 5-00am wind all but dropped off, forecast gale warning east of Wilsons prom. Make last entry in log book in hut, entries in log include many seakayak crossings over last 15years, it seems Tina is the second female to paddle across Bass Strait. On water 6.30am light wind swell up to 3 meters and sloppy, make good progress 7kph. Erith Isle visual but Peter doesn't look well and feeling sick again, spots shark about 8ft swim under my rudder, 3rd hour Peter vomiting, raft up bit of towing comes good again, 8km of Erith Peter violently sick. Tina

"things getting very serious now, sea getting big and worried about missing entrance to Murray pass."

rafts up and supports Peter, lan and me tow both of them. Peter now cramped up and cannot paddle, s/w change hits, Erith Isle disappears in low cloud and rain, navigating now only by GPS, things getting very serious now, sea getting big and worried about missing entrance to Murray pass. Getting very exhausted and paddle tripping on lans tow rope when surfing down swells followed by a violent snap when slack takes up. Finally make it into Murray Pass fighting gale force headwind into small bay for shelter. Peter recovers enough to make it into Bulli cove where we find a hut and fresh tank water, set up camp.

Distance today 39km's Tina and I paddle across Murray Pass to Deal Isle, meet caretakers Bob and Peter at homestead, help catch wallabies in compound and throw them over the fence. Are given a bag of tomatoes from 100 year old vegie garden, paddle back make dinner watch rats, possums and penguins, rest day tomorrow, explore islands and phone home.

Thursday 24-02-2000 Day 6

Awoken about midnight by the familiar sound of a V12 engine, peering out of tent can just make out in moonlight a shape of the black and grey suspicious looking vessel we saw in Norman bay slowly cruising around our bay then disappearing down Murray pass. Slept in today, perfect weather no wind. Bush Heritage people whose organisation leases these Islands turned up today with equipment and new water tank for the hut, plan to stay for 4 days.

Girl gave Peter a tablet for stomach bug, hope it works. Visited Bob and Peter at Deal Island, had

tea and biscuits, walked to lighthouse, 2nd highest lighthouse in the world, decommissioned because it often shrouded in clouds. Spoke to crew of "Mezair" in bay, Tina talked 4 cans of drink out of them, showed us some huge lobsters, gave us some abalone, tried it and gave it to the bush heritage crew, prepare for crossing tomorrow to Killiecrankie, forecast no swell, light winds.

Friday 25-02-2000 Day 7

Crap night sleep on angle, 2.00am wind came up most depressing sky, now overcast low clouds, up at 5.00am anyway doesn't seem any hurry to pack on water at 7.30am paddle east to Garden cove, decide wind too strong 20knts plus from

east head back to Deal Isle catch forecast from 3 yatches, s/w change tommorrow hoping Sunday is the day to go. Peter and lan head back to Erith to make new camp in foreshore, forest campsites, Tina and I sit on pier half sleeping while a wallabie sits next to us waiting for something maybe. Go up to visit Bob and Peter get offered soup and muffins, wander through museum again now warm with light winds, could have gone today but who was to know. Police speak to us on the caretakers phone want to know about suspicious boat who we know is Cam Strachen from Hastings, he is banned from entering Tasmanian waters and is a bit of a pirate type character wanted for illegal fishing but they cannot catch him as his boat is a converted ocean racing hull fitted with hi-tech electronic gear and a V12 turbo engine and a two foot diameter surface prop very fast can't catch him with evidence on board.

Saturday 26-02-2000 Day 8

Up at 8-00am s/w change here heavy rain starting to feel we are running out of time and food, discussion with Peter clears up a few issues. Visited Bob and Peter for last time got more tomatoes, said goodbyes and rang Bill Robinson, got forecast paddled round to Winter cove on other side of Deal Isle is I hour paddle time closer to Flinders Isle, experienced gale force gusts, strong currents and some big seas, landed in small surf found very nice sheltered campsite. Went snorkelling, lots of big reef fish but can't quite spear the bastards, caught small salmon on beach very tasty, cooked in foil good to eat some protein, wind abating, sit round fire till 9.00pm.

Sunday 27-02-2000 Day 9

Awoke to light winds, clear skies, cook porridge on fire again, I won't be eating this crap again at home. Getting bored now, made lure from tin foil, caught more salmon, ate for lunch with tomatoes, eating spoon full of promite daily, think is important, other's don't realise this (fools!) If I am on this Island much longer I will kill them..... a wallabie and throw it in the fire, haven't seen one today, maybe they know something???

Slept all afternoon, how good is it to do this, weather looking good for early departure tommorrow. Salmon and tomatoes for dinner.

"Up at 4.00am; this is the big one,"

Monday 28-02-2000 Day 10

Up at 4.00am; this is the big one, every one running off up the beach trailing toilet paper this morning. On water at 5.15am seas flat sun rose after one hour, 7kph had us at Wright rock in three hrs photographing a seal colony and having snack, taking offcags as warming up now, Vz way to Craggy Isle. lan and Tina spotted a dorsal fin of a shark much bigger than the previous one, very sinister looking according to lan, this brought the group together. Rafted up at Craggy Isle, got out of cockpits had stretch, sea calm. Set off on last 22km's to Killiecrankie bay arriving just after 2pm feeling sore but very pleased with ourselves 10 days after leaving Tidal river. Directed to campsite by Mrs Stackhouse who runs the little camping ground also found the general store and off loaded \$150 between us which covered most food groups as you can imagine.

Also found big tiger snake about 7ft long, seems they grow up to 9ft on and around the islands surrounding Flinders. Waited for Peter and lan to have cold showers then lit fire and had hot shower myself, felt fine now and have not worn gloves. Distance today 61 km's.

Tuesday 29-02-2000 Day II

Casual start today se wind up, overcast, can't believe how well we did to enjoy yesterdays conditions. After raiding the general store again we were told by the shop keeper that her mother lives at Allports beach where we were heading, if we see her we may get some eggs. My thoughts at this stage were if we don't see her we may just get the whole chicken!! Sailed out of Killiecrankie bay all the way to Cape Frankland then turned into headwind of 20+knots, struggled across Marshall bay then along beach, had a late lunch with 8 or 9 km's remaining. Spectacular huge marble like boulders line this part of the coast, arrived at Allports beach in small bay at 5.00pm, found picnic type area with BBQ site and table, went for a walk after dinner along rural dirt road and met eccentric old fellow named Jim, who is a technical book writer for Penguin books, looked exactly like the Professor out of the movie Back to the Future and behaved rather similar, apparently he'd had a few before we arrived. He showed us the old bush tennis court where Laurie Ford's group camped during their return crossing in 1987. We took Jim back to camp to meet lan and being both into astronomy and having spent time at the CSIRO they got on like a house on fire.

Wednesday 1-03-2000 Day 12

Casual start again off at 9.00am, sailed around Settlement point, met headwind from s/e again, few aches and pains from yesterdays effort. Cut across bay rounded next cape and paddled last 8km's in shallow reefy water into 15-20knt headwind arriving at Whitemark intime for mixed grill in pub reccomended by Stuart Trueman on his crossing and excellent it was. We were now almost too fat to fit in the phone box, rang Bill Robinson to report in and Bob and Peter at Deal Isle to say thank you for all their help and that we were safe. Looked around town, Tina and lan each purchasing some Killiecrankie diamond earrings from shop. Loaded more supplies in kayaks and set off to Trousers point IOkm's away in calm conditions, took photos of Mt Streziecki. Local copper advised us of the best campsite, met crew of recreational fishing boat "Fly Fisher" out of Hastings returning to Lady Barren from continental shelf chasing marlin, gave us a bag of fillets for dinner, on board was Laurie Ford's ex brother in law, small world. Caught up with 3 yatchs from Deal Isle moored in bay, received forecast 20knt n/w turning s/w up to 30knts tommorow.

Thursday 2-03-2000 Day 13

Up at 7.00am possums been busy at night ate whole fish fillet off BBQ, sandflies also bad here. Away at 7.50, crossed Franklin Sound (16km) in two hours, flat seas, spoke to Flinders Isle copper again on his shark cat, flash unit with 500 hp hanging off the back. lan spoke with crew on 'Fumeaux Explorer' n/w wind up now fast sail down to Preservation Isle had lunch on lee side, people in cabin

here gave us some water, they had flown in earlier that day as this Isle has an airstrip. Wind now quite strong fast sailing with 1-2 metre sea having already passed Thunder and Lightning bay on Cape Barren Island our destination for today we headed for tommorrows destination Rebecca bay on Clarke Isle arriving mid afternoon the hottest day of the trip. Beautiful little bays but no water and campsite at the top of a steep sand hill, however the snorkelling here was the best I had seen so far. Can see s/w change coming in sky now had option of going across Banks Strait today but decided to rest here the night, think everyone is wondering whether we made the right decision.

Friday 3-03-2000 Day 14

S/w change came through early morning up at 8.00am, forecast 20-30knts s/w sky a bit dark but we decided to go 2-3 hours before low tide and ferry glide 7km's to the right of swan Isle lighthouse allowing for current on water. 10.30 lumpy sea 2-3 metre plus right hand beam head wind 10-15 knts after a while turn on GPS realise we are making good progress. Peter out in front on compass bearing of 240, pass lighthouse after 3hours, not bad for 18km's. Have lunch in bay on lee side, trawler skipper tells us stronger s/w change expected soon, time to go as soon will be slack water for last 4km crossing, have heard of strong currents to 5knts here. Front hits us with wind to 50 knots can't make headway, paddle close to shore to tip of Swan Isle, as we plan our blast across wind moderates making ferry glide possible to Little Musselroe bay, enter creek mouth and are greeted by Jeff Jennings (Maatsyyker Canoe Club) and Mrs Ponting. Who wel-

comes us to have a hot shower. Jeff just happened to be dropping of a NSW seakayak club member David Whyte who had become sick after leaving Launceston to paddle to Hobart with Mike Snoad and Dirk Stuber who had arrived here this morning. They all now planned to head off in the next couple of days to Swan Isle then continue on to Hobart. After a few cold beers we wished the 3 NSW members well, with a full loaded kayak trailer we then headed to Jeff Jennings place at Bridport our trip now over feels like we only left Tidal river yesterday almost feel like turing around and paddling back. Could we be as lucky with the weather again, might have to wait till next time to find out.

There are many people we must thank, for without their help this trip would not have been easy to put together or complete. Bill Robinson: Base communications. Bill had to deal with everyone from worried wives and mothers to water police-sorry about the extra grey hair Bill!!!

Lionel Wishwell: Mercy Radio. Radio communications expert, knew where we were before we did!

Yacht and fishing boat crews for their help and weather info across Bass Strait. Bob and Peter the care takers at Deal Isle- for without their supply of tomatoes and tea with biscuits we would of starved! Jeff Jennings, prior info, transport and accomodation.our Tasmanian connection. Steve Vegh at Canoe Inovations for his amazing craftsmanship once again in altering and repairing our kayaks. Sea To Summit for supplying their wonderful lightweight indestructible dry bags for all of us.

Laurie Ford for information prior

to trip which was invaluable, however we never did find that water that just bubbles out of the sand. Canoes plus The Yacht shop Frankston and anyone else we forgot. The use of Ian Dunn's MSR water filter was invaluable, one thing worth taking on any trip. The group each used Ian's filter daily, which was important as nobody

wanted to get sick due to bad water. Another important mention is the use of a side band short wave radio, the yatchies use these to get accurate weather forecasts out in the middle of nowhere. And of course Ian Dunn, Peter Provis, Tina Rowley for without them this trip would not have been possible.

Paddlers

Ian Dunn RaiderX
Peter Provis Selkie
Tina Rowley Artic Raider
Julian Smith Selkie
All boats kevlar construction

The following is taken from 'SEATREK', the official newsletter of the Victorian Sea Kayak Club. with grateful thanks.

Adventures in Greenland
by Pete Dingle

Returned last week to Iceland from a 12 seakayaking journey in Greenland. Greenland was FANTASTIC.

The remoteness of the place is stunning. No roads (except in each village) as the towns are so far apart and there are too many high rocky mountains, deep fjords, glaciers and icecaps in between. All travel is by boat, plane or helicopter. I enjoyed travelling with newly found friends in these remote places in such rugged terrain. Both Baldwin and Ottar work for Ultima Thule Expeditions with Oskar (my ex-student friend) and, as are all staff for UTE, are members of rescue teams in Iceland.

Seakayaking here - in the birthplace of the seakayak - is, on one sense, an honour, and in other senses, awesome and magical. It is a reality check on life as it restores one's awe and wonder in life, particularly when one also gets to see the Northern Lights dance as well!!

For the most part the water is ideal for sea kayaking - sheltered and flat amidst the most amazing scenery one could imagine. The mountains rise out of the deep fjords for 1000 - 2000 m straight up out of the water. The fjords and open sea are scattered with varying amounts of sea ice and icebergs. We were all cautious about paddling too close to icebergs, knowing that they can roll over or break apart at any moment, sending huge waves of freezing water and tonnes of ice onto unwary paddlers.

The biggest icebergs get to be about 2

million tonnes apiece, though I suspect the ones we were meeting were far less. The glaciers here calve at only about 20 000 tonnes a day we are told - the bigger ones up north calve at 20 million tonnes a day!! The ice cap that feeds these glaciers is over 3 kilometres thick and about 2/3 the size of Australia!! The bigger icebergs are around 200m tall - and that's only what you see in the water, 7/8ths of an iceberg being underwater. The tallest ones we saw were about 100m high. Apparently the glacier that sank the Titanic came from up this way.

The mountainous scenery is stunning. Glaciers do amazing things to mountains when winding their way to the ocean - their power is awesome in the paradoxical sense of simultaneous destruction and creation.

We are careful not to fall in. The water temperature varied from plus 5 degrees to minus one degrees; air temp from plus 15 to plus 2 degrees. (I was aware that this was summer, the warmest time to be paddling.) We were very wary of the marginal chances of survival if we fell in - the close presence of our friends was our greatest chance of staying alive as swimming to shore would not be possible in such cold water, particularly where the waters edge was bordered by steep cliffs rise straight out of the water. There were times when paddling at cliff bases that you could see the cliff descend underwater on the near side of the boat, but in looking down the other side you saw nothing! The fjords, though only maybe 500 - 1000m wide, were up to 500m deep!

Whales (Minke) and seals were with us most days. I spent quite some time watching whales from elevated rocks on shore while they swam around below me. They were 6-10 metres long and very graceful. One surfaced and dove only about 2

boats lengths from me while paddling. Amazing sight. Seals were always inquisitive to come and have a look. One of the beauties about seakayaks is that they are so quiet - seals often bask on the surface, just rolling around, often half asleep. Even though their senses are acute, we could paddle and then glide to within, at times, 15m of them before there was a wild rush and flurry as they dove off, only to stick their heads up some distance away, often behind you, just to see what was going on. They have good reason to be wary of humans - the Inuits (they prefer not to be called Eskimos any more it seems, for eskimo means 'eater of raw flesh') hunt them in their power boats (they don't use sea kayaks any more for hunting) as seals still form a major part of their diet, trade and clothing needs.

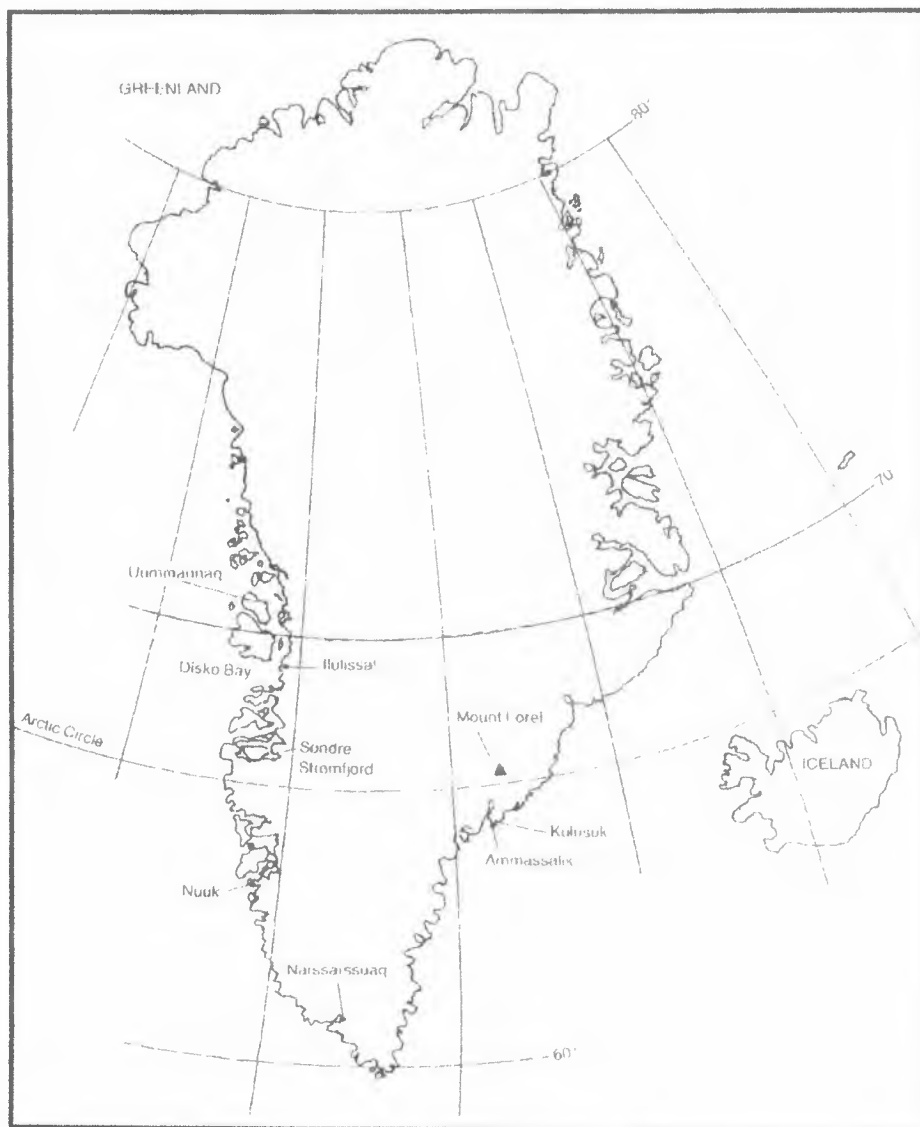
My paddling companions, Baldwin and Ottar, must be from true Viking stock. Both in their mid to late twenties, they didn't seem to mind the freezing water too much. On the cold days, I wore gloves, for I was aware of the loss of hand movement/ motor control if I were to fall in if an eskimo roll failed to bring me back upright. (I had never capsized in such cold water, and wasn't particularly keen to try!) Up near the glaciers, the water temp was minus one and the 20 knot wind wasn't helping matters either. Ottar, however, quite happily played under the glacier-melt waterfalls that became the fjord, having the below freezing water fall heavily on his head and parka-covered body and bare hands. I shuddered at the thought and had to look away! Maybe I'm just getting old!! When I expressed my wonder at Ottar's ability (or inability) to feel the cold, he just laughed and said that he would prefer to spend a whole day in such water to the cold one experiences when ice climbing. He says the pain on ones hands is another dimension - I silently crossed ice climbing of my

list of aspirations!!

We had been warned about the dangers of Southern Greenland, particularly the Foehn winds (pronounced Fern). These are very powerful winds (often warm) that come down out of the mountains as a result of Orographic uplift on the other side of the mountains. The winds churn up huge waves, overturn most boats and shred most tents, many people have died we were told. They come without warning it seems. In the town of Nanortalik (means 'place of the (polar) bear'), the evening prior to our departure, a local tried very hard to convince us not to go, warning us of all the dangers (which we knew) and telling us to go north instead of south (our trip was taking us around the southern most tip of the mainland). As I've so often found with 'local knowledge' - you must listen, but make your own judgement for few, if any, know the capabilities of sea kayaks. It was with great caution that we continued our journey, but always we were looking out for possible landing or camping places that

we could retreat to if conditions suddenly worsened. We did end up getting a Foehn wind on our second day out. My anemometer only measures up to 58

knots (about (110 kph), and it was blowing right off the scale. Fortunately, we chose to stay put on this day when we saw the wind building up. Our tent was



fortunately also sheltered from such a blast. Paddling into it, as we would have been, would have been impossible. Standing in that sort of wind was an effort, let alone paddle in it. One gets to feel acutely aware of one's insignificance in nature - at awesome power of raw nature, as well as its beauty. Human arrogance at our own sense of power is brought up short in this humbling environment.

In many places in the fjords we found evidence of old Norse (Viking) and Inuit ruins - old building sites, burial mounds, etc. up to 1000 years old! Clearly they couldn't dig graves, - so they simply placed the bodies on the ground (with a good view of the sea) and piled rocks on them. We didn't realise what they were until I looked inside a rockpile and saw what I thought was a river rock (strange I thought, finding a smooth rock thus far from inland waters) and as I reached in to investigate, I rapidly discovered that it was a human skull! We were later to find up to three bodies in one grave; two was quite common. No headstones, just rockpiles.

From Rick Jones, Matlock, Derbyshire.

Hi John,
I've heard that some paddlers are a little concerned about the possible re-introduction of beavers to Scotland and the subsequent damming of rivers. Extinct for nearly 350 years. I reckon that it would be interesting to re-introduce another much bigger beast. A recent browse through Mallinson's "The Shadow Of Extinction", (Macmillan, 1978) brought to my attention an animal extinct from the Scottish coast since 1500 and from the Orkneys and Hebrides since 1800. It was a bit of a hock. I'd never known it. ODOBESUS ROSMAREUS, the Atlantic Walrus. I assume this means breeding, feeding and

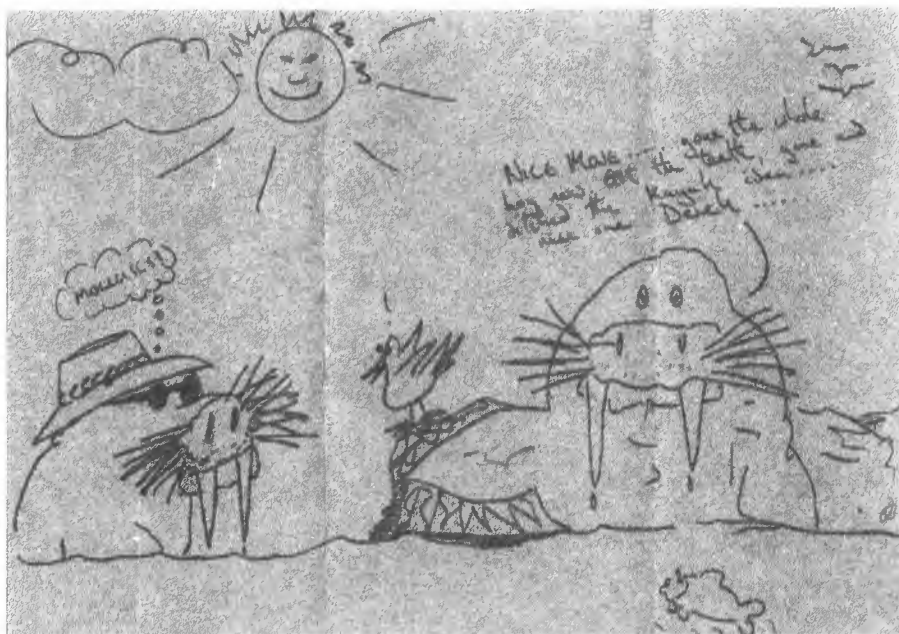
've never heard reference to the walrus in local history, descriptions of life, flora and fauna, folklore or archeology of Scotland but I suspect it must be recorded somewhere. Anyone know anything? Was the ivory used for the 'Lewis Chessmen' discovered at Uig in 1831, sourced locally?

We should try and get it back to those fair

shores. Paddling to peek at a walrus colony without flying thousands of miles first would be ecologically sound, Eh!? I'm sure that the shell fist industry would love the competition! Just think of the income to be had from tusk-resistant kayaks.

Some sweetie found me a copy of Henderson's "Kayak to Cape Wrath", as a wonderful present last festive season. I'd forgotten how delightful it is. Definitely a book that should be re-published. Like Dunnett's "Quest By Canoe", it is a record of so much lost to us now and thankfully not a 'rufty-tuft' account or sweat-rot Hellies.

Come on you lot, Scotland, Walrus - any info? Any sightings? Apparently last sighting round Scotland in 1954. Any interest? Splish splash,
Rick Jones



From Michel Angele Minaudo, Argentina

Hi John
How are you? I hope very well, paddling and making your ocean kayaker!
I received from Knoydart Kayaking Systems, pro-forma to ask him catalogue!
I know, it is very important to have news to kayaks accessories, but our badly economy it is a big problem to buy anything! Anyway, it is very important too, to do contacts with sea kayaking of world!
Adrian -Pol, our kayak club secretary, told me, that on my city, there are only 10 touring kayaks, between maybe 100 or 150 sea kayakers!
Why a little touring kayaks??? well, maybe because our coast it is not very interesting to visit paddling. or, our kayakers has not "conqueror mentality".
I hope, on near future will be more touring kayakers, because it is very important to put in the mind of our kayakers, the seed of touring!
At Buenos Aires city coastal and our south atlantic coastal, are very similar because there are islands, (big river at Bs & As.) rivers and bays (on the south), and the possibility of visit on our sea

Atlantic, the lighthouses.
The most famous is "The Lighthouse of End of World", from Julius Verne novel, near of Tierra del Fuego (Land of Fire).
One of our sea touring kayakers is Carlos Golman. Two years ago, he did a trip between Buenos Aires city and here. - Trip time, two months (he must wait for good weather many days)
Paddling alone, on winter. Distance: 250 miles.
With a little bit experience in roll! Sea kayaker told me about Carlos: he is the most crazy touring kayaker of our Atlantic coast!.....??
And told me time, don't tell his story to John Ramwell, we don't like the British kayakers think we are "indian"!
On his condition, this special trip, it is a heroic expedition. More, because, if you see the world-map, you can find, the Samborombon Bay, it is a big place, and... it is too, a terrific marine territory!
Why??? Because, when the water go to deep sea (each six hours) start strong currents. Now, if you are tired, you have two alternatives: to continue paddling

maybe other 100 kilometres, to go ahead to the 'marine hell place on beach frequented by crabs, on marine mud!!
To unload it is possible, but it is necessary to paddling above crabs, of course!
...So, this unexpected and last "travel", to arrive to more stable land to put tent, signify paddling extra time and win few yards!!
But, you see, it is a big experience, and very interesting fire proof!!
I see, start necessity from our sea kayakers to begin to do touring!!
More people each time, like to have touring kayakers!!
We need to do contacts with touring kayaks european (specially from Spain) here our kayakers not speak your language very well!
Anyhow, I like to write in english to learn more each time!
But, also I make contact with Spanish touring kayakers!!
would be very interested to go to your International Sea Kayak Symposium and take course to win my B.C.U
Finally, what in essence the Nordkapp Trust? Best wishes, Michel 'angelo

STAYING IN TOUCH WITH THE WEB. KAYAKERS ON THE MOVE

There's nothing more satisfying than letting your friends and relatives know what a fabulous time you're having on holiday while they're stuck in the everyday drudge back at home. You could rub it in by sending them a postcard, but all you'll have space to say is, "Kayaking is great. Weather hot. Fred has turned a rather disturbing shade of pink." Odds are the postcard won't even arrive until you've been back from your travels long enough to lose your tan. You could use the phone to let them know what a great holiday you're having, but we all know how expensive it can be to call long distance, especially from a hotel room.

By far the fastest and cheapest way to keep in touch while you're travelling is to use the web. Whether you travel the far reaches of the globe to exotic locations for months on end or you make a quick dash to the continent, you

the world has truly become a smaller place

can still stay in constant touch with loved ones to let them know how you're doing. And the beauty of it all is that it is cheap, easy to do, and fast. You no longer have to pre-arrange postal pick-ups or expensive collect calls. With the internet, the world has truly become a smaller place.

Not only that, you can also book your hotel rooms as you travel, sort out tours, get important weather forecasts, as well as economic and political updates of the

countries you plan on visiting. You can even download maps and phrase books.

Of course, jet-setting business folk will tell us that to keep in touch while you're away you'll need a modem, a laptop computer and a mobile phone. But for most of us who simply want to send the occasional email this kind of set up is overkill. Why try and get to grips with the vagaries of foreign telephone connections and internet service providers when you can simply use somebody else's connection to the internet? Sound difficult? Well, it isn't. Read on and we'll tell you all about staying in touch while abroad.

Signing up

The first step in getting yourself ready to communicate with the folks is to set yourself up with a free email account. There are hundreds of free email services on the internet and we've pulled together ten of the best. All of them let you send and receive emails from any computer that's connected to the internet, whether it's in Thailand, Teddington or Timbuktu. You don't need any special email software - all you have to do is log onto the free email website using any web browser and type in your password and user name.

you don't need any special software

All of the services let you send attachments with your messages and also have an online address

book where you store your email contacts, so you don't have to worry about forgetting everybody's email details. Some of the services even let you pick up email messages directed to any exist email address you already have - that way, if you're really keen about staying in touch, you can be sure you won't miss out on any of the office gossip. Another handy feature to look for is group emailing; you can save time by sending out the same 'Wish you were here' message to everybody in your online address book.

To set yourself up with a free email address you simply choose your service and then visit their website. Select the new user option and you'll be taken through the registration process. You might have to hand over a few personal details such as your age, sex and contact information. Once you've gone through the registration process your new email address will be confirmed and you can go ahead and log onto your mailbox.

Finding the nearest internet connection

The most common source of internet access when you're travelling is through internet cafes, although local hotels and libraries often offer web access too. Members have tracked them down to tiny villages in India, beach huts in Bali and the mountainous ranges of Tibet. To find out if there's an internet connection at your chosen destination check out the internet

cafe directory at www.cybercafe.com. Also worth a look is the Internet Gates Guide at www.netcafeguide.com. You'll find 2,600 cyber-cafes listed, plus the option to buy the Internet Cafes guidebook for \$12.95 (about £8). Cyberia runs a chain of internet cafes around the world (from Ealing to Bangkok) so it's worth visiting its website at www.cyberiacafe.net/cafes to see if there's one near your travel destination.

More than just email

Of course, once you've found an internet connection you can do more than just send email. If you're travelling for a while you can even manage your bank and credit card accounts over the internet. Several banks now offer web-based banking services that let you access your bank details, as long as you've got the appropriate password and PIN. This service could be a godsend if you find you've gone a bit crazy with your credit card and need to transfer cash quickly. Banks that offer web-based services include Egg (www.egg.com), Barclays (www.personal.barclays.co.uk),

Lloyds/TSB (www.lloydstsb.co.uk), the Royal Bank of Scotland (www.rbs.co.uk) and Smile (www.smile.co.uk).

You might also want to find out a bit more about your destination resort. At the Rough Guides website (<http://travel.roughguides.com>) you'll find the complete text from their excellent range of guidebooks. You can look up hotel details, get tips on which shops to visit and peruse a list of recommended restaurants. Lonely Planet (www.lonelyplanet.com) doesn't go

into quite so much detail but is well worth checking out for local information.

If you're moving around on your trip then you can book your flights, hire cars and reserve hotel rooms in advance online. A good place to start is with Yahoo's travel service (www.yahoo.co.uk), which has links to a huge range of accommodation, tour operators, restaurants and visitor bureaux. You should also pay Microsoft's Expedia site a visit (www.expedia.co.uk). Here you'll find an online hotel finder covering more than 40,000 hotels worldwide along with a car rental booking service. If you don't find anything you fancy at Expedia head off to the Travelocity site (www.travelocity.co.uk), which offers a similar service.

Dig around the search engines and you'll also find some excellent online guides to specific areas of the world. If you're travelling around America then visit Roadside America (www.roadsideamerica.com). It guides you to some of the more unusual US tourist attractions such as the Glore Psychiatric Museum or the fascinating Hair Museum.

Hong Kong looks like a happening city to spend some time in, according to the brightly coloured Hong Kong City of Life site (www.hkta.org/millennium). As well as pointing out the top attractions it enables you to book hotels, tours and flights. And if you're heading for the outback take a look at the Visit Australia site (www.visitaustialia.com) and book yourself on a few tours and check out the cheap flights.

For the ambitious

Many internet cafes do more than simply offer internet access. They also have printers, scanners and occasionally videophone capabilities. If you're away for a long time and international phone calls are proving too expensive then it might be worth trying to organise a videophone conversation with the folks. This can be a bit tricky; you will need to make sure they're running the appropriate software and hardware and you'll have to schedule the call carefully to make sure they're online at the same time as you.

A more practical option for real-time conversation might be to use one of the online chat services. If you've signed up with the Yahoo Mail or Hotmail free email services you can download a bit of software that lets you chat in real-time. Both chat services are called Messenger and the software is available from www.msn.co.uk and www.yahoo.co.uk.

What's on offer

Hotmail is the most popular free email service in the world and it's owned by Microsoft. Because there are more than 50 million members you might find it a bit tricky to get exactly the email address you're after and you might have to resort to a catchy name like joebloggs-2000@hotmail.com. However, the service is easy to use and is generally pretty fast although some users have reported problems with the handling of large attachments. And watch out if your messages eat up more than 2.Mb of space - the Hotmail administrators will come after you telling you to delete a few

emails to free up space on their computers.

Yahoo Mail is another popular choice and is slightly easier to use than Hotmail. As well as all the usual features, Yahoo Mail has some nice additions like an online calendar and scheduler. The message storage space is limited to 3Mb and you can send attachments up to 500Kb in size.

We got quite excited by Excite Mail since it let many use their own name in the email address, which suggests it doesn't have as many members as Hotmail or Yahoo Mail. Like Yahoo your messages shouldn't exceed 3Mb. Excite Mail is a reasonable service but not as easy to use as Hotmail and Yahoo Mail.

Lycos is another big search engine that's hooked on to the free email service bandwagon. A nice touch here is that you don't have to take a boring old blah@lycos.com email address. Instead you can choose from more than 300 domain names including mail.com, doctor.com, engineer.com, cyberdude.com and artlover.com.

If you want the ultimate in choice you should check out the UK-based Funmail service. This free email service lets you attach your name to more than 300, domain names. If you fancy yourself as a bit of lady's man you could be joebloggs@o-o-7.co.uk. You can have up to 20 different email addresses — one for every mood.

If you want to stick with a system that's based in the UK you could also try out BT's Talkzi. It's an absolute doddle to use although it lacks some of the more sophisticated mail management features of Hotmail and Yahoo Mail. Those who want a really patriotic email address should sign up with England Email ([\[ous.com\]\(http://ous.com\)\) to get a \[joebloggs@england.com\]\(mailto:joebloggs@england.com\) style address.](http://www.splendifer</p>
</div>
<div data-bbox=)

Alta Vista (www.altavista.com) offers a free email service and when you sign up you also get a free 12Mb of web space, which could come in handy if you fancy setting up a website packed full of your holiday snaps. BiblioTech's Postmaster (www.bibliotech.net/postmaster) might suit those who are familiar with the Apple Macintosh way of working — it has a Mac look about the interface. And Mail.com (www.mail.com) is also worth

might not worry you too much if all you're doing is sending personal messages. However, it does mean that you should be wary of sending things like bank details through these services. Free email services are not as private as the email you receive on your own computer. That's why you should always remember to log off properly from your free email service once you've finished reading your messages. You don't want the next person to use the computer to click the back button in the browser and get an eyeful of your mailbox, do you?

SIX TOP TRAVEL SITES

Time Out Guides, www.timeout.com

A great guide to the major cities in the world advising you on where to drink, eat, sleep and shop.

Leisurehunt, www.leisurehunt.com

Comprehensive online hotel booking service for the UK and around the world. You can search for accommodation by price or by facilities.

Travel Advice Unit, www.fco.gov.uk/travel

The government's travel advice unit offers lots of good advice on travel safety and consular services.

Travelmag, www.travelmag.co.uk

Online travel magazine for the more adventurous traveller. Includes articles on Inner Mongolia and traversing South Africa on a Harley.

Conde Nast Traveller, www.cntraveller.co.uk

If you've a taste for the exotic and a big budget be inspired by a gorgeous site.

Multimap, <http://uk.multimap.com/world>

Detailed maps available from around the world. Great guide to the major cities.

checking out as it offers you a choice of domains and leads you through the set up procedure step by step.

The downsides

These email services are incredibly popular because they're free and they're useful, but there are a few potential problems that you should be aware of. Hotmail in particular has been at the sticky end of a couple of security scares. Recently hackers found that without too much difficulty you could get into the mailboxes of Hotmail subscribers as long as you had their email address. These security holes

The other problem with free email services is that all your messages are stored on somebody else's computer, so if their service isn't working then you can't send or receive emails. You also give up a measure of control over your mailbox. The free email services are at liberty to delete messages if they're taking up too much space on their servers and if you don't use the service for a while you could find that your mailbox has disappeared altogether.

Dear John,

I was in the middle of compiling a letter to ISKA regarding pumps, when onto my doormat dropped the July edition of the ISKA Newsletter, containing the article by Frank Goodman on the subject in question. On reading the article I felt even more compelled to write as he raised some interesting issues, to which I felt I could add another dimension.

All the sea boats I have owned over the last 20 years have had a factory fitted pump, of the hand-lever action type. Recently I had need to use my pump to assist another paddler, who, following collision with some unseen hard object, was taking on water quite quickly. In all those years of paddling it was in fact the first time I had used the pump in earnest and, as always seems to be the case, conditions were less than ideal. Of course, as you do, you practice with your gear, but there is no substitute for the real thing and it proved much more difficult than it should have. The problem was the position of the pump handle behind the cockpit and the need to have my deck off in order to bring the suction tube over the rim and into the other boat. Two boats were now open to the waves, banging together and the pumping action so awkward as to make the task, whichever of us pumped; almost impossible. This prompted a serious retrospective look at the whole idea of pumps and their practicability, when conditions get tough.

As a frequent solo paddler, I have long been of the opinion that, first and foremost I should have a bomb proof roll and that I should at all costs, avoid coming out of my boat. Second, if I was unshipped, then the conditions which led to the capsize would surely prevent me from pumping out the water afterwards. I therefore need some method of getting rid of unwanted water, which allows me to continue to paddle, in stable control. My contingency arrangement was to glass-in to the bottom of the boat a dinghy self-bailer. All my boats have had this simple, cheap, maintenance free device fitted without fault or failure, for a good number of years now. Indeed I wrote an article for the ASKC newsletter years ago spelling out its virtues, as I then saw them. I am ever more convinced now, that self bailers have a worthwhile role to play in the safety of our craft at sea.

The great boon of the device is that:-

- 1) it has hands free operation - allowing you to concentrate on stabilising a swamped boat.
- 2) your spraydeck is in position - so you are not going to get further water inside the cockpit.
- 3) as the device empties the water, you are paddling away from danger.
- 4) the longer you paddle, the lighter and more stable your boat becomes.

I have been asked many times :-

does it leak? Yes if you get sand in it, but open it

for a second or two then close it again, and that usually does the trick.

is it vulnerable to rocks? Yes I suppose so, though I have never done it any damage on any of the frequent rough landings I've made.

does it fill up your boat when you paddle backwards ? of course, but if you are emptying your boat you are aware of this and avoid it.

don't you refill when you stop ? yes, but you slide your hand round the edge of your spraydeck and close the flap when you want a stop.

does it get rid of all the water? No, there is always a little left, but then there is always some water from your wetsuit boots or remaining when you pump out by other methods.

will it still empty when paddling slowly against the wind ? I have not yet experienced a situation where I was not able to paddle quickly enough to drain the water, but the slower you paddle, the less water the suction effect shifts. There must come a point when the balance of pressures between the inwards force of water and the suction caused by the forwards motion of the boat are equal. If you slow down below that threshold, you will take on water, rather than lose it.

how quickly does it empty a fully swamped cockpit? In a comparative test with a friend, he in a Nordcapp and myself in an Iceflow, we both capsized, re-entered and rolled, I fitted my spraydeck and paddled off with the self

bailer open, he settled to pumping his hand lever operated pump. We agreed we would signal to the other when we had emptied the cockpit as much as was possible. My boat was the first to be empty, at a distance of about 300metres away. I closed the flap and paddled back to him, to find he still had quite a considerable amount of water to go, where I had about 1/2 pint. This test served to highlight the speed with which it emptied the water, but also that I was able to be some considerable distance away from the point of capsize, instead of still being in the danger zone. Mark, my companion was quite amazed by this demonstration, indeed everyone to whom I have demonstrated the self bailer has been impressed. However, I have not seen any other boat or heard of anyone else having fitted one, until that is, the comment in Andrew Eddy's review of pumps, reprinted from the NSW Sea Kayaker newsletter, No.35 which appeared in ISKA in January. I was pleased to at last see, that someone else had been experimenting with the device, even if my findings do not wholly agree with the comments Andy makes.

Frank Goodman in his article for ISKA in the July 1999 newsletter makes a good case for a reliable pump on a sea boat, stating that it is second only, in terms of safety, to the ability to roll and further that it is far superior to cross deck, fibre glass rendering, muscle straining, x-rescues. I agree. He goes on however to admit that-

'there are difficulties however, rear deck pumps really need operation by an assistant who pumps it for you, as it is difficult to self pump when it is behind you'. It is this issue which concerns me. I have not yet found a pump position which is truly operable; when the going gets tough, which can allow you to remain stable when swamped with water and only one hand left on your paddle - stationary in the area in which you just capsized.

For the solo paddler, Frank recommends the foot operated pump, which admittedly allows hands free operation and the ability to be paddling away from danger, but the one's I tried quickly gave cramp in the leg, were very slow to shift water and reduced the necessary grip I needed on the boat in rough conditions. I wasn't impressed. The front deck mounted pump I had on my Iceflow was an improvement in handling, but still left you one handed with the paddle. Additionally I discovered, it's screw fixings were affecting the compass and the below deck arrangement restricted what I could do with my legs, an observation Frank also makes of them.

Frank then went on to complement the electric pump, as does Andy in his review, because 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.' I couldn't have written a

better advert for the self bailer myself ! But he then goes on to say the downside of electric pumps are 'the horrid combination of sea water and electricity' and Andy adds, batteries need to be recharged **before** the trip. You can guarantee you will need the pump to work, when you put out to sea for that impromptu paddle with your mate, and the battery wasn't charged.

In contrast, the self bailer has a simple lever operation, which lowers a shaped slot into the slip-stream of the forward moving boat. This creates a low pressure area (called the Bernoulli effect) in the lee of the slot into which, water from in the boat is drawn. Some versions have an extra vortex flap fitted, which increases the sucking effect and allows effective removal of water at even slow speeds. It also closes as soon as back pressure exceeds the suck, which prevents reflux of water back into the boat. When suction is adequate the flap flutters, making an audible noise which reminds you it is open and serves to allow you to gauge just how fast it is necessary to paddle.

At the conclusion of his article, Frank sums up by saying - 'the method of forcing water out, by forcing the paddler in, then pumping out the remainder with the spraydeck on, is [so] far superior to the lifting method, that I am surprised any other way is bothered with' then adds - 'but to pretend that they [the pumping methods just described] 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'. I would add to that by saying, that to persist in fitting unworkable pumps to our boats when there is a cheap, credible alternative is also irresponsible. There is no denying that pumps at best, provide a method of removing water in fair conditions, but at worst they give a false sense of security. Ask yourself, could you, on your own; re-enter your boat and pump the boat dry, with the pump in it's present position, maintaining stability long enough to carry out the task? I don't believe it is just a matter of practice makes perfect with these hand operated pumps. We have had them around on our decks for years, have accepted their presence as an essential tool of sea paddling, but how many of us have really questioned what they can be effectively

used for? Should we not be looking at all our kit and evaluating whether we can use it, whether it is just a need to train with it or if perhaps it just looks or feels the part.

I have now taken out my troublesome fore-deck mounted pump because I am confident that if I get back into my boat, following a wet exit that I am much more likely to succeed by paddling away whilst my boat empties, than sitting on the spot trying to hand pump it. For other contingencies I carry a Henderson stirrup pump when paddling with a group.

Returning to the original purpose of my letter to ISKA regarding pumps. I have decided to research the use of pumps in sea boats as part of my Level 5 Coach development.

I am interested in finding

out just how useful we find our pumps, do we really use them or are they just so much deck ornament?.....

I have therefore compiled the following questionnaire and would be most interested to hear your answers, comments and suggestions on the issue of pumps. Most particularly I want to hear of your accounts of using pumps in testing conditions.

Please return all questionnaires and any further comments to:-

David. Youren.
119, Pennard drive,
Southgate.
Gower.
Swansea. England.
SA3 2DW.

Dave Stow , Bolberry, 33, Compit Hills
Cromer Norfolk, NR27 9U
Home Phone 01263 513895
03 June 2000

Dear John,
Sea Kayaking in the Sun

Not being someone who can make time for expeditions, I nonetheless enjoy a paddle whenever and where ever I can. Hence my disappointment last year, when holidaying at the north end of Mallorca, that there did not appear to be any kayaks in sight - other than a few 'sit on tops' with the knee straps removed !

Even ISKA did not seem to boast any members from the Balearics.

Fortunately, however, having returned to the Port de Pollenca/Alcudia area again this year, I have now discovered that plastic sea kayaks can be hired at about £6 per hour from a diving centre just outside Alcudia on the Bay of Pollenca.

The paddling is on relatively calm water around a rocky, Mediterranean style coastline with a with a mountain backdrop. The equipment is basic but includes the essentials of feathered paddles, spraydecks and buoyancy aids and an instructor is about to join their team (qualifications not known) to lead mini expeditions.

They currently have 8 boats available and although the shape did seem somewhat familiar, I was unable to establish the manufacturer as they appear to have been provided through a Spanish supplier.

I'm sure there must be lots of sea paddlers out there who enjoy a week or two in the sun whilst on a family holiday and this seems an ideal outlet for SKWS (Sea Kayaking Withdrawal Syndrome - a disorder which seems to afflict all paddlers when presented with an inviting patch of water and no means of getting out on it !)

For all you aspiring holiday makers intent on soaking up the Mallorcan sunshine in the future, the contact details are attached:

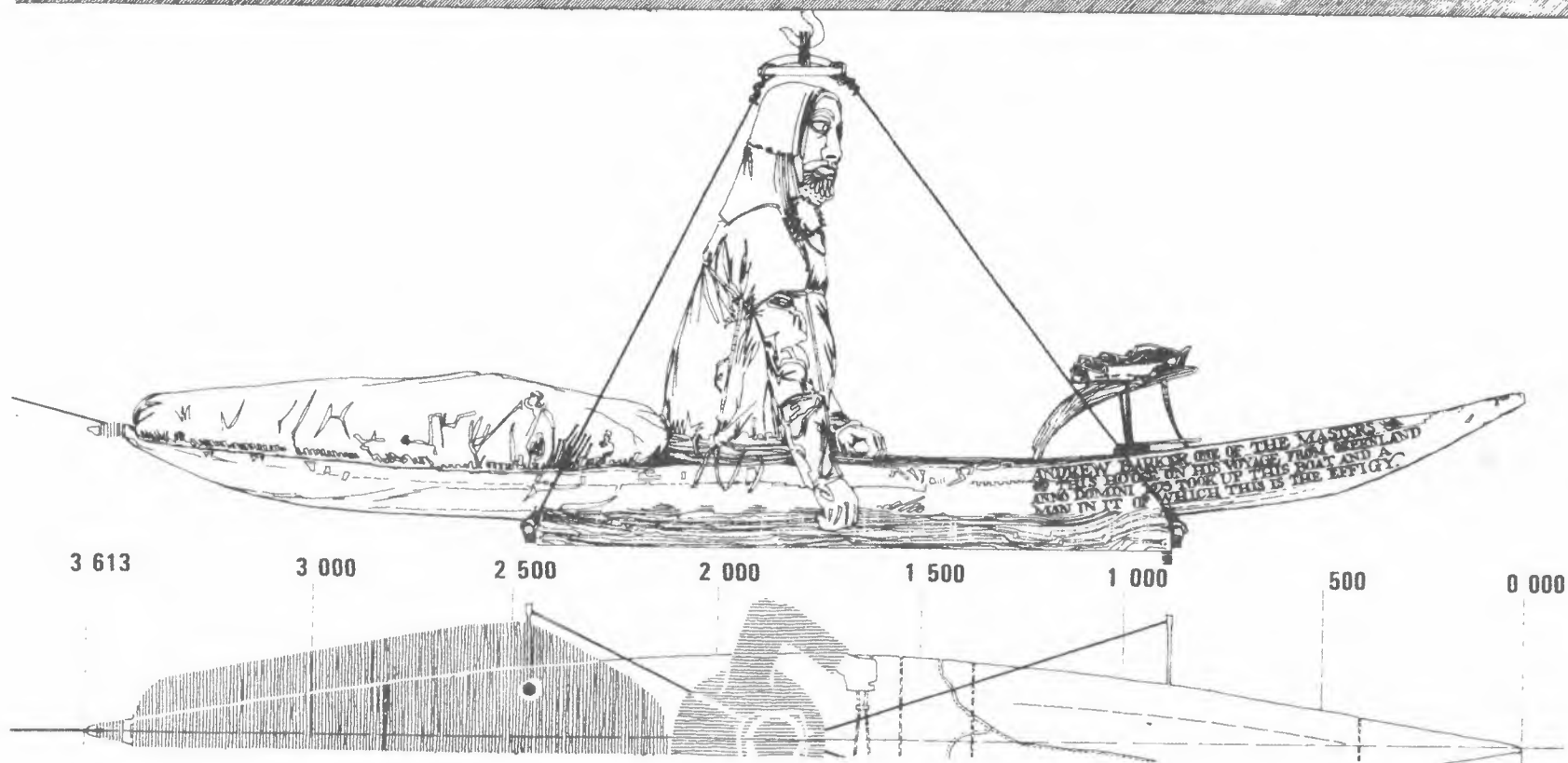
Santiago Giraldez at the Ocean Sub International Diving Centre

Av. del Mal Pas, I, Bajo
Puerto Deportivo Cocodrilo
07409 Alcudia - Mallorca
Tel: 971 54 55 17-Fax 971 54 62 51
www. oceanosub. com

This is approximately 2 km ME of Alcudia (Old Town) just before the Marina at Bon Aire.

Enjoy!
Dave Stow
(Station Officer, H.M Coastguard - Cromer)

Craig Wightman is doing his youth studies BA disertaion on Outdoor Education and Youth Work. Can anyone offer an idea of what or how they percieve the value and content of youth work to be within their O E experience. You can contact Craig at 7E, Victory Alley, B'kara, Malta.



Location — Trinity House,
Hull, Humberside,
England.

Museum no. — none

Type — S. W. Greenland

Classification — IV . 2 . C

Length — 3613 mm

Beam — 430 mm

Surveyed — 28th January, 1966
Charles Ranshaw
and John Brand

bKr — 001 (a)

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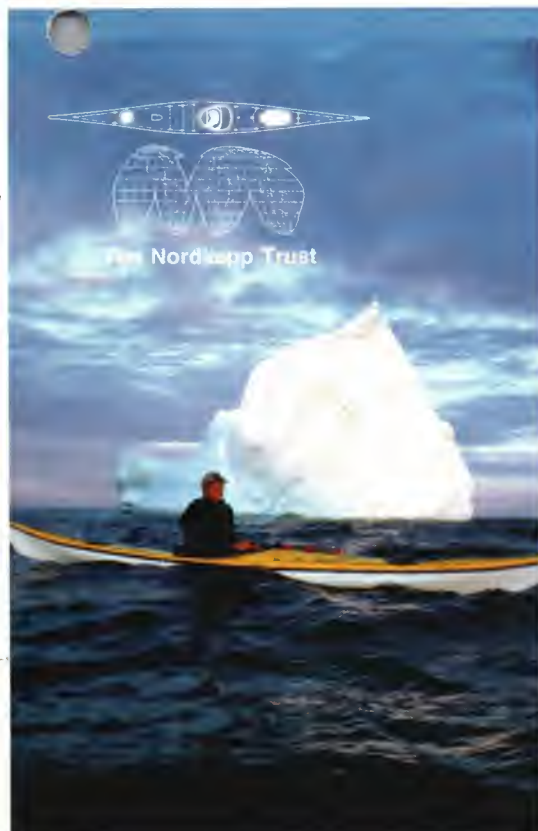
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Please write for the course information and dates.

North America

Maine Island Kayak Co, 70 Luther St, Peaks Island,
ME 04108. (800)796-2373

Atlantic Kayak Tours, 320 W. Saugerties Rd, Saugerties,
NY 12477, (914)246-2187

Sweetwater Kayaks, 1136 Pinellas Bay Way, Tierra Verde,
FL 33715, (727)906-0708

Great River Outfitters, 4180 Elizabeth Lake Rd, Waterford, MI
48328, (248)683-4770

Kayak Centre at Wickford Cove, 9 Phillips St, Wickford RI
02852, (800) 985-2992

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When paddling on the sea which make of boat do you paddle?.....

1/. Does your boat have a fitted pump?.....yes/no.....

If not, do you-carry a hand held pump? yes/no...make.....

or -have a fitted self bailer? yes/no...make.....

2/. If you have a fixed a).i.....a lever operated pump? yes/no...make.....

pump, is it:- a).ii.....mounted behind you? yes/no.....

a)iii.....mounted in front of you? yes/no.....

b).....afoot operated pump? yes/no...make.....

c).....an electric pump? yes/no...make.....

d)other type please specify.....

3/. Have you ever had to use the pump in earnest, at sea, yes/no

in which of the following ways?

a). to assist the over-deck pump out of a companions boat...yes/no

b). to pump out your own cockpit area.....yes/no

c). which type of pump was it that you used for a).....b).....

d). other use please specify.....

4/. Was the need to pump out caused by :-

a).....a burst in or leaking spray deck?yes/no

b).the loss of, or leaking hatch cover?.....yes/no

c).....a leak in the cockpit area.....yes/no...hole or split seam?.....

d)i.....a capsized and roll.....yes/no

ii.....a capsized re-entry and roll.....yes/no

e). other situation, please specify.....

5/. If you used your pump in 4d)i or4d)ii, what were the sea/weather conditions at the time?.....

6/. On this above occasion, how easy would you say it was to pump out your/their boat and maintain stability.....

7/.How long do you estimate it took to empty your/their boat sufficient to carry on?If you were assisted at the time by another paddler, say in what wayor were you paddling solo?.....yes/no.

8/. If you were solo, what method/s were you using to maintain stability whilst you pumped?.....

Briefly describe any difficulties and or successes you experienced pumping out your boat on your own.....

9/. Please add any other information regarding your experiences of pumps.

Thank you.

Please return to: Dave Youren,
119, Pennard Drive, Southgate, Gower, Swansea, SA3 2DW