

OCEAN KAYAKER



NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAKING ASSOCIATION,
THE NORDKAPP TRUST & PADDLERS INTERNATIONAL



**An international & independent sea
canoeing association open to all
interested in this aspect of canoeing
with the objective of promoting safe
sea kayaking for everyone**



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Ocean Kayaker

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of this magazine
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be reached on
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*Whether you sea kayak
regularly or hardly ever I
know you can write. I also
guess you have something to
say. A point of view, an
experience, a piece of gear
that you like (or hate). SO
LET ME HAVE
SOMETHING FOR
YOUR NEWSLETTER*

EVENTS . . .

Please note that we are NOT including an events guide in the newsletter—as we only produce the letter six times a year we believe events are best kept up-to-date on the ISKA web site at:

www.seakayak.co.uk.

So keep Chris Bolton informed of events (planned, changed or cancelled) by e-mail at:

seakayak@btinternet.com

All events, wherever they are staged around the world, should be included.

Ensure details include what, where, when and who. As much notice as possible is a good idea. Include contact details such as telephone, e-mail and/or postal address.

By letter send to Ed. at 5 Osprey Ave., Westhoughton, Bolton, Lancs, BL5 2SL

editorial by John Ramwell

hi!

Here we are again. Hope you've all had a good summer - catching the sun between the wind and rain!

I have been following the fortunes of one of our members, Richard Atkinson, who I actually met earlier this year when we were both out in southern Chile with Raleigh. 'Rich.' was the Deputy Chief Leader and it was out there that he shared with me his plans to kayak around U.K. excluding Ireland this summer. He left from the Moray Firth to go clockwise in May and I had a call recently to say he had navigated Cape Wrath (the NW tip of Scotland and a notorious stretch of coastline) and was soon to head southwards down the east coast of Scotland to complete the circumnavigation. I asked him about his worst moments but apart from some 'hairy' overfalls he has had a good expedition. So many congratulations to Rich for completing what is a challenging trip, done solo and with no shore support at all. Great. I understand there is one other individual and a small group also undertaking this trip around our coast but I don't have details. Rich has sent me four progress reports and I shall be condensing these for inclusion in this newsletter - if not in this issue, then the next.

Previously I have taken the ISKA stand to the International Festival of the Sea. The 4th such event takes place at Leith Docks, Edinburgh over the w/end 23/26 May, 2003. Maybe I'll see you there.

I am losing the plot over the International Canoe Exhibition for 2003. The BCU are running the International Canoe Exhibition in Hall 20 at the National Indoor Arena, Birmingham alongside the Ordnance Survey Outdoors show from 14th to 16th March, 2003. I have agreed to take the ISKA stand to this show. Hope to see many of you there. BUT then I receive an invitation from the National Boat, Caravan and Outdoor Show asking me to support the National Canoe & Kayak Show 15/16th February, 2003. So can the canoe world sustain two England based canoe exhibitions, bearing in mind that Scotland and N. Ireland have their own national canoe exhi

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hibitions. (Scotland is having theirs October at Perth). The manufacturers, who provide 90% at least of the substance of the shows, have often said that their preferred timing for a show is Autumn when they are preparing stock and production for the forthcoming year. Perhaps you have some comments on this. Personally I believe that an exhibition could be combined with the Anglesey Symposium. I have spoken with Nigel Dennis about this and he agrees it could be appropriate. The rivers of Wales are only a car ride away and there is no better venue for sea kayaking. A large marquee could stage the exhibition, lots of "come and try it" sessions provided by the trade (this already happens). The 'alternative' Int. Canoe Exhibition could then be followed by a week of courses and mini expeditions. So we would literally something for every body. Plenty of camping, B & B opportunities exist and the improved A5 and the good train service to Holyhead means that this venue would be in reach of the whole country. What a great idea. One big event that would please most of the people most of the time. It could be done.

I no longer retail ISKA shirts BUT I recently came across some quality tee shirts on which I have placed the ISKA logo over the top left front. They come in light grey and I only have 20. Let me know if you want one, they're £6.00 which includes post and pack. Oh! and I only have large and extra large.

Finally, as we are approaching the end of the year it is renewal time again. I hope you decide to stick with us. We continue to grow year on year despite not really working too hard to promote the organisation. Word of mouth seems to be the best promotion and this is what we rely on. So complete the enclosed renewal form and do make it clear if I am not to include you details in our membership list that will go out in the new year.

Good Kayaking,

John Ramwell

BOOK REVIEW "Sea Kayak Rescue"

You show up all excited at your first coastal kayaking class. You get to do your first wet exit, a paddlefloat re-entry, and perhaps try a T rescue. At the end of the rescue section of the class, your instructor encourages you to practice, practice, practice.

The next week, you and some friends get together at a local lake to practice the paddlefloat self-rescue. Now the debate begins.

Do you right the kayak before or after inflating the paddle float? Do you position yourself at the stern or at the cockpit? What am I doing wrong as I keep "flashing the yellow rainbow"? Do I rotate towards the paddle or away from the paddle?

For lucky owners of Sea Kayak Rescue, flipping to Chapter 5 reveals the "Step by Step" section for a Paddlefloat Self-Rescue. Here all questions are answered by viewing the picture or detailed explanation.

Now you're wondering whether anyone ever uses this rescue for real. Seems the author anticipated this question, so at the end of the section is a sidebar called "Real Life Rescues" where the author recounts the tale of a sea kayaker using the paddlefloat rescue in a "real life" situation. I found myself reading all the "Real Life Rescue" sidebars first. Each is interesting, some are "nail biters", and many present a creative approach to dealing with a real life situation.

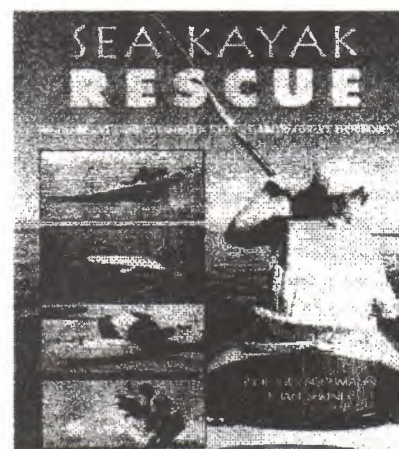
This approach of a "Step by Step" section often accompanied by a "Real Life Rescue" sidebar gives you the general look and feel for this book. Most sea kayak books devote a chapter to rescue techniques. Sea Kayak Rescue is an entire book on rescues. Each rescue is described in detail, incorporating a discussion of local variations and their pros and cons.

There are several rescues and rescue techniques beyond basic paddlefloat and T-rescue which serious sea kayakers should have in their inventory of skills. Sea Kayak Rescue provides a step by step view of:

Reenter and roll. Bow rescue. Rolling. Sling rescues for tired paddlers. Scoop and Hand of God for incapacitated paddlers. Cleopatra's Need for a failed bulkhead. Double kayak rescues. Rescues in surf, rock gardens, and rough water. Towing skills. Retrieving boats and swimmers.

The author's practical view of Greenland sculling is that it can be

by Roger Schumann & Jan Shriner
Reviewed by Melinda J. Bean



used by a tired paddler to scull up for a breath of air before attempting a roll. There is a lack of recognition on the authors' part that Greenland sculling and rolling really are one and the same. (Those that follow Greenland skills might get a chuckle from the picture of Greenland sculling.)

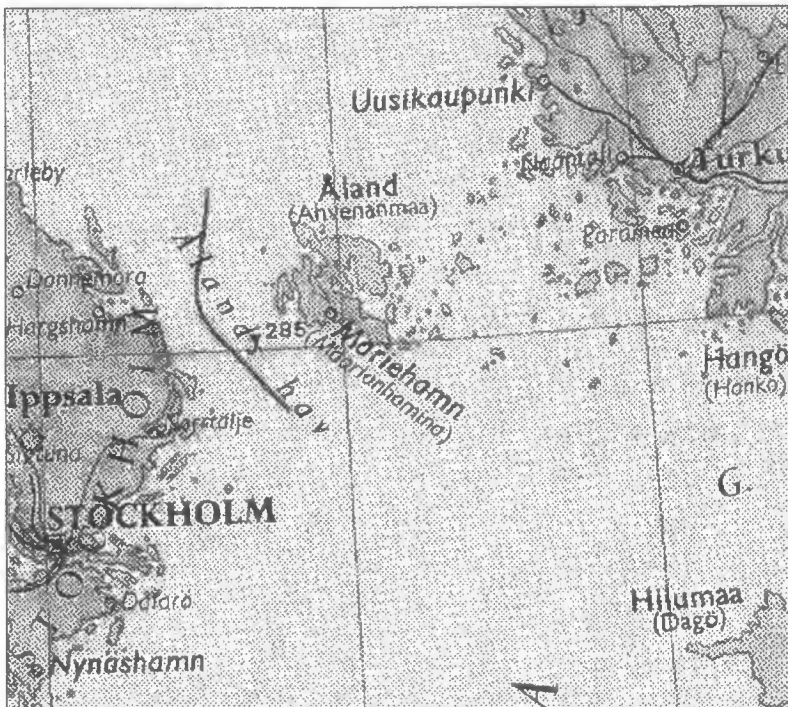
The first three chapters are dedicated to preparation and prevention. Safety guidelines on dressing for immersion, checking weather and tidal forecasts, paddling within your limits, having the right gear, and bombproofing your braces are all discussed. granted this information might seem basic to a seasoned paddler, but may save the life of someone newer to the sport.

The authors recommend a change in the name of the basic paddlefloat rescue and T-rescue to "Paddlefloat Recovery" and "T-Recovery". They emphasize there is nothing wrong with tipping over - you pushed the envelope and tried something new. You just "recover" and move on. To me, this equates to my many falls on a ski' slope. I was never "rescued", just "recovered" and continued on my way.

Roger Schumann is an ACA Instructor Trainer Educator and Jan Shriner is an ACA Instructor Trainer. Consequently, the descriptions and techniques presented in this book closely mirror the training guidelines of the ACA. This makes Sea Kayak Rescue an excellent resource for ACA coastal kayak courses or ACA coastal kayak instructor certification. For those new to sea kayaking, this book is a definite add to the library. I also recommend this book to those with more experience as an excellent reference book

Destinations . . .

Ambling through the Åland Islands

byPHIL
FRANKLIN

This title was chosen to reflect the nature of the trip; the object being to enjoy the wildlife and natural surroundings while kayaking at a leisurely pace among the thousands of small islands which constitute the Åland archipelago. With only two of us we were able to stop where, when and for as long as we wished. Our outward journey from Cornwall took nearly a week, including a deviation via Denmark, a visit to friends in Stockholm and a day sightseeing in Mariehamn, the largest town on Åland.

Semicircular route

Our general plan was to leave the car at a campsite on the island of Vardo, take a roughly semicircular route to the south

following the major groups of islands and then return to our starting point on one of the inter-island car ferries.

The pattern

Setting out on Saturday morning in a southerly direction from the campsite at Sandosund we were glad to be cooled by a gentle south-westerly breeze which just rippled the surface of the water; the whole area had been suffering an unseasonable heat wave for the last month. We soon passed the terminus of our intended return ferry at Hummelvik, and continued south, stopping on small islands for morning, lunch and afternoon breaks. This was to be the pattern on most days. Whilst wandering along the shoreline after lunch we surprised a large snake which had been sunning itself on the rocks. This in addition to a white-tailed eagle, put up during the morning, and various ducks was quite a good tally of wildlife for the first day. We found a suitable place to camp on a small island just off the ferry terminal at Langnas, from which we could watch the ferries passing. At all our subsequent overnight stops we were able to find small, generally very small, patches of grass or low vegetation just large enough for our tent. It would, however, be quite a problem for a group unless they were willing to pitch camp on bare rock or stones. The following morning was absolutely still with a clear sky, so we set off southeast for the island group of Foglo and landed at the village of Degerby. We had hoped to top up our water supply, but finding nowhere open were unable to do so. Setting off along the

narrow channels between the islands which make up the Foglo group we could have been on a small inland lake. The larger islands are all quite densely wooded, almost to the waters edge in many places.

Continuous attention

Elsewhere there are smooth glacier scraped rocks or reed beds. There are no tides and so there is little or no foreshore. We found that that navigation needed almost continuous attention. Being totally ringed by islands, which from sea level appeared to form a continuous barrier, made location of the channels between them quite demanding at times. In the sheltered stretches of water we passed numerous groups of very small ducklings under the care of one, two or occasionally three adults. If we accidentally came too close they set off in great panic, the ducklings 'running' across the water's surface and an adult setting off in another direction with much splashing to draw us away. From the many hides that we saw we concluded that their great fear was the result of shooting earlier in the year.

First real sea kayaking

Following a second night's camping on a small island to the north of Foglo we set off into a brisk easterly wind to cross a channel some three to four miles wide. This was the first real sea kayaking with sufficient chop on the water to throw spray in our faces.

Then turning northwards we stopped briefly at a cafe on the southern tip of Sottunga for a cooling drink and to replenish our water supplies. We continued generally heading northeast for a further three days, alternately crossing open stretches of water two to three miles wide and passing through groups of islands, via Seglinge and Kumlinge to the ferry terminal at Torsholma on Brando. On Kumlinge we took a half day break to explore the island and booked into a small hotel for one night. This proved somewhat entertaining at first since the only staff present were two girls, a Taiwanese and an Icelander, neither of whom could communicate with us or each other. However, all was soon sorted out when the manager who spoke excellent English arrived half an hour later. The official language on Åland is Swedish with some Finnish spoken in the eastern islands, but we

found that the majority of local people we met spoke good English. The few that didn't seemed to understand our limited Swedish. At the ferry terminal we mounted our kayak onto its trolley and with difficulty manhandled it up to the roadway. After the ferry had arrived and unloaded its vehicles we followed a cyclist up the loading ramp and were accommodated without any query. The journey was free too! A two and a half hour ferry trip followed by an hour's paddling saw us back at the campsite where we had left the car.

The weather during the last two days had been much more varied. There was much more wind and light overnight rain with heavy cloud first thing which generally cleared by midday. This was not a real problem with so many islands for protection. When on our own we always paddle in conditions well within our capability and found the Ålands much less challenging than either NW Scotland or the fjords and islands of Norway.

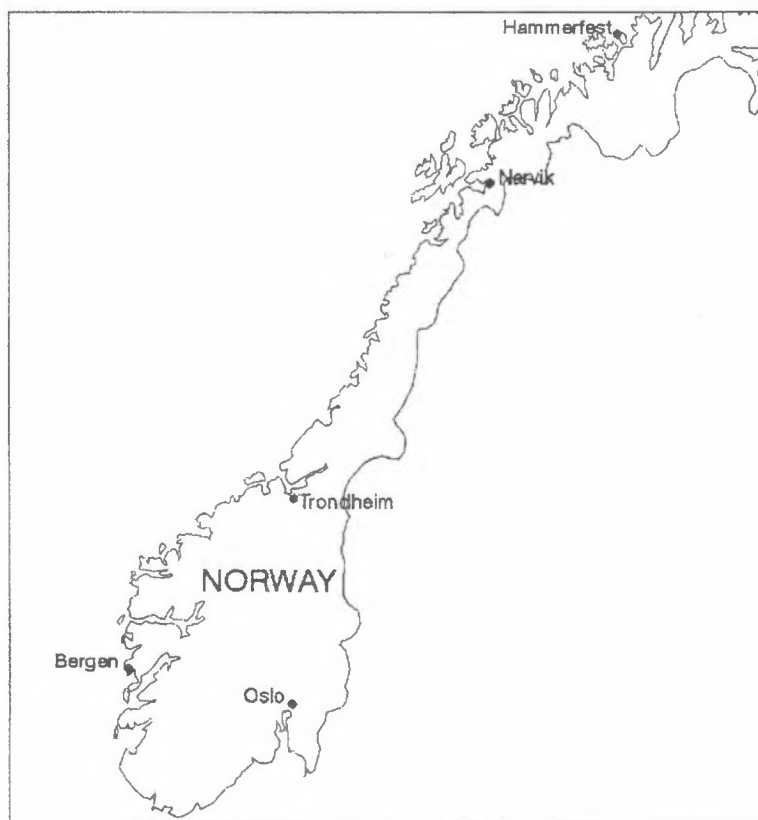
Ferries

Newcastle-Gothenburg by DFDS Seaways. Cheaper if booked as a camping holiday in Sweden. (even more so for the over 60's) The camping vouchers came in useful for the odd night en route. Grisslehamn-Eckero by Eckero Line Not necessary to pre-book except perhaps holiday weekends: we didn't, the boat was less than half full. Inter island ferries are free to pedestrians and kayaks. Maps 1 :50,000 published in Finland are essential. Available to order in UK (allow 6 weeks) or more cheaply from Mariehamn Bokhandel on Åland. Kayak North Shore Calypso II. We carried provisions for 8 days and water for 3-4 days. Car Parking 2 euro per night at Sandosund campsite. The proprietor was very friendly and not the least concerned that we had our own kayak even though he had kayaks for hire.

Tic Born Encephalitis

Following advice from MASTA we spent nearly £80 each on the course of two inoculations but experienced no problems. General Information

A call to the London office of the Finnish Tourist Board produced a selection of guides and timetables through the post. www.GoÅland.net for those with web access.

Destinations . . .**Fjord Kayaking in
Western Norway****by**RICHARD
BRYANT

The Norwegian coast offers endless opportunities for all types of sea paddling as well as being one of the most scenic and outstanding natural areas in the world. The expedition I undertook in the summer of 2001 down the Geiranger Fjord is the journey many thousands of tourists have done from the deck of pleasure cruiser or liner.

Eagle Way

Geiranger Fjord is approximately 15km long and 1 km across and lies in the area of Sunmore on the west coast. A stunning zigzag road - the Eagle Way (Ornesveien)

leads to the town of Geiranger at the head of the fjord from Andelsnes. The fjord is reached by boat from the sea by heading east along Storfjorden to the south of the town of, then south along Sunnlyvsfjorden and then east into Geirangerfjorden. The town of Helligslyt lies just south of the entrance to the fjord at the head of Sunnlyvsfjorden, and it is from here most of the smaller excursion boats start from. As I entered the fjord, the wind that had slowed my progress over the first few kilometres from Helligslyt, died completely leaving me paddling in the glassiest water I have ever experienced.

Unable to get home

After several kilometres I paddled past several old wooden farm buildings constructed on the small foreshore areas, some of which are alluvial fans at the base of avalanches and rock fall gullies. It is a fact that school children who left to go by boat to school from these low level buildings, occasionally were unable to get home to their farms higher up due to stone falls that occasionally destroyed the paths and even sometimes destroyed the farmhouses.

Almost immediately on entering the fjord the 1500m mountain sides dropping vertical into the fjord dominate the view .

About halfway along the fjord there are two farms that are sited on small plateau areas at a height of 250-300m above the water. Both Skageflaa and Knivesflaa consist of a wooden farmhouse and a barn or other small outbuildings. The path up from a small quay is very exposed, extremely steep

and only to be taken by those who are not prone to vertigo. There is a rope to aid the climb but it is said the farmers removed the posts when the taxman was visiting. The farms were abandoned about 50 years ago but they have been thoroughly restored and are popular to visit. They have been visited by a group of European reigning monarchs. The children who lived on these farms were tied by long ropes to stop an inadvertent fall over the edge.

Mirror like

Paddling along the fjord is a strange experience as the water is so perfectly mirror like. Occasional tourist ships pass by on their way to Geiranger. The swell these boats produce is difficult to see and comes as a glassy rolling wave and then again as a perfect reflection from the rock wall. Finally rounding the last bend I came in site of the town of Geiranger. The town is dominated by a large hotel and small tourist shops, cafes and boats anchored in the bay. The large cruisers disgorge their passengers for a few hours before returning back the way they have come.

From an aesthetic point of view there may be other fjords with no tourist ships, where no other people are seen apart from the odd fisherman, but Hardanger deserves its reputation as one of the premier tourist attractions in a country abundant in beautiful scenery.

On the return I paddled over to the north side of the fjord where numerous waterfalls come crashing down over 200 metres into the dark waters of the fjord. These are called the seven sisters and I was able to sit in behind them in the one metre between the rock face and the water, probably the only craft able to do such a manoeuvre. The spray thrown up by the waterfalls made amazing small-scale rainbows.

The trip is one I was able to do relatively easily as I keep a kayak at relatives in Aalesund but it is one I would suggest for anyone considering paddling in Norway. Typically paddling in Norway involves open sea crossings and island hopping, sea fjord coastal trips and inner fjord mountain scenery trips. My one regret was being unable to have time to paddle one of the high glacial lakes with their green, ice-cold water. This remains to be done next time.

THE TIMES (MALTA)

Sportsmanship Trophy

Veteran canoeist wins award ahead of Valletta goalkeeper

The winner of the 2001 Sportsmanship Trophy is Craig Wightman. This was announced by Chief Justice Emeritus, Prof. J.J. Cremona, chairman of the Adjudicating Committee during a live broadcast on FBS Television.

The citations of the winner and of Sean Sullivan, the runner-up, were read out by Lewis Portelli, honorary secretary of the committee who founded this Award together with the late Fred Bennett in 1974,

The winner and runner-up received diplomas while the Trophy will be formally presented at a later stage during a major sports activity by the Malta Canoe Union.

During the Round Manoel Island IOK classic race in February 2001, veteran canoeist Wightman placed second among 30 competitors.

After a brief rest, the IOK race was followed by a 3kn race which attracted a sizeable number of newcomers who were unskilled canoeists.

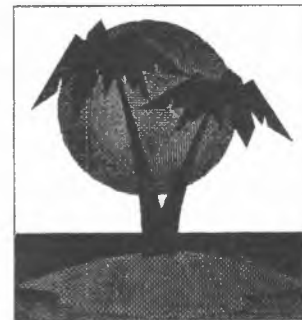
With the winner of the first race now participating in a doubles canoe, Wightman had every opportunity to claim victory in this event.

However, conscious of the fact that some novices may encounter problems early in the race, he spontaneously opted not to surge ahead with his initial sprint, but to stay at the rear of the contestants, and indeed he expertly conducted a rescue of a young canoeist who capsized soon after the start and who was not noticed by the safety boat in attendance.

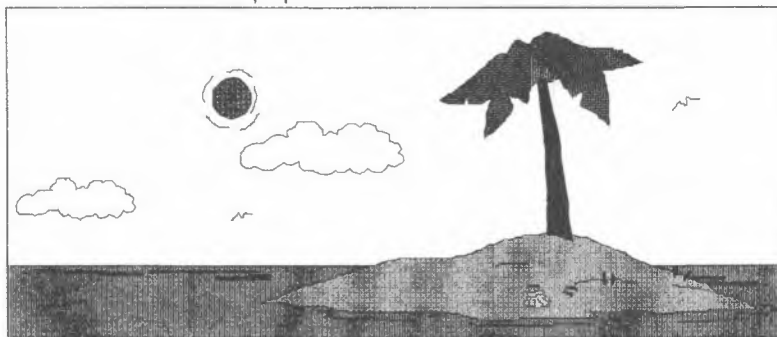
He thus jeopardised his chance of winning the event. Later on in the same race Wightman also initiated the rescue of a young female participant who found herself in difficulties and her boat actually began to drag the canoeist underwater.

Desert Island survival . . .

What would you encounter?



It's a common fantasy to be alone on an isle with endless white sands and an empty crystal sea stretching to the horizon. Holiday resorts are too busy, too noisy, too populous - too much like life at home. We



crave solitude, want to get back to a more natural way of living. The Good Life in a tropical paradise.

About survival

But living on a desert island is about survival, not lotus-eating, and take it from me, survival is not fun. When pirates marooned an errant shipmate, it was the ultimate punishment, a living death followed by the real thing - with much mental and physical privation in between. Suppose you were washed up on a tropical shore - how would you survive? What would you encounter?

First, let's be clear: real survival on a desert island would be nothing like the current "reality" TV show *Survivor*. There are no bright young things wearing skimpy bikinis, and certainly no television crews offering illicit ciggies, lighters or the odd Bounty bar. Whether we're irked or inspired by the

contestants, nobody is going to die. They're not even going to be allowed to get sick: the contestants are the show, and these victims are going to be mollicoddled until they've done whatever the producer requires.

Find water—Fast

But here you are, washed up, bubbling gently in the limpid shallows. This is no time to be savouring the sea's mellow temperature: humans can live for 10 days or more without food; without water, we last only a few days. In hot climates, we can lose it after a few hours. Find water. Fast.

If you go inland and dig a very deep hole, you might be lucky and find small amounts of brackish fresh water. But the work will make you sweat precious bucketfuls, and there is no guarantee of success. And even faster than death from thirst comes death by heat exhaustion.

In the humidity and unrelenting heat, without shade or water, you soon develop a skull-splitting headache and muscle cramps, and begin vomiting away any fluids you might have left in your stomach. You behave irrationally, drinking your own urine or seawater, in desperate attempts to satisfy a terrible, raging thirst. Forget pina coloda: you'd kill your children for the chance to drink from a loo bowl if it contained fresh water.

Build a shelter

So, your next priority is to build a shelter to keep you out of the sun.

This is serious work. You need many 12ft-long "attap" palm leaves, which you split down the middle and lie upside down along a bamboo or driftwood frame. Build it properly, and you'll not only protect yourself from the sun, but keep the rain off too. And you'll also need to get off the ground, away from the thousands of tiny biting sandflies that arrive when the sun goes down. (Sunsets? You'll learn to hate them.)

Survival requires fire

All survival requires fire: to ward off those insects, for cooking, and to give psychological comfort against the unseen but terrifyingly noisy horrors that lurk beyond the flames. With a fire burning on the beach, concurrently sending rescue messages to ships as well as keeping you warm, things start to seem rather jolly.

But lighting a fire is very difficult, unless you have dry tinder and something sensible like a cigarette lighter. Forget rubbing sticks together. If you used exactly the right wood, and knew precisely how to do it, you'd get the odd puff of smoke, which you'd struggle to turn into flame. Only real experts - like a friend of mine in Canada who's spent years studying with Indians - can do it to order.

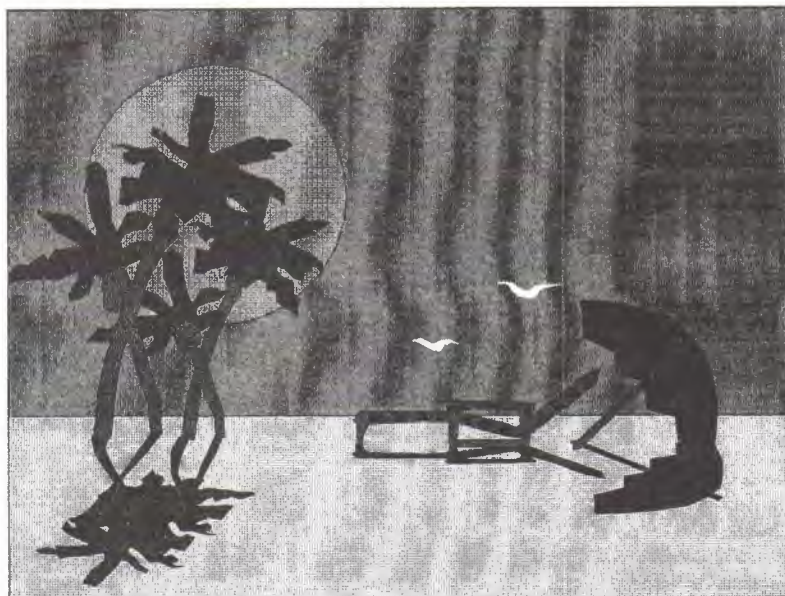
It's the same with fishing. The best way to fish if you are really hungry and have no other source of food is by way of that old military stand-by, plastic explosive. Take a knob of PE and a detonator, light the fuse, lob it into the water and - bang! - lunch floats to the surface.

Downright dangerous

But on the desert island, sans plastique, line fishing is not only nutritionally unreliable - it's also downright dangerous. After dark, frighteningly large sharks come in so close to the shore that you could become their dinner, snatched from the shallows as you bait your hooks.

Food should not be a problem, surrounded as you are by coconuts, rich in oils and carbohydrate. Grilled fish soused in coconut milk is delicious, and will make you fat. But beware. The nuts are heavy and fall sporadically. Being killed by one is an embarrassing way to die.

Most creatures can be eaten: 2in diameter coconut beetles, for example, are crunchy and nutritious, although the wings and legs tend to stick in the teeth. The sprinting lizards have some flesh in their legs and tails, but the calories expended in catching them will probably exceed what they contain once cooked. Most exotic animals are supposed to taste "just like chicken". I don't



know about that, but what is certain is that one bout of vomiting will leave you weaker than if you'd stuck to coconuts.

Winds and sheet lightning

It's a very routine lifestyle on the desert island. You might consider the regularity a form of mental torture. Every day, at 6pm, it rains - in torrents that physically hurt, with shelter-destroying winds and sheet lightning that turns the heavy blackness into a jagged nightmare of electric-blue flash-gun images. From the hotel veranda, it's a wondrous firework display that coincides neatly with the second GAT, but in the real world, you realise that electrocution is probably imminent.

You must be joking

And, as the thunderclaps stop, the night noises begin. A whole new world of insects and other creatures comes to life, competing lustily to make the most startling sounds; the blackness is shockingly loud, alien and terrifyingly alive. Sleep? You must be joking.

"Going round the island?" . . . Yes!

by

RICHARD
ATKINSON

Hello, I'm afraid it's been a long time since I've been near a PC to scribble an update, but at last here it is! I'm currently in the beautiful Menai Strait, waiting for the afternoon tide to take me down past Bangor and so onward towards Liverpool and the final leg of the journey - a return to Scotland!!

Waved goodbye

After I last wrote I waved goodbye to friends at Leigh on Sea and pushed off from the Essex coast, crossing the Thames in a brisk wind and racing tide and working my way around the Kent coast. My first port of call was the resort town of Leysdown on Sea, a place of unrelenting awfulness and not one of my better decisions. A desperate, hour-long boat drag across a quarter mile of oozing mud flats led to a campsite near a loud and tacky amusement arcade... it rained non-stop and to cap it all I awoke to find someone had stolen my tent pegs in the night!

Having no desire to prolong acquaintance with Leysdown, I pushed off early, rounded North Foreland, Ramsgate and pulled ashore on the sands near Deal; just around the corner lay Dover, with its congested waters and frantic ferry traffic. The harbour control took it all in their stride however and waved me across between the stern of an outbound ferry and the bow of an inbound dredger, and from there it was just a short hop to the sheer white cliffline of Beachy Head, its red and white striped lighthouse dwarfed by the towering chalk wall above it.

As I reached Hythe the red flags of the firing range were flying, and puffs of smoke accompanied sounds of artillery fire - reluctant to become an unwitting target, I

took an enforced pause through the afternoon. Firing finally stopped at 5 pm and I was on my way again - but there was bad news. Lydd Range, ten miles further on, would be firing all the next day. I would have to clear Lydd that night or waste a day sitting on the shore tomorrow. I pushed on to break past Lydd that night, racking up an exhausting 38 miles that day and pulling ashore shattered on benighted beach. Too tired to pitch tent in the dark, I chanced the weather and rolled out my bag on the shingle to sleep under the stars!

Battling wind and waves

Over the next days I worked my way along the south coast, fighting into strong westerly winds almost every day. Energy reserves drained low, sapped by my long haul into the night to clear the firing ranges, and by days constantly battling wind and waves. Struggling to make 15 miles most days, I watched the schedule slip away from me while feeling powerless to do anything about it, a frustrating and dispiriting experience. However, on the plus side the south coast is home to family and numerous old friends, so for a change I was able to stop off and spend time with familiar faces - my family visited me with a picnic, and I even pulled in at Ricardo plc in Shoreham to catch up with old colleagues. There were some strange looks from people arriving in the morning to see a tent pitched on the company's front lawn! As I readied to go on the slipway a crowd of inquisitive schoolkids arrived and suddenly we were engulfed in ten year olds, fascinated at this strange adventurer! Small hands fumbled with cameras and a barrage of questions had to be answered! Ready at last, I rolled up my trousers and slithered the boat across the knee deep mud, children

The harbour control took it all in their stride however and waved me across between the stern of an outbound ferry and the bow of an inbound dredger

cheering and waving, friends recording the indignity on film!

Weymouth - delightfully pretty

Gradually I clawed my way windward - through the Solent and across Christchurch bay to Swanage, where once again firing ranges dictated the schedule, this time a 4 am start to get past before hostilities commenced! Visiting Weymouth - delightfully pretty as you enter the town from the sea - I called in to chat to the Coastguard before rounding the notorious Bill of Portland and crossing Chesil beach, a



15-mile stretch of inhospitable shingle and dumping surf. Any landing here can quickly lead to drowning in the vicious undertow, and I'd long worried about this exposed stretch so it was with relief that I pulled ashore after 8 hours without a stop. Slowly I ticked off the shores of Dorset, Devon and finally Cornwall, making steady but hard won progress. In Devon I waited out storms, and encountered some of the wildest seas I'd ever been in. Off Salcombe Estuary at Bolt Head, where tide and river and wind all meet at once to fight over their differences, I found myself suddenly engulfed in wild breaking seas, towering above me and crashing down towards me in walls of white - fighting hard to stay upright and bracing in all directions in the confused seas, I fought for an hour in water that was frighteningly powerful and at times close to terrifying before finally arriving in the tranquil estuary

of Bantham, and tying up by the picturesque boathouse with its thatched roof and old ships' figureheads in the eaves. It was the scene of happy childhood holidays, and a needed tonic after the day's hard fight on the water!

Land's End

Land's End marked a huge psychological turning point - finally I would be heading North, finally each mile would be taking me closer to, instead of further from, Spey Bay and the finish line, and most important of all the strong south westers would now be blowing on my back - helping me instead of punching me back at each stroke!!

Heading up the north coast of Cornwall progress seemed to leap ahead - suddenly twenty five, even thirty or more miles in a day were possible! As well, I was now seeing new wildlife - grey seals following the boat along, manx shearwaters zooming up to the kayak at wavetop height, a rare sun fish floating by and even a school of basking sharks. One of these lumbering monsters I didn't see until he was just feet off the bow. A two foot high dorsal fin slid by inches off my bow and a colossal grey bulk glided primevally past the kayak; close enough to touch, he was fully as long and a grey deal more massive than my slender, fragile craft. I admit I felt a minor tremor of fear and instinctively put in a couple of hasty paddle strokes! Basking sharks however, despite their Jaws appearance and colossal size, are toothless, gentle beasts, which graze lazily along our coast for plankton and mean the passing canoeist no harm!

Biggest and most comitting

Reaching the northern tip of Devon I made the short hop over to the Isle of Lundy - one of my favourite haunts - and in the Marisco Tavern there I prepared my navigation for the biggest and most comitting open crossing of the voyage. I planned to make a thirty mile trip from the Island across to St Govan's Head in South Wales. Poring quietly over my charts, I tried to be patient with a crowd of onlookers advising me to 'watch out for the weather', including one chap who asserted "I bet you've never paddled right round Lundy!" The next day saw me miles out on an open sea, paddling on a compass bearing for a landfall that slowly emerged as a hazy grey outline, gradually took form over the hours to become cliffs and bays, and finally turned into the sandy paradise of Barafundle Bay - an almost tropically beautiful beach on the

South Pembrokeshire coast, and a fine reward for a ten hour paddle across the Bristol Channel!

On a bright day

Despite the previous day's exertions, I had to be on the water at seven if I was to catch the west-going tide, so it was an early turn to. On a bright day I joined the tide race going past the St Govan's Head cliffs, and by evening I was in the tiny cathedral city of St Davids. The weather now held fair for the first time since the beginning of the voyage in May, and I made fast progress up the Welsh coast to Newquay, where a resident community of dolphins was out feeding in the ebb tide as I arrived - fantastic! I'd caught only passing glimpses of dolphins during my voyage, so it was a treat to simply stop and watch them, gracefully arcing out of the water, sometimes noiselessly wheeling back under, other times bursting right out to splash back in with a crash. This is well known dolphin territory and is being studied by the Marine Wildlife Centre in Newquay. Thanks to Steve who runs the centre I had a bed indoors for the night, and enjoyed a beer with the centre volunteers that evening - very civilised!

North of Cardigan I pushed on to Porthmadog, where I had arranged to meet up with Dave Evans of the Cwm Pennant outdoor centre. Dave generously offered to pick me up off the beach with a minibus... however, as we loaded the boat the van began to sink slowly and ominously into the sand! Frantically we tried to dig the bus out as it sunk down to its axles, with us getting progressively dirtier, wetter and more desperate! A passer by stopped, watching our labours for a while before mindlessly observing "You wouldn't think the sand was soft, would you?" Sensing, perhaps, that he was in greater danger than even our imperilled minibus he wisely moved on....

Breathtaking

Leaving Porthmadog I paddled past the breathtaking but mist-shrouded mountains of Snowdonia, took Bardsey Sound at the slack - a place with a fearsome reputation, but calm on the day I was there, thankfully - and headed north towards Menai. Arriving in the strait just too late to go all the way through (Menai has some of the most complex and seemingly contradictory tides on the UK coast), I pulled up on the slip at the Plas Menai watersports centre. As I pulled in a sailing dinghy passed and we exchanged yells in the wind. "Going round the island?" "Yes, the island of Britain!"

"WHAT?" (hand cupped to ear) "YES!" (for simplicity) He gave me a broad grin and a thumbs up. "AH! I'VE DONE IT A COUPLE OF TIMES MYSELF!"

Obituary Peter Hatt.

'Hattie' has died. I could not believe it.

He died on Sunday 29th September, 2002. Peter and I first got to know each other when we partnered up for the 50th Anniversary Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race a few years ago. He was always so reliable. He never failed to produce a full commitment to both the training and the race. On one occasion, because the canal was frozen over, we went round and round the docks at Preston which was mind blowingly boring. Unfortunately we failed to complete the race and get to Westminster but this was entirely down to me. "Are you OK Peter?" "No problem, I'm in my comfort zone", came the reply. Cruising he might have been but I was flagging and we pulled out. I remember seriously falling out with a partner who I believed failed to pull he weight. Not Peter, though clearly disappointed he never once commented on my failure to get us to the end of the race.

So Peter, you ran a full race in life. You leave behind a loving family and a lot of good friends. Many you made with your work and enthusiasm in setting up the North West Kayakers Association which has been used as a template in other parts of the country. This association gave local paddlers the opportunity to come together and enjoy their common interest.

Peter only retired a few years ago at 55 from the Greater Manchester Fire Service. He often spoke of his plans on retiring - most of them centering around his family and his passion for the outdoors and the natural environment. Though he was only granted a few years, in his usual style he made the best use of them as indeed he had done with his life prior to retirement.

Peter, you will be missed. I still can't believe it.

John Ramwell

a resident community of dolphins was out feeding in the ebb tide as I arrived - fantastic!

Australian news

by Peter Carter

The New Australian Canoeing Award Scheme is gradually being taken up in place of the old scheme, which dates from the mid-1970s. The new one has the magic label 'VET' (Vocational Education and Training) attached, so that it suits the rapidly expanding outdoor recreation industry. Makes it complex, with lots of documentation, much of it sitting on my computer for editing and layout, but will be worth it in the long run.

A bureaucrat in NSW Waterways recently decided that all sea kayaks used by commercial operators ('hire and drive' and 'charter' are the terms) must have 50 litres of fixed foam buoyancy. Commercial providers and

Aus Canoeing set about explaining that that would be counterproductive, but reasoned argument doesn't work against heads full of expanded polystyrene. Fortunately, there's one bureaucrat in NSW Waterways who has done some sea kayaking and is on our side.

She came to the Canoe Safety Taskforce meeting held by Aus Canoeing in Sydney in early August, along with representatives from whitewater and sea paddling, insurance, commercial providers, and a lawyer. Lots of followup for the two teams formed to put things together, but the aim is to have a comprehensive set of standards that can be pre-

sented to marine authorities, education administrators, the insurance industry, etc. so that they can see what is appropriate for equipment, qualifications, and so on for flat water, whitewater and sea conditions.

That way we should not only be able to avoid the absurd, like the 50 litres of EPS, or the PFD 1 and anchor required in Western Australia, by showing that we are regulating ourselves appropriately and responsibly, but keep insurance premiums within reasonable limits.

One expedition we had planned for early October won't be happening, alas, because owners of the island won't let us camp.

French news

by Michel WALLER?

Président of CK/mer, independent kayak association

Foreign paddlers in french waters: according to personnel direct exchanges with french officials and letter confirmation, YOU have only to prove that you are a foreigner (hopefully with documents in order, hard times presently, don't wear a keffy or a turban) and that your kayak is conform to the legislation which prevail in your country. You don't have to belong to any federation. The builder registration number, or any other document as already prepared for example as by Udo in liaison with DKV should be OK. However a good idea, if you come in France is to bring a copy of the letter published in facsimile in the last PKI letter, to show IF control.

Regarding representation of touring sea kayakers vis a vis the french officials of Ministry of Transport, I agree that the French Federation de Canoe Kayak was not the right speaker for the rules definitions, and is not yet fully

competent in this matter. They are mainly concerned with white water and competition, but they try hard to be present in the sea kayak booming activity.

BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, we didn't involved ourselves in the past, within the discussions as a active lobby; paddling is more pleasant, I confess myself. Sitting as guest in the commission Mer (sea) since october 2000, I confirm the FFCK chairman and guys are strongly determined to keep their official position of exclusive speaker. On the other side the Authorities claimed and confirm this position. Every demand should pass via the F.F.C.K., and last negotiations on the length/beam ratio of 10 (now cancelled) clearly show a totally frozen situation. I was personally involved in these discussions and supporting Pagayeurs Marins objective was hopeless in my position. Legislation is now confirmed, I keep a low

profile as a non representative association chairman. On our next members meeting, the members should decide which way we have to go. Democracy will decide.....

By passing the FFCK for sea kayak legislation is obviously the ideal way to adapt rules to our touring kayakists views Is it possible to change the situation in the next future and for ever ?

This is Philippe's hard job and I wish him good luck, courage and success !

Other countries

Germany had a similar situation some years ago and the choice was to pass the voice from Salswasser Union in the DKV. In Australia, Peter CARTER is the sea kayaker speaker in the Australian canoe federation. Tell me if I am wrong What about other countries, gentlemen.....

Best wishes to all
et vive le kayak de mer.....

Circumnavigation of Symi, Dodecanese

or how I nearly found religion

by

BOB
MARK

I'm fairly new to sea kayaking but have long harboured a desire to paddle in the Aegean: warm water, minimal tides and (how wrong can one person be?) calm seas. The plan came together in May 2002 when my wife, Denise, and I took my folding boat on a package holiday to Symi, a beautiful and rugged island 2 hours ferry ride from Rhodes. We stayed at Pedi at the northern end of the leeward side of the island.

Feathercraft Khatsalano S

I paddle a wonderful Feathercraft Khatsalano S which, with all the other kayaking kit, took up two large bags and gave us about 15kg of excess baggage. For this we were charged a very reasonable £64.00 each way although our impedimenta did raise a few eyebrows from airport security, bus drivers, reps and fellow travellers.

Denise provided non-paddling back up and moral support such as reserving a seat in the bar and making appropriate expressions of appreciation during oft repeated tales of exploits.

From our hotel balcony the Turkish coast shimmered in the heat haze in the middle distance across a glassy sea. The Greek Waters Pilot assured me that the powerful seasonal "meltemi" wind was unlikely to blow in May. A review of the map revealed a paddling circumference of 25 - 30 land miles with isolated escape points around the otherwise rugged coast. Chatting with locals suggested that the windward side of the

island was not quite as flat as the dazzling waters lapping at the beachfront. The holiday rep warned me that the windward side of the island could get rough, but then she also told me to be wary of the currents that flowed in the depths of the Aegean.

Circumnavigating

I became set on circumnavigating the island, my biggest kayaking challenge to date.

In preparation I paddled increasing distances and did a recce around the northern point of the island. I found nothing to disturb me but plenty to fire my interest. I practised my bracing and also self rescue with paddle float and "Sea Wings". I was able to put my newly acquired "Klatwa" Greenland paddle and techniques through their paces. I was trying these out in an attempt to get round a very stubborn tennis elbow which did not allow me to use a feathered paddle. I was rewarded with economical and almost pain free paddling.

Kicked me out of bed

The appointed day came and the support party kicked me out of bed: "I thought you were paddling round the island today. Shouldn't you start before lunchtime?" That's my girl.

The boat was set up just so with buoyancy aplenty, ballast, lots of water, a Feathercraft "Sea Sock", VHF radio, dry clothes and footwear, 3 gallons offactor 30 sunscreen, whistle, silly hat, spare paddle, self rescue aids, strobe, head torch, and a slack

Denise provided moral support such as reserving a seat in the bar and making appropriate expressions of appreciation

handful of chocolate bars. The choice of chocolate was without doubt a schoolboy error as the bars had to be held in the water for five minutes or more to render them edible rather than drinkable. I also took my mobile phone to take advantage of the excellent local coverage and was able to call Denise to keep her updated and reassured.

I headed south from Pedi, passing fabulous

offer reassuring words. Thanks, Keith. It was a big boost to see a friendly face out there on the water.

Started to get interesting

As I came round onto the windward side of the island it started to get interesting. I remembered the flags outside the hotel had been blowing quite stiffly out to sea as I set off. That would explain the fact that my silly hat kept blowing off and I was paddling



cliffs and sheltered woody bays. I came across the occasional Symiot fishermen who seemed politely bemused. The wash from a passing ferry gave added interest. Just before I reached the southern point of the island I ran into Keith, my expat friend who lives on Syri, in his fishing boat. He had kindly gone to check out the sea state for me further down the coast. He was able to

head on into a roller coaster sea and disappearing between in the troughs. Exciting stuff. The boat rode it all beautifully.

Anxiety

But the wind was west by north west. As I ventured further around the coast the seas were coming across my beam and it started to get very, very interesting. Anxiety was

definitely beginning to show through the cracks in my excitement. I had contemplated turning round when I reached the monastery at Panormitis. However, the state of the rollers here, as they raced towards the shore, rapidly convinced me that if I tried to do that I might be requiring the services of the monks. The only thing to do was to keep on keeping on and, above all, concentrate.

Paddle, brace, paddle, paddle, brace,
brace.....

Bottle started to go

As I moved further north the seas dropped a little but became very confused. I started to get rattled but the secondary stability of the boat came into its own. I also found that rapidly repeating "Hail Mary's" were very calming. I'm an atheist, not a Roman Catholic, but this appeal definitely helped as my bottle started to go.

Paddle, brace, paddle, Hail Mary, full of grace, paddle, brace....

I made my first landfall after about 4 hours and rested my mind more than my body. After paddling another hour or two I stopped at a remote beach and contemplated my next move. I was questioning the wisdom of my venture. Should I admit defeat and walk out or plod on? I plodded on.

Crossing the next large bay at the north west of the island I ran into a fisherman who plainly thought that I was as mad as a snake. He told me that the seas got much rougher around the next headland. So that decided me. "Always take local advice" seemed both sensible and face saving. Discretion won over valour and I headed for the shore, making a scrappy landing in the surf and filling the boat with all sorts of debris. I secured the boat and set off on foot to the track which would get me home.

And then it hit me. No wind. It had suddenly dropped. I surveyed the sea through my binoculars. The swell was diminishing and there were no white tops to be seen. To backing out in the face of this new opportunity would be too much to live with after what I had longed for, planned for and

gone through.

With renewed vigour and determination I re-launched and paddled north. It just got easier and easier. My forward stroke became rhythmic and nearly effortless. I shot through the strait at the northern end of the island and the bay, which had seemed so vast when I first crossed it on my recce, was as beautiful as ever but seemed so much smaller.

The last leg was completed as dusk was drawing into night. I donned my head torch and tucked into the cliffs. I had been out for over nine hours, most of which was paddling but I did not feel in the least bit tired. I power stroked the last two hundred yards. Denise arrived as I was pulling the boat out of the water outside the hotel. She seemed to as be of proud of my little triumph as I was.

Sea dog stories

Whilst I showered Denise went to get the drinks in. Keith soon showed up at the Anchorage bar and we bored all and sundry with our salty sea dog stories. Thoughts of taking up religion ebbed as the beer flowed.

Sleep did not come easily that night as I retired and considered every moment of the trip. What conclusions did I reach? I should have thought twice and three times about those flags: they had not blown like that since we had arrived. I should have sought more local advice before setting off. Perhaps I should first have gone round the island by motor boat, but where would have been the adventure in that? Perhaps I should have paddled with other people, but there were no other paddlers to paddle with and I'm old enough and ugly enough to decide to go it alone.

This was, for me, a great achievement. More importantly it was a wonderful experience. I feel so privileged to have seen those sights and felt the sheer, strange, joy of paddling a small craft on the ocean.

I'm left itching for more. I'm hooked. See you on the water.

Bob Mark

I was questioning the wisdom of my venture. Should I admit defeat and walk out or plod on? I plodded on.

Fitting electric pumps to kayaks

by

ROWLAND
WOOLLVEN

I suspect that you may already have done this subject to death, but having been asked twice in the last 3 weeks for advice on fitting electric pumps to kayaks, I drew up some notes based on the 9 or so that I have fitted to boats over the years -they may be of interest, but I would not be in the least offended if they are used as firelighters in the Ramwell household!

Technician course

On a less facetious note, expedition enthusiasts concerned about their ability to keep a casualty alive when the helicopter isn't going to arrive anytime soon may be interested in this year's Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician course. The course runs from 10 -16 November and will be based at Glenmore Lodge. It is staffed by Rescue and Emergency medical specialists from the USA and UK and assumes a basic knowledge of first aid. You are trained to become the eyes, ears and hands of a doctor, with whom you communicate by radio. The course is aimed at 'outdoors' people and most exercises take place outside, regardless of conditions, and are very realistic. The by-product is the gaining of an immense amount of practical experience in making clinical judgements, monitoring vital signs and techniques for 'long term' medical care. The course is very intense (running from 0830 to 2200 on most days) but afterwards I

certainly felt a lot more comfortable about my ability to look after people on long trips in wild and remote areas. Booking forms and further details can be obtained from Glenmore Lodge on 01479 861256 (T) or 01479861212 (F). Useful websites are glenmorelodge.org.uk, wemsi.org and wildmedic.org.

Yours Rowland

Mountain Instructor Award, SNSC
Nordic Ski leader Wilderness
Emergency Medical Technician
Nordkapp Trust Sea Guide (Sea, Surf,
Inuit) British Canoe Union level 5
Coach (Sea) & level 3 Coach (Surf)

FITTING OUT INSTRUCTIONS FOR A SEA KAYAK ELECTRIC BILGE PUMP

Parts List

- 1 x Rule 500 gph bilge pump
- 1 x Yuasa NP 1.2 -12 12V, 1.2 Ah battery
- 1 x 12V, 4Ah battery charger
- 1 x right angle elbow skin fitting (size to be compatible with the outlet from the pump)
- 1 x non return valve to mount 'in line'
- 1 x waterproof toggle switch

1 x U bolt to protect the switch!

1 m of 1" hose -goes from pump outlet to NR valve to skin fitting

Small amounts of electric cable for wiring

Flexible sealant (Halfords windscreen sealant!)

2 D rings and some webbing for the pump hold down (see sketch)

Thin bungee cord (for hold down)

Glass fibre kit for glassing down hold down webbing and sealing the hole through the cockpit bulkhead

Total cost about £120 (2002); mainly the battery, pump and charger!

Time

About a day; with care and patience!

Sources

The bilge pump, skin fitting, non return valve, toggle switch, U bolt and hose should all be available from a good chandlers. The sealant, cabling and spade connectors come from Halfords. Bungee cord, webbing, glass kit and O rings are usually found in the 'spares' cupboard! The battery and charger can be sourced from a company called Maplin Electronics -consult

Yellow Pages for the nearest branch. The product codes are -battery -Y J69A (£16) and -charger -VS95D (£33). The battery pack is held in a small plastic case in the day hatch -it can either be a modified piece of plumbing tube or a small plastic container -parmesan cheese ones are ideal!

Points

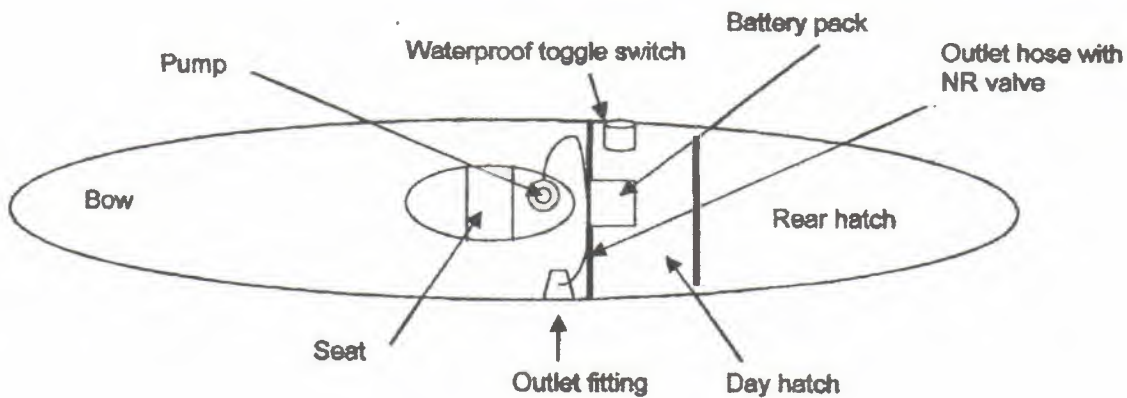
To Remember. Drilling holes in kayaks is scary; make doubly sure

that they are in the right place. Wear eye protection -glass fibre and gelcoat shatters! The top of the outlet hose must be ABOVE the outlet skin fitting - otherwise you get back flushing, despite the so-called non return valve -this is also known as sinking! Because of this you may need to drill a SMALL hole in the top of the curve to prevent an airlock. The non-return valve must be mounted vertically -they all weep if mounted horizontally (we're back

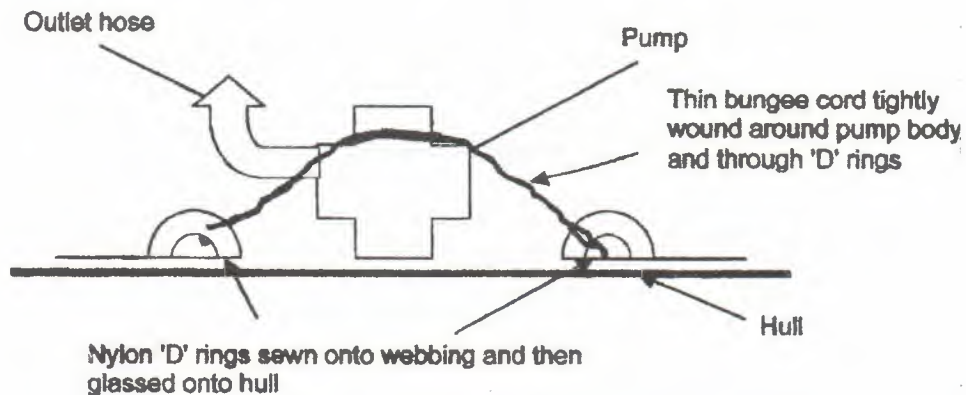
to sinking again!). The 2 difficult things are firstly waterproofing the bulkhead into the day hatch (use sealant first then cover with a skim of glassfibre) and getting the holes in the right place for the U bolt and toggle switch -this can be fiddly and lead to tears! In all cases where nuts have to be tightened behind bulkheads or below decks, make sure you can get them on in the position you have chosen, and cut the bolts to the right length before final fitting.

5. Illustrations.

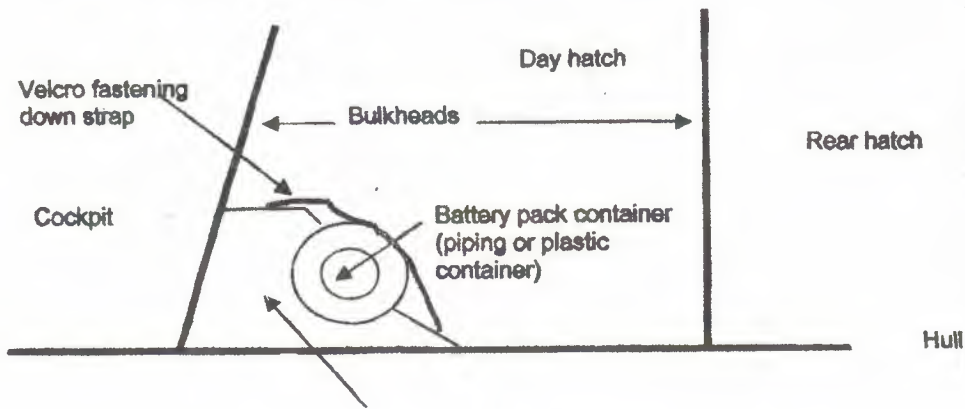
a. General Layout.



b. Pump 'hold down' system.

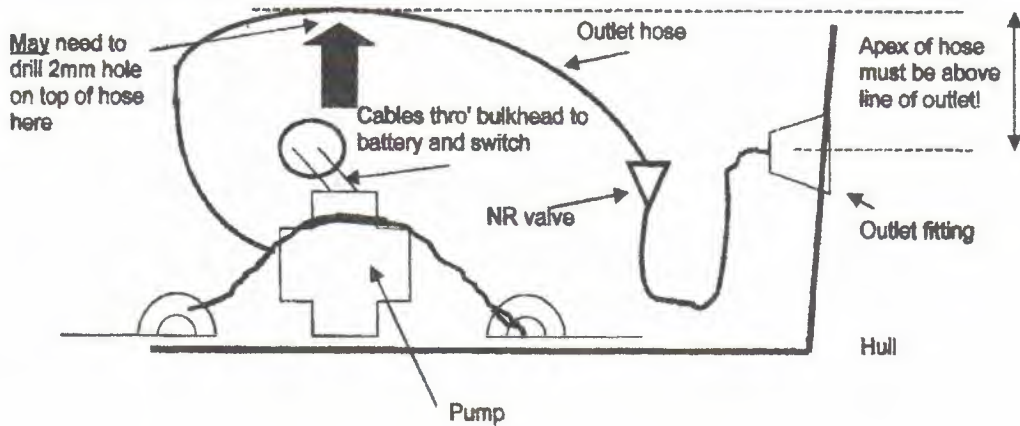


c. Battery pack mounting.

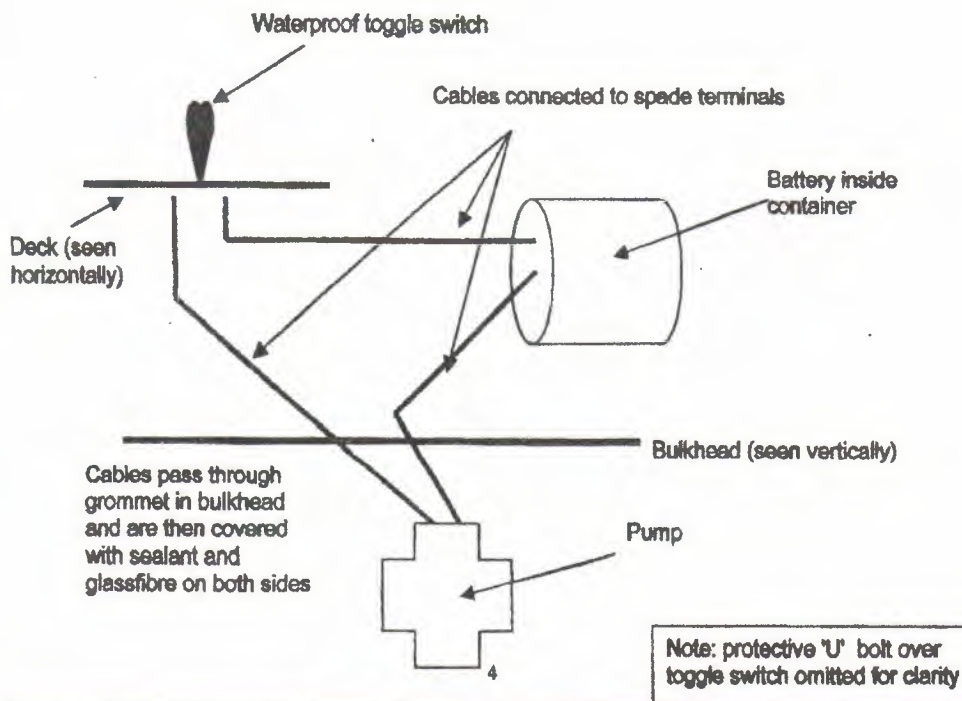


Block of polystyrene, shaped to fit compound curves of bulkhead and hull; glued in with Evostick

d. View of rear of inside of cockpit, aft of seat, looking aft.



e. Wiring diagram.



Note: protective "U" bolt over toggle switch omitted for clarity

Enjoying myself building a kayak

by

ALAN
BYDE

I really am getting a kick out of building a new Yukon kayak and doing it the way I first did it. What comes next is really interesting.

Vapour barrier

Son John who is in the construction business in UK tells me that a material used for cladding buildings might do the job. It is a monomer, long chemical name, has excellent tear resistance and is used (I suppose) as a vapour barrier in buildings. He suggests I approach the multi national makers and suggest they use this idea "It makes kayaks waterproof, it does the same for buildings" I might then sweetheart some from them.

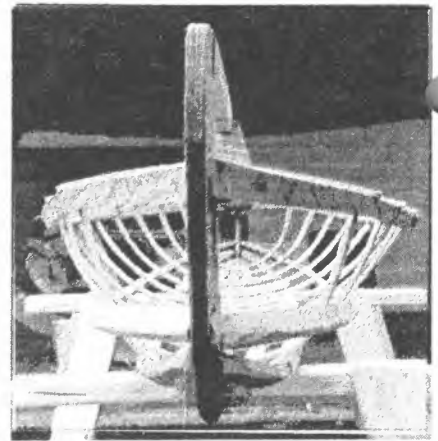
I have had a visit from Paul Caffyn . The talk was about the kayak and I reckon everyone who sees it, knowledgeable or not, agree it has beautiful lines. I point to the hunters of the Yukon and thank them. If I clad it in two lams of glass cloth proofed with resin, and it proves to be a handy craft, why then, to make it into a plug and a set of moulds should not be too difficult. Given I do that the pod cockpit goes in next, with side rails and side skeg. I had a discussion with Paul's pal, he says that the Inuit paddle is the most inefficient of them all. That blew an ancient fuse. Efficient for what purpose? It turns out that both Paul and he wish to go from A to B across the sea as fast as possible. When shown my beautiful paddle made by Collars of Oxford, 1969, still going strong but not much used these last 15 years but that's going to change, he asked "Do you put your

hands here?" (On the shoulders) I assured him that was right and mentally noted he'd never used such a paddle.

The Yukon kayak is 15 feet long approx, and I guess handy enough to explore caves and rocky shores. Over the horizon high speed paddlers vanish in a rooster tail of spray but I am having fun MY WAY. I saw a slalom kayak today, grp, old style. It's the first I've seen for months. The kayaks here are either sit-on wave riders or 17ft tri-athlon speedy craft sort of modified K1s. River kayaks are rare. Given you see the rivers here, you'll know why. They are either bottom knockers or raging in high flood.

Fit a pod

Pod I hear you ask plaintively? Well, you cannot fit a pod to a frame, stringer and canvas craft. For one thing air must circulate freely. What does the pod do in an exit in deep water? 1 it keeps water out. 2. What water does enter, about 6 gallons, is persuaded to leave by the air in the side tank formed by the pod. Put the lift of immersed air tank under the load and the load will lift. Kayak is self emptying when put on its side. Half asleep, between night and next morning, the answer arrived. Form a sealed inflated tube about 6 inches diameter and perhaps 6 ft long. Kite fabric perhaps? Strap one to the frames each side of the cockpit, so that when the occupant is in place the inflated tubes just grip the hips firmly without pressure. One sits on an anchored slab of closed cell foam. A token buoyancy bag at each end



will ensure it doesn't do a Cleopatra's. On its side the lower buoyancy bag will provide enough lift to cause an unladen kayak to rise. If round the world paddlers with camping gear and the kitchen sink object it won't for them. I'll bet there are far more day journeys made with minimum baggage than long ones with a load. Who deserves to be given a fighting chance? The few who have climbed Everest, or the many men, women and children who are out for an afternoon potter? The Farnes come to mind.

Designer arrogance

I've included a pic of the bow view showing the section. The collection of stringers at the bow have pulled the lightweight gunwales down, so that the original intention to have 4 inch rocker fore and aft is now 2 inch rocker fore and aft. Interesting how materials form themselves and foil the arrogance of the 'designer'? "There is a destiny which shapes our ends, rough hew them as we may" More when it is clad and more still when it is in use, but that will be 6 months away.



Letters . . .

Letters to be addressed to: 5, Osprey Ave., Westhoughton, Bolton, Lancs, BL5 2SL and I can be reached on 01942 842204.

Write to us about all things paddling and any bee in your bonnet you want to air. Ask other readers about trips you plan or kit you might buy—ed

Hello, John,

From Simon Godfrey,
COTTENHAM, CAMBRIDGE

I stumbled across the ISKA site on the net when I was looking for a kayak compass, and enclose my £8-00 to join.

I've been a somewhat solitary sea-kayaker for about 35 years, beginning with a Wessex Sea Rapier in the mid 60s, and now with 15 year old P & H Eskimo, which I think was built for export and not sold in the UK. I bought it last year from P & H for not very much - it was languishing in the back of their container of used kayaks.

Now in my late 50s, getting fat, not fit, and not nearly as skilled as I ought to be after all these years, I still relish coastal and estuary jaunts at a very gentle pace and usually with the current and/or tide!

Rotting in my garden is a Kayel Angmassalik. I was never good enough to manage it! If anyone wants it they are welcome. But it does need some TLC and may not be worth saving? Let me know if you hear of any hero who wants to a/ rescue the beast and b/ paddle it!

*All Good Wishes
Simon Godfrey*

Hello, John,

From GuyOGEZ, 10 pare de la Berengere, 92310 Saint-Cloud

The British have invented the sea kayak, the French the rules!!!
A decision of June 28, 2000, which

affects the kayak, issued by the Department dealing with sea affairs, precises the following :
"boats whose ratio (length divided by width) is superior to 10 will not be authorized to go beyond the distance of 300 metres from a shelter".

The Nordkapp with its dimensions of 5,47 m and 0,525 m (if I am not mistaken) has thus a ratio of 10,41 and is classified as a beach toy.

It is very difficult to go against this law which has received the agreement of the FFCK (French Federation of Canoe-Kayak), the equivalent in France of the B.C.U.

Would you have an idea of what could be done ? We would like to create a French section of the Nordkapp Trust with the owners of nordkapps who should number several dozens. Do you have their addresses ?

Thank you for your help.

*Sincerely yours
GuyOgez*

P.S. I myself own two Nordkapps.

Hello, John

I notice that the dimensions for the McNulty huntsman given in the Directory are incorrect. The correct figures are:

Length	4.87 metres
Beam	0.58 metres
Weight	19 kg
Hatches	2 round, 18 cm
Cockpit	ocean

I don't know the volume.

I've owned a Huntsman for about 20 years. It's very similar to the modern Vela, though an bit lighter.

McNulty's email address is:
sales@mcnultyboats.com.

They no longer make canoes, but you might wish to maintain the information in the Directory to help purchasers of second-hand boats.

Robert

*Thanks Robert. Will amend accordingly.
Cheers, John*

Hello, John,

In "SeaKayaker" (June 2002, pp. 46-51; see also:

www.seakayakermag.com/02June/Turk11.htm) you can find an article of Jon Turk about "Expedition Sea Kayaking and Surf Tips". Jon wrote: "Dry suits are great, but when they fail, they fail catastrophically."

Don Price asks in a letter published in "SeaKayaker" (August 2002, p. 6): "Has anyone reported a seal on a dry suit rupturing or splitting while paddling or during a wet exit?"

My answer: Well, my friends and me do sea kayaking dressed in dry suits since about nearly 15 years. Only once a girl friend got a tear on the leg of her Avilastic dry suit during a wet exit.

My Gore-tex dry suit was never damaged on its material, but: - once the waterproof zipper was no longer functioning because I had sand in the zipper, so I could no longer close my suit, and at least every two years one of the five latex gaskets (one for my neck, two for my arms and two latex boots for my legs) will tear, and that during a tour when I want to put on or off my dry suit.

Therefore I also cannot recommend

sea kayakers who want to go on tour for several weeks to dress with a dry suit which is fitted out only with latex gaskets. For reasons of safety it is necessary that the dry suit is equipped

additional with extra neopren gaskets. The reason why you can deduce from the data Steimann/Kublis published in "Wilderness Medicine Newsletter (1990, Vol. 7, No.2) (see: W.W.Forgey: The Basic Essentials of Hypothermia, 3rd Printing 1996, page 51):

If you capsizes and have a wet exit during rough seas (at 43° F) the "Time to Incapacity" (core temperature: 93° F) will happen a) within 0.4 - 1.3 h (when dressed in only lightweight clothing), b) within 1.0 - 2.9 h (when dressed in closed-cell foam insulated, wet coveral (3.2 mm thick insulation in loose-fitting coverall), c) within 1.6 - 4.7 h (when dressed in closed-cell foam insulated, custom fitted wet-suit (4.8 mm thick insulation; tight fitting), d) within 2.9 - 8.8 h (when dressed in non-foam insulated dry coverall (water-tight shell over thick, fiber-fill, insulated underwear), e) but only within 0.9 - 2.7 h (when dressed identical to d), but when the dry suit has a 2" tear in the left shoulder).

*Best wishes from Germany:
Udo Beier, Speaker of Sea Kayakers
(German Canoe Federation)*

Hello, John,

Please can you include the following advertisement in your new for sale section. I am a relative beginner to sea canoeing and to date have always used borrowed equipment. I am now looking to buy my own but do not wish to buy new just yet. The site is excellent and very helpful to somebody like me. My subscription cheque will be in the post when I return to the UK in mid August.

*Many thanks
Ian Biles*

1 Stone Lane Gosport, Hampshire
PO12 1SS
e-mail ianbile@aol.com

tel- 07 801 939000. office 02392
524490. home 02392522361

Advertisement

Wanted -second hand Romany, Romany Explorer, Sirius, Capella, Skerray or Calypso. GRP preferred rather than plastic. Condition not critical but will need to be reflected in the price. UK based. e-mail to ianbileS@aol.com

Hello, John,

I have just been sent a copy of an article in Ocean Kayaker describing the New Zealand sea kayak scene, as reported by Alan Byde.

Everyone sees things through their own eyes, and I have great respect for

Alan - I still try out the strange paddle strokes he describes in Living Canoeing-but my take on things is a little different.

Alan describes roto-moulded kayaks as "plastic pigs", a term from decades ago. Well, time and design have moved on. I felt the same about lowly plastic, until a trip a couple of years ago around Banks Peninsula, my local haunt.

Exposed to all weather and sea state, with cliffs rising over 100 metres from minimal boulder-beaches, it is a true ocean paddle. Any offshore wind is funneled out of the steep sided bays, and rotors over the cliffs. On this trip I was the only one in a glass boat, the other three paddling different designs of plastic. The conditions were interesting, with strong winds from three directions over three days, and a good swell breaking.

To my horror, I didn't have to slow down for the "plastic pigs" to catch up, and when one landing was a choice six foot dumpers onto sand, or a one footer onto boulders, the three plastics were simply paddled hard onto the rocks and then the paddlers came and helped me land my fragile craft. A humbling moment. While many paddlers here use imported boats, and a Nordkapp is being rebuilt in my boat shed, local designers and builders are hard at work. A few of the results I wouldn't paddle in a pool, while others are a

match for the best.

The marathon boats that Alan speaks of are designed and used in multi-sport races, which are usually on rivers, grade two/three. Some of these races now have sea components, and designers have risen to the challenge with very fast, light boats fitted with bulkheads. Few would consider these suitable for standard service as sea kayaks.

I have never seen an Inuit paddle used here, but after speaking to Gordon Brown of Skye, I'm tempted to give them a go. An alloy shafted paddle with plastic blades lives in my shed, where it serves as a drying rack for my booties. Apart from that one it has been years since I have seen one, except as a spare split. Some sea kayakers here are using wing paddles, a concept I thought was daft until challenged to learn to use one properly. There is now no stroke that I can do with a spoon that I can't manage with a wing. Add to that the advantage of full torso rotation that the technique requires and they make sense. I'll have to wait until my modified-crank Lendal breaks!!!

Rudders! Well I don't intend to go down that path, except to say that I have just returned from a two hour paddle in a Gale Warning that the local wind recorder stated as having maximum gusts of 43 knots. A solid work-out with no sweep strokes, and surfing home with a following sea was a joy. Alan

mentions racers in the past cutting rudder cables. I can't think of a faster way to die.

As I said earlier, we all see things differently, and I respect Alan's view. Mine is simply from another viewpoint.

I hope to attend the Irish and Scottish symposiums next year, and look forward to catching up with people I met at Anglesey in 1998. Great to see that the ISKA is going well, and I really must renew my subs.

*Cheers
John Kirk-Anderson*