

NSW Sea Kayaker

Newsletter of the NSW Sea Kayak Club Inc.

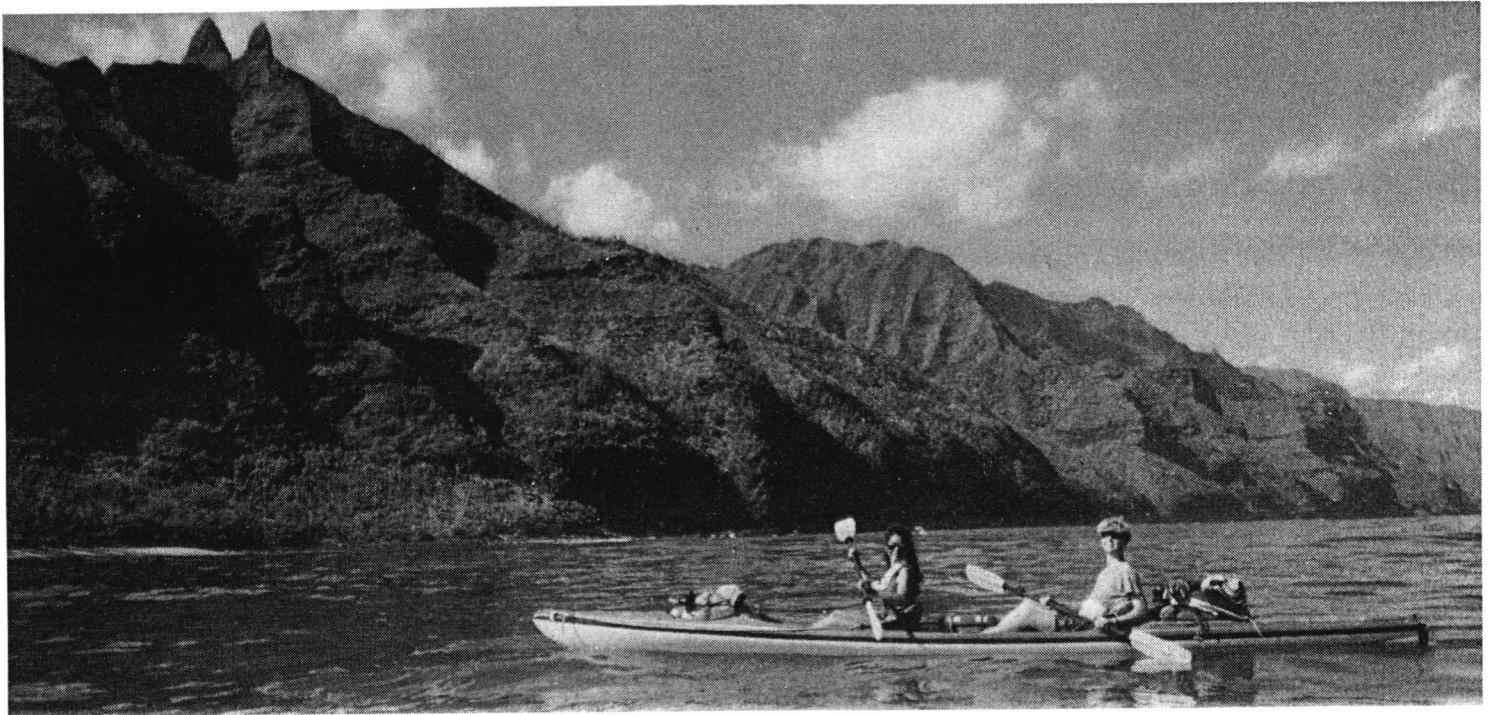
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May 1994

Kayaking Kauai's Na Pali Coast

By Jacqueline Windh



Above: *Belinda and Jaqueline, Na Pali Coast*
(Photo: Mike Malone)

"Boss, de plane, de plane!"

Remember little Tattoo, from TV's *Fantasy Island*? And remember the backdrop to the show? A rugged coastline with narrow waterfalls cascading down lush green cliffs into the turquoise sea... That is Kauai's isolated Na Pali Coast.

I decided to buy my Feathercraft folding kayak in April last year. I had only been kayaking once in my life, six years previously, on a two-day guided tour through the

Whitsunday Islands. From that moment I was hooked, even though I did not have the opportunity to do any more paddling. I was never at a stage in life that I was living in one place long enough to bother buying a kayak **and** could afford to buy a car to transport it.

Then last year I found out about folding boats...the perfect solution to my mobile life, flitting between my Australian home and my native Canada (with necessary stops at various Polynesian Islands). So I

phoned Feathercraft in Vancouver, ordered my boat, then started investigating which Polynesian island to take it to on my way back home. I very quickly settled on Kauai.

Kauai is the westernmost of the accessible Hawaiian islands. (Niihau, further west, is privately owned). The Hawaiian islands get progressively younger to the east. The easternmost Big Island is still being formed, and is the site of spectacular present-day volcanic

Presidents Report

I had hoped to have this newsletter out earlier but due to various complications including a computer virus this was not possible. For those who don't know, we publish four newsletters per year and I have not aimed for exact publication dates but I do try to space them evenly through the year. The plan with the Talk/Slide Shows is to hold four per year when speakers schedules allow.

I have been doing my usual hunt for guest speakers and a few exiting events are now in the pipeline.

On Saturday, July 2nd we will be having a 'Club' Slide Show. This is a chance to meet your fellow paddlers and see what each other has been up to. So far meetings have been almost exclusively covering the BIG trips with speakers such as Larry Gray, Paul Caffyn et al. I thought it's about time we had a look at what us mere mortals have been up to.

We'd like you, yes you, to show us your slides and tell us a little about your trips. We are looking at awarding prizes for the best presentation and the best kayaking shot. We'll be holding this at Tambourine Bay Sea Scout Hall and there will be refreshments and nibbles provided so come along and meet the gang. Give me a ring if you'd like to enter or have any suggestions.

I've been talking with Gary Steer and we (that's 'we' the club) are invited to the premiere screening of Gary Steer's and Larry Gray's film *'Islands of Fire and Magic'*. This film is based on their expedition last December when they sea kayaked from New Britain and New Ireland to mainland PNG. The launch, at the Australian National Maritime Museum, is planned for Thursday the 15th of September (to be confirmed). The current plan is for members to arrive by kayak at the Maritime Museum at 5:00pm for pre-film drinks on the lawns

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before the screening at 6:00pm . Bring your waterproof tux and be prepared to be on TV! - I'll keep you posted on this.

I've also been talking with Paul Caffyn and his book 'The Dreamtime Voyage' is now available (see Add).

(continued back page)

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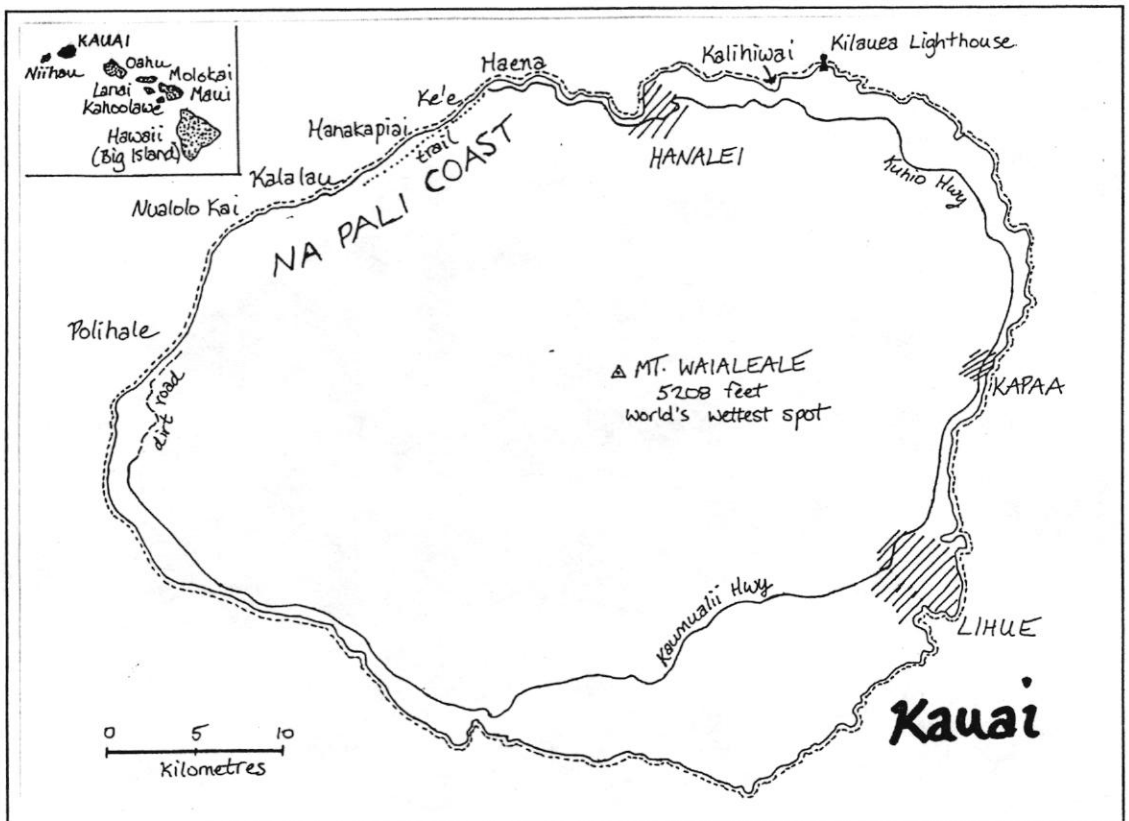
activity. Kauai is one of the oldest Hawaiian islands. Most volcanic activity there stopped about five million years ago. Since that time, erosion due to wind and waves has sculpted the spectacular cliffs and canyons that Kauai is famous for.

I had wanted to visit Kauai for years, after the visit of a respected friend who raved about its rugged beauty and its isolation. Its northern coast, the Na Pali Coast, consists of shoreline so steep that no road traverses this part of the island. In fact, half of this 22 km section of coast is not even accessible on foot! Kayaking provides the only easy access to the region.

The other reason I chose to visit Kauai was because, being a novice paddler, I wanted to go somewhere that I would be able to meet other people to paddle with. While still in Australia, I called up local outfitters *Kayak Kauai*, based at Hanalei at the eastern end of the Na Pali Coast. I spoke to co-owner Micco Godínez - he said just to show up there, prepared to camp, and promised that I would meet lots of interesting people.

I arrived in Kauai towards the end of August (late summer), with plans to stay for eight days. Micco arranged for someone who was driving the 50 km from Lihue, where the airport is, up to Hanalei, to pick me and my kayak up. I set up my tent near the shop, and looked at a few maps with Micco and friends that evening. I spent the next few days paddling on the river and the ocean, and making some wonderful paddling friends. After a few days of acclimatisation, the serious paddling started...

I had been hanging out to do the Na Pali Coast. Access to the area is restricted, and you must apply for camping permits (with photo ID) in advance, whether hiking or paddling. I did not have a permit,



and wasn't going to be around long enough to get one. But paddling the coast both ways, ie. 44 km, was a bit much for me, considering chances were that I would be battling a strong headwind on the way back. Finally the day came that Micco was running a day trip along the coast, from the end of the road at Haena (just west of Hanalei) to where the road picks up again at Polihale. A van would meet us at Polihale, and transport paddlers and boats back to Hanalei. I gladly signed up.

We launched into gentle lapping waves from the beach at Haena. As "experienced" paddlers (ie. we had been in kayaks before), our guide Mike asked my partner Belinda and me to help out, and round up the back of the group.

It was a still day...without the usual easterly tailwind it would be a bit of a harder paddle, but the trade-off was getting a clear view of the ocean bottom. The water was brilliant turquoise and very clear - we saw several green sea turtles as we paddled over the reefs from Haena.

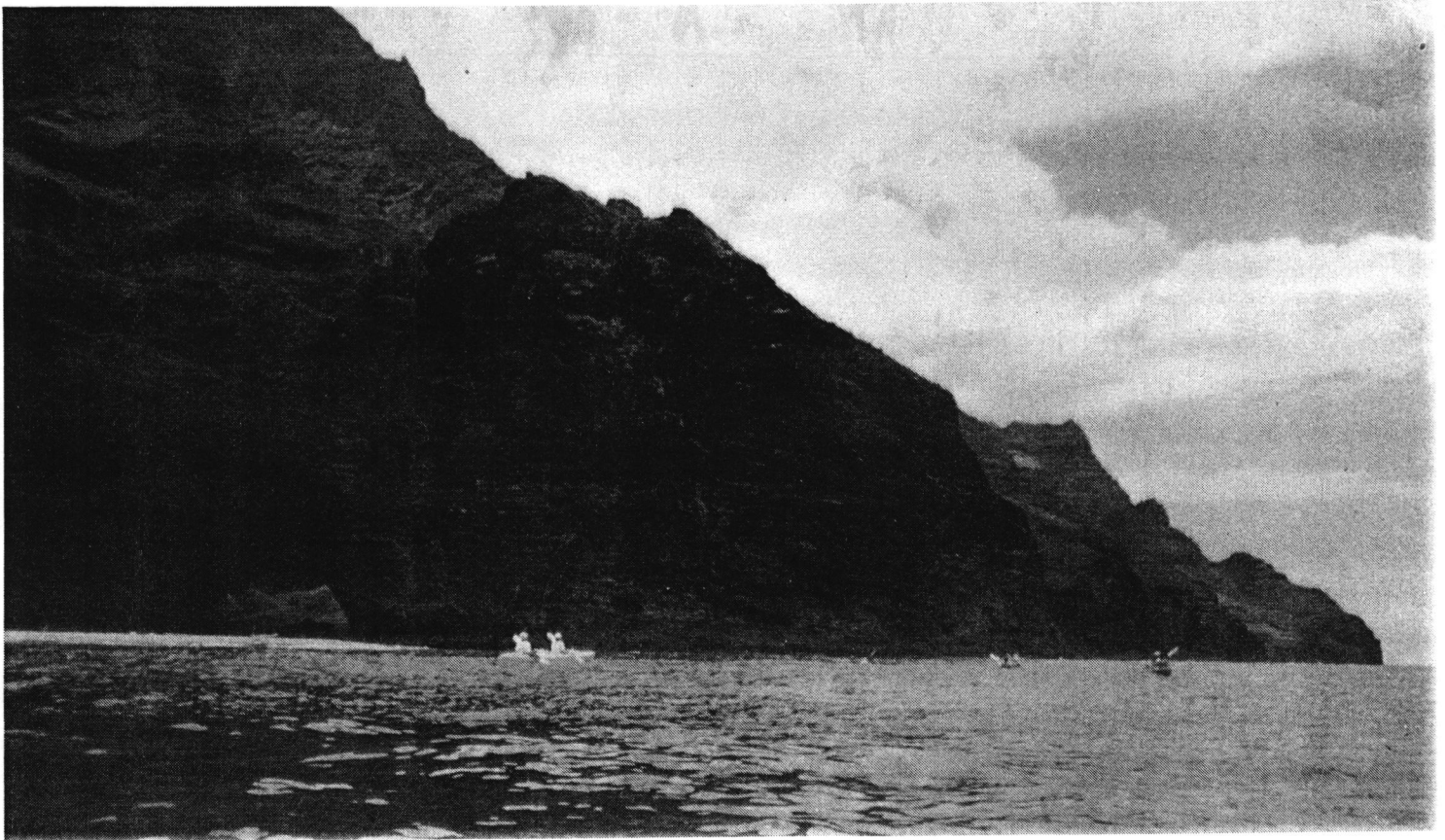
The scenery was everything I'd expected. In spite of having the limbs torn from the trees by Hurricane Iniki less than a year before, the terrain was incredibly

lush. The entire coast consists of cliffs, some tumbling straight into a pounding sea, and some with gleaming white beaches at their foot.

For me, the most exciting part of the trip was the sea caves, eroded deep into the volcanic cliffsides. Most of the caves were very safe to paddle in, at least that day. (Micco has other stories to tell!). Each cave was different - some were huge gaping holes with their roofs collapsed, some were narrow with only minimal room to turn around, and one curled around to a separate exit further along the coast. Many had waterfalls either inside them, or as welcome freshwater showers over the cave mouth.

We passed several white sand beaches nestled at the bottom of the cliffs - Ke'e, Hanakapiai, and idyllic Kalalau. Kalalau marked our halfway point, and is the end of the hiking trail. Everything ahead of us was accessible only to kayakers. The surf was roaring at Kalalau, so we continued on to the next sheltered beach at Nualolo Kai for our lunch stop.

After filling our guts and sprawling in the sun for a while, Mike showed us the remains of an ancient Polynesian settlement. Nualolo Kai



Above: Paddlers at Kalalau Beach (left).
(Photo: Jacqueline Wind)

once supported a thriving fishing and agricultural community. The stone walls that formed the food storage area, and part of the *heiau*, or temple, were still preserved. A small stone-walled spring still contained some fresh water, and the areas excavated to cultivate taro could still be seen. This settlement was occupied only a few centuries ago. Apparently some of the Na Pali Coast's steep valleys contain remains of settlements that pre-date the Polynesian settlement of Hawaii (c. 400 AD). It is not known who these early inhabitants of Hawaii were.

Sufficiently rested, we re-loaded our boats and continued the last 7 km to Polihale. All parties safely negotiated the surf. In varying states of exhaustion (most people on the trip had never paddled before) we loaded the van and trailer, and drove around to Hanalei.

I spent the next few days leisurely paddling and sailing with my new friends. For my last evening in Kauai, Mike arranged for a moonlight paddle around the northeast corner of the island. Here, the cliffs face directly towards

the oncoming swell and wind, and conditions get pretty hairy. We set out from the river at Kalihiwai, just east of Hanalei, at sunset, and explored the cliffs and a sea cave in the fading light. The sun had set by the time we rounded the point at Kilauea Lighthouse.

Around the point conditions suddenly changed, and we were tossed and thrown around by the erratic waves rebounding from the cliffs. It was great! In the last purple light as darkness fell, Mike took us through a cave that made me really glad I was not in my own boat (I was in a near-indestructible plastic sit-on-top-of number). The cave was double-ended, and oriented **parallel** to the shoreline, with a beach at either end. The surf roared upon the beaches, curled into both ends of the cave, and met in the middle in a shower of spray. I trusted Mike, and followed him in. A wave roared in behind me as I neared the middle. I was tossed all around with my head near the roof. Just as quickly, the wave sucked out, and I felt the boat bottom out on rocks. As the water rose again, I dug my blades in and followed Mike out the other side. I hung out with him in the surf zone for about

two seconds, then dashed back through the cave and landed at the beach.

The next morning, our last morning together, Mike, Belinda and I paddled out to a quiet beach just out from Hanalei. Just as we beached our boats, a dolphin leapt out of the water. (I have to confess, I thought it was a tuna). The dolphins here are very different to Australian or Canadian ones. They are smaller and paler grey than dolphins here. They are called Hawaiian Spinners, and with good reason. They leap out of the water and, rather than doing the usual flipping type of somersault, they corkscrew their body, spiralling upward, landing with a slap on the water (that's why I thought it was a tuna).

As we looked for it to come up again, another one leapt up, then another. We jumped back into our boats and raced towards them. As we approached them, the size of the pod became apparent - there were about one hundred of them, suddenly all around us, leaping and spinning. I kept my speed up, and suddenly they were swimming with me, along side and under me,

bobbing up for breaths. Belinda stopped paddling and leapt out of her boat to swim with them. But as soon as we stopped paddling they moved ahead and left us.

That experience was magic. Paddling with wild dolphins - they came to me! Did they know it was my last day?

That was almost a year ago. Since then, letters have been flying across the Pacific regularly, between Belinda in California, Mike and others in Hawaii, and me Down Under. Not much time to go now...the Feathercraft and I have seen a fair bit of ocean since that trip. We'll catch up with Belinda for three weeks in California and Mexico in early August, then with Mike (who will get permits for an extended trip to Paradise, I mean Kalalau) in August and September.

If anyone needs paddling contacts in British Columbia, California or Hawaii, get in touch with me. If you are planning to go to North America, make sure you stop through Kauai! The folks at *Kayak Kauai* rent boats and lead guided



Above: Paddlers exiting sea cave, Na Pali Coast
(Photo: Jacqueline 'Windh')

trips. (They also rent mountain bikes). You can contact them at P.O. Box 508, Hanalei, Kauai, Hawaii USA 96714, or phone

Micco's shop on 0011-1-808-826-9844, or fax 0011-1-808-822-0577.
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Trip Report

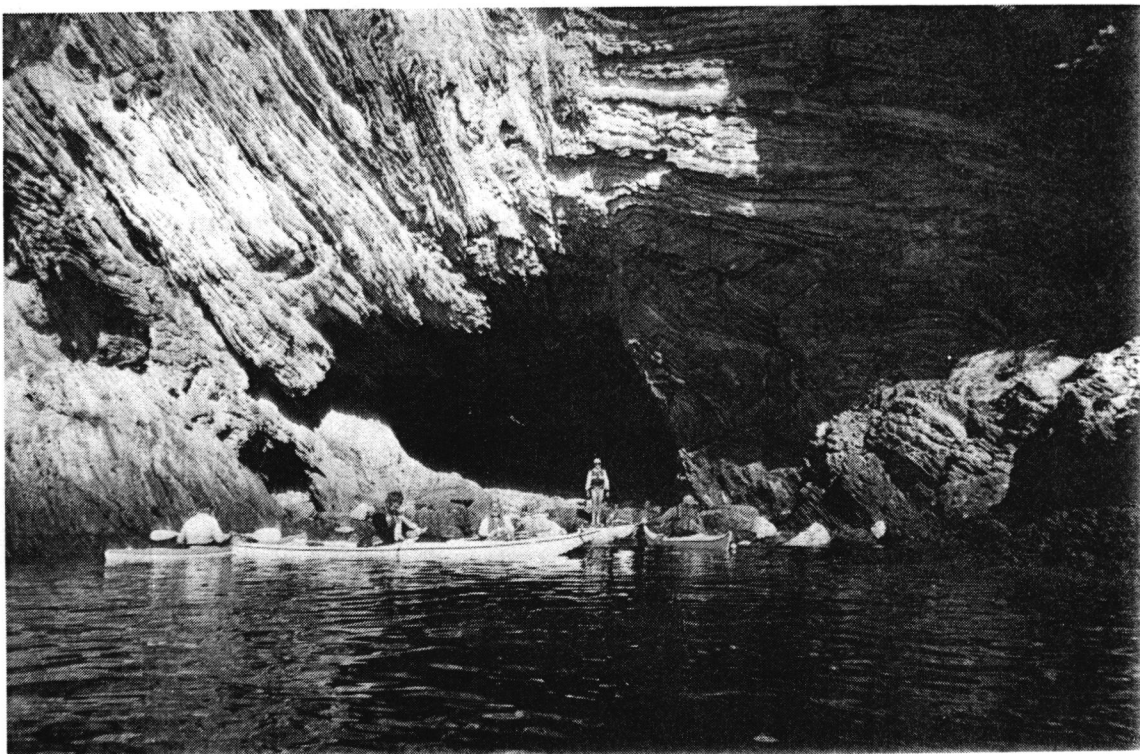
Advanced Proficiency Training Weekend

By Dirk Stuber

The NSW Board of Canoe Education's advanced proficiency training weekend was held at Batemans Bay on the 23-25 April, 1994. Ten people attended, three instructors and seven candidates. We were blessed with excellent weather which was pure joy after the last couple of Club weekends. It was very pleasant camping at the Glenhaven grounds and the Bay is ideal for kayaking. It has many fine features including the Tollgates.

The training/practice was conducted on land and at sea with an emphasis on candidates giving input and impetus to the training. We also had time for some fun, there was only a small surf on Sunday and Monday so we entertained ourselves by exploring the bay and playing in the gauntlets. We had a near miss in a very cranky gauntlet on the eastern side of the Tollgates. We witnessed one of our own being flung over a very large rock by some angry whitewater escaping injury only through excellent technique and a large dose of luck.

Some of the topics covered in the discussions led by the candidates



Above: Everyone ashore at Snapper Island. This cave goes right through the island... Shame it's not at paddling height. Maybe when the polar Ice Caps melt!
(Photo: David Winkworth)

were group leadership, personal equipment and safety gear, rescues, drogues, navigation, sea conditions, health risks, planning an expedition, radios and flares. Frank and Gary impressed all with their demonstration on how to use big, noisy, colourful, smoky, hand held flares (which were well passed their use by date).

Below is the personal equipment list which may be of interest to club members. Some of the issues discussed while formulating the list

were: how high tech do you want to go, how much money have you got to spend, how much time do you want to spend packing and unpacking your boat and how to avoid feelings of guilt when talking to gear freaks. We all agreed that there is no definitive list however every trip requires detailed planning. The list is not as long as some, see what you think.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SAFE PADDLING

(does not include camping gear)

Scenario:

Three day completely self sufficient wilderness coast paddle. Six kayakers minimum level proficiency.

- sea worthy kayak
- pump and sponge, quality spray skirt
- Two spare paddles for group
- sun screen, hat and sun-glasses
- Six tow lines
- cagg, thermal clothing or wet suit for colder seasons and regions
- spare clothes
- PFD, whistle, knife and torch
- water and high energy food
- positive buoyancy devices
- maps (min. 1: 100,000) or charts
- water proof compass
- Six first aid kits and if needed
- repair kits
- personal medicines
- VHF radio for sending and receiving and paddle leash (there was not complete consensus about these last two items).

Sea Kayaks - The Cutting Edge

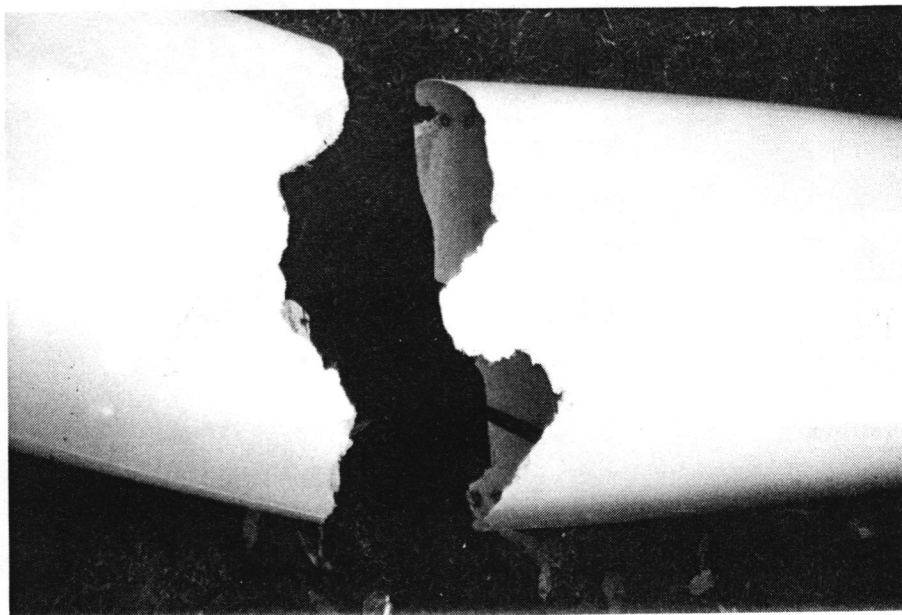
By David Malcolm

It was the last day of my Christmas break and a great morning for a paddle. There was myself in my Arctic Raider, friends Tony in a dancer and novice Ken in a borrowed Mirage. We set off from Blackwater at Long Reef on a calm bright day, no groundswell and three to four feet of gentle surf. The surf was much more appealing than the flat water and as boys will be boys ...

Five minutes later Tony and I were catching waves along Collaroy Beach while Ken patiently watched - it was his first paddle. Eventually he was enticed onto a few selective waves and was rather impressed with the electric bilge pump operation after taking a couple of swims. Basically, a fun day was being had by all.

Just as Ken's confidence was at its peak his stern was lifted by a steepening wave which prompted Tony to yell out "Not this one Ken!". He was beyond the point of no return and a little to the front and side of me as I was paddling out through the break. His acceleration was rapid down the wave face and I paused to enjoy the inevitable wipe-out. The Mirage then began to veer toward me. It was almost funny until we both realised that there was little chance of him altering the Mirage's trajectory.

There was nothing to do but hold on and... pray. I leant to the side a little in the vain hope that the Mirage's bow would go beneath me and I could then ride up on its deck. That was the plan anyway; but it was probably a poor choice. The hull began crushing around my feet as I was twisted and rolled into the water. Its amazing how your senses appear to "slow" in these situations. Getting out of the cockpit and onto the beach was the number one priority - by now it was "stuff the boat!". While swimming in to the beach I had to suffer the indignity of nearly being



decapitated by my AR which was surfing in on a following wave.

On the beach I ran/limped around in circles for a few minutes occasionally stopping to assess and wash my feet. It must have been a real spectacle for the other people on the beach watching us.

We retrieved the boat only to discover that it was being held together by just a rudder cable and the front chart shock cord. The three of us carried it up the beach because I was still trying to not scratch the gelcoat - don't ask me why. It was cleanly broken in two (the following waves could have finished it off), the footrest/rudder/pump system was bent, my loose foam footpad was cleanly ripped in two, I had numerous small cuts to one foot while the other was bruised in the toes, heel and ankle.

Conveniently we ended up directly across the road from the bottle shop at Collaroy. What else was there to do but get a 'six pack'? After all, I felt we deserved it.

A number of interesting points were highlighted by this experience and other near misses :

- Sea kayaks aren't ideal surf craft but they inevitably end up there. Some designs obviously handle it better than others. Solid surfing skills are an asset for a paddler.

- I will now always try to keep a respectable distance from others in the surf/rough seas as it is very difficult to correct a kayak that is turning to a broach. The question is probably "how much do you respect your partners ability / judgement?".

- With the advantage of hindsight, the impact could have been reduced or possibly avoided with a roll it would have considerably slowed his progress.

- While on a wave with a 94 kg paddler aboard, a Mirage has an uncanny resemblance to a torpedo well to me anyway. There is a lot of momentum concentrated onto a small sharp point; a perfect weapon?

- The destructive potential of a fully laden kayak on a wave is scary. I have discovered that unladen craft aren't much better.

- Although broken in two, the AR suffered no longitudinal cracks along the hull and deck join.

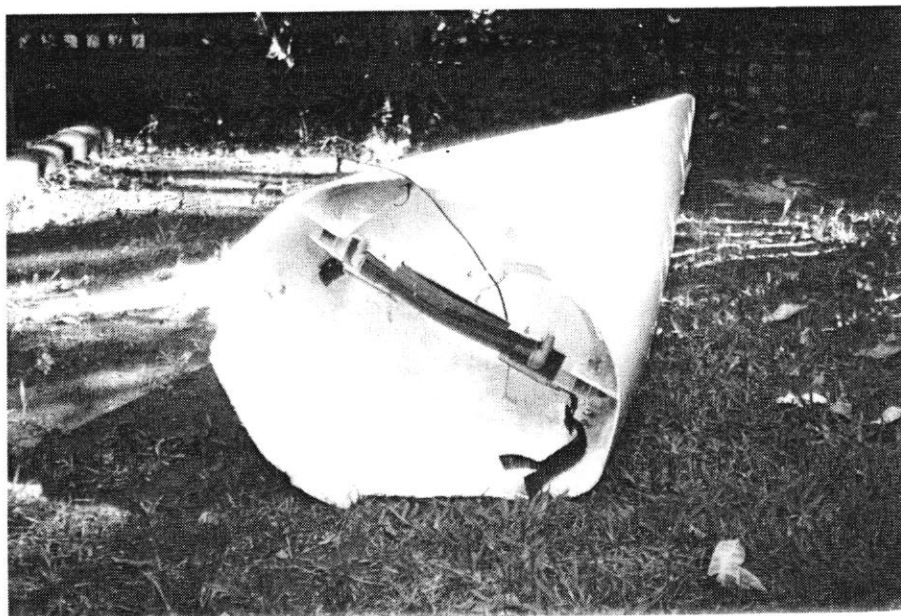
- I am very fortunate that the impact was not directed at my torso. The consequences could

have been very nasty.

I got a lot of puzzled looks while driving along the road with the stern on the roof and the bow sticking up in the back seat. It resembled a Klu Klux Klan head

piece.

Ken has apparently expressed a keen desire to not take up sea kayaking in the future. A pity after making such an impact his first time out!



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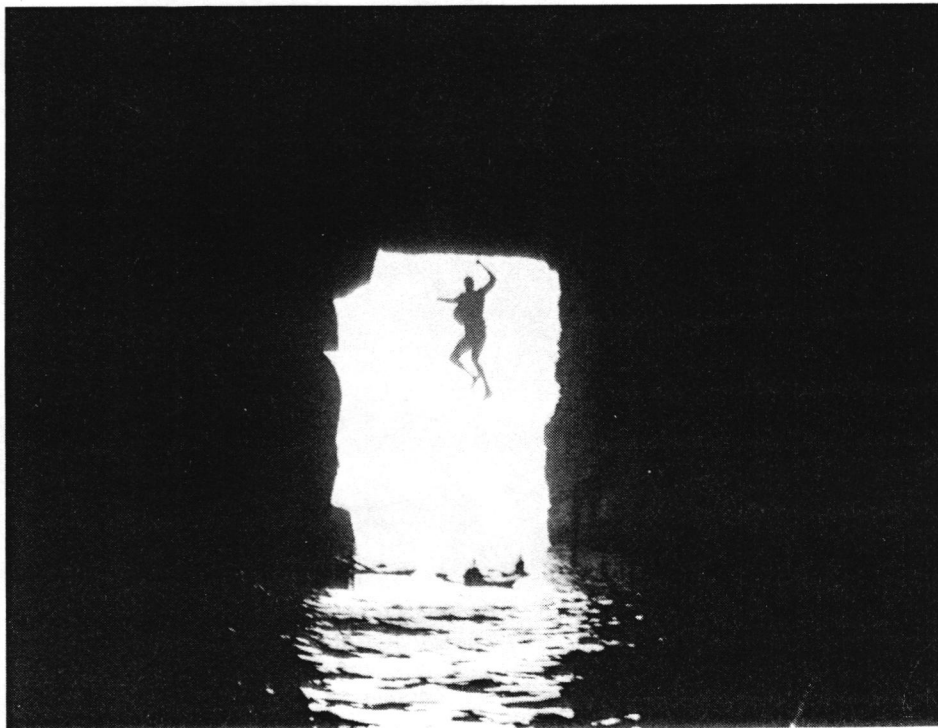
By Gary Edmond

It is with no small pleasure that I am able to juxtapose the following account with my previous misadventure. I hope the sensual indulgence causes no offence to the purists and Stoics whoever they may be. This story represents the partial consummation of an earlier and uglier experience off the Beecroft Peninsula (NSW Sea Kayaker No19).

During a trip from Wallagoot Lake to Mallacoota (11-17 Dec) Arunas Pilka, David Malcolm, Gary Parker and myself had planned a relaxed festive paddle, notably devoid of dry food and punctuated by majestic scenery along the coastal tract of the Royal National Park. Accordingly, this excursion was to be sustained by a veritable litany of sumptuous Epicurean delights, lubricated, of course, by the mandatory libations (8-9th Jan). It was to be the "Royal Banquet": a paean to vulgar Dionysianism.

The recent bush fires, an unforeseen contingency, necessitated the expeditious selection of a suitable alternative. At the eleventh hour it was agreed by all that we should paddle around the Beecroft Peninsula. To this end we met at Currarong around 9:00am (Eastern Stuber™ Time) and commenced paddling about 10:30am. We had invited a water-wise non-paddling friend, Wayne Tyrnil, to accompany us. A solid NW had risen drawing a 1-2ft wind-chop in its wake. Everyone remained enthusiastic toward our journey despite a hint of apprehension concerning Wayne which soon proved unwarranted.

Peels Reef to Whale Point was playfully bouncy and the group spread considerably over such a small stretch. Fortunately the rear caught up riding the wind swell around the northern point of Beecroft. The wind abated from Little Beecroft Head as the Peninsula intruded into its path producing a tranquil realm for paddling. Mermaids Inlet unwittingly introduced us to 11km of cliff induced serene grandeur. As we entered Mermaids Inlet through



*Above: Author mixing adventures in the cave
(Photo: Wayne Tyrnil)*

a negligible swell the rich green hues of weed swung rhythmically under the crystal carpet which held our kayaks. The water around the cliffs, too deep for waves, could only softly well. We tended to paddle as close to the rock as our paddles would allow.

This was one of those paddles where the sensory infusion eliminated any consciousness of fatigue or discomfort. The water was transparent and calm, the sun was hot and the scenery spectacular.

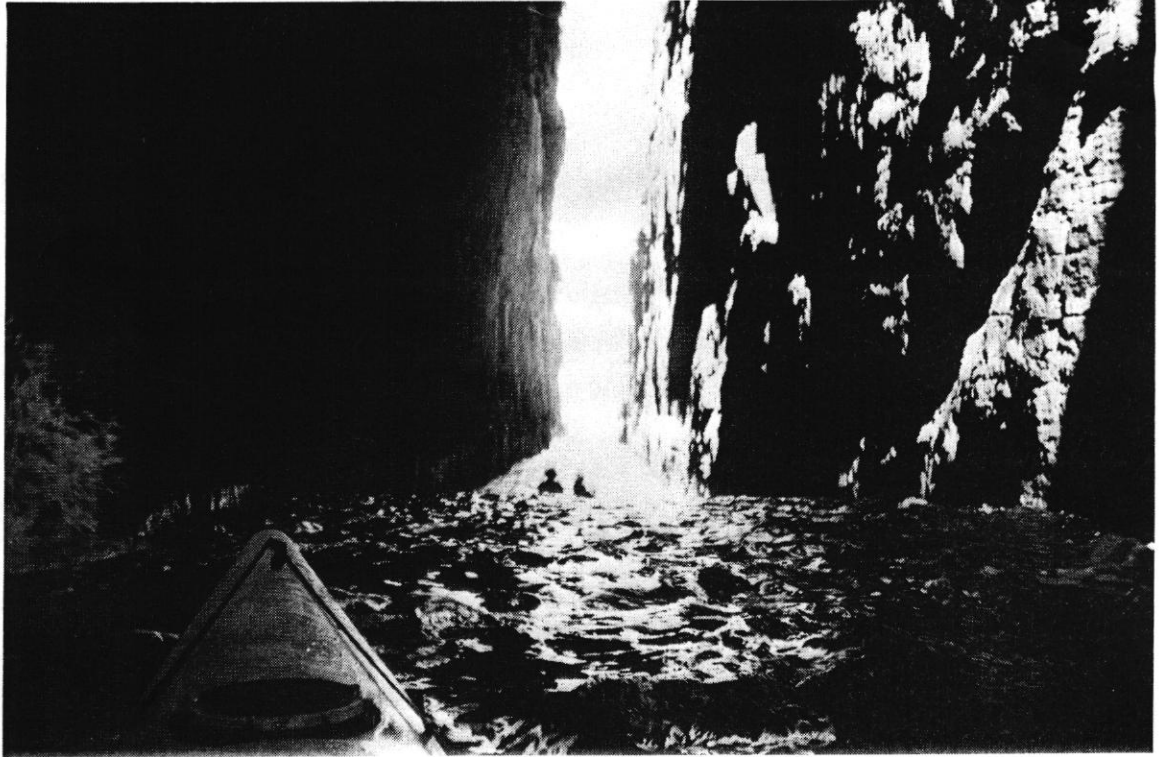
We continued our course south, stopping occasionally to imbibe our surrounds and bask in their brilliance. As we cornered Snake Inlet, a large opening at the base of the sheer cliff face surreptitiously beckoned. So potentially sweet seemed its enchants that we raced to enter. There, beneath a spluttering waterfall, we spied an enormous sea cave and paddled out of the sunlight into this cool, dim domain. In reflection free half-light the water yielded even better visibility. Coloured sponges lined the cave walls and schools of fish

swam unperturbed just below our boats.

Whilst in the cave enjoying its pristine ambience I noticed that Arunas, Gary and David were at the end rolling their kayaks. Closer inspection revealed that they were inverting with face masks to appreciate more fully the underwater vista. When my turn came I couldn't remain under for long enough. It was magnificent. From the back of the cave which was about 15m wide and 50m long I could see right out to the open water through an increasingly concentrated infusion of sunlight. eventually We abandoned our boats to swim unencumbered within the cave.

Whilst out of my kayak I ventured to the side to try and scale one of the cave walls allowing a jump into the water. The space above the surface (10m) was about equal to that below. Climbing over weed splattered rock with wet booties proved formidable. I climbed just short of the roof then boisterously leaped. A sympathetic place to climb I think a roof traverse might be on next time.

Finally we dragged ourselves away and continued south to Gum Getters Inlet for an uneventful lunch. In the afternoon we passed Drum and Drum Sticks and were spellbound by the cliffs all along the coast. Near Crocodile Head we came across a narrow canyon-like inlet with towering cliffs obscuring the sun. It was about 6m wide, 130m long and 70m high with no breaking water, just loch-like rises and falls. The splendour and isolation of these walls invoked images of a furious Cyclops dropping enormous boulders from on high or the dreaded Scylla stooping to devour unwary paddlers. It was awesome.



Above: *Straight from Homer*
(Photo: Wayne Tyrriil)

Eventually we rounded Point Perpendicular where we marvelled at the highest of the cliffs. The sublimity was quickly eroded as it became obvious that the wind on the exposed ocean had not abated, but intensified transforming the

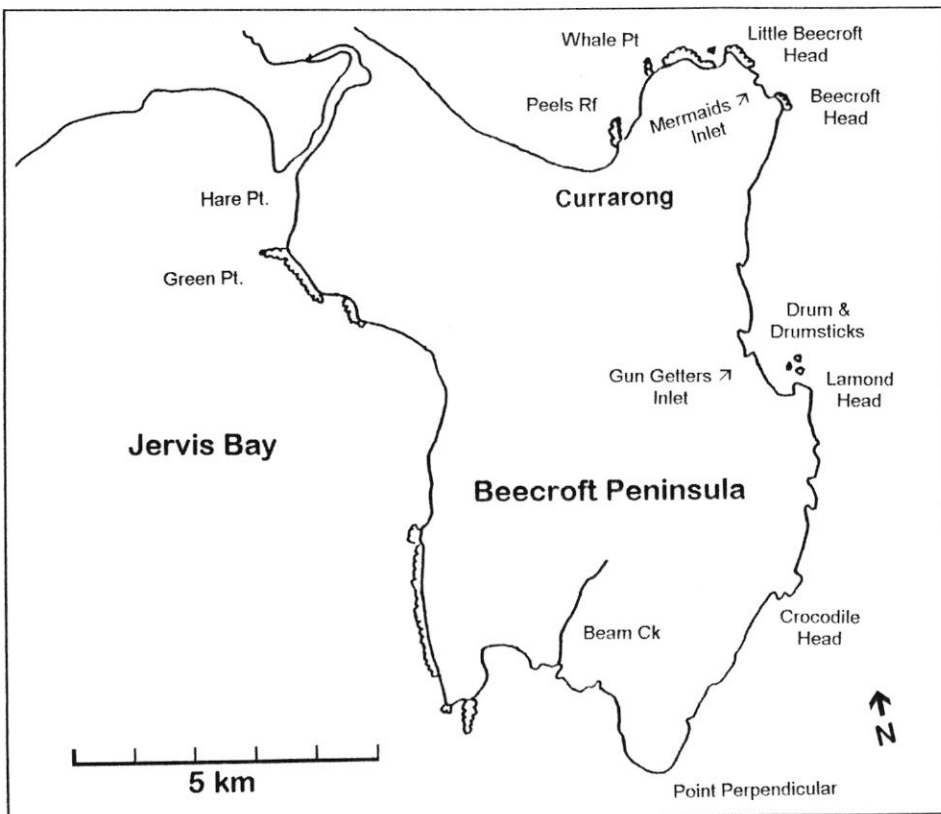
stretch to Bream Creek into an arduous finale.

Bream Creek offered a pleasant respite and we set to establishing camp and preparing dinner. There is no need to bore you with details other than the tantalising menu. Entree: Prawn Cocktail (D. Malcolm), Main: Marinated Chicken served with Chilli Vegetable Pie (G.

Edmond & G. Parker), Dessert: Sacher with Tia Maria cream (Arunas Pilka), Supper: Brewed Coffee and Chocolates (W. Tyrriil).

On Sunday we returned, retracing our steps. The swell had increased and the familiarity and intrigue surrounding many of the sights had dissipated. It reminded me of a fragment by the early Greek philosopher Heraclitus. About 400BC he had postulated that "no man (sic) can enter the same river twice". His statement seemed vindicated by the diurnal metamorphosis. Whilst conditions were favourable only some Eskimo-rolling around Drum and Drum Sticks recaptured any of the magic which Saturday had so generously bequeathed. The cave and the inlet in particular were transformed by a rougher ocean.

Mid Sunday afternoon we arrived at sleepy Currarong with our own dreams. Arunas had only lost one hat and recollection of my previous experience seemed like some fading palimpsest cleansed by the sun. □



The Secret Is In Not Minding

by Gordon Carswell

As a relative newcomer to the sport of sea kayaking, I find that I still get nervous on some occasions. I think the usual fears are - What if I go over? Will I have the presence of mind to roll up again? What about unexpected strong winds, big seas etc.

The sea is a vast lonely expanse which makes the beginner uneasy about leaving the security of "terra firma". I admit I am no exception to this. However, the biggest thing to fear is fear itself (cliche'). It is these feelings of apprehension and uneasiness that can spoil an otherwise enjoyable outing.

Now before venturing into the ocean, I learnt to roll. I practised regularly and then in surf. At first I kept on wet-exiting when bowled over by a wave until a more experienced kayaker (Ron Mudie) informed me that it takes very little to roll up whilst broaching and going over. He was right. I only missed my rolls because of my anxieties. This opened up a whole new world to me. All I have to do is concentrate on the set up and with very little effort, the wave actually helps me to get up. The biggest problem is the confusion one feels whilst being pummelled underwater and the subsequent panic which may set in.

To alleviate (somewhat) this problem I say over and over to myself "left is right and right is left". This means that if I can remember which side is my left and which is my right I can set up correctly. On my **left** side the right blade goes forward and on my **right** side the left blade goes forward.

Another thing I will say to myself is - "the secret is in not minding". I got this from an article in a sea kayaking magazine about rolling in the surf. Sometimes one just has to "hang in" there and wait for the turbulence to end in what seems like an eternity (5-10 seconds). Most people could relatively easily hold their breath for a minute, so



Above: *Staying cool - last November's Rock & Roll weekend at Patonga*
(Photo: Patrick Dibben)

why do some of us panic after 5 to 10 seconds? I think the answer is that we have already created a state of anxiety in ourselves and this makes everything seem more difficult. (I know I do it quite often.)

Anyway here I am thinking that I have this rolling thing all mastered and I buy a new (second hand) sea kayak which needs lots of work. After getting it sea-worthy (plastic taped over holes where hatches will soon go etc), I discover that it is a totally different concept to the little white water kayak I had been using. Suddenly I had great difficulty in turning the thing.

My biggest problem was that I didn't spend enough time getting used to the boat before going on a sea paddle (at night yet). Getting out was a fiasco. The tide was low and running out of Wallagoot Lake pretty fast. I could not turn quickly enough into a wave and got washed all the way onto a sandbar near the shore. Here I am, high and dry in an unfamiliar boat which I can't turn and I seem to have run out of water.

When the big sets came through, I managed to turn the boat and head out to sea, just as the biggest wave I have ever seen (well it felt like it at the time) build up. Fortunately this boat is faster than my other and is better at getting through the

waves. I got through all right but shaken. "My God!", I thought, "I have to get back in through there"

The paddle was really good and I managed to stave off my anxiety until we got back. "This is it. If I get bowled over, I'll only be washed into shore" I said to myself reassuringly. Even though I felt competent at rolling, this was an unfamiliar boat and the thought of being rolled at night had me a little tense. "No sweat, a piece of cake - I knew all along I would have no problems getting in" I said to myself with a sigh of relief (it actually was easy). "maybe I should go back out and try it again? No, have to get home soon don't I?"

Two nights later I found myself paddling out of the Bega river at North Tathra. I was a bit concerned about "big waves" but it was very easy to get out. My mind seemed to be on my return - "What will the surf be like then? Could I handle being rolled at night? Well at least I'm wearing my wetsuit if I do end up in the drink?" My anxiety was actually setting me up for problems.

On the way back the surf was no bigger than when we went out two hours before. I got on a wave and intended to ride it to shore but guess what? My boat nose dived. It shouldn't have but it did. Not only

did it nose dive (Hey! I've done this many times in a small white water kayak), but it flipped completely over end. Now this I wasn't used to and at night!

In my ensuing panic, I did not set up properly but somehow still managed to roll up all right. The next wave to hit me rolled me over again as I got sucked back through the falls. (Here is where I think I really goofed.) I tried to roll up too soon (I should have let the wave pass in this position). I tried again and nothing seemed to go right, so I wet exited. Now had I just hung on a little longer ("the secret is in not minding"), the turbulence would have passed and I would have had no problem in rolling up. Yes! my anxiety and panic set me up for this.

Once in the water, I felt very clam, hung onto the boat and was easily washed into shore. I had always realised that there was no real danger because the waves will push the boat to shore. My precaution of wearing a wetsuit was rewarded. On getting to shore I found that the front compartment was full of water. The boat had split two nights before while I had been gallivanting on the sand bar. This explained why I nose dived and

went end over end and why I so easily got bowled on the next wave. My wet exit, however, was solely due to my anxiety and panic as the very next day I went into the lake, filled the boat up with water and could still roll it.

I have wet-exited since (during the day) whilst practising in the surf. The cause seems to be in tiredness creating a difficulty in setting up properly and then not taking enough time to set up properly. That's OK, though, because now if I wet-exit I hang onto the boat for a minute or so, relax, climb back in, roll up and then paddle out past the break (or into shore would be OK) to bail the water out. I am now working on a suitable way to secure my paddle to maybe allow me to put my spray skirt on first.

Also, What I do now when I find I don't set up properly and miss a few rolls, is to raise the entire paddle up past the left side of the boat and in line with the boat. I hold it loosely enough to let it float, push down with the left hand first, finishing the roll by pushing down with the right hand and throwing the left hand across the boat. (can be done the other side if you wish but use opposite hands.) I would strongly advise to practise this in

the lake first to get the orientation right. It seems much easier to roll this way because the natural flotation of the paddle sets it up automatically. (probably once you can do it, it is easier.)

Anyway, the main lesson to be learned by this is that anxiety is a normal part of kayaking (particularly for is inexperienced paddlers) but preparing oneself beforehand is the best safeguard. Become familiar with the use of your boat and practise paddling and rolling in many different situations.

The worst of having to wet-exit is the humility of it all but after speaking to a number of experience paddlers, no one is immune from the possibility of a wet-exit. So take it in your stride and practise re-entry techniques. If you ever have to wet-exit, it will probably be in the surf zone (maybe in an unfamiliar boat). The waves should wash you to shore. Hang on tight.

Don't forget the best preparation is to practise, practise and yes, more practise and remember

"the secret is in not minding" ☐

The Dreamtime Voyage ***Around Australia Kayak Odyssey*** ***by Paul Caffyn***

In May 1994, Paul Caffyn self-published the story of one of the most remarkable journeys ever undertaken by kayak - the first kayak circumnavigation of Australia, a 9,420 mile, 360 day epic. 'The Dreamtime Voyage' is an inspirational tale of one man's dogged determination to fulfil his impossible dream against all odds including tropical cyclones, raging surf, sharks, sea snakes, crocodiles and long sections of sheer limestone cliffs.

Paul Caffyn is acknowledged as the world's outstanding sea kayaker with the first kayak circumnavigations of New Zealand, Great Britain, Australia, Japan and Alaska.

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By David Winkworth

I'm pleased to report that Frank Bakker "survived" the meeting with his Japanese parents-in-law and that he and Michiko are now married. Frank tells me it was a very nice ceremony in Japan followed by a skiing honeymoon. Michiko is expecting a baby in August. Frank, does this mean sleepless nights for us all on camp weekends post August?

No Bunnies

There was certainly some kayaking done on the South coast around Easter! The weekend before Easter was the annual instructor intake/Sea proficiency course run by John Wilde for the Board of Canoe education, at Honeymoon Bay. The weather was perfect and input by course participants was excellent. The following Monday, Ron Mudie, Gordon Carswell, Arunas Pilka, John Wilde and Ewan Shillabeer paddles out of Eden Harbour bound for Mallacoota. In contrast to the club trip down south in December, this group had light NE tailwind all the way - luxury!

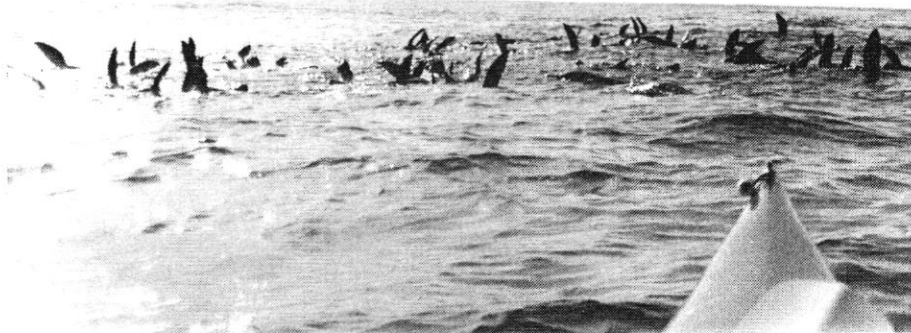
Over Easter, Arunas Pilka guided a group of Victorians back to Eden from Mallacoota.....and they had light southerlies behind them all the way. The southerlies weren't behind you in December were they guys?

Canned Berries

The Canberra connection continues to grow! The ACT now has quite a few club members and I predict a few more soon too. Who knows we may soon have meetings on Lake Burley Griffin. Actually the Canberra members do have a semi-regular Tuesday evening paddle on the lake so if you're going that way sometime take your boat and the contact list and get in touch with them. I don't know about rolling in the lake though!

Bega World

It's a small world. Sue was going to the supermarket in Bega recently and she saw a car with three sea kayakers on the roof. She tracked them down in the shops...(they were in uniform: fleece jackets,



Above: *Sleeping seals at Greencape*
(Photo: David Winkworth)

tech sandals and sunnies with cords attached) and invited them out to our place for a cuppa. One of them turned out to be an old school friend of mine! After a good yarn and a paddle together the following day, they spent an enjoyable few days paddling the far south coast. Hopefully, they'll join in a club paddle soon.

Hmmmm

I gaze into my crystal ball and predict that the Arctic Raider is going to be the cult boat of the 90's. They are, it seems, quickly catching up to the Pittaraks in numbers on the water. I believe Jacqui Windh now has one and Arunas Pilka and Kenji Ogawa have just bought one. Anyone want a three year bet on this?

Impress Us!

Is anyone going to record their impressions of their boat(s) for us? I'm interested. I'll be writing about my new boat in a future issue.

Rumour Baseless

I made a brief note recently to write about the rumour/hint that Jervis Bay was out of the running for the Naval Armaments base. You may have heard that JB is definitely out of it now because it is to be or has already been gazetted as a National Park. This is good news for

sea kayakers. It is a beautiful area and well worth a weekend visit if you haven't been there - don't forget your boat too.

Whale of a Time

Twofold Bay is another good spot for a weekend paddle. Coming up around October (actual date to be announced) is a whale watching weekend. This weekend will probably be centred on Twofold Bay... now all we need is for the whales to co-operate. Stay tuned!

Brrrrrrruuum

Winter is on its way. A sure sign down this way is the temperature of the coastal lakes falling below the ocean temperature. I noticed it this weekend in Wallagoot Lake....don't put your boat away though. Winter usually means offshore winds on the south coast making for ideal paddling conditions for less experienced paddlers. Stay close in and not too far from your vehicle until you build your skill levels....or better still go out with a competent qualified paddler. There's someone paddling every weekend down this way if you need some company.

Please Consider

If you're working at improving your stroke repertoire consider this: you won't know how far you can lean

your boat on turns, high braces, sculling strokes etc until you actually reach your limit and go over. Now, if your rolls are a bit shaky, it can become a cold, tiring exercise to bail and re-enter. We've all done it. To keep up the practice through winter, why not find a nice level sandy area about a metre or so deep and practise there. If you overdo it, just put the paddle to the bottom and hip flick up!

If anyone is interested in assessment for the Sea Proficiency Award or some training towards it during the winter months please give me a call. we can organise a weekend at fairly short notice.

Decked Out

Don't forget the Rock & Roll Weekend at Patonga in November.

Now is the time to fit those decklines and pad out the cockpit and seat. This year we'll organise some extra on-water activities. Another slide show would be nice....so load up your camera with slide film and start clicking!

Remember there is no substitute for time in your boat. ☐

ACT News

A Salad Roll Weekend

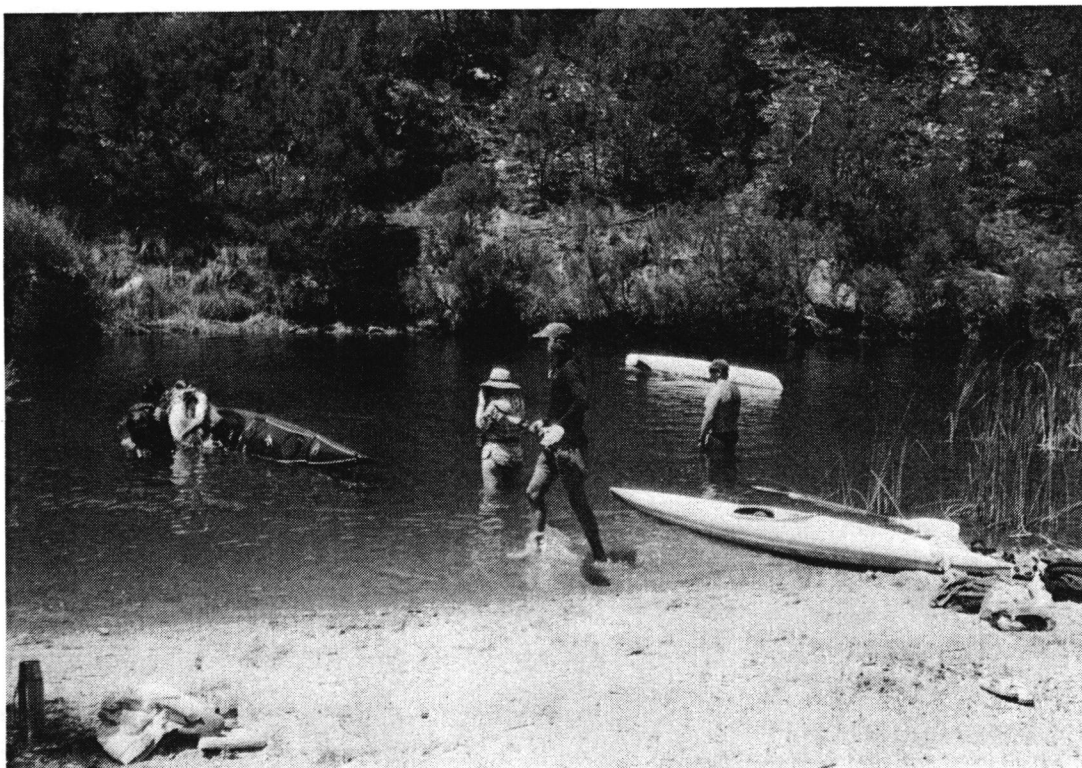
By Jacqueline Windh

The Canberra sea kayaking group is growing. Which is pretty good, considering we don't have a sea here. We're working on that...we envision a wave machine installed on Lake Burley-Griffin within the next year.

Many of the Canberra members joined the Club after the Rock-and-Roll weekend. I live on the Queanbeyan River, in a house backing onto a clear, sandy bottomed waterhole, perfect for practising rolling skills (in summer, not now!). So on Sunday 6th February the rosellas, roos and wombat woke to a strange sight, as their waterhole filled up with four sea kayaks

The session was attended by star rollers Arunas Pilka, Jeff Blamey, Nick Gill and Norm Sanders (more about him below) and eager pupils Tony Bomford, Mark Pearson and myself. Jeanette Mill provided encouragement and start photographic services.

The date for the Salad Roll session had been set a month before. Norm, in particular, was very keen to learn to roll. So keen, in fact, that he couldn't wait for the



Above: From L to R Jeff assisting; Jeanette taking photos; Nick marching; Norm upside down Arunas over-seeing.

(Photo: Jacqueline Windh)

designated weekend. He decided to teach himself, without a word of advice from anyone, in shallow muddy waters of the Tuross River. After a few masochistic days of paddle-poling he called up Arunas, who explained what to do over the phone. Two weeks, and several aching muscles later, Norm had mastered it - a self-taught roller (much to Arunas's amazement!)

I am pleased to say I did my first successful roll that day (I had the benefit of a few earlier, frustrating training sessions). Mark made a lot of progress, and Tony undertook a

marathon session - I am surprised he could move the next day!

Our next Queanbeyan River session will probably have to wait until Christmas, unless we all buy drysuits. until then, we'll keep you posted! ☐

Bits and Pieces

FOR SALE

PUFFIN. In near perfect condition. Comes with padded seat, rudder, and sail. \$1,1000.
Kenji Ogawa (02) 807-6911

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS.

Contributions for our newsletter are sought. One to two pages including space for photos & maps is ideal. Please try and supply relevant maps and photos. Write your name and the caption on the back of photos and these will be returned. Contributions can be hand written but we would prefer them on IBM format 3.5" diskette in any of the common word processing formats such as MS-WORD or WORD PERFECT.

Mail contributions to: Editor, PO Box A1045, Sydney South, 2000.

Warning: If you send photos or artwork in an envelope larger than DL (the size this newsletter is usually posted in) then mark your envelope "Do Not Bend"!

NOTICE.

Bush and Paddle Sports has re-opened at 127 Prices Circuit, Woronora.

GOSSIP

Driving home after a mellow afternoon's paddling on Lake Burley-Griffin, Arunas Pilka looked down at his feet and noticed his kayak straps lying there. He looked up, and the kayak was still there, in spite of (in his own words) speeding over the bridge and tearing around roundabouts. So he kept driving.

He claims his forgetfulness is due to having Frank Bakker's car in his driveway (Arunas has been car-sitting while Frank is away). Arunas reckons the car is cursed, because that kind of thing happens to Frank all the time. Frank's latest misadventure was forgetting his passport on his way out of the country to get married. □

SEA KAYAK RACES

Manly Warringah Kayak Club is running :

Ski & Sea Kayak Race Series
1994 Winter Championships

There are three races to go (see trips list). The cost is \$5.00 per race. There are at least two classes for sea kayaks:

1. *Touring Sea Kayaks:* Minimum width 530mm for at least 600mm of boat length. In the touring class there may be two classes (depending on numbers) - Short: under 19ft and Long 19ft and over.
2. *Racing Sea Kayaks:* All sea kayaks under 530mm in length. At present there are two boats which fall into this category the Mirage 22S and then Nemesis.

Sea Kayaking - the last word

By Norm Sanders

PITTARAK, Dictionary Definition

pit t a rak (pit' -rak), n. [ME. from an exclamation uttered upon seeing a vessel being battered on a rocky coastline. i.e. "Pity, a wrack." as in wrack and ruin. (See WRECK)], a large, unwieldy, water-borne projectile, operated by a semi-skilled person sitting upright in a central cockpit. Usually identifiable by large letters PITTARAK on side of projectile. (A legal requirement which serves as a warning to stay clear.) v.t. (to pittarak): to use a pittarak as a weapon, or instrument of destruction, particularly in surf. (to be pittaraked): to be attacked without warning or mercy by a pittarak. **pittarakophobia:** reasoned and reasonable fear of being pittaraked. (related words: see *Mirage*)

Noteworthy Pittarakers:

Arunas Pilka
Gary Edmond
Frank Bakker (numerous offences)

Unfortunate Pittarakees:

Arunas Pilka
Jackie Windh
Norm Sanders
Dave Malcolm

A special note of mention goes to Arunas Pilka, who, while piloting Frank Bakker's Pittarak double managed to pittarak Frank in his Pittarak single, thereby pittaraking a Pittarak. Happily, all parties to this particular pittaraking have avoided contracting pittarakophobia. Not so fortunate are Jackie Windh and Norm Sanders who are suffering advanced cases of this pernicious disease. They are forming a support group for other pittarakophobics.

Watch this space for further developments □

There's a chance Paul will be out here later in the year and we might have him as a guest speaker again!

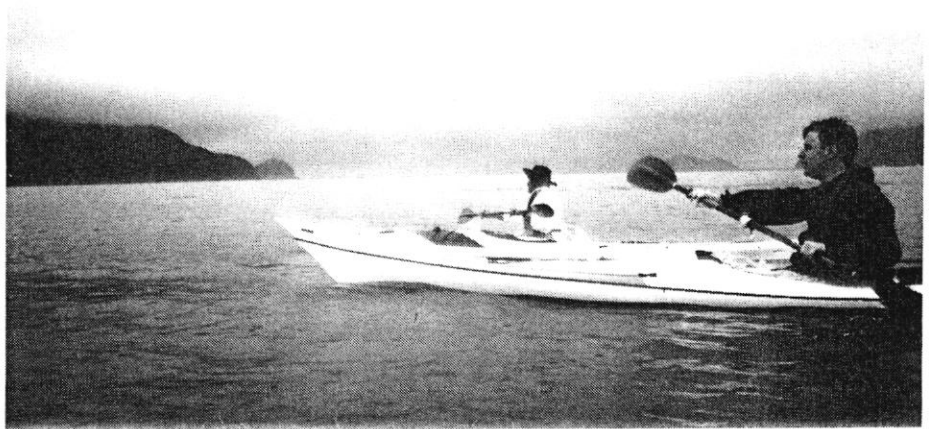
What do you do if you have just ten days holidays from work? Peter Treseder decided to travel the length of New Zealand - no big deal really, I've done it. Peter, ever the bank officer, did it on the cheap however. Forget the car hire bills or bus fares. Peter cycled from the northern tip of the North Island down to Mt Rua-whatchamacallit which he climbed to the peak. He grabbed a bicycle on the other side and cycled down to the southern tip. Here, in an effort to dodge the cost of a ferry ticket, he paddled across Cook Strait before cycling down the middle of the South Island. He ran across the crinkly bits in the middle and peaked Mt Cook (in Dunlop Volleys and crampons!) before finding another bicycle and pedalling to the south coast. He paddled across to Stewart Island ran across it and back climbing the peak and then paddled back to the South Island. He flew back to Sydney (no, using a plane) and started work the next day. He tells me he was pretty stuffed at work that day! (It's that airline food Peter).

Our club has now grown to 129 members and I would like to welcome our new members : Tony Bomford, Greg Ferguson, Peter Garrett, Annette Kelaher, David Kelaher, Andrew Maticka, Carla Rogers, Andrew Singer and David Whyte.

In March we had a fantastic talk/slide show by Gary Steer on his 'Islands of Fire and Magic' expedition. The film should be brilliant!

The Family Weekend at Greenpatch, Jervis Bay in March was a washout with terrible conditions and only a few hardy souls turned up for the weekend. It sounded like perfect Advanced Proficiency training.

The Board of Canoe Education Sea Kayak Instructors Course in March saw Bruce Easton and Helen Jacobson, among others,



Above: Richard McNeal on a misty morning paddle at Patonga's R&R weekend (Photo: Patrick Dibben)

gain their Instructors certificates. Congratulations!

The south coast has seen lots of action with an Eden-Mallacoota trip and the Easter Mallacoota-Eden trip a great success. (See South Coast News)

The Advanced Proficiency training in late April saw a number of club members gain their Proficiency Certificates. Congratulations guys!

The Pain and Suffering trip must have lived up to it's name. The participants - Dirk Stuber, Arunas Piilka, Gary Parker, Gary Steer and Jacque Windh survived the 60km paddle although there's a nasty rumour that Dirk hitched a ride in a rubber ducky. Jacque had rudder problems on her Arctic Raider with it becoming bent by waves. It eventually snapped off after Arunas had straightened it a few too many times. Norm Sanders and Nick Gill paddled in from Huskisson to meet everyone at the campsite on Saturday night. The group made a decision to skip the 48km Sunday paddle - probably too many of Arunas's pancakes again. They paddled back to Huskisson for a lift.

Speaking of Arctic Raiders, as a follow up to David Malcolm's product testing another member of our club has carried out some road testing. Warwick Francis was in the process of overtaking another

vehicle at 110kmh when his roof racks, complete with two boats left the car, flipped in the air and landed on the road. Amazingly he patched his kevlar Arctic Raider with tape and still paddled it until it could be more fully repaired!

The club has received correspondence from Paul Robins on behalf a group of paddlers in Queensland who have formed an informal club and they have mailed us their newsletter. Paul's letter also mentioned the problem of communication on the water and asked if our club has standard hand signals. We don't but does anyone have any input on this? Also if you're planning a trip to Qld I can put you in touch.

Other correspondence included membership enquires; requests for information; newsletters, Sea Trek (Vic), Sea Canoeing (Tas), Investigator Canoe Club (SA); and sea kayak tour brochures for commercial tours in Irian Jaya (Irian Adventures), Chile (Altue Expediciones), Alaska (Kayak Katami Adventures) and the Whitsundays (Whitsunday Kayak Adventures). All on file and available on request.

Hope to see you all at the Slide Show on July 2nd.

Patrick Dibben

□