

❖ NSW Sea Kayaker ❖

Newsletter of the NSW Sea Kayak Club Inc. 29 Westgarth Street, O'Connor, ACT, 2602.

Issue 25

January 1996

CROSSING BASS STRAIT: 'ONCE BITTEN, TWICE ...'

by Gary Edmond

Most people would agree that paddling and alcohol should not be combined. Of more concern is the combination of alcohol and trip planning. It was during a relaxed evening reclining on a beach with some fellow kayakers, a year ago, that I suggested an ambitious plan which had been concealed and dormant in my mind for some time. Rather than receive the caution and reservation I had expected, there was momentary silence, reflection and then enthusiasm. This was the beginning of preparation and research which lasted the better part of a year. Equipment had to be assembled, kayaks modified, climatic patterns investigated and logistics organised.

What I had proposed was an expedition across the consistently roughest water in Australia, namely Bass Strait. Bass Strait is the stretch of water that divides Tasmania from mainland Australia. It was named after an English naval surgeon and explorer George Bass (1771-c.1803). During the late 18th century Bass and Mathew Flinders (1774-1814) explored northern Tasmania and discovered a watery strait de-bunking



'Men In Skirts' - Gary, Arunas, Evan and John prepare to leave Port Welshpool
Photo: Jacqi Windh

popular belief in a land bridge between the (our) mainland and Tasmania. Bass and Flinders had undertaken their own expedition in an eight by five foot sailing boat, the *Tom Thumb*. In a sense Bass and Flinders' exploration in such a small vessel has provided a precedent for subsequent generations of water based adventurers.

The narrowest passage between the mainland and Tasmania is approximately 220km wide. The path we eventually chose followed islands which had once been part of a land bridge - tens of thousands of years ago - and measured just over 300km. The Strait itself is relatively shallow and captures and concentrates the weather patterns of higher latitudes. Bass Strait deservedly holds a wide, in fact, international reputation, due in part to its treacherous nature and also because it comprises a section in the popular annual Sydney to Hobart yacht race. The yachts

generally give Bass Strait a wide berth

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Editorial

We're Under New Management!

Hi, despite hiding in the back row at the recent AGM I was spotted and am consequently the new editor - welcome to the October '95 edition?

Yes, for a number of reasons, the NSWSK has become a rather irregular publication of late. As this is not a good thing for club cohesion, my first responsibility will be to make this newsletter boringly regular. My second responsibility will be to put out a newsletter that is informative, entertaining and, if possible (given the generally sombre, dour nature of sea kayakers), occasionally humorous.

The 'making it regular' policy unfortunately means a new feature - the Contributors *Hall Of Shame*, naming those who chose to go paddling (or pursue some other frivolous pursuit) rather than get material to me by the promised date. The shocking inclusion in the inaugural 'Shame' of both our President and Vice President is hopefully an aberration, as both are said to be men of honour. Hopefully, the mere existence of this feature might assist me, the poor Editor, in getting future issues to you all in the appropriate month. If it doesn't, I would encourage members to show their displeasure at current and future Felons' by throwing stale booties at them after long Club paddles. The next issue *will* come out in March!

Back to the newsletter itself - new regular features making their debut in this issue are Jim Croft's Internet page, the Old Sea Dog's Gear Locker and possibly even Poet's Corner.

This issue is also accompanied by the first NSW Sea Kayak club survey. It is hoped that members will respond enthusiastically to the questionnaire, which will be used primarily to prepare a Used Sea Kayak guide for future publication. The opinions of serious paddlers on what works and what doesn't should also be of interest to the manufacturers. The survey will also assist the club in meeting any perceived 'gaps' in our paddling calendar. As a further inducement - all paid up members who return a completed questionnaire shall be included in a draw for a \$50 giftvoucher from Paddy Palins.

1996 Club Calendar

The new calendar is attached to this issue - , as usual, there are a few 'quiet' months at this stage so if you would like to add a trip or regular paddle to the calendar please call Gary Edmond on (042) 84-0836 (H) or send details to him at;
8 Glenhaven St., Woonoona, NSW.

For the information of members who are keen to attend formal training /assessment events, we have also attached the NSW Board of Canoe Education calendar.

Newsletter Contributions

If you have an article or an exciting idea that may result in one, please call me to talk about it, or just send me the article, (on a diskette if possible -preferably MSWord format - all diskettes/photos will be returned).

I would also like to start a letters page - they might be letters asking for advice on setting up a sea-kayak (our resident panel of experts is standing by), comments on the latest version on the paddle grading system, or even a criticism of some aspect of a published article (and lets face it - criticism is sometimes warranted eg Waiting for Godot!). Variety is the key - your contributions will ensure that the NSWSK continues to go boldly where very few newsletters have gone before.

Members Boat Reviews

When I joined the club in October '93, my first newsletter contained an excellent article by Dave Winkworth on his experience and evaluation of the venerable Puffin. As a newcomer, I found the article interesting and informative, and, had I not just bought a sea-kayak, it might have helped me with my first purchase. Of course, our club members own a wide range of kayaks and know their boats intimately after many kilometres of paddling in a variety of conditions. So where are all the follow up articles on Greenlanders, Mirages, Arctic Raiders, Roscoes etc? To get the ball rolling I formally nominate Mr Gary Parker to make public his highs and lows with the Pittarak Expeditioner. I also nominate the dexterous Mr Gary Edmond to type the article!

Minutes of AGM

The minutes of the AGM held at Honeymoon Bay are attached for your information. Please note that the cases for and against the motion for the club to affiliate with Canoe and Kayak Incorporated will hopefully be in the March issue. Members will then be asked to vote on the motion.



CONTRIBUTORS HALL OF SHAME

Felon	Crime	Editor's Comment
<i>D. Stuber</i>	1 week late with the President's Report	Poor example for the younger members of the executive - must learn that high office is not just about power but also responsibility!
<i>D.Winkworth</i>	2 weeks late with Rock'n'Roll Review	Ex President's performance must improve if lateness is not to become a vice!
<i>J. Croft</i>	Late with article and then forgot to give me the diskette when in Sydney - a further 7 day delay	Shows promise as a contributor but too much paddling is causing brain fatigue.
<i>L. Hemmings</i>	4 weeks late with newsletter format	Very poor early performance but made amends with Express Post delivery.

(Continued from page 1)

preferring to push east into the Tasman Sea to avoid potential danger.

Whilst Bass Strait has been the site of many deaths and wrecks during its relatively brief navigational history it has featured in a great many more incredible tales which have served to heighten its stature and firmly entrench its place in the Australian psyche. Of course it is these same considerations that make such a

embarking for Tasmania.

Arunas Pilka, a very powerful paddler, had broken his new kevlar kayak into two discrete pieces just three weeks before Easter. Arunas and I had been on an overnight paddle and as the sun emerged we ran a "gauntlet" (rough, often breaking, water between two rocky outcrops). As we crossed between the rocks, after about 12 hours of paddling, a large wave (1.5m) broke on us and Arunas was forced back onto rocks and trapped for some

I'll never forget my sense of loss, for Arunas and myself, when he decided to discontinue. There, shocked, in the darkness of Refuge Cove we undertook a rapid gear reshuffle. The four of us had basically divided into two teams to share equipment and food. Now my partner was gone and I had to hurriedly reorganise our gear. My two other paddling companions John Wilde and Evan Shillabeer were receptive and the surplus gear was shared around evenly. We then said our sad good-byes. What can you say to an expedition member who has been there all along and suddenly isn't?

Symbolically the three remaining paddlers tentatively left the Victorian coast entering a shroud of mist on our way to the first of our temporary destinations. Some fifty kilometres away lay Hogan Is. Leaving the coast we ventured into one of Australia's major shipping lanes - between Sydney and Melbourne. In a relatively thick mist our visibility was limited to about 100m. We knew that commercial ships travelled at about 20 knots so we assumed that we would be able to dodge them if required. The seas were benign and the fog lay gently over the water's surface. Through the shroud we heard the occasional "aeroplane" in the distance which we eventually realised were fog horns. The noises occasionally drew closer but fortunately never quite reached us before they receded into the distance. Whilst enveloped by the mist albatross regularly cruised by, momentarily hovering above the bows of our kayaks. They are elegantly sculptured birds able to glide effortlessly across the surface of the ocean.

In anticipation of navigational difficulties I had purchased a *Garmin* GPS 40 (Global Positioning System) to include amongst our equipment. It proved to be a reassuring device during our paddle through the mist. Every hour or so I cranked it up for thirty seconds to check our bearing and the distance to Hogan Is. Our compass navigated course varied a few degrees here and there but was basically accurate. Even with only 12km to paddle - according to the GPS - we were unable to ascertain our preferred destination. When you're about 40km offshore on the first day of a long open ocean crossing the absence of land becomes

(Continued on page 4)



Evan and John arriving at Hogans Island - Photo: Gary Edmond

crossing appealing and challenging to an experienced sea kayaker trying to cut his or her teeth.

Originally a group of five paddlers committed themselves to the crossing scheduled for Easter 1995. Attrition caused by a combination of work commitments and physical injury eventually reduced this number - as late as the morning we departed mainland Australia - to three. David Winkworth, affectionately known as "the propeller man", was the first casualty. He was forced to withdraw his involvement back in February due to his thriving business.

So it was that four paddlers left Jacqui Windh, who had generously provided logistical support, at Port Welshpool on their way to Refuge Cove. Refuge Cove, on Wilsons Promontory was a popular yachters anchor some 42km to the south and our last campsite before abandoning the Australian mainland. But our party was still to lose another member before

minutes in a turbulent gutter. By the time he was able to land, his kayak was dissembled and he had lost considerable quantities of skin from his legs and buttocks.

Shaken, but undeterred he promptly acquired a new sea kayak only to discover he was experiencing some minor wrist irritation. On the morning we were to leave Victoria we rose about an hour before dawn. Arunas consulted the group concerned about persistent "niggling" in his wrists. He had taken some mild anti-inflammatory medication but this had not relieved the sensation. Arunas was placed in the invidious position of having to decide whether he would continue. Would his wrist condition be exacerbated by the paddling or would it subside once he was warmed up? Arunas' commitment to the group and healthy respect for Bass Strait influenced his decision to remain behind.

disconcerting. Indeed the efficacy of a compass let alone a more technologically dependent GPS can raise serious disquiet. Although it must be said that 40km out it is easier to paddle on in hope than retreat in despair.

By about 11am the sun had burnt away the mist leaving only a cloud line on the horizon. We could now see the occasional bulk carrier cruising by despite the cloud concealing our destination. Finally a vague silhouette of an island appeared faintly through the cloud. Hogan Is. was surprisingly large. It was surrounded by numerous smaller rocky outcrops and featured only one bay with an easy landing. After circumnavigating the island it became apparent that this bay was well oriented for the prevailing conditions and allowed a very comfortable exit adjacent to our eventual campsite.

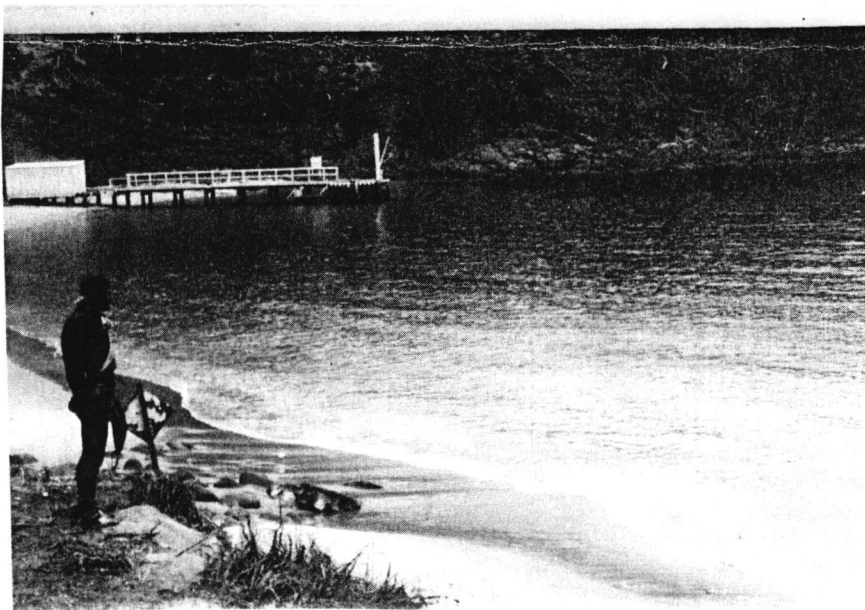
Meanwhile Arunas had returned to our camp at Refuge Cove despondent. After a couple of hours of contemplation he had packed his gear into his kayak and fruitlessly paddled out into the mist in pursuit. After about twenty minutes Arunas realised that such a venture was relatively foolhardy and consequently turned back. Ironically his wrists offered less irritation than he had anticipated but he had no visible point of reference or GPS to navigate by and would have arrived at Hogan Is. after dark. It must have been a very slow and lonely paddle back to Port Welshpool over the next couple of days.

Most of the islands in Bass Strait are leased to farmers who run cattle or sheep. Tradition and long family associations with particular islands are obviously more important than the commercial viability of such enterprises. Hogan Is. was uninhabited though it offered, like many of the Strait's islands, a dilapidated hut as refuge. The hut was, presumably, utilised by the lessees when they came to inspect their herds of cows. It also provided some old, though edible, supplies for sailors in distress. We camped in a stockyard which was one of the few flat pieces of grassy ground close to the small beach. A still night and a warm beach fire saw over-provisioned paddlers eagerly and triumphantly reduce their supply of port.

The next day we paddled to the Kent Group of islands. This cluster consists of three major islands - Erith, Dover

and Deal. The island group lay about 42km from Hogan Is. and was preconceived as probably the most interesting component of our trip. Deal Is. especially, had a permanent resident and considerable historical interest to us. At one time the Deal Is. lighthouse was the second highest operating light in the world. It is located at an elevation of about 260m and formed part of the substantial influence Deal Is. had exerted upon Tasmanian navigational history.

The Kent islands are very remote and steep. As the dawn burst forth we could identify the group from a range of about 35km. Despite being able to observe our featureless destination it took many hours of paddling, and a very gradual approach before we arrived. When I say paddling, not every one on the trip employed paddling as the exclusive means of propulsion. John the most experienced, oldest, and dare I say craftiest member had brought a sail. The 10-15 knot westerly aided his Tasmanian rigged sea kayak across the water.



John contemplates the next leg near the Dear Island wharf
Photo: Gary Edmond

During our transit two vessels - presumably catching sight of John's fluoro pink sail - approached to investigate. Those in a commercial dive boat were intrigued by our presence. The second group, in a yacht, were concerned and disappointed when after dropping their sail and motoring up wind all we asked for was an up-to-date weather report.

They told us some foul weather was expected so we made haste for Deal Is.

The wind increased from the north and combined with the tide to funnel along and in between the Kent Group resulting in a slog to the southern end of Dover Is. Before long we arrived under Dover's towering cliffs. They offered protection before we ventured around into Murray Pass. The Pass is deep and flows quickly. We caught the turning tide and paddled to Deal Is. where we had intended to camp. After a quick lunch, continually interrupted by rampaging wallabies which knew no fear, we ascended the island to the caretaker's residence. Bill, who takes readings for the bureau of meteorology, informed us that we were unable to camp on Deal Is. as it is a nature reserve. He recommended a hut on Erith Is. about 1.5kms back across Murray Pass.

By this stage the wind had risen to about 25-30 knots. We were becoming cold standing around talking so we asked Bill if we could use his solar-phone to obtain a weather report for the next twenty four hours. The prognosis was

unfavourable for the following day so we hastily returned to our kayaks and negotiated about 1km of virtual white water conditions including 2m standing waves as we battled wind against tide in Murray Pass. Eventually we pulled into protected Bulli Bay (West Cove) and paddled toward the hut seeking refuge and warmth.

(Continued on page 5)



(Continued from page 4)

As the winds increased and the rain arrived the hut appeared very hospitable. Its logbook proved a colourful source of information. It appeared that a number of families travelled to Erith Is. each summer to spend about 4-6 weeks holidaying on this remote windswept isle. Other accounts were given of monstrous storms with 75+ knot winds and yachts dragging anchors in the bay. We also noted two previous entries in the logbook recorded by sea kayakers from earlier expeditions. The hut also boasted a potted history of Erith Is. which retold of stranded sailors from one of the nineteenth century wrecks who had constructed a primitive coracle from wood, bones and seal skins in a vain attempt to cross Murray Pass to Deal Is. Unfortunately their endeavour failed as sharks were attracted by the scent of hastily dried seal skins. Posterity records they made it back to Bulli Bay considerably faster than their departure.

As had become the custom, on the next morn we awoke to our alarms but in the foreboding, howling darkness decided that the weather remained unsuitable for the next leg of the trip. From Erith Is. to the relative safety of Flinders Is. was a 65km haul. This was the longest open stretch of our expedition so we were looking for appropriate weather. Weatherbound, we spent the morning exploring Erith Is. Later in the cold windy afternoon we donned our wet paddling gear and returned across Murray Pass to obtain weather information through Bill. Again we stood in the spine-chilling wind whilst we were lectured on safety and moral responsibility. Bill had warned to us; having spoken to some residents on Flinders Is. who were aware of a previous kayak crossing. Evidently Bill had realised that our adventure was unusual but within the realm of the achievable. Again he graciously provided his solar-phone for a reverse charge call.

This time the weather forecast for the coming day was relatively favourable. It forecast SW winds at 20-25 knots early in the morning shifting to the NW later in the day. In the evening it predicted a storm from the SW. Our course was predominantly SE. We decided that we would probably go, realising that there would be very serious consequences if the wind didn't change or if we were caught in the storm. If the SW winds remained we could well have been pushed out

into the Tasman: the next available land being New Zealand some 2000km to the east.

That evening we retired early to an insidious and amplified chorus of rat noises. In the two short days we had been on Erith Is. the rats had become increasingly emboldened. During the night John surreptitiously abandoned the hut to escape their constant rummaging and occasional face scampering. He was lucky. For as I lay, arm out of my sleeping bag and oblivious to my impending fate a rogue rat bit my finger causing it to bleed. I knew that I slept peacefully but this was ridiculous. My inability to contain an instant stream of expletives led a slothful though cognisant Evan into guttural fits of laughter. I wanted to "torch the joint" but was dissuaded by my bemused companion. My vexation was only abated by our recognition that John was missing. Fearing him carried off by the vermin we endeavoured to locate him and prepare for the demands of the new day. Evan eventually located him sleeping peacefully under a tree. If the weather report was take-it or leave-it the rats had rapidly swung the balance in favour of departure.

Early morning was relatively calm in protected Bulli Bay. However as we paddled out into Murray Pass under cover of darkness the wind and tide fought. We had decided to go south between Deal and Dover Islands rather than north with the tidal stream around Deal Is. because if the SW wind remained we were determined to avoid being blown too far north, away from Flinders Is. When we eventually broke clear of the tidal influence in the Pass a large ground swell of about 3-4m with breaking white caps greeted us. It introduced moments of doubt and also exhilaration. We paddled tentatively for about half an hour and then stiffened our resolve as we became increasingly committed - there was no turning back.

In the distance behind us, we were relieved to spot the NW front approaching. A few hours out this changed wind caught us and pushed us in the desired direction. Unlike the others I was without a rudder and despite the presence of a retractable skeg worked consistently all day in 25-30 knot winds to keep my kayak on track. Of course John erected his sail and

cruised. Again we could see land about 50kms away but it took us 8.5 hours to traverse the 65km in very windy conditions.

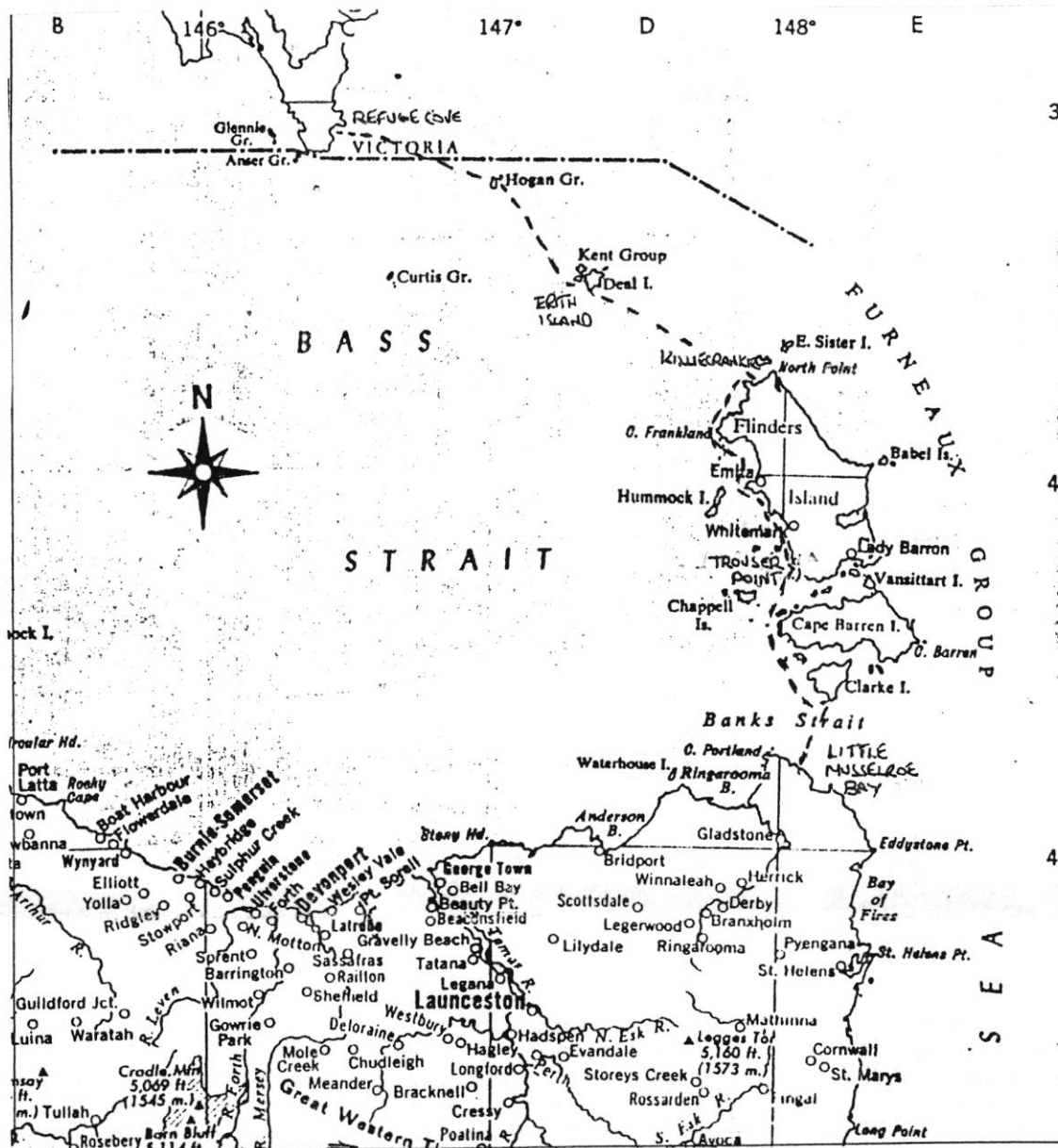
Tired but elated we entered Killiecrankie harbour where we soon found a shop supplying us with drinks and hot pies. Later that afternoon the anticipated storm arrived. In the evening as we sat relaxing around a small fire, John produced a bottle of port and wine glass which he had brought to celebrate Evan's birthday. That night we slept very snugly as the winds bellowed around us. The next day was not conducive to paddling so we layed low and explored the locals hills - talking and eating with some interesting, if not eccentrically affable locals.

Refreshed, the new day brought a mild westerly wind as we headed south along the coast of Flinders Is. The larger open ocean legs were now behind us. John, rapidly testing friendships and stretching kayaking credibility, was utilising his sail at every opportunity. At one stage he opened an enormous lead as he cruised for about an hour at 9 knots as a small squall struck.

We continued south to Whitemark, the island's major township (population 700), enjoying a hotel counter meal that evening. At Whitemark we were met by Curly, or was it Crusty?, the sailor. He had a litany of improbable though entertaining and predominantly innocent stories to regale us with: like the time he had been overcome with fumes and fallen unconscious for six weeks whilst painting a caravan - only to regain consciousness to find himself still holding the wet paintbrush; or the time he suffered his first air-embolism whilst diving for abalone when he should have been on holiday - as he indifferently rolled a cigarette. Eventually his stories wore thin and we were eager to escape back onto the water.

Our homeward push was hampered by shallow water and windy conditions which only allowed us to paddle and drag our kayaks 12km on the following day. We made it to scenic Trouser Point under the Strzlecki Peaks (777m). The day after we struggled 50km, due to largely unfavourable winds, to the beautiful granite outcrops and tranquillity of Rebecca Bay on the southern tip of Clarke Is.

From Rebecca Bay only Banks Strait
(Continued on page 14)



The route taken by the intrepid trio

Trip Itinerary	From	To	Distance
Day 1	Pt Welshpool	Refuge Cove	42km
Day 2	Refuge Cove	Hogan Is.	50km
Day 3	Hogan Is.	Erith Is.	42km
Day 4	Weathered in		
Day 5	Erith Is.	Killiecrankie	65km
Day 6	Weathered in		
Day 7	Killiecrankie	Whitemark	50km
Day 8	Whitemark	Trouser Point	12km
Day 9	Trouser Pt	Rebecca Bay	50km
Day 10	Rebecca Bay	Little Musselroe Bay	23km

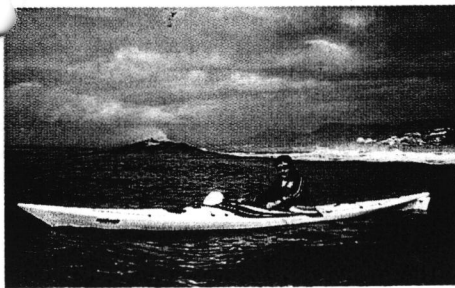
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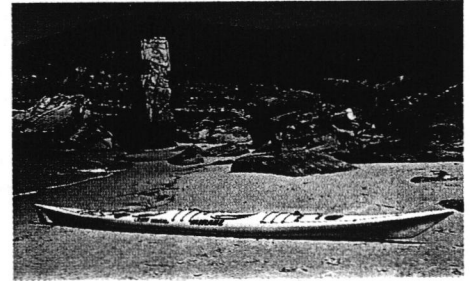
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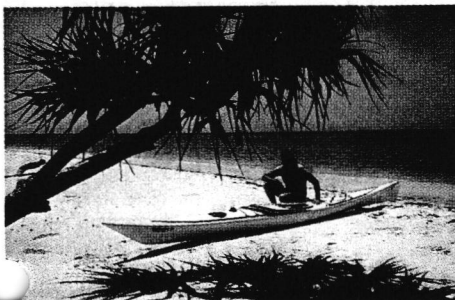
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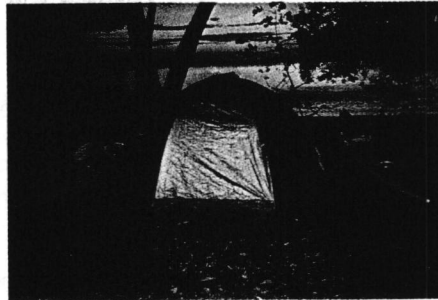
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President's Report

By all accounts the Rock and Roll weekend (3/4 November) was a huge success with over eighty people attending. On Saturday someone counted 60 kayaks on the beach and at some of the training sessions twenty to thirty people attended, which was a new experience for most of us. Six to eight is considered the optimum number of trainees per instructor. Our thanks to David Winkworth for organising and coordinating a great weekend.

The AGM (3 November) went well and a number of issues were discussed (the minutes are attached to this issue).

After the AGM, a special meeting was held to discuss the Jervis Bay paddle in July, in which some paddlers experienced difficulties due to 25 knot headwinds. In summary, it was agreed that for those who wish to undertake a trip graded three or higher a rigorous self assessment should be made in consultation with the leader (if one is nominated) or the organiser. Also the group shares the responsibility of determining if all those present at start of the trip have sufficient experience and ability and that they possess the necessary equipment. If someone needs to be told that they are not suitable for the trip the group should support the leader/organiser in this onerous task. Once the trip has begun all the usual safety guide-lines are to be followed.

In this newsletter you will also find a copy of the trip grading system. It is a very important document, please read it carefully. The Survey includes a section in which members can make comment on the grading system.

Our thanks to Gary Edmond for all his work in developing the gradings.

One thing I liked about the AGM and the special meeting was the open, lively and often passionate discussion. I think everyone who wanted to speak had a chance and some useful ideas and motions were put forward.

I think it is a sign of a maturing and healthy club if controversial topics can be discussed openly and honestly. Hopefully everyone is then able to go home free of any gripes and grudges.

The last thing I'd like to say about trips is be kind to the organiser. He/she is giving freely of their time and energy. The organiser deserves your support and encouragement and remember they also want to enjoy the trip they've organised.

My final task is to thank the outgoing members of the executive. They are Vice President Patrick Dibben, Editor Leigh Hemmings and Treasurer Peter Adams. We appreciated their hard work and dedication and wish them all the best. For the names of the new executive please see Page 1.

Happy paddling

Dirk Stuber

SECRETARY/ TREASURER'S REPORT

Hello all. Those of you that have paid your membership fees for the 1995/96 year should have received a receipt with this newsletter. Those of you that have not yet paid will have received a membership renewal form which you should complete and return with a cheque, (along with the kayak survey) in the post paid envelope provided.

At the AGM it was resolved to introduce family membership. Family membership entitles all family members to be members of the Club with voting rights conferred on all adult family members. Family membership is \$30.00 per year.

Some of you may be receiving a second receipt for membership fees. This is because when I received the membership database numerous people were already recorded as having been paid up for 95/96. I do not have all the old receipt books and so not knowing whether receipts had been issued already I have issued receipts for all those that have paid.

Does anyone know C. Brett? I have him recorded as having paid this year's membership dues but have absolutely no further information on him; address, phone no. etc. If you do know him either get him to contact me or give me his contact details so that he can get his newsletters.

The Club's address has changed. I don't get to Sydney often enough to empty the PO Box so in future please send all correspondence to NSW Sea Kayak Club Inc, 29 Westgarth Street, O'Connor, ACT, 2602.

If anyone has changed their contact details recently please let me know by either writing to me at the above address or by phone on Home: 06-248 7828 or Work: 06-283 5404.

Arunas Pilka





Equipment



THE THINGS THAT MATTER!

by Jim Croft

Going to sea in kayaks is not the pastime it was several decades or a century ago. It is time to honour those innovations, those inventions, those pivotal points in history, that have shaped the sport of sea kayaking as it is practiced today.

Design

Decks

Origin uncertain. Either a structural solution to the problem of holding the sides of the kayak together (see Bulkhead), or an extension of the hull for those tippy boats that spend considerable time upside down, or most likely a large flat surface on which to display networks of shock cord (see below) and other items of status and credibility (see below).

Bulkheads

Who can imagine a seaworthy boat without some form of sealed compartment these days? Or something to rest your back on, or rest your feet on, or hold the sides of the kayak apart. Or most importantly, to blame for those unexplainable leaks.

'Pods'

Sort of like a built-in plastic or fibreglass sea-sock, to minimise cockpit volume. You can achieve a similar effect with closed-cell foam in all the places you do not want to put parts of your anatomy. The common expression, 'like two pees in a pod', arose from a very cold, a very wet and a very long trip in a kayak fitted with one of these.

Unfeathered paddles

Invented by the Inuit centuries ago, uninvented by western civilisation, then reinvented by sensitive new-age recidivist kayakers who also invented the application of repetitive strain injury to paddling. Interestingly the prime and perhaps only reason

traditional paddles are unfeathered was to enable both blades to lie flat when the paddle is stored.

Skegs

Fixed rudders for dyslexic paddlers who can not tell left from right or port from sherry or who can not paddle and move their feet at the same time.

Construction Materials

Duct Tape

The undisputed winner in all categories. A sort of laminar, adhesive, non-elastic shock-cord. No boat should set to sea without a roll or two of this stuff. Given enough of this invaluable commodity, there is no damage to anything, boats, paddles, humans, that can not be repaired (often to a higher standard than the original).

Closed cell foam

A remarkable invention with a variety of purposes: flotation in PFDs, seat and hip padding, flotation for important loose items, sleeping and sitting mats, etc. Sleeping mats are just an excuse for having some of this stuff on-hand for emergencies.

Polyurethane foam

A porous, fluid adsorbing version of the previous, the prime purpose of which is to deal with the 'pees in the pod' mentioned above. Also a useful and inexpensive sacrificial item to the surf god when stored under deck shock cords; sunglasses, hats and drink bottles are preferable for this latter purpose, but are much more expensive.

Fibreglass

More modern sea kayaks and

paddles seem to be made of this stuff than any other substance. With appropriate gel coats, the highly desirable effect of making kayaks look like modern bathroom furniture is easily achieved.

Kevlar

More expensive sea kayaks and paddles seem to be made of this stuff than any other substance. Cosmetic upgrade from fibreglass is achievable with appropriate stickers - no-one will know you are lying.

Polypropylene

That remarkable polymer of a simple short-chain hydrocarbon, that brings you plastic boats with that magic Tupperware look and feel. And zip-lock plastic bags that look waterproof, but actually leak when you are not looking.

Polyester resins

The stuff that turns floppy fibreglass mat and fabric into something rigid and useful.

Epoxy resins

The magic goo that stops wooden kayaks from floating apart.

Stainless steel

Without it, we would still be in the 'Bronze Age'. A useful and practical substitute for Sterling silver camp cutlery.

Fittings

Velcro tape

Sort of like reusable duct tape. Almost every sea kayak on the water or in the shop has a bit of this stuff somewhere on the hull or fittings. An essential

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

fashion accessory for all sea kayaking garments.

Neoprene rubber

Marvellous, flexible, expanded rubber stuff. Can you imagine spray skirts and wetsuits made of anything else? Also used in hatch covers, deck seals, booties, gloves, and importantly, beer can and bottle holders.

Shock cord

Sort of like elastic, cylindrical, non-adhesive duct tape. All sea kayaks seem to have metres of this stuff lacing the sides of the hull together. Some say it was invented to give olive cleats a meaningful role in life.

Olive cleats

Shock cord without these things is just a glorified rubber band.

Valley (VCP) rubber hatches

There is considerable debate as to whether this secure but easy to open hatch was designed to fit the Trangia spirit stove, or the converse.

270 deg. retractable rudders

Just in case you forbloodyget, this is a bloody Australian inbloodyvention, mate! Well, Tasmanian actually, which is almost the same thing...

Recessed deck fittings

Hatches, cleats, fairleads, anything - for those who have got it, but don't want to flaunt it; they leave the deck clear for displaying the really important things (see under Technology below).

Clothing and protection

Goretex fabric

The spray and rainwear of choice for those who can afford it. Jackets, coats, overpants, hats, gloves, even socks. The rest of us have to be content with PVC coated nylon and oilskins, or just get wet. Goretex

paddling pants have been mooted for long trips (see comment under 'pod', above).

Polypropylene thermal under clothing

The kayaker's way of trying to feel warm and dry when actually cold and wet. It works, but may be all in the mind. Substantial fashion statements are possible here by wearing the garments on the outside, especially by wearing old, misshapen, worn and torn thermal garments with holes in embarrassing places (no names - you know who you are!).

Polaroid sunglasses

See the danger below before it hits you, rather than be totally surprised as it leaps out of the water. Also they make the sky and clouds look pretty.

SPF 15+ Sunscreen

Contrary to popular belief, the purpose of this substance is not to prevent the wearer from attaining an attractive suntan and the appearance of an ocean-wise sea kayaker. Nor is it to prevent skin cancer and unsightly wrinkles and sun spots. Its role is to cause the eyes to water excruciatingly, thereby preventing dehydration of the cornea through exposure to wind, sun and salt.

Camping

Trangia spirit stove

There is considerable debate as to whether this remarkable camp cooker was designed to fit the Valley hatch or the converse. This stove is so ubiquitous among sea kayakers, that to not own a stained and battered one is to label oneself inept and a social outcast. A standard ploy seems to be to not bring a stove at all and borrow someone else's Trangia; expert sea kayakers are able to extend this technique to food, drink, tents and even clothing, enabling them to travel very light and efficiently.

P.E.T. plastic bottles

Ubiquitous, lightweight, indestructible, dirt-cheap, recyclable soft drink bottles in

common sizes from 500 to 2500 ml. Slowly but surely putting manufacturers of camping canteens and fuel containers out of business.

Thermarest self inflating sleeping mats

It is the bizarre concept of a mattress that will blow itself up, rather than comfort (a concept totally shunned by real sea kayakers) that attracts paddlers to this item.

Closed cell foam sleeping mats

Again, rather than comfort, it is the light floatable material that wins the accolades.

Nylon flexible pole tents with waterproof Bucket floors

Are there any other kind these days? But of course real sea kayakers sleep on a bed of rocks under a sheet of polythene.

Two minute noodles

There are two kinds of people in the world. Those who have taken these things on kayak trips, and liars...

Dried vegetables, tofu, beans, lentils, etc.

Well... it stops you from starving to death. Or so they tell me.

Plastic bladders from wine casks

Another bloody Australian inbloodyvention, mate! Inflate them and stuff them into the hull for positive flotation, use them as a pillow, carry water in them, kick them around like a football, or more appropriately, carry wine in them.

Vinyl and coated nylon dry bags

Anyone want to argue about this?

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(Continued from page 10)

Technology

Silva - style protractor compass

Know where you want to go from where you are.

Waterproof electronic wrist watch

Know when you are where you are.

Hand-held GPS

Know where you are when you are. The accoutrement of the '90s; like mobile phones they need to be flashed

around conspicuously, even when you can see where you are, where you have come from and where you are going.

Hand-held EPIRB

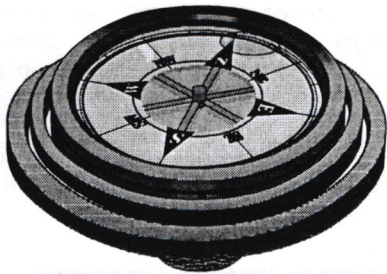
So that others can know where you are when you are. Also, when carried on deck, a serious fashion accessory that

lets others know that when you get lost and in need of rescue, you do it in a big way.

Hand-held 2-way radios

Tell others where you are when you are. Modern ones appear to be voice activated to facilitate kayak-to-kayak communication: shouted commands like "OI! NICK! TURN YOUR BLOODY RADIO ON!" seem to do the job.

Anyone have anything else they wish to nominate?



THE OLD SEA DOG'S GEAR LOCKER

by Norm Sanders

What, I ask you, is sea kayaking without gear? Wet and boring, that's what, with nothing to talk about around the camp-Trangia on those cold, dark nights unrelieved by the warm glow of candle-lantern or Petzl headlamp.

Fortunately, there is help at hand! The Old Sea Dog himself has agreed to answer any questions about good, CHEAP (inexpensive) ways to fit out a kayak and partake of the wilderness in safety and comfort.

For starters, he suggests sending away (or FAXing) for YOUR VERY OWN COPY of the Recreational Equipment Incorporated (REI) catalog in America. Just reading the FREE catalog will give many hours of heartwarming pleasure:

REI, 1700 45th Street East, Sumner, WA, 98390, USA. FAX - 1-206-891-2500.

Look up their Expedition Weight M.T.S. 2 Thermal Wear. The zip neck top is very warm and perfect for all season use under a CAG. US\$35

plus air freight. Delivery within a week of receiving a FAXed order.

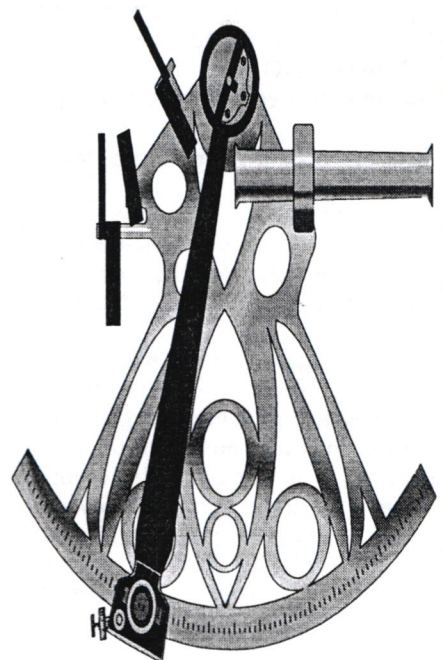
Speaking of CAG's (spray jackets - CAG is reputed to stand for something in the hated French language), the Old Sea Dog has just purchased a nifty model put out by EX-Treme. (Gulp. \$89. What the Hell, you only live once, except if you're a Buddhist!) It is waterproof nylon, with tight neoprene cuffs and neck band and a full length ZIPPER. The zipper makes it very convenient to put on and take off in the cockpit, and, it doesn't let much water in during rolls.

Unfortunately, the introduction of the zipper will require a revision of the Winkworth System of kayak stability standards, which are based on whether or not it is possible to remove or put on a CAG at night without capsizing.

Finally, the secret is out about where to get those classy black deck lines. The Old Sea Dog has discovered that it is made by RONSTAN and is available at Q-

Craft in Sydney and Bateman's Bay Power and Sail.

That's it for now. Next issue: Olives, bailing scoops, urinals, water purifiers, and MORE!.





Simon's Epic Voyage

by Simon Stenhouse

(story courtesy of Burley Griffin Canoe Club)

The NSWSK would like to advise it's readers that the following article is rated MA - It contains;

Violence

(mainly against pigs!)

Mid-January, 1995.

As the elbow pain from climbing increased, so to did the realisation that I must find a new sport. But What?

Then one day I saw an ad in the gym for a although the ad actually read "K1 as used in Seoul Olympics, \$400". Sounded too good so I bought it, took it down to the lake and fell out of it.

Around this time, Nick, a good friend and I hatched a plan over a few beers to paddle around the tip of Cape York from Mossman, near Cairns, in sea kayaks. As the best weather doesn't occur up north until around July, that left a few months for some hard training in the "K1", if only I could stop falling out. One day while floundering around near the lake shore, I met the legendary Jacko who informed that what I had was a TK1.

"Is that like a K1?"

"No, the TK is very stable and easy to paddle."

After 10 months I can start believing that!

I was put in touch with the BGCC who, as we all know, are an incredibly friendly mob who race the clock/each other every Sunday up the Molonglo.

After managing to stay afloat during the start of my first time trial, I promptly fell in at the first turn. This caused me great embarrassment but contrary to my thoughts that people would point and giggle at the guy who fell out, everyone pretended not to notice. How Polite! That first time trial took around 56 minutes and gave me two goals:

- Don't fall out.
- Get under 50 minutes

I eventually got the hang of (a), but (b) eluded me until recently.

The next paddling highlight was the 24-hour TK1 relay. What can I say about that? You just had to be there to appreciate the effort put in by paddlers and land crew in such adverse conditions.

The weather became colder in Canberra which meant that it was time to head north to sunny Queensland for the winter. From my diary:

22 June: Left Canberra for the epic journey to Cape York. Camped at Myall Lakes

23 June: Paddled around Myall Lakes, fed a dingo a spoonful of honey, camped at Crowdy Bay National Park.

24 June: Swimming, surfing at Byron Bay.

25 June: Drove to Murwillumbah, paddled up the Tweed River. Went to Pub to watch the Kostya Tsyu Fight. Camped on Mt. Warning.

26 June: Climbed Mt. Warning, awesome views. Got lost in Brisbane. Swam at Noosa. Camped under railway bridge near Gympie.

27 June: Don't EVER camp under a railway bridge. Drove to Mary River Heads and paddled over to Fraser Island and made camp. Learnt about sandflies.

28 June: Paddled back to the car and drove to Bundaberg for a tour of the rum distillery. Made camp at Miriam Vale.

29 June: Camped in a spooky place near Mackay. Dingoes howling all night and bats flying in one's face.

30 June: Drove to Airlie Beach. Had four steaks each for dinner and then went to the Pub for a gutful of lagers. but left just before the wet T-shirt competition started.

01 July: Spent the day kayaking, snorkelling and spearfishing.

02 July: Went paddling in rough seas near Ayr. Practised eskimo rolling. Discovered that climbing coconut trees is not easy. Caught a mudcrab on a wallaby tail. Camped near Townsville.

03 July: Bought a shotgun in Townsville. Caught the Ferry to Magnetic Island to spend a few days with Sally.

04 July: Paddled part way around Magnetic Island. The sea was rough and Nick capsized. Later we discovered that we were paddling in a tiger shark breeding ground. Practised eskimo rolling. Got on the turps.

05 July: Bad weather, big sea. Went fishing. Surfing in sea kayaks until Nick crashed into a rock and put a hole in his boat. Went to the Pub to checkout the Cane Toad Races.

06 July: Caught the Ferry back to Townsville. Bought \$129 of groceries. Swam at Jourama Falls. Camped near Hinchinbrook Island.

07 July: Swimming, bushwalking at Mossman Gorge. Patsy Norris, manager of the Mossman Art Gallery, volunteered to mind the car while we paddled north. Spent all afternoon trying to pack the boats.

09 July: Fishing in the morning, bream for lunch, mudcrabs for dinner. Swimming in Mossman Gorge.

10 July: Mailed two food parcels to Cooktown and one to Lockhart River. Started paddling for Cape York at 11:30. Pulled in at Snapper Island. Nick hit a coral reef. Coconuts for afternoon tea, fish for dinner.

11 July: Mossie nets are no shield from sandflies. Today we paddled past the most scenic coastline I've ever seen. Beautiful sandy beaches overhung by coconut trees with a backdrop of rainforested mountains with their peaks shrouded

(Continued on page 13)



(Continued from page 12)

in mist. Saw a reef shark. Camped at Pilgrim's Beach, just north of Cape Tribulation.

12 July: 25 km. The sea was dead flat and glassy today. Made camp at Cedar Bay. Rainbow lobster and coconuts for afternoon tea. Feral pigs and feral people abound here!

13 July: 25 km. Saw 14 sea kayakers on a guided tour today. Camped at Archer Point. Met a couple of paddlers camped nearby. Mudcrab for dinner.

14 July: 15 km. Paddled into Cooktown with our two new friends, Andrew and Lisa from Daintree. Made camp in Cooktown Backpackers. Had a few beers with Andrew and Lisa in the Pub.

15 July: Picked up food parcels from Post Office. Packed the boats, watched the sunset from the lighthouse on Grassy Hill. Another night at the Backpackers.

16 July: 20 km. Left Cooktown Jetty at 9:00 am with a strong wind from ESE. Very choppy seas. Camped just S of Cape Bedford.

17 July: 25 km. Couldn't eat this morning due to crook guts. Decided to tackle Cape Bedford despite strong winds and heavy seas. Although we were never far apart, we could not often see each other due to the height of the waves. As we rounded the Cape, the waves started to reflect off the cliffs which made it very difficult not to capsize. Once around the Cape however, conditions became more pleasant.

18 July: Windy as buggery all day. We were both rolled by freak waves. Made camp at Cape Flattery Silica Mine.

19 July: 30 km. Very windy, collided with a turtle. Made camp near Lookout Point. Have to start catching food if we are to make it to Lockhart River. I caught two fish and Nick caught a 120 lb boar eating our Christmas Cake out of the kayak so he killed it with the machete and we ate a portion of its rump.

20 July: 40 km. Saw many stingrays, turtles and a dugong. Very windy. Camped at Jeanie Creek Point.

21 July: 25 km. 30 knot winds,

waves 2-3 m high. Made camp on the sheltered side of Red Point. On the beach there was a huge boar, a feral bull and some crocodile prints. Tonight I will sleep with my machete, Bowie knife, Swiss army knife, shotgun and powerhead. Ate about 40 black lipped oysters for afternoon tea. Found some dugong teeth.

22 July: 28 km. Bloody windy as usual. Stopped at Barrow Point for a feed of oysters for lunch. Made camp at North Bay Point. There were two dingoes eating a turtle carcass on the beach.

23 July: 25 km. Paddled to Cape Melville today. The mountains here are composed entirely of granite boulders in piles up to 650 m high. We have now seen more turtles than seagulls. Five fish for dinner.

24 July: A pair of yachties came ashore and gave us a bag of over-ripe bananas. I ate 10, Nick ate 2. Very strong winds. It took us 2 hours to paddle 7 km in the morning. Nick was suffering from exhaustion this afternoon as he did not have the 8 banana advantage.

25 July: 10 km. An easy day out today in preparation for Princess Charlotte Bay. Bream for lunch, oysters for afternoon tea, bream and mudcrabs for dinner. Saw turtles, dugongs and some weird looking dolphins.

26 July: 54 km. On the water by 7 am for the big traverse of Princess Charlotte. We were quite nervous about paddling so far out to sea but after a while the nerves were replaced with the shits. Today was the first windless day since Cooktown. We camped on the Cliff Islands near a sign that said, "Cliff Islands Nature Park. NO Camping". We you can slap my wrists and call me naughty because I am not moving. Saw many dolphins and sharks. Oysters and fish for dinner.

27 July: 14 km. Slept in, paddled to Exanson Point.

28 July: 34 km. Dropped into Port Stewart for some water from a hermit called Allen. He also furnished us with an army ration pack which really made our day as our rations are getting very low indeed. Camped at Roberts Point.

29 July: Strong wind. Damper and honey for lunch followed by a siesta. We awoke to find a mob of pigs rooting their way down the beach towards us. Nick crept over to the kayaks to assemble the shotgun. He shot a sow but it didn't drop, however we managed to catch 3 piglets by chasing them down the beach and kicking them over. Made camp near the Nesbit River where we saw a 15' long crocodile. Roast piglet for dinner.

30 July: 33 km. Rainy day. Had shot a huge boar but didn't drop it. Black lipped oysters for afternoon tea. Camped 13 km N of Cape Sidmouth.

31 July: 44 km. Big day today to get us closer to Lockhart River as our food has run out. Raining. Stopped at Old Lockhart River Mission which is deserted. The previous inhabitants just got up and walked off leaving houses, boats, tractors, generators just to rot. Camped nearby.

01 August: 36 km. Rained throughout the night. Paddled around Cape Direction which is very beautiful. Arrived at Lockhart River Community at 3 pm and went directly to the shop for a junkfood fix. I met a one-armed aboriginal who refused to believe that we were risking our lives with crocodiles for no money whatsoever. Camped on the beach.

02 August: Picked up our food parcel from the P.O. Lazed around on the beach.

03 August: 30 km. Paddled around the fantastically beautiful Cape Weymouth and into Portland Roads (Pop. 14). Met a lovely old woman named Barbara who cooked us barramundi for dinner and topped up our water supply. She also gave us some blessed healing cloths and warned us about the little people.

04 August: 10 km.

05 August: 26 km. Unusual coastline here. Mountains of granite boulders rising straight out of the sea interspersed with dense rainforest vegetation. It's Raining. Nick's boat is leaking and mine is also needing repair.

06 August: Yesterday's fibreglass repairs have not set due to continuous rain and cool weather. Mudcrabs and oysters for lunch.

07 August: 35 km. Resin is dry although it is still drizzling in "Beautiful



South Coast News



Down here on the Far South Coast, the Spring weather has been really unstable. we've had rain and plenty of it, strong southerly and south-easterly winds and lively seas with it. It will soon settle down to a summer pattern of nor'easters no doubt but so far it has been sou'east swells and seas which have predominated, One good thing I suppose is that the water temperature has continued to climb slowly, unlike last year where it dropped at this time to what felt like single figures. Perhaps we shouldn't

complain! I heard a Victorian waters forecast last week of 6 metre seas!

Other unusual features this year include a plague of huge jellyfish (many that have disintegrated leaving millions of stinging pieces slopping around) and large numbers of bluebottles. Over the New Year's weekend, club members reported being stung in waters stretching from Bateman's Bay to Merimbula.

Mutton birds have are now well into their migration south. The long trip from Russia is taking its toll - many dead and dying birds have been seen on the water by paddlers.

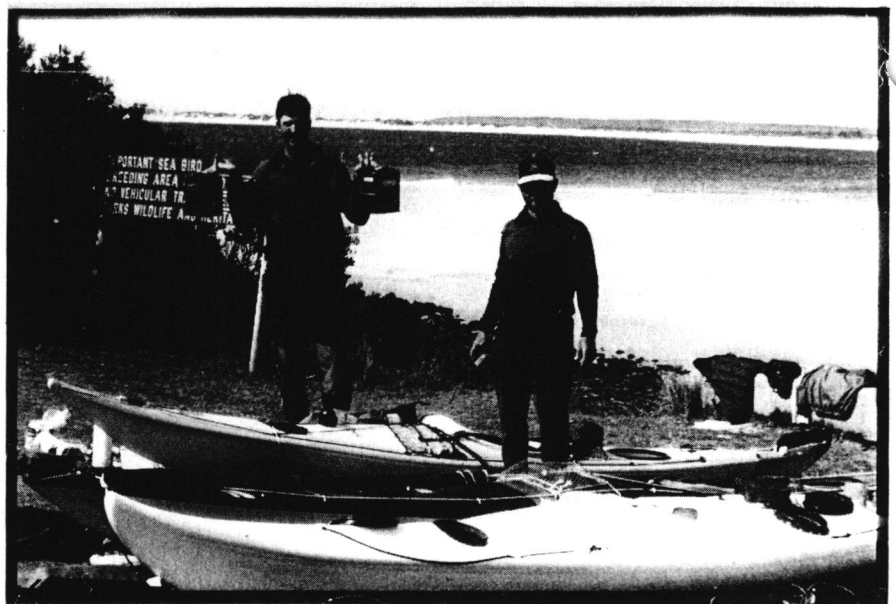
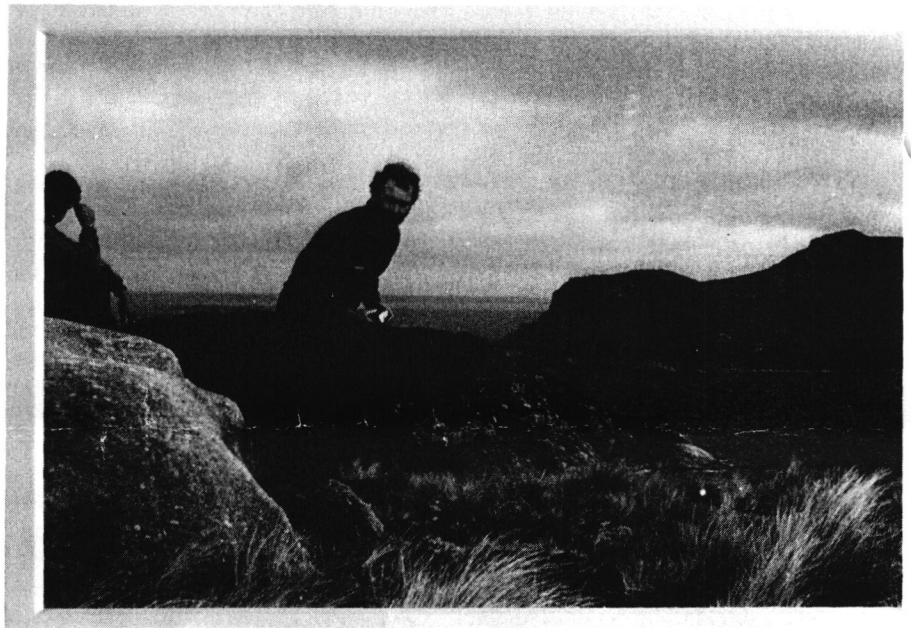
(the NSWSKC would like to apologise for the lack of actual 'paddling' news in this South Coast News - members can show their displeasure by throwing stale booties at 'missing' SCN contributor Nick Gill when convenient - Editor!)

(Continued from page 5)

remained. This relatively short crossing (23km) maintains a notorious reputation as the channelling of winds and tides from Bass Strait have been known to create 7m breaking waves - easily capable of looping yachts We could see the Tasmanian mainland clearly and hoped that the weather would provide an opportunity to cross as our fresh water supplies were low and finding water for sitting out bad weather would be time consuming.

We woke to find a magnificent sunny day with a slight breeze. Indeed conditions were so encouraging that we headed off about an hour earlier than the optimum time to maximise the benefit of the tide in order to avoid the escalating afternoon winds. This proved a mixed blessing as we were required to paddle vigorously for over an hour against the current. This influenced us to take a brief rest on Little Swan Is. and inspect the pelican rookery. We returned to our kayaks and finished the last 5km in about half an hour as the wind propelled us to Tasmania proper. On landing we experienced a combination of relief, euphoria and regret. The paddle we had prepared for and contemplated so affectionately for the last year was now over.

All that remained to be done was to recover the wine and port I had secretly buried on that remote Tasmanian beach months before. As we toasted to our success I thought of my friend Arunas and the terrible disappointment he must have experienced. An awareness of his tenacity and strength brought some comfort added to the realisation that he would be there next time.



TOP: John and Evan on summit of Erith Island with Dear Island in the background

BOTTOM: John and Evan with the buried 'treasure' at Little Musselroe Bay.

Photos: Gary Edmond (who else?)



(Continued from page 13)

one day, Perfect the next," Queensland. Had lunch on a reef exposed by low tide, several kilometres from shore. Camped behind some dunes somewhere in northern Queensland.

08 August: 30 km. Porridge cooked in coconut milk is scrumptious. Strong winds and big waves made paddling a real bastard today until we rounded Cape Grenville and had the wind at our backs. Camped on the W end of Margaret Bay. Lesson for the day: Don't cook your spaghetti in sea water.

09 August: 10 km. Walked inland in search of water. Found some in a swamp. Pulled in on a sandbar for morning tea and became trapped by the receding tide. In next to no time our boats were 400 m from the sea so we had to wait for the tide to turn in order to leave. Made camp at Joh's Spaceport.

10 August: 35 km. Had morning tea under the biggest sand dunes that I have ever seen. White Point, on Shellburne Bay. Very windy. Rammed a

turtle and bent my rudder. Camped just N of Red Cliffs.

11 August: 17 km. Gale Force winds all night, huge waves. Nick has been rolled four times this morning, once end over end and the fourth time, into the rocks, causing a fair bit of damage to the boat. Far too rough to paddle any further today. Camped 500 m S of Captain Billy Landing. Saw a 12' croc.

12 August: 22 km. A couple of campers gave us their left over supplies which provided us with some sense of relief as we were nearly starving. This afternoon I stood on a stingray.

13 August: Strong winds and rain all night. Fought through big waves all day. Camped at Usher Point.

14 August: 50 km. A lovely, warm, sunny morning. Light wind, small waves. I snapped my paddle getting into the kayak and got a palmful of carbon fibre splinters. Luckily I was carrying tweezers and a spare paddle. Had lunch on Turtle Head Island. After lunch we paddled past Jacky Jacky

Creek to a campsite near Fly Point.

15 August: 14 km. Arrived at Cape York this morning.

SIMON'S EPIC VOYAGE will continue in the next Newsletter as we follow his adventures around the Cape and back to life in the city.



Advertisement

Paddling past Tuross Heads? Tired? Hungry? Lonely?

Why not surf in to the **Paddlers Haven Guest House!**

Be pampered by owner manager, raconteur and kayaking legend Norm 'Salty Dog' Sanders
Experience North American hospitality at its very best!

Glorious Mornings

Enjoy magnificent Ocean views from the breakfast balcony
Observe your host 'at one' with the local birdlife.

Action-packed days

Go surfing at nearby Tuross Bar or 'Chicken' Beach - range of hire boats available!
Browse your host's amazing range of innovative kayaks and gear
Take advantage of the well equipped workshop - free repairs and advice to guests!

Cosy Evenings

Tuck into the Chef's specialities, spicy Tom Yum Gum or the award-winning Quesa Dias
Relax as continuous classical music soothes those tired, aching muscles
Reminisce with your host on your near-death experiences on the Tuross Bar!

ALL WELCOME* - NO NEED TO BOOK - JUST PADDLE IN!

Paddlers Haven, where you'll wonder, 'What are the poor people doing today'

Proudly serving the kayaking community since 1994

*Please - no Pittarakers



Flotsam & Jetsam



FOLDING BOATS ONLY

The intrepid Andrew Eddy and two other paddlers of Feathercrafts (or equivalent) are tripping around the coast of south west Tasmania as you read this. The destination is so remote the threesome have chartered a light plane (hope it can handle the weight!) from Hobart to fly them to the launch point. We look forward to the trip report.

SURF ZONE INSURANCE

The 'Surf Zone Skills' session at the Rock'n'Roll weekend attracted 36 paddlers. Miraculously, there was only one serious 'coming together', in which a Mirage and Seafarer made contact, with the Mirage sustaining serious hull damage. The repair bill was \$550 - luckily the owner had a GIO Marine Insurance policy (approx \$100 p.a.) which covered the damage. This type of policy might be of interest to some of the more accident/incident prone members of the club. (GIO have since quoted \$250 pa for 'high-risk' paddlers such as Arunas Pilka and Gary Edmond).

NEW KAYAK TO HIT MARKET

Word has it that a Bateman's Bay marine business and the entrepreneurial Norm Sanders have joined forces to produce a fibreglass version of Norm's plywood TAKU. The 14'6" 'Innuitt Classic' will include quality fittings such as VCP hatches and will weigh in at around 20kg. Price is likely to be around \$1350. For all you paddlers just dying to get their hands on this brilliant surf craft, 'Flotsam' will of course announce when and where the first 'Classics' will be available.

PAGE HEADER NEWS

More observant readers will have noticed not one but two new kayaks adorning the page headers of the newsletter. Whereas the previous model was short, bland and more suited to flatwater touring, the new models are ocean equipped, with choice of rudder or retractable skeg. Model A (even pages) is more suited to the lighter paddler, and comes with quality hatches and deck fittings as standard. Model B (odd pages) is expedition-rated and comes with a bulkhead-mounted foot pump and sail. Watch out for more exciting page header designs in the next issue!

POETS CORNER

Ode to the Roll

Why do I roll my kayak?
It's wet and cold down there
get dirty looks from fish I've spooked
and a crying need for air

Why do I roll my kayak?
what pleasure can it bring
can't say I blame that primal urge
to just vacate the thing

Why do I roll my kayak?
it really is a shame
that if you lift your head too soon
then down you go again

Why do I roll my kayak?
my nose hates upside-down
'fills too quick to only drip
on land when bending down

Why do I roll my kayak?
no matter what the season
Well I think I've finally worked it out
I think I know the reason

I kind of like the motion
lithe movement, torque, not power
the feel, the joy of pure control
of body, craft and water

And then, alone in awesome seas
whose power may turn me over
I'll thank the times I did for fun
what just might be my saviour

F.K

(the following poem is dated early this century and is donated by Dave Winkworth. Does anyone know of the author?)

I'm on the sea
I'm on the sea
I am where I would ever be
With the blue skies above
And the blue below
And silence wheresoever I go.

LOST (AT ROCK'N'ROLL WEEKEND HONEYMOON BAY)

TOW ROPE - in green nylon bag with yellow foam attached - used by the ever-alert good Samaritan David Winkworth to secure two Pittarak doubles about to be carried out to sea in the torrential downpour. If the owner of this boat is now on possession of the rope could he/she please call David on (064) 94-1366 or send to 21 Tura Beach Dr., Tura Beach 2548.

BLUE PATAGONIA top - last seen on the bonnet of Arunas Pilka's ute. Please call Alex Preema on (063) 51 3267 if you can help.

FOUND - two pieces of tent pole and blue nylon bag, left by young couple who departed quickly when a "river" went through their tent. Contact Dave Winkworth on (064) 94-1366.

FOR SALE

PUFFIN + neoprene skirt

Very Good Condition
\$1100 ONO
Contact Jeff Blaimy
(06) 257 1237

PITTARAK EXPEDITIONER

Very good condition
Large rear hatch
Built in foot pump
Retractable skeg
\$1400 ONO

Contact Jackie Shrimpton
(048) 836320





We Never Talk Anymore

by Norm Sanders

TUROSS HEADS

Communication. The giving and receiving of information. From the Latin *communis*, shared by all or many.

A pleasant paddle can turn into a nightmare if communications break down, either within the group or with the outside world.

Communication should start long before the hulls hit the water. All members of the party must be in agreement over goals and expectations. For many, including myself, the journey is the destination. I'm quite happy to drift along, just enjoying the sensation of being on the ocean in a kayak. Others are more goal oriented, revelling in the challenge of a 65 km, all night paddle into a howling gale along a rock-bound coast.

Often, people are reluctant to state what they want to do in the face of a perceived group opinion. All members of the party should be provided room to speak up to voice concerns about personal health and/or equipment or lack of clear understanding of any aspect of the proposed paddle. The more experienced paddlers should watch people's reactions before the trip, during the briefing, and ON THE WATER. Slowing down and lack of conversation are often danger signals which indicate exhaustion or seasickness.

A trip briefing just before departure should include weather and other environmental considerations, landing points, and rendezvous points if separated.

Once on the ocean, it is surprisingly difficult to communicate verbally. Most conversations are punctuated by "Whaat?" repeated every few seconds. If another paddler is over 50 meters away, conversation is impossible and even a whistle may not be heard. (Plastic whistles have varying degrees of uselessness. The best and most dependable whistle for those who can manage it is with the mouth.) Visual signals take over when audio means fail. The most effective is a paddle raised vertically in the air. Other paddlers will almost instinctively come to investigate. Arm waving isn't so obvious and can sometimes be confused with a

greeting, (or rude gesture), especially by fish-killers in power boats. Flags are good, but take a while to organize. The internationally recognized distress signal is a large orange sheet with a black V in the center. I carry one in a bag on deck. The vinyl flag is big enough to use as a ground sheet or bivouac shelter.

Other means of attracting attention include flares (not to be used until rescuer is in sight), mirrors by day, reflective tape on paddles and decks at night, waterproof flashlights and strobes. Cyalume sticks can keep a group together, but are difficult to see at a distance.

And then, there are electronics. A bewildering range of glittering gadgets clamor for the attention of the innocent kayaker with some surplus cash. The traditional form of marine communication is High Frequency gear, which can be used over long distances, but which is heavy, requires a lot of power and a long antenna. Most ships and fishing boats now depend more on Very High Frequency (VHF) radios. These are lighter and cheaper (but not cheap at about \$500 for a battery powered, hand-held unit). They have another disadvantage, requiring line-of-sight conditions like television.

As with HF gear, VHF requires a *Restricted Radiotelephone Operators Certificate of Proficiency*. This involves money and a written exam. Once passed all the hurdles, VHF can tie you in to the infrastructure through Seaphone.

Mobile phones are another option. Analog phones have greater range than digital, but both require line-of-sight and are useless behind sea cliffs. Satellite systems may soon furnish universal coverage, however. If things get tense, you can always activate a VHF/UHF emergency beacon, a \$200 EPIRB, but then all Hell breaks loose and you are sure to be on the evening TV news, dripping wet, facing up to questions about why you just cost the taxpayers a million dollars in helicopter time.

At the moment, for the New South Wales coast at least, I prefer Citizen's Band, 27 Megahertz. License requirements are minimal, the equipment is the size of a mobile phone and about \$190 to buy. Every fishkiller has one of the radios and there is an extensive network of Volunteer Coastal Patrol stations. In addition, a channel is available for "ship to ship" contact, so kayakers can talk to one another without going through the system.

I belong to the Narooma Marine Radio Safety Service which is run by the Narooma Division of the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol. The various Coastal Patrols have power boats which will come to your aid with a minimum of fuss. Membership costs me \$20 per year, which gives me an identification number which I can use anywhere in Australia. I often paddle alone along the coast and out to Montague Island and find the radio useful for weather and position reports. The normal range of communication is about 30 to 40 Kilometers, but this can sometimes increase to thousands of kilometers when the "skip" is in. In my area, Moruya and Bermagui are available if I get too far from Narooma. There are many other stations in NSW, giving almost continuous coverage from Eden to the Queensland border.

I visit the different Coastal Patrol stations when I'm in their areas, just to say hello. I'm gradually getting them used to the idea that sea kayakers exist and are legitimate ocean users. If we all keep communicating, there is less chance of BIG BROTHER legislating us out of existence. As Francis Bacon said, sometime before he died in 1626, "This communicating of a Man's (Person's) Selfe to his Frend works two contrarie effects; for it redoubleth Joys, and cutteth Grievs in halve."



Bad Day at Tuross Bar

By Mark Pearson *ACT*

Saturday 27 May 1995 and this was serious. The wind was now starting to pick up as the tidal current eased. Out to sea the horizon was lumpy - the sou'wester was in full cry out there. Less than three kilometres and I was heading that way. A terrible looking place. I began shivering again as I struggled to keep my position draped over the upturned kayak; After forty minutes of immersion, the 17 degree water was making it's intentions clear. Blood was now in full retreat leaving grey white limbs.

I gazed hopefully at the distant shoreline - was that a figure on One-Tree Point? I again lifted the paddle into the air and waved it wearily. Was I too far out to be seen? I guessed I was now at least eight hundred metres out. Chris Soutter's parting word's kept ringing in my ears 'Hope you come back in one piece'. Yeah Chris, maybe a cold dead piece. But how did I get into this mess anyway.....

I had paddled the Dancer once before on Lake Burley Griffin in February, accompanying Chris while he test-paddled my Seafarer. I rolled her three times - the first after unintentionally capsizing while lean turning (farewell yet another pair of Glarefoils!), and the second to show Chris, who was relatively new to kayaking, the basic technique. She was the easiest boat I had ever rolled, and to prove this my third roll was just a wide sweep and lay-back with no hip-flick. Up she came. This was cheating, I told Chris - what a boat he had to learn on.

When Chris kindly offered to lend me the Dancer for the weekend I jumped at the chance. I'd seen Gary Edmond and Co. surfing in white-water boats at Coledale and, in their expert hands at least, it looked fun. So I loaded the family and kayaks and headed for

Tuross Heads, where I normally go for a paddle with Norm Sanders. On this particular day Norm was applying his powerful physique to repairing a friend's roof, so I would have to surf alone. At 11 am I took my wife Kerrie, three year old son and two of our host's children to the sheltered Caravan Beach which adjoins the two hundred metre wide Tuross River bar. It was a fine but cool day of about 15C.

Inshore, at least, the sea was benign - even the bar, normally a place of chaotic waves, was



subdued, with waves of about three feet at most. I knew that the tide was running out, and that this was not a good thing at Tuross. I well remember the day last year, in my pre-rolling era, when Arunas Pilka and Nick Gill seemed to spend most of an afternoon rescuing me and my up-turned Seafarer in nasty ebb tide waves. I made the monumental decision to have a play anyway. After all, I told myself, the waves were small and this boat just about rolls herself, right!

I quickly launched into the river-mouth, admittedly in a rather ill equipped state. Due to the lack of decklines my paddle was not leashed and I could carry neither a sponge or water. My clothing was

adequate; a Dry-Tech shirt, thin wet-suit vest, PFD, nylon paddle jacket, bike pants and neoprene booties. As I approached the wave zone I thought about a quick roll, but as I had not warmed up yet decided to get the circulation going first with some vigorous paddling.

I was now ready to catch waves. I quickly found out that the Dancer was slow and hard to keep straight - despite frantic paddling I was left behind by three waves before finally getting the speed to get a ride. I was puffing with exertion when picking up

the next wave, and as I paddled to maintain a line I was hit by a refracting wave coming in from my right - the Dancer spun to the left and I braced but, much to my surprise, went straight over. Now, as I am not normally prone to such a rapid capsizing whilst bracing, here I must provide some background. As a result of breaking a blade against a cliff wall at Merica River a month previously, Norm had persuaded me to join the growing 'unfeathered' club (as an inducement he had offered to, and did, re-build my paddle in this configuration). I now think that my brain had yet to fully come to grips with the new equipment, and in the

heat of the moment my right wrist instinctively turned the shaft to set the paddle flat on the water. Of course this caused the 'new' paddle to present an almost perfect vertical blade to the water.

So, such was my surprise at the speed of the capsize, I didn't get time to suck any air in before going under. As I manoeuvred the paddle into the set-up position, I knew that I would have air for just one roll. But the anxiety caused by nagging lungs led to a rushed attempt and down I went again. There followed a difficult wet-exit due to a stubborn sprayskirt. After less than ten minutes, the fun part of the day was definitely over.

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I was now in neck-deep water holding on to the Dancer and the untethered paddle. The current was strong, and although I tried to 'walk' the boat the sixty metres to the nearest sandbar I was soon out of my depth. It was at this stage that I realised I needed a plan.

I came up with Plan A - Re-enter and Roll. Plan A provided me with a quick education on the characteristics of capsized white-water boats - with no bulkheads and minimal in-built foam, the Dancer was about as buoyant as you would expect a lump of plastic with a hole in it to be. Reentry was therefore tricky and unpleasant, as I was unable to use the 'reverse somersault' technique that worked well with the Seafarer. Once in, I swept and hip-flicked as strongly as I could, but the waterlogged hull would not right itself to a point where I could then brace. I persisted for about eight more attempts but then started to tire. Why I persisted for so long with Plan A still escapes me - if I had got her up, I would have been sitting in a wallowing and 90% submerged log, with no chance of bailing it out and every chance of going over again.

So when I came to my senses I instigated Plan B - Towing the Kayak. This involved towing the boat while 'swimming' on my back with my three available limbs. Despite several minutes of hard work, the movement of nearby trees relative to their backdrop told me that I was fighting a losing battle. Plan B joined Plan A on the scrapheap.

I was now four hundred metres out from the bar, and considered my options while resting. I doubted whether Kerrie would even be aware of my predicament. With two three-year olds playing at the water's edge, I quite rightly wouldn't have been the focus of her attention. I couldn't get into or tow the boat, which was only useful to me as something to hold onto. The current and increasing wind were still pushing me out and northwards. Plan C now revealed itself!

I would swim for it; now, before I drifted too far out. If I could make it ashore I could then launch the Seafarer with my spare paddle and hopefully re-capture the Dancer before it disappeared from sight. The long swim definitely did not appeal, but neither did drifting out towards

that terrible looking horizon.

But I was horribly unsure about Plan C. The two halves of my rapidly cooling brain debated. The sensible well-read half made a strong case for staying put, detailing several tragedies where the victim had left the boat/car/plane due to their own misguided Plan C. However the other half, led by a powerful coalition of Primitive Fear (of deep cold water, nightfall, sharks etc), Instinct (to head for land) and Increasing Panic forced Plan C through without amendment. I slipped the spray skirt off and rammed it and the paddle into the front of the Dancer. The sensible half continued to nag at me - how was I going to tell Chris that I had last seen his beloved Dancer drifting in the general direction of Lord Howe Island! And what about the paddle - Norm had spent hours working on it.

And so it was with a heavy heart that I pushed away from the little kayak and commenced a steady free-style towards land. But the proponents of Plan C had not taken into account the weight of water-filled arms (thanks to my paddle jacket). I tired rapidly and after about 70 metres my brain, in an emergency sitting, voted unanimously to return to the security of the Dancer. She was now on her side and drifting away, but with the aid of my now dwindling supply of adrenalin, I was just able to catch her. I hung on, exhausted, until my breathing recovered.

I realised that my energy levels were now low and that a conservation policy would be wise. Plan D was implemented - waving my paddle for the benefit of any one looking out to sea. I seemed to be the only craft on the ocean - where are all the motor-boats full of fat fishermen when you need them?

And this is where I began..

I was now trying not to panic - I knew I could do nothing more for myself, and that I would have to wait until someone came to rescue me. Kerrie would eventually raise the alarm, but given my history of disappearing for two hours when I'd said one (be it kayaking or fishing), it could be a while before my

absence would alarm her. And how far from Tuross would I be when they started looking? I was drifting to the north east at quite a rate. Apart from being angry with myself, I felt vulnerable, weak, cold and increasingly aware of my mortality.

And then a siren sounded in the distance. An old World War 2 type siren. It sounded for a good minute, stopped, then started again. I tried not to hope too much that this was related to me. What if they were just testing it, or there was a fire somewhere, or it was just a noon ritual. I thought of disaster movies, and the anguish of shipwreck victims as the search plane flew over without seeing them. Poor bastards. But I was sure I could now see a figure on One Tree Point; again I waved my paddle. The shivering was now coming in waves as my body protested at the prolonged immersion; this was now torture.

Ten long cold minutes passed and then a flash of red on the bar. Soon I could make out that it was a Rubber-Ducky moving quickly, leaping over waves, two men on board. More paddle waving, but it was not needed, they knew where I was. The Tuross Rescue Squad (TRS) had arrived. They quickly pulled me and the Dancer aboard. I tried to tell them what had happened but talking was difficult due to the 'rigor mortis' in my jaw. They radioed ashore that they had located the boat, and that the 'patient' was OK. One of the guys thanked me for rescuing him from a bad round on the golf course!

They landed on Caravan Beach, and after ensuring I was OK and taking some details, the TRS headed back to base. They, at least, had enjoyed the outing (their first since the previous Xmas). Kerrie was as surprised as anyone to see it was actually me that was rescued - she had seen the Rubber-Ducky heading out to sea but thought it was on a training run. Michael, my three-year old, thought that this was all terribly exciting, and wanted to know every detail of the drama.

As I was fumbling my way into some dry clothing a middle-aged man approached. He had been taking a walk and had seen me in trouble, but couldn't find a nearby house with anyone at home. He had finally flagged down a friend's car, who had raised the alarm. I thanked him

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sincerely for his efforts through clenched teeth. I learned later that a second call was also received from another house resident. Thank you Tuross.

Norm had heard the siren from his perch on the roof, but did not connect it with me. Given that I had come through the ordeal OK, his main concern was for his reputation - ie. the local populace would assume it was he, the only 'regular' kayaker in Tuross, had been rescued.

What is mild hyperthermia like? Well, despite a long hot shower and layers of clothing I found it hard to get warm for the rest of the day. I also felt dog-tired, dizzy and like I had a severe head cold.

The next day I felt somewhat better, and Norm and I headed to Tomakin with our sea-kayaks. For the first time I actually appreciated the weight and size of the Seafarer as I carried her to the water. I felt at home as I squeezed into the snug-fitting seat and slipped into the water. She picked up speed rapidly, cutting reassuringly through sizeable waves without fuss. This was a boat for the ocean - big, tough and capable! I rolled her a few times just for my self-esteem; to prove I still could.

What followed was a very satisfying surfing session followed by a short paddle to Broulee Island. It was a beautiful sunny late autumn day. On returning to Tomakin, my little boy ran to me; 'Daddy, Daddy - you didn't have to get rescued!' he said incredulously. Obviously it's going to take quite some time to live this one down!

So what have I learned from this life threatening experience. Well, I think a new commandment should be added to the do's and don'ts of sea-kayaking;'

"When alone, never cavort with a strange Dancer in an unfriendly Bar'.

On a more serious note, the feelings I experienced out there will take a lot of forgetting. If I had not been spotted when I was, I shudder at the thought of the desperate hours I would have endured becoming severely hyperthermic in rough seas. For me then, the legacy of this 'scare' is a much more cautious approach to sea kayaking, especially when alone. As



The first from our secret library of nude pictorials of the club executive. This clandestine portrait of President Stuber reveals his natural physique prior to competition paddling and steroid abuse.
Girls! - next issue - Vice President - *full frontal*

Dave Winkworth once said, 'one minute you're having fun, the next your life is in danger'. It's true. Hopefully the experience will help me avoid having to write another story like this one.

Footnote: I sent a cheque for fifty dollars to the TRS the next day.



More action and inaction from Honeymoon Bay - PHOTO: Jenni Marsh

ROCK 'N ROLL WEEKEND 1995 POSTSCRIPT by Dave Winkworth

It was great to see so many sea paddlers not only turning up to the Club's recent Rock 'n Roll Weekend but also participating in the workshops

of Canoe Education for sea paddlers. I commend these courses to you as worthwhile steps in kayaking skills attainment and plain

interested, call the organiser and have a chat about your level of skill and whether the course will benefit you.

We certainly felt the rain on the Saturday night at Honeymoon Bay! I spoke to the service station people at Tomerong on Sunday and they recorded 150mm for the night. Tent-testing weather indeed!

Speaking of rain, our Guest Speakers for the evening: Lindsay and Janice Smith from Southern Ocean Seabird Study Assn (SOSSA) spent hours marooned on the road out of Honeymoon Bay as a virtual river came down the middle of the road!

They did however make it safely back to Wollongong and are continuing their great work with seabirds in our part of the world. Following our donation of \$150, the club is officially a member (No.197) of SOSSA. If any members would like to give them a hand on their field trips you would be most welcome. Please call Lindsay or Janice on (062) 71-6004. You can be guaranteed to get dirty and learn a lot!



Before the deluge - the NSWSKC fleet dominates the Honeymoon Bay shoreline

we included this year. An average of 30 paddlers attended each workshop - your interest and participation has given us valuable feedback into what sea kayakers in this state want in the form of skills training. Thanks again to the workshop presenters; Gary Edmond, Norm Sanders, Dirk Stuber and Frank Bakker.

During the year we plan to conduct a number of "specific skills" based training days and weekends and a Rock'n'Roll Weekend which will combine elements of the year's activities and a little extra.

Feedback I've received since the weekend is that we didn't advertise it widely enough for the benefit of non-members - that is, those non members wishing to join the Club. So this is where you come in. This year we'll send out information well in advance for members to distribute around their area in outdoor clubs and shops. By the way, if you have any comments on the weekend that might be useful in regard to venue selection, activities or whatever, we would be pleased to hear from you.

During 1996, there will be a number of courses conducted by the NSW Board



Sunday morning - severe beach erosion but luckily no kayaks lost
PHOTOS: Jenni Marsh

good fun! Some will be training days and weekends while others will be award assessments. They will all be advertised in the Club's Newsletter with plenty of notice. If you're





WORKSHOP REVIEWS - WOODEN KAYAKS/ DOWNWIND PADDLING

by David Winkworth

(the first of a series of detailed reviews of the workshops held at the Rock'n'Roll weekend - next issue will contain 'Setting up your Kayak' and 'Surf Zone skills')

What follows is a brief summary of points covered. The list is not exhaustive and it would probably be a good idea to talk with your friends about them and follow them up in some of the quality sea kayaking books available.

Wooden Boats There's not much I can add to the presentation by Norm Sanders on the weekend except to say that Norm showed that wooden kayaks are easy to build, classy and very strong - no flex in wooden boats! There are a few other members who are messing about with wooden boats also but gave Norm a call at Tuross Head if you have any questions, Thanks Norm.

The key to downwind paddling and efficient paddling is to get into your boat at every opportunity and practice! This applies to much that was covered on the weekend too Plenty of practice!

That brings me to the subject of rudders. Despite what the purists say about rudders, they do have a legitimate place on a sea kayak - they are a significant energy saver in adverse conditions and can help get you out of difficult seas....BUT....they are mechanical devices and can fail. You should therefore work on handling your boat without your rudder wherever possible and in any conditions where rudder damage is likely - (eg. surf).

You can practise downwind paddling almost anywhere on the water when a wind is blowing and there is enough "fetch" to produce some wind waves,

They do NOT have to be big! Half-metre waves are fine! As your skill level increases, look for bigger waves. Our summer winds - nor' easters - on the coast range right up to 30 knots or so, and they'll blow you right back to the shore if you get into any difficulties. Please don't practise with gale force westerlies!"

OK, the main strokes you'll be using are the forward paddling stroke (naturally) and the stern rudder stroke.

You should practise using these in smooth combinations. The forward stroke for propulsion and the stern rudder stroke for steering down the wave to avoid a broach. If you've used a stern rudder on the port side, your next stroke should be a forward stroke on the starboard side - keep it smooth! You can execute a stern rudder stroke on the same side you've just completed a forward stroke on however.

As waves get bigger they get faster. You'll find that some bigger waves will be harder to catch and will require faster paddling. This is where advanced efficient paddling comes in. It is common in sea kayaking to use relaxed strokes with arms kept low and a minimum of body rotation. When you need more power, arms higher and increased body rotation will produce results. You'll see from your bow wave that the boat is moving faster.

OK, we're using this following sea to speed us along at up to twice our normal speed. Sure, we're getting good rides but it's also requiring a healthy paddling input! One way we can save some energy at the same catch as many rides as possible is to use weight transfer. This is also used in surfing and it is simply a matter of leaning as far forward as possible until the wave picks you up. You'll be able to tell this from the bow of your kayak. As the wave lifts the stern, it will drive the bow down and often under. NOW throw your whole body back as far as you can to launch your boat down the wave. Keep your body back now for better tracking of your boat and be ready to use a stern rudder stroke if you feel a broach coming on.

Letting your paddle skim along the surface on one side is fine. A note on the stern rudder stroke... keep your paddle well back for greater effect with this stroke - slide the shaft through your hands to the neck of the upper blade if you like - the shaft is there to be used! Use all of it. Also, keeping the blade in the water as vertical as possible (ie, not tipped over) and in line with the boat will reduce drag.

Quite soon this mean mother of a

wave is going to drop you off the back! When that happens, you'll quite literally be pointing uphill. At this point save your energy because there'll be another one along in a sec. Waves share the same trough so the uphill angle of your boat at this point will give you a good idea of the DOWNHILL angle of the wave about to pick you up!so be ready.

If you get broached in front of a wave - that is you've carved down and across the face of the wave - you'll need to lean into the wave to avoid a downwave spill.

Once your boat has turned across the face of the wave, the length of a sea kayak will make it difficult for you to pull it back quickly. If you find that it is happening and you can't recover, lean into the wave with a high or low brace (depending on the size of the wave) . When your kayak has stopped, you can spin round and continue with a smile on your face - chalk up one for the ocean!

John Dowd (Sea Kayaking - A manual for Long Distance Touring) says that there will come a time when you cease playing with the ocean and it starts playing with you! He's quite right of course. You'll probably be muttering "death or glory" through gritted teeth as you plunge in a freefall down six metres of green water..... Be aware of your surroundings at all time, Develop a feel for the conditions How many whitecaps around you will help you gauge the wind speed. Remember you're travelling with this sea so the wind speed will not seem so high to you. A small deck compass is a useful aid for charting windshifts, especially if you are on an unfamiliar coastline.

So far in this ramble we've been cruising directly downwind. Now, what if you need to head diagonally downwind - that is with the wind on your stern quarter?

Sea Kayaks are at their most directionally unstable heading with the wind on the stern quarter. Rudders can help here but for now we are cruising with the rudder in the "parked" position remember.

Paddling on a heading such as this means that your boat will attempt to broach often as the waves try to push

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NSWSKC ON THE INTERNET!

by Internet Correspondent
Jim Croft

Following endorsement of the principle at the recent AGM at Honeymoon Bay, the NSWSKC now has a presence on the Internet World Wide Web, joining the ranks of several other kayak and canoe clubs around the world.

For the moment, as it is being developed, the site can be found at;

<http://155.187.10.12/jrc/kayak/>

It contains information about the club, its members and activities, some articles from present and past newsletters, some useful background information for sea kayaking and kayak touring, and links to other internet resources of interest to sea kayakers such as weather and sea reports, lists of gear, trip grading schemes and so on.

The site is still very young and much more information has yet to be added. It is proposed that each new newsletter will be added and indexed for easy searching of articles; articles from past newsletters will be added to the site as we get them in electronic form.

There are very few images of club activities available at the moment as we are still experimenting with the technology to convert slides and prints to a usable digital format; once we have that under control, your favourite characters will be there in all their glory, in stunning living colour.

If you have any material at all that you feel might be useful or interesting for the NSWSKC WWW site, especially if it is already in electronic form, email it to jrc@anbg.gov.au, or send it on a floppy disk to the editor, and we will do what has to be done.

There is far too much information on the NSWSKC WWW site to put into a single newsletter, so each issue we plan to include a description of the information we have, and selected pieces from other kayaking Internet servers around the world, as well as announcements of new services as they come to our notice.

For this issue we include a list of other

Internet paddling resources (including those that have already made links to us).

* Sites indicated with an asterisk have links to the NSWSKC home page.

Australian kayak and canoe resources

Kayak-Canoe-Paddle (Australia)*, Fairfield Canoe Club, Victoria*, including the Victorian Sea Kayak Club and Sea Trek newsletter *

Peter Carter's Home Page (Kayak Links) *
Canberra Canoe Club (CCC), ACT*
Australian Canoe Board of Education (ACBE)*
Sydney Outrigger Canoe Club *

Clubs

California Kayak Friends*

University Kayak Club at the University of Washington*

Boston Sea Kayak Club *
Champlain Kayak Club, Vermont* including Blazing Paddles newsletter
Gulf Area Sea Paddlers (GASP)*
The Norwegian Kayak Pages *
Bergen University Kayak Club* ,
Norway (Sea group) *

Personal paddling pages

Preston Holmes' Kayak Page* , including rec.boats.paddle FAQ and Sea Kayaking FAQ *

Bruce Fisher's Paddling page, including Surf Paddling FAQ *

Kenton's Sea Kayaking Page (SF Bay Area) including Kenton's gear list *

Andrew Hurley's Watersport Resources at halcyon.com *
Andrew Hurley's Watersport Resources at viewit.com *
Nick Schade's Kayak page *
Paddle Craft WWW pages by Tim Gittin*

Magazines and newsletters

Atlantic Coastal Kayaker magazine *
Blazing Paddles newsletter from

the Champlain Kayak Club, Vermont*
Canoe and Kayak magazine*
Sea Kayaker magazine*
Sea Trek newsletter from the Victorian Sea Kayak Club *
Wave~Length sea kayak magazine from the Wave~Length Paddling Network *
Hurley's Pack & Paddle*

Associations and organisations

Trade Association of Sea Kayaking (TASK)*

North American Paddlesports Association (NAPSA)*

American Canoe Association (ACA) from Outside Online*

Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association (CRCA)*

Manitoba Recreational Canoeing Association (MRCA)*

Wave~Length Paddling Network, including Wave~Length on-line sea kayak magazine *

Others

Mangrove Bay Sea Kayak Page, including South Florida Sea Kayaking*

Sea kayaking resources from California Kayak Friends*

Rafting, canoeing, kayaking resources from Great Outdoor Recreation Pages (GORP)*

Canoeing, Kayaking, and Rafting from Yahoo*

Other paddle sites from Preston's Kayak Page *

Links to kayaking and Canoeing from the Fairfield Canoe Club, Victoria*

Rowing virtual library*

Water sports virtual library *

Global Oceanic Surfing links*

High Tide wave prediction and surfing page from Tasmania*

Australia's on-line fish file*



THE WRECK OF THE "ST. MARTIN DE PORRES"

by David Winkworth

Jervis Bay - been for a paddle from Honeymoon Bay around to Target Beach recently? Yes? Have you noticed the grey rusting wreck high and dry on the rocks of Longnose

speculate on the events that of the "St. Martin de Porres".

On return home I began ringing Jervis Bay authorities in an attempt to find out more on the vessel's history. The Federal Police had the

three hour cruise???. They ventured outside the heads of Sydney Harbour with strong NE wind blowing. A length of rope fouled the propeller leaving them pretty well at the mercy of the wind with their limited sail choice. They carried no radio. So they sailed south and were spotted off Jervis Bay, with a V sheet (distress) up by another yacht. This craft radioed the Jervis Bay Water Police for them and they were towed in to HMAS Creswell. During the tow, visibility decreased to several hundred metres due to a storm.

At HMAS Creswell, the prop was cleared of the fouling rope and they left Jervis Bay to return to Sydney one evening just before midnight to 'catch' a forecast southerly home to Sydney.

Whether they turned left too early encounter difficulties is not clear - they were not familiar with the area - but they were blown onto the rocks near Target Beach soon after midnight. They were not noticed until midday the next day - remember they carried no radio. Fortunately no-one was injured, The "St. Martin de Porres" was not insured.

OK, what's the message for sea kayakers from this incident. Simply this: Spend time in your boat. Develop paddling skills to be able to handle all reasonably expected sea and weather conditions. Carry appropriate safety gear.



Norm Sanders and Gillian Cross examine the wreck

Point? I first saw this vessel last February on a Club weekend get-together at Honeymoon Bay. The wreck was then much closer to the water and in better condition than she (notice how we prefer to address inanimate objects in the feminine gender... sorry girls, no letters please) is now.

Norm Sanders, Gillian Cross and I paddled in to the small beach nearby and walked out to the wreck. All deck and below deck structures and fittings have been removed and a gaping hole in the side of the ship led us to

answers for me:

The "St. Martin de Porres" began it's life as a backyard project of some 8 to 10 years. It had been on the water for a few years before coming to rest at Longnose Point. Motive power came from an auxiliary engine only and it's gaff rigged sails.... the clue here being that vessels with this sail rig really only sail well downwind.

Anyway, in Christmas 1994 the owner and 4 of his grown children set out on a three hour cruise (a

depends on the wind, waves and the desired direction. You're probably cruising still above your normal "flatwater" speed and in any case where else would you rather be?

A note about this method... when crossing the wind direction and using a feathered paddle, you may feel the upper blade want to take off as it is exposed to the wind. Put your paddle leash on and let the paddle go if the

(Continued from page 22)

your stern down the wave and force a turn. The bigger the waves - the stronger the effect. It is hard work on arms and that's dangerous if you have a long way to go or a non-landable coast inshore. This is surely a heading to practise on in protected waters! Now, we can cheat here a little by paddling in a "stepped" fashion. This is simply paddling directly downwind for say 2 minutes and then across wind at 90° for say 3 minutes and so on. The combination

wind is strong enough on the blade to pull you over. Also, be ready for a reflexive, brace or quick slap support stroke as the waves pass under you.

If you're on an expedition and you know you'll be paddling downwind as you pack your kayak, keep the weight in the bow hatch too a minimum and load up the stern compartment. This will improve your downwind tracking and save your arms!



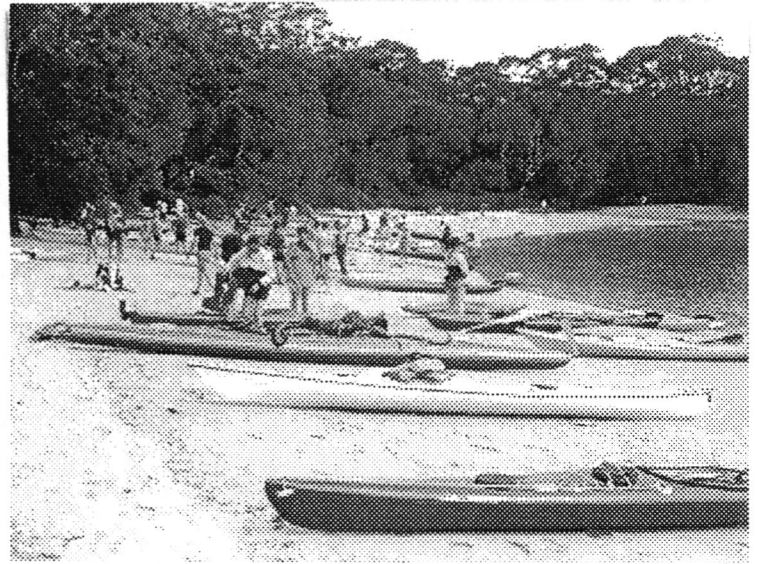


STOP PRESS!

Late Photographs
from the
Rock'n'Roll Weekend

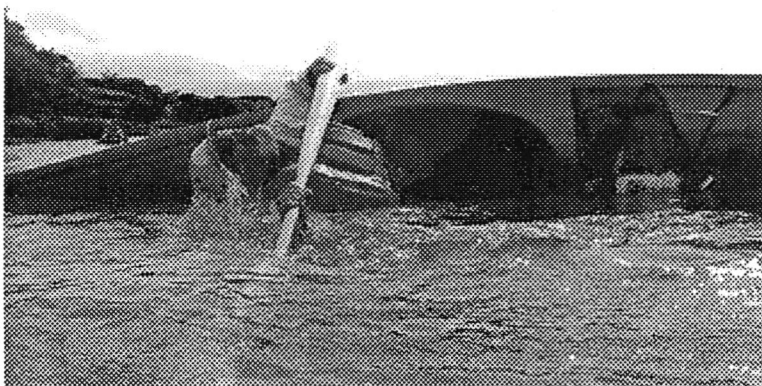
See these photos, and more, in vibrant 24-bit colour
on the NSWSKC WWW site at
<http://155.187.10.12/jrc/kayak/>

On the Beach at Honeymoon Bay ready for action
Photo: Nick Gill



Dave Winkworth, assisting roller in a Mirage 19
Photo: Nick Gill

*Norm Sanders 'executing' roll with a narrow
quit paddle, in his home-built cedar strip Panache*
Photo: Nick Gill



*Norm again - note the position of the right hand
on the short shaft and the left hand grip
on the narrow paddle blade*
Photo: Nick Gill



Gary Parker giving advice to a mysterious masked paddler in a Greenland II at the Rock 'n' Roll Weekend
Photo: Nick Gill

From the Net

Date: Thu, 23 Nov 1995 22:09:19 -0800
To: Wave_Length@bbs.sd68.nanaimo.bc.ca
From: albatross@EARTHLINK.NET
Subject: Microsoft Kayaks

The Top Ten Ways The Sport Would Be Different If Microsoft Built Kayaks:

(Drum roll MIDI file at the ready?)

10. A particular model year of kayak wouldn't be available until AFTER that year, instead of before.
9. Every time you wanted to try a new paddle, you would have to buy a new kayak.
8. Occasionally your kayak would stop dead in the water for no apparent cause. No amount of paddling would budge it. You would have to tow it back to the launch site and restart your kayak. For some strange reason, you would simply just accept this.
7. Two people could not both paddle your kayak unless you paid extra for a '95 kayak or NT kayak in which case you would also have to buy an extra seat and expensive new charts.
6. A sophisticated marketing blitz would make you feel like a second-rate tasteless slacker for failing to upgrade your kayak. OOPS -- wait a minute -- that's ALREADY happening.
5. Sun Microsystems would make a kayak with 70% less hull drag, half the weight, watertight in all conditions and twice as stable. Unfortunately, it could be used on only 5% of the existing rivers.
4. Your Microsoft kayak's compass, weather radio, and sump pump would be replaced with a single "General Kayak Fault" warning light.
3. The enthusiast press would get people excited about the "new" features of Microsoft kayaks, forgetting

completely that they had been available in other brands for years.

2. Microsoft's inconsiderable owners manual would spawn a whole cottage industry of outsiders who would write hundreds of books explaining how to paddle your Microsoft kayak. Amazingly, we would buy all they printed.
1. If you wanted to go kayaking in a group with your club members or friends (known as Network Kayaking). EVERYONE in the group will have to BUY special group kayaking accessories: however, only one member of the group (known as the kayop) would have the foggiest notion of exactly what they did and no one else would be permitted operate them.

Hope my Utah friends understand I'm just kidding. Yes, it is possible to have a little too much leisure time. Have a great weekend.

Bird

From bm22kg@lion.rbgkew.org.uk Thu Nov 30 20:54:26 1995
Date: Thu, 30 Nov 1995 09:53:36 GMT
To: jrc@anbg.gov.au
From: B.Makinson@rbgkew.org.uk
Subject: Re: paddle your own Knut

11. You would constantly have some capitalist geek nerd who is (unbelievably) richer than Paul McCartney, blathering at you from all media orofices and telling you how you're going to be eligible to find a really very realistic - in fact better than real - electronic version of the perfect [insert kayaker's concept corresponding to surfer's Perfect Wave], real soon now and gee isn't it wonderful and you won't even get WET if you don't want to.

You do know the tale of King C'nue, don't you? How he demonstrated to his sycophantic courtiers that there were some things even a king couldn't do? Like halt the tide of hype?