

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NSW SEA KAYAK CLUB
ISSUE 98 | SEPTEMBER 2015

Salt



Beach Systems
and their significance
to sea kayakers

ALSO INSIDE:

- ✓ Around Britain
- ✓ Navigation Weekend
- ✓ Our N.S.W Challenge
- ✓ Kangaroo Valley
- ✓ AGM Report

Win!
Kayak Gear
Two Competitions
Inside





Front Cover: Rae Duffy handling surf
This Page: Bill Raffle, Ken Collins and Tom Cox crossing Sydney Harbour

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The NSWSKC is a voluntary organisation run by members who give their time freely to the club. Membership is offered yearly. Please see the website for details and application.
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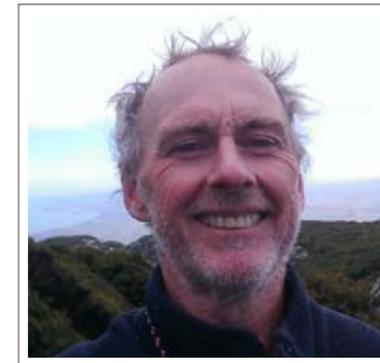
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All views expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the NSWSKC.

IMPORTANT: Please review the Paddler Safety, Required Equipment, Grading System and Club Calendar sections of the club website.

CORRECTION: Due to an editing error, Emmalee Holmes was not acknowledged as photographer of three of the photos in the article "WomDomNom" in the March edition - Apologies from the Editor



From the President's Deck

CAMPBELL TILEY

With the 25th club AGM just over the Committee needs to look towards our priorities for the next year. Alison Curtin has volunteered for the important Secretary / Treasurer role to replace Rae Duffy who has done a fantastic job over the past four years but has now stood down as she will be spending more time paddling in far away places. The only other departure from last year's committee was Adrian Clayton who has also been a tireless contributor to the committee, to training and as an assessor. I am really pleased to welcome Tony Murphy to the VP role. For those unable to get there and anxious not to miss out, the AGM minutes and committee member reports will be posted on the website and my report will appear later in this issue.

While each committee member will have their own priorities to pursue, my number one is to see the website backbone upgraded with a reworked menu structure and a workable trip registration system for the trip leaders. Number two is a rewrite of the Club Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to reflect our current practice and obligations in a more transparent and accessible fashion. Beyond that I hope I can continue to extend my own paddling experience and skill by running and participating in more club paddles and training.

The extended event that Megan Pryke initiated and styled the NSW Challenge, which involves a series of club paddles covering the entire coast between Newcastle and Wollongong, has started well. Most legs are now listed, with two or three now complete. Judging by the

registrations the event has been very well received and Megan has cunningly driven us trip leaders to list a few trips more than we might otherwise have done.

My most recent club paddle was the new members paddle over to Quarantine in July. As detailed later in Salt it was interesting and rewarding to watch a group of paddlers new to moving water push through their discomfort and a little fear and prove to themselves that they can push their boundaries and also to start to learn what sea kayaks are capable of.

Now in the depths of winter, with the days only just starting to lengthen, there always seems to be an extra barrier to getting

onto, and certainly into, the water. Despite the cool conditions the air is typically crystal clear with few other boats around and often with relatively calm conditions. Make the most of it before the summer crowds appear, especially with Spring on the horizon.

Finally I just want to repeat my thanks to the Committee members who have kept the Club rolling on over the past year and all of the instructors, assessors and tripleaders who have volunteered their time to help other members towards their kayaking goals.

Once again I hope to see you on the water!

From the Editor's Desk

STEVE HITCHCOCK



After a rocky start to magazine editing last year, I've survived a year on the job without jeopardizing too many paddling days, and indeed improving my sea-skills in recent months. Of course my paid employment has suffered, but hey, it's a pretty cool work-life-kayaking balance.

Thanks very much to Ruby Gamble who has stepped up to help me with the layout and artwork for your magazine. Notwithstanding the survey responses that follow, it

remains my goal to keep delivering 4 issues per year at \$10 per edition per household. With your continued submissions, photos and support, we'll be here for the club.

Once again, thanks to all the contributors to Salt 98. Amazingly, every single article and most of the photos in this magazine have come from our members. You are our stars!

NSWSKC New Committee L-R: Tony Murphy as new Vice-President, Shaan Gresser as Trip Convenor, Stuart Trueman as Training Coordinator, Campbell Tiley as President, Stephan Meyn as Internet Coordinator and Steve Hitchcock as Editor. Absent tonight was David Linco as Rock 'n' Roll Coordinator.



NSW Sea Kayak Club Annual General Meeting 15 August 2015

CAMPBELL TILEY, PRESIDENT

I want to firstly thank the club committee for their commitment through the past year. Two committee members are stepping down. Rae Duffy has been our Treasurer / Secretary for 4 years. She has enthusiastically and efficiently kept on top of our obligations as a registered association, has kept our books in order and has been a major contributor to the committee with her common sense and experience. Adrian Clayton has been Vice President for two years and has brought his long experience of kayaking and commitment to training and paddling to the committee.

I'd like to thank the other committee members for nominating for further year and to acknowledge the time and effort that all of them have committed to their roles.

The club is a reasonably well-oiled machine and financially stable, which certainly helps your committee. The leaders of the weekly paddles, Rob Mercer, Sharon Betteridge and Owen Kimberly (assisted by Stewart Morgan) continue to provide regular paddling options for members. All of the leaders, instructors and assessors have contributed to regular paddling and training listings with Megan Pryke and Adrian Clayton standouts on the paddling and training options. The other committee members will expand on their areas of responsibility.

What have we done as a committee this year?

Highlights for me have been the following:

- Tracking down and scanning copies of all of the club magazines over the past 25 years has secured this interesting and historical archive of Australian kayaking. We will get them all posted on the website. I have just completed the electronic table of contents with the help of 15 other members. It will be posted as a downloadable document, which we will endeavour to eventually link more intelligently to the content.
- The Club's 25th anniversary was marked with a weekend event at the Little Patonga Sport and Rec Camp. We had around 45 current and past members, including past presidents and several members from the very early years of the club, the longest being Dave Slattery a member since 1990.
- With Adrian's assistance we have run 4 new members paddles over the past 2 years. These have been well received and we will do our best to keep them going.
- On the training front, the 'harmonisation' of standards and criteria that our assessors are applying to sea skills assessment was important and I would like to

acknowledge the time that Rob, Stuart and Adrian put into this process.

Works in progress and new issues

- The website review. Tim Wolstonecroft has built a test site to assess alternate plug-ins on an updated Joomla backbone. His time has been limited and he has been a critical link in getting each of the recent club magazines out. The next step is to take the current site functionality to the new environment. We will need additional help to do this – in my view a key task for this incoming committee.
- The Club SOPs. Our venerable SOPs need a substantial rewrite. Although the document contains useful and important information it could be more accessible and clear if reorganised. While we have obligations as an AC NTP to clearly address a range of issues in our SOPs, there are also areas where in small ways we do not operate strictly according to ACs guidelines. I will be discussing with the next committee and our training coordinator in particular how best to address this.
- We have our 100th magazine issue coming up and I expect a Dr Who like materialisation of past editors to contribute to it.

The Online Survey

The following results relate to the small minority (38) of club members who found the link to the survey in an emailed 'enews' a couple of months ago and got around to responding. The opinions on the magazine and future RnR venues are provocative but of dubious relevance given the low numbers. I will try again later in the year – guaranteed 10 easy questions so please respond if you see it.

Results

The 38 members who responded had been members for:

- the past year (5%)
- 2-5 years (44%)
- 5-10 years (36%)
- over 10 years (13%).

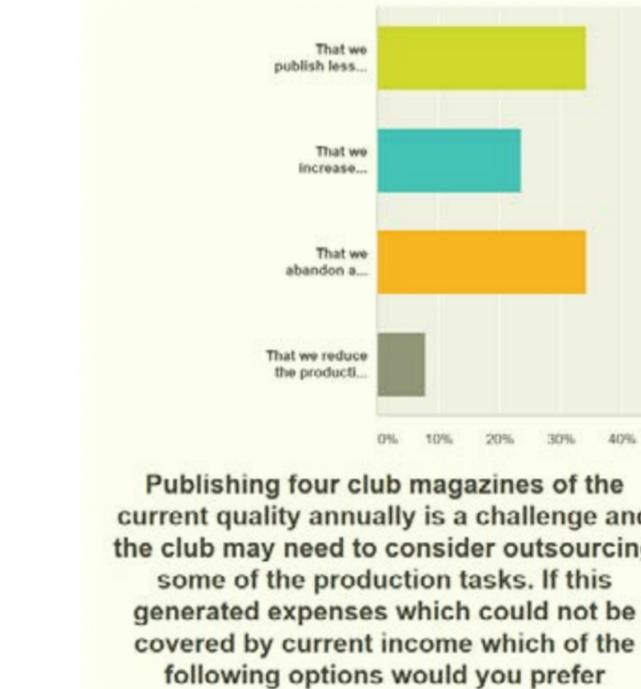
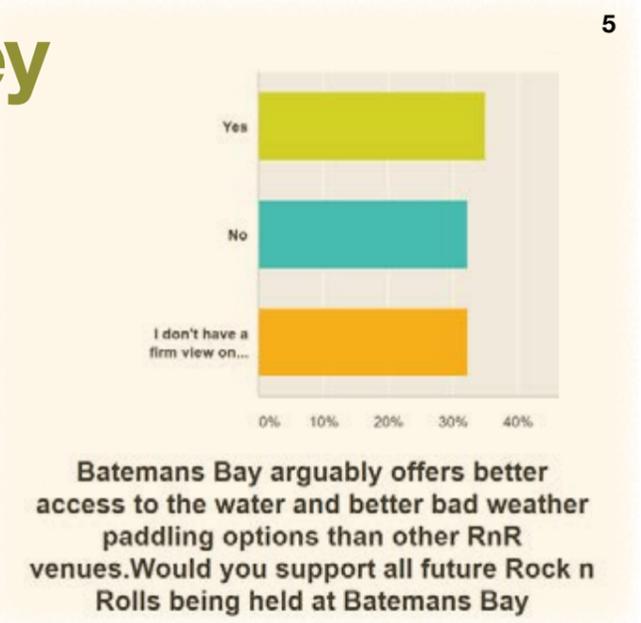
Either there's no young people in the club, or they don't have time to fill in surveys, because there were no under 30's. Just over a third were aged 30-49 and another third were 50-59, with 18% of respondents 60-69 and 8% over 70.

The largest group of respondents were Grade 1 or 2 paddlers (44%), with the next largest group Grade 3 paddlers (26%). Equal numbers of flatwater guides, sea guides and instructors responded (each group making up 5%) and 12% were ungraded.

Unsurprisingly, the members predominantly spend their time coastal paddling (88%), with 8% spending more time flatwater paddling, and 2% either sprint or marathon racing, or ski paddling.

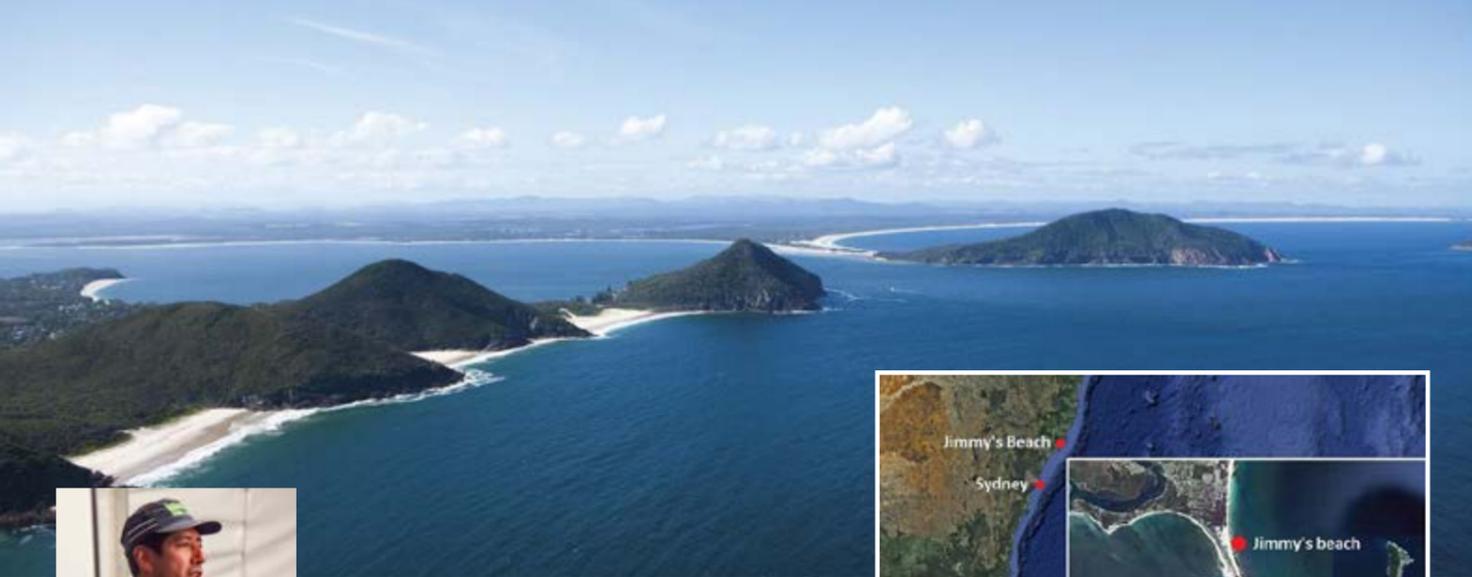
Rock 'n' Roll

Nearly everyone had attended a Rock 'n' Roll in the last two years (83%), with 69% committed to attending in 2016. 21% were unsure if they would attend. It was important to discern member's commitment to Rock 'n' Roll, because a key question of the survey was about the location of future events.



How well does the club support the following aspects of your paddling life

	Not at all	A little	Fairly well	The club does a good job	Excellently	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Training and skills development	5.26% 2	13.16% 5	5.26% 2	39.47% 15	34.21% 13	2.63% 1	38	3.86
Paddling opportunities	2.63% 1	15.79% 6	26.32% 10	42.11% 16	10.53% 4	2.63% 1	38	3.43
Expanding your paddling contacts	0.00% 0	28.95% 11	10.53% 4	39.47% 15	21.05% 8	0.00% 0	38	3.53



DAVID LINCO

Rock 'n' Roll 2016

After two years enjoying wonderful paddling in the Shoalhaven region, we are pleased to announce that in 2016 we are venturing north to Jimmys Beach at Hawks Nest from 11th to 14th March next year.

For those not familiar with Jimmys Beach it is located at the northern end of Port Stephens with paddling

options for both open and closed waters.

We are currently negotiating for preferential camping ground rates but expect this to be finalised in early September.

Your feedback from RnR 2015 has been taken on board and will be incorporated into the 2016 program.

If you've never been involved as a RnR volunteer, it's a great way to enrich your Club membership experience by meeting new people, being invited on new paddling destinations and developing new skills.

Full details to be provided in SALT 99 towards the end of this year.



Saltiest submission WINNER

I'm pleased to announce the winner of the 'Saltiest Article' from Salt #97 was our club president, Campbell Tiley, for his detailed recount and excellent photos from the recent Bass Strait crossing by Alison Curtin and himself.

For those that know Campbell, it may come as no surprise that he did submit enough material to fill a book, including over 150 photos. It was hard work to get the word count down and choose just a fraction of those photos for the magazine. I hope the rest of them make it into a photo album for subsequent Bass Strait adventurous souls to pore over.

Yes, I did pause for thought about whether a committee member should

win the prize, but of course nobody should be discouraged from submitting articles. Our committee members are as good a source of material as everyone else, so it's fair that the competition is open to them too.

Pictured is Campbell modelling his prize from Mark, a green short-sleeved jacket courtesy of Expedition Kayaks.

On behalf of the club and the magazine, I wish to thank Rob Mercer and Mark Sundin of Expedition Kayaks for donating the jacket. I'll be in touch with Rob and Mark to determine the winner from this edition. May the saltiest submitter succeed!

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Commute

IAN VAILE

PHOTOS BY JOEL WERNER



Dusk on Monday the week before ANZAC day: a huge low squatted off the East coast, throwing off huge winds, torrential rain, and mighty storms. The worst was yet to come, as the next day's storm would peel back beaches, strand ships, cause millions of dollars in damage, flood the Hunter and cast up waves off Manly of over 14m: but already on Monday afternoon winds over 100km/h were being recorded off southern Sydney, and sheets of rain were falling. I stood in the street outside my work in Pyrmont, and thought of the chaos on the roads heading back to my home only a few km away in Balmain: endless crawling queues on the ANZAC Bridge, miserable bus-stops choked with drenched and unhappy commuters, bleakly facing a long wet trip home, and I bade farewell to some of my cyclist mates at work as they headed out on to the gale, with falling darkness, strong crosswinds and slippery streets adding to the normal perils of cycling on Sydney roads. All ugly options.

Me? I hoisted my 25-year old Dancer whitewater boat onto my shoulder and headed down the street to the nearby wharf. Despite the forecast, there were no whitecaps on the

harbour. The scudding rain whipped across the surface in rippling sheets but visibility was OK. I sealed my skirt, stuck my light into the end of the plumber's conduit and jammed that down the back of my PFD, seal-launched the half metre down into the murky turbid water and headed out. After a bouncy, wet but uneventful paddle I was home in fifteen minutes, in time to call my aged mum and tell her I was still alive. Again.

I began commuting by kayak back in January 2008. I had (and still have) a job near the Star casino and live in Mort Bay in Balmain, so it's only about 1.5km on the water. I figure at four days a week and forty-eight-odd weeks a year, I've crossed the mouth of Johnstons Bay over 1,500 times since then, in good water and bad, in storms and calm, at dawn and in pitch dark. I've seen some tragic things: the water cops bringing back the boat in which six young people were killed, back in 2008, and the crane off East Balmain the morning after a young man fell to his death in the night. I've had exhilaration as well; penguins gliding past my boat seen only by me, the city ablaze with sunset reflected across the water, a white and fat full

moon rising over the bridge against a crimson backdrop, a sudden explosion of baitfish as something big beneath me makes them jump.

The water police know me now and don't pull me up as much as they used to. My rig with the light makes me street legal, and it helps to have a boat driver's ticket as well. The real challenges have been other craft; from the drunks in the stinkboats on Friday nights to the colossal cruise liners that dock in White Bay and come in and out directly across my line of travel. I have learned to be patient with those ships; once they get moving they travel at a surprising clip and I wouldn't even be a speed bump - probably wouldn't even chip the paint.

I've had a brief two minutes of fame from the commute, with a Radio National doco and a segment with Adam Spencer on 702 in Sydney. I feel like I'm riding a line between cool and eccentric when I talk to people about my mundane commute. I've come across a few others who have been commuting by kayak; one bloke saw me from the ferry wharf and decided to give it a go, but I only ever saw him once and he didn't look too happy, and a colleague at work bought a boat

and kayaks in once a week or so. I've also discovered a couple internationally; a guy called Steven Linaweaver in Oakland in the US, and Laura Prendergast of Pygmy Kayaks in Washington State. If you google "kayak commute" you come up with a handful of people who do this thing.

It's the fastest way to work for me, faster than driving, ferry or bike, and still catches me by surprise occasionally when I look up and see the bridge shining in the morning or encounter an unexpected marine beastie. And it gets me in a kayak almost every day, and there's a lot to be said for that!





Instructor's Day

with Nick Cunliffe and Kate Hives, 28 March 2015

CATHY MILLER

20 NSW Sea Kayak Club instructors and guides were privileged to take part in a one-day training session with BCU Level 5 Instructor Nick Cunliffe and Kate Hives on the weekend following Rock 'n' Roll.

Anyone who joined Nick and Kate's sessions at Rock 'n' Roll would know that they are both highly experienced kayak instructors. This instructor's day was held at La Perouse Sailing Club and involved both theory and practical training.

Nick Cunliffe works as a professional kayak guide, in his words, "not a real job". He and Kate are both excellent instructors, and this was the last opportunity for us to work with them before they left Australia. They worked very effectively as a team, splitting the group in two to follow the exercises.

We kicked off by discussing leadership styles, on a spectrum ranging from a 'Command' style of teaching (army style autocratic methods) to 'Experimental' discovery learning (with little guidance). Somewhere in the middle is a 'Control style' with guided discovery – letting a learner discover things for themselves, while guiding them in how to improve.

The goal of an instructor is for learners to build self-reliance, not dependence. If an instructor just tells a learner what to do, they could become reliant on the instructor and not actually learn for themselves.

In the morning session, Nick and Kate set us some activities designed around us 'discovering' things for ourselves by being guided in a particular direction. Here's some of his Boat Awareness Exercises, and by the way, these were all fun to do:

- Buddy up in pairs and follow your buddy from one end of a designated area to the other, copying their sweep strokes

- Sweep stroke in both directions, discovering the effect of wind in each direction
- All 20 paddlers to paddle in a small designated area on the water enclosed on 2 sides by a beach and break wall. We were told to all had to paddle forwards in a single direction and not go outside the lines. In order not to crash into each other, we all needed to use a great variety of steering and turning strokes! It was left up to us to 'discover' this for ourselves. This was lots of fun, like herding cats.
- Paddle forwards in a line directly across wind in one direction, then come back in the other direction, edging on upwind and downwind side. This allowed us to observe for ourselves the effect of weather-cocking in each direction, and how we could alter it by slight weight-balance shifts.

Nick gave us an activity designed to look at different paddlers' learning styles. Nick set us a task (oral instruction): "Hold your paddle with just 1 hand and turn the kayak. The paddle must be placed in the water on the other side to your hand". For some learners, this oral instruction was enough for them to leap in and try it for themselves (Stuart Trueman jumped up first!). Other learners preferred to watch Nick do a demonstration (the majority of us). We all gave it a go, with varying degrees of success. Of course, we also watched our top instructors to see how they did it!

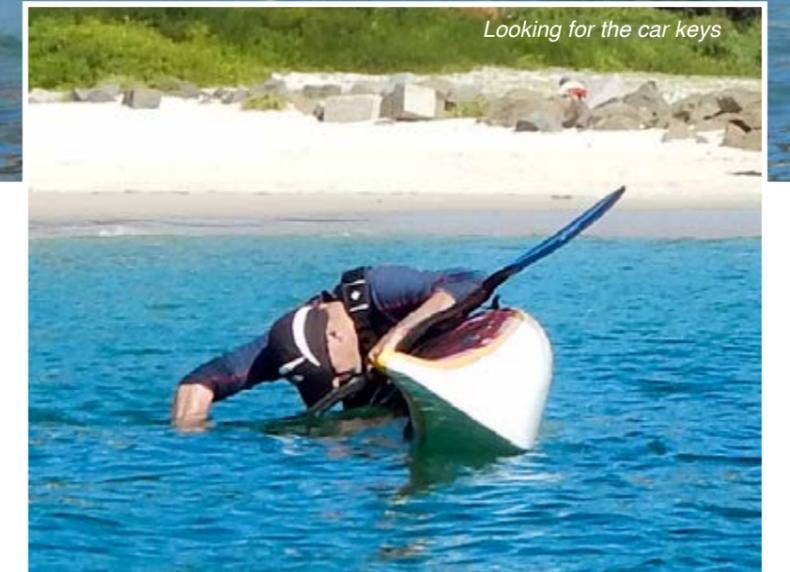
After the exercise, we re-grouped and reflected back on what we'd learned. This exercise covered a wide range of instructor styles and appealed to different learner styles:



Nick about to go looking for the car keys

- Oral instruction – instructor giving the group a task
- Demonstration – instructor showing us how it was done
- Practice - 'discovery learning' as we tried it ourselves
- Analysis – the instructor demonstrated the stroke again, breaking each component into smaller parts
- Feedback – as we tried it for ourselves, Nick and Kate went around the group to give tips and give corrective feedback
- Reflection – after the exercise, we talked about it as a group, pooled our experience and the instructor drew out the key points.

FYI, this stroke is called a 'bow jam'. A few of us pretended we'd created our own unique strokes that achieved the same criteria (thinking outside the square), but our usual suspects such as Rob Mercer achieved the stroke quickly and elegantly. This style of teaching was engaging, practical, and allowed us to explore for ourselves while being supported.



Looking for the car keys

We spent the afternoon with balancing and bracing exercises, designed to help us feel "loose" in the boat, testing out what it felt like to not engage the hips and knees. We did subtle weight shifts and tried this out while paddling both upwind and downwind. One of our instructors likened this weight shift to sitting on a bar stool and lifting a bum cheek to release flatulence (see, Nick, that's how the Aussie instructors teach).

We did a series of bracing exercises. I remember in particular the one Nick called "looking for your car keys" – doing a low brace with momentum while leaning forward and leaning down. Nick feels the term 'high

brace' is unfortunate because it encourages paddlers to reach outside safe zones while in dynamic water, so we had lots of discussion around bracing and safety.

It was a privilege to be able to take part in this training day. As always I was in awe of the skills of our own top instructors who managed to do Nick's exercises effortlessly and with grace. There was lots of food for thought and we capped off the day with a few beers at the La Perouse Sailing Club just to make sure we had got it all. Thanks to the Club for hosting this training, and we trust our paddlers will benefit down the chain.



Kate giving instructions on the beach

Beach Systems and their Significance to Sea Kayakers

Part 1

ADRIAN CLAYTON



Introduction
With so many different and constantly changing factors involved, the beach system is the most complex and probably the most challenging environment that a sea kayaker will encounter.

There are more than 750 beaches along the NSW coast, and they make up over 60 per cent of the state's coastline. Their cumulative length is nearly 1,000 kilometres. Embark on a multi-day sea kayak expedition along our coast and it's almost certain that you'll be confronted with launching and landing through surf at some stage of your journey.

This is the first of two articles dealing with the subject of beach systems and their impact on sea kayaking. It will concentrate on the influences that shape the waves we find breaking along the beaches of NSW. The second article will deal more with NSW beaches themselves – the form they take and when and why they can be regarded as a suitable place to launch and land a sea kayak.

Although some references will be made to areas of which sea kayakers need to be mindful when they are contemplating launching from or landing on beaches, the articles cannot be considered as sources of "dos and don'ts in the surf". There are some very good contributions related to this topic in back issues of the Club's magazine and elsewhere (see the recommended reading list). The intent of these articles is to

give the reader a feel for what is a very complex subject – waves and beaches and the interaction between the two – all of which has a significant relevance to safe, injury-free and enjoyable sea kayaking.

Between them, these articles more than cover the knowledge requirements related to this subject area that a candidate for Australian Canoeing's Sea Skills award needs to have.

The "Beach System"

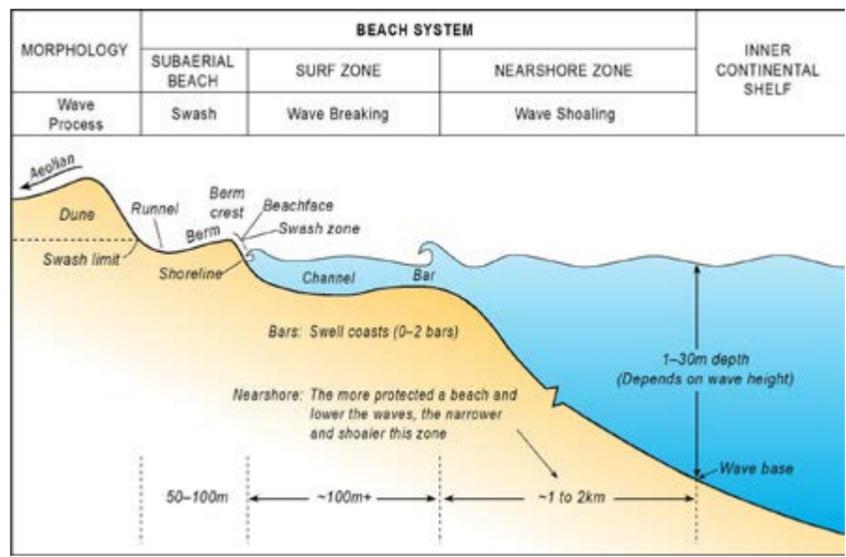
Beach systems are either wave-dominated or tide-dominated. The energy generated by a tide-dominated system is not as explosive as that from a wave-dominated system. This article focuses on the wave-dominated beach system mainly because of its likelihood of providing greater

challenges to a sea kayaker (particularly in a fully-laden kayak) launching or landing through surf unscathed.

As an aside, tide-dominated beach systems certainly have relevance to the expeditionary sea kayaker. They can present serious portage challenges getting a kayak chock full of camping gear between the points of high and low tides (up to two kilometres on 80 Mile Beach in Western Australia!).

Figure 1 identifies the areas that form the beach systems along the NSW coast. The areas of most concern to sea kayakers contemplating a beach launch or landing are those identified as the Nearshore Zone (wave shoaling), Surf Zone (wave breaking) and Subaerial Beach (swash – i.e. upwash and backwash).

Figure 1 - The Beach System - from Beaches of the NSW Coast



However, not to be dismissed lightly in the context of sea kayaking (particularly with fully loaded boats), extensive dune systems need to be taken into account. For instance, the dunes, at Dark Point on the mainland adjacent to Broughton Island present a major portage challenge in the event of an emergency walkout.

Wave data for the NSW coast

Manly Hydraulics Laboratory (MHL) has been recording data on wave height (i.e. combined swell and sea waves), frequency (period) and direction from the oldest of its seven wave rider buoys (Port Kembla) for nearly 40 years and its newest (Sydney) since 1992. Its buoys extend from Byron Bay south to Eden. MHL claims to have one of the most extensive data sets in this area of research in the world.

As at March 2013, the MHL records indicate the average H.sig (i.e. the average height of the 1/3rd highest waves recorded over a defined period) ranged from 1.44 metres at Batemans Bay to 1.67 metres at Byron Bay. The average H.sig from Sydney's wave rider buoy (located a little over 10km east of Curl Curl) was 1.62 metres. The incidence of waves measured by the Sydney buoy exceeding two metres was 23%, exceeding three metres 5%, exceeding four metres 1%. Holders of the Australian Canoeing Sea Skills Award know what it's like to competently manage surf conditions of one metre high – a figure well below the average NSW H.sig data recorded by MHL.

The wave periods (peak of the period of the energy spectrum, expressed as Tp1) from the MHL records average between 9 and 10 seconds across the seven wave rider buoys. The occurrence of a 10-12 seconds period ranged between 25 and 28% of the records, 12-14 seconds period ranged between 14 and 16% of the records. Appreciating the significance of wave periods – the longer the period, the stronger the wave -- is also important.



Figure 2 - Swell in Manu Bay, Raglan, New Zealand; photo by Conrad Comer

The making of waves

We all know that what we refer to as "swell" are waves generated by winds, 100s to 1000s of kilometres away from our beaches, and that the beautiful rhythmic nature of these waves does not occur until they have escaped the influences of the winds that have created them. The stronger the wind the bigger swell it will create. Figure 2 clearly illustrates the uniformity of the undisturbed swell as it approaches land and how it builds in height at the point of shoaling and eventually breaks.

The MHL records also include data on wave direction, which indicate 63% of the waves registered on their Sydney wave rider buoy come from a southerly to south-easterly direction. The records also show a seasonal influence on both height and direction. For example, over spring and summer Sydney experienced waves coming from a NNE direction between 15 and 20% of the time.

The forces a wave exerts on a sea kayak in the surf zone are significant – particularly when the kayak has broached. The bigger the wave the greater the force. Therefore, appreciating the exponential growth in wave energy as the wave height increases is important. A one metre wave is reckoned to have 10 times more energy than a 0.3-metre (1 foot) wave and a three metre wave is reckoned to have 10 times more energy than a one metre wave.

Wave period is also an indicator of the energy contained within a wave. A one metre wave with an 8-second period is going to pack much less punch than a one metre wave with a 12-second period.

The sea floor (bathymetry) over which a wave travels is not always uniform. Gradients change, obstacles such as submerged rocks, reefs (bomoras) and sandbars get in the way, while currents and rips gouge deeper channels. Even without atmospheric influences, a perfectly formed swell wave will start to change in shape when it starts to shoal ("feels" the sea floor and slows down). It will build and at the point where its height represents a figure of approximately 75% of the depth beneath, it will start to break (e.g. a 1-metre wave will break above a depth around 1.4 metres). How it breaks will depend on how steep the slope is leading up to the point where it starts to break.

As can be noted from most of the photographs within this article, a wave does not necessarily break uniformly across its width. Figure 3 shows a significant difference in the height of the wave between the left hand and right hand sides of the wave even though the distance between is only a few metres. The higher peak on the right has been created by that part of the wave finding shallower water – maybe the edge of a sandbar – slowing down and building in height to the point that it’s about to break (as a

The wind also plays a part in shaping swell waves. An offshore wind, clearly evident in Figure 6, will steepen the face of a wave whereas an onshore wind will tend to flatten it out. Onshore winds have the potential to blow the inattentive sea kayaker, waiting in the nearshore zone, into the surf zone.

Figure 5 gives a clear indication of what happens to a wave and the water particles within it as it travels from deepwater to the swash zone on the beach. Beach systems are

Wave sets

We learn pretty early on in our surfing education about wave sets – one or more bigger waves coming through at regular intervals. These sets are the result of the convergence of swells generated by different storms. Before contemplating launching or landing a kayak through the surf zone, it is wise to establish the pattern at which wave sets come through. This can be simply done by timing the lulls in between.



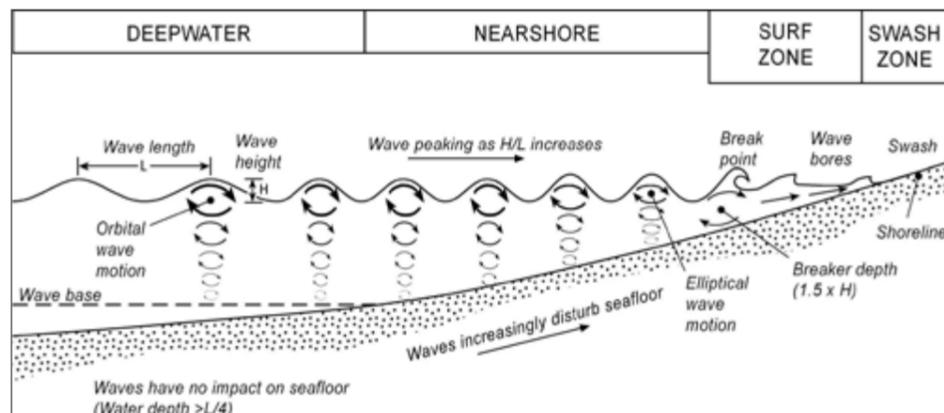
Left: Figure 3 - A wave peak starting to break at Manly; photo by Geraldine Clayton.
 Right: Figure 4 - Cathy Miller breaking out through wind affected surf at Currarong; photo by Adrian Clayton.
 Below: Figure 5 - From Beaches of the NSW Coast

dumper). The kayaker should get over the unbroken part of the wave with a few powerful strokes.

Waves generated by local winds (referred to as Sea in maritime forecasts) also form part of the beach system. The nature of wind waves is that they are generally less powerful than swell waves (local storm generated waves might be an exception), are shorter and steeper and more confused. Surfboard riders refer to surf conditions as being “clean” when there are no wind waves about. Conditions depicted in Figures 2 and 6 could be considered as clean. Contrast them with Figure 4 where the wind is having a big influence on the condition of the surf.

constantly being modified by the orbital nature of the wave currents interacting with the seabed. Figure 5 also indicates the points at which a wave’s height is established – from the trough up to the crest. The points establishing wavelength are also identified.

It’s not uncommon for swell waves generated by separate weather events to approach the coast from different directions. In such cases the dominant swell is referred to as primary swell, any lesser swells, if they exist, are referred to as secondary and tertiary swells and have their origins elsewhere.



The occurrence of multiple swells requires more time in determining the best place to launch from or land on a beach. There was a situation on a recent overnight Club trip where the group of 10 paddlers were landing their loaded kayaks on to a small beach affected by swell coming from two different directions. Waves of around one metre were breaking close to the shore at different points of the beach at different times. The first three members of the group landed without incident at the south-eastern end. When the influence of the second swell took effect the rest of the group opted to land at the other end of the beach. When the time came to relaunch those who had landed first had a much easier passage through lulls in the shore break than the others at the north-western end of the beach who had to break out through a persistent one-metre wave. If the time had been taken to fully assess the pattern and effect of the two swell directions on approach to the beach the group would have all landed at the south-eastern end and had an easier relaunch.

Wave types

In simplified terms, waves in the surf zone fall into 3 categories: plunging, spilling and surging.

Plunging waves (the dreadful dumper or beautiful barrel – depending on your point of view) occur when a shore bound wave meets a point where the sea floor steeply rises (such as at the seaward edge of a sandbar). It’s very much a case of wham bam with these waves as they expend most of their energy when breaking. There have been occasions – fortunately not too many -- within our club where injuries have been sustained (one on my watch) in plunging waves. Given their potential to cause serious harm to boat and/or body, they need to be avoided at the point at which they break at all costs – even in small surf conditions.

Spilling waves are those that break in a progressive manner and without the sudden violence of a plunging wave. However, as the wave breaks and the foam spills down its face the energy it releases lasts longer than that from a dumping wave. When landing in small surf conditions, say under a metre, a spilling wave will not create too many problems and a combination of effective ruddering and a good low brace should have the kayaker progressing towards shore without difficulty. It’s when the surf is large that a spilling wave can exert enormous force on the kayak and result in injury if bracing technique is poor.

Figure 6 enables a clear comparison to be made between a plunging wave and a spilling wave. The shape of the bigger – plunging -- wave at the back can be clearly seen to break with a barreling (surfboard riders’ terminology) formation and at this moment there is clear space (“the green room”, “crystal cylinder”) between the foam pile and that part of the wave behind it. The smaller wave at the front is a spilling wave and is breaking over a gently steepening seabed.

Identifying a plunging wave from a spilling wave from the comfort of the beach is a relatively easy task. However, the same task from the ocean side of the wave is more difficult. The following signs will help you determine if the wave in front of you is a plunging wave:

- The “whoomph!” it makes as it suddenly breaks. This might not be audible if there is an onshore wind.
- The turbidity behind the wave created by sand disturbance generated by the force of the breaking wave.
- The momentary “bounce” of the foam pile (wave bore) rising above the height of the wave itself (compare the foam pile of the two different wave types in Figure 6).
- If board riders are about (with an entirely different objective to yours – they want to catch waves, you want to avoid them as much as possible), what type of board are they using? Riders of short boards will favour the plunging wave (as Figure 6 indicates) whereas SUP and longboard riders will prefer to surf spilling waves.

Figure 6 - Legendary Bells Beach in Victoria with a plunging wave at the back and a spilling wave at the front; photo by Judy Scanlon, Surfangle Photography





Figure 7 - A surging wave; photo by Rob Brander

Surging waves break on the shore and occur at beaches with steeper shorelines. They can present real problems for sea kayakers. Our New Zealand brethren refer to them as “bumper dumpers”.

The occurrence of a surging wave, (Figure 7) is determined by factors such as the size of the surf, the state of the tide and the shoreline gradient. The picture clearly indicates the potential for such a wave to do serious damage to the sea kayaker and her/his kayak. The solo expedition sea kayaker is going to find it near enough to impossible to launch through such a wave (Freya Hoffmeister, after her experiences paddling around New Zealand’s South Island, might beg to differ). Even if assistance is available, launching through a surging wave could still be a hazardous task – both for the kayaker and those helping. Such is this type of wave’s potential to cause a serious injury (to joints, spine, head) or damage to kayak and equipment, landing a sea kayaker through it should be avoided.

What the sea kayaker needs to appreciate is that changing conditions bring about a change in the type of wave. For example, a one metre spilling wave at high tide could well turn into a one metre plunging wave at some point as the tide ebbs. Likewise, on beaches

with a steep shoreline, a pesky one metre shore break at high tide might turn into a nasty surging wave at low tide. Additionally, changes in the height and/or length of the swell, weather conditions, wind direction and speeds all play a part in determining the wave type you’ll find in the surf zone.

Additional to the three types identified above, waves are sometimes referred to as either destructive or constructive. Destructive waves cause major erosion of a beach due to a strong backwash dragging sand particles back in to the sea, often exposing the rocks beneath. Destructive waves are generated through storm activity. Constructive waves are those that gently redeposit the sand on to the beach. They occur in calm conditions, are lower in height than their counterpart and have a weak backwash. Aptly named Washaway Beach in Sydney Harbour is an example of a beach that demonstrates the cycle of destructive and constructive waves. The consequence for sea kayakers is that they might plan to land on a beach where their related chart indicates they will find sand only to arrive to find a rocky shoreline resulting from the effects of destructive waves.

Wave refraction

Figure 2 illustrates the nature of wave refraction – the way a swell wave will reform across its width as it begins to “feel” the sea bed at different points beneath – in this case the shallower waters (created by sand accretion) adjacent to the headland. This has the effect of slowing down the progress of the affected part of the wave thus causing the arcing appearance clearly evident in the photograph.

Another area where wave refraction will occur is if a land form – such as an island – gets in the way of a wave’s progress. Minnamurra Beach (Figure 8) is a great example of this. Look hard and you will see that Stack Island has caused the advancing small swell to wrap around behind it. It is not uncommon for swell waves to wrap around the back of the island and converge with swell coming in between the island and the mainland. The violence of the collision between the two waves will vary. In some cases it’s a playground for seasoned sea kayakers with surf experience, but in the case of big swell it’s something the prudent sea kayaker would want to avoid. In this location, an ebbing Minnamurra River could well be a factor in creating more confused wave conditions.

Figure 8 - Minnamurra Beach and Stack Island, Illawarra region; Photo by Andrew Short



The parts of the wave

Surfboard riders, amongst others, have their terminology for the parts of the wave. The “face” is self-explanatory as is the “back”. The “soup” refers to the wave bore (also referred to as the foam pile), which is the white fluffy stuff we get after the wave has broken. The “crest” (also known as “the peak”) is the top of the wave. “Lip” is the term used for the crest of the wave just before it breaks (and can clearly be seen in both waves in Figure 6). The “shoulder” of the wave is the unbroken part of the wave adjacent to its foam pile. The single board rider on the spilling wave in Figure 5 is making his way towards the wave’s shoulder on his right hand side.

Sea kayakers transiting the surf zone are most likely to encounter some form of soup as they launch or land. Timing the run to go over the shoulder of the wave will result in a drier breakout. Avoiding the lip is important, particularly on a plunging wave (which will have a steep face before it breaks) due its potential to injure the kayaker or damage equipment.

The sea kayaker has to be wary of the method board riders use when assessing the size of a wave. They have a different system (said to originate in the early days of board riding in Hawaii, using the back of the wave as the reference) to that used by the Bureau of Meteorology and other agencies. If a board rider says it’s a 1-metre wave you can safely assume it is likely to be double that size.

Close outs

At times a beach will become closed out. This situation occurs when a wave breaks across the full length of the beach at the same time – more likely in heavier swell conditions. Close outs make it impossible for a sea kayaker to launch or land without the prospect of getting very wet. Figure 9 illustrates Boomerang Beach in a closed out state from a sea kayaker’s point of view.



Figure 9 - Close out at Bommerang Beach, Mid-north coast; Photo by Adrian Clayton

Whereas this article has dealt primarily with swell and waves, the second article in the series, to appear in the next edition of Salt, will focus on specific beach types (such as Transverse Bar and Rips, Low Tide Terraces, Reflective, etc.) and how they interact with the sea. We will categorise some of those beaches along the NSW coast that are regularly visited by the sea kayaking fraternity and identify when and why they might need to be avoided.

References

The following resources have been used to provide much of the information in this article:
Beaches of the NSW Coast: A guide to their nature, characteristics, surf and safety, 2nd edition, Andrew Short; Australian Beach Safety and Management Program, Sydney University Press, Sydney, 2007

The NSW Wave Climate: Improved understanding through the Introduction of Directional Wave Monitoring Buoys, Kulmar et al, MHL; Coasts and Ports Conference, Sydney, 2013

Dr Rip’s Essential Beach Book, everything you need to know about surf, sand and rips, Rob Brander, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2010

Acknowledgements

I’d like to express my appreciation to Professor Andrew Short, Rob Brander, Conrad Comer and Judy Scanlon for allowing me to use some of their photographs and diagrams in the preparation of this article. Sources have been identified in the captions to each item.

I’d also like to thank Stuart Trueman, Josh Andrews and Caoimhin Ardren for their assistance with the preparation of this article.

2016 National KASK Forum

Friday 26 to Monday 29 February 2016

Cobham Outward Bound School, Anakiwa, Marlborough Sounds, New Zealand

A social, fun weekend with plenty of opportunities to paddle, share ideas and learn, on and off the water. Registration fee is \$180. Kayak hire is available.

Your fee covers accommodation in bunkhouse, Friday night nibbles, Saturday breakfast, lunch, dinner, Sunday breakfast and lunch.

Registration form and queries to Lois Cowan at loisc@paradise.net.nz

Staying Hydrated on and off the Water

CATHY NOLAN, PHYSIOTHERAPIST

Spring has sprung which means longer days, warmer temperatures and time to get back on the water for some longer paddles. Whether you are a recreational, time trial or expedition paddler, kayaking is a healthy form of exercise, which at times can be strenuous. To make sure you maintain performance (& enjoyment) on the water it is important you stay well hydrated. Not only does it prevent the unwanted negative effects of dehydration but also helps with your recovery off the water.

Why do we need to replace fluids?

As you would know, the body uses water in all its cells, tissues and organs. Water regulates your body temperature, lubricates your joints, and helps with digestion, transporting nutrients for energy and health and getting rid of wastes. Exercise increases the body's water requirements and if it isn't replaced during exercise, you can be at risk of hypohydration (total body water below normal). When total body water decreases, heat cannot be regulated effectively, which starts a chain reaction of negative events



(*) with reference to and facts from Australian Institute of Sport, Sports Nutrition, Fluid Who Needs it? Factsheet. July 2009

in all of the body's systems. Your performance becomes impaired and generally your 'great' day on the water turns into one of 'woe'.

The dehydration spiral

During hypohydration, as core temperature increases, the heart rate can elevate increasing the perceived level of exertion. For sea-kayakers, this means paddling can start to get awfully hard to do when no other factors have changed. Fatigue sets in. As fluid levels fall further, mental function (concentration/decision making) can be affected, along with the body's ability to co-ordinate a movement. The stomach can start to become uncomfortable as gastric emptying is slowed and basically by this stage, you really wish you were back at shore. You might think these negative symptoms are only likely to appear in extremes of dehydration. The Australian Institute of Sport reports that the negative effects of hypohydration have been detected when fluid deficits are as little as 2% i.e. A deficit of 1.2 litres for a 60kg athlete. (*)

So how much water do we need to prevent hypohydration?

It is a hard question to answer specifically, as everyone has different water needs. For example, fluid losses are affected by (*):

- Genetics – some people sweat more than others
- Body size – larger people tend to sweat more than smaller ones
- Fitness – fitter people sweat earlier in exercise and in larger volumes



- Environment – sweat losses are higher in hot, humid conditions
- Exercise intensity- sweat losses increase as exercise intensity increases.

As a result, there are no set guidelines for water intake while exercising because of individual variation. Instead the Australian Institute of Sport recommends estimating your own fluid requirements by measuring weight before and after exercise and adding on the weight of any fluid or food consumed during the exercise.

For example, if I weighed 65kg before I went for a paddle, drank 1 litre of water (which is equivalent to 1kg weight) and weighed 65kg on my return from the paddle, my fluid loss is 1 litre. So I need to start thinking how I can get more water in on my paddle as I am getting close to the lower end of when the effects of hypohydration can start to take effect. In the meantime I need to start replacing the fluid I have lost, especially if I want to paddle (well) the next day.

There are some other factors that also stand out as contributing to hypohydration during exercise and these definitely apply to sea kayaking:

- Not having the opportunity to drink while you are exercising (easy and regular access to water)
- Being so focused on what you are doing you forget to drink (rough sea or just having fun)
- Not having suitable fluids for drinking (water as your only fluid may not be suitable for long paddles).

What fluids should you drink when you are exercising?

Water is a suitable fluid when undertaking mild to moderate exercise for short durations. During high intensity exercise (including long duration exercise) of greater than 60 minutes the Australian Institute of Sports recommends fluids that contain carbohydrate (4-8%) and sodium (salt) (10-20mmol/L) as more beneficial to prevent hypohydration than water on its own (*). One of the reasons for this is water on its own can satisfy your thirst well before you have replaced enough fluid to compensate for sweat loss. As a result, AIS actually recommends sports type drinks that meet the above criteria for sodium and carbohydrate as more suitable drinks to prevent hypohydration.

Soft drinks, fruit juice or cordials are high in carbohydrates and low in sodium are not recommended, as these can speed up gastric emptying which is already a negative effect of hypohydration.

When should you have fluids?

Before Exercise

Start in fluid balance. This requires drinking regularly throughout the day leading up to your paddle. Have a drink with all meals and snacks. Water is a suitable drink.

Immediately before a paddle commences consume 200-600ml of fluid. Again, water is suitable.

If you are going on a day or multiday paddle, plan your fluid intake. Aim to match previous fluid losses to within 1% of body mass if possible.

During Exercise

Begin drinking early in the paddle and continue to drink small amounts regularly.

This means having water easily accessible either in a hydration pack in the PFD or in easy reach on your deck. For paddles longer than 60 mins, you should not only drink water but also drink fluid that contains 4-6% carbohydrate and (10-20mmol/L) sodium eg sports drink.

After Exercise

The Australian Institute of Sport recommends you will need to drink 150% of any fluid deficit in the 4-6 hours after exercise to account for ongoing sweat and urinary losses.

When fluid losses are high and/or rapid rehydration is required, sodium replacement may be required such as a sports drink, oral rehydration solutions and salty foods.

How do I tell if I am hydrated?

A simple way to make sure you're staying properly hydrated is to check your urine. If your urine is consistently colour-less or light yellow, you are most likely staying well hydrated. If your urine is dark yellow or amber-coloured after paddling, then it is a sign you are dehydrated and haven't had enough water.

I hope this information helps you prepare for safe and well-hydrated summer paddling!

Michele Powell having a post-paddle drink



Salt #100

Next March 2016 will mark our 100th edition of the magazine. We have some ideas to help mark the special occasion, but will need your help.

To kick things off, between now and Christmas, please email the editor with your short answers to:

“What my club magazine means to me...”

Members Feedback

I just wanted to say what a great magazine you've put together. Its full of very informative and engaging content and is beautifully presented. Love all the colour photos and in depth articles.” Wow,

Cathy Miller

Really great to catch up with you at RNR...it was a great one, wasn't it! Loved the last mag.... you are really keeping a high standard and I look forward to reading it every time.”

Lisa & Mark

“Great stuff can't fault the mag.”

Alex Manu

“I have said it before but I will say it again - I am continuously amazed by the quality of the magazine for a relatively small club.”

Paul Thomas



Safe and Timely

PAUL THOMAS
POSTSCRIPT BY MARTY VANDERPOEL
PHOTOS BY PAUL, MARTY AND ADRIAN CLAYTON

For some of us, navigation in a sea kayak is pretty straight forward. Just point and paddle right? But this approach fails to address some issues that could end up being very important. For example...when will I get there? How will the tide affect my progress? What if a fog rolls in or it gets dark? What if my GPS dies? The list goes on.

It doesn't take much thought to realise that there is enormous value in a working understanding of navigation and recently eleven lucky club members got the opportunity for training to prepare for the sort of situations described above.

The Navigation course was run by Adrian Clayton with expert assistance from master navigator Russ Swinnerton. Campbell Tiley and Matt Bezzina provided valuable support.

The training was conducted at Jimmys Beach, Port Stephens. This turned out to be an excellent venue, and as it happened, excellent weather considering that it was the middle of winter. Well organised Adrian!

On the Saturday we covered theory and practised land (and beach) based skills. This is where we learnt that the key objective of effective navigation is to arrive at your destination in a safe and timely manner. That makes sense.

It didn't take long to discover that my old bushwalking navigation skills, whilst helpful, didn't give



Campbell standing and overseeing Team Flinders

me the full picture. For starters, I needed to appreciate the differences between topographic maps and nautical charts. Both have valuable information and it was interesting to see that the trainer staff had differing opinions on which they would prefer to have sitting on their deck when navigating around coastal waters.

This sort of 'creative tension' is great because it clearly showed there is not necessarily a single right way to do these things. On that note, one of the highlights of Day 1 for me was the discussion about the very different experiences of Matt and Campbell on the same long leg of two different Bass Strait crossings. There is nothing like hearing from guys that have been there and done that in situations where navigation makes a big difference.

The second day of the course was all about practice and most of it was spent on the waters of Port Stephens. We practised following a planned route ('handrailing' along

the way), taking bearings on the water, calculating positions using the height of known features, planning and executing ferry glides across tidal streams and many other useful skills. By the end of the day it was clear that with the right devices, and the right skills, it is possible to have a vastly improved understanding of where you are at any given point in time, and how to get somewhere else.

By the end of the weekend I had learnt a variety of new navigation skills that I am sure that I will put to good use in the future. I am also sure that I will need to keep practicing them to embed them into the grey matter. For me this was a perfect example of one of the many benefits of being in the NSWSKC – expert training by capable and passionate individuals in a beautiful setting. This sort of training is not just for the adventurous Bass Strait crossing types – there is definitely value for anyone going anywhere in a sea kayak.



(L) Pre-briefing before launch: Adrian holding the map with Glen Boulton (Captain of Team Cook) is to his immediate right, then Campbell, then Paul Thomas (Captain of Team Flinders), then Russ Swinnerton



(R) Theory with Matt

Postscript by Marty

So during first exercise on Saturday morning I'm thinking "How hard can this be?"

- Step 1. Find a clearly visible pink plastic bucket from 100 yards away with a compass.
- Nailed it!

Needless to say, the challenges did go on to become a little more thought provoking throughout the weekend. By the end of Sunday afternoon's paddle we'd embraced a better understanding for establishing where we are, how to maintain course, judging distance, keeping track of miles covered and taking the simplest route to where we needed to go with all the variables that paddling in the tide and the wind throw in.

I reckon most of us got a better appreciation for reading

the "lie of the land" as well. To be able to recognise surrounding features and adapt them into the day's plans that were set out previous to launching is a handy skill to have.

It helps to confirm your suspicions as you go, rather than getting lost and having to find a way back. This was particularly pertinent in Port Stephens with so many of the Chameleon-like channel markers that had mysteriously changed colour since our maps were produced!

It certainly whet the appetite to learn more about the navigation side of Sea Kayaking and provided a good starting point for planning some of those bigger trips out on the wild blue yonder.



On water practice: John Hutchinson (L), Kylie Sheppard and Paul Thomas (R) discuss one of the navigation challenges on the waters of Port Stephens



A Day in the Life of a Sea Kayaking Leader

TERENCE 'CHUCK' MURPHY

Life is all about the adventure. I have always been an avid adventurer of the outdoors and landed myself in the saddle of a sea kayak in early 2014. As many might relate; in the beginning I knew nothing about Sea Kayaking! I grew up with a love for the ocean and surf, going from beach to beach and board to board. All those years in the surf gave me handfuls of knowledge. This became very useful when I decided to take on the unknown that was to be Sea Kayaking.

As a student on a rather intense five-week course to gain a Sea Kayaking Leader Qualification I developed not only skills and knowledge of the art, but also an understanding of what kayaking can provide for different people. This shaped the conduct of activities and view I carry today ~ kayaking, although adventurous and enjoyable, is a tool that provides the means to facilitate the development of both individual and group qualities required in everyday living. Since adopting this view and seeing its outcomes in real time I have increased my little list of tools, which now include qualifications in Whitewater Kayaking and Whitewater Rafting. Suffice to say when there is a paddle in my hands I am a happy man!

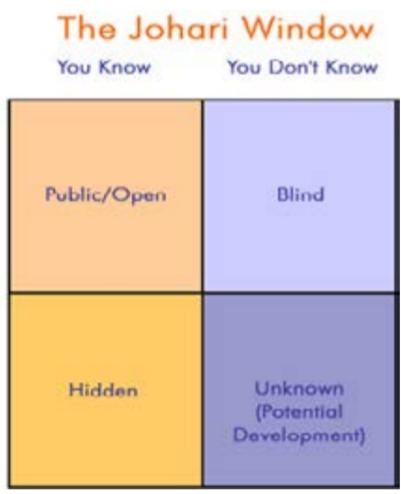
I joined the NSWSKC earlier this year and unfortunately with work commitments have only had the opportunity to paddle with club members less than a handful of times. Thank you to those members for welcoming me to the club and allowing me to share some of my skills and experiences. I joined with the intent to progress through the clubs qualifications to hopefully

conduct a range of different training, activities and expeditions. Throughout these endeavours I hope I get a chance to meet the majority of members and bring something new to the club. With any luck hopefully you will all see me employed somewhere in the outdoor recreation or kayaking industry in the future.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Running an activity (in my life) for groups of people seeking adventure that have never paddled before is not as easy as most would think. The activity needs to encompass the experiential learning cycle by providing an element requiring physical ability (Sea Kayaking), however that's not necessarily the primary aim of the activity.

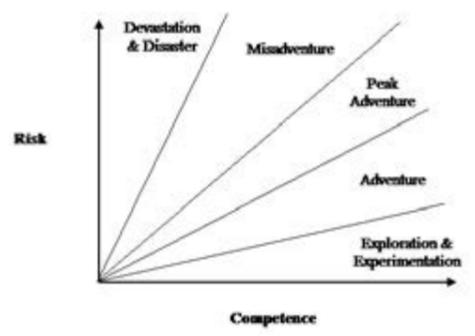
It then needs to have an element of technical skills with demanding and challenging progression so that the activity does not lose its appeal. It then has to be tailored in such a way that it provides the primary focus of the activity, being a psychological conditioning element. Having this element embraces the development of both individual and group qualities such as courage, determination, teamwork, leadership etc. This allows for reflective discussion of the group's experiences during the activity, experiences of fear, anxiety, excitement, accomplishment, etc. This is generally where most people's Johari's Window opens – pun intended.



These can be generalised which then allows participants to apply lessons learnt during the activity to everyday life, work and tasks (big or small). Physical and technical skills merely provide a vehicle for qualities development.

But where's the adventure...?

All of these elements need to be planned into an activity where participants are stimulated with adventure, which is where understanding Mortlock's Adventure Paradigm is useful.



The idea is to provide demanding and challenging progressive skills,

tasks or scenarios with a minimal amount of real risk vs participant competence. Having a small real risk and a participant with not much competence leaves the participant feeling a greater risk or threat than reality. This is called perceived risk, and will have your participant sitting well stimulated at peak adventure. This is what you aim for whilst sitting back comfortably facilitating (with the odd chuckle) from the exploration & experimentation section, maintaining safety and control knowing that the real risk involved is miniscule.

In relation to that, I'm sure everyone's had an experience that they've

looked back upon that had minimal real risk though at the time you may have been pretty scared, or was exceptionally good and you felt part of an in-sync team. Easy to look back and laugh or reminisce now. If you took all those experiences, emotions, controls and applied the lessons learnt to everyday life challenges you might surprise yourself with what you can achieve, or can lead a team to accomplish.

Note: Chuck Murphy works as a sea kayaking leader with a large national organisation. To date he has not sought accreditation as a trip leader with Australian Canoeing or the NSWSKC.



A first timer's day one activity pretty well comprises the following:

- Arrival & Introduction
- Medical brief (threats & treatments pertinent to the activity)
- Adventure brief (concept of the activity aims)
- An icebreaker (to ease nerves)
- Kit sizing & fitting
- Kayak & paddle identification & terminology
- 200m swim in full gear
- Capsize & wet exit drills
- Basic paddle strokes (8)
- Assisted rescues (3)
- Paddle games
- Lunch break
- Safety brief
- Trip and activities (qualities focused) for remainder of the day.
- Debrief once off the water for the night.

MY FIRST CLUB PADDLE

My first experience getting down and dirty with the club began around 8am Saturday 7 February with a sea skills session at the boat ramp, Collaroy basin. With a relatively sunny day and the likes of Owen Kimberley, Hubert Wiest, Mark Fuller, Stephen Reid and the club's editor Steve Hitchcock we kicked the morning off with some introductions, a safety brief and the general outline of proceedings for the day.

We commenced in the sheltered safety of the basin going over various paddle strokes, bracings, capsizes drills and self/assisted rescues. From memory I had a little input into some of the demonstrations and techniques being used and was able to assist Owen with a few demos. Once we'd finished refreshing some drills and getting comfortable on the water we headed over past the ocean pool and into some small surf to practice reading and timing swell, rudder strokes, bracing and bracing techniques, beach landings and kayak safety & procedure in the surf. I got to hand it to the older guys, you did yourselves proud with your surf skills progression that day. I saw some solid broaching and bracing techniques and great patience in timing between sets to get that nice clean paddle out, paddling smarter not harder!!!

After a short break for lunch and coffee Owen decided to up the adrenalin levels and lead the group to a nearby

rock reef, to further apply some surf skills and swell timing. Rocks are bloody awesome; they make even the most relaxed paddlers sit upright almost instantaneously, risk perception, GOLD!!! I think everyone quite enjoyed their time surfing over the small reef break, it made for some spectacular capsizes, great teamwork and conduct of assisted rescues and small tows. Overall a great activity choice to conclude the day with smiles all round.

Thanks for the great day guys much appreciated, looking forward to meeting and paddling with more members. Until then enjoy the last chill of winter adventures, happy paddling!



Chuck playing in the small surf at Collaroy (photo by Steve Hitchcock)

Kayak Innovation III

The Retractable Dog Lead Topping Lift (RDLTL)

NORMAN CARTER

Readers will recall that in the September 2010 issue (Number 80) of the NSW Sea Kayaker I published a description of two kayak innovations. These were "A Hat For All Seasons", and "Combined Practice Violin and Paddle Float".

In this article I present a third innovation with dual functions: "The Retractable Dog Lead Topping Lift".

To aid its widespread acceptance and for the benefit of kayaking in general I will not be seeking to patent this new device. However, those who were there will recall that I gave a talk on this topic at the Bateman's Bay Rock 'n' Roll 2010 in the Gadgets Session. This put the concept in the "Public Domain" and so it is not strictly patentable anyway.

The Retractable Dog Lead Topping Lift (RDLTL)

Many kayakers have enjoyed kayak sailing. Peacefully coasting before a gentle breeze, or hurtling along at 3 knots in a stiff wind leaning on a stern rudder, while going somewhere you want to go (or don't care if you don't) are experiences not to be missed and can be therapeutic.

But to get the sail down while on the water and stow it on deck can be a bit awkward. The main problem is gathering the sail and spars in, in such a way that they go into the right place, quickly. How to get all that 'canvas' under control?

The answer is to fold the boom up flush with the mast with a topping lift before casting off the 'main' halyard and dropping the mast. I have done this by attaching a second halyard to the tip of the boom, running it through loops in the leech of the sail, then through a pulley at the top of the mast, down the mast, through another pulley at the mast step, and then back to the cockpit through eyelets on the deck. Just let go the main sheet, pull on the topping lift and the sail folds up. Easy!

But what to do with the extra rope lying around on the deck and in the cockpit and getting tangled up with things?

Enter the Retractable Dog Lead!

A retractable dog lead (RDL) enables the dog-walker to let the dog loose to a point but pull it back when necessary. The retractable dog

lead has a thumb 'switch' with two positions: (1) 'stop' (or "that's as far as you go"); and (2) 'retract' (dog is pulled in and any loose lead retracts into the handle).

The application to kayak sailing is simple. The retractable dog lead is placed flat on the deck in front of the cockpit, attached to the first two bungees (see Fig. 1). The line from the dog lead is fed through the deck eyelets (these also serve the main sheet and mast halyard) to the mast step, masthead, and to the tip of the boom by way of the loops in the leech of the sail.

To get the sail down again, cast off the main sheet, set the RDL switch to 'retract' and pull on the topping lift halyard. The sail and boom will fold up to the mast and excess line will retract. Then drop the mast. With a little practice you will be able to drop the mast with already folded sail into your hand. Stow the mast/sail under the bungee. Set the switch back to 'stop'.

After paddling unship RDL. Wash RDL in fresh water. Walk dog.



Club Trip Tweets

Not every trip needs a double-page spread and half-a-dozen photos. We think there's merit in sharing some commentary about club paddles, without all the fanfare and glamour that special event trips get.

So with some trepidation about starting something new, this segment here and in future, will highlight some of the other club paddles that you may have missed. Thanks to Mark Alchin for the idea and to Caoimhin Ardren for the segment name.

To all the Sea Leaders out there, please send in your paddle tweets for this segment in Salt 99.



27 / 28 June 2015

Shellharbour to Kiama, and Gerroa to Bare Bluff (Kiama)
Trip Leader: Mark Alchin
Club participants: Joanne Alchin, Bill Thompson / Megan Pryke

5 July 2015

Trip Leader: Caoimhin Ardren
Club participants: Tom Cox, Alison Curtin, Nick Blacklock David McDowell, Geoff Dauncey. Last minute bail-out: Rhys Ward (because he left his paddling trousers at home). Gate crasher: Selim Tezcan (appeared out of the deep dark depths of the cave below Bangally Head).

This was a trip for those who have navigational challenges and could not get on Adrian's navigation training weekend. Paddling in a big circle was the right way to go and got you to the correct end point. Small swell - but the long swell period kept us away from the cliffs and out of the few caves and rock gardens. We launched from Bongin Bongin Bay and paddled north in and out of all the bays, with a tea stop at Palm Beach to discuss the possibilities and virtues of using drones while sea kayaking - anybody want pizza delivery at your next "remote camp site"? A stop for lunch in the sun at Great Mackerel Beach and then an easy paddle back to Winnererremy Bay in Mona Vale. Short car shuffle saw everybody packed up and heading home by 4.30pm. And somewhere around The Basin we lost our gate crasher - but he never signed on so there is no evidence...



Friday 7 August 2015

Team Leader: Stewart Morgan
Club participants: Phil Rose, Geoff Adams, Hans Schmidt, Barry Marshall

Only 4 paddlers turned up at Clontarf on this cold Friday morning, with winter westerly winds blowing, the plan was to paddle down the Harbour hugging the western shore for protection. That was until Barry paddled in. He had arrived early and gone for a paddle upstream where he spotted a young whale, which he thought was a Right Whale. So we paddled into the westerly wind under Spit Bridge just beyond the marina and after a short wait, a small 10 metres long whale surfaced just metres away. It slowly circled our group surfacing a few times and then disappeared. We continued our paddle back down the Harbour to Chowder Bay for morning tea and coffee.

When not sailing, the mast/sail bundle is stowed under the bungee with the switch on 'stop'.



When you want to set sail pull the mast up.



Then move the retractable dog lead switch to 'retract' and pull the boom down into the sailing position by means of the mainsheet. Switch RDL back to 'stop'. Sail away.





Obligatory new members group photo

New Members Paddle

CAMPBELL TILEY

I really enjoyed meeting new club members Kate Wall, David Whitfield, Graeme Thomson, Lara Phillips and Alastair Morris who made it to our welcome paddle in July despite grey skies, mid-winter temperatures and a less than encouraging forecast. None had paddled off flat water before and we embarked from Clontarf for Quarantine, lured by a hot coffee. Impressively, four of them had homemade kayaks!

Conditions got a little bumpy with

rebound off Washaway Beach with one capsize, boosting Alastair along the track to grade 2 with rescue practice. After a welcome hot coffee we headed back into the wind to Clontarf with our new friends testing their limits and learning a little about balance as well as the seaworthiness of kayaks.

The obs showed wind 14 gusting 18 kn and SE swell 1.5m with occasional sets over 2m in the sound. Thanks to Adrian Clayton



Graeme Thomson



Kate Wall & David Whitfield

for helping to pull together another new members paddle and to Shaan and Steve for joining the group as well as cameo appearances from Owen and Michael Steinfeld along the way.

ALASTAIR MORRIS
NEW MEMBER

So now I know what paddling out in a 1.5-2.5m swell looks and feels like. Intimidating at best verging on terrifying at worst - but at the end of the day one of the most exhilarating experiences I have had in a long while. Most of my kayaking has been around Cockatoo Island and Hunters Hill so this first venture out with the club and in more serious conditions was heading into uncharted territory.

Club royalty was on hand to meet the newbies, outline the trip and go through a safety briefing. Sure I had done a safety course practicing a wet exit and two person recovery - seven years ago in the Olympic Park swimming pool! - but things became a little more immediate as I viewed the world from an upside down position somewhere in Middle Harbour courtesy of a wave with my name written on it. Time for a moment of cool I thought, and the water wasn't warm either. I bobbed up, Steve paddled over and the re-entry went well. I guess there is a first time for everything and for sure that won't be the last but I did feel a

lot more confident having one rescue under my belt, skeg, PFD - take your pick.

I missed the pod of dolphins as I was trying to catch up but saw them the next morning from the ferry on the way to Greenwich.

The whole paddle was fantastic and extremely social with the experienced paddlers very keen to teach and pass on their knowledge. On our return to Clontarf I swam my 50m and was signed off as Grade 1 by Adrian who generously took extra time to go through some other

re-entry techniques with me before we went our separate ways. The day exceeded my expectations and provided stories to tell for the rest of the week - as you'd expect the waves became bigger, the wind stronger with each retelling of the tale. I hope to become a regular paddler with the club and look forward to the experiences and friendships it will bring.

A big thanks too all that helped organise the day but especially Campbell and Adrian.



LARA PHILLIPS
NEW MEMBER

As a mother of three grown children and one more reaching high school age, I searched for something that I could do for myself once I finished the crazy morning routine of getting everyone out the door everyday. Something that combined nature, tranquility and fitness...what about kayaking? So off I went to purchase my first kayak.

I spent many mornings paddling and splashing around the spit bridge with no intention of ever heading out the "other way" towards Manly.

Three kayaks later and a member of the NSW Sea Kayak Club talking me into joining the club, I found myself on my first paddle with the

club doing what I said I would never do; paddling to Manly! We went with a group of very experienced club members and the not so experienced first timers, and to my surprise, I found the experience incredible. My nervousness was immediately addressed and I felt safe and confident that I was never in any danger.

I am so glad I took that first step and joined the club as I now have a new hobby and the expertise of the senior members has given me the courage to venture outside the flat waters of The Spit Bridge.

Thank you to the members who made my day possible. I look forward to future adventures.

FREE SPRAYDECK!

Courtesy of Electric Water, we are giving away a free spraydeck to the NSWSKC member who sends in the best justification for needing a new spraydeck. Electric Water custom-build spraydecks to suit all kayakers and all paddlers. Pictured here is a spraydeck that fits a Mirage with a large tube. Electric Water will custom make a deck to fit the winner.

Conditions of entry are:

1. One entry per member.
2. Submission must be 100 words or less.
3. One photo may accompany your entry.
4. Must be member's own words and photo of member's own spraydeck.
5. Must be submitted to the editor by 31 October 2015.
6. Editor's decision is final.
7. Winner will be announced and submissions/photos published in Salt #99.



www.electricwater.com.au
spraydecks@gmail.com

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P O Box 424, Dingley Village, Vic 3172

Oandora Maiden Voyage

ROBERT BYRNE

I recently joined and had my first paddle with the Friday Oandora group. Although I have had my kayak several years, I'm a bit of a novice with my paddling experiences confined to closed waters.

I met Owen Kimberly and the Oandora Group one Friday when I was attempting to land a small rowing dingy (with my 11 year old daughter on board) on Seven Shillings Beach, Double Bay. The group of 7 or 8 kayakers were already on the beach. A few waves were hitting the beach from the wash of a large boat and I was standing just off the shore waiting for them to subside, when the kayakers waded into the water, picked up the dingy, (with my daughter and I on board) carried it on the beach and placed it gently on the sand.

I noticed the well fitted out kayakers and the very professionally kitted out kayakers, and was very impressed. I asked them where they had paddled from, and Bill replied nonchalantly; just "south of Newcastle". Another kayaker explained that they had paddled from Clontarf ("... via Newcastle", added Bill). I expressed interest in paddling with the group to which Bill replied, "you'll never keep up with us in your rowing dingy".

I explained that my other boat was a Boreal Design Baffin Island Sea Kayak. Owen said I was welcome to come for a paddle but that I should join the NSW Sea Kayak Club and register for the e-mail list for the 'Oandora' Group.

Soon after, I watched the group expertly relaunch off the beach and paddle off in a north-easterly direction, three of the kayakers expertly hoisting tiny folded sails off their fore decks, taking advantage of the southerly breeze. I joined the club on-line that night and got myself on the Oandora email list.

Owen circulates an email to club members on the Oandora list every Thursday afternoon advising of the meeting point for the Friday paddle (usually 9.00am at Clontarf or Little Manly Beach), together with the BOM forecast and other useful information. The paddling destination is usually discussed with the group on the beach that Friday morning, after a final appraisal of with the conditions, group numbers and experience.

My first paddle with the Oandora group was on Friday 8th of May. There were 15 other paddlers that

be paddling to Freshwater Beach, probably doing surf landings, then over to Shelly Beach for coffee, before coming back through the Heads to Little Manly. I had never paddled into the ocean and I have never done a surf landing.

Before leaving the beach, Owen explained that there would be a number of waypoints where the group would wait for stragglers such as myself to catch up. Paddle signals and other basic safety information were also explained. I was reassured by the vast array of safety gear, toe ropes, emergency pumps, etc which were being packed into/strapped onto the kayaks.

As we paddled off to North Head, one of the group, Ken paddled alongside and started talking to

telling me that all the other paddlers were looking out for me and that at least two of the group had paddled Bass Strait. "Don't worry, just enjoy yourself.... We've all been there." Bill paddled up and told me that I had absolutely nothing to worry about. "We are all prepared for anything, and the best thing to happen would be for something to go wrong - that way we can all practice our rescue techniques." The good humour helped me to relax and enjoy the paddle.

Once outside North Head, the sea was calmer and a gentle southerly swell helped the little fleet on its way to Freshwater Beach. The group assembled just outside the surf zone and made preparation for one-at-a-time calculated landings onto the beach. There was no shortage of very useful advice from

paddle blade out towards the ocean to prevent broaching. I was one of the last to land and apparently did a fairly good job. I didn't manage to out-paddle the second set of waves, but they were small and I managed to surf onto the beach without broaching. Apparently somebody got some really good photos...

We all managed to safely relaunch from Freshwater Beach and started to paddle over to Shelly Beach for a well-earned coffee break. On the way over, Barry explained the finer points of launching off the beach using the calmer waters of the rip to make it comfortably and safely back out to sea.

Some of the group took advantage of a very nice surf break on the reef north of Shelly Beach to surf their kayaks. Some of them even

capsized and used the opportunity to practice wet exits, and one and two man rescues. Mark explained that it was a very safe surfing opportunity as the waves carried you into deep water making it less chance of bumping your head if you happen to come out.

The Oandora group has a wealth of experience which they are only too happy to share. They are a great bunch of people. Everybody looks out for everyone else and there is a fantastic sense of camaraderie. I had such a tremendous sense of accomplishment upon returning to Little Manly. We had paddled over 20 km that day, I had paddled in the ocean and had safely landed and relaunched off a surf beach. I can't wait for my next paddle!



day. The forecast was for, "south-westerly winds 15 to 20 knots becoming westerly 15 to 20 knots in the evening. Seas 1 to 2 metres, decreasing below 1 metre during the morning. 1st swell – southerly around 1 metre, increasing to 2 to 2 metres during the morning. 2nd swell – easterly around 1 metre. Weather mostly sunny". I was a little apprehensive when Owen explained that morning on Little Manly Beach that the group would

me. Ken took it upon himself to stay close to me for much of the trip, providing encouragement and even valuable tips to correct my paddle stroke, thanks Ken! I mentioned that I was a bit nervous about going into the ocean and Ken provided reassurance telling me to trust in my boat and keep up a steady paddle rate. I found the messy swell reflecting off the North Head cliffs to be quite challenging. Ken gave me more reassurance

Barry, Matt and others. The waves were coming in sets of three or four with a short break in between. I noticed how the other paddlers had waited for a set to pass, paddling furiously on the back of the last wave in an attempt to make the beach before the arrival of the next set of waves. I was told that if I didn't make it to the beach before the arrival of the next set of waves that I was to surf the waves, leaning into the wave with the

Clayton's Kangaroo Valley for the Unemployed

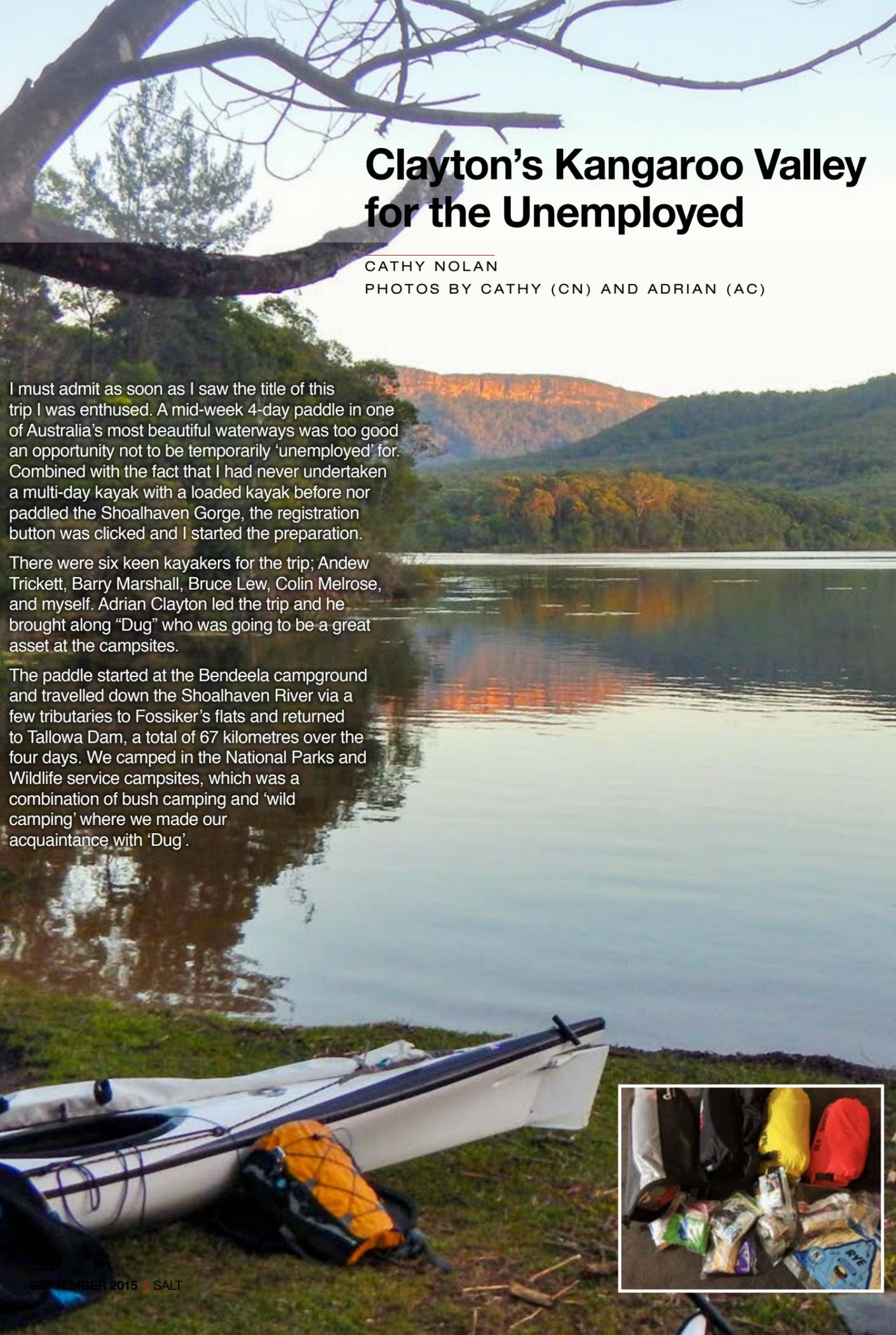
CATHY NOLAN

PHOTOS BY CATHY (CN) AND ADRIAN (AC)

I must admit as soon as I saw the title of this trip I was enthused. A mid-week 4-day paddle in one of Australia's most beautiful waterways was too good an opportunity not to be temporarily 'unemployed' for. Combined with the fact that I had never undertaken a multi-day kayak with a loaded kayak before nor paddled the Shoalhaven Gorge, the registration button was clicked and I started the preparation.

There were six keen kayakers for the trip; Andrew Trickett, Barry Marshall, Bruce Lew, Colin Melrose, and myself. Adrian Clayton led the trip and he brought along "Dug" who was going to be a great asset at the campsites.

The paddle started at the Bendeela campground and travelled down the Shoalhaven River via a few tributaries to Fossickers flats and returned to Tallowa Dam, a total of 67 kilometres over the four days. We camped in the National Parks and Wildlife service campsites, which was a combination of bush camping and 'wild camping' where we made our acquaintance with 'Dug'.



Day 1: Bendeela camp ground to NPWS "Easy Landing" campsite, 13kms, Bushcamp

The plan was to travel from Sydney and arrive at the Bendeela campground by 12.30pm for a rendezvous with Adrian, Barry & Bruce who had driven to Tallowa Dam and car-pooled to Bendeela. Well that was the plan! A fatality in Kangaroo Valley that morning, saw Colin, myself and Andrew on a 1½ hour diversion back through Kiama when we were just 17 km out of Kangaroo Valley, making our arrival time some 2 hours later. By this stage 20-25 knot winds were gusting up the river. After some discussion on whether we could paddle against these winds in time to reach the 'Easy Landing' campsite by dusk, we decided to give it a go and if we didn't reach the half way point 1½ hours in we would turn back and camp at Bendeela for the night. My best laid plans of a leisurely pack of the kayak and time to make sure I

had a balanced boat went out of the window and instead a speedy pack (with the help of the team) while trying to keep the dust out of the hatches was the best I could do.

I think we managed to pack, park cars and launch within 30 minutes. By this stage, there was spray coming off the water as the gusts reached 30 knots. This was going to be challenging. We launched and stayed close to shore while Adrian and Barry did a reconnaissance to find the leeward side. As a result we paddled as fast as we could in the lull and holding in the gusts. Personally I found it quite challenging but I did find the strategy of just holding in the gusts and paddling in the lull, saved energy and you did get in a rhythm. It also gave us an opportunity to try some different formations, like horse-tailing and the "V" so I could have less exposure to the gusts and take advantage of drag. All in all we made good time, the wind had died down a little at the halfway point and we carried on. Wet and tired we reached the "Easy Landing Campsite" and it didn't disappoint. Scenically beautiful, quiet, bush loo and some wood left from previous campers for the campfire, was a welcome prize for our efforts. We quickly got dry (well except for Barry who went for a swim in the 15 degree water), put up our tents and set in for the night. It is no surprise it was an early night for us all. Some gentle snoring was the only sound to be heard all night.



Day 2: "Easy Landing" to Bundanoon Creek campsite via 3km up unnamed creek and return. 19km, Wildcamp.

Fortunately the wind died down overnight and we woke to a clear, calm and sunny morning. Today we would venture into some of the tributaries of the Shoalhaven which had been formed when land close to the edge of the Shoalhaven was flooded to make the Dam. We breakfasted, packed the kayaks, did our warm-up pre-kayak stretches (always a must when you camp with a physio), then headed up towards Beehive Point where we entered a tributary that was like a tree graveyard. It was eerily majestic, with lots of cormorants perched on the dead branches. We followed this creek for about 3km, avoiding the many stumps just under the surface, until nearing the end where the old roadway rises above the water. We turned back and stopped at Beehive Point for morning tea, before heading to Bundanoon Creek.

We stayed at the campsite at the end of Bundanoon creek. Great campsite, white sand, easy launching and storage for the kayaks, a few smooth rocks to navigate through to make it interesting plus a pleasant walk down the creek to waterfalls (20 minutes).

Opposite: Easy landing
Inset: Packing my bags
Left: Barry after his swim
Below: Map of Kangaroo Valley
All photos by CN





Above: Andrew paddling Bundanoon Creek - AC
Inset: Inquisitive possum - CN
Below: Andrew paddling through the Tree Graveyard - CN

Beware the campsite does contain very friendly and opportunistic possums, who were very crafty at sending in decoys to where we were sitting around the campfire, while other's found any open tent with food and had themselves a little party. Now I am not sure what biscuits Adrian had in his tent, but they liked his the best and made frequent visits throughout the course of the night despite Barry's repeated attempts to deter them all away. I don't think the possums (or us watching) had had so much fun in ages.

Day 3: Bundanoon Creek campsite downstream to the Kangaroo River and Tallowa Dam. Upstream on the Shoalhaven River through the Shoalhaven Gorge to just short of Fossickers Flats, 24kms, Wildcamp

Today's paddle through the Shoalhaven gorge was well anticipated by us all and it didn't disappoint. A leisurely paddle out of Bundanoon Creek was followed by a mid-morning stop at Tallowa Dam to refresh and fill up with water, however the signs said the water

wasn't for drinking, so we decided we had enough to get us by for the next 24 hours. Spending some time at Tallowa Dam is very well worth while, especially taking a walk to the dam wall to see the rapids of the Lower Shoalhaven River and the ingenious fish lift that carries spawning fish, in a lift, over the dam wall and releases them into the upper Shoalhaven. Amazing engineering. The fish return into the lower Shoalhaven, via the spillway, which is coated with a 'slippery' coating and deep pond to make their landing more comfortable!

The journey from Tallowa Dam into the Upper Shoalhaven is well marked with a series of buoys deterring you from making a wrong turn towards the spillway. The trip takes you through the gorge, which is flanked by the Morton National Park on each side. As you enter the gorge you pass Herbert Buttress, Double Terrace Point and Hoddles Cliff on the left and Monarch Bluff and Bullan Buttress on the right. Half way



through is a natural amphitheatre that has incredible acoustics. It seemed like there were hundreds of bellbirds calling out in succession. I think we were all in a trance as we craned upwards to take in the dramatic escarpments, forest and blue sky. The water was like a millpond, reflecting mirror images of rocks, trees and ridges.

We stopped for lunch, then continued up the Shoalhaven to just short of Fossiker's flats. Beware if you go for a look this far down as it becomes shallow quickly. Andrew unexpectedly docked himself on a rock, which was fortunate for the rest of us behind him with fibreglass and Kevlar boats. Colin and Bruce ventured further into the flats where I believe there were some 'fun' little rapids to play in. After ensuring Andrew had left only gelcoat on the rock we returned to the campsite area which is about 3km from Fossiker's flats where there were four to choose from. Aesthetics and ease of landing/access were our key criteria, so we chose our site (the one opposite Grey's Point) collected wood (which was a bit lacking this time), dried off and we settled in for the night, once again with the possums and the free entertainment.

Day 4: Campsite to Tallowa Dam pull-out, 11kms, 50 minute paddle (for some)

After another leisurely morning, and everyone doing their exercises without prompting, we headed back to Tallowa Dam. A moderate wind behind us of around 10-13 knots, saw the faster paddlers complete the 11km paddle in around 55 minutes. It was a treat to travel back up the gorge another time as like everything, you notice a lot of features you didn't see the first time round. We arrived at Tallowa Dam around 10.30am. Barry & I stayed at the Dam and unpacked the kayaks while Bruce, Adrian and Colin, picked up their cars and returned (via the Kangaroo Valley pie shop - highly recommended). The timing was great as Barry & I had just finished unloading and drying everything out as they returned, so it was a quick and easy pack of gear back into the cars. After another visit to the pie shop for coffee, we all returned back to Sydney.

Clockwise from top: Colin (CN), Campsite L-R Andrew, Bruce, Colin (AC), Adrian and Dug (CN), Cathy and Bruce (AC).



The Newcastle, Sydney, Wollongong (a.k.a “NSW”) Coastal Sea Kayak Challenge



MEGAN PRYKE
CHALLENGE COORDINATOR

The state of New South Wales is often abbreviated to “NSW”. Three of the key population areas, organised from north to south, are the coastal cities of Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong. Amongst the many millions of people who live near this coast, I have not completely explored this coast by sea kayak. I enjoy paddling with others and therefore decided to seek out interest in making a club challenge. I am very pleased that fellow trip leaders have so willingly put up their hand to help provide the opportunity for members to work towards completing for them themselves with this small section of the “NSW” coast by sea kayak.

The goal is for the club collectively to cover this section of coast with a series of approximately ten different paddles of around 25 to 30kms over the period of a year between Newcastle and Wollongong. Allowing for wiggle factor the total all up paddling distance could be up to 300km depending on conditions and accessibility of landing and launch points. There should be approximately one trip per month with trips scheduled not to clash with school holiday traffic or Rock ‘n’ Roll.

At the time of writing trips completed are:

1. Long Reef to Clifton Gardens: 11 of July 2015 with 13 participants.
2. Newcastle to Swansea and Swansea to Nora Head – 8-9 Aug 2015, with 9 participants.

Upcoming trips:

3. Watsons Bay to Frenchmans Bay, Scheduled 5 Sept 2015
4. Terrigal to Ettalong - Scheduled 18 Oct 2015
5. Bundeena to Coledale - Scheduled 31 Oct to 1 Nov 2015 - overnight

The final three legs being Nora Head to Terrigal, Pittwater (Palm Beach) to Long Reef and Coledale to Wollongong are to be scheduled in 2016. So keep your eye out on the club trip calendar.

N.S.W. Challenge - Trip 1 Collaroy to Clifton Gardens

TOM COX

On Saturday morning 11th July 2015, eleven of us met on the beach at Collaroy to commence the inaugural paddle of the NSWKC N.S.W. Challenge. We had done the requisite car shuffle and were ready to hit the water. An Antarctic Vortex was promised for the following day; but today the weather gods were with us. The sky was clear, the sun was shining, there was a one metre southerly swell at around nine seconds, and light winds (five knots and less) from the northwest. The water was delightfully clear and around 18 degrees. Benign conditions indeed! Fernando, our fearless leader and ably assisted by Matt Bezzina, briefed us on the trip, and talked about Long Reef, which we would soon have to navigate. We would paddle out some distance to go around the reef. We launched at low tide. Fernando, a stickler for correct Club protocol, insisted that we wear helmets for our launch through the 20 cm waves that dawdled in to shore.

We paddled out beyond the end of the reef, and then started on a long arc southeast, gradually travelling further and further from land. Fernando had paddled with whales and dolphins 4 km out the day before for a couple of kilometres, so perhaps it was this and the calm seas that inspired him to keep taking us further. After 3.5 km



Fernando, our fearless leader

of paddling, a humpback surfaced a couple of times about 50 metres in front of us, then disappeared from sight. We kept paddling southeast until we were about 5 km off Freshwater. All the while we were passing the various beaches that we usually saw from closer quarters. What joy, surrounded by the vast expanse of sea and sky!

We turned and headed southwest until we rejoined the coast just past Blue Fish Point. We made our way south, playing at the base of the cliffs. Throughout the day Fernando displayed his legendary love of rock garden adventuring, following surges over reefs, making his way through slots, and bouncing around in the wash at the base of cliffs. Some followed, with measured caution.

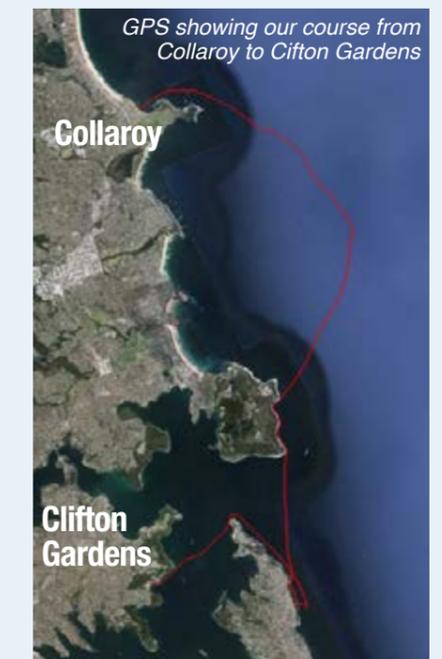
Deciding that a paddle straight to our destination would be too short, we paddled from North Head to Macquarie Lighthouse, and on past The Gap to Diamond Bay. Here seals lolled on rocks at the base of the cliffs. We rafted up some distance away, and had picnicked on the water. Nearby, great clouds of gulls whirled and turned and settled again on

the water, picnicking with their fishy friends below.

After our lunch afloat, we turned and headed to South Head. We learnt a new route around South Head, watching Fernando as he caught the swell that carried him over the reef and safely through to the other side. The rest of us took the long way round. We headed down past Lady Jane, crossed the Harbour at Sow and Pigs, and pressed on to Clifton Gardens. We had covered 25 km, and loved every moment of it. After we washed down our kayaks and packed up, Fernando invited everyone to a stretching session on the grass. For a great day on the water, big thanks Fernando and Matt!



Humpback whale



GPS showing our course from Collaroy to Clifton Gardens

N.S.W. Challenge - Trip 2

Norah Head to Newcastle

MARK CLARKSON

The second and most northerly of the NSW Challenge trips, Newcastle to Norah Head, was staged for the weekend of 8th-9th August and was planned with great attention to detail as is Adrian's usual style. On the Wednesday before the weekend we were all set to go with a forecast of lightish winds, manageable swell and tide calculations for put in and destination points all favourable. Adrian even went to the trouble of working out to the nearest 15 mins which cars would be meeting at Norah Head & Horseshoe Beach Newcastle, who would be giving lifts to who, which cars get shuttled on the Saturday night and much the same again for the Sunday.

Everyone knew exactly what the plan was except for the weather!

By Thursday evening the wind forecast had changed to a 15-20 knots southerly with 2-2.5m swell from the southeast. Therefore the trip direction was changed to go south to north and the entire car arrangements had to be recalculated.

Adrian, Alan Tracey, Megan Pryke, Michael Taylor, Deb Cuneen, Steve Hitchcock Bruce Lew, Fernando Charnis and myself all arrived at the Bald Street car park at Norah Head by 9am on Saturday as planned. The local "old boys" Central Coast surfers were out in force already surfing a well-formed break in the bay so parking was quite scarce. Adrian did his final float plan checks with the Norah Head Coastguard, which took 20 minutes or so while the rest of us

were waiting on the water (except for Fernando of course who was riding the break with local surfers). I did consider joining him, but considering the size of the wave and my fully laden boat I thought it might not end too well. By the time Adrian joined us we were a good 500m on the way to Swansea without doing any paddling, which was an indication of what the wind was going to be doing that day.

We headed north up the coast on a line just to the inside of Bird Island. The swell was forecast to have a long period of 15 seconds or so, but the wind waves were masking this and following waves were much more frequent. Fernando and Michael had kayaks equipped with sails and decided to take advantage of the following wind.



Top left: Megan about to leave Flat Rock Beach. The sky and beach belie the real conditions further out.
Top right: Challenging conditions



Michael hadn't done much sailing with the Nordkapp and found himself to be the victim of the messy conditions even before we reached Bird Island. Fernando was there to assist Michael back into the boat, after which he decided (with some vocal support from Adrian!) that the conditions weren't suited to sailing and he reverted to the hard work of paddling like the rest of us. Now totally wet, keeping warm was Michael's next challenge. We all rounded the more protected westerly side of Bird Island except for "you know who" who was zig zagging his way northwards still under sail and opted to take the easterly side. The next feature on our route was Wybung Point, which has a reputation for being a bit gnarly when the swell is up so we headed out to sea to give it a wide berth.

Further out at sea we kept away from the local disturbances off Wybung Point and so on, but were still fully exposed to the wind and quartering seas. There wasn't the usual chitchat and mini grouping that you usually find on a club trip. Instead, everyone was concentrating on keeping an eye out for that rogue wave that swamps your back deck when you expect it least and keeping good separation to avoid surfing

into one another. We had the 'come to me' signal from Adrian at regular intervals to count stock and inform everyone where we were heading to next. It was at one of these gatherings that I overheard a couple of fellow paddlers saying that these conditions were the most challenging they had encountered. Adrian retorted "Well, it isn't called the NSW Challenge for nothing you know!"

Our next plan was to land at a sheltered beach for lunch if possible. Catherine Hill Bay was identified as the most likely spot to find protection from the wind and swell. However, we found a sheltered beach landing behind Flat Rock Point, which is just south of Catherine Hill Bay. We all made it through the surf OK with the exception of Bruce who found himself side on to the surf with his rudder up. He was only in a few feet of water so it was an easy task to walk the boat back to the beach. We all put on our cags and found a spot at the back of the beach sheltered from the wind by the bushes. It was a welcome break to have lunch and a hot drink and even quite pleasant when the sun came out.

We calculated that we'd covered about 15kms and had 10 to go to our campsite at Swansea. We all



Mutton-birds

headed off with Moon Island off Swansea Heads as our next target. Conditions remained just as challenging so Fernando decided it would be a good time to practice rolling with his sail

up! I believe the first attempt worked but the sea claimed its second sail victim soon after. We all stopped a while to watch Fernando get out of his predicament with a cowboy re-entry. I'm sure an assisted rescue was offered, but the DIY option was chosen.

An interesting wildlife encounter occurred on the way when we paddled straight though a huge gathering of mutton-birds. I have no idea why they were all congregated on that patch of sea. They just seemed to be 'hanging out together' rather than looking for food. Anyhow, it was mutton-bird

mayhem for a few minutes as they all took to the wing when we gate-crashed their party.

By the time we were on the final approach to Moon Island we were all somewhat weary and looking forward to the comforts of the campsite. However, it wasn't going to be that easy. We could see several bommies going off and the channel between the island and mainland was affected by rebound that created steep waves and white water. Fernando went to investigate and returned with the "no go" answer that was received with unenthusiastic groans by several fellow paddlers. Personally,



sail coming out of the sunset which meant he'd gone through the channel solo.

Fortunately for us there was a strong incoming tidal current that helped us down the Swansea



Channel. On the way to the camp ground we gathered together and Adrian informed us that Fernando had left his car in Swansea and was able to give a few of us a lift back to our cars at Norah Head. We could then drive the cars back to Swansea, which had two advantages. Firstly, we'd have less distance to cover for the car shuttling on Sunday

and secondly we could pack our camping gear in the cars instead of having to lug it all the way to Newcastle on Sunday – what a bonus! Adrian was feeling pretty chuffed with his organisational skills until I pointed out that

if he'd let us know at the start we could have left the camping gear in the cars and wouldn't have had to carry it today either. Steve added that we could have driven to a restaurant for dinner too! Adrian gave his now universal reply that it wouldn't be called a "challenge" if it were that easy... We'd covered 32kms at the end of the day and our average speed was ~6.3km/h including stoppages. The car pick-ups went to plan and the camp ground was comfortable. We even had our own en-suite shower/amenity cabin with white towels provided. Not bad for a \$10 camp fee.



Clockwise from top left: Our uber relaxed leader, Adrian; Debbie looking extremely relaxed; Michael, our determined sailor; Alan posing casually for the photo; Bruce taking it easy

I had no problem with doing the extra kilometres because a weary paddler capsizing in the channel ran the risk of washing up on the rocks, which just wasn't a risk worth taking. There were multiple rocks and reefs off the north and eastern side of Moon Island that were going off non-stop so we had to give the island quite a wide berth. About three quarters of the way around I spotted Fernando's tell-tale orange

Sunday 9th

Good fortune smiled on us again and the tide was now outgoing at a fair lick to help us out of the channel. We stopped at a small beach at the entrance to the channel where we were welcomed by a seal that was just 'chilling out' as they do. After a short break and trip briefing we headed out to sea and northwards at 10am. We still had fair size long period swells behind us but the wind had abated somewhat overnight so the going was more relaxed. Blacksmiths was a long beach with heavy surf and dunes behind scarred with 4WD tracks, so we pushed on. We set out on a heading for Redhead Point, which according to the map, had a reef/bommy about half way along. The only evidence of this was elevated swells for a short time but no breaks.

From the sea it was evident where Redhead got its name from. The red cliffs were pretty impressive. Despite being a few hundred metres off the coast, the effect of the rebound off the rocky shore between Redhead and Dudley was very evident. It upped the ante of what had been a pretty relaxed paddle to that point. Our plan was to land in the lee of the rocky outcrop on the southern side of Glenrock Beach. Adrian went ahead to check it out, but at this stage the swell was fairly easterly and was pummeling the beach. Landing for lunch was not an option. We continued towards our destination and the surf off Merewether Beach was pretty dramatic. The long period swells produced an impressive display of white spray as they hit the rocks.

We stopped for lunch off Bar Beach under the watchful eyes of dozens of sightseers on the new Anzac Memorial Bridge. There weren't any whales around so all

binoculars were focused on us enjoying our lunch! We did see a seal that was looking very much like an ornate piece of driftwood bobbing on the swells. When I got close it woke from its theatrical slumber and torpedoed under my kayak. A dolphin also emerged very close to Adrian off Newcastle beach and again off Nobby's Beach. We were all looking out in the distance for its next appearance when Michael spotted it through the clear water, darting directly under his kayak. We gave the breaking waves at Newcastle breakwater a bit of room and then headed on the last leg to our destination, Horseshoe Beach. Once again we were in luck with the tidal current in

our favour. That was a consistent feature of this trip; wind and water always behind us.

Day 2 was also a 32 km day and our pace was much the same as Saturday's trip.

These two legs of the NSW Challenge lived up to their name's sake, but overcoming the challenges set by the wind and sea is in itself a satisfying experience. We constantly assessed the conditions and adjusted our strategy so the whole group reached our destinations on time and safe and sound. Many thanks to Adrian, Megan & Fernando for leading the trip.

*Top: Anzac Memorial Bridge, Newcastle
Bottom: Group photo L-R: Debbie, Adrian, Michael (seated), Bruce, Mark, Alan, Megan and shadow Steve*



Bouncy Beecroft

MEGAN PRYKE

Paddlers: Nick Blacklock, Ilija Ilcesin, Garry Mansfield, Peter Murphy, Dragomir Pejic, Megan Pryke

Saturday's forecast: BOM coastal Illawarra: Northerly winds 15 to 20 knots reaching 25 knots south of Point Perpendicular in the afternoon. Seas increasing from 1 to 1.5m to 1.5 to 2 metres in the afternoon. Seabreeze.com.au indicated that winds at Point Perpendicular would be NNE building up from 11am reaching 22 knots in the afternoon. Swell forecast southerly 1.5m.

Sunday's forecast: NNE winds of 15 to 20 knots and a continuing 1.5m southerly swell.

I chose this weekend for a Beecroft trip due to the tides. A lowish tide at Hammerhead Point would help make those pesky rocks more visible. At the end of the day we would glide in on a rising high tide up a creek allowing us finish the last few hundred metres on foot. However, we decided with the wind forecast and the car resources to ditch the eight kilometre head wind battle at the end of the day, thus missed the Hammerhead surf launch and the creek paddle which shortened the trip and deleted the a surf launch.

We camped at Honeymoon Bay, arriving Friday pm at various times. On Saturday we launched from Currarong, which allowed Ilija the chance to get a pre-paddle coffee. Near Gum Getters point we got out of our kayaks for a leg stretch. By 1030am we were back on the water again saying hello to the Drum and Drumstick resident seals enroute.

The rebounding southerly swell combined with a strengthening tailwind created lively sea paddling south of Lammond Head, the occasional runner was caught as we zipped past tall sandstone cliffs. We admired from the sea side the grand Cathedral Cave, which is like two large archways set at right angles to each other. Light spilled through ceiling gap between the archways highlighting the occasional white foam of broken wild waves driven by the southerly swell. The water was crystal clear, the sky was blue, we had a tailwind and no Blue Bottles. It could not get much better!

Once around Point Perpendicular (Pt. Pep) there was enough sting taken out of the swell to explore caves and rocky coastline to the north east of Pt. Pep. We were also sheltered from the strengthening northerly wind. We explored a tunnel, which Nick located, passing through at least twice each. We landed for lunch at Boat Harbour as the northerly wind continued to intensify. Target Beach was a target for the dominant swell, we paddled past noting the flowing white manes and booming sound of barreling waves. Once around Bombora Rock we go the full brunt of the wind, though we pushed through without too much drop in average speed. We arrived back at Honeymoon Bay by 2:30pm. On a late afternoon walk



Heading out of Honeymoon Bay on day 2: Dragomir, Ilija, Pete, Garry and Megan

Nick, Dragomir and I admired Target Beach's wave sets from the shore, the occasional larger set closed out almost the entire length of the beach. The translucent curling, crests were nice to look at from the beach when you don't have to deal with them in a sea kayak.

On Sunday we set out on a second sea kayak visit to the area near Target Beach. We were on water by 7:30am aiming to return by 11am. This time the "Tunnel Cave" had an extra obstacle due to the tide being lower. We spent more time exploring this area compared to yesterday. It was mostly protected from the swell and the refracted swell that did reach us only made the paddling more enjoyable.

Once again it was a head wind for a three kilometre stretch to Honeymoon Bay though we were all pretty charged up with energy and felt it was a small price to pay for the privilege of visiting such a great coastline.

Garry exploring the scenic coast near Target Beach

Sydney to Ballina

June 2015

BARRY MARSHALL



This trip was a continuation of my exploration of the NSW coastline, having already covered the coast from Sydney to Victoria over three previous trips. I had very little idea of how far I could go in the 16 days that I had before I was booked on the XPT train from Ballina back to Sydney. I had 3 options as pull-out points on the way; Forster, where I knew a few people; Woolgoolga, where my Aunt Dor has a holiday house and Ballina, where my brother, Geoff lives. Going alone was something that was really forced on me as, whenever I mentioned the trip amongst the 'Oandora' group of Friday paddlers, an awkward silence would descend on the group, with distant stares and the shuffling of feet (I think it may have had something to do with my last attempt of crossing Bass Strait which involved an unplanned stopover on Curtis Island) and besides, I consoled myself, it would give me the confidence of being able to abandon any companion in trouble and save my own skin, if ever the need arose!

The week prior to my planned departure was wet and stormy so I put it off for a week, hoping for better conditions.

Tuesday, 23 June 2015 (29kms)

My daughter drove me down to Fishermans Beach in Collaroy with all my gear and a friend who worked over the road came down to see me off. It was warm with a light northerly on a small swell. I set off at 9:15, pulled into Palm Beach for lunch and arrived at Maitland Bay at 2:15 to set up camp. I like a short day on the first day just to relax and sort out any problems that may arise.

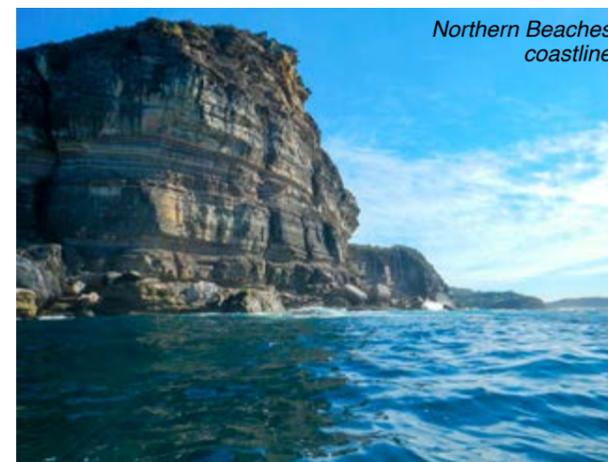
Wednesday, 24th (53kms)

I was up at first light and on the water at 7:45. The conditions were very similar to the previous day with the wind shifting more to the west. Very pretty Toowoan Bay for lunch and on to Moonee Beach, between Frazer Park and Catherine Hill Bay, arriving at 4:30 for the night - bright waxing moon. I learned a lesson this night, and that is, don't make

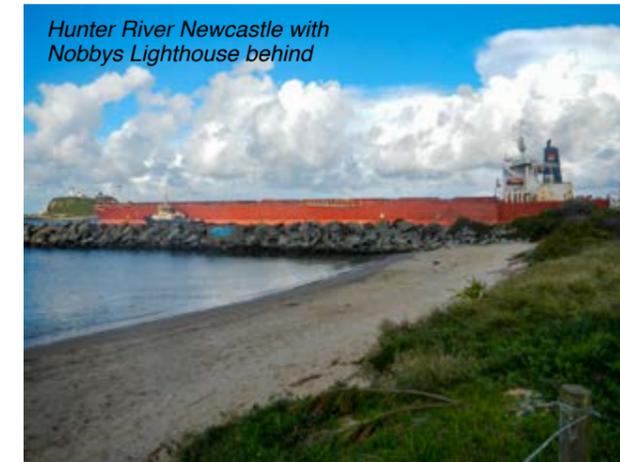
fires on a base of pumice stone. The trapped gases explode like popcorn!

Thursday, 25th (38 kms)

Launched at 7:35 and enjoyed the beautiful, rocky coastline up to Dudley Beach where I pulled in for lunch. I met a kayaker at Red Head, just before Dudley Beach, who reckoned it was a couple of hours paddling from Newcastle to Birubi Beach at the northern end of Stockton Beach. He must have been some paddler as it is 30 kilometres as the crow flies! Although the surf was small, I got hit pretty hard on the way out (enough to rearrange some of the gear on my deck), so I made a mental note not to be so blasé about even small surf in future. The wind was getting up a bit as I rounded the reef at the southern entrance to the Hunter River. The coal carrying ships, which are constantly coming and going are amazing to watch, with barely any margin for error in the narrow waterway. Helicopters would land



Northern Beaches coastline



Hunter River Newcastle with Nobbys Lighthouse behind

on the ships to convey the local pilots to and from port and four tugs would ease the monsters in and out to sea.

That afternoon, before I'd even pitched my tent, a storm hit from the south-west. I sat under my makeshift lean-to on the small beach on the northern side of the river as a massive electrical storm swept through creating flash flooding in and around the Hunter. It was the brightest and loudest storm I'd ever been in! By nine it had stopped so I got to pitch my tent and put my head down.

Friday, 26th (48 kms)

On my way by 7:45 - out through the river into a grey, overcast day with a strong south-easterly wind. For the first time I got to use my sail and, sailing as close to the wind as possible, I made for Anna Bay. The seas were up and messy. For a while I aimed for the hills, which form a backdrop to Anna Bay until I realised that the point (further to the east) around which I had to paddle wasn't an island. The seas were pounding the coast and, along with the four-wheel drive enthusiasts, it would have been a last resort to land and camp along Stockton. In the distance I could see a juvenile humpback breaching clear out of the water – its last breach that I saw being about 50 metres in front of me. Eventually, after a rather grueling paddle, I pulled into the wonderful refuge of Boat Harbour at 12:30 for lunch.

I set out at 1:30 for the short paddle to Fingal after lunch and went wide to approach the northern, more protected side around the reefs, arriving at 3:20. In the lee of the point I saw a potential campsite on a tiny protected beach, which it proved to be. It was perfect! Stunning scenery looking over to Port Stephens.

Saturday, 27th (53 kms)

I squeezed out of the beach at low tide at 7:50 and headed for Yacaaba Headland on the northern

side of the entrance to Port Stephens, so as to eventually be able to use my sail in the brisk sou-wester. After passing the headland I paddled to the western side of Cabbage Tree Island and found I had company – two large paddling out-riggers were out from Port Stephens racing around the island – it was strange to see anyone else out at sea.

After rounding the island I set sail for Broughton Island. Approaching the island, in perfect conditions, I was passed by a police launch and, on rounding Looking Glass Isle, found another police launch and two Marine Rescue vessels along with the Westpac helicopter! Landing at 10:40 I lunched in the cove and watched as the helicopter repeatedly swept around Little Broughton Island. I talked to a marine rescue bloke on the beach who said a boat had capsized. I asked him, thinking he may know, what the passage was like between Broughton and little Broughton Islands. "No problems, just be careful of fishermen and divers".

I had planned to spend the night there but conditions were so good that I decided to head for Seal Rocks. I left at 12:00 and I paddled around to Little Broughton and had trouble even seeing a passage between them – the passage is big enough for one kayak at a time to squeeze through. As I was studying the passage, inching ever closer, I sensed something behind me and turned to see a two-foot wave about to break. Well, I back paddled for all I was worth and scrambled through it, the next one, and a bigger one behind that which carried me forward having already broken. It was too late to consider

retreating so on I went through the chink in the rocks – luckily that was the last wave of the set (I made another mental note to be more cautious). Out past the islands I again set sail and headed for Seal Rocks arriving at 4:20. On rounding the point I found rock fishermen perched precariously on the steep rocks – how they got there, I don't know!



Barry and kayak on Elizabeth Beach, just South of Forster

Sunday, 28th (38kms)

7:50 start in a south-west breeze in great conditions, arriving at Elizabeth Beach at 9:40 to be met by Brad, a friend who lives at Pacific Palms. At 10:20 I take off again hugging the coast amongst numerous pods of dolphins arriving at 1:30 at the boat harbour in Forster. I phoned Bruce Lew who promptly came down to meet me. He insisted I stay the night at his and Lorraine's house. I accepted the invitation and after a bit of shopping and Thai take away I checked the BOM's forecast for the next few days on their computer (all good on the weather front).

Monday, 29th (49kms)

As Bruce and Lorraine have a regular paddle at 6:00 on the Monday morning, I was down on the water early to pack. I was ready to launch when they arrived back at 7:00 and made use of the beautiful early morning conditions. This was the only day that I paddled without pulling in for lunch. Crowdy Head, my destination for that day, eventually appeared way out to sea and you would swear that it is an island, being apparently unconnected to the land, and Harrington looks like strange towers out at sea from a distance. Eventually the penny drops when they all join up. The wind abated at about 1:30 and then picked up at 2:30 from the south-east all on a rising southerly ground swell. Arrived at Crowdy Bay at 4:20. I camped by the surf club on beautiful grass. Crowdy Bay is a wonderful, quiet place.



Crowdy Bay

Tuesday, 30th (55kms)

After experiencing the early start at Bruce and Lorraine's place I decided to get up in the dark to be ready at first light to make use of the good conditions. At 6:50 I launched into the sheltered bay. I pulled into North Haven at 11:00 for lunch, after passing a magnificent

look out platform on Camden Head, landing on a rocky bit of exposed beach (the large steady ground swell was hanging about) south of the break wall. I climbed the wall for lunch and discovered a perfectly sheltered beach with picnicking families on the other side! I even thought about dragging my kayak over the wall to be able to launch in its placid waters. I picked a lull and exited the beach at 11:50 without drama, luckily. Arriving at 4:00 at Port Macquarie I had to weave my way through the numerous reefs and sand banks to land on a spinifex campsite on the north shore of the river. My side of the river was totally wild and undeveloped, whereas the opposite shore had a manicured camping ground and large, brightly lit buildings.

Wednesday, 1st July (51 kms)

Off at 6:50 with the prevailing sou-westerly which died before I arrived

at the very popular Crescent Head for lunch at 11:30. Surfers and families (being the school holidays) were everywhere bathing under a clear blue sky. I set off at 12:30 and paddled in a freshening sou-east breeze with the solid southerly ground swell persisting, arriving at Hat Head at 3:00. Another very quiet place in winter. It was here that sunset and sunrise put on a magical display of colour.

Thursday, 2nd (42 kms)

I left Hat Head at 6:45 with a steady sou-wester (as usual). By the time I arrived at Smoky Cape the wind had increased significantly. On rounding the cape the wind seemed to have shifted to the north-west and was whipping. I paddled as close in to the cliffs as possible on the inside of Green Island. On rounding Arakoon into Trial Bay, past the old gaol, the wind had dropped enough for me to punch into a stiff breeze across the bay to South-West Rocks where I landed at 10:30 for a break. The marine rescue people there gave me a print out for the weather over the next three days, including that afternoon's wind warning. At 11:30, after the break, I headed off, keeping to the shoreline for some protection from the wind, arriving at Scotts Head (SUP heaven!) at 1:40. Because of the wind warning I decided to stay put for the night. I camped close to the bowling club with a full moon.

Friday, 3rd (45kms)

Got up at 5:15, breakfasted and packed under the setting full moon, launching at 6:45 into a larger swell and stiffer breeze. I rounded Nambucca Heads and negotiated the 4 marked reefs on the northern side (all breaking). I pulled into Wenonah (Wenona?) at 10:30 through the breaking reefs – there were two surfers out and the current was sweeping down the beach. I caught a small wave close to shore, which turned into a double up and when I tried to brace on the second wave there was no resistance and over I went. It was too shallow by this stage to roll so I wet exited and dragged the waterlogged boat on to the beach. Then I realised that I had lost my map and hat! I secured the boat and went looking down the beach, coming across a full water bottle, then my hat, which had washed up, and further on, floating in the surf, my map – pure elation! I talked to some council workers who said that



Sawtell would be a good place to land.

Relaunching at 11:15 I paddled and sailed with a very stiff breeze and a large, rolling swell at my back. I rounded Sawtell Island and pulled into the sandy isthmus on the lee side at 1:20 – large waves were breaking right across the windward side. I was feeling very cold from my earlier dunking along with the chilly breeze so I decided to get dry and camp rather than push on to Coffs.

Saturday, 4th (54 kms)

On the water at 6:35, and in perfect conditions (sou-westerly breeze and a southerly swell) arrived at Woolgoolga at 11:30 for lunch. I decided, that as things were all going well and that I still had 4 more days, to push on to Ballina after resupplying at the convenient IGA store. I devoured 2/3s of large iced cake washed down with a carton of caramel milk to the amusement of the French family with whom I shared a picnic table (the Woolgoolga Fair was on). I set off at 1:00 paddling wide of Woolgoolga Reef into a building nor-easter! The wind persisted and

even increased so I had to push into a breeze all the way to Pebbly Beach (Station Creek) to camp, arriving at 4:30.

Sunday, 5th (58 kms)

6:45 launch, past Minnie Water, arriving 11:30 at Sandon, on the north shore of the river for lunch. Relunched at 12:30, planning to camp at Little Shelley Beach. A series of long reefs stretch north from Brooms Head (all breaking). It was getting on by the time I arrived at Little Shelley Beach, which didn't quite appear like it was supposed to from my map. There were a lot of rocks, breaking waves and no protected corner in which to pull in that was apparent from my position, so I pushed on studying my map again and again. By the time that I got to Back Angourie Beach, I

Sandon



realised my mistake but decided to push on. On rounding Angourie Headland I found a comfortable landing spot (4:30) on a bit of a rocky shore. There were about a dozen surfers out in great 6-8ft waves. By dark there wasn't a soul left on the beach, which left me to enjoy the beautiful surroundings with my campfire.

Monday, 6th (45 kms)

With the big effort of the past two days, I had the luxury of having less than 80 kilometres left to Ballina with 3 days in hand. Another 6:35 launch (monotonous) and paddled past Yamba on to Woody Head where I decided to pull in for a break as the next protected pull-out was the distant Goanna Headland. The two salient features of this section were the RAAF bombing range exclusion area and Chaos, an area of reefs and bomboras at the northern end of 10 Mile Beach, which comes with a warning marked on my map! The wind was a very stiff west-nor-west so I hugged the coastline for a few hours before I'd reached a point around the bay which allowed me to set sail. The boat really picked up with the breeze in my sails. I

passed the RAAF bombing range without incident so all I had to do now was negotiate Chaos. The outer rocks of Chaos appeared out to sea. The beauty of paddling a kayak is that you approach reefs and bomboras so slowly that you become aware of any dangers ahead.

Things were going perfectly well when, on cresting a largish swell, I was confronted by the next wave, an eight-foot monster, blue as blue with the appearance of an amphitheatre, feathering in the offshore breeze. Too late for anything other than to turn and charge. The face was vertical by the time I launched up it (the 5 metre kayak fit comfortably on its face!). I was launched off the top with the sail up and rolled in mid air with nothing to brace against, coming down heavily almost upside down. My first attempt at rolling failed with the sail and rigging, so I wet exited anxious to see if another monster was coming. There was nothing but a calm blue sea again so I climbed back in, paddled off the break and pumped. The wind was off shore blowing me further away from the break so I could relax. I was wide-awake and alert after this experience and kept thinking how bloody Chaos had come along to bite my arse! I noticed a few fishing boats heading back to Evans Head keeping well wide of where I'd been (locals, no doubt).

I paddled around Goanna Headland (Snapper Rocks?) into Chinamans Beach landing at 2:10 and, for the first time on the trip, I found

another sea kayak (mirage 580) on the beach. No one was around but whoever owned the kayak was obviously camped. I selected a campsite under a grove of pandanus palms about a hundred metres away from my fellow kayaker. About four o'clock this guy comes up, all excited asking me where I was heading (Ballina) and where I'd come from (Sydney), well blow me down if he hadn't just paddled from Sydney also (heading home to Hastings Point)! Robbie Johnson had set out the week before me (from Cottage Point) with a surfboard strapped to his back deck! I don't know who was more surprised. His wife, Rachele and two young sons had come down the day before to spend the night together. That evening Robbie and I sat around the fire telling our tales of the trip sharing a drink. We decided that we'd paddle the next day together.

Tuesday, 7th (38 kms)

Robbie and I met on the beach and set off at 6:30 in perfect conditions. Paddling around Evans Head we set our sails for the long haul up Patches Beach. The wind was the best that I'd had on the trip and we found ourselves off the Ballina break-wall by 11:00. Robbie decided to continue on rather than risk the bar at Ballina and also to make the best of the following breeze. We parted, the bar (almost full high tide) was kind (my brother reckoned it would have been interesting on that morning's low with the large swell) and I landed near the swimming pool in Ballina at 11:20 (14 days, 2 hours and 5

minutes after leaving Collaroy). I had texted my brother, Geoff, that I'd be arriving between 12 and 1, and sure enough, Geoff and our good friend David Sare turned up to give me a lift to my brother's house, a short distance away. Robbie paddled on to Byron Bay that day where he was picked up by his wife.

In summary; I had two good weeks of weather, which on the one hand, was fortunate but, on the other hand, I paddled 15 days without a rest day. The paddles along some of the longer beaches had me playing all sorts of mind games to while the hours away, whereas the headlands had me sitting up, not only taking in the beautiful scenery but keeping a look out for reefs and bomboras. The sail, with the predominantly southerly winds in winter, was a handy accessory. I suffered a lower back problem, which had me regularly changing positions to try and gain some relief. Robbie, despite being 23 years younger, also had similar problems. The sun was low and in my face all day! The camping was brilliant; the few people I met were great and very encouraging. The NSW coastline is paradise for kayakers wanting to camp and explore. I included the (approximate – with the aid of Google earth) distances and times. I used the NSW transport maritime maps (bought online) and could very accurately predict my times of arrival at all the wonderful harbours and havens. I paddled a current design, storm kayak – indestructible!

Bird Island



Hawkesbury River Classical

PHILIP ROSE (AND MARK FULLER)

For those people who enjoy camping and kayaking the Hawkesbury River offers great opportunities to indulge both of these activities. It offers a diverse range of river environments, combined with quaint, historic settlements and well-located cafes and general stores. Another great advantage is its proximity to Sydney. Mark Fuller and Philip Rose opted to kayak the 120 kms from Windsor to Church Point in two journeys of three days each. Not exactly matching the times achieved in the Hawkesbury River Classic!



Top: Launching at Windsor
Middle: Mark paddling the Upper Hawkesbury River
Bottom: Mark in his sandstone cave



TUESDAY 17th February 2015

We drove to Wisemans Ferry, left one car and drove 40 kms to Windsor, where we launched our kayaks at the boat ramp. There were very few other boaties around, considering the perfect conditions on the upper Hawkesbury. We paddled an easy 13 kms in 2 hours past farmlands and low banks to Cattai National Park paddling with the tide. It was a delightful campsite with no other campers, clean toilets and showers Eastern grey kangaroos bounding around in the early evening.

WEDNESDAY 18th February 2015

Another glorious day on the river as the sandstone cliffs begin to appear. Day 2 required two paddles of 14 km and 13 km. We commenced around 10.00 am against the rising tide and reached the Sackville Ferry around 1 pm. By this time we needed a solid rest and lunch. Quite hot 30C. We were happy with our progress but were only half way to Lower Portland and our overnight camp. The tide was finally beginning to fall. Arrived at Skelton Rocks, Lower Portland at the junction of the Colo River and Hawkesbury River around 4.30pm. It was a long paddle of 27 kms for the day and we were feeling pretty tired and sun burnt. We pitched tents before heading across the river to the Paradise Pizza Café. Bookings essential! Ate tasty pizza and drank medium strength XXXX beer in case the return paddle was in the dark.

THURSDAY 19th February 2015

Next day we departed Skeleton Rocks at 11 am after waiting for the tide to start falling. An eventful night with some mysterious vehicles and early morning boat launchings. Taking a break on the last leg of 20 km, Mark discovered a stunning sandstone cave. A well located rock ledge allowed us to climb out of the kayaks and enjoy this ruggedly beautiful location. We approached Wiseman's Ferry around 2.30 pm. By now the river was quite wide with strong tidal flow and a northeasterly wind blowing. We arrived in 3.5 hours, loaded the kayaks on the car and drove back to Windsor to collect the second car. Completed stage one with a 60 km paddle and 40 km car shuffle. As we left Wiseman's Ferry we had a great view of the River and were looking forward to the second leg!



Top: Mark and Phil departing Wiseman's Ferry
Right: The hub of the universe
Below: Dangar Island in front of the café



TUESDAY 7th April 2015

Barbara Rose drove us to Wisemans Ferry and left us to pack our kayaks in brilliant sunshine. High tide was around 12.00 noon, two hours behind Fort Denison. Perfect conditions as we departed but a short time later a severe westerly rain squall hits. It only lasted 30 minutes but created a strong tail wind with large wind waves, ideal for our journey. The magnificent sandstone gorge towered above us. There were few landing spots in this part of the river and it was quite uninhabited but very beautiful with occasional small hamlets and holiday cottages. After 27kms and 3 solid hours of paddling we arrived at Gentlemen's Halt. Named in the early days of the colony as a place to stop on the boat journey to Windsor. The early April weather had been very changeable. We camped at an idyllic NPWS bush camp with pit toilet, shared with a couple who had canoed from Spencer. We had a very welcome roaring fire to sit around and slept soundly after an exhilarating day. Very cosy in our sleeping bags and tents.

WEDNESDAY 8th April 2015

In the morning we paddled the short distance to Spencer and enjoyed coffee and a chat with the locals. There was no rush as we decided to wait for the tide to begin falling. Today was another 24 km paddle with a break at Milsons Passage about 12km from Spencer. We made good progress with wind and tide helping. The SW winds were perfect for this part of the trip although a bit chilly at times. Milsons Passage is a quaint little hamlet located upstream from Brooklyn with lots of picturesque holiday shacks and cute boatsheds. We wandered around Milsons Passage while we took a break from two hours in the kayaks. On departure we got a turn of speed from the tide ripping through the narrow channel. Approaching Brooklyn we had a great view of the Hawkesbury Railway



Bridge, complete with trains. Around 3 pm we stopped on the east side of Dangar Island at the public wharf and café, with more cappuccinos to keep us going. We chatted to the locals and helped launch a stranded tinny. Around 7 km still to go to reach Patonga. The last leg down the Hawkesbury was challenging with high wind waves and a strong cross wind. We saw many magnificent sea eagles and were happy to round Juno Head and reach the calm of Patonga Creek. Patonga was quite a contrast to the previous night - camped among families in their vans, although the hot shower compensated. We enjoyed a great dinner in Patonga pub – yummy steak and a few beers.

THURSDAY 9th April 2015

We enjoyed a nice farewell from our new "friends" in the van park as we headed down Patonga Creek and across the small bar. There was slight apprehension about crossing Broken Bay with the high winds predicted but we experienced idyllic conditions in the lee of West Head with stunning views of Lion Island and Barrenjoey. It was a very hard slog up Pittwater into a strong, gusty and cold SW wind. The evening weather report indicated gusts of 70 km/hr. We only had 14 km to paddle but it was quite challenging conditions. After a much needed rest on Portuguese Beach we completed the final leg around Scotland Island in tough conditions to a welcome rendezvous with Barbara at Church Point, completing a journey of 62 kms in three days.

Circumnavigation of Britain 2015



Stuart Trueman
24 April 2015

Final preparations before getting on the water. I have been checking my map supplied by friends from NSW Sea Kayak Club. They were a bit worried I would miss some of the highlights of GB.



Left: Bunkered in the dunes shortly after a freezing start to the trip
Right: A decommissioned toilet block makes a good campsite



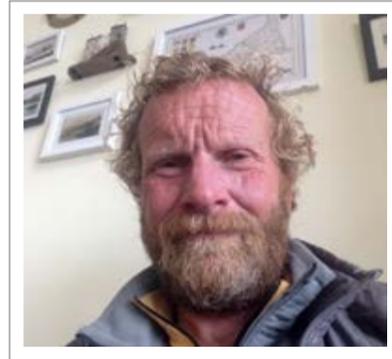
STUART TRUEMAN

The promise of tide races, lousy weather and cold seas while paddling thousands of kilometres of unfamiliar coastline enticed me the other side of the world to kayak around Britain.

I had just over three months available to get myself over there, organise a kayak, paddle round then get back. It could never have happened without much help from family and friends who deserve more than a quick mention, but that's all they get.

Pre-trip preparation was meticulous. I left from the closest beach to my brothers' house, as he was the only family member with roof racks. Start date was about the same as all previous circumnavigations and I went the same way round as everybody else. The rest I would work out as needed.

As you would expect, there were some details that I wish I'd paid more attention to. I based my expectations of what weather to expect from childhood memories of summer holidays. Unfortunately my fading 40 year old recollection of fishing in the sunshine had been cherry picked from a lifetime of near death experiences from hypothermia. These warm and fuzzy images started to slip away



as I brushed the frost off a brand new TideRace Pace 17. Before the end of the first day I had dismissed my childhood memories as fantasy.

My brother had wished me well after dropping me off and I quickly disappeared with the help of a moral boosting current, which took me swiftly from those memories of a childhood with endless sunshine to the reality of 25 April 2015. I have a record of disastrous starts to trips, which my mind has also replaced with skipping through fields catching butterflies. Day one kept with the trend, I just don't learn.

The sun had lured me out to sea, where I expected another 40 years of sunshine. I was soon losing the struggle to icy blasts of rain laden winds and only 3 hours after waving goodbye to my brother I was forced onto an open beach to look in vain for shelter.

I was so cold my fingers would not function; I could not get the hatch covers off or grip clothes. I spent some worrying moments chasing thermals down the beach with my light blue bum on show. Anyway lesson learnt, for the rest of the trip I paddled in all the paddle clothes I had with me and kept a 'Grab Bag' of warm stuff handy.



However the traditional start was not over. I had put my paddle together with the wrong feather, causing my right wrist to develop a worrying, stabbing pain as I paddled. After two days I had figured out what the problem was, but the damage was done, it needed rest. It took four days to get moving again, but by then I was sure the trial was over.

The east coast was low beaches and cliffs, which were slowly dissolving into the sea. One of the villages that provided the stage for my distorted childhood memories had suffered to the extent that roads dropped off cliffs where pipes and wires stuck out aimlessly and houses were lining up to drop into the sea.

To try and slow the erosion there were many varied constructions stretching along this coast. There were the traditional lines of wood heading out to sea, wooden walls, haphazard concrete blocks and immaculate lines of breakwalls. The effect from a kayak was the impression of a desperate attempt to defend against anything coming from the East. Unfortunately that included me and I had a hard time finding landing spots.

I landed on a beach that I remembered holidaying at as a child. I quickly changed into warm, dry clothes while watching parents, well back in their duvet jackets, encouraging wetsuit-clad kids into the frigid sea for a play. It would have been helpful in my expectations if I had dragged up my similar experiences of childhood holiday hypothermia.

Currents and headwinds made progress a struggle from day one. I could manage the cold after my education, but I could not avoid the headwinds nor change the currents.

The first day without headwinds was over two weeks into the trip. It was draining and demoralising to plug into cold winds each day. By that time I had more days off than

I had paddled and was starting to realise that I would be lucky to finish the trip if my luck didn't start to change.

My brothers were walking around the Isle of Wight and I was trying to meet them before they headed back north, but I couldn't get there in time. The weather forecast answered the question of how strong the head winds were going to be, not 'if' there were going to be headwinds.

To add variety to my frustrating progress the Ministry of Defence had prime coastal real estate, preventing access while they shoot at it. I was given the option of waiting until they ran out of bullets or head out to sea for 3 km before traversing the area. I opted to head out to sea. Just to make sure they used a patrol boat to escort me out and then hung around until I had moved a good way in the right direction. I struggled into headwinds loaded with drizzle until it got too much and I landed a few kilometres outside the range. Next time I waited until they run out of bullets.

Approaching Cornwall the coast got much more interesting and the weather eased up on me a bit. I had lost a lot of time and was still worried that I would not make the entire coast so any good weather was a chance to make as much ground as I could. The coast was a collection of little villages with picture perfect harbours for tourists and fishermen, but not always for camping kayakers.

There were many 'PRIVATE' and 'Strictly NO Camping' signs, but I soon found that the more signs there were the less chance there was that anybody was around to enforce them. Despite camping in some odd places I



Stuart Trueman
9 May 2015

Ramsgate. I have passed a few milestones:
1. I have had almost one whole day's paddling without head winds since starting.
2. I have just managed to paddle more days than not.
3. I have just arrived on the south coast.



Above: Erosion takes road
Below: Beachy Head Lighthouse, Eastbourne





Stuart Trueman
15 May 2015

Isle of Wight. Somewhere everybody should be able to find on the map. Met up with my brothers after they walked round the Isle of Wight. Found a good spot in someone's garden to camp. They have just brought me some chocolate and a cup of tea. All Good!



Stuart Trueman
18 May 2015

Stuck on the coast near Swanage with strong winds preventing paddling. Nothing but food and water to keep me going. So survival training kicked in and I found a pub.



had no issues other than having to put up with half a dozen grogged up kids talking crap for hours one night.

Lundy is an island found in the Bristol Channel. It is a challenge to paddle to and was on my list of places to visit. Getting to islands is one of the rewards of kayaking that I like to make the most of. While sitting out a few days of bad weather I carefully planned my trip as currents of 5 knots have to be considered and rough waters were guaranteed when leaving from Hartland, particularly after days of 30knots.

I had packed up my tent, eaten, walked my kit 2 km down to the quay and was ready to leave by 5am but rough seas and high tides made a launch imposable, I had to wait until 10am to try again.

After a dodgy reef launch into the surf I realised there would be no reversing the move, so set off with determination into seas being ripped up by currents. The forces at play were strong but mostly with me, as the wind died the tides swapped over I made good time. I was relieved to pull past the southern tip of Lundy as currents were gathering to agree on a direction to run. I rewarded myself with a few beers and a stay in the Bed and Breakfast making the most of the relaxed environment.

In open water it's easy for the seas to hide their strength. With no reference points a paddler can be taken by the forces of tidal flows, unaware they are not in control until a dramatic revelation, which is sometimes a signal that it's all too late.

The next day, north of Lundy, the tides intentions were revealed as I watched big, open ocean buoys being dragged down and toyed with by the forces of the sea. It was an impressive show of strength that was made even more dramatic in a setting of open seas.

Wales was also a spectacular place

to paddle, with an interesting and varied coast against a backdrop of mountains. When the coast reached out to form headlands some strong tidal flows were attracted. The strongest couldn't be navigated when against you so timing was important. As well as having to manage the tides the weather of the day made a huge difference to the state of the seas. Paddling unknown waters that flow at 4 knots is an exhilarating experience, when combined with the conditions lingering behind a storm, cliffs concentrating the headwinds and reflecting the seas it's a serious place to be.

To give me a chance to complete the trip in time, my route crossed to the Isle of Man from Anglesey, then to Northern Ireland where I would head north to the Scottish Island of Islay.

The crossings were not more than 75km but as with most of the trip the currents and weather made you think before heading off. On my way to the Isle of Man I set off on a heading knowing I'd be swept East then West with the change of tidal flow. At one point I had been taken 15 km east but the change in tide took me back and almost pulled me too far west past the southern tip of the Island. It was the week of the famous TT Bike race and there were dozens of leather-clad spectators who had ridden to the southernmost point of the island to watch me struggle round the headland. I was surprised to have a couple of Minkie whales check me out as I approached the Island, seals were along most of the trip but I only saw a few whales.

In contrast, Isle of Man to Ireland was free of currents, but I found them again as I paddled beyond Belfast over the next few days. It took me an exhausting time to work out that the best time to head north was when the currents were due to flow against you. They were so strong that they created back eddies that could be used



Top: Impressive castle on the beach, with no camping signs and no people around. Good camping spot."

Above: The only possible launch site from Hartland Quay, England



by a kayaker close to the coast. The further north the stronger the currents got, by the time I made the Island of Rathlin you could hear the conflict of currents before you saw the struggle.

I planned the crossing to Scotland with the aid of a chart posted on the wall of the pub and local fishermen, which complimented my road map of England which was completely useless in Ireland. As usual it involved an early start. I got to the northern point of Rathlin at what I calculated was slack tide, but currents were already running causing 2-3 foot standing waves. A dynamic environment made eerie

as the rain dropped visibility and magnified the rumble of the waters clashing. It was a relief to finally see the hills of Islay through the drizzle and I was soon inspired by the many whisky distilleries to pay \$14 for a glass of whiskey.

It is hard to describe my time paddling through the Western Isles of Scotland without making it seem an ordeal. It rained almost every day, the views were covered in low mist and my self-imposed daily regime to make distance could be described as mixture of masochistic, pain management exercises during exhausting days where any use of the word



Stuart Trueman
12 June 2015

Anglesey. Had a good spell of weather and saw some of the great coastline of Wales. I'm on Anglesey with my parents who have driven over to make sure I'm wearing my clean underpants. They were initially disappointed until they realised I was wearing the cleaner ones! Hope you like my arty photo taken as I waited for the tide to change to get though Bardsey Sound.



Stuart Trueman
16 June 2015

Ireland. Had good weather for crossings to and from Isle of Man. I saw a couple of whales but I'm still looking for the crocs!





Above and left: Strange but true. I landed my kayak on the remote side of Isle of Jura (pop 200), where sat a few buildings, then discovered a table with hot coffee and biscuits for visitors! The young lady was trying to raise money for university.

The tide went out between arriving and departing

'fun' would be inappropriate. Nevertheless the experience was one of the finest you can have in a kayak. I experienced a taste of one of the finest areas for kayaking that has all the ingredients to provide adventures for everybody. Endless days could be spent exploring a single island or long crossings further west may be calling. When the wild backdrop of mountains, open skies and cliffs, all teaming with wildlife, combine with a spell of generous weather the paddler is rewarded with experiences that will remain forever.

North of Skye things got really wild, there was almost no area not stripped clean of vegetation by the winds and seas, I felt quite exposed as I continued north. Despite the sun not making too much of an effort, the wind died away and I made the most of it forcing my tired body round Cape Wrath in good

conditions. As with all this coast it offered caves and inlets, remote beaches and the shelter of inlets and fishing villages. Although I didn't have time to explore to this level the scenery made it easy to paddle through the day.

The day after Cape Wrath I had my only day off in the last month of my trip, I spent most of it trying to hide from the wind. A few of the tents in the campground blew down; including mine, and a wet and miserable night was had by many.

The North and East of Scotland was a blur of cliffs currents, headlands, tide races, sea birds and lentils. All spectacular and seamlessly combined so you could not expect one without the others, apart from the lentils.

After rounding Cape Wrath I knew I had a good chance of completing the trip, but kept the pace up because I knew the weather could easily hold me up for days. I was close enough to finishing to allow me to keep up my pace, but I was getting a bit ragged. I had lost about 10 kg and some parts of me were rotting away, having been wet for weeks. It was nothing that couldn't be fixed up given time, but I kept going while the weather allowed.

Everything was done when I had the time. Showers were rare, laundry rarer. Food shopping was basic and my diet suffered with a lack of veggies and fruit, although I include mushy peas and hops as vegetables.

I was tired and running on empty, which was brought home to me with a tough crossing of the Firth of Forth where the last 3 hours were a battle with currents. It should not have been an issue but with not much strength to call on I was dragged down the coast feeling helpless in the grip of a flow I had expected but exhaustion I had not.

A few days later I drifted into a fishing harbour looking for somewhere to camp. There was no

ramp and not much hope, so as I turned round to face some unwanted kilometres I was shouted back and offered a bunk on a fishing boat for the night. That built into a car ride to his house for a shower, supermarket, MacDonald's and his wife made sandwiches for the next day. As my story was passed around the harbour a steady stream of local fishermen came by to shake my hand and show appreciation of what I had achieved. As I left the next day £10 was pressed into my hand for a fish and chip lunch stop. My tiredness disappeared and I was off again.

I finished on 16 July at Cleethorpes, which gave me enough time before my flight back to Australia to adjust any remaining 40 year old childhood memories of summer in England.



Note: I would like to acknowledge the generous support of 'Tiderace' (UK) and Mark Sundin of 'Expedition Kayaks' (AUS) without which the trip could not have happened. Also 'Wilderness Wear' (AUS) without which my life on and off the water would have been much colder.



Stuart Trueman
1 July 2015

Lybster Harbour. I paddled and paddled then I fell off the top of Scotland and started heading south. Great to be past John O'Groats in good conditions. One guy even told me it was too hot for him to work in the garden but I'm still in my thermals and duvet!



Stuart Trueman
5 July 2015

Gardenstown with Haar in the background and kayak in foreground. I have found out what "Haar" means, it's weather that you can't see anything in. I have just paddled for 4 hours in the Haar, and couldn't tell you what the coast looks like, I can tell you Haar looks a lot like mist though.



Stuart Trueman
16 July 2015

Finished. Landed 16th July after a great trip.

Back cover: Windmills off shore saves space on land

