

THE SEA CANOEIST NEWSLETTER

Issue 56

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EDITORIAL

Apologies for the late arrival of N/L 56. It was all due to work commitments and a kayaking/climbing trip in the Milford Sound area with John Kirk-Andersen. The sea kayak certainly opens up some great opportunities for a blend of climbing and sea kayaking in the Milford Area.

1995 KASK FORUM

The seventh national Graham Egarr KASK Forum was held at Titahi Bay over Easter, from 14 to 17 April 1995, with 50 paddlers attending. The Surf Club rooms proved to be an ideal venue, with formal lecture and slide shows held upstairs and overnight kayak storage in the basement. The bay, with Mana Island offshore and a great long rolling surf late evenings, was probably the best forum venue to date. The catering also was second to none, with paddlers struggling with second helpings of pavlova.

Highlights of the formal lectures were surf landings and launchings with Mark Hutson and kayak photography with John Kirk-Andersen. As Libby notes in her report on the forum, the evening slide shows were stunning, particularly that of Paul

Chaplow who showed a superb set of stunning slides of killer whales and kayaking in Johnson Strait at the northern end of Vancouver Island in Canada, and that of Tracy Weens who instructed Operation Raleigh paddlers in the Prince William Sound area of Alaska.

On Monday, a team of 32 paddlers complete with playlunches, set off from Titahi Bay on a cracker morning for a group paddle out to Mana Island. The team was broken down into four groups each with a designated leader. Mark Hutson led the A team for a circumnavigation of Mana Island while the other groups headed for the northern end of the island, then ran with the tide down to the DOC boat ramp and visitor centre. Vic Jennings then led a conducted tour of the island, highlighted by numerous close encounters of a feathered kind with plump takahe. A more direct route back to the bay, required close scrutiny of transits on the North Island to combat a very strong south-going tidal stream.

My thanks to all the lecturers and instructors, and particularly to Vic and Sandy Jennings for their help in making the forum such a success.

KASK AGM

The annual general meeting was held on 15 April at 6pm and the committee for 95/96 was elected as follows:

President - Paul Caffyn
Secretary - Peter Sullivan
Treasurer - Sandy Ferguson
Committee Members -
Nora Flight
Glyn Dickson
Phil Handford
Max Grant
Bev Schafer

A full breakdown of the AGM minutes is available from either Peter or myself, but I have included the salient points raised. The remit from Helen Woodward which was included in N/L 54 and pertaining to IRD requirement for society constitution requirements was passed. The bank balance is healthy with \$6,000 and the annual subscription is to remain at \$10. One of KASK's main objectives in the forthcoming 12 months will be to produce a little red Sea Kayakers handbook, with basic information on kayaks, equipment, rescue techniques, weather and navigation etc.

FORUM DEBRIEFING

This was held on Sunday evening, and Peter Sullivan has also completed a full page of the main features arising from the debrief, if anyone would like a copy. There was plenty of positive feedback and some good suggestions for next year. Easter seemed not to be a good choice for the time, and Anzac weekend was suggested for next year. By popular North Island vote, Picton was adopted as the venue. One suggestion was for targeting of 'fringe' sea kayakers as well as true believers, with much earlier promotion of the forum. Following discussion of whether to persevere with the forum format or change to a meet, it was decided to continue with the forum in its present style with several days set aside after the weekend for a multi day trip. The forum attendance forms should also include level of skill and expertise. And lastly, one suggestion that introductions should be made at the beginning of the forum which would be optional for introverts.

1995 KASK FORUM

written by Libby
from the 'Ruahine White Water Club Newsletter'

David Herrington, Max Grant and I enjoyed a pot-pourri of workshops on topics which included canoe first aid, rescue techniques, fibreglass repair, navigation, gadgets and effective paddling techniques. In an informal personalized workshop, Paul Caffyn advised David and Max on the snorkel approach to sleeping in your sea kayak. Apparently this reduces the risk of asphyxiating in the cockpit under your spraydeck. Sound appealing?

At the gadgets workshop I finally found my ideal kayak knife and was able to jettison the useless one I've been carrying around for years. Later I thoroughly tested those covers for Thermarest mattresses which turn them into choice chairs and became an easy convert.

Participants had the opportunity to trial a variety of craft. David and I obviously offered such unbiased advice that we were frequently mistaken for representatives of a local kayak manufacturing company.

Titahi Bay Surf Club rooms proved to be a great location and made it very easy to move between the indoor and on-the-water workshops. David was the only paddler on Saturday's dawn paddle to Mana Island but a group of us joined him in glorious sunshine on Sunday and Monday. Mark Hutson had the company of a reasonable sized shark on the way and I am still not convinced that what I was assured were the upturned fins of a stingray were not smaller twin sharks swimming in perfect parallel formation.

Paddling around the western side of Mana Island gave us the chance to sneak in and out of fascinating rock formations, before landing at the DOC jetty. Fat takahe waddled out bushes in all directions, and we had to sneak around corners for fear of disturbing either delighted human observers or bird families feeding.

I found the weekend great for learning heaps about gear and techniques, meeting interesting people and finding out about amazing places to go sea kayaking. The slides, especially of Alaskan and British Columbian sea kayaking, were inspiring. I'm keen.

SUMMARY OF EXERCISE RIMAU RETRACE

from an article by John Addison in the Victorian Sea Kayak Club Newsletter by John Kirk-Andersen

Adventure Training - a trip at the Army's expense - had six Australian ex-special forces officers paddling 500kms in north-western Indonesia, along the escape route of World War 2's Operation Rimau.

During a second raid in 1944 on shipping in Singapore Harbour, Operation Rimau commenced with a party of 23 commandeering a junk from a submarine. Equipped with sleeping beauty submersibles and two man folding kayaks, the group was compromised and the junk was scuttled. During their escape and evasion in the kayaks, the men were scattered throughout the islands. All were eventually killed, either fighting the Japanese or executed only weeks before the end of the war.

Fifty years later, approval was given to retrace part of their escape route, from Singapore to Singkep Island. Staying in villages most nights, and living off local resources, the trip took 16 days and visited areas of historical interest to Operation Rimau. The trip report details local cigarettes, hard floors in huts along with monsoon downpours and tidal currents.

'Cowboy Country' was a local description of the paddling area so a support boat was hired when one of the party withdrew, a problem for double kayakers. Mentioning Australian special forces caused some interest among the ever present Indonesian Military, who remembered the confrontation of the 60's.

The kayakers used were two man folding kleppers, supplied by the Australian Army and the equipment carried was interesting: EPIRBs, anchors, salt water desalinators, marine radio, satellite phone (23 kgs), two medical kits, GPS, but not sprayskirts. Military logic shines through.

Despite kayak and fitness problems, the exercise was successful and retraced a time when kayakers were used as weapons of war, not toys for fun.

John Kirk-Andersen.

BOOK REVIEWS

Title: Blazing Paddles

Author: Brian Wilson

Published: The Oxford Illustrated Press. 1988

Haynes Publishing Group, Sparkford, Nr Yeovil,

Somerset BA22 7JJ England

Subject Headings: Sea Kayaking, Scotland

ISBN No: 0 946609 59 4

Contents: 192 pages, 25 colour photos, 5 maps

Size: 18 x 25cms

Cover: hardcover & dustjacket

Retail Price: ?

NZ Distributor: ?

Reviewed by: John Kirk-Andersen

Plucked from the sea kayaking library at the 12 Mile, this book struck me by its simple honesty. Brian Wilson paddled his Nordkapp around Scotland by himself, taking ferries where needed, but self-contained where possible. With no set rules and no records to set, he says purists who accuse him of cheating have missed the point.

The first chapter gives a brief personal history and the motivation and preparation for the journey. It is also a time for the sponsors to be mentioned and forgotten, clearing them from the rest of the book. Funding for the trip was a problem and not helped when his boss arrived early to find his snoring security guard asleep in the executive chair, surrounded by kayaking kit.

The start of the journey had me cringing as the boat, weighing 400 pounds, sat on the sand and resisted the efforts of an incoming tide. Finally, 'Never had the kayak felt so heavy; never had it sat so low in the water, but my God it floated!' Fairly important, that.

Brian avoids the 'and the next day, paddled...' style of book with very many funny tales, some of which left me wondering about the strange people of Scotland. Breaking into public toilets, exposing himself to Prince Charles and Lady Di, scaring drunken salmon poachers, surviving a ride on a sailing gin palace and the weirdest of all, a very strange night in a tent with ten homosexuals.

The names he passes made my spine tingle, Corryvreckan, Tobemory, Muck and the Pentland

Firth are faced up to, battled and escaped. Weeks of rain and wind made for a depressing setting and at times his morale slumps. His frank admission of this makes his highs all the better.

130 varieties of midges, seemingly all in his tent at the same time, sound like South Westland with added cold.

His description of sprinting to a beach with bladder at explosion point, stripping off all the layers and cross-eyed until 'ahhhh' was brilliant. Not making it and wetting his suit was also familiar.

Philosophical considerations of natural art that he struggles with as an academic were given a new twist by adding driftwood art to the fire - it burned beautifully. Horror stories of fishing boats being snared by nuclear submarines had me white knuckled, and North Sea pollution sounds vile.

It was his environmental outbursts which were the only thing in this book I found a little awkward. It seemed as if an editor had nudged him every so often and said, "chuck in a bit more of that greeny stuff" and then he forgot about it again.

The photos are fairly dull, not helped by being three to a page, 8 x 12 cms. A bit of space would have given them life, and the six near identical shots of Brian paddling 'Natural Crunch', a Nordkapp HM, could have been done away with.

With those as the only grumbles, I really enjoyed this book, and had to wrench myself from the tide races and Swiss tourist mermaids, to turn out the light in the wee hours, trying not to wake Mary or our cat.

John Kirk-Andersen

Note: I'm not sure if this title is still in print. I can only suggest you write to the English publisher, or try one of the non-supermarket specialist bookshops such as Scorpio Bookshop in Christchurch, to see if you can order this book (editor).

'A Boat in Our Baggage'

Penguin Books (NZ) Ltd. have recently released a paperback copy of Maria Coffey's wonderful book, with a recommended retail price of \$21.95. The hardback edition was reviewed in N/L 53.

TRIP REPORTS A DAY IN THE BAY

by David Herrington

On 18 February 1995, Max Grant and I paddled across Hawk Bay from Clifton Beach to Mahia Beach. It turned out to be a long day.

We stayed at the Clifton Motor Camp for the night and set out on our trip at 3.45am in ideal conditions. The sea was dead calm. The moon was just past full so there was plenty of light. We followed along the coastline to Black Reef which is 3.5 nautical miles north-east of Clifton, and about three quarters of the way out to Cape Kidnappers. Turning onto a heading of 30 degrees magnetic, we were able to head towards a little star which lay about halfway between a bright star or planet (Venus I think) and the lights of a ship at anchor.

After about an hour, Max and I seemed to notice at the same time that the ship and the bright star were moving rapidly towards each other. So it was time for re-assessment of our heading and which star to follow. So out with the torches to see the compass. After another hour or so, we re-checked our heading required on the Tamex GPS and came up with another heading to follow of 29 degrees; things couldn't be better.

The day was just starting to break followed half an hour later by a magnificent sunrise. There was a bit of coastal mist behind us, so on we paddled. Shortly afterwards Max started to feel a bit off colour. We put it down to a small case of motion sickness while he was doing the recent navigation check. Things didn't get any better for him and by 10am it was a case of fingers down the throat to induce vomiting to see if that would reduce the feeling of nausea. He still wasn't feeling the best but we kept going at medium speed. I had estimated a three knot speed for our ETA at Mahia and we were still maintaining that okay. Max wasn't feeling well but kept on despite his discomfort. As we were nearing our halfway mark, there was little point in turning back.

The day was perfect, no wind and only a slight swell that is to be expected 20 nautical miles (36km) from the nearest land. The sun was shining

and with very little cloud about, the sea sparkled like little strobe lights scattered everywhere. We only saw two small fishing launches, and two big ships going into Napier Harbour. Once I saw a kingfish leap after its quarry. We stopped every hour for a rest for Max and food for me, with a navigation check every two hours. I paddled the day listening to the radio on my spraydeck, while Max continued to feed the fishes. By this time we had come to the conclusion that Max's trouble was more of the nature of a stomach upset caused by something he had eaten rather than sea sickness of any sort. He paddled the whole day without any sustenance apart from a mouthful of lemonade which stayed with him from 3pm.

The sun moved across the sky towards the west while we kept our heading of 30 degrees and later in the day a change to 20 degrees. At 6pm and 12 nautical miles from our destination, we started to receive a northerly wind, which is local to that area. It was about 15 knots which meant we had to paddle with more determination to make headway. The radio was put away because of the occasional splashes over the spraydeck. Anyway I find paddling in these conditions were entertainment enough.

After an hour of this, and with a change to an outgoing flow, it was time to move closer to the shoreline still 2 nautical miles away. The wind was reducing a bit but the tidal flow increased. Nearing the shore Max was attracted by the light of a fishing boat near by, but I decided to paddle on. Max had a cup of coffee with the fishermen and was able to ring through to a neighbouring house where our wives were waiting at Mahia. The house at which Glenis and Margaret were staying did not have the phone on. All was in vain though, as the neighbour was out. The fishermen's kind offer of transport for the last couple of miles was eagerly accepted by Max.

As I neared the shore and out of the main tidal flow, I broke out a cyalume light stick and placed it on my aft deck as a nav light. The sun had long gone. The moon emerged over the hill tops as I made my way along the shore, and this made for a moderately pleasant

night paddle for the last hour. I had lost sight of Portland Island light-house as I moved shorewards but there was still plenty of lights from boats, houses, and street lights of Mahia. At 10.45pm the kayak bow made contact with the sandy beach at Mahia. On shore it was time to set up the primus for a hot drink of coffee. After that we walked 5kms to where our loving and understanding wives were waiting; very thankful to have the comfort of a friend's house which had been available to them.

We had been paddling for 19 hours and Max had gone the distance with no food in his system! However the journey was not over yet - we loaded the kayaks and gear onto the car, had some tea (more like a midnight feast - Max watched) gathered everything together and headed home. Glenis and I picked up our ute from Napier, and arrived home at 4.30am. Max and Margaret still had to travel to Ashhurst.

David Herrington.

SOUTH COAST PADDLE

by Stan Mulvany

Date: 8/3/95

Party: Ross Sinclair & Stan Mulvany

Distance: 30 kms

Two years ago Ross and I did a day paddle on Lake Te Anau. When we got back we were hooked and went straight out and bought two Southern Aurora kayaks. Since then our ambitions and experience have grown steadily. There are only a handful of sea kayakers in Invercargill and most are climbers. I guess this reflects the similarities of the two sports, the adventures in wild places, the adrenaline highs and coping with unpredictable weather. I have been an active mountaineer for many years and when I cannot get away into the hills I think of the sea now. We have considered a sea crossing from Riverton to Invercargill, a distance of about 18 kms in a straight line.

Last Saturday I got up early intending to have a run. We live out of town and have an unobstructed view to the west and although it was drizzling I could see blue sky out to the west over the Longwoods. I hate running in the rain so I pondered the possibilities for a while. Then I noticed the absence of

wind and my mind settled on the south coast. I rang Ross and he said he would check out the surf at Oreti Beach.

By 10.30am we were off the beach into a small surf. It's odd but surf does not seem big till you are out in it. Ross took off first and disappeared over a crest. Next thing I was racing up a wave about to cap, followed by a face full of water and a slam into the trough behind. No time to stop, another wave approaching. Great Scott! It's about to cap but I slice through its crest and fall into another trough. After about six of these I'm out to sea. There is only a gentle swell and no wind. The sky is grey but seems to be clearing from the west. Further out the swell is even less so we decide to cut straight across the bay to Riverton which takes us out 6 to 7 kms. To the south is Stewart Island, 40 kms away. I'm tired after a busy week in the surgery so I'm pleased to quietly paddle along. We pass a few rafts of birds floating on the ocean, mostly sooty shearwaters but one also with five blue penguins. In a few places the surface of the sea is quite disturbed but not by wind so I guess there must be a tidal stream here. Closer to Riverton we can see houses still 6 to 7 kms out. By now the sky is blue although the Takitimu Mountains are capped in cloud.

We decide to bypass Riverton and carry on to Colac Bay which is another 13 kms. A few sooties circle us while others skim over the surface of the sea. Ahead is a line of black rocks a few kms offshore, and we kayak around them; no seals but a few birds. On the other side is Pig Island so we stop here for a break and stretch our legs. A fishing boat lies at anchor and the occupants are out in an inflatable checking their craypots. We climb a small hill and look out to Pig Island and Centre Island. Ross has a cell phone so I call up a Jon Taylor, a kayaking mate, and he agrees to come out to Colac Bay to get us. Then we're off paddling into Colac Bay but it is a lot further than it looks and it is 4pm before we arrive. We land easily through the surf and Jon arrives soon after, a bit disappointed that he did not come. Centre Island looks great and I promise I will go there soon.

Stan Mulvany

VOYAGE TO KANE

by Stan Mulvany

Date: 10 > 20 November

Party: Jon Taylor, Brian Scott, Stan Mulvany

Distance: 40 kms paddling, 10,000 feet of ascent and descent.

Mt. Kane is a prominent peak in the Franklin Mountains which lie in middle Fiordland between the Worsley Arm and North Fiord of Lake Te Anau. Although not the highest at 5,620', it is the hub from which great ridges radiate like the spokes of a wheel. Also it is mantled with extensive snowfields and has a dominant view of the surrounding country.

The idea of a trip here originated last January on our climb of McDougall (written up in NZ Climber No.9). The plan was to paddle from Te Anau Downs to Worsley Arm and climb up Saint Creek. At the last minute Jon suggested an alternative approach from the Glaisnock which proved shorter and possible in a week-end.

Spring in the south has been a poor affair this year. The dominant southwest winds have kept winter conditions on the mountains with few anti-cyclones permitting climbing. So it was with relief we saw more favourable weather maps as the weekend approached. I had my doubts though on the drive to Te Anau on Friday night, as it was sleeting and blowing a gale. Too miserable to camp, we retired to the Te Anau motor camp. Overnight the weather cleared revealing a fine morning. We left our cars at the Te Anau Downs Motel. It was fine and sunny as we glided out of the boat harbour onto the placid waters of the lake.

I line up Entrance Island and a steady paddle stroke soon brought me there. Around the corner, McDougall broke into view but cloud hid the summit and also some of the surrounding peaks. A south-west breeze was blowing broken cloud over the mountains but there was little wind in North Fiord. Still it was cold and I was glad to be wearing pogies on the paddle. Jon and Brian had pulled ahead a little and we kept a steady pace to the narrows where we pulled in for a

breather. The forest looked magnificent and no beaches were visible due to the high level of the lake. It took us another hour to reach the Glaisnock.

Here we landed and decided to have lunch at the DOC hut which was in a mess and stank of dead fish, the result of visiting boaties. I was glad to get away and paddle up the Glaisnock River past Newton Creek where we pulled in. With light packs we started up the valley, then turned right on an excellent deer trail which climbs up the true right of Newton Creek. After about 1,000, we left this and climbed straight up a ridge coming off the south-west spur of Kane. There were good deer tracks on this too and we quickly mounted this to the bushline. About 500' above, we found a dry campsite on the ridge crest and after much discussion, decided to make a lightweight summit bid and return in the dark. It was 500' above us to a snow dome which we reached at 7pm, only to see the summit several kms off and two awkward steps along the ridge. With only tramping boots, crampons, one ice axe each, no rope or technical gear, this did not look promising so we retreated back to camp, preserving our steps in the snow for the morrow.

We spent a comfortable night. The sky cleared to the east and there was a heavy frost. We were up before 6am and it was evident the weather was breaking. It was black to the west although the peaks around us were still clear. It was now or never. Jon and I quickly reached the snow dome and climbed along to the first step. An icy gully proved no obstacle, then I waited for Brian while Jon kicked steps around the side of a steep bluff. We traversed out on steep hard snow, neither of us feeling very comfortable with our minimum of gear. The second step was no better. Jon tried a direct route up the rock, but no go. The alternative icy traverse required care. Then we were plodding up easy angle snow fields in mist. The summit was a nondescript rocky knoll; the view non-existent because of the cloud.

Then we were running down the ridge in a near whiteout. My thoughts were on the fiord. Would it be rough in the kayaks. On the last step we took out the rope and abseiled. In two hours

we reached the campsite where it was raining lightly. Then down into the bush, steaming along, racing for the sound and praying the passage would go well. We saw a kaka pirouette in the tree tops in the Glaisnock valley. It was still raining when we reached the kayaks. This time I donned my wetsuit and slipped the goretex parka on top. It would be a cold paddle.

It was dark and gloomy in the fiord, high walled mountains descending from the dark storm clouds. We glided out with a gentle wind behind us. No trouble till past the narrows then the wind from the north-west caught us - confused water, surfing in the kayaks. Brian looked unhappy. When I suggested he hug the shore, Jon had a fit - too slow he cried. Later he relented as conditions worsened. I eventually shepherded him in close and all the time we were running before wind and waves. Brian nearly was caught on a lee shore just before Shelter Point. Once past Entrance Island it was really rough. A northerly gale was screaming down the lake, with some whitecaps out in the middle. Brian wore an anxious frown while Jon was nonchalant. We decided to take a diagonal course to Welcome Point. This was no place to capsize and so with Brian between us we headed across. With wind and waves behind us, we surfed easily. Brian rafted up a few times for a spell. I could see Jon was cold and irritable and he eventually exploded when Brian started to coast along the shoreline past Welcome Point, so I told him to take off when I held station abreast of Brian. Behind us it was a wild scene with storm clouds on the peaks, an angry lake and the scream of the wind. No a moment too soon, Boat Harbour hove into view.

Stan Mulvany.

COOK STRAIT AS AN ALTERNATIVE

David Herrington

(Refer Map 1 on page 7)

I had not been paddling much for the last two years while I waited for a shoulder injury to complete its healing process. There was a trip planned to Little Barrier Island on January 28 but DOC pulled the plug on that trip. There had been some preparation for

the trip so I was ready to go somewhere. When talking to Graeme McIntyre one day, I found he felt the same way. As luck would have it, the weather was settled in our part of the island so Cook Strait looked like a good alternative for a paddle.

After a check on tide times, we decided to start from Titahi Bay at 0900 hours to be at the Brothers at slack water. With help from Vic Jennings, we launched into perfect conditions - flat sea, no wind and covered in sun block.

Between Titahi Bay and Mana Island, there was a strong tidal flow. We were fresh so this was no problem. The weather stayed perfect but our time to The Brothers was a bit slower than anticipated. Too much enjoying the conditions and not enough paddling.

It was slack tide when we were north of The Brothers but the ebb flow caught us between The Brothers and Arapawa Island. We paddled 2.5 nautical miles across and were carried 1.5nm south; it took two hours to cross the gap.

We landed for a well deserved break on a stony beach along a rocky shoreline. From there we stayed very close to land and made our way north against the tide, around Cape Koamaru to a camp site in Onehunga Bay.

Next morning we were on our way by 0800 hours. We continued down Queen Charlotte Sound past Long Island, Pickersgill Island and through Pattern Passage, which is between Arapawa and Blumine islands. We were hampered by a northerly wind but got shelter from the islands as we passed them.

As the day wore on, the wind decreased or we got more used to it. By noon we had entered Tory Channel where we lunched with some friendly residents for an hour while waiting for the outgoing tide. It was a good run down the channel, our only concern keeping out of the way of four ferries and the wind gusts which the sounds are noted for. We stopped just inside West Head for a 15 minute break before we crossed the channel, then keeping very close to the shoreline to combat wind and tide, we headed north to Perano Point. From there it was decided to make a go for it across

the strait to Makara. This was quite a challenge with the tide and wind against us.

As we paddled out into Cook Strait, we were losing ground in what might be called a major ferry glide. By 2000 hours, with a change in tide, we started to make progress on our transit points. It was obvious we were going to be paddling into the night with no moon. The sea conditions were not my idea of experiencing night paddling for the first time. I had always thought I would try a night paddle on a calm sea with plenty of moonlight as a first introduction.

I was comfortable and happy with the way I felt in the kayak considering the conditions. The only real concern was that of losing sight of each other in the darkness.

Night came on slowly and without the distraction of lights, our night vision was good. We could see each other 20 to 30m away so things were not too bad. That is until we ran into some confused sea or it ran into us. The first of it hit me fairly much head on, luckily. My drink bottle was swept off the deck. I use only lemonade bottles now because I've lost too many good cycle drink bottles. Half of my split paddle went overboard from the rear deck. It got caught in the bungy cord and was left dragging behind the kayak.

Graeme was hit side on and with a quick recall of his whitewater skills, he braced and stayed upright. We plugged on for what seemed like ages but it was only probably 10 minutes before we came clear of the worst of it. From my experience I would say it was a patch of merging currents. I won't guess at the size of the waves but we were certainly bobbing about.

From there everything gradually got better. We rafted up and lashed my split paddle back on deck. It was 2200 hours. The wind started to reduce as did the sea. Ohau light came into view with its two long flashes every 15 seconds. We paddled north along the coast with the top of the hills being lit by the loom of Porirua city. The phosphorescence was magic - like thousands of glowworms all around us as the sea was disturbed by our kayaks and paddles. It was only in the calmness that I started to feel tired.

There was a small light on shore spotted in the distance, so we headed inwards. Who in their right mind wouldn't be going to bed anyway.

Not much further on, there was a disturbance in the sea. My first thought was it's a whale, but no, just the sea breaking over some rocks. The next thing was around the corner came the street lights of Makara, shining high and clear. I had only been to Makara once years ago, and all I could remember was lots of rocks and not much beach.

As we approached, the moon came up only to be lost again behind the hills as we approached the shore. The idea was for Graeme to go in first in his Puffin (plastic) to test the landing and help me with my fibreglass kayak if it was stony. It didn't quite work that way. Graeme had just landed when a small swell carried me in beside him. A quick exit and grab the kayak from the waves being dumped on a steep beach - 12.30am. Fifteen hours paddling for the day. We looked around for a suitable spot to spend the rest of the night and settled on asking the owner (luckily for us he was still up) if we could camp in his boat shed, which we did along with a cup of coffee he made for us.

Next morning (or later the same day) we were up and back on the water by 7.45am for the 2.5 hour paddle with the tide northwards to Titahi Bay. Once again Vic Jennings helped as we loaded everything into the ute. We accepted the kind offer of coffee and toast from the Jennings before we hit the road.

David Herrington. (Map on page 7)

CARTOON

Ray Pratt of Christchurch takes the prize for the cartoon caption, which appeared in N/L 55, of a shark sizing up a capsized paddler. Ray's caption: "Who's going to get their Eskimo Roll in First?!"

Ray suggested the N/L include a detailed list of what equipment should be carried in the kayak. The Canterbury Sea Kayakers N/L has such a list, and I will endeavour to include one with the next N/L. Ray notes he carries a few extra things, like a waterproof torch, matches, candle and stainless steel mirror for signalling.

SKOANZ LEVEL 1 SEA KAYAK GUIDES COURSE

Report by Alistair Rynn

After two changes of venue, the first official level 1 sea kayaking guides course was held from 28 to 30 April 1995. It was based at Marahau on the edge of Abel Tasman National Park. Weather conditions were perfect with a maximum of 10 knots of wind all weekend.

During the first morning, participants were divided into groups according to kayak colours and then briefed on the assessment techniques, objectives, course content and a rough itinerary.

Then it was wetsuits and thermals on and into the kayaks. We paddled out from Otuwhero Inlet to Toko Ngawa Point, then 20 minutes out to sea. Here rolls, both left and right, self rescue, single and group rescue were assessed with a variety of techniques required. This was followed by a rather cold feed-back and lunch session on the beach next to Split Apple Rock.

Next was a session just off the beach involving participant's skills in paddling around a course of stationary objects (the assessors), draw strokes and sweep strokes, before returning to Marahau for hot showers and coffee.

The evening test was meteorological, taken by Ray Button, and involved matching weather maps with weather descriptions, and writing a weather prediction for a weather map. This session was eventually completed after much head scratching and nail biting on everyone's part.

Saturday involved hands-on guiding of clients (Nelson Polytech Adventure Tourism course students) working in pairs with one completing the briefing and guiding until lunch, when the second guide took over. Due to the late arrival of the students and long feedback session following lunch, unfortunately the second guide had little time to demonstrate their skills.

The evening test involved compass and map skills.

Sunday, the assessors decided a surf session was in order, so we loaded vehicles with boats and people and headed over the hill to Golden Bay

then across to the Patarau River mouth on the West Coast. Fortunately a southeasterly wind forecast meant no wind and this with a high tide combined to give quite calm conditions (for the coast!) We were once again working in pairs with one participant remaining in the soup while the other demonstrated left and right rolls, surfing in front of waves, and broaching techniques. After a few trashings, some planned, some more spontaneous, we retired to a driftwood beach. Into dry gear, and lunch was followed by the final course de-brief and results.

Some bad points I found were lack of pre-course organization and communication. The venue lacked more typical NZ coastal conditions and I felt not enough on-the-water judgement testing of participants was carried out in some areas, ie., wind, weather, currents, crisis and risk management.

The best points were excellent emphasis on self rescue drills. The NZOIA (Outdoor Instructors Association) assessors, Steve Chapman, Ray Button and Brian Lodge, were very skilled, appropriate and familiar with their role. The final results yielded two outright passes and six deferments.

Alistair Rynn

CONSERVATION NEWS

Peter Sullivan has had one letter back from the Auckland Conservancy, in response to his letters sent out to all the main DOC offices with information about KASK and contacts in various areas. The revised Draft Management Conservation Strategy policy June 1994 for the Auckland Conservancy includes a policy specifically referring to sea kayaking:

46.1.3. Increase self-sufficient

over-night camping opportunities for sea kayakers and other boat users on the mainland and on islands in the Hauraki Gulf.

The four main areas of concern to be noted by KASK members are listed as:

1. check landing is allowed on off-shore islands
2. only camp at sites designated for the purpose
3. be extremely careful with fires
4. ensure no stowaway rodents when you pack your kayak

The conservation officer who wrote the letter notes that a rat was seen to jump out of a sea kayak 'at one of our islands recently.'

BIRTH NOTICE

Congrats to Bevan Walker and Nora Flight on the very recent birth of Adele Sandy

If undelivered, please return to Sandy Ferguson, 12 Dunn St., Christchurch. 2