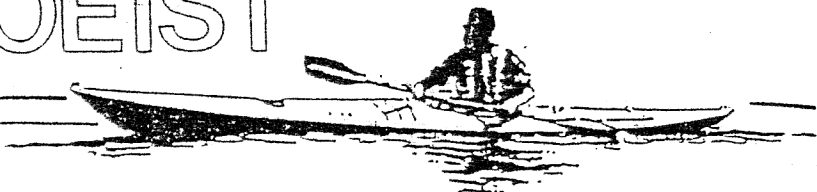


39 Marsden Rd
GREYMOUTH

THE SEA CANOEIST NEWSLETTER



Issue 38
APRIL 1992

EDITORIAL

We are pleased to report that the Graham Egarr Forum was an unqualified success with about 55 people attending from as far away as Auckland and Stewart Island. The forum generated a healthy profit which will be used to establish KASK(NZ) which was formed as the result of a unanimous decision at the inaugural AGM.

There are now 75 Subscribers to the Newsletter and we are boosting circulation as of this issue by circulating to N.Z.C.A. affiliated clubs, sports retailers and other interested organisations.

It is apparent that Sea Kayaking is on a rapid growth path in New Zealand. It's our objective that this newsletter grows with it and keeps pace with new developments. Feel free to contribute an article, or even just an idea we can follow up. How about some letters to the Editor?

TRIP REPORTS

We have the following trip reports on file. Drop a line if you want a copy of the report in full.

Double Cook Straight Crossing

Date: 5 Sept 1991
Duration: 12 hr 45 min
Report Details: 1 page
Participant: Dave Herrington
Route: Titahi Bay - Brothers - Mainland Return

Bay of Islands

Date: 6th Aug 1991
Duration: 8 Days
Report Details: 2 pages including map
Participant: Dave Herrington
Route: Opuia - Haruru Falls - Rangihoua Bay - Cavalli Is. - Waitepipi Bay - Motukawiti Is - Cape Brett - Opuia

1992 GRAHAM EGARR FORUM

The Weekend Started as planned with a general chin-wag and three short slide shows by Paul Caffyn, Bevan Walker and Eric van Toor.

The Show and tell on Saturday morning ran about a hour over time due to the unexpected and pleasing number of new designs which have appeared on the scene. There were no fewer than 14 different single and 5 double designs covering everything from the latest design in lightweight kevlar to a faithfully reproduced Kodiak Island type Baidarka (except for the seal skins which are not an approved boat building material any more).

The subsequent sessions were split into two groups to allow a greater range of topics and cater for different skill levels and interests. Basic techniques, trip planning, surf, various forms of kayak construction and repair, navigation and rescue techniques were covered.

An interesting group discussion on safety rounded off the afternoon which included a discussion on a wide range of equipment that could be used to alert others to your difficulties. The need to be self-reliant was emphasised.

Sheila and Jill prepared an excellent buffet dinner which along with a little wine lead to the relaxed atmosphere required to intelligently discuss the establishment of a formal organisation. (See "K.A.S.K.(N.Z.)INC." on back page.)

Saturday evening finished with an enjoyable slide competition featuring 26 slides. Bevan Walker scooped the prizes with two brilliant wildlife-with-Kayak shots featuring muttonbirds and a dolphin.

Sunday Morning focused on accessories and comfort, covering customising your Kayak, photography, videoing, fold up trailers and sails. Paul then led a session on expedition planning while Bevan a smaller expedition to the surf.

Panel discussions on weather and Health and fitness followed after lunch.

The games event was not held due to time and energy running out and it was resolved to hold fun events earlier in the programme in future.

The Forum was informative and very positive. The most difficult part from an organising point of view was to run to time as there always seemed so much more to discuss as each session drew to a close. Some sessions were clearly too short and sessions on coastal conservation and paddles were omitted. As the size of forums increase we will be able to split the electives into three parallel sessions which would allow deeper treatment of some subjects by those who want it.

The aim is to have the next forum in Wellington. Please let us have any ideas on format and the venue. It is probably going to be even larger than this year's, so planning can't start too soon.

Bevan Walker - Circumnavigator

On the 2nd of October 1991, Bevan Walker and Daniel surfed into St Kilda Beach at Dunedin, completing an arduous paddling stint around the southern tip of the South Island from Te Waewae Bay. Over the past few years Bevan has been progressively knocking off sections of the South Island coastline. The landing at St Kilda Beach successfully concluded his kayak circumnavigation of the South Island. His arrival home at Brightwater was celebrated with the now traditional squishy pavlova in the face welcome.

Although this last leg was accomplished in very trying weather and sea conditions, the highlight of Bevan's circumnavigation has to be the 13 day sprint with Craig Hornblow from Te Waewae bay around the coast of Fiordland to Jacksons Bay.

Bevan has sent a 6 page trip report to K.A.S.K. which we will try and include in another newsletter with a maps showing the route and landings. But to give an idea of the conditions he and Dan experienced, an excerpt from Bevan's report on day four, when they were heading east from Bluff Harbour:

The wind started to increase, the cloud base was dropping and the sky darkening by the minute. We changed direction and headed for a shingle beach. With increasing speed, the sea was lifting and beginning to break, then the rain started. Sometimes we had to use support strokes to stay on an even keel and the wind kept on increasing in strength. Approaching the beach, we lifted our rudders and I caught a large breaker that left me high and dry on the beach. Jumping out of the cockpit, I grabbed Dan who was surfing in and pulled him up high and dry. The air temperature was dropping and rain was pelting in horizontally. We lay the Nordkapps side by side beneath a small cliff and pitched the tent in between to prevent it being blown away. We has paddled 6.5 hours and it was now 2pm. Offshore, visibility has dropped to a few hundred metres and the the sea was covered with foam.

Book Reviews

'Sea Kayaking' by Nigel Foster. Published by Fernhurst Books, G.B., 1991, 96 pages.

Authoritative manuals on sea kayaking number only a few. Derek Hutchinson's 'Sea Canoeing,' now into its third edition, is a good all round book on the techniques and equipment for sea canoeing with a concluding chapter on the Arctic origins of the sea canoe. It lacks a comprehensive section on expedition paddling and planning. Derek, a Geordie from Northumberland, is a skilled instructor and great raconteur. His overseas trips include a 300 mile trip in the Aleutian Islands and a trip in Prince William Sound, Alaska.

John Dowd's book 'Sea Kayaking' is more for the expedition kayaker. John's forte was paddling foldboats, with his longest trip, a trip with two doubles along the Caribbean Island chain from South America to Florida. The early editions contained a marked bias against 'tippy' British fibreglass kayaks, while the latest edition has somewhat modified the bias. This manual has a comprehensive section on expedition paddling, survival situations etc.

I did expect a lot more from Nigel Foster's new book as he has completed a circumnavigation of Iceland and crossed Hudson Strait solo. At a glance, the layout is good, with double columns print and almost half of the book as either illustrations, photographs or maps. Photographic sequences of launching and rescue techniques are good.

The book however lacks depth on many of its chapter and subject headings. For example, it is the first to contain a chapter on night paddling - the three page chapter looks quite stunning as the pages are black and the print is white. However the content is superficial and inadequate - first page is half story of a night paddling

experience and half photograph, the next two pages have information on keeping together in the dark, buoyage at night, a caution plus a half page diagram on ship's lights. OK stuff only for a basic introductory guide to sea kayaking, but not adequate for an expedition kayaker.

The old British bias of heavy built boats and not paddling with rudders is emphasised by Nigel:

rudders: 'I consider them an additional way of turning rather than a substitute as they often fail.'

This follows 3 pages of photographs of how to tilt and lean turn a kayak

weight: I would consider 28 - 30 kg (62-66 lb) as being a reasonable maximum unladen weight for a single sea kayak when you need to carry it.

I would have to ask Nigel in what circumstances do you not need to carry a kayak.

The chapters on tides and the sea are good, particularly with good information on tide races and overfalls. The chapter on navigation attempts through five complicated examples to explain navigation when crossing tidal streams, while a short section on using charts and maps afloat completes the chapter. It lacks an introductory section on the fundamentals and techniques of navigation. The chapter on rescues has excellent explanatory photographs for both single and double kayaks. The self rescue using a paddle float shows the paddler holding onto the paddle with one hand at the front of the cockpit which I feel is OK for the experienced paddler. The more commonly used technique, which allows the use of both hands to re-enter the cockpit, is to slide the paddle under the deck lines

To sum up, a good introductory book to the British style of sea kayaking, with a good to excellent layout and plenty of good pics, but the depth of material is lacking on some of the subjects covered.

This book is available in New Zealand from Boat Books in Auckland.

Minimalist Sea Kayaking & Kayak Weight

It puzzles me why the British persist in stressing the need for building and paddling heavy kayaks, for instance as noted in the review of Nigel Foster's book.

In newsletter No. 53 of 'Paddlers International', there is a report on a trip by six Brits paddling Nordkapps in South East Alaska:

'With no support crew, the party were obliged to be self sufficient in food and equipment for 20 days. As a precaution against being stormed in, 6 litres of fresh water was carried on the rear deck on each kayak. In the kayaks, tents, clothing, sleeping bags, cooking equipment and a full complement of safety and emergency equipment was carried.

In all, the kayaks weighed some **200 kilograms**, so heavy that it took all six paddlers to carry the kayaks over the rocks to and from the waters edge each day.'

Even if the 200kgms (440 pounds) is a bit of an exaggeration, I cannot comprehend how on earth the boats ended up being that heavy. Bear in mind that I paddled solo through the same area in 1989 with an all up weight of my kayak, food and equipment in Alaska would have been a maximum of 75 pounds with two weeks of food on board. My criteria concerning weight of kayak, equipment and food was that I had to be able to carry the fully laden kayak onto my shoulder.

Twelve years ago, when heavy boats and equipment were the norm, a laden NZ expedition kayak would require two people to carry it to the water, or loading at the water's edge when paddling solo. Today, with the production of 30 to 35 pound kevlar kayaks, dehydrated meals and lightweight tents, sleeping bags and clothing, the all up weight of an expedition kayak should come well under 80 pounds with a little careful planning.

When Max Reynolds and I paddled round Fiordland in 1978, our kayaks weighed 75 pounds unladen as this was the stock standard British heavy layup. Our trip took 27 days and a 30 mile day was exceptional. By comparison, Bevan Walker and Craig Hornblow, in light kevlar kayaks, completed the same trip in 1990 in only 13 days, with some days nudging the 50 mile mark.

The heavier a boat and its equipment, the deeper it sits in the water and hence the greater the wetted area. As wetted area increases, the drag or frictional resistance of water on the kayak proportionally increases. Thus to maintain the same speed as a light kayak, a paddler in a heavy boat has to proportionally expend a greater amount of energy. Admittedly this is not a problem for short duration paddling, half day trips or less but on a multi-day trip, as weight of boat and equipment increase, the daily achievable distance decreases. On exposed coasts, often the most critical time of the day is the evening landing. It is no good busting a gut in a heavy boat to reach a destination only to come unstuck because the body lacks the strength to deal with a hazardous landing.

If you are considering purchase of a sea kayak for multi-day coastal cruising or a lengthy expedition, I cannot stress enough the need to consider a lightweight boat. The extra cost of a kevlar layup is fully justified.

If anyone has any thoughts on this subject, please drop a line to K.A.S.K.

Steering Mechanisms for Rudders

At the recent Sea Kayak Forum in Christchurch, I promised to include an explanation and diagrams of the rudder steering system I developed.

Foot control of a rudder can be achieved using:

- a. T bar, mounted under the deck
- b. pedals sliding along tracks attached near the hull/deck join
- c. floor mounted hinged foot pedals

My preference has always been for the surf ski style, floor mounted hinged foot pedals. I prefer foot size pedals to prevent pressure points that occur with bar type pedals. The pedals are plastic/steel hinged onto a T bar section of wood, aluminium or fibreglass, with a slot running down the axis of the T. The T bar is held in place on the hull by two plastic wing nuts and bolts (the type that hold a toilet lid onto the pan) that are glassed along the centre line of the cockpit floor. With the wing nuts loosened, the slot along the centre of the T allows fore and aft movement of the T bar until the perfect placement for the feet is found. Using this system, the heels of the feet are fully supported, for most efficient paddling, while the toes and top section of the feet move the pedals fore or aft for steering. The foot pedals, either fibreglass or aluminium, are mounted as far apart as possible, near the hull-deck join, to allow the feet to be stretched between them.

The rationale for the floor mounted foot pedals is as follows:

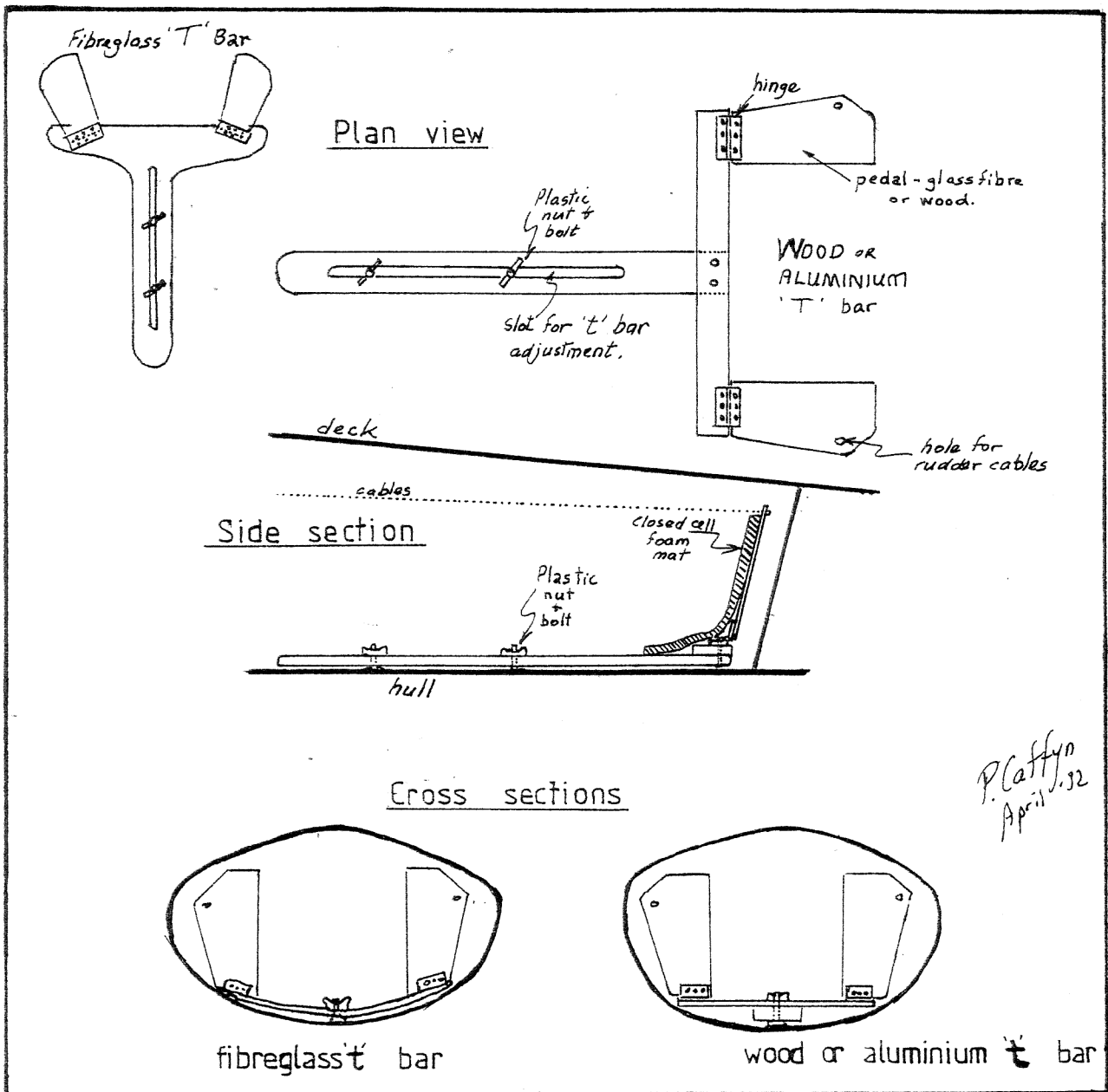
- i. tracked foot pedals on the hull deck line do not allow solid support for rolling, nor do they give full support for the feet.
- ii. T bar steering systems do not normally allow full support for the feet.
- iii. With the hinged foot pedal system, the heels sit against the hinge, allowing continuous support for rolling and bracing. It is the toes and ball of the foot pressing against the top of the rudder pedals that do the steering.

The T bar systems or the sliding track systems rely solely on the toes or ball of the feet achieving the steering. The heels and lower half of the feet are un-supported, which I feel is an un-necessary strain on the lower legs and feet. With a round T bar or narrow bar pedals, pressure points are created, and can diminish blood flow to the tootsies. Not a problem with short duration paddling but it can lead to debilitating

problems on lengthy expeditions. For a kayak with either of these systems, foot size pedals can be added, and if aluminium sheet is used, these foot pedals can be bent to accommodate the natural angle of repose of the feet.

With the hinged foot pedal system, the whole foot is securely supported in a natural angle or repose - nothing is strained. The diagrams hopefully will be self explanatory. One problem I experienced in the past was the pedals flopping towards the cockpit when the feet are not in position. This problem was easily rectified by contact glueing closed cell foam mat across the hinge and foot pedal, which also added a comfy support under the heel.

Paul Caffyn



K.A.S.K.(N.Z.)INC. A.G.M.

The meeting to set up a national association of sea kayakers was attended by thirty people at the forum. Paul Caffyn outlined the aims of the association as being:

- * to inform and educate sea kayakers
- * provide an information network
- * obtain funding for videos, manual and literature
- * assist commercial operators to establish guidelines

Concern was expressed that the organisation appeared to be South Island based. It was pointed out that that was not the intention and that every attempt would be made to make the association national.

Another area of concern was the relationship with the N.Z.C.A.. A letter from the Sea Kayaking Commodore, Mr D. Robertson was read to the meeting. The issue of what form, if any, of affiliation with the N.Z.C.A. would take place was left as an issue for discussion between the committees of both organisations, but that some involvement would be mutually beneficial.

The motion to form an incorporated society for the promotion of sea kayaking was passed unanimously.

Lively discussion followed about the name of the society. It was concluded and passed by the meeting that the name of a national organisation should include "New Zealand" in its name. A vote was then held on a number of options, of which "Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (New Zealand) Incorporated" won out, followed closely by "Sea Kayaking Association of New Zealand incorporated" or S.K.A.N.Z.Inc..

It was resolved that a steering committee would be formed for the first year to get the association running, and that the committee comprise Paul Caffyn as Chairman, Eric van Toor as Secretary/ Treasurer and Sandy Ferguson, Bevan Walker and Dave Herrington as committee members. Meetings would be held by conference calls.

I'll shortly be writing to committee members to get the ball rolling. Contact me or your nearest committee member if you have anything specific you want brought up.

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