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EDITORIAL

We have had several requests for a newsletter circulation list to enable sea kayakers to get together with others in their area and also to renew contacts made at the forum. We wish to encourage this and intend to publish names, addresses and phone numbers in the next newsletter. If there are any subscribers who would rather not be on the list, please send a note to the editor in the next month or so.

It's pleasing to be getting some feedback in the form of letters to the editor. We are also beginning a three part series on medication next issue for sea kayak first aid kits which Max Handford has been kind enough to prepare for us. Other contributions will be gratefully acknowledged, but I'm not much of a typist, so if you can send longer contributions on disk (wordstar, wordperfect or ascii) it would help.

Next issue we will also be running a special on strait crossings. The feature will include Dave Herrington's report on his double Cook Strait Crossing which a number of people have requested.

N.Z.C.A. AGM

The N.Z. Canoe Association AGM was held on Saturday 18 July in Wellington. The meeting took with seven hours, so only items of relevance to sea kayaking will be covered here.

The first half of the meeting was taken up with reports from the various commodores and officers. Sea Kayaking was mentioned specifically in several of the reports as a growth area which needed consideration in other portfolios, i.e. instruction, safety and conservation.

Dave Robertson, the sea kayaking commodore for the 1991-92 year, presented a written report but was not present at the meeting. Dave's report expressed regret at the lack of funding for sea kayaking. He is currently preparing a survey to establish the "standards of knowledge" for sea Kayaking. Dave has resigned as commodore effective from the AGM.

I was elected to the sea kayak commodore position for the coming year. I cited my tasks for the coming year as:

a) co-ordinate the forming of guidelines for safe kayaking,

b) help set conservation guidelines,

c) assist commercial operators to establish standards,

d) to liaise between the NZCA and KASK.

The President, Hugh Canard moved a notified remit. "That the N.Z. Canoeing Association agrees in principle to move to a federation structure comprising autonomous associations...".

The motion was passed and it's up to the incoming executive to formulate the guidelines.

The importance of this remit to us is on a par with the government's proposed referendum on proportional representation!

The federation would be similar in style to Federated Mountain Clubs in that it lobbies for the common good of its member organisations. The member organisations would be autonomous, so that the problems of one would not directly affect others. This was our main objection to affiliation to the NZCA, as the financial and other problems of groups like

racing and slalom (with which we share little in common) also become ours.

The main benefit of membership to a federation is that, when it comes to funding and conservation issues we are part of an organisation that represents 1600 canoeists and not just 80 sea kayakers. Capitation fees of \$5.00 have been suggested rather than the current \$10.00 NZCA levy, and would not need to be paid twice if you were already a member of an affiliated club.

In a sense we have preempted the federation concept in that we have built KASK from the bottom up rather than have sea kayaking organised for us. If the federation proposal becomes reality, slalom, canoe polo, racing and touring would need to set up their own organisation as we have done.

Your views on the NZCA, the proposed federation and whether we should belong are most welcome and would assist in formulating the proposal for a federation.

ADVERTISING CLASSY TO CLASSLESS

WANTED: Double Sea Kayak in good condition. Phone Don Wilson, Dunedin (03)477-0663 home or (03)474-0999 ext 8570.

FIORDLAND KAY-
AKING HUNTER wants to hear from other folk interested in future forays into both eastern and seaward wapiti blocks. Rod Banks 186 Waiti Rd Timaru ph (03)688-6945.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

KAYAKERS & WILDLIFE

I had the pleasure of attending the 1992 Sea Kayak Forum in Christchurch in March this year and found it informative and well organized. Thank you for the time and effort many members went to share their experiences and knowledge with others. I was however disturbed to see a slide during the slide show on the Friday night of a very close encounter with a Yellow Eyed Penguin on Stewart Island. Despite outward appearances, these birds are stressed by close human contact as is most other wildlife kayakers have the privilege of getting close to, on their trips.

Through loss of habitat and predation, many of these species around our shores are at risk and any extra disturbance adds to their problems. Sea kayaking is a growth industry in New Zealand and many more people will be in a position to get close to previously undisturbed wildlife through this sport. KASK has a duty to encourage responsible and sensitive behaviour towards the wildlife around our shores by its members. As an environmentalist and one who spends a considerable amount of time revegetating habitat for the Yellow Eyed Penguin on the Otago Peninsula, I feel obliged to speak now and encourage KASK to formulate guidelines and policies for wildlife

viewing and to actively discourage the obtaining and showing photographs of 'hands on' wildlife.

I would be willing to assist with the formation of a policy or with the provision of more information towards such a policy.

Helen Clarke, Otago

Unless anyone else is keen, I would like to ask Helen to prepare a draft policy which can be either circulated with the Sea Canoeist Newsletter or discussed at the '93 Forum.

In my travels I have seen a great variety of wildlife, of all shapes and sizes, and ranging from nasty venomous biting creatures to a hedgehog joining three of us by an evening campfire. My philosophy has been to treat them all, no matter the shape, or size of teeth, with a great deal of respect. I am a trespasser in their home patch, not the other way round. I like to think N.Z. kayakers share this philosophy of mine.

RUDDER PEDALS

Dear Eric,
In your April issue of the Sea Canoeist I read with some amusement Paul's preference for a surf ski style pedal mechanism. I would be interested to know which model surf ski his design was instigated from as in the last 30 years of surf ski paddling I've never seen a floor mounted hinge (maybe 'style' is the key word here). All the skis I have seen have at least a half

to two thirds of the foot positioned against a solid foot well with the pedal and hinge being placed on top of this.

This allows for an efficient paddling style where the stroke can be powered from a solid leg action against an immovable platform with steering being done with the upper part of the foot. Several years ago I tried a kayak with a system not unlike Paul's with plastic hinges on the floor. For the first 10 kms the rudder waggled from side to side with each stroke until finally the hinges blew to bits. Fortunately the craft hip steered for the return journey.

I agree with Paul that the ski pedal system is superior to any other system but I would omit the word 'style'. I've enclosed a sketch of the setup I've used in my craft for the past 15 months for 15 months with no problems. The system is the most recent 'marque' in a long involvement with creature comfort and efficiency developments in my interest with craft design. The longest lay paddle I've done using the system is 7 hours, 5 of these were non stop, with no appreciable leg/foot whatever cramps. I've glued a piece of closed cell foam mat onto the hull for heel comfort.

The system allows for adjustment of the footbar and steering cables without disembarking. (This may be a problem with a large person and a small

cockpit.) There is positive and solid base for rolling and there is absolutely no rudder waggle. The bungee/shock cord attached to each pedal keeps the cables tight and self aligns the rudder. The cord should be two separate pieces - one for each pedal - or - 1 piece knotted/tied to the centre support so that each side stretches independently. Tightening the cord to similar can be checked by plucking/twanging each cord. They should 'twang' at the same pitch.

The support on the footpad base which is in contact with the hull should be as large as possible with closed cell foam or neoprene rubber between the pad and the hull. This reduces any pressure point loading to a minimum.

The only disadvantage that I can see with the system (no doubt others may see more) could be that there is no space between the pedals in case cramping requires the need to straighten a leg out - but - if the system is (a) adjusted correctly to suit the individual and (b) if the paddler has thoroughly prepared for the ordeal/ expedition this shouldn't occur very often.

I find that if I do get pins and needles, it's in my backside and usually inside the first 30 minutes of paddling (after that it disappears). By pushing against the footpad and raising my backside off the seat for a few seconds pressure on the sciatic

nerve is relieved.

I don't think nylon hinges would stand too much of this and I'm positive nylon/plastic nuts and bolts wouldn't last a nanosecond. I'll opt for stainless steel bolts and extruded brass hinges any day.

Thanks for the magazine, excellent value and I enjoyed the seminar. I hope my comments are of some interest to someone out there.
Peter Sullivan, ChCh.

Paul Caffyn responds:

We are in agreement that the hinged foot pedal system is superior to other steering systems. Frankly I'm not bothered about the semantics of what this system is called as long as the kayak manufacturers take note and get rid of the daft sliding track bar systems that are presently installed.

Peter's foot pedal system certainly has merit in that there is good solid support for the lower part of each foot. If my memory is correct, I only paddled a surf ski once, the heel supports are built into the deck of the ski, with no means of lengthways adjustment for different paddlers.

My foot pedal system was evolved to minimize leg and foot discomfort. It allows the feet to be stretched forward full length (against the forehead bulkhead) between the pedals. I have not experienced

rudder waggle with my rudder and foot pedal system.

Peter I take issue with your comments 'I don't think nylon hinges would stand too much of this' and 'I'm positive nylon/plastic nuts and bolts wouldn't last a nanosecond.' I have used the hull mounted plastic nut and bolt system for the Japan and Alaska trips (9,100 miles), and the plastic hinges for the Alaska trip (4,700 miles). Problems I have experienced long term have been with corrosion of brass hinges with stainless steel bolts and aluminium bars.' This was rectified by a change to strong marine standard plastic hinges for the Alaska trip.

Lastly I have always had a strong aversion to drilling holes in my kayaks, hence my preference for the system of glassing plastic bolts to the kayak hull. Any hole through the hull or deck is a potential source of water entry plus a potential stress/fracture point in the event of the boat hitting rock or sand in a hard landing.

To conclude, I'm sure my system can be improved upon. I can see the merit in raising the position of the foot pedal hinges a tad. What I do want to see is a easily adjustable foot pedal system that can be mass produced by kayak manufacturers which will replace the diabolical systems that they are presently inflicting on the unknowing public.

SEA KAYAKING NEWS FROM ABROAD

Brought to you by your fearless roving overseas reporter Kayak Dundee.

1992 Round Australia Attempt

On the 10th of March a strong duo set off from Bondi Beach, Sydney, to attempt a second kayak circumnavigation of Australia. Twenty one year old Tony Brown, from Melbourne, and 31 year old Eric Stiller, from New York, are pushing a 300 to 350kg laden double Klepper folding kayak in an anti-clockwise direction around the world's largest island or smallest continent. Stiller's father, Dieter, owns a Klepper kayak shop in New Jersey. It was in this shop that top class male model Brown first bumped into Stiller and the idea for a great adventure was conceived. Their initial training was carried out on the Hudson River and on the ocean south of Long Island.

The choice of a beamy folding double for the Australian trip must have been influenced by Stiller's father. The poor choice of boat for dealing with Australian surf has already been hammered home on the first leg up to Brisbane:

'Booming surf that tossed us out, mangled the rudder and twice snapped the mast in two.'

On the last leg into the Queensland waters, the pair spent 35 hours offshore in their klepper

slogging up the coast through 'heavy storm, whipped seas.' There are very few sheltered lee landings on the northern coast of New South Wales. The waves were so big, they did not risk attempting to land through the surf.

On the 19th of May, Eric and Tony reached Cairns. Their latest letter is from Thursday Island which they reached on the 16th of June. (Thursday Island is just north of Cape York, the northern tip of Queensland.) From Cape York, the duo aim to sail/paddle across the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria, which at a distance of some 350 miles, is a formidable challenge. At least they will have an advantage with the prevailing south-easterly trade winds to help sail across the gulf. A desalinator will provide fresh water during this 8 to 12 day crossing. (The paddling distance around the inside of the gulf is 1225 miles from Cape York to Cape Wilberforce, hence this 350 mile crossing will cut the paddling distance around Aussie by approximately 960 miles.)

Once they make a successful crossing of the gulf they will be free of major surf landings until the start of the Zuytdorp cliffs, the western tip of Australia, where the crux of the whole trip will commence for Tony and Eric. The cliffs are 130 miles long and the sails will offer

no assistance as the prevailing wind/current swell are all from the south.

The massive weight of the loaded klepper, 300 to 350kgs, is because Eric and Tony are carrying one month's food, plus 15 to 20 gallons of water, repair materials etc. By the time they reached Cairns, Brown had lost 12kgs in body weight and Stiller 10kgs. Sails, two are raised on short stubby masts, have been important to conserve their energy.

Since leaving Sydney, Eric and Tony have achieved a creditable 2150 miles to Cape York for an all up paddling average of 22 miles per day.

Their next mail drop is at Broome in W.A. and I hope to have another progress report in the next newsletter. One of the questions I have to answer for Eric and Tony is:

"What was the limit of surf that was 'reasonable' to negotiate with loaded kayak (2 meter?) with option to get out the next day?"

At least the boys are aware of the severe limitations of the klepper in surf, and are prepared to overnight for multiples of days to avoid huge surf.

Japan

Sea kayaking is becoming a popular growth sport in Japan. Kayak shops are springing up in coastal towns while some large outdoor shops have whole floors devoted to the retail of sea kayaks and equipment. Two separate colour magazines, Canoe Journal and Canoe Magazine, cater for both whitewater and sea kayaking, the latest of the former contains a superb colour pictorial article on kayaking in the Abel Tasman National Park.

While in Japan I was involved with four teaching clinics in Hokkaido, Kyushu and Honshu. Japan does have some of the most beautiful coastal scenery in the world. Visiting some of the small fishing ports is like stepping back 100 years in time; old wooden fishing boats, narrow streets, men and women repairing nets and sorting fish. On the western side of Izu Peninsula, the Dogashima Coast, I was staggered by the number of tunnels, archways and caves in only a five mile stretch of coast. Tunnel tagging became a favoured pastime with a total of 26 different tunnels and archways being paddled through.

For hardshell kayakers, the major problem for the likes of Tokyo paddlers is the time and expense to drive to the coast. Hour(s) long traffic jams and expensive toll roads do not make weekend paddling easy. For this reason, folding kayaks are popular, both for river and sea kayaking,

since rail transport is a fast and cheap alternative for accessing both sea and rivers.

For anyone contemplating a kayaking trip to Japan, I would suggest taking a folding kayak and using the super efficient rail transport system to access the coastline.

The Japanese would appear to be catching up on expedition sea kayaking with several major trips either under way or in the planning. In early June Katsuyuki Tanaka set off from Boso Peninsula, east of Tokyo, to attempt a solo kayak trip around the four main islands of Japan.

North American News

Three KASK paddlers will be attending a kayak festival at Providenya, in Eastern Siberia, from the 1st to 12th of August. Nelson paddlers Bevan Walker and Nora Flight will be joined by Dunedinite Alan Wood for the flight from Nome across to Providenya. Major problems for people wishing to attend this festival have been the cost of return air travel to and from Providenya, plus the impossibility of transporting a hard shell kayak. There seemed little point in attending the festival without a kayak to join the organized tours. Bevan and Nora are taking a double folding kayak with them.

My plan for this northern summer was to paddle across

to Providenya from St Lawrence Island, then after spending two weeks at the festival the plan was to paddle with Bevan and Nora up the Siberian Coast to Cape Behznev, then across the Bering Strait and back to Nome. Despite five months of trying, I was not able to obtain a visa for my "independent" expedition.

Bevan has a compact video camera, so hopefully at the 1993 Sea Kayak Forum, we will be able to view Bevan's footage of life in Siberia.

Book Review

The Essential Sea Kayaker A Complete Course for the Open Water Paddler
The only fully illustrated manual for the beginning or experienced sea kayaker

Author: David Seidman
Publisher: International Marine Publishing, PO Box 220, Camden, ME 04843 USA
Price: \$US 12.95

This 144 page softback, at first glance, is a good introductory manual for a novice paddler who wants to learn paddling strokes, and bracing skills.

Seidman, who is a columnist for American and English boating magazines, began sea kayaking only a few years ago, and most of the input for the book has come from friend and instructor Andy Singer.

Singer is noted on the cover as being a kayak designer/builder/instructor.

Despite the claim in the title, this book has nothing to offer for an experienced paddler. Neither is the book the only fully illustrated manual, for the Nigel Foster book, reviewed in the last KASK newsletter, is more lavishly illustrated. Even for novice paddlers, I feel the omission of a section on navigation in Seidman's book is inexcusable. The use of chart/map and compass plus basic navigation techniques are skills which have to be learned just as well as basic paddling and rescue skills.

The book is broken into two sections, titled Setting Forth and Toward the Horizon. On the plus side, for the novice paddler who has just bought a kayak, the chapters in Setting Forth on: Meet Your Kayak (Lifting, Making it Fit and Transporting), Getting in and Out (dry), Getting Out and In (Wet), Paddling, Maneuvering and Bracing are easy to read and understand. A combination of predominantly sketches and photographs illustrate the text.

The section Toward the Horizon contains information on rolling, rescues, advanced gear (which is your basic Kiwi paddling clobber), surf, wind and waves. The final chapter, titled Electives: Expanding your Horizons, strangely mixes a section

on weather, which should be a chapter on its own, with sections on Disabled Paddlers and Family Kayaking. The last four pages of the book contain lists of books and magazines, clubs and symposiums.

The first section of the book, the kayak, is only four pages long, one of which is a full page diagram. It is far too short and lacks meaty information. What there is reflects the way kayak marketing is carried out in North America:

"Don't be afraid to go by your instincts"

"(Kayaking is personal stuff, and looks definitely count.)" This is a reference to buying a kayak that is most appealing to the eye. The author suggests that your first kayak isn't going to have to last you the rest of your life. You can buy a turkey boat to begin with and buy better boats as your skills improve. Is it not better to buy a good boat to start with and gradually improve your skill level.

It concerns me that when I hear manufacturers (or writers) touting the word 'shelf appeal' regarding sale of kayaks. Form, function, performance and safety must be the initial criteria used for buying a kayak, not fluoro colour combinations or 'bells and whistles' deck attachments.

This will be coming across as a fairly negative review, however I feel the information presented in

this manual reflects the limited sea kayaking experience of the author and his instructor.

For the experienced kayaker, there is nothing to learn from this book. For the novice kayaker, there are several reasonable chapters on the basic paddling skills however I feel your money would be better spent joining your local kayak club or taking a pool training instruction course.

Contributions to Kayak Studies

Edited by: E.V. Arima
Published by: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1991, Canadian Ethnology Service, Mercury Series Paper 122.

Sold by: Mail order services, Publishing Division, Canadian Museum of Civilization, PO Box 3100, Station B, Hull, Quebec, J8X 4H2, Canada.

This 347 page softback, A4 size book contains 11 papers by various well known kayak historians, including John Heath and George Dyson. For anyone interested in traditional skin kayaks, this superb book has a wealth of information. There is a range of topics covering such diverse subjects as:

The Baidarka as a Living Vessel: the "bones" in the joints

Sub-arctic kayak commitment and "kayak fear"

The King Island kayak
The Features of Aleutian kayaks

The East Greenland kayaks

Kajakangst: The Greenland hunter's fear of disorientation

Form and Function of the Baidarka; the framework of design

Aleut kayak terminology Revival in Canada: a bicultural presentation Report on the construction of a kayak at Pond Inlet in 1973

Two Mikolski Aleut kayaks

There are some excellent photographs of traditional skin boats and building techniques. John Heath's paper on the King Island kayak is a valued contribution as the King Islanders moved to the eastern outskirts of Nome in 1966. On the entire coast of Alaska, traditional skin boats are no longer built. The knowledge and building skills have almost died out with the passing of the old timers. King Island, which lies 34 miles west of the Alaskan Coast, is only 1.5 miles long by 1.2 wide. It is rugged, rocky island, virtually surrounded by perpendicular cliffs. The King Islanders lived in a small village, Ukiwok, on the steep southern side of the island, in what was one of the earliest forms of pole houses, perched precariously on a rocky slope. There was no landing beach and the kayaks and umiaks had to launch from a steep boulder beach. I have heard stories of how a paddler in his kayak was virtually thrown into the surf by six of his mates when launching.

In Form and Function of the Baidarka, George Dyson

attempts to justify historical reports of baidarkas being paddled at planing speed, that is over 10 knots. He postulates theories on the moving wood of the baidarka framework, flexible skin, bifid bow, and truncated stern, plus some technical mathematical calculations and Aleut musculature to explain how these reported speeds were achieved.

The Kajakangst paper by John Heath is an excellent read. Angst, as I understand it, is a Greenland Eskimo term for acute disorientation, brought about by a lack of visual horizon. There are two situations in Greenland, one being a glassy calm day with a blue sea and blue sky, with sky and sea melding into one backdrop of blue, and secondly a calm day in very thick fog, with grey sea and grey fog showing no visual horizon. In the Arctic ice, I felt the latter dramatically in thick fog and was relieved when small floating ice particles or wind ripples on the sea gave me back a limited horizontal horizon. There is a lot more to it, including a growing fear of the sea, all well discussed by John.

Paul Caffyn, alias Kayak Bunde.

Vincent Maire sent down a report on the Auckland Scene for the newsletter. A contributing writer for the Wilderness Magazine, Vincent was introduced to sea kayaking in 1990.

The Auckland Scene

Perhaps the most qualified person to talk about sea kayaking in Auckland is Peter Sommerhalder of the Auckland Canoe Centre. According to Peter, sea kayaking is showing slow but steady growth with the move away from a few committed Nordkapp owners to a broader base of people using a wider variety of craft. It is this newer group who Peter sees the most of as they come into his shop to purchase the right sort of equipment.

Rangitoto to St Heliers. The 200 or so swimmers who took part in the 1992 event were escorted by more than 30 kayakers. No one could recall seeing so many sea kayaks in one place before and it was a great thrill for all the paddlers to be part of this event. Nancy Augustin spent many long hours on the phone getting paddlers to attend.

Auckland canoe clubs put on a series of four long distance sea races this year. They were organized by Dave Robertson and attracted a good number of sea kayak entrants especially the round Rangitoto race which was held in challenging conditions. One participant, not in a sea kayak, ended up in the water for 40 minutes, and

two Nordkapps had to tow another (make of) sea kayak which had lost its rudder, from McKenzie Beach on Rangitoto back to Takapuna. The four races were dominated by tri-athlete type kayaks however sea kayaks more than held their own, if not in placings, at least in numbers.

In spite of all this talk about club events, Auckland sea kayakers are on the whole unlikely to be members of a club. It is currently estimated that 50% are not club members and this number is likely to grow. The recent efforts of Canterbury kayakers to form a network rather than a club has been received with interest. Vincent and Dave are looking at setting up a similar network based on a mailing list that all 'members' have access to.

In spite of so few kayakers being seen in Hauraki Gulf there are plenty of intrepid explorers paddling the many miles of island coastline the gulf had to offer. Hard luck story of the year (so far) must go to George Spearman and Fred Underwood who took leave from work to paddle Cook Strait. The weather was not good so they spent the first three days exploring Kawau Island and the Mahurangi. On returning to Auckland, Cook Strait was still uncrossable, however their contact in windy Wellington said there was a possibility that things would improve so they strapped their puffin and sea bear on the roof rack and headed south.

The weekend the ferries had to stay in harbour because the seas were so rough was the weekend Fred and George camped on Makara Beach!

And talking of Kawau Island, the DOC ranger there is Geoff Cook who is a very keen sea kayaker. Recently Geoff led a party of sea kayaking environmentalists on a tour of Pollen Is.

On a recent trip to Motutapu, Rakino and the Moises, four Bay of Island sea kayakers joined the party of 15 which based itself at the lodge in Administration Bay on Motutapu. Apart from tourists, local sea kayakers can still be counted on two hands which is surprising considering the diversity of destinations awaiting intrepid explorers. Tim Smith has recently started an interesting venture on his 100 acre farm which is located on an estuary near Russell. Tim has 10 puffins for those seeking aquatic adventure and his wife has 10 horses for those wishing to keep their feet dry. The contact for Lanes Road Farm is (09) 4037672.

Ray Button has added 9 puffins to his fleet and is offering a range of tour options including trips around Great Barrier Island.

In spite of the slow but steady growth in sea kayaking, Auckland is not under threat of losing the title, "City of Sails"; and there are a good number

of paddlers who wish it to remain this way.

Vincent Maire

Stewart Island Kayak Tours

Recently I was sent a feature article from the Southland Times (June 17, 1992) which is headed:

"Sea Kayaking on island a big hit with tourists."

At the Sea Forum in Christchurch earlier this year, I renewed acquaintance with Innes Dunstan from Halfmoon Bay. Back in 1979, Innes, who was Postmaster for Stewart Island, hosted Max Reynolds before and after our trip around the island.

Although he never admitted it at the time, Innes thought we were totally crazy. At the forum he had to admit we were not so crazy after all. After 15 years as postmaster, he lost his job with all the PO closures, and recently set up a sea kayak rental outfit based out of Halfmoon Bay. The feature article notes he has five one seater puffins and a two seater. They are being used for trips down Paterson Inlet, for easy access to Mason Bay, and paddling down South West Arm.