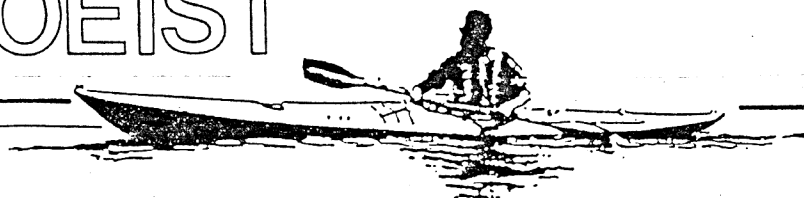


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RUDDERS AND SKEGS AGAIN

I was fortunate in being able to get to Auckland recently to attend the 'Coastbusters - Sea Kayak Symposium' - a full report will be provided in a future newsletter. However, I was taken to task by a couple of paddlers for my comments regarding rudders. Unfortunately, the necessity for brevity in the article has meant that some readers have misinterpreted what I was saying. I agree that Paul Caffyn was not the first to fit a rudder to a sea kayak, many people were doing that many years ago. What I did say, however, was that Paul had rethought the design concepts of the rudder and had come up with something that is quite different from what people had been using before. To repeat the exact words from that article:

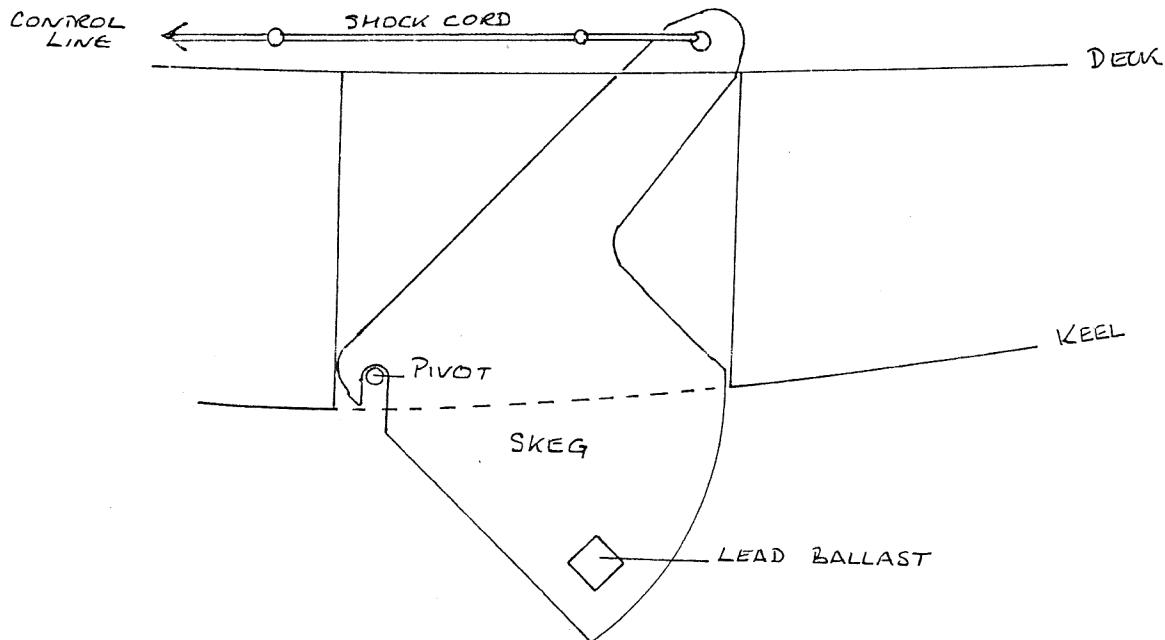
"... Paul Caffyn re-invented the kayak rudder for New Zealand and came up with a design that was far superior to anything else available around the world. Grahame Sisson has added refinements to not only the rudder itself, but also to the manner in which it is fitted to the stern of the kayak. In the past most paddlers allowed their rudder blades to kick-up on impact and were not able to be retracted from the cockpit..."

The interesting thing about the Caffyn rudder was that his original model was shown at a Sea Kayak Symposium in North America some years ago which was also attended by all the major manufacturers from both North America and the UK. Within 12 months all these manufacturers were bringing out copies, some, like the version made by Valley Canoe Products in the UK and now fitted to the Nimbus range of kayaks, is an almost exact copy with differences required only because the rudder fittings are made from moulded plastic rather than sheet aluminium. Some of the American copies have limited retraction and have a lower aspect ratio blade. The Sisson adaptation has a longer pintle arrangement which is far stronger and less liable to bend than in any of the other versions so far seen. It is extremely important that a rudder does not jamb up on you while at sea as this would drastically affect the kayak's handling to a dangerous degree. In fact, it is one area of kayak construction that needs particular attention. Another important feature of the Caffyn rudder is the high aspect ratio, semi-balanced design and depth of the blade, all features which can be used because the blade is fully retractable. The kayak rudder is really a trim-tab rather than a true rudder and therefore it is important that the blade area is kept to a minimum to avoid drag. The high aspect ratio achieves all the desirable features required in a trim-tab.

Wellington kayaker Russel Ginn has written regarding the comments on skegs. He has a wooden kayak which he found to yaw annoyingly in a quartering sea from aft. A rudder would have spoiled the aesthetics, and he didn't like rudders anyway, so he fitted a skeg. He writes:

"...The article on skegs discusses problems that are all too real with the type of skeg referred to. There is another type which is an unqualified boon: the internally retracting skeg. After much cogitation I opened up the rear deck, cut a slot in the bottom and fitted a skeg pivoting about a pin. The case was fixed to the bottom of the kayak and the deck replaced leaving a slot for movement of the arm of the skeg, or its extraction. The case is really a centreboard housing, as in a sailing dinghy, moved aft. The hull slot is 255mm long and 10mm wide. The skeg is made from 9mm 5-ply ballasted with sufficient lead to sink it positively and is controlled from fully extended to fully retracted by a length of cord with loops to fit around a peg on deck beside the cockpit. I used wood rather than metal for the skeg as wood is less likely to bend and then jamb. The device has been completely successful - with it slightly down in calm conditions the boat runs true with no wandering. More fully extended, the yawing in quartering seas is largely

eliminated. It also helps to balance the effect of cross winds. Going upwind in lumpy conditions I keep the skeg retracted and can turn into any awkward seas without any problem. Cruising setting in a moderate sea offers a triangle 200mm x 75mm. An area of 200mm x 140mm is available when conditions are a bit difficult. The skeg can be lifted out easily and stows through the rear hatch..."



DOUBLE TO THE SOUNDS

Mike Rowley - Dannevirke

Our major expedition this summer was a combination of wanting to explore the Marlborough Sounds for a week or more, and wishing to try out Max Grant's new 'Sea Farer' double sea kayak.

Before we headed south to the Sounds, John Craven and I took part in a cruise out to Kapiti Island to get the feel of the double. We had paddled together many times over the last few years in a lot of interesting situations and in a number of different boats. As we climbed into the 'Seafarer' we straight away felt at home: it was stable, comfortable and had lots of space for gear. Its kevlar construction made it very light and as we paddled out to the island we became aware that it also was very fast. We were delighted.

On returning home we set about organising gear, food, charts, tide times, etc. We were joined by Max Grant and Mike Christensen who were to paddle 'Puffins'.

On September 9 we all climbed into John's little Mazda with gear on our laps as well as the boot. We drove to the Wellington Ferry Terminal and found the poor roof-rack badly bent! The car was left behind and we walked onboard carrying our loaded kayaks. It was a pleasant trip to Picton, looking at places where we had paddled on various previous trips. On arriving at the Picton Terminal we phoned the shop at Portage to organise our transport over to Pelorus Sound.

We paddled away from Picton just after noon, reaching our Portage rendezvous at Torea Bay 68 minutes later, after checking out a shag colony on the way. The ute and trailer arrived and we quickly whisked over the hill and re-launched in Kenepuru Sound, setting

off for Pelorus Sound just after 2pm. We made good progress with a following wind and arrived at Pipi Beach camp overnight at 5pm.

Up at 6am, packed and set off northwards for the outer sound. The South Easterly wind followed us on every course change. We rounded Tawero Point where we rafted up and much to the surprise of Max and Mike, we broke out our John Dowd inspired sail (a converted ground sheet) and sailed the next 14km at an average speed of 6 knots. It was a real buzz as we sailed along. John (ahead of the sail) navigated and called for course alterations. Max and Mike trimmed the sail and I steered, sometimes we used all three rudders to steer. We sailed past Maud Island and right into the bay at Bulwer, on the western side of the sound, arriving there 24 hours after leaving the ferry with the Portage and 57km under our belts. The water here was very clear and blue, we looked at a Salmon farm before landing and having a long lazy lunch in the sunshine. We had a 'team talk' where a decision was made to tramp up to the top of the ridge overlooking Admiralty Bay and have a look at D'Urville Island and French Pass. We had hoped to paddle there but there was too much wind and not enough time to return, so we had a lovely walk with great views instead.

We shifted to a nearby beach and set up camp for the night, then did some fishing.

Day 3. Monday September 11. Slept a bit and got away at 10am, heading into the South Easterly. After an hour we met some seals sunbathing on Treble Tree Point. We spent quite some time watching and photographing them. A short while later we came across an enormous bull seal.

While paddling close to Maud Island the rudder in the double popped out: we had not put the screw in far enough. We raced off after Max, stopped him and fitted a spare screw. It is only when you are without a rudder that you realise how much you use it.

Mike met some dolphins and they swam right alongside him. We also saw several penguins, then stopped for lunch on a sunny sheltered beach behind Tawero Point. Then it was out into the wind again and quite a slog to Jacob's Bay where we decided to make camp. We pitched our tents and walked through the bush to the lovely little bay called Dillon Bell. it was almost dark when we got back.

Day 4. After breakfast we headed off into the wind again. Max skirted around the entire bay while we punched into the strong wind and head seas. We passed close alongside a yacht and were asked if we wanted a ride into Havelock. The yachties were surprised when we told them that we had come a long way to do this and did it for pleasure! We dug in and sprinted along with them for awhile, making about 5 knots into wind and sea.

It was a cooler day, but when we stopped for lunch we found another sunny sheltered beach, this time behind Koutuwai Point and just back into Kenepuru Sound. We paddled on east along the sound, keeping close to the shore and occasionally sprinting down the lanes provided by the mussel farms. We set up camp at Ferndale in mid afternoon and walked through the bush to Long Bay. On our return we cooked up a great feed of noodles and rice risotto followed by 'spongy puds'. Max went out for a short night paddle to try out his 'glowstick'. He said "I've cut the end off it, now what do I do?" The glowing liquid started dripping all over him and his gear!

Day 5. Up fairly early and away at 8am. Max, who had paddled ahead, unsplit his paddle around Kaiaho Point, so we could paddle through the little canal, but the tide was out too much and we had to portage over a few metres of sand. Mike was the first to arrive at the Portage shop where he ordered coffee and hot scones; while we waited we had toasted sandwiches and dripped all over the shop floor.

We loaded the kayaks onto the trailer, then over the hill again and back into Queen Charlotte Sound. A great service at \$10 a trip and well worth knowing about.

The wind was quite cool and strong as we headed towards Picton. We met Bill Anderson paddling strongly in his Nordkapp just off Mabel Island. Passed on the car keys and

said goodbye to Max and Mike who were returning home. Meanwhile we headed off in the driving rain towards Diffenbach Point where we waved to the others as they went by on the ferry. We had sat huddled together with our legs under a huge plastic bag as we waited. After the antics of our friends on the boat deck had finally gone by we got back into our kayaks and paddled north across the sound to Ruakaka Bay. After setting up camp and meeting the resident Weka (there was one at every campsite) we fished off the interesting sedimentary rocks (often running vertical), snagged and broke three lines and gave up.

Day 6, a lovely morning. We paddled along the northern shore of Queen Charlotte Sound, past pine covered headlands that reminded each of us of North America. We lunched by Edgecombe Point light, then on into Endeavour Inlet to look up an old friend at the Punga Cove Resort. We mowed ourselves a campsite on the lawn above the beach, set up our tents and hung up our gear to dry. After a quick change into bush-shirts and tramping boots we were off up the hill to the Kenepuru Saddle for the view, then back down via Camp Bay.

Day 7 brought steady rain overnight so it was up early to cook porridge in the shelter of the boatshed then off across Resolution Bay and into Ship Cove. It was like Fiordland all over again. Once more we were walking in Captain Cook's footsteps and we could feel the history of it all. Then it was off to Motuara Island where we lunched on the beach. We climbed the track to Cook's Cairn where we lay in the spring sun, enjoying the views all around, the birds, and the whole atmosphere of the place. The birds were here in abundance, there were pigeons, bellbirds, tuis, and the fascinating robins that actually walked over our boots as we uncovered worms and insects from under the leaves. They each had their own territorial claims to sections of the tracks and were most upset if another robin came over the boundary. We finally walked back down to the beach to find a large seal floating on its back lazily waving a flipper in the air and enjoying the warmth of the sun. We paddled quietly up to it and equally quietly, it casually swam away from us.

We paddled back across the sound to Cannibal Cove to camp for the night. After looking around for a while we found bricks, concrete and hydrangeas, and some very old macrocarpa trees. We wondered what was the history of this interesting cove. We cooked a really enjoyable dinner, then went fishing in the bay in the moonlight. The sea was flat calm and it truly was great to be alive.

As soon as breakfast was over on day 8 we loaded up our kayaks and set off for a string of little islands called the Kokomohuas where we took some photos as we rode the surges through the rocks. Then it was down the east coast of Long Island to land for lunch on a nice sunny beach to investigate an old searchlight generating plant left from the last war. We carried on southwards as Jhn wanted to land on Arapawa Island. We headed back out into the middle of the sound so that we could surf down to where we were to camp on Bluemine Island. Once again Bill in the Nordkapp took advantage of every little bit of lift in the waves - we might be able to paddle the double faster than him, but not in a following sea.

We landed on Bluemine Island and found fresh deer sign around the campsite. Our final dinner was cooked over, and eaten, around a lovely open fire in the moonlight.

Our last day, day 9. We woke at 6am to find a heavy dew on everything. We sang together as we packed our kayaks for the last time, then paddled away into a lovely clear calm spring morning. We stopped again at Diffenbach Point for a scroggin and drink stop, and to watch the ferry go by. Then on towards Picton where we met a couple of triathletes out paddling. We went past the Yacht Club to look at the old scow 'Echo', then back over to the Ferry Terminal to land and stow our kayaks on the ferry.

We had paddled 200km and tramped a further 22km.