

# THE SEA CANOEIST NEWSLETTER

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## EDITORIAL

At long last, a story from Bevan Walker on his trip with Craig Hornblow around Fiordland in the summer of 1990. Their trip was quite a remarkable achievement considering that the first trip from Te Waewae Bay to Jacksons Bay took Max Reynolds and myself 27 days, and even now I still consider this stretch of coastline one of the most committing in the world in terms of frequency of bad weather, rough seas, and paucity of sheltered landings. I would suggest that the development of lightweight, kevlar kayaks and the deepdraft over-stern rudder contributed to Bevan and Craig's success. Max and I paddling 65 pound kayaks (unladen weight) and using matchbox size, semi-retractable skegs, considered 30 miles in one day quite exceptional whereas Craig and Bevan nudged 50 miles on their good days.

The story by Phil Handford of a successful Foveaux Strait crossing also reflects on the importance of sound research, planning and physical training as integral ingredients of a safe trip or expedition.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

1994 COASTBUSTERS- AUCKLAND  
14-16 OCTOBER

The annual Coastbusters Sea Kayaking Symposium is to be held in Auckland over the weekend of October 14 to 16. It will be held at the Marine and Recreation Centre (MERC) at Long Bay on Auckland's North Shore. The programme will be a combination of keynote speakers, panel discussions, workshops and practical sessions of the water. Manufacturers and retailers will be in attendance to show the latest in boats and equipment.

On Sunday morning there will be an announcement concerning a major event in the Auckland sea kayaking calendar for 1995.

MERC offers full accommodation but with a limit of 55 beds. Delegates are advised to book early as up to 100 people are expected to attend. To obtain a copy of the programme and a registration form, contact MERC by telephoning (09) 473 0714

or fax (09) 473 1945

## KAYAKER SAVES DINGHY OCCUPANTS. SALVAGE RIGHTS REJECTED!.

by John Kirk-Anderson

I'm not sure whether to paint a Red Cross or a Jolly Roger on the side of my kayak. After the fun and games of the KASK forum, I thought I'd practised enough rescues for awhile, but no such luck. Surf was up at Sumner and I had a Seahawk out from Topsport for a play. The surf was topping out at around two metres when I saw a runabout launch into the surf zone. I soon lost interest as I chose that moment to

miss a roll and grovel ashore. Hoping no-one would notice me empty the boat, I skulked back out in time to see what I thought was a bloody great shark fin. By the time my eyes had climbed back into their sockets I realized it was the bow of the runabout reaching for the sky. I beat a couple of wave riders to the scene, mindful of the spoils. A young girl and her granddad were clinging to the boat as surf knocked them around while Dad was doing a runner, swimming for a dinghy about 50m away. I got the two away from the boat and they played cling-ons as the surf blasted over the top. With them lying on their backs (they were both wearing buoyancy vests) and kicking we were able to make good progress. I don't recommend a couple of swimmers as a replacement for paddles however. As soon as they were on the dinghy, the Sumner lifeboat arrived to claim the glory. The wave riders and I tried to claim salvage rights on the overturned runabout but our cries fell on deaf ears. We paddled around collecting the million-and-one things that had floated free while seagulls cleaned up the soggy biscuits and bread rolls. The boat was towed to shore, blowing bubbles and getting lower with every wave. Once close to the lifeboat station the 'headless chicken' surfaced. I landed and watched some 10 chiefs yelling instructions to three guys on the tow boat. After watching for five minutes, I wandered into the water with a tow rope and assisted in pulling the boat onto the ramp. My claims to salvage rights were brushed aside so I gave up and went paddling.

John Kirk-Anderson

### 13.5 DAYS AT SEA A Sea Kayaking Odyssey in Fiordland - February 1990

by Bevan Walker

**DAY 1** - Te Waewae Bay to  
Green Islets

It was 12.20pm and we had just broken out through the surf at Te Waewae Bay. We had been planning for this trip for quite some time and at last we were on our way. The team included Craig Hornblow, Keith Dekkers and myself. Keith was going to come half way with us, up to Doubtful Sound then go over Wilmot Pass to Lake Manapouri. Craig and myself were heading for Jacksons Bay in South Westland. I had undertaken several kayaking trips in Fiordland but had never been right around the outside in one go and never on the south coast before.

Our Nordkapps were heavily loaded with a month's supplies. An average swell was rolling in and as we paddled around Sand Hill Point it started to lift and a 15 knots south-east breeze was nearly directly astern. Conditions were really good - the day was warm and the swell and a lump on top whipped up by the following breeze. With such good conditions, quite rare on this south coast, we wanted to go all day and land just before dark.

We headed past Sand Hill Point and pointed the bows westwards. Two fishing boats were out to sea, bobbing in amongst the swell. This was kayaking at its best. We wasted no time and Long Point was in the distance - a headland that juts out to sea, past the river that flows out of Lake Poteriteri. This part of the coast land is heavily bushed, low lying round-topped hills and numerous reefs, some of them extending several kilometres out to sea.

The day was getting on and we could see the sun lowering to the horizon. We passed Big River with conditions still the same and in the far distance we could see another headland. 'That must be Green Islets' which would be our first camp, for I knew the small boat landing had numerous rocks that jut out and some of them have archways through them. With less than an hour of light left as we approached Green Islets the sun

was very close to the horizon. We were surrounded by breaking waves. We had to find a channel to go over this reef. It was low tide.

Craig and Keith were just behind me as I approached the reef. A large wave lifted me up and I surfed down it's steep face. Over the shallow reef and into smooth water, I glanced over my shoulder and saw Keith knocked sideways with a breaking wave but he rounded the Nordkapp up and soon they were alongside me on calm water. It was a step-out landing on a sandy beach rising to a small flat piece of land with a steep cliff behind. We made camp in fading light, had tea and climbed into our sleeping bags. It was a great feeling. We had achieved over sixty kms in eight and a half hours non stop. This coast is wide open to the Southern Ocean and we could see by the driftwood that some massive storms must come this way.

**DAY 2** - Green Islets to  
Cape Providence

We are up before the sun, a small fire going, cooking our breakfast. The sun lifted up over the horizon and shone through one of the headland's archways. It looked promising for a good day's paddle around Puysegur Point, the south-western extremity of the South Island and considered the crux of a kayaking trip around Fiordland. The tide was half out as we pushed off. Joining a light south-east breeze we rounded the headland of Green Islets and turned the Nordkapp bows to the west. As we were approaching Long Reef we could see waves breaking well out to sea. To get around this reef we had to go several kilometres offshore and when we turned to the north-west the wind was lifting slightly in our favour. Rounding Windsor Point we could see in the far distance the aerials by the automatic lighthouse on Puysegur Point. We slipped inside Marshalls Rock and where the swell was lifting and breaking on the outside of this reef.

The kayaks were feeling lively, bucking about in this chop and sometimes surfing. We rounded Puysegur Point and headed in to Otago Retreat. We landed in a small cove on a sandy beach and walked up to the lighthouse, once a well used track. The

light was once permanently manned but two of the houses have now been removed. The light is now powered by batteries and charged by a solar panel. We had lunch here and looking to the north-west we could see Cape Providence in the distance, our camp for the evening.

We pushed off from our small cove and round the outside of Coal Island and across to Gulches Head, through Break Adrift Passage, the sea was lifting. Gulches Head is jagged with numerous rocks sticking up. Across to Chalky Island and around the outside and then straight into Landing Bay at Cape Providence to Pickersgill Harbour

This was another good landing on a boulder beach in a sheltered bay. We moved the kayaks into the bush, grabbed our overnight gear and walked through the bush on an overgrown track to the outside coast. Down a steep bank to a shingle beach where a cave was found. This was an old sealers gang cave that was used last century. It was a dry cave in all weather, big enough to swing an axe in. We made our first radio contact and heard a marine forecast which sounded good. Tea was cooking over a small fire at the entrance of the cave. This part of Fiordland is rarely visited by kayaks and we were feeling very pleased with our progress and the conditions.

**DAY 3** - Cape Providence  
to Pickersgill Harbour

We were up early and walked down the shingle beach to Cape Providence where a cave goes right through the headland and into Landing Bay. Some big seas must hit this headland; there were logs well inside this cave. We loaded the kayaks and we pushed off at low tide.

Around the cape to the north we paddled. The tide was coming in which meant we had a head tide all the way. Cape Providence has numerous offshore rocks which are just below the surface. The cape is swept by strong currents and we could feel it as we pushed into it. We met Cyril and his crew mate on the *Sea Spray*, a cray boat that fishes the Providence coast. This part of the coast is low lying with round topped hills and in the distance

we could see the Dark Cloud Range. The wind was easing off as we paddled around West Cape, the westernmost extremity of New Zealand; a small low lying headland with offshore reefs. There were many mutton birds on the water and we paddled very close to them on our way to Dusky Sound.

The sea was dropping as we paddled past South Point at the entrance of Dusky Sound. Many large mollymawks would fly by and look down upon us. We followed the coast into Dusky Sound, past Crayfish Island and into Pickersgill Harbour where Captain Cook was once moored for several weeks. We made camp just above high tide. Looking up Cooks Channel in the distance we could see Cooper Island and on the skyline Heath Mountains.

#### **DAY 4 - Pickersgill Harbour to Breaksea Island**

We woke to an overcast sky and a hint of rain. We packed and checked out the small harbour and visited a place where Cook cut down the trees - Astronomers Point where they looked at the stars to get their longitude and latitude. And then on our way past Low Island and Indian Island and into Bowen Channel and up the Acheron Passage. Resolution Island on our left and the mainland on our right with Wet Jacket Arm coming into this passage. We paddled to the northern end of Resolution Island past Gilbert Island and onto the inside of Breaksea Island. We did some fishing here and caught many large cod for our tea and then landed on a boulder beach. This was a shorter day paddled than the previous ones.

#### **DAY 5 - Breaksea Island**

We had a little lie in. We brought one set of snorkelling gear with us and this was the day we were going to use it. We spearfished around the inside of the island and looked at the seals that came our way. We were camped next to a seal colony. I was spearing fish when I saw a seal swimming by with a large gash in its side. It must have been bitten by a shark - I decided to give the spear fishing a miss after seeing that seal and got out of the water. We had enough fish for several

days. Craig and Keith had also speared a few fish and we were cooking them on the beach as darkness came in.

#### **DAY 6 - Breaksea Island to Dagg Sound**

We were on the water early, just on first light. Conditions still good but the wind had shifted to the north-west - this meant a slight headwind. We paddled past Coal Bay and the sand dunes at the head of this bay are black - like the colour of coal. The wind was lifting. Now and again a breaking wave would come our way. The tuna were jumping and we were getting closer to Dagg Sound by now.

About midday as we entered Dagg Sound, the wind was too strong for us to paddle. We made camp on the northern side of the sound about three kilometres in where a large river comes down a steep valley. We fished and that night feasted on cod.

#### **DAY 7 - Dagg Sound to Deas Cove**

Next day we were up early and heading out of Dagg Sound. The sea had dropped slightly but the wind was still coming in. It was starting to lift a little, more tuna jumping, past Black Point and we could see the entrance of Doubtful Sound. The Hare's Ears were sticking out - two rocks at the entrance of the sound. The cloud was dropping and the headwind was increasing. At last we entered Doubtful Sound. At the same time a large cruise ship went into the fiord. It was dwarfed by the large mountains rising straight from sea level up to a thousand metres and more; bush coming down to the sea and waterfalls falling into the sound.

We left Keith at Bauza Island - he would paddle up to Deep Cove, bus over Wilmot Pass, then paddle across Lake Manapouri. Craig and myself paddled past Blanket Bay and around the southern tip of Secretary Island into a grinding head wind. This was painful. Squalls tore down the channel and blinded us sometimes, even pushing us backwards.

We wanted to reach Deas Cove, about six kilometres away with a comfy hut, before night fall but we could see a storm coming in. One squall hit us; we just rafted up. Visibility was just a few metres. We were

pushed backwards. When it had passed we powered on again into the driving rain. This was one of the worst headwinds I have been in. It was an absolute physical drain, our arm muscles stretched to the limit. We were right against the east side of the channel, just metres from shore trying to get out of this blinding wind and sea which was getting whipped up and blowing straight into our faces. Metre by metre we ground our way up to Deas Cove. At last we were in the shelter and paddled up to a perfect landing with the bush coming down to the high tide mark. At last we had made it. Those wind squalls were lifting over 40 knots. We had been on the water ten and a half hours, completing 35 kms. Two hours longer than day one and just over half the distance covered. Head winds are gut busters. Nothing is going to stop us now. We are halfway - 230 kms behind us.

#### **DAY 8 - Deas Cove**

We woke up to a big storm outside. No paddling today!! We just rolled over in the sleeping bags and went back to sleep. A north-west storm was raging outside. It made the day before look quite calm. We were really happy to be in the comfort of this warm hut. We finished the rest of our fish and had a good look at the maps for the rest of the day and read some magazines.

#### **DAY 9 - Deas Cove to Styles Island, Caswell Sound**

The storm had passed. Conditions looked okay, the rain had gone, cloud had lifted a little and the sound was quiet. We packed and once again we were out on the water. We were wondering what conditions were like on the outside of the coast. We paddled past Open Cove and we could see that it was going to be a lumpy ride. It was a confused sea. The north-west storm had left a steep north-west roll coming down the coast as well a south-west roll coming up. These two swells hitting each other made a very confused water, lifting the swells into steep faces. As well the sea was hitting the cliffs and bouncing back out to sea. It was the biggest confused bit of water that I have ever been in.

The swells were making their own wind; in the troughs there was no wind at all and when we were on the crests we could feel a fresh breeze blowing into our faces. As we paddled past Nancy Sound, a couple of kilometres offshore, we could see a small cray boat dancing on top of the waves as it lifted its pots and dropped them back over. We were making good time in this big sea and it didn't take long to reach Charles Sound. This part of the coast is very steep, rising from sea level straight up to the snow grass with a very rocky coastline.

Past Nugget Point were some large cathedral shaped rocks, sticking well out of the sea. We could see the entrance of Caswell Sound but Craig wasn't feeling the best. This large confused sea was taking a toll on us. So we headed into Caswell passing on the south side of Styles Island. We landed on a smooth round-topped ledge and pitched the tent just above high tide. There was no running water on the island but the storm had left some water in some rock pools which we gathered.

That evening we walked to the west side of the island and we could see the sea was dropping and conditions looked promising for tomorrow. This small island was covered in bush and we had a panorama view looking towards the head of Caswell Sound. Craig did some more fishing to fill up our larder and that night we feasted on fresh cod.

#### **DAY 10 - Styles Island to Bligh Sound**

We were up early, well before sun-up and on the water just as it got light. This was a perfect morning with very little wind and not much evidence of the storm two days before. On past Two Thumb Bay and along to Looking Glass Bay, past Round Head and in the distance we could see House Roof Rock. This is a massive big rock sticking out of water with a roof top pitch to it. The sky was patchy with cloud and now and again a hint of rain would come our way. We paddled out to sea to go around this offshore reef with white water crashing over the top of it. Ahead we could see the entrance to George Sound. A crayboat came

along side and the skipper said he was looking out for us. Cyril from down the Providence coast had radioed through and told him that we were on our way.

A headwind was lifting. We did not want to go into George Sound as we would have to paddle in a long way to find a flat piece of land to camp. Our speed was slowed down with this wind. We were opposite Catseye Bay, we had been paddling all day against a head breeze and head tide. This was a good chance to land. On the south side of Catseye Bay a reef sticks out which slows the south-west swell down. We entered the bay and surfed onto a sandy beach. The sandflies were very thick. We walked to the northern end of the beach and back to our kayaks. We pushed off into a low surf and out of the bay and headed to the north-east. The head breeze had now dropped leaving just a bit of a lump on top of the south-west swell that was always out to meet us. Paddling around Flat Point, the southern end of Bligh Sound, we decided to push on to Sutherland Sound where we wanted to explore. This sound is quite different from the others. It has a shallow sand spit over across its mouth and a large estuary behind. It had been a long paddle and we could feel the effect on our arms. We had covered just over 50 kms. Approaching the entrance to the sound we could see that we would have to paddle over the bar and into the quiet water behind. As I began to surf down a steep wave, the stern of the kayak was lifted up and the bow sank under. It broke with a roar and from the cockpit to the rudder was under white foaming water. After some time the bow lifted up and I was off like a rocket. This was the best surf ride I had on the whole trip. We made camp in the bush just above high tide.

#### **DAY 11 - Bligh Sound to Milford Sound**

We awoke to a perfect day and decided to paddle up into the estuary. The tide was coming in which pushed us on our way. The water was shallow and up at the end of the sound rose a large mountain. The sun was lifting and made the surrounding mountains look inviting. Many estuary birds

were in here, ducks, white herons, oyster catchers. We turned and paddled out back where we had come from. We broke out through the surf over the sand bar and out into the deeper water and headed towards Milford Sound. As we paddled past Bell Point some large breaking swells were lifting high on its jagged coast line. Looking into Poison Bay we could see some large mountains covered with ice. This is a very steep coast line with U-shaped valleys once carved out by the glaciers more than 10 thousand years ago.

The day was warming up and we had a slight breeze behind us. This was great to be making good time. We rounded Fox Point and across to Anita Bay the entrance to Milford Sound. We landed here and set up the camp. I went for a spear fish and caught some good size fish for our tea.

#### **DAY 12 - Milford Sound to Martins Bay**

We are up early. Cooked breakfast over a fire and waited for it to get light enough to leave Milford Sound and up the coast to Martins Bay. Overnight a north-westerly had lifted which meant we were pushing into more headwinds. Around Yates Point and the winds increased on up to No Mans Beach. This was getting too much for us we were getting nowhere. The sea was lifting and the wind increasing. We sneaked in behind a small headland and landed on a steep shingle beach. We were here several hours before pushing off about two hours before dark. The wind had eased slightly allowing us to launch and paddle up the coast to Martins Bay.

We landed at the southern end of Martins Bay in between some rocks on a sandy beach. We made camp just by some flax bushes just high enough to be out of the way of the breaking surf. We cooked tea and then slid into our sleeping bags and were soon asleep.

#### **DAY 13 - Martins Bay to Browns Refuge**

We awoke to a noisy surf outside. Thinking that it was too rough to push on we just lay and listened to the sea outside. Thought we would have a look. It had calmed down. Lets pack

and go. We ate breakfast as we were packing and were soon off the beach on our way north.

We paddled directly across the Martins Bay to Long Reef. The swell was lifting up over the shallow reef so we keep well out to sea. Across Big Bay and around the northern point. Some more big swells were lifting and once again we headed out to sea. Along past Longridge Point, Gorge Island and on up to Cutter Rocks. We were looking for a place to land and Browns Refuge looked like a likely place.

A boulder reef was sticking out to sea and if we could sneak around behind it we could have a good landing. I went in first catching one of the smaller surfing waves. Some large round topped boulders were all around me but I sneaked in between them and landed on a sandy beach. Craig was right behind me and had a good landing. There are not many safe landings up this coast but we managed to get behind this shallow reef that stuck out.

The day was only half gone so we made camp and then explored the beach. We could see the wreckage of an old fishing boat that had been thrown high and dry by a big storm some time ago. During the day the sea lifted with some large sets of surfing waves coming into our little cove. It was good to be on shore.

#### **DAY 14 - Browns Refuge to Jacksons Bay**

Next morning we were up early and packed, ready to push. It was too dark, we had to wait a little to see where we were going out over this reef and then up the coast. This was our last day. Out to sea was blue sky but over the land was a big dark cloud. The sun was shining through small gaps in the cloud and it looked really spooky.

Past Barn Bay Island some large sets of swells were coming in. I would not like to land on this part of the coast. It looks worse than where we landed the day before! We could see Cascade Point in the distance and once we were around that point we were on the home straight.

Some very large sets of swells off the coast of Cascade Point and we were well out to sea - several kilome-

tres. These swells must have been lifting up to five metres and they were hissing on the backs of them. When we were in the troughs there was no wind but on top of them we were caught by the south-west winds. There were many Fiordland crested penguins along this coast and they seemed to like these conditions. Once beyond Cascade Point the sea had calmed down. The day warmed up and the weather seemed to know that nothing would stop us now. Past Seal Rocks,

Stafford Bay, up past Smooth Water Bay and around Jacksons Head. We had made it! In thirteen and a half days! 480 kilometres! Two days without paddling. This was sea kayaking at its best. What a great trip! We had food left over and we had done what we had come to do. We landed at Jacksons Bay not far from the wharf. We hitch hiked back to Southland to pick up the vehicle and then back to Jacksons Bay to pick up the kayaks and back to Nelson.

Bevan Walker

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### KASK Forum paddle

I felt I had to write to put matters straight about the forum paddle and the slog to Picton. It is of great interest to see how the wind strength changes in each writer's account, from 25 knots to 30 knots. It must be noted that not a sail was seen in these conditions, only motor craft.

According to the Beaufort Scale of Wind Force, a 25 knot wind falls into the category of Strong Breeze (mean wind speed 22 to 27 knots) while 28 to 33 knot winds fall into the category of a Near Gale. It is very hard to put an exact figure on wind speed, as the sea conditions had not conformed to a pattern at that time.

It was felt that the wind may well have been 28 to 33 knots with stronger gusts which may have exceeded 40 knots for brief periods, caused by the steepness of the surrounding hills. All I can add to the debate is, I was glad to get my feet on dry land, and was also glad to be alive. By the way Harry Litchwark and I had a frightening encounter when the ferry seemed to loom up very quick.

The question I ask myself is would I go out for a paddle in a 30 knot breeze for the fun of it? And the answer I keep getting is a big NO!

Michael Rossouw  
Christchurch

### Logo/PANZ

1. I've just read my latest Sea Canoeist Newsletter (51) and it was great to get such an extensive report on the 1994 Sea Kayak Forum at Picton since I was unable to be there.

2. You had inserted a sample of the modified logo that Peter Sullivan had been working on from Graham Egarr's original. I think it is a great idea to have a logo and it's good that you invited comment on the design.

3. What concerns me with this present draft of the logo is that it is quite strongly male in appearance. You and Sandy and various others such as Brian Lodge in KASK have made the effort to recognize and involve the women who are already involved in sea kayaking in New Zealand. I think this should be continue by a bit further work on the logo, to the end that the figure paddling should

look, at the very least, unisex rather than purely male. This is a subjective response of mine, based on the fairly broad shoulders and broad face with what appears to be a beard from the shadows underneath the face. Would you like to refer this query onto Peter to see if the graphic artist he has been using would like to work further on the figure in this way.

4. I suppose another matter that arises pursuant to the debriefing at the Picton Sea Kayak Forum is whether or not the person on the KASK logo should be more obviously wearing some form of life jacket. I would be interested in the views of KASK on this one.

5. Lastly it was good to see that KASK has joined PANZ (Public Access NZ) and Nora Flight is to be commended for her summary of their work in their latest newsletter. PANZ does excellent work on access anywhere throughout NZ and I am genuinely grateful for what they do. I have been involved in the work on access myself, although not through PANZ, for the last five years and it's great that there are volunteers out there.

6. I do have one area of concern with respect to some of the ways PANZ's views are represented. There has been an occasional tendency to portray the Maori as some kind of deeply faulted bunch of New Zealanders because they have valid claims with respect to many areas of land within New Zealand.

7. Generally speaking, the Maori place their claims before the Waitangi Tribunal in order that they be recognized through the proper processes. I understand from Bruce Mason, researcher for PANZ, that it is not so much that the Maori make these claims and have valid claims that PANZ object to; it is what the Crown may do in response to these valid claims that is more a matter of concern.

8. I hope that KASK will not every fall into the same mistake of appearing to slang Maori claims but rather work actively in it's own right and through groups such as PANZ to guide the Crown towards sensible settlement of the claims instead. I believe Nora has done a good job in this in her representation of the wide range of work that PANZ does and has man-

aged to avoid any suggestion of 'Maori slanging'. Good on her.

Ann Louise Mitcalfe  
Wellington.

### Editor's Response

Peter Sullivan has modified the logo by the inclusion of a lifejacket and New Zealand for those overseas people who think a Kiwi is a bird.

Regarding the unisex comment, I like the logo as is - it is different in that the paddler appears in serious concentration, as though on a mission.

The logo represents a sea kayaker, and does it really matter if the paddler appears as a male or a female? The sports of both caving and sea kayaking have always been non-sexist - people are accepted for what they want to do enjoy out of the sport, regardless of sex.

Has anybody else anything to add regarding the logo design?

### The Big Blow - Anzac Day 1994

I was not there either so will refrain from commenting on the actions of those involved. I would like however to comment generally on the reports. In my experience it really helps to separate facts from opinion in a report. Also making 'asides' in a report can really offend those people being referred to. The nett effect is to create division and disunity where warmth and fellowship of shared adventure were present on the actual day.

I have seen this happen in a number of clubs and associations (and businesses) so my plea to all future writers of reports is:

- only state known i.e., corroborated facts
- keep personal opinions to a separate section ( as some writers did)
- use as few emotive adjectives as possible
- if you want to be critical - criticize your own actions or inactions

Otherwise I'm sure 'An adventure is a disaster you survive'. I'm looking forward to the next Forum. Thanks to the organizers.

Hugh Canard

## TRIP REPORTS

### Foveaux Strait Crossing

15 February 1994

Phil and Max Handford

in a double Resolution Sea Kayak

This trip report includes weather maps and some insight into weather patterns that can occur in southern NZ.

It had always been an idea to be able to complete a Foveaux Strait crossing. Puysegur and Foveaux are a part of the Southern Ocean and right in the path of the southern weather patterns - the winds are strong and changeable and the swells large. The weather patterns are affected by the polar maritime airstreams and conditions are typically unstable. Forecasting is therefore more difficult than in the more stable conditions further north.

Our holiday to the South Island for the last two weeks of February had been planned for some time. During January, I began watching the weather patterns more closely to decide whether to head for the bottom of the South Island or alternatively for north-west Nelson. There was a noticeable change as an increased number of intense high pressure systems appeared and moved slowly across the lower South Island.

A large intense anticyclone (1025mb) moved slowly onto the country in early February (see maps). This actually remained stationary and then moved south slightly. As is typical of strong anticyclones, they tend to be slow moving so that the centre is unlikely to move more than 100 miles in 24 hours. In addition such anticyclones act as a block to advancing systems, for example the depression SE of Tasmania on 10 February was forced away as the anticyclone moved to the SW.

As a result of this strong virtually stationary anticyclone, what developed was an unusually long period of settled weather. This meant that the swell was likely to be relatively low and the weather relatively stable when we were ready to make our crossing.

During the last few days, we got updated marine forecasts at regular intervals on Metphone. The winds were typically forecast at 10-15 knots, up to 20 knots and the swell at 2 to 2.5m. The swell height seemed high given the weather but it is typical of

down south. We decided to go for it and left Christchurch on February 14 - this was a bit of an opportunist trip after all.

On arrival at Invercargill we booked into a motel to sort out our gear and made a call to Meri Leask at Bluff Fishermans Radio to confirm conditions and low tide time. The swell was nil and low tide in the middle of the strait at about 12.00 midday. Still the marine forecast said a 2m swell which was a bit un-nerving but only a 10 to 15 knot westerly wind. The next day would reveal the truth.

The morning dawned a beautiful clear blue sky. We aimed to launch from the Bluff boat ramp and get away at 9.30am to catch the ebb tide out of Bluff Harbour. We had to pack a week's food and gear into the kayak for the rest of our time on Stewart Island. With not a cloud to be seen, we made fast time as we caught the tide down the harbour to Bluff Head.

Before we cleared Bluff Head, the westerly swell started to get bigger being pushed up by the opposing tide and Stewart Island looked a long way off at 35kms away, just an outline in the distance. I had some doubts in my mind as to whether we should have even been here at all but reminded myself that conditions were perfect and if we couldn't cross now we never could. And we would probably never be fitter having done lots of endurance training for the Coast to Coast three days earlier.

I set a compass course for about the middle of Stewart Island (slightly west of Port William); Halfmoon Bay, our destination is further to the east. The plan was to paddle to this compass bearing all the way and to be in the middle of the strait at the turn of the tide. With the ebb tide, the tidal stream sets to the west so we would drift westwards until 12.00, and then drift to the east for an equivalent time with the flood tide. We estimated a trip time of about five hours with four hours for the actual crossing.

Directly in line with our compass bearing was a tide race off Bluff Head and as this didn't look too severe, we decided to paddle straight across rather than around it. Although there was some broken water, this proved okay.

We made good progress at about

8km/hour stopping every hour for a compulsory drink and a bite to eat (some old power bars I was trying to get rid of and some carbo drink). The westerly swell dropped to virtually nothing but twice we experienced waves up to one metre as the westerly wind got up and the opposing tide pushed the waves up. Good whitecaps formed with a few breaking over the boat. Fortunately these times only lasted about half an hour each and made us realize how changeable conditions were out there.

A couple of albatross followed at times to see if we had anything to offer and provided a pleasant change to the limited scenery.

We passed within 500m of a fishing boat in the middle of the strait, busy working long lines, but I think they were none the wiser as we would have been hidden behind the waves half the time.

The tidal stream on the Bluff side of the strait was surprisingly strong and we were taken well to the west. Our progress proved faster than expected and resulted in us being more than half way across the strait before the tide turned. As a result the drift to the east with the flood tide was not sufficient to compensate for how far west we had drifted.

As we neared Stewart Island it became obvious that we would have to change course towards the east if we wanted to take a more direct route to Halfmoon Bay. Ending up too far to the west with a westerly wind and a flood tide was certainly the preferred situation to be in, rather than ending up in the east too close to the Muttonbird Islands and having to paddle against the westerly wind and tide to reach Halfmoon Bay.

The trip took us a little over five hours for the 40+kms, with five minute breaks on the hour.

Innes Dunstan at Halfmoon Bay provided us with accommodation and local knowledge and gave us a lift over to Paterson Inlet for some more leisurely paddling. Paddling in Paterson Inlet is growing in popularity with its easy access to the wilderness and shelter from the open sea. Hiring a Puffin or a Southern Light from Innes or taking your own boat on the ferry for \$10 would have to be

high on the list of trips to do.

In hindsight, it would have been a perfect opportunity to head down the west coast of the island and right around. Unfortunately we hadn't done enough trip planning for that opportunity.

Phil Handford.

from any gift shop. The type that looks like paua shell in the light. Stick this on the front of your paddle and you have an instant mirror which catches the light.

Editor's comment: a bright fluoro-coloured blade is also a lot more visible at sea than a green, blue or white paddle blade. In the group situation on a lumpy sea, it is always a kayaker's paddle blades that appear first for another paddler. Bright red, fluoro-pink or fluoro-orange blades make an enormous difference with the ease of being spotted by other paddlers or yachts. A spray can of 'dazzle' will do the trick. Regarding the reflecto-tape, I use the tape on both faces of the paddle for two reasons - boats do approach from astern and when paddling on a pitch black night, the tape helps orientate the angle of the paddle blade in the sea.

### **You Kiwis Think of Everything**

by Mike Rossouw

On a recent trip to Abel Tasman National Park, something quite funny happened to me. After leaving Marahau, I was paddling into a slight headwind when I smelt the aroma of percolated coffee. I followed the smell for about 10 minutes until I arrived at Apple Tree Bay where a group of tourists were sitting at some tables. Was there any left? Yes said a tall American man. so after a cup we talked about all sorts of things. Then he noticed a tap on the bow of my Nordkapp, and said in a loud American accent, 'Hey what's this for?' Keeping a straight face I said "For fresh water".

"How does it work?"

"You see this pump (the bilge pump), well you pump and create a pressure, then open the tap and out flows the water."

"God damn it! You Kiwis think of everything. Why couldn't we Americans think of it."

Well with a silly smile on my face, I pushed out of the bay and paddled away.

Yes we can all get a tap. Where from you may ask. From any novelty shop. It is a suction cap tap, the type kids stick on their mother's fridges for a laugh.

### **BOOK REVIEW**

#### **Weather for NZ Sailors**

by Lt. Cdr Kenneth Brierly  
Endeavour Press

reviewed by Phil Handford

This book has been around for some time however it is worth reviewing in the KASK newsletter as it is the best book on NZ coastal weather and the sea kayaker's best reference.

To quote the Introduction: 'This book is concerned with forecasting weather in NZ waters and along NZ coasts. It is intended as a practical guide for practical people.' Most other texts that cover weather describe northern hemisphere weather. 'Rarely are South Pacific conditions described and never specifically those of NZ waters. This book aims to fill that void.'

'The mariner who looks for changes, listens to forecasts, inspects weather maps, reads instruments, has a basic understanding of meteorology and applies this knowledge, will be unfortunate indeed if taken unaware by the weather. The aim within the following pages is to explain these factors for NZ conditions. The book is purposely brief, for my experience with practical sailors tells me that they seek concise detail. It is non-mathematical, for why it happens is more important than how it happens... This book concerns the signs, the reading and the messages.'

Chapters include: The Marine Forecast, Pressure Systems, Clouds, Fog, Airstreams, Fronts, Wind, Sea and Swell, Weather Maps, Tropical Weather and Hurricanes. Local conditions are referred to throughout.

This book should be the first book in any sea kayaker's library. It retails at \$20.

The text has also been incorporated in 'Coastal Radio and Weather for NZ Fishermen' which was compiled and edited by the NZ Federation of Commercial Fishermen Inc. and published by Penguin Books in 1991. This particular publication was put together and sponsored by the Shipwreck Relief Society of NZ and the fishing industry organizations who made 5,000 copies available free of charge to mariners - 'it could serve to save lives - yours and ours.'

Phil Handford.

### **Letters to the Editor**

It was good to see you in Christchurch while you were promoting your book. When I spoke to you, I said I would like to try and write a canoeing tip for each newsletter:

#### **Mike's tips.**

While out on the sea in a launch or yacht, when you look around it is very hard to see a canoeist. The first sign is usually the flashing of the paddle. So why not make this part of your equipment more visible. For the cost of about \$5, you can buy reflecto tape



**NEW KAYAKING BOOKS**

Recent additions to my library include:

**'Complete Folding Kayaker'**

by Ralph Diaz

Published 1994, by Ragged Mountain Press, Camden, Maine, USA.

ISBN 0-07-016734-6

Ralph Diaz is editor of a 'Folding Kayaker', a bimonthly newsletter he started back in 1991. The 162 page, limpbound book is divided into three sections, Part One is 'What You Should Know', Part Two is 'Handling Skills for Foldables' and Part Three, 'Using and Enjoying.' The section on evaluating the 'leading doubles and singles' is good with comparisons made of: assembly/portability, stability/sea worthiness, tracking, maneuverability, speed/efficiency, versatility/access, quality/durability, cost/depreciation. Chapters on sailing, camping and repair and maintainence, plus good explanational photographs to complement the text, round off the first comprehensive book on folding kayaks.

Much of the material in Chapter 1, where Diaz attempts to justify why folding kayaks are better than rigid sea kayaks, will make any rigid kayak paddler with offshore paddling experience steam at the nostils. One quote from John Heath is included in a section that attempts to state why folding kayaks are truer descendents of the Eskimo kayak:

*John Heath, noted scholar on Greenland kayaks and paddling techniques, feels strongly about the liveliness and flex of the skin-and-frame design. "Paddling a hardshell kayak is like dancing with a department store mannequin while paddling a folding kayak or skin boat is like having a real-like dancing partner."*

The foldboats of today bear more resemblance to the clinker-built, style large cockpit kayak first built by John McGregor then the slim beamed Greenland skin kayaks which I feel is a more logical origin for the German folding kayaks. The Greenland style kayaks were never beamy with huge cockpits, and bracing and rolling were basic paddling skills. Also these kayaks were tailor made to each paddler's body size so the kayak was 'worn like

a glove' and became an extension of a kayaker's body. The Nordkapp, modelled on the lines of a West Greenland kayaks, with the hard chine rounded into a semi-round bilge hull shape, I would suggest is more akin to a real-life dancing partner. A thoroughbred sea kayak should be an extension of the paddler's body so that all the nuances of the scend of the sea are felt. Folding boats are not worn, they are sat in - the boats are too beamy and the cockpits too large for a paddler to attempt to brace, a fact which is reflected in Raph Diaz's book by the obvious absence of a section on rolling in rescue skills.

Leaving aside the folding kayak versus rigid kayak debate, folding kayak owners and prospective owners will find this a valued resource book.

\* available from Boat Books, 23B, Westhaven Drive, Westhaven, Auckland at \$49.95.

Ph: (09 )430 0580

**SKINBOATS OF GREENLAND**

by H.C. Petersen

Ships and Boats of the North Volume 1

Published 1986 jointly by The National Museum of Denmark, The Museum of Greenland and the Viking Ship Museum in Roskilde.

Hardback, 104 X 168cms, 215 pages ISBN 87 85180 084

English and Danish language editions

This book ranks on a par with Adney and Chapelle's *The Bark Canoes and Skin Kayaks of North America* as an authoritative historical document. H.C. Petersen was born in Greenland in 1929 and grew up with a traditional Inuit family lifestyle. He became concerned with threats to the cultural identity of Greenland Inuits by the transformation from a hunter's culture to that of an industrialized society. In the author's foreword, he quotes one of the great kayak seal hunters:

*It would be all too sad if the kayak, which has made it possible for our forefathers to exist in this harsh country, that vessel which developed out of their experiences and which has also formed the basis for the existence of my generation, should be lost forever when we die.*

To counteract this continuing loss of knowledge and hard won experience, Petersen began collecting and presenting all available evidence on the building and use of the Greenland kayaks.

The book is in two parts, the first on kayaks and the second on umiaks. Chapter headings for the kayak section are:

- Construction of the kayak
- The shape of the kayak and its development
- Kayak gear and fittings

The major emphasis is on constructional details of kayaks and hunting equipment, with a fair number of good photographs and diagrams to supplement the text. A glossary lists 347 kayaking terms in Greenlandic, Danish and English. I was a little disappointed by lack of historical photographs of the various styles of kayaks and a lack of detail on paddling techniques and suitability of different boats for various conditions but Petersen hopes to have the time for a second monograph on a description of Man and the Kayak, the cultural area which the kayak has created in the lives of the Inuit.

I have only skimmed through the book so far but one story appealed to me and will give you an idea of the descriptive writing style used throughout the book:

*My father told me of old Nikooq whose deeds in his prime were remembered with awe. The men sat one evening and reminisced about the great kayakers while the roar of the storm could be heard from far away.*

*Nikooq's eyes shone. The next morning the storm raged with unabated force. Nikooq came out of his house with a kayak suit on. Because of his age he had almost stopped taking his kayak out to sea. Now he carried his kayak down to the sea, made ready his harpoon and then sailed out alone. In the afternoon he appeared again with a large saddle seal in tow. His face was burned red by sea spray. The seal was pulled in and the folk flocked around him. Remarks were made about his age. "If that seal could talk, it would have quite a tale to tell," he said and went to his wife*

*not available in NZ to my knowledge.*

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### KASK Forum Paddle

from Glyn Dickson

Ron Augustin and I were disturbed by some of the remarks made by Sandy Ferguson in the July/August KASK newsletter regarding the incident that occurred at the Picton Forum. While I believe firmly that an open exchange of ideas is to be encouraged so that we can all learn from each other's experiences, when people with commercial interests pass judgements on competitor's products it must be recognized that their comments are usually biased to some degree. I am aware of a number of Sea Bear owners who have spoken and even corresponded with Sandy Ferguson disagreeing with his 'expert' opinion of the Sea Bear's design, yet he seems to 'know' things about the boats that we don't know even though we have clocked up thousands of kilometres paddling them in all sorts of conditions (including a number of trips in the Marlborough Sounds in high winds).

Looking back at the Picton incident, talking to people about it and reading the different reports, I'm struck by the degree of difference between the accounts of the incident, particularly from people who were not actually there. I really enjoyed reading John Kirk-Anderson's report which was very positive in terms of viewing the incident as a valuable learning experience, and because he was writing from his own experience. My report included in the last newsletter had actually been written for the *Wilderness Magazine* so I had downplayed the incident while trying to highlight some of the lessons that arose from it. There were a number of things that I could have done better in a risk management sense, however the main one was given the decision to paddle on from the island, I had placed two light people in a lightweight kevlar double (35kg), empty of gear, and with wind gusts that were in excess of 30 knots. If placed in the same situation in the future I would load the kayak with some form of ballast to settle it slightly in the water. This helps to bring the kayak to the displacement that it has been designed for, in the same way that cargo vessels ballast with water between ports.

I noted that Sandy Ferguson had actually done this, yet still experienced the problem the couple in the empty Sea Bear had, that is having the bow blown around so the kayak pointed at right angles to the wind. In this position bodyweight, paddling style and also style of paddle are very important. The body needs to be leaned into the wind, the paddle should be used with a low stroke, and an unfeathered paddle will not be caught by the wind as the paddle blade goes through the air. Having been less than five metres away from the kayak as it capsized and being the only person other than the couple concerned who actually saw it happen, I believe that a capsize would have occurred had it been any double sea kayak currently available in New Zealand. My memory of the capsize was that the kayak was on the crest of a steep wave, and the paddle stroke was occurring on the down wind side of the kayak when a strong gust hit.

Ron and I take a very low key approach to selling the Sea Bears as opposed to some other designers and manufacturers who believe in hyping up their product, while running down those of the opposition. We believe that the Sea Bears sell themselves and that if people try them out, and talk to people who actually know how they handle, they will discover just how good the kayaks are. With so many of the tour operators using our kayaks in exposed places like Fiordland, Banks Peninsula, Wellington and of course the Marlborough Sounds, the Sea Bear's design and safety record have been thoroughly proven.

Glyn Dickson

Paddling Perfection

## NEWS ROUNDUP

### 1994 Round Norway Kayak Trip

On August 7, Japanese sea kayaking instructor Takehiro Shibata completed a 3,000km solo trip from Oslo, near the Swedish border, around the exposed coast of Norway to the Norwegian-Russian border. The trip took Take 109 days of 'hardship and excitement.' In his first postcard, Take noted: 'It's been a month to cover 1,000kms. So it's been slow progress. My purpose is to meet people on the way and gather knowledge of the sea

from those ex-Vikings. Never the less I highly admire your strong commitment to an expedition. I become a whimp in rainy cold days. Right now I'm stuck in a small town due to Force 8 wind. But I'm having the best sea kayaking experience in my life. People here are so kind and have a lot of respect for seafarers.'

On July 26, Take rounded Norway's northernmost point, Nordkapp or North Cape. His postcard of the cape shows a rugged, exposed promontory of cliffed, flat-topped headland a little similar to some of the highest cliffs around Banks Peninsula. Well earned congratulations to Take for completing a bold and very committing expedition.

## Rudder Hints

In August I spent some time with Tony Free of Canoe Sports in Napier. I picked up a few more hints from Tony regarding rudders.

Anodizing: the strength and durability of an aluminium blade rudder depends on the quality of the aluminium used; the higher the grade, the greater the strength and corrosion resistance. The strength of a rudder blade and resistance to corrosion can be improved by having the blade anodized.

Foil Shape: the optimum blade shape for minimizing drag, is a blunt edged foil shape, similar to that of an aircraft wing. The leading edge (closest to the bow) should not be knife-edged sharp but a blunt, semi oval shape while the trailing edge can be feathered towards a fine, sharp edge. The best material to clean aluminium and form the optimum blade shape is wet and dry sandpaper used with kerosene.

## NZCA/NZCF

At the New Zealand Canoeing Association A.G.M., Glyn Dickson received the nod for the position of NZCA Sea Kayaking Commodore. Glyn notes: 'My bottom line is that I believe that KASK should be the sole representative of recreational sea kayakers at a national level. With the NZCA's move to a federation, this clears the way for KASK to be "officially" recognized as such. "Officially" really comes down to funding where Hillary Commission, Water

Safety Council, Sports Foundation etc only want to deal with one canoeing/kayaking body for the whole of NZ. If KASK decides to go it alone without the NZCF (NZ Canoeing Federation), we cut ourselves off from considerable resources.

#### **Correspondence Received**

With KASK now listed in Sea Kayaker magazine, some promotional material has been received from overseas. I will list those below and if anyone would like the information forwarded, please phone/fax or write:

a. Northwest Outdoor Center, sea kayak instruction and trips on the USA Pacific Coast

one course called the 'Total Immersion school of sea kayaking'

b. Irian Adventures; sea kayaking and rafting in Irian Jaya (Indonesian New Guinea)

#### **New Australian Coastal Hazard**

Recently in Sydney, at the AGM of the New South Wales Sea Kayak Club, I gained an insight into recent developments with deck fixtures and a new form of coastal hazard. This particular paddler Chris is a bit of a character. He has a lightweight solar panel mounted on deck which trickle charges a gel battery which powers his shaver, a light in the tent and a small televi-

sion. On a recent trip Chris took along a formal suit and dress shoes which he donned after setting up his tent on a beach to attend a dance at the local bowling club. Well, three ladies ended up coming back to the beach with him, uncertain if he was pulling their legs or not about arriving by kayak and camping on the beach. Satin sheets are on the check list for the next trip!

Regarding the new form of coastal hazard, this is not one mentioned in any guide or manual about sea kayaking. Chris landed on a nudist beach, which was backed by a row of sand dunes. As he soaked up the sun, Chris was horrified by the sight of a person, who was not of the fairer sex, making improper advances and gesticulating at him from the base of a dune.

Removing a knife, about the size of a small bayonet from his kayak, Chris threatened to remove the person's willie if he failed to desist in his advances.

Well if you have ever tried to run up the face of a steep sand dune, or plough up a steep slope in powder snow, you can picture the scene that followed as the terror stricken flasher attempted to escape. Then nearly at the top of the dune, he remembered where his clothes were - at the base of the dune - and had to slide all the way down again.

#### **Unclassified Adverts**

In this newsletter we were going to carry an advertisement for mail order books from Canoe and Outdoor World, Christchurch however Stephen Counsell suffered an out of body bone fracture as a result of a skiing accident. Our commiserations Stephen and best wishes for a speedy recovery.

#### **Aussie Books**

The Round Australia Kayak Odyssey books are still in print. The last 200 of the print run I had bound as hardbacks which have a really nice finish. Prices for mail/courier order are:

Limpbound (softback) \$43

Hardback \$52.50

Price include GST and P&P

For the hardback, please include a street address rather than a Post Office box for courier delivery. Only negative feedback on the book so far is from the wife of the helicopter pilot I work with. This lass is a bit of a Mills and Boon fan and reckons there is not enough passion for her.

I sent out 500 mailers to public and high school libraries and to date only 27 have bought the book. If you visit your local library, please request the the book!

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