

**Title:** *Fiordland and Beyond*

**Subtitle:** *A Circumnavigation of the South Island of New Zealand by Kayak*

**Author:** Max Grant

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**Publisher:** Max Grant

**Contents:** 152 pp

**Cover:** hardcover and softcover

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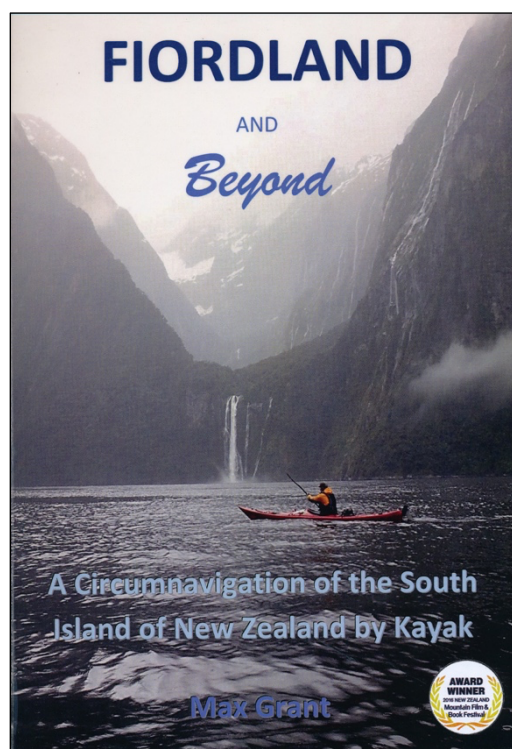
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**Availability:** m.grant@inspire.net.nz

**Review:** Paul Caffyn

Although the New Zealand Sea Canoeist kept paddlers informed and up to date with the adventures of Max and Melanie (Melz) Grant during their remarkable father and daughter team kayak circumnavigation of the South Island, this new book written and self published by Max is a valued addition to the stable of South Island books already in print.



What Max's book has over Chris Duff's Southern Exposure and Paul's Obscured by Waves is that all the photos in Fiordland and Beyond are in colour. One of the very positive aspects of self-publishing is that the author chooses the photos to accompany the text but but also can place them where they are most relevant. Too often these days, new paddling books have either no photos or a slim black and white plate section where white background page overwhelms thumbnail size pics. From the cover photo of a grey day in Milford Sound with sheer cliffs and waterfalls dropping into the sea, to the champagne and pavlova finishing photo at Jackson Bay, the 165 photos are all good story telling photos and so enrich the quality of the book.

Fifteen large scale, detailed section maps add greatly to the quality of the book, showing the route followed and overnight stops. It is so easy to flick back a page or two for look for the site of a one of the horrific surf trashings, scenery highlights or a meeting with locals.

On 29 April 2007 Max and Melz headed south, from Jackson Bay, to paddle around Fiordland to Te Waewae Bay. Work commitments dictated a three stage trip, the 1<sup>st</sup> to Milford, a 2<sup>nd</sup> stage to Doubtful Sound and a final stage to Te Waewae Bay, at the west entrance to Foveaux Strait. That 1<sup>st</sup> stage included a 'hell portage' from Big Bay up an old dozer track to the Pyke River, then downstream via the beautiful Lake Alabaster to the Hollyford River, then down river via Lake McKerrow and over the Hollyford bar, then down the coast to finish in Milford Sound.

Once Fiordland lay astern, the plan then grew into completing a paddle right around the South Island. It grew also into a fundraiser for Child Cancer as Max's son, and Melz's brother, Steven had died of a brain tumour in the late 80s. Over \$7,000 was raised by the end of the trip.

Max's writing style is a treat to read, with graphic 'heart racing' details of severe thrashings in the West Coast surf, snippets of history, up close and personal encounters with marine fauna and enjoying wonderful hospitality from the locals they met on the journey.

On 29 April 2008 Max and Melz paddled back into Jackson Bay, on a glorious sunny West Coast day, to be welcomed ashore with the traditional 'circumnavigators' pavlova and champagne.

A few minor spelling mistakes missed the final proofing, but that is such a minor quibble with a cracker of a book. Max printed both hard and soft cover editions, which can be sourced with the link above, or I see them now listed on Trade Me. Those of us fortunate to catch Max at the Raglan forum were able to get autographed copies, signed by Melz and Max.