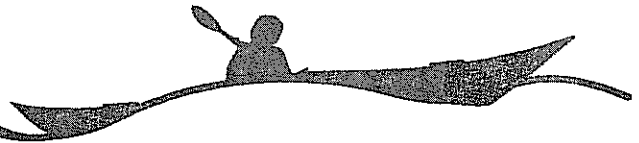


CONNAYAK



C O N N E C T I C U T S E A K A Y A K E R S

March 2001

Every year at our pool sessions the same problems occur with paddlers who are relatively new at kayaking and arrive to learn how to roll. I personally find this quest commendable and never lost my close association with the struggles and strains of going through that process. I'm sympathetic and aware of the Catch 22 pattern of kayak buying that has made this illusive technique out of reach for the one group that desires it the most - the beginning paddler.

New paddlers buy kayaks that feel comfortable to them - not just in the seat but mostly in the larger initial stability that the wider/larger boat offers. The manufacturers of these kayaks unfortunately also assume that everyone who desires this greater initial stability weighs 400 lbs. or more. Not only are they wider, but they have enough volume to carry the kitchen sink. The other assumption by manufacturers is "there's no way these people need to roll - we'll put in a little foam for their thighs and that will keep them quiet! Besides, this way it will fit more paddlers; we sell more kayaks and we make more money". End of discussion. The same manufacturers will put out white water kayaks with great thigh bracing because they know that a roll is mandatory in that sport and... the white water paddlers demand it or won't buy the kayak. White water kayaks are designed by white water paddlers whereas sea kayaks are sometimes designed by naval architects who have never done a roll or attempted one.

This half hearted attempt that some sea kayak manufacturers make with their products is truthfully based on the fact that the greater population of paddlers will go along just fine with what they have ... and possibly so. However, when learning to roll, you really have to be locked in with a very positive grip or you just won't ever be able to roll - period! Once you gain skills - like in a few years of rolling, you may be able to roll any kayak but you won't do it with the grace and effortless motion like you do in your own custom tailored kayak.

Some people luck out and buy a low volume boat and it fits them like a glove, but this is not the norm. Or... you're a big person and you fit in your big boat nicely. Most people however, have to add foam or

IF THE KAYAK FITS- ROLL IT

by Jay Babina

bracing to be able to truly master the roll.

Most of the paddlers I know who have good skills have all padded out their boats. It's unfortunate that people arrive at the pool sessions in kayaks that seem to fit well while paddling but when push comes to shove and they're upside down, there's not enough grip to twist the kayak up without their thighs slipping out of position. I think this is the number one reason for sloppy or failing technique especially when I notice they have the paddle movement fairly well.

I'm really obsessive about this because I remember what a difference it made for me when I was slipping out of position in my Hydra Sea Runner. (I think the model was the *Enterprise*) The technique is difficult enough without having to swing two bats during the learning process. Once I finally glued in a couple of blocks of foam to prevent my thighs from slipping out, my weak, inefficient roll became reliably weak and inefficient. Hey... at least I was coming up every once in a while.

I used to practice in secrecy because of embarrassment. One time I was hanging upside down at lake Quanipaugh trying to figure things out and when I rolled up a man was standing there in thigh deep water in his street clothes who ran in to rescue

GAIL FERRIS TALK

"The Light in the Arctic"

Gail Ferris will give a slide presentation about paddling in the Arctic - March 23, Essex. Gail who is no stranger to ice and paddling in distant places was recently seen breaking through the ice on a less than ideal day, with her pitch fork fastened to her deck heading out to her secret place in the Thimbles to do some clamming.

Gail will share her paddling experiences in high Arctic areas of Greenland, Canada and Alaska, focusing on its beauty and mystery with some unforgettable images that she has captured on film (not shown at her previous lecture). We're fortunate to have an adventurer and explorer with this kind of experience as a club member, who is willing to share these travels with us!

me. From then on, I use to find secret sandy spots where I could practice in peace and push off the bottom if I had to.

I think when paddlers arrive at the pool and see others hand rolling or doing fancy rolls etc. there 's an untold story of the years of practice and sometimes obsession that these paddlers put in to get there. There's also the untold story of the various kayaks they purchased and outfitted to finally come up with a kayak that fits them like a glove.

Rolling is truly one of those techniques that's easy to learn but a long road to refine because it's a marriage of physical technique and the kayak itself. ■



IT WOULD SEEM LIKE COMMON SENSE!

I am writing about Sea Kayaking safety from a commercial mariners point of view. I am an avid Sea Kayaker. I also operate commercial vessels such as Tugboats with Barges. I feel the need to relate an experience in the hope of enlightening other paddlers as we head into the warmer paddling season.

I was operating a tug/barge unit on a restricted waterway on a cold fall afternoon. As I was approaching a sharp turn in the channel, I noticed up ahead two people in a tandem Kayak enjoying the day. I thought to myself how I hadn't been out in my boat for a while and how enjoyable a time they must be having.

But, as I made my turn I saw that they were going to be exactly where I needed to be. I watched for a few seconds. I decided they may not know I was coming (hard to believe they'd miss 500ft of steel tug and barge headed their way). I sounded the horn on the tug; they looked over their shoulders at me and kept on paddling. They headed closer to the bank for a minute but then headed right back out as if to cross ahead of me.

"What are they thinking?" I sounded six short and rapid blasts on the horn (the danger signal), not that they would know what the danger signal is but it's got to get anyone's attention, pulled the throttles back and waited. They paddled along for a bit then started heading in closer to the bank and stopped paddling. I put the throttles back in gear and continued on my way, giving them an enthusiastic wave along with an index fingertip to my head.

"THINK!" is the point I was trying to make.

Kayakers need to understand some points:

1. Commercial vessels such as tug/barge units or small tankers that run coastal waters are not capable of stopping within a short distance and cannot make abrupt turns to avoid things.
2. The operator of the vessel is way higher above the water than a kayaker, changing his perspective drastically. It's a good possibility vessel captains won't even see a kayak.
3. As a kayaker, take into account the angle of the sun in relation to the other vessel, as well consider cloud cover and sea state when trying to figure out how visible you are to large vessels.
4. Coastal vessels in a channel may have little or no room to maneuver, and even in

an emergency may be unable to alter course.

5. Stay out of the channels. They are there for a purpose - to allow safe passage for large ships that need lots of unobstructed depth and space.

6. Finally, several hundred feet and thousands of tons of moving steel vs 18 feet of fiberglass or kevlar, who loses?

Big ships and tugs are fun to look at especially from the vantage point of a kayak. When encountering one of these vessels, paddle away, not toward it. Stop, and let it go by at a safe distance.

Kayakers will confuse operators of large vessels by maneuvering like a squirrel in front of a moving car. It's better to get out of the way, and to do it in a manner that is clear to the other vessel as to what your intentions are.

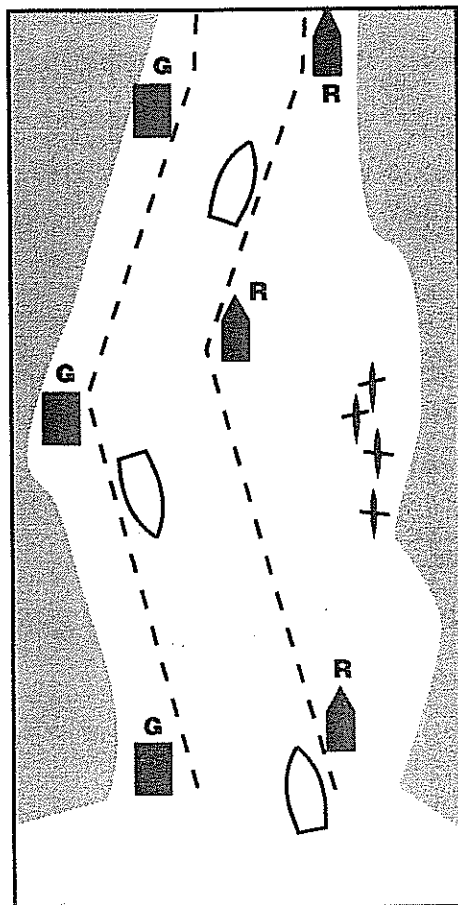
Make it an enjoyable and safe paddling season.

- Bill Spangler

CONNYPAK BOAT BUILDERS

I would like to put up a web page on the ConnYak web site for ConnYak boat builders to display and tell about their work. If there is interest, please contact me - Bobby Curtis.

email bennycurry@earthlink.net,
Snail Mail PO Box 108 Woodbury, CT 06798
or phone (203) 263 3437.



LICENSE AND REGISTRATION

With kayaking on such a rise in popularity, many people who have no prior experience in seamanship have entered into a sport where the basic rules of the road on the waterways should be known. The Coast Guard and the U. S. Power Squadron both have basic navigation courses that cover these things in detail and is offered in almost all major towns throughout CT. The fee is minimal and you get a certificate licensed by the state allowing you to operate a registered vessel. We're fortunate in CT that none of this is mandatory for paddle sports, however I hold my breath every time a kayaker parades down the center of a busy channel. I'm not so worried about their safety as I am about some insecure politician looking for a few points and suggesting that a course and registration become mandatory. Could you imagine registration numbers on your kayak. It's a reality in some states! I would have to carve registration numbers out of pieces of walrus tusk for my skin boat.

The one way we can assure this doesn't happen is to show that we're not a menace to boating safety with the kind of behavior that Bill Spangler describes in his article. Unfortunately, it happens far too often on our waters. I have written about the lack of responsibility by the manufacturers of kayaks and personally have never seen a booklet included with a kayak describing these basic things. I hope the industry doesn't snap to attention when it's too late.

Left, is an illustration showing a typical channel situation and what the markers are marking. When you come in to a channel from open sea, the red buoys are on the right (Red Right Return) and the green cans are on the left. Between the two is a two-lane highway that boats use. Why? To keep them from running into a rock or a shallow area. The channel is a safe passage area with deep water. Just like a highway, boats coming in from sea travel to the right side of the channel and boats leaving (going to sea) stay to the left side or.. towards the green cans. A large tug and barge may have to use the center of the channel. This channel or highway on the water, is where you want to stay out of - it's meant for boats that need it. We have no rights on the water! Since we have full maneuverability and no real depth concerns, it's our job to stay clear of boats and ultimately out of channels as much as we possibly can.

By showing respect and awareness to the boating community and navigational markers in general, we can help guarantee our freedom from the bureaucracy that some states have imposed on paddle sports!

- Jay Babina

DECK SEAL FOR THE GLOVES

I used 2 coats of Thompson's Water Seal (Home Centers etc.) on the outside of my winter paddling gloves. Instead of water totally wetting the outside of the neoprene fabric which causes evaporative cooling as it evaporates, it now beads and rolls right off. There was a noticeable difference in the warmth the gloves provided. Thompson's won't seal leaks, it waterproofs the surface. - Sheldon Penn

SMALL BOAT SHOP EXPO

Sat. & Sun. March 17 & 18

National Guard Armory- Exit 38- Merritt Pkwy - head a short 1/2 mile toward New Canaan- Armory is on the right. For Information call 203-254-5223

WATERWALKER FILM FESTIVAL

The Waterwalker Film Festival will be held this year at Old Saybrook Middle School (60 Sheffield Street) March 29 at 7:00pm. Tickets will be \$8.00 per person. Get your tickets early from N. Cove Outfitters! Profits go to The Old Saybrook Land Trust.

The festival will showcase many of the winning films from the Waterwalker Film Festival in Ottawa.

SEAL WATCHING

I believe most sea kayakers would definitely consider themselves environmentally conscious. I heard some startling news about seals when talking to a naturalist from the Woods Hole Institute that may be of interest. He basically told me that when you drive seals off their islands by coming in too close, they don't return to their land-based retreats until a full tide passage. In other words - 12 hours.

They sit on land to warm up, nurse their young, rest and gain strength just as we do when we relax and warm up in the winter. A constant fleeing into the cold water has shown to be an enormous stress on the general life style of these seals, eventually leading them to find more distant and quieter places to rest.

If you drive seals into the water, you're too close. Do them a favor and give them the distance they need. In Long Island Sound they get spooked quite easily; however, please try to refrain from charging the islands that they're resting on for a closer look. They're not going to sit there and pose for you when you approach - they're fleeing for their lives. We would all like to get in close and pet them but unfortunately, this is the untamed wilds of Connecticut. - JB

\$250 FOR RETT SYNDROME

ConnYak donated \$250 to aid in research of Rett Syndrome and will sponsor a canoe donation gathering event at the Meriden Sq. Mall along with organizer Clark Eid who will race in the Great Mississippi Race for this cause. Clark showed his racing double kayak along with an overview of the race and his cause at our last meeting.

CONNYPAC FINANCES - 2000

Cash on deposit at Fleet Bank on January 1, 2000 was \$6,567 and at the end of the year on December 31, 2000 it was \$5,899, representing a reduction of \$1,668. The reduction in cash is attributable to the current year pool sessions being prepaid to Wallingford Park and Rec in 2000 and the good supply of hats and t-shirts on hand at this time. The detailed cash flow report and checking account activity is available to any club member by contacting the club Treasurer at:

(860) 767-0610 or by e-mail:
richard.f.gamble@snet.net.

A brief summary is shown below:

Opening Balance 1/1/2000	\$6,567
Income:	
Club Dues	5,737
Savings Account Interest	58
Net Expenses:	
Pool	754
Hats, Mock Turtle & T-shirts	1,159
Speakers & Classes	289
Newsletter (printing & postage)	3,099
Home Page & Messaging	416
Library	45
Club Picnic & Raffle	382
Donation to LI Soundkeeper Bank	250
	69
Total Expenses	6,463
Closing Balance 12/31/2000	5,899

BOOK REPORT

David W. Zimmerly - Author
RR3 Stn Main, Perth, ON K7H 3C5 Canada

The book Qajaq (1986) is now Qayaq (2nd edition revised, 2000) and is available from me and autographed, at a cheaper rate for shipping and handling than Amazon. My other one is Hooper Bay Kayak Construction reprinted in 2000 from the 1979 edition.

Email:
mailto:dwzimmerly@ArcticKayaks.com
Web site: <http://www.arctickayaks.com/>



CONNYPAC MEETING

Gail Ferris - "Images - Greenland & Alaska"
Friday, March 23 - Essex Town Hall 7 - 10 pm

World-wide traveler, Gail Ferris will be presenting a slide show on her travels in Alaska and Greenland along with sharing some of her first-hand experiences. These are images that have not been shown at the previous Gail Ferris lecture of last year.

DIRECTIONS TO THE ESSEX TOWN HALL

Approaching from the North on Route 9, take Exit 3. At the end of the exit ramp, turn left and go under the Route 9 bridge to the light. Turn left at this light on to West Avenue.

Approaching from the South on Route 9, take Exit 3. At the end of the exit ramp turn left and go to the light. Turn right at this light on to West Avenue.

The Town Hall is about a third of a mile up the hill on the left at the corner of West Avenue and Grove Street. Turn left on Grove Street - parking is in the back of the building.

PADDLE

THIMBLE ISLANDS-BRANFORD SATURDAY, MARCH 24

We'll be back for lunch. Brown bag or at the market. 2+ hr. paddle? In - water 10.

Exit 56 off Rt. 95. Head (south) toward water. Go straight across at the stop sign, under RR bridge into Stoney Creek. Street parking only.

Note: All paddlers are responsible for their own safety, including dressing for immersion. You must wear a CG approved PFD and a spray skirt. The boat and equipment must meet CG requirements, including an appropriate signaling device. Beginners must have taken a basic course and be proficient in performing a wet exit, paddle float re-entry and carry a pump. Kayaks without bulkheads should have flotation installed. (always carry extra dry clothes, food and water) Paddlers are expected to show a sense of awareness as far as staying with the group.

Think about any trips you would like to list for 2001 so we can get a basic trip calendar out for the next newsletter.

CONNYPAC MESSAGE SYSTEM (203) 603-4615

Information regarding events, trip schedule updates, cancellations, changes etc. will be heard at this number.



CLASSIFIED

Wilderness Systems Alto with rudder. Yellow Skirt and flotation bags. \$650/obo. Call (203) 457-9983.

Kayook plus with rudder. 8 months old, like new, \$900.00. 860-526-1410, 860-663-2069

Ocean Kayak Frenzy with backrest-1 year old \$325 and Ocean Kayak Yak-Board \$250. 203-235-6721 after 6

Current Designs Slipstream, 16' X 22", fiberglass, retractable skeg, day hatch, spray skirt, \$1,700. 203-256-191

Diriego, 17.5' Sea Kayak, Kevlar/Fiberglass w/wood trim & rudder. \$1,200.00 203-734-4452 kck@ashcreek.net

Nautraid One Expedition (foldable) 15'3" red & black \$1800. or best offer. 860-521-6070

Solstice GT, Current Designs. Fiberglass, red over white. Used 2 seasons. (203) 855-9707, \$1700.

Necky Artuk 1.9 kevlar 17'x22" 45lbs new in 1996 ex. condition. Call 203 656-0946. mmarkb@juno.com

Touring/Surfing Sea Kayak: Sun Maximum Velocity 13' x, 25" in Xyltec \$675. SurfKayakers@aol.com

Wilderness Systems Pamlico double-2 person \$500. Jim 203- 345-0090

DRYTOP - BomberGear breathable drytop (S)-(New) \$150. 860-643-8303 - fernusen@aol.com



Wilderness Systems Tchaika, fiberglass w/rudder, neoprene sprayskirt yellow/white used 4 times. \$1,500 (203)483-7705.

P&H Sirius with skeg - excellent condition. \$1650 Call 860-767-0696.

2000 Necky Looksha Sport - expedition - front/rear bulkheads & rudder 14' 4" x 22.5" red polymer \$850 1-860-434-0221 or dwc@99main.com

Necky Looksha kayak-poly. 17 ft. two neoprene hatches, bulkheads, rudder, skirt . \$700. 914-967-3164

Necky Tesla-NM, Used Once. 17', Kevlar, Mango / white, blue trim, large cockpit, rudder, Ckpt. cover. Two Werner paddles. \$2,500. 1-860-526-3344

Two piece 220 cm Lendal crankshaft paddle : Carbon 1F Archipelago blades New \$340 - slightly used at \$240. . oldphoto@connix.com / (203) 281-0066

Wilderness Systems Pamlico double-2 person \$500. Jim 203- 345-0090

Borel Ellesmere, used one season, Yellow over Yellow, Kevlar, day hatch, drop-down skeg, \$2700 new \$2195. E-mail ckayaker01@mindspring.com tel 203-481-1881.

Heritage Nomad 16' fiberglass open-deck kayak. 42 lbs., removeable skeg, rear hatch and deck rigging. Ex cond:\$1350. Mens 3 mm farmer-john wetsuit, small \$20.Jeff 860-267-9563 - jbrooks@wesleyan.edu.

Dry Suit Seals- Collinsville Canoe contacted the newsletter - they have dry suit seals and lots of Aquaseal in stock. Also Aquaseal tubes have metal and shouldn't be used in the microwave.

INSTRUCTION

Greenland style paddling and rolling. BCU Coach and ACA Certified. fernusen@aol.com for private or groups.

Urban Eskimo Kayaking

Indoor Pool Sessions at the Sheehan High School, Wallingford.

Skills Workshop: March 10, 18, May 5.

Safety & Rescue March 11, April 7, 14, May 6, May 12. Eskimo Rolling March 17, April 8, 22, May 13.

To register please contact: Wallingford Rec Dept. 203 - 294 - 2120.

Call for specifics - Nancy at 860 228 0105

Send newsletter articles or classifieds to:

Jay Babina e-mail: jbabina@snet.net

7 Jeffrey Lane, Branford, CT 06405

203-481-3221 Fax 203-481-1136

TO JOIN CONNYAK...

ConnYak is a non profit club that is open to all paddlers interested in sea kayaking from any location. ConnYak annual membership fee is \$15. Membership includes monthly newsletter, paddles, functions etc.

Send inquiries to: Ed Milnes

35 Hampton Park, Branford, CT 06405

E-MAIL: CONNYAK@CONNYAK.ORG

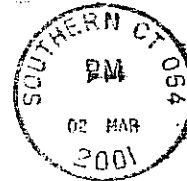
WEBSITE / BULLETIN BOARD: WWW.CONNYAK.ORG



ConnYak

CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

c/o Ed Milnes 35 Hampton Park
Branford, CT 06405



Russell Norton
PO Box 1070
New Haven CT 06504

1/1/2002