

# CONNAYAK

CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

September 2001

## Paddling With Diabetes

by Paul donoski

There are many kayakers out there with more severe medical handicaps than diabetes. Not to downplay the seriousness of this affliction and the affect it has on millions of people. I am one of those people. I was diagnosed with type 1 insulin dependent diabetes over 35 years ago. I hope by defining the precautions I take while paddling it may help or influence others with diabetes that kayaking is a viable and healthy activity.

Early on after being diagnosed with diabetes I promised myself that this disease would not keep me from enjoying the outdoor activities that were a big part of my life. I continued to backpack, camp, hunt, fish, bike ride, scuba, ski, and now kayak as often as I could. Somewhere I squeezed in work so I could afford to pursue these activities. Time and opportunity have eliminated backpacking, scuba and skiing from the list. Paddling has more than made up for those activities and hopefully will continue to do so for a long time.

I immediately recognized that sea kayaking offered fun, relaxation, adventure and a element of danger I couldn't

avoid. Almost any paddling on a large lake or ocean can result in conditions that call for extra effort, time or skills. These are factors that can play havoc with a unprepared paddler, especially a diabetic one. Here are the steps I take to minimize the risks. I start like every day monitoring my blood glucose level. This tells me by experience how much breakfast and medication I will need to cope with the day's paddle. My paddle plan for the day includes:

- 1) A lunch consisting of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, dried fruit and a fruit drink.
- 2) Snacks like dried apricots or fruit bars under the deck bungees.
- 3) At least one water bottle.
- 4) Different forms of glucose to combat a low sugar condition if one should occur. One is glucose tabs in foil packets. Another is fast acting glucose gel in a foil pack. I keep these in my PFD.
- 5) A waterproof medical ID bracelet.

I take kayaking safety to the max. I don't leave the put-in without a spare paddle, paddle float, flares, air horn and VHF radio. My kayak is set up with rescue features like a tow line and hands free cockpit pump. I have learned to roll and practice paddling skills regularly. All these precautions may not only help me some day but also some other pad-

dler who needs assistance.

I hope what I have shared sheds some light on what a great activity sea kayaking is even if you are diabetic or have some other medical handicap. I will add that I have found to date in over 3 \_ years of kayaking including cold weather outings that kayaks are so efficient on the water that my physical expenditure of energy has never created a problem. Long hikes and biking have drained me to a point where I required some glucose or other sugar source. I can't paddle the U.S. Coastline like a Mike Falconeri but I can safely and confidently paddle a day or a weekend.

## Rescue Day +++

Many thanks to Jeff Dickson and Dominic Settle for their demonstrations as well as all the additional commentaries and paddlers who helped one another.

An interesting twist in conventional methods was used and endorsed by both Dominic and Jeff.

When doing a "T" rescue, it makes a lot of sense to place the kayak upright (normal position) and then the bow will easily climb right up on your spray skirt area. Then you can easily turn it over to drain it rather than trying to reach underwater to lug an inverted kayak up for a drain which is a more clumsy position to start from, especially with a heavy kayak in rough water.

Neither way is right or wrong, it just presents a very logical method and one that's used by Atlantic Kayak Tours where Dominic guides and teaches. I only mention that because many instructors and guides work there which gives some added validity through lots of trial to the method. Jeff guides and teaches at Collinsville Canoe.

The forum was great because of the diversity in methods that was shown. 63 paddlers arrived and even seasoned paddlers came away with some new insight and methods on various rescues.



Feeling Unloved? Someone loves kayakers. Phil Babina and a loyal kayak fan. Photo: Tom Maziarz

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## Great Island parking

A boater at the Great Isl. ramp asked that kayakers could use the short side of the lot (left side - facing the water) and leave the right side (deeper) for the trailers. When kayaking with friends don't be extravagant - park tight or even double up rather than denying trailer boaters a space. Give the trailers plenty of room at the launch area as well. As our sport grows, we need as much good will as possible with others who use the water. We're all trying to do the same thing and we're much more mobile than the cars with trailers and can easily launch on the edge of the ramps.

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## connyak picnic - sun, sept. 9

and... the long awaited

### swap meet

BROODIE PARK, WEST HILL POND,  
NEW HARTFORD, CT 10 - (?)

You won't be able to enjoy the picnic unless you arrive. We've secured a great site on a great lake and there will be food, friends and kayaks - what more could you ask for? Like last year, certain foods, beverages and a gas grill will be supplied by ConnYak and members are encouraged to bring their own food and things to share which makes for a great feast for everyone. Family and friends are totally welcome.

**Swap Meet** - Bring along anything you want to sell or trade and we'll set up an area to place everything. PFD's, kayaks, paddles, clothing, nose clips ... whatever. Put a tag with the price and your name on it so people can browse at their leisure. Sell it cheap and it will go. Trade it, sell it or give it away to a needy kayaker.

### - Directions to Brodie Park -

Go to the center of New Hartford, Route 44, and turn south onto Route 219 at the stoplight. Go 0.8 mile and turn right onto West Hill Road. Be careful to stay on this twisty, climbing road for 2.5 miles to Niles Road and turn right. Just 0.1 mile on the left is the entrance to Brodie Park. As you enter the park bare right at the fork and go past camp buildings on your left and continue down the gravel road to the parking area at the beach. If you want a chair, bring one.

If you are coming up Route 8, take exit 46 to Route 183 and go left a short distance to West Hill Road and turn right. Stay on West Hill Road for about 1.5 miles to Niles Road and turn left.

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## LIGHTHOUSE TO LIGHTHOUSE RACE - Westport- Sat. SEPT 15

The Soundkeeper's "Lighthouse To Lighthouse" canoe and kayak race, formally billed as "Pull For The Sound" has been scheduled for September 15, 2001; the race will start at 9am off Compo Beach in Westport, Ct. This annual event is a close-of-season, open water celebration for outrigger canoes, ocean going sea kayaks and fixed oarlock rowers.

There will be four competing categories of boats, each with cash prizes and trophies. The categories are: Mens teams and "mixed" teams, Women, Kayaks and Surfski's, Fixed Oarlock Rowed Boats. \$100 prizes and trophies will be awarded for 1st and second place in each category.

The awards ceremony will take place at nearby John Harvard's microbrewery, where competitors will enjoy a free post-race feast and ample beverage nourishment. Race entry fee is \$25 per rower or paddler, and a \$15 per entrant late charge will be levied for entry forms submitted after September 8, 2001.

The 12 mile race course starts off Compo Beach at Westport, and goes out to the Norwalk lighthouse and loops down outside of the Norwalk Islands to the Norwalk/Darien lighthouse, and back. This is essentially an open-water course and weather conditions can be severe. The Race Director reserves the right to refuse entry to any boat, which is not, in his opinion, appropriate for the course.

Ample free parking will be available to contestants at Compo Beach, close to launch sites. Compo is easily reached from I-95's Exit 18, where drivers head inland from the off ramp and make the first left at a traffic light, continuing on that road through two stop signs, and then turning left at the next traffic light onto Compo Beach Road. At the Minuteman statue, turn right and follow the road to Compo Beach.

Entry forms can be obtained by emailing the race director, Ellis Gaskell, at [Connpiano@aol.com](mailto:Connpiano@aol.com), or by calling (203) 854 9973 and leaving a message that includes your name, address and zip code, and a telephone number where you can be reached. Additional questions potential competitors and observers will be answered, as well, through these formats.

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## Tow (rope) line

There's two kinds of paddlers. The ones with all the extra pockets on their PFDs, day hatches, radios, knives, flares in open view - basically ready for anything short of a volcano. Then there's the "normal" paddlers who are out for a good time and carry the basic needed equipment and seem to do just fine 100% of the time.

One item that I think "good time" paddlers would appreciate some day is a tow rope. I remember the first time I had to retrieve a kayak that fell into the hands of the incoming tide and some wind. It was only about 40 yards off shore when we discovered it went for a solo journey. I headed out and got beside it, straightened it out and shoved it in. Except it turned into the wind and headed parallel to shore. I straightened it out again and gave it a more precise shove. Did a little better and on and on this stupid little exercise went until I finally got it in to shore. Well... you can guess what was in my hatch the next time out. That will never happen again!

The ACA and the BCU make a life-long obsession with towing and have enough rules and not-to-do's to have your head spinning. "Good time" paddlers should go into the garage and cut a piece of rope about 20+ feet long, coil it up and keep it in the kayak and forget it's there until the day you need it.

There's a few things that make the "official" towing rig official. The line is usually polypropylene that floats. It has a snap on the end so you can quickly fasten it (and unfasten it) to a towee. And most importantly, it has a quick release belt that's secured around the waist - the idea being if you're in the North Sea in 20 ft seas and the towee goes over, you can release it rather than be pulled into a capsized and possible entanglement. All cynicism aside, it makes putting it on a lot easier than tying a loop around yourself. Being able to quickly release it or get out of the tow rig is important. Also, a strap around the waist is a lot more comfortable than a rope digging into your gut in the summer. By the way, you do tow from the waist not the back of the boat or more officially, a cam cleat fastened near the cockpit etc.

If you do tow someone with your rope, make the loop around yourself large and non-sinching so you can easily pull it

right up over yourself for fast removal. A simple brass or stainless snap or carabiner ring could be put on the end.

My unofficial tow rig has a thick piece of bungee cord incorporated which takes up the shock of boat movement.

Towing does take stamina. Once you try it, you'll see that a long tow can be exhausting, especially into the wind.

The need for a tow can come in the simplest and most unexpected situations. Even on a dead calm day a paddler can get sea sick, strain their back or shoulder (break their arm) or just run out of steam or ... the run-away kayak. A piece of rope is certainly an item that you'll never regret having along and one that may have other uses especially if you camp. I think as long as you're aware of being entangled etc., the simple rope will serve in almost all but extreme situations and prove to be an almost free additive to your kayak, and ... it adds 0 weight and requires no maintenance.

-Jay Babina

## CONNYPAC TRIP RATINGS

Any trip can change dramatically due to conditions - as in all sea kayaking. (I) is generally longer and more off shore with greater chance of rough conditions.

**(N) Novice:** Novice paddlers are expected to be able to keep up with the leisurely group pace or will be turned back.

**(I) Intermediate:** Fully capable of self rescue, confident paddling stroke and braces.

**(A) Advanced:** A dependable roll, able to rescue others, strong, experienced paddler.

**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 floatation 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 during paddles.

Check the bulletin board for other impromptu trips listed by members - [www.connyak.org](http://www.connyak.org)



## JONATHON REYNOLDS TALK

THUR. SEPT. 27, ESSEX TOWN HALL

7:00 - 10 PM

Jonathon Reynolds and Heather Smith have just completed their book "The Soft Paddling Guide - Ontario and New England" which can be purchased at the lecture and is the topic of the slide show and discussion. The book features paddling destinations along with Inns and accommodations on these destinations. We will be sharing this presentation with the Connecticut Audubon Society. Jonathon was with us a year ago and gave a talk on paddling Canada.

### 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.

## tuesday Night paddlers

contact bill 860-535-4473

or.. russ 860-621-0796

Mystic Area evening paddles - calm conditions.

## LECTURES & LARGE GROUPS

We're always looking for speakers, presenters, travelers etc. for our fall and winter meetings. Once our meetings start, we will have to fully address our large groups since it has become a persistent reality that's quite obvious when we fill a parking lot at a launch site. Things just grow faster than anyone has control over and we have to seriously address it rather than cause any harm or resentment to the sport. If you have suggestions, email me and we'll publish them in the newsletter to get things going. [jbabina@snet.net](mailto:jbabina@snet.net)

## T-SHIRTS FOR ARTICLES

T-shirts for articles is still valid.

## CONNYPAC MESSAGE SYSTEM (203) 603-4615

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



## EVENTS/ PADDLES



## CONNYPAC PICNIC, SUN SEPT 9

### ESSEX TO 8 MILE RIVER (N)

SATURDAY SEPT 15 - ESSEX

In the water by 10:00. Paddle to 8 mile river.

### DIRECTIONS -

From Exit 3 off route 9, go to stop light and go east on West Avenue in to Essex Center - to the rotary at the head of Main Street and then go north (left) on North Main Street for 1 short block and turn right onto Bushnell Street. Just before entering the Dauntless Boat Yard there is a dirt road to the left, leading a short distance to the boat launch and parking area. In the water by 10:00 a.m. (pack a lunch)

## REYNOLDS TALK, THUR SEPT 27

## MYSTIC

SATURDAY SEPT 29- MYSTIC (N)

In the water by 10:00. Meet in front of the old Mystic boats at 10:15 for departure.

### DIRECTIONS - 2 LAUNCH SITES

Go past Mystic Seaport on the right. Take your first right on Isham Street. Launch is at the end of the street. Street parking is available. Worst case: Drop off the boat and gear and park in the Mystic Lot which is free.

### Or... Under I-95 Bridge Launch

Eastbound on I95 -- Take exit 89 and go across Allyn Street onto Sandy Hollow Road -- when you come to High Street, go left a short distance to the first right turn onto side street with a boat launch sign (don't know the name) -- continue to a left turn onto River Road -- continue on River Road and just after you go under I95, the boat launch is on your right.

## GROTON - DUMPLINGS - (I)

Groton, CT.

SATURDAY, SEPT 29

Open ocean crossing to dumplings (Islands)

Itinerary may change according to conditions.

In the water promptly at 10:00. Pack a lunch

**DIRECTIONS - AVERY POINT** - Take Exit 87 off east-bound I-95 and follow the signs (Rt. 349) to the University of Connecticut Avery Point Campus. After you pass the campus, we believe Bayberry Lane is the second right. Look for the boat launch ramp sign.



# CLASSIFIED

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

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

Touring/Surfing Sea Kayak: Sun Maximum Velocity 13' x, 25" in Xytec \$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

2 Walden Vista Expedition 12.5' kayaks (lime, grape) \$600 ea. (203)389-1230 email ensign@southernct.edu

Like new Romany 16, tan over tan, with skeg, neospray skirt, aqua bound paddle. \$2100. 203-281-1529

13' Mad River Compatriot; light green with wood trim, 42 lbs., mint condition., \$500, Clark 203/271-2484

Werner Kauai 1 pc. paddle 220cm. Feathered maybe 10X; \$150. 203 457-9772 or andyb@asan.com

Valley Anas Acuta, Ex cond., Day hatch, \$2500.

Vyneck - Nigel Foster, 19" beam, \$1200. 860-441-8416W or jonandlisa@msn.com

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

Wilderness Systems Tchaika Kevlar with rudder. \$1400. 860-873-1884 or denandjoy@snet.net

Current design - Caribou, fiberglass. Ye./yel. 45 lbs. hard chine \$1895 203-985-9288 areimann@snet.net.

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

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

Current Designs Caribou "S" Kevlar. Yel/white, Compass New \$3110 in 3-01 sale \$2700. 860-563-3391

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

Cedar strip PANACHE sea kayak, 18'4"x22 1/2", 55 lb. \$1825. Stripper canoe, 18', \$650. (860) 653-5899.

Ocean Kayak 17'9"—Valley Aquila - Blue and white 1800 - 203 226-6926 —pascale@earthlink.net

Kokatat, Gore-Tex, front entry, dry suit, never used. Size-Medium. \$400. Call 860 767-0696.

Wilderness Systems Sealution: 16.5' x 22" Glass, Light, All grey. VCP hatches, no rudder, Compass and spray skirt. \$900. (860) 521-9054

Looksha IV, kevlar, plus extras. \$1900. 203-335-6289

Wilderness System Tchaika, glass with float bags, (no hatches - no rudder) excellent condition, \$750.00 - 860-444-6950 9-5 or riley@uconnect.net.

## INSTRUCTION

Urban Eskimo Kayaking Classes  
Mike Falconeri Nancy Lovelace  
203-284-9212 860-228-0105  
www.uekayaking.com

## GREENLAND STYLE INSTRUCTION

Paddling and rescue techniques, hand rolls, paddle stick rolls, and many other traditional rolling techniques taught by Donald White and Fern Usen, BCU Coach and ACA Certified Instructor. Call 860-643-8303 for appointment, or email: fernusen@aol.com. Free consultation for safety questions.

## 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**

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

Please contact the Newsletter when items are sold.



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