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Sea Trek



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VICTORIAN SEA KAYAK CLUB

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COVER CREDITS: Bob Fergie
Turner Wilson preparing to lead a
Greenland paddling and rolling train-
ing session out from Frankston Beach,
Port Phillip Bay, April 2012

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EDITORIAL



Can you believe that we're into August already? For me it's a little embarrassing given that this issue of Sea Trek was scheduled to be up-loaded to the website at the beginning of July. However, a 21 day expedition in the Whitsundays with five other VSKCers from mid June to early July meant that editorial work was put on hold.

That being said, I think you'll find that this issue is well worth the wait given another excellent range of articles. In particular we have featured in a good deal of detail the Easter visit of Greenland paddling/rolling experts from America, Cheri Perry and Turner Wilson. Many members benefited from the excellent instruction of this couple and there is little doubt in my mind that they have left a very valuable legacy for our club.

This edition also includes other terrific articles from a number of first-time contributors as well some regular folk. Thanks to you all. Keep them coming I say. The deadline for issue 74 articles is 28th September. I look forward to receiving your stories/photos in due course.

Cheers, Bob (SeaTrek Editor)



Greetings once again, as we move through winter there are a lucky few who have escaped far afield.

We have members going or who have recently been to Vanuatu, Croatia, far north Queensland, Canada and the Whitsundays. What a great way to see the world – from a kayak! We look forward to hearing of your exploits soon. Speaking of this, a reminder that this year's annual gathering is the Paddle Feast and AGM. It will be held at The Gap Road Conference Centre at Phillip Island on the weekend of the 9-11 November.

This year all the speakers will be VSKC members enthralling us with presentations of some of the adventures listed above. There will be a host of paddles, commercial displays and socialising making it a 'not to be missed weekend'. Put it in your diary now. Details will be available and distributed in due course.

Many of you would know of Sandy Robson. Sandy is currently undertaking the second leg of retracing the late 1930s voyage of Oskar Speck from Germany to Australia. You can follow Sandy's progress on the expedition section of the web site.

The visit of Cheri Perry and Turner Wilson once again proved the value of being in the VSKC. Cheri and Turner are certainly two of the best instructors I have had the fortune to be exposed to. The 'Rolling Extravaganza' at the Mentone pool was well attended and an eye opener for many. Similarly, the group lessons

held at Frankston were well subscribed with participants experiencing some real food for thought on Greenland paddle and rolling skills.

The Easter instructor's weekend out of Port Welshpool was greatly appreciated as well. We all gained new insights through experiencing first hand Cheri and Turner's training techniques of the 'Greenlandic way', and yes, I confirm that even a cynic like me was converted!



If you don't already own a copy of the recently released "This is the roll" DVD featuring Cheri and Turner I would highly recommend you have a look. Produced by Justine Curgenvin, it is much more than a promotion of Greenlandic rolling. It provides very practical and transferable reference for rolling with any blade. I can proudly say that the world premier viewing of this DVD was held in my lounge room when with the rest of the committee we hosted a social BBQ for Cheri and Turner towards the end of their time in Victoria.

Recently the VSKC hired the Baldwin Spencer Lodge at Tidal River, Wilsons Prom for the weekend of the 20, 21st and 22nd July. For those not familiar with this venue the lodge is a very comfortable thirty-bed venue ideal for a great weekend get-together for all paddle-level abilities. Even if the weather is not great we always have a good weekend with lots of socialising and tall story telling. With reasonable weather, this venue provides some of the best paddling in Victoria is. It was a real pity that we were not able to fill all the spaces available. Those who did make it had a ball.

Recently the committee approved

the investment of a significant amount of club funds for the purchase of a large-screen Mac computer with professional desktop publishing software for the production of Sea Trek. This investment ensures the ongoing sustainability of Sea Trek production as a first class sea kayaking magazine. Prior to this purchase Bob had been producing Sea Trek using an antiquated notebook with less than adequate software! So, if you see Bob in a shiny new kayak please let me know as I want to see that the computer hasn't been traded in! (*no chance Prez--as I type I'm appreciating the ease of use of this new editing resource, Ed.*)

The new version of the VSKC paddling competencies has been completed replacing the old blue VSKC log book system. It was mailed out to all level 0-2 members early July. It provides a far more comprehensive description of what is required to gain the clubs first two levels of paddling proficiency (and a basic outline of level three requirements as well). You will need to keep your own paddle log- either using your own customised log sheet or a log proforma which is available from the website in the documents and download section.

Let me finish with hearty congratulations to John and Tina on their recent marriage early May at the Barwon Heads Bluff and presided over by our own 'paddling pastor' Bob Fergie. It was followed by a



paddling honeymoon (what else would you expect) in Vanuatu no less. Congratulations guys. I am reliably informed that Greg (Petal) Murray made a 'lovely' bridesmaid!

Safe paddling

Terry Barry
VSKC President

ACROSS THE BAY IN A DAY FOR A GOOD CAUSE by Minjahra Williams



Early January 2012 I received a call from my son's friend asking if I could help his daughter with a school project. Minjahra (a 14 year old Grade 8 student from the Little Yarra Stienner School in Yarra Junction) wanted to paddle across the Bay to raise funds for an Indonesian orphanage. I agreed to help on the condition that Minjahra commit to weekly training for six months or more. This she did with enthusiasm and impressive skill.

I taught her to roll and involved her in a number of club paddles including a 6 hour, 36 km paddle across the Bay in a tandem in May. On the 9th June, and together with a number of other VSKC members Minjahra completed her project with distinction. Paddling my Tahe Greenlander T and using a Greenland paddle (most of the way), she paddled from Sorrento to Queenscliff in challenging conditions. Without doubt, she is the most determined and gutsy young 14 year old I know. This is her story (Editor).

The night before the scheduled Bay crossing we had been looking at the forecast and the winds and were debating whether it was going to be too strong to do the big paddle. We worked out a few contingency plans just in case but decided to wait until we arrived in the morning before a final decision was made. When we arrived in the morning we decided that we would do the real thing.

As I started to pack the kayaks and get dressed it was quite hard to

believe that the big day had finally arrived. I had been training for it every week since the start of the year.

Once the kayaks were ready we set off at about 9:30am at a steady pace. We were all in good spirits for the first leg of the paddle of about 7 km all the while listening to Bob and Peter Costello's Australian classic bush songs. They were very entertaining to say the least. We soon arrived at our first stop, the Channel Fort (a man-made island that was built a hundred years ago in-case Australia was invaded by the Russians. This was really interesting I found, and we got to look around the island for 30 minutes or so.

We then paddled to Mud Island which was our lunch stop. It was quite unpleasant though because it was windy and raining. I think that the only person who didn't think that there could possibly be anywhere else anyone would want to be was Bob (who is always in high spirits, which among many other things is a quality that I admire in him).

After we had some lunch we set off again and were all feeling quite good about the last leg of the journey. We therefore decided to add a couple of extra kilometers onto the paddle so as to pass by a wooden structure called Chinamans Hat (that's actually what it looks like). This was quite amazing because on top of it and around it were about 80 seals, many of which

ended up playing in the waters around our kayaks. Not long after this, we began battling into a strong in-coming tide and I started to feel my energy levels drain. We could see the shoreline but it was hard pushing on as we seemed to be going backwards. Instead of reaching Queenscliff to catch the ferry home, we had to land about 5 km to the North.

The last 3 km of paddling was really hard work and Bob and Peter offered to tow me the rest of the way. However, there was no way that I could have accepted being towed this close to achieving my goal; so with all of the strength I had left I paddled as hard as my body would allow. I actually managed to keep up with the rest of the group (*ahead of the group in fact, Ed*).

This was the hardest part of the trip I found because not only was I exhausted, with the tide strengthening against us, there were also a few rouge waves breaking in one particular spot. This was very worrying for me because I knew that my roll wasn't proficient enough to re-stabilize myself if the waves tipped me over. I couldn't bare the thought of having to wet exit in icy water. With all of these thoughts running through my head I had to forget about my physical tiredness and sprint in a bee line for the beach which I managed to do. I landed on the sand completely exhausted and very overwhelmed. I was also starting to get cold so I quickly changed into some dry clothes and had a short rest on the beach. It was after 4pm by this time and we had paddled more than 20 km.

The next challenge was to get to Queenscliff to catch the last ferry back to Sorrento where our cars had been left. It was going to be touch and go. Three of our pod agreed to paddle the rest of the way against the tide to Queenscliff. Siena (Peter's daughter) and I were too tired to paddle so with Peter and Bob we decided to wheel our kayaks back along a road that we found behind the sand dunes hoping it would lead us to the Queenscliff ferry terminal.

We then went to get out the kayak trolleys we discovered that both of Bob's trolleys were unserviceable so we were at quite a loss about what to do. The sun was setting and so I called my parents to pick us (They'd been waiting at the ferry terminal). Luckily my dad had roof racks to carry two of the kayaks. But we had three kayakers including the double. Bob decided to get back in his kayak and paddle the rest of the way in the fading sunlight to Queenscliff. The drama was not quite over though as we soon discovered that we had landed on Swan Island which is a military base with no unauthorised entrance allowed. This proved tricky as we were already inside the compound of the military base and were locked in.

We also suspected that my dad was going to have a hard time gaining access to Swan Island as well. Soon we saw two military cars coming along one of the roads outside the gates. Fortunately, and after some explanations and warnings they let us out of the base. They warned us about the seriousness of landing on the island and took Peter Costello's number and details in-case we were ever found there again!

Quickly we loaded the kayakers on the roof and headed out of the gates with no time to spare if we were going to catch the last ferry of the day.

Thankfully, we just made it. Bob and the other two guys had made it and were doing all they could to convince the ferry crew to wait for us. When we arrived there we had a mad rush to buy tickets and load the kayakers onto the ferry. Amazingly we managed to get everyone safely aboard.

I don't remember much of the last part of the travel home -- only the warm feeling of relief and a big sense of fulfillment. Finally I had accomplished a goal that I had trained and worked towards for so long. It made me believe that any dream or goal is possible if you apply determination and the will to believe even when it seems impossible.

I think that this amazing experience will have an impact on the way I see the world and set goals for the rest of my life. I also raised about \$1500 for the orphanage my family supports in Indonesia. Later this year, my family and I will visit the orphanage to pass



on the money I raised to help buy food for the orphans. Thanks to all those VSKC members who contributed and supported me.

Postscript:
Minjahra has recently become a member of the VSKC and looks forward to continuing sea kayaking into the future. (Ed)



SOUTH TO NORTH BASS STRAIT CROSSING, APRIL 2012 by Tom Davis



THE TEAM:

Robin Boundy (trip leader and 3rd crossing)
Bill Zombor (3rd crossing)
Tamsin Visick (1st crossing)
Nathan Belsar (1st crossing)
Hamish Kebbel (1st crossing)
Tom Davis (1st crossing)

After waiting for two days at Little Musselroe Bay in north eastern Tasmania for favourable winds, we left at dawn on a beautifully calm sea to cross the notorious Banks Strait. The sunrise was glorious, its orange and gold rays shimmering off the silky ocean. Our spirits were high and finally the nervous anticipation of the last few days had turned into excitement. The adventure had begun!

Previous to our departure we had been camped in Tassie with Laurie Ford, a well known legend of Bass Strait who had come to see us off. Hearing the tales of his adventures around the campfire had certainly peaked our excitement. While watching us pack he shook his head in dismay telling us that all we needed were Sayo biscuits and Coke! Also camped with us were Jean and Tully Kebbel (Hamish brought his parents and his PJ's!) and Gill Gibson who drove our cars back to the mainland. Many thanks for their help.

As Tassie slipped slowly from view

behind us, Clarke Island and the jagged peaks of Mt. Strezlecki on distant Flinders Island grew steadily closer. Even in calm seas the huge tidal flow in Banks Strait was evident and it was obvious this was a crossing where you wanted to get your tide calculations right. Ours were spot on and about five hours later we were exploring the rock gardens of Clarke Island.

We camped that night at Spike Bay, a beautiful bay surrounded by huge granite boulders covered in orange lichen, a trademark of the Bass Strait landscape. Just before dusk a pod of dolphins came hunting close to the shore and Hamish couldn't resist getting his gear off and going for a swim with them to the raucous laughter of the rest of us. This

proved to be another trademark of the trip. Lots of laughter! Nathan provided us with some bounty from the sea, which also became a common occurrence.

From there we cruised up the western side of Clarke Island and crossed to Preservation Island for more rock garden exploration. Leaving there with a freshening wind we had our sails up and made good time in front of approaching bad weather to Thunder and Lightning Bay. Deciding not to stay we pressed on toward Long Island. Just off the coast of Cape Barren Island lightning forced us to shore where we tracked its progress via the BOM site on an iPad. Laurie would have been rolling his eyes!

We camped at Long Island and then had a fantastic sunny crossing to Trousers Bay on Flinders Island (our next camp) with even time for some 'kayak-frisbie' along the way! From there it was a launch in the dark due to the high tide time and a shallow section off Whitemark, the main town on Flinders Island. Here we enjoyed a rest day including dinner at the pub (twice!), a day trip in a hire car and the local talent show! All of this, however, paled into insignificance when compared to the friendliest people on earth, the Islanders themselves.

The next leg was from Whitemark to Royden island. Some Parks people were staying at the hut there so we moved on to Killerkrankie to camp for the night. It was a



long day as we spent an unplanned afternoon battling against the tide. This was punctuated by some large swell and fun tidal races. A gift of fish from some locals put smiles on some weary faces.

From Killerkrankie we skipped up to the north west tip of Flinders Island before darting across Sisters Passage. Again we encountered some fun tidal races before paddling into the large white sand beach at Inner Sister Island.

After a rest day there, we were happy with the forecast for our first big crossing to Deal Island for the following day. We launched at 4.00 am and had covered a good 15 km by sunrise. Only another 50 to go! It was another spectacular day. Sunny with a light breeze on the nose--just enough to cool you down. A very friendly seal kept us company for 20 km or so (I reckon he thought safety in numbers!), and to top it all off a surf landing to finish! We were all elated and tired ... a wonderful feeling.

The following morning after a fresh surf launch to help blow out the cobwebs, we followed the beautiful cliffs of Deal Island around to the eastern end of Murray Passage and on to our Camp at Erith Island. As it turned out we were to be stuck here for the next 5 days as a massive storm tore through the region. Winds up to 70 knots and 6 meter seas kept us on land with small forays across the passage to Deal Island to explore the lighthouse and eat scones, jam and cream with the caretakers. What a treat!

When we finally did get a window in the weather it was above our agreed limit of 20 kn. However, as a group we decided it was within our abilities and risk management assessment. We also realised that if we didn't take it we would be stuck for another week and that could possibly mean an end to the trip. We decided to go for it.

A usual seven hour crossing took five and a half with our sails up! 2-3 meter seas and gusts up to 35 knots kept us all focussed on the task at hand. When we arrived at Hogan Island we were all very happy to get out of the saddle. We camped in the middle of a penguin colony we were lulled to sleep by

their calls.

The next morning we left at dawn for the last big crossing to the mainland! Some lumpy conditions and fresh winds sometimes helped and sometimes hindered our progress. After a long day we left Bass Strait behind and entered the noticeably different coastal waters of Wilsons Prom. We landed at Johnny Souey Cove and yes, we had crossed Bass Strait!

After our final camp (and the consumption of our favourite varieties of dehy saved for dinner celebrations) we paddled the next morning against the tide into Port Welshpool to our waiting loved ones.

I felt a mixture of elation, relief and sadness at the completion of our epic journey—a trip I look forward to repeating!



PREPARING FOR A BASS STRAIT CROSSING & the 6 P's by Tamsin Visick

Tamsin Visick was a member of Robin Boundy's recent team who paddled across Bass Strait. While the trip itself was an impressive feat, the preparation for the trip was just as important as Tamsin explains in this article (Ed).



Prior Preparation Prevents Piss Poor Performance (the 6 P's): that's how I decided to tackle the 2012 Bass Strait crossing. Being the only female in the group of six, I was determined to limit the amount of times I was going to be a damsel in distress.

For the purpose of this article I will address Prior Preparation for this trip with regards to fitness, food and equipment.

Fitness:

Physiologically and genetically men should be far more suited to sea kayaking than females. Being a female sea kayaker has only one advantage that stands out to me; a lower centre of gravity. Men genetically have more muscle mass and most of their strength in their upper body when compared to females. This is why approaching a trip that requires days and weeks where we could be sea kayaking as long as 12+ hours in a day I had to make sure that I was physically fit. My training was a combination of weight training, cardio sessions, and sea kayaking. I adopted an eight month training schedule:

Aug – Dec : Training started with general conditioning, focusing on improving my aerobic capacity and strength, specifically the muscles involved in sea kayaking.

The following charts give a basic outline of what I did.

Resistance program :

Goal: muscular strength :

Muscle group	Exercise	Reps	Sets
Lats	Lat. pull down	8-12	3
Trapezius	BB up row	8-12	3
Abdominal	Swiss ball curl with weight plate	8-12	3
Pecs	BB chest press	8-12	3
Quads	Seated leg press	8-12	3
Hamstrings	Leg curl	8-12	3

Load : 60 – 70 % of 1 RM
 8-12 reps
 1-3 sets
 2-3 mins rest between each set

Component	Training method	Frequency	Intensity	time
Aerobic capacity	Continuous Kayaking Spin classes Body attack class	3 + x per week	70 – 85% of max HR	1.5 – 9hrs mins +
Muscular strength	Resistance	2 times per week	60 – 70 % of 1 RM 8-12 reps 1-3 sets 2-3 mins rest between sets	

January – March: The focus was on maintaining my aerobic fitness and strength and increasing time in the boat (sport specific) and team paddles. Over this time we did the following paddles:

Across the bay, Circumnavigation of Phillip island, two day Wilsons Prom trip. Sundays were days that I allocated time in the boat usually if the team did not have a paddle planned then I would do at least a 4 – 6 hour paddle. In the last 3 months prior to the expedition I would do at least 3 sessions in the boat lasting a minimum of 2 hours.

Food :

Breakfasts were either muesli and milk powder or porridge. Lunches varied from vita wheats with spreads (vegemite, peanut butter, honey) and/or salads like cucumbers, roma tomato, cheese) etc. Dinners were either two serves of various 'Back Country' dry freeze packs or my own combinations of dehy meals and pasta. For snacks I carried an assortment of snickers,



mars bars and muesli bars. I also carried oranges, vita fresh orange drinks, Gatorade powder, tuna, cheese as well as tabasco sause, tomato paste, puddings, soup packets, peas, deb, cous cous stew and parmesan cheese.

I found that all the food I took was substantial and had enough variety and nutritional value so that by the end of the trip I had only lost 1 kg!!!! (a bit disappointing from a weight loss perspective!) .

As the trip was one of endurance I relied heavily on carbohydrate and fats stores to fuel my energy levels. The menu was focused on low GI breakfast, lunch and Dinner with moderate to High GI snacks. Dinner was low GI with added protein to assist in replacing lost carbohydrates during the day and protein to rebuild muscle.

Low GI foods tend to be slow releasing and sustain energy levels for a longer period of time. Moderate to High GI foods release glucose more rapidly into the blood stream so that when I am paddling and a bit flat it will boost the blood sugar levels and give me a pick me up.

Equipment :

My equipment list (chart on opposite page) was developed from my original camping list I use for hiking. I spoke a lot to Robin Boundy and David Winkworth with regards to gear that they found useful and adapted my original list specifically for Sea kayaking.



The most valuable thing I took that aided me in packing all this gear into my boat was, 1: colour coding my gear with dry bags (blue bags was clothes, yellow was food etc...) and a schematic (a pictorial

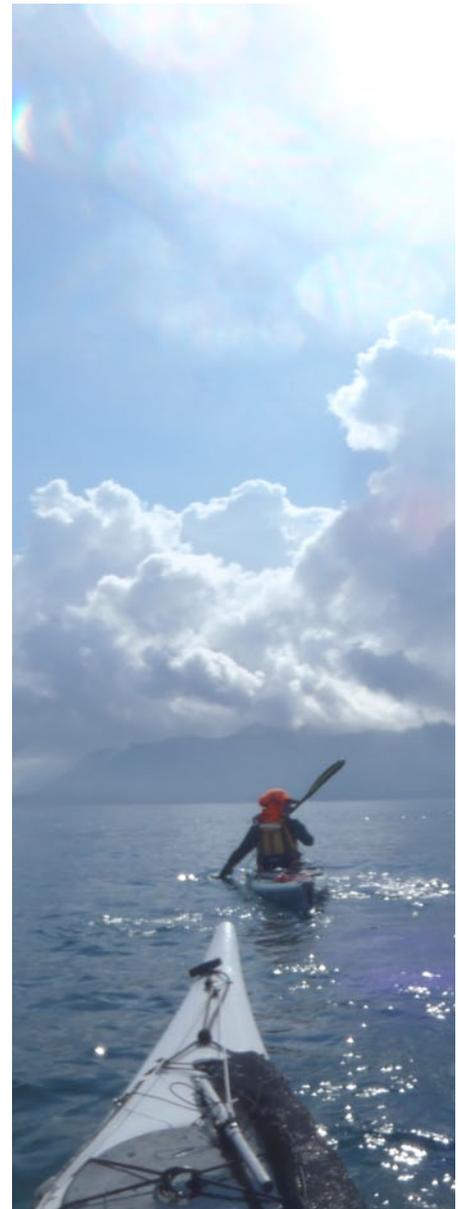
representation of where each item went in my hatches).

There is a photo of the schematic and I recommend anyone to do this! At 3am in the morning in the dark with a full boat to pack and a time limit packing is stressful. However, a schematic made it a way less stressful start to the morning than otherwise would have been the case!

... So remember your 6 p's and have a great trip, I DID ☺!!!!



paddle gear	clothes	repair gear	camping equipment
sunscreen	long dry pants	oedie, thread (marine)	seat
wets suit	thermal/legs/ top(heavy)	gaffes tape x2	sleeping bag
PFD	lycra bike pants	extra_cord 15mt	liger
boddies	socks	spare rudder and parts	pillow
thru thermal	long sleeved top cotton	shot_cord	torch
sunnies / band	2x undies	olive cleats	stranger
sock x 2	1x socks	speed it x 2	2x outtop
toilet	batbers bikini	medical kit	matches x 4
gel san	warm jumper	downow	lights
toilet paper	towel	VET wrap x 2	seat
tooth paste	cut up micro face washer	gastro meds	tarp
tooth brush	apara	causesa pills	sit upon
face wipes (30)	coats	infection pills	safety equipment
feet wipes (30)	cauche, thal fish pants	sleeping pills	snag lights
small talc powder	2 t-shirts	quells x 4 each day (48) (12 days paddle)	colch
deodorant	1 sports bra	oerobio	eos
body wash	water	goti inflam	batteries x AA 28
shampoo wash			oboon / car charger
small soap	3 lt bladder		bead torch AAA x 2
small moisturiser	1.5 bladder		tow line 15 mt
	sea summit bladder 4 lt		shot tow line
	PFD bladder 1.5		flares (2 orange 2 red)
	bladder 2lt		paddle float
			Fluro Yellow beanie



CHERI PERRY AND TURNER WILSON VISIT, EASTER 2012 by Bob Fergie

The VSKC hosted two of the world's leading instructors of Greenland paddling and rolling over Easter this year. Cheri and Turner came to us with more than impressive CVs and they did not disappoint. In fact more than a few of the club's most seasoned paddlers agreed that Cheri and Turner's legacy to the VSKC may well be one of the most profoundly helpful in the club's history (p20).



Over the two weeks of their stay in Melbourne, Cheri and Turner trained our club's instructor team over the Easter long weekend out from Snake Island. In the following week they provided a range of expert training sessions to the broader sea kayaking community working out from Frankston beach.

They also participated in a special 'rolling extravaganza' at the Mentone Aquatic Centre providing fantastic demonstrations and insights into the gentle art of Greenland rolling. In addition they judged our own club rolling challenge involving 16 VSKC members of varying rolling experience in what was a really fun evening enjoyed by 60 or so kayaking enthusiasts.

In a world first, Cheri and Turner also launched their 'This is the Roll' dvd (by Justine Curgenvan). I would rate this rolling instruction dvd as about as good as there is at present and I would encourage all sea kayakers to buy a copy.

Don't be surprised if you notice an increasing number of VSKC'ers dressed in black tuiqs, paddling with 'sticks' in very skinny, low volume Greenland rolling kayaks. Of far greater importance though, notice significant progress in rolling competence and confidence across the rank and file of the club.

INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

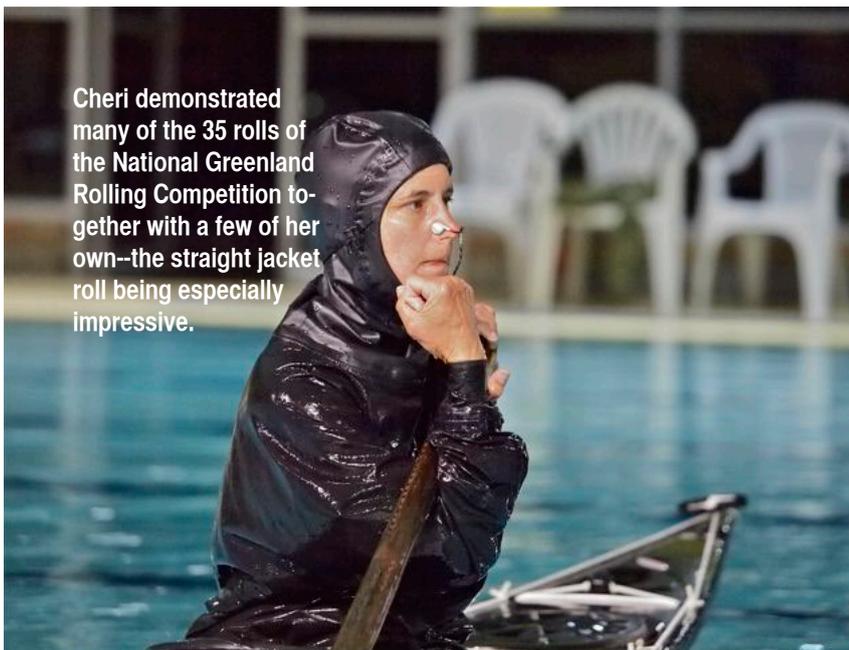


ROLLING TUITION



ESKIMO ROLLING DEMONSTRATIONS by two of the world's best

Cheri demonstrated many of the 35 rolls of the National Greenland Rolling Competition together with a few of her own—the straight jacket roll being especially impressive.



'move the kayak first, head out of the water last'
(Cheri and Wilson's oft repeated coaching mantra)



A NEW ROLLING DVD

The launch of Cheri and Turner's new rolling dvd raises the bar of eskimo rolling instruction to a new level. It is a most useful resource not only for 'stick' paddlers, but euro paddlers as well. It focuses on three rolls (high brace and low brace) breaking them down into simple and clear learning progressions. They also provide some excellent instruction for safe body stretching designed to increase flexibility and minimise injuries.



ROLLING COMPETITION

Fifteen very good humoured VSKC members participated in the rolling challenge. Glenn Foster won the open mens' title and Raia Wall the open womens' title. Doseena Fergie was awarded the judges special encouragement prize.

Without doubt everyone had a great time, spectators, competitors and judges alike so don't be surprised if this becomes a regular club event.





Highlights

(Turner) The obvious highlight was going to Snake Island and hanging out with several VSKC instructors and Committee members. Snake Island is a special place with a special heritage and it was great sharing this with a lot of people with open minds. I was very impressed with the way they all responded given that some were at first more sceptical than others about using traditional ‘sticks’ and Greenland techniques. But all in their own ways rose to the challenge of being open minded about it and the way we approached our teaching session.

(Cheri) I agree with all that Turner said—meeting all the people and going on the trips. But it was really cool to see the different climate and culture and critters as well—the kangaroos and wallabies bouncing around were really fantastic. The cattleman’s hut was really amazing too because they’ve got this cultural thing where they bring the cows out and its obviously been a tradition. Swampy (the Ranger) showed us old photos of them coming out and this was really cool and very different from any of the other places we’ve seen before.

Challenges and opportunities for the VSKC

(Cheri) I think the club is very interesting with a nice group of folks.

I think you’d highly benefit from a library with books and tapes of outside material to help you bounce new ideas off. I know you guys are working on your competency-based training program, but I think that if you also had access to more outside material you might find a good deal of ideas to help you. However, I see you have a great bunch of people who like to paddle and that’s what it’s all about.

(Turner) I think every club has its own personality and cast of characters. I think the cool thing about most clubs is that they have a pretty good notion of what they are trying to do. They want to help along people who are new to the sport and have some social interaction with people who are more experienced in the sport. It gives people the opportunity to train and be trained in an informal setting. I think we both definitely appreciate that sort of situation. I think it’s very useful, particularly for people who are seeking to understand what sea kayaking is all about.

The other thing, and I sense this about the VSKC, is that there are so many ways to interact with one another through sea kayaking, and despite some jostling and some teasing I think people are fairly open minded about accepting each other’s points of view and bouncing those ideas and challenges off

one another. So yes, every form of kayaking has something to offer different people and all of those styles of kayaking offer gifts and challenges and some are different from others. Certainly the open mindedness of the club instructors and committee really impressed me. Other clubs we’ve worked with are not always this open, and in some settings there is a very strong core group of the ‘old guard’ who can be rather resistant to anything new, seeing their way as the right way.

Things you enjoy/appreciate about Greenlandic kayaking culture/values

(Turner) I think the thing that first appealed to me about Greenland kayaking was *the notion of ‘rolling first’* and the independence it offered you right out of the get-go. I took that pretty seriously and I committed myself to it and it has flowered in my consciousness and my experience. I believe in it more deeply now than I did when I went through that transition itself.

I think it is a very powerful thing and I think any training program should take a harder look at what they are doing. I don’t really, in fact I can’t, encourage people to become ‘dependent’ paddlers. I want them to become independent paddlers. I respect some training systems that are world-wide,

the BCU (British Canoe Union) particularly, but *I really would like all of these programs to look at the Inuit method of rolling as a simple solution to some of this dependency.*

(Cheri) I went to Greenland and got to experience the Greenlandic people and their national sea kayak competition (rolling, ropes, races). The culture was very eye-opening for us because we think of a competition as a very rigid serious event. For them it was competitive for a certain age range but there was a lot of other people that competed at lower and higher ages with all different experience levels from the really really new people to much more experienced people.

So it was much more a celebration of their culture than just competing at a hard level. Even the hard-core competitors spent the day assisting the kids and women on the water all day long before they got to compete themselves. So it was definitely a family celebration and an opportunity to get little kids into kayaks so they wouldn't forget the roots of their traditional culture.

This was so inspiring and people really were brave, dressed in ordinary clothes, leaving their sneakers on the dock. It takes a lot of courage considering they don't know how to swim as they don't have many swimming pools in Greenland. It's just a very different relationship with the water compared to what we have, and that was very interesting.

Also, just trying some of their food made it a really cool experience.



Going to Greenland not as a tourist but as a kayaker participating in the competition meant you were more accepted into their circle, and this was an amazing experience that I would highly recommend to others, especially if they have younger people to bring to the table. It's great.

What are some of the positive values for modern day paddlers learning to paddle and roll with these traditional blades?

(Cheri) Like Turner said, it's the absolute independence thing—going into big waves may be a bit uncomfortable but if it knocks me over I'm going to roll up. I'm not looking around thinking whose going to rescue me out of this situation. I know I will roll up. It may not be pretty but I know I'm coming up and I'm going to be able to get myself out of there.

So just the general independence issue is a big thing and *I think we both feel that rolling is a foundation skill.* The Greenlanders learnt to roll, and roll well from every angle and on both sides before they ever went paddling. A lot of people think the Greenlanders just roll all the time. Well they do for a while until they get it nailed down, and then they are ready to go paddling in bumpier stuff so that they can save themselves—and then to learn to paddle and do different and progressively more difficult things.

Theirs is a different progression to that of modern day kayakers where we so often start with teaching wet exits and assisted rescues before teaching rolling. So often rolling is put up on a pedestal and made to look like it is some unattainable thing for most folk. But really, rolling is very simple and there is no reason to complicate it and put it high up on the list. It should be a foundation skill not an advanced one.

(Turner) I've had some conversations with people about the practical application of Greenland rolling. Many from the outside perceive Greenlanders focused on rolling rather than paddling paddling. Some of that perception is correct and it's something that Cheri and I talk about with our Greenland friends. We are

constantly encouraging people to paddle but there is practical reason why rolling and bracing is so important to discover. I challenge myself to discover things about the Greenlandic technique as often as possible. That's part of the ongoing engagement here for both of us. These skills were almost lost in the twentieth century.

The Greenlandic skill-set is wide and deep and to see it teeter on extinction really is a daily challenge to us. *We don't think of ourselves as rolling gurus. No, we see ourselves as Zuloos.* We are enthusiasts and we have seen the practical application of these skills and we firmly believe in them and that's our passion—to spread that enthusiasm so that others can discover it for themselves.

What unique contribution to rolling does your new DVD make?

(Cheri) In our new DVD (This is the Roll) we are hoping to make rolling look simple, because it is. *We break it down into the most simple, easy and basic steps for people to understand and do* and we've got Justine (Curgenven) there with her camera getting it from every single angle. Prior to her being this amazing adventure film maker she was a journalist so she's got that inquisitive nature and she's professional about it so it's like, 'I still don't understand it, so show me again, explain it again... and can you show me better, or a different way...'. So its that package of her pulling the information out of us and shooting from every angle and having us talk about it and write about it. This we think has got it to a level that it's easy for folks to understand and watch and say, I can do that.

(Turner) I think the other thing that *we're striving for is a basic rolling skill set and sort of focusing on its practical application to real day paddling* rather than focusing on the competition Greenland rolling list itself, which is really only part of the picture. So *we've picked three rolls to focus on that are core standards of many other rolls on the list (standard layback roll, reverse sweep roll and the forward ending storm roll).* Together they really bring a practical skill set to every paddler (especially



when they can be performed on both sides). The other thing that's come about through our partnership with Justine-- a euro-blade paddler herself, although interested in learning *the Greenland stick is that the Greenland technique is transferable to any blade.*

Cheri and I are obviously passionate about the Greenland blade and we firmly believe that it makes sea kayaking easier. It makes it simpler and more straightforward to understand the context and to do certain things. But *we also believe that the Inuit way of rolling is so deep in its fundamentals that it really doesn't matter what blade you use it with.*

Making the DVD with Justine was a real eye-opener for us to see how far you could go with the wing blade or a euro blade using the Inuit skill set. It's totally achievable, so that means to us that it is more applicable to a much wider audience of paddlers, not so much Greenland style kayakers.

In the end though, we're with paddlers—bottom line, but we would like to see them communicate more. The first place I practiced rolling was with paddlers of all sorts on flat water. At the end of a day, they brought their boat and paddle, and passion, and skill set and together we shared stuff and learned from each other. That is so important. It is the function of kayak club and it's the primary function of the work we've just done with the DVD.

What do you enjoy about sea kayak coaching?

(Cheri) I just like that thrill when people get stuff—they're so stoked about their roll and so excited and

they keep it. They email me later and say they've still got it and they're doing this and that, and thank you so much.... So just having people have that experience and have that confidence—like your daughter (Safina) today. She was so happy she got her roll.

In fact after her initial success I purposely made her fail her roll because I wanted her to know that she could come up with her standard roll. I gave her a roll (crook of the arm roll) that I knew would trip her up a little bit so that she would have to move her hands into the standard roll position and come up—and she did and so teaching her to be independent was great.

(Turner) Well I'm with Cheri there, I love to see people make progress in their skill and it's not just with rolling either. I love to teach people to paddle with this Greenland stick. I love to experiment with it myself—to explore the technique and share what little really I know about this. I'm quite blunt about how humble I feel in front of this technique. It's just really cool. We also get really frustrated if we can't push someone's skill set a little further but we're lucky to have one another to debrief with. We do it all the time talking about what's happened in our day and what we've learned in terms of new methods of teaching.

A big part of it is getting into people's heads in terms of what their actual learning style is. This is incredibly intriguing as an educator in any field. It's important not to get too roped into your own style because a lot of people aren't into your style no matter what your style is. So figuring out learning styles is important. I always feel as though I've got about a minute to work this out and sometimes I get it wrong. So I often look over to Cheri and she'll be giving me tips, or other times I'm sneaking around the back of her and suggesting things that may need attending with those she's teaching, and so it goes on. We both do this all the time and it's great.

Who have inspired you most in Greenlandic way?

(Cheri) Greg Stammer and Harvey Golden are pretty inspirational folks, but going to the Greenland

competition was pretty impressive to me. There are so many people and it's hard to pinpoint just a few because everywhere we go people just love their sticks and they all share. As Turner was saying, lots of this stuff was almost lost and gone and what we now know is so little. *I realise that the stick itself has so much more to teach us.* So often we stumble upon things accidentally—that sharp blade we've been playing with happened because I was trying to make a paddle and I was trying to get my lines straighter, but I got it so straight it was like a razor. I said I don't care and I'm going to paddle with it anyway. But then I noticed how well it sliced the water, and so Turner made another paddle that was razor sharp too.

We realised that sharper edges had such a great entry into the water. The paddle just had a lot to show us, and we stumble upon things like that all the time. Then there was wave energy and various different combinations that we discovered, although the Greenlanders would most certainly have known all of this long before us. For us it's been more of a re-discovery—that mysterious thing where the stick has so much to tell you. You just have to listen.

(Turner) One of the things that we go by, 'a living tradition continues', means that its impossible to single out any one person of influence. Malligiaq Padilla has obviously been a big influence on an entire community outside of Greenland and he's had a huge influence on Greenlanders as well. But there many others inside and outside of Greenland who are passionate about this stuff.

Cheri mentioned that Harvey Golden has influenced me a great deal even though I don't think anything like him. He's a historian, I'm an architect, and we see the same boat and think about different things as a result. But as you know, as someone who has built stuff, one building informs the next, and the next, and the next. To be open to that, to be open about something different is relevant to not only building kayaks, paddles, but the Greenlandic skill-set itself. As you discover, you unearth more, more, more—it's an inevitable and

unending process. It's very cool.

The thing that I think about kayaking in the modern world is that we're not quite doing the same thing as the Inuit. They hunted out of a kayak to feed their families and survive. Even so, we are hunters in our own yet different way too. We are looking for a path through an often crazy, disconnected, complicated culture that doesn't offer a lot of psychological comfort. In a lot of people's lives we're pretty mixed up and jumbled. But, getting out and being in a small boat with a paddle--having been empowered to do that can be very helpful. Somehow, some way, someone inspired you to do that. It may have been your grandfather, or your father, or your mother, or sister, or girlfriend/boyfriend, or just a friend. Somehow it happened and it just clicks.

For so many people it's not even about kayaking. It's about water-beings on and in the water and how a deeper connection is made that I can't even begin to explain but I think people can relate to.

Advice on building SoF Greenland kayaks

(Turner) I think you need to try as many boats as you can, ask as many questions as you can about people who have built kayaks. Build a kayak. Learn about the tools of the wood trade so you can build better kayaks with solid and sound joints that are mechanically appropriate. But, be inspired by the pure form, the aesthetic. Respond and build to something that you think is sweet and fair. Try it, if it screws up rip the skin off and

re-build it. Refocus your energy and change it, or build another and go do, do, do, do. I think at some point you will be happy with what you come up with.

There are some good resources to get you started: H C Pettersen's book of kayak building is excellent (Peterson, H. C. Instruction in Kayak Building. Nuuk: The Greenland National Museum and Archives and Atuakkiorfik/Greenland Publishers, 2001). It's a very small pamphlet and is available through bookstores in Greenland and the Qajak USA website (<http://www.qajaqusa.org/>). It has a very studious approach to the actual construction method of the mid twentieth century Inuits. The techniques of building skin-on-frame kayaks have evolved over hundreds of years however, from very rudimentary connections to very sophisticated compression frames that are very resilient.

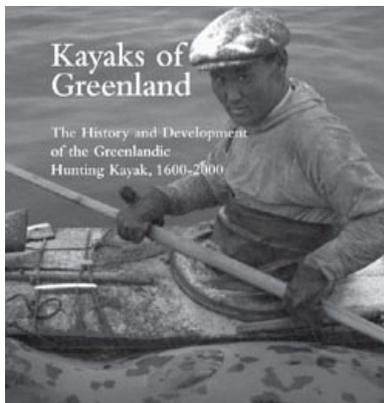
I would recommend above all Harvey Golden's book, 'Kayaks of Greenland: The History and Development of the Greenlandic Hunting Kayak, 1600-2000'. Portland, Oregon: White House Grocery Press,

2006). Harvey is miraculous. His enthusiasm and his way of thinking about things have unearthed this world collection of Inuit boats. He has gone about and analyzed them upside down and side ways. He has surveyed them and provided those drawings in this magnificent book. So I would start there but I would not be held there. I would urge people to think about the relevance of the boats to their body and I would think about the forms, the archetypes, rather than think only about their replication.

(Bob) *So optimal body shape is the key?* (Turner) *optimal body shape is everything!!*

What does the balance of 2012 look like for you?

From Australia, we go home to Mayne for a week where we'll celebrate with a few DVD parties in various states. Then we're off to Wales and Scotland and England for a little bit of teaching. Then it's up to Canada and British Columbia, spending a month on Anchora Island before teaching our way back, mostly through Canada. Then its down to Florida and back finally getting home for winter.





In golfing terms one's handicap ranking reflects a player's current proficiency/form relative to a par score on any golf course. I'm reliably told by my golfing guru-mate Robin Boundy that the handicap system is designed on the one hand as a way of competing with one's self in an effort to improve your form relative to a par score. On the other hand, it is also a means of moderating competition between golfers of varying ability/form so that they can enjoy a game together. I'm no golfer as you can see above, but I am aware everyday I tee off with my own set of handicaps. I'm in good company though if we're honest because the truth is we all have handicaps of one kind or another. The question is, how do we deal with these?

Applied to sea kayaking adventures, this is an important question (and one of the reasons we are asked by our trip leader during pre-paddle briefings to disclose our handicaps to ensure we are not putting ourselves or others at unnecessary risk).

Unfortunately, many people often see their own and/or other's handicaps as inhibitors to the enjoyment and challenge of sea kayaking. While there is no question that we need to honestly and realistically acknowledge our handicap(s), I think we also need to learn to manage them so that we can participate in Sea kayaking adventures with responsible and reasonable safety. This is something I personally I am learning to grapple with in more recent years as a type II diabetic. In the hope that my experience may

encourage others let me explain the condition and the management strategies I have developed and continue to fine-tune.

Five or six years ago I became dependent on insulin injections (up to five a day) to manage this degenerative disease. More recently, thanks to a brilliant little insulin pump invention, I have been able to much more efficiently release appropriate amounts of insulin into my system. As a consequence my control of the condition has improved dramatically. By this I mean that my Blood Glucose levels (BSLs) have stayed within a reasonably normal range consistently much to the delight of my specialist (not to mention me). My medical professionals work closely with me in monitoring all this and are very aware of my sea kayaking involvement/ambitions (including my desire to participate in extended sea kayaking expeditions).

The issues that I with them have had to work through relate to the two potential problems that insulin-dependent diabetics face.

HYPERGLYCAEMIA (*ie. very high sugar levels*) can make you feel ill in the short term and cause blurred vision and nausea, but is most dangerous in the long term as untreated high BSLs can cause serious damage to major organs, especially kidneys. Hyperglycaemia is treated in my case by three things: synthetic Insulin injected through my insulin pump; exercise to burn up excessive sugar in the blood (which is why kayaking has been such good medicine for me);

and careful management of food intake. The challenge is to match the amount of carbs in the food I eat and the amount of insulin I take in—actually the insulin pump does all the calculations (which is why it has been so successful for me, and also why it has a \$8000 price tag attached). The really good news is that my management of hyperglycaemia has improved dramatically with the use of the insulin pump

HYPOGLYCAEMIA (*ie. very low sugar levels*) is the opposite problem and potentially the most serious for me in my sea kayaking involvement. If too much insulin is administered (or not enough food taken in, or too much physical exertion or a combination of these), my BSLs can drop in ways that at first leads to tiredness and nausea, then to disorientation and at the most serious end coma, leading to death. This all sounds rather draconian, and it is if it is not managed appropriately. However, I'm discovering that it is more than possible to manage the condition.

So how do I manage it I hear you ask?

There are a number of complementary strategies I employ at the advice of my medico specialists. First, I carefully monitor my blood sugar level before and immediately after a paddle (making food input adjustments accordingly). Secondly, I manage food input carefully. Given that I have to disconnect and stow my insulin pump when on the water (it's not waterproof), but more significantly, do not have any insulin being pumped in while disconnected, the danger of BSLs dropping dangerously low is minimised as long as I eat/drink at regular intervals.

Therefore, I carry at all times in my PFD two types of food: **quick acting sugars** (eg soft drink, jelly beans etc) which I can access very quickly and easily even in rough condition (rafting up obviously makes this easier) as soon as I begin to sense/feel my BSLs are low; **low GI longer acting snacks** (muesli bars, power bars, sports drinks etc). I make sure I eat one of these each hour so that my blood

sugars remain balanced and in sync with the physical exercise induced sugar depletion.

Like many active sports people, I am learning how to manage these strategies peculiar to my own body mechanics/metabolism. Since being fitted with the insulin pump mid 2010, I have been experimenting with and monitoring all this on regular paddles (usually 3 sessions a week of 2-3 hour duration, 15-20kms in a range of sea states-rivers, Bay, coastal, surf etc). As a part of my own commitment and responsibility to both self-assess and prepare adequately, I have taken this process very seriously I should add, and I continue to fine tune the management of my condition in ways that I believe are both responsible and efficient.

Recently, for example, on a 21 day expedition in the Whitsundays Peter Dingle introduced me to a much better alternative to hourly power bars and the like. A mixture of nuts and seeds (interspersed with some M&Ms) in a used peanut butter jar and stowed in my deck bag provides an excellent accessible source of low GI food (except for the M&Ms). I can eat mouthful at a time at 15-20 minute intervals without missing more than half a dozen stokes. On 20-30 km crossings in 20-25 kn seas, this has proven to be an excellent means of stabilizing my blood sugars at levels adequate for high exertion.

Another thing I am careful to do before a paddle is to make sure that those paddling with me know the signs of hypoglycaemia too (mainly loss of energy so that I begin to slow down, and also symptoms not dis-similar to hypothermia, eg mumbles, mental lethargy and disorientation). I then invite them to question/challenge me to eat if they see either of these symptoms developing. I also make them aware of where my snacks are stowed in my PFD, deck bag and day hatch. As well as appropriate food and liquids, I also carry a special glucose injection that others can easily access and administer from my day hatch if I were to show the more serious symptoms of hypoglycemia.

Further, I am also very aware in myself when my BSLs begin to

drop so it's not a case of all of a sudden lapsing into a diabetic coma. I should add that I have never reached a stage where I was on the verge of going into a coma. While I do have occasional hypos from time to time, I and my paddling companions have always been able to pick the symptoms for me to take the necessary action to raise my BSLs to the normal range myself (a process that takes normally 3-4 minutes to reverse with half a can of coke or half a dozen jelly beans). That being said, this may not always be the case if the experience of other diabetics is considered so I need to be vigilant.

Handicaps need not relegate us to the sideline.

As you can see, I have found ways to manage my diabetes 'handicap'. There are some things I have had to accept that I most likely won't be able to do. As much as I'd love to do a Bass Strait crossing, the truth is the challenge of managing 12+ hour/60 km crossings involve a level of risk that would unfairly put pressure on fellow paddlers (not to mention my own survival) if I were to develop hypoglycemia for example. However, there are lots of other challenging things that I can do with relative safety.

Diabetes certainly is a serious chronic disease afflicting more and more people every year. However, like many other illnesses it is also a manageable condition. While I am far from an elite sportsman as I approach 60 the reality is that there are a significant number of elite sports people who have insulin dependent diabetes like me but who have learned to manage it at the highest level.

In fact, since being diagnosed with diabetes about 14 years ago,

my overall health has improved considerably as I have been forced to address far more intentionally exercise and nutrition. There is therefore a genuine sense of thankfulness for these positives that my diabetes has opened up for me-- sea kayaking being one of them.

As I type, I'm sitting on a beautiful little beach in the Whitsundays on a rest day with five other friends. We've been involved in a 21 day/300+ km un-supported expedition through the Whitsundays, camping on small islands, carrying all our gear in our boats. For me personally this has been a wonderful experience not just from a paddling perspective but also from a mate-ship perspective as well. In addition to their encouragement and support I continue to learn ways to improve the management of my particular 'diabetes handicap' (not to mention a few others).

Yes, I do 'play off a handicap', as they say, and yes it does have its challenges. BUT, I have found that with responsible management, and the support of like-minded mates it need not rob me of the opportunity to participate in and enjoy one of the most interesting and healthy sporting/hobby pursuits I have experienced. In fact, as a Christian Pastor, it is for me very much a part of 'doing church as I go' given the opportunity to enjoy close up God's amazing creation and to build great friendships along the way. I have my GP to thank for all this I hasten to add. He was the one who encouraged me to take up paddling in the first place as a part of managing my diabetes and geriatric knees.

Yes, handicaps there may be, but more often than not they can be managed successfully. That's my experience and I hope yours too.





There's a saying for these types of trips that there's only one reason to go and a hundred not too. In the past the hundred had always won out. But after the 2010 AGM and hearing Paul Caffyn and Terry Boland speak about their trips and have Stuart Trueman on his way around Australia it was a case of what the hell, just go and do it. So with the support of my SO and the stunned disbelief of workmates I gave notice and started planning for the trip.

The aim was to start in Mackay and take two months with the destination open ended. This would allow flexibility depending on how I handled the physical and mental demands of the trip and to take away time pressure from judgement calls. In other words, to actually try to enjoy the experience.

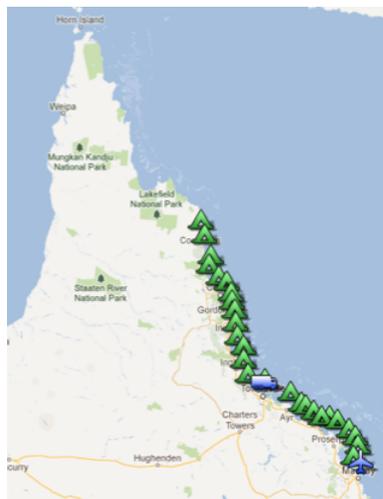
Mackay to Bowen – Whitsundays

Getting around a rapidly growing Mackay for food and gas took longer than planned so I hadn't done a pre-pack run before the first day. So Day one saw the usual first pack, re-pack and food rationalisation session necessary after getting carried away in the supermarket – Goodbye vegetables! The late start meant I had missed the best of the

tide and hadn't done the necessary sink test on the three piece boat.

A 30 km open water test paddle out to Carlisle Is probably wasn't the best option so I changed to plan B and headed north from Blacks Beach for Cape Hillsborough. A quick check at Brucasia Pt made sure that sluggishly heavy boat was due to the previous hours spent cramming gear through hatches and not a courtesy hole from the airline.

The trip out to Goldsmith Island was uneventful. I'd timed the start of the trip for neap tides as the area has a large tidal range created by the north-south tide convergence. I did unwittingly paddle within



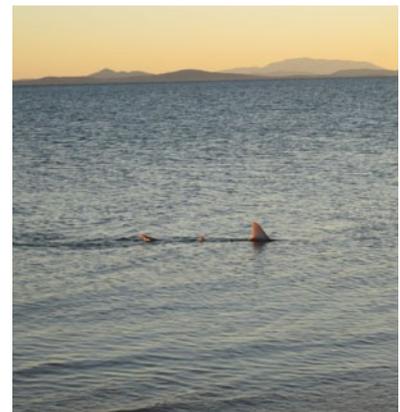
a metre of a black and white sea snake. Most sea life makes a rapid departure but this guy leisurely eyeballed me as I passed by. Yep, sea snakes have attitude.



Paddling through the Whitsunday Islands was the Queensland tourism cliché with perfect weather and blue water with winds a perfect 15 kn for sailing. It was my first time using a sail and the increased speed lead to some waiting for the incoming tide to land over the reef at the first couple of islands. I island-hopped Goldsmith, Shaw, Henning, Armit and Gloucester to Bowen.

The stop at Henning Island was to collect water from Hamilton and the manicured lawn of the campsite felt 5-star after the wilder less used southern islands. There was a second sea snake encounter leaving Armit Island that had me clambering hurriedly into the boat when it swam up to my legs while launching. My effort to stealthy spy over the edge failed when my shadow spooked it and it coiled up aggressively on the sea bed– yep sea snakes definitely have attitude!

At the next stop on Gloucester Is I had some amazing dinner entertainment as a 1.5 m shark chased whiting up and down the beach. There were incredibly fast runs with highside 180's throwing most of its body out of the water. I then paddled into Bowen Harbour which



in hindsight wasn't the best option as landing further around the point at Rose Bay would have been more convenient and made leaving against the SE's easier.

An unseen Dugong feeding in the shallow sea grass beds near the Marina stole a couple of years off my life when it startled as I nearly paddled over the top of it (I'll admit the first thought was CROCODILE!). Two rest days in Bowen was spent doing the housekeeping and enjoying civilised life after the last two weeks of camping.

Bowen to Alva

A rainy start with a short stint into strong SE's out of Bowen and around the point where I was disappointed to find wallowing seas caused by my now tailwind being against the tide. Frustrating paddling as I couldn't find a speed or rhythm that would save me from having to reaccelerate the loaded boat as it repeatedly stalled in the steep wave backs. The tide eased in time to have some speed as I sailed under the transfer station at Abbott Pt with the hope that the water was deep enough between pylons and a couple of bays around I camped at a beach black with coal dust.

The next day's destination ended up being Snug Harbour after mistaking it for Coconut Beach and I camped on the beach as I didn't want to fight it out with the mozzies in the scrub. High tide came within 2 metres of the tent which wasn't a concern as it didn't seem like crocodile area. But having a large piece of burley wash up that night next to the tent caused a few moments of reconsideration. It was roughly 75 cm diameter and 150 cm and looked like the remains of a dugong or whale that had been fed on by sharks. Apparently Dugongs are particularly susceptible to boat strike and it may have been the cause. It weighed a ton and I couldn't push it back into the water to get rid of the smell and

the rapidly growing swarm of flies. Later a small shark cruised into the bay at the next high tide after picking up on the trail.

The paddle around Cape Upstart was one of the highlights with the scenic cliff line and the angled rebound creating a sweet spot that gave some great runs. I was surprised to find that around the corner at Shark Bay there were large houses which had started as fishing shacks but increased in grandeur over the last forty years. I was shown fantastic hospitality by Mal and Mae who pointed out a good camping spot and then proceed to feed me well over the next two nights while I waited out some bad weather.

The locals were excited due to the arrival of a life-size fibreglass cow from an old butcher's shop that was being used to commemorate Suzie Maloney. Apparently during the last floods a cow had washed out of one of the creeks across the bay and floated 40 km (cows do float well) out to the Point where it came ashore to be promptly named after the long distance swimmer.

The warm South Easterlies had changed to cold and rainy westerlies courtesy of a low sitting in the Coral Sea. I was suddenly feeling the lack of decent warm clothing and spent a great deal of the time wearing a sleeping bag. I managed to cross Upstart Bay between strong morning and evening westerlies but it was hard work and I landed when I hit the disturbing flat Cape on the other side. There was nobody to be seen so I headed over the dune to get out of the wind and fulfil the normal necessity after five hours in the boat.

Being an isolated spot and solo I decided to do away with the discomfort of chafing wet shorts. I wandered down from the dunes to the boat and happened to glance down the beach in time to see my current state register on a small crowd from two four wheel drives held back by a creek mouth. As mothers herded

away confused young children and amused teenagers I attempted to nonchalantly replace my shorts behind the meagre cover of a sea kayak and quickly launched back to sea. With the wind now partially behind I weaved through the shallows trying to spot Alva beach surf club. (*thankfully Adam is learning to change nappies more efficiently with the recent arrival of little Amy. Ed.*)

I missed it due to the estuary mouth in front of it and after stopping to asking a beach fisherman paddled back 2 km against the wind. When I landed I discovered I'd lost a clip from the wheel system so after searching around for something I settled on a cable tie that would hold the wheel on if kept uphill or on even ground. I'd carried my dry bags of gear up to the start of the beach path and I now discovered that quad bikers had been amusing themselves by doing doughnuts to spray mud on to them. After loading it into the boat and hauling it 2 km to the caravan park I arrived cold and wet at 9pm. As Paul Caffyn is fond of saying – you get days like that on big trips.

The plan had been to wait at Alva until there was a good forecast to cross to Cape Cleveland and then paddle to the end of Cape Bowling Green for just the one night before crossing. The sandflies at the Cape had a fearsome reputation mentioned by early explorers, Freya and Stuart Trueman's blog which suggested what Cook really wanted to call it. Obviously I didn't want to be waiting there for good weather. I was meeting the SO on Magnetic Island and had optimistically had her rebook earlier dates only to find myself now running out of time waiting for the weather. With the forecasts not looking promising I made the decision to rent a car to get to Townsville on time.

In the next issue of SeaTrek, Adam continues his journey so stay tuned (Ed).



INSTRUCTOR'S REFLECTIONS OF 'STICKS' WEEKEND WITH C&T



TERRY BARRY

Before the weekend began I expected I would get the 'good oil' on how to use my newly acquired stick. What I received, however, far exceeded my expectations. Not only did I receive instruction on different ways to paddle with a stick I received a whole new way of looking at technique with rolling and progression of teaching rolling.



By weekends end I was convinced that the Greenland rolling method is far safer on your body and easier to teach than other methods I have used, and that with proper attention to technique and practice, stick paddling could easily be a more enjoyable and efficient method than my euro blade--not that I expect to switch completely.

Another surprise for me was the open minds of all present to

something different and the way in which it was embraced by the group. Without doubt the highlight for me was Cheri & Turner's passion and expertise in teaching these skills. As an instructor the most useful things passed on was the rolling teaching sequence, particularly the off-water teaching techniques which I will definitely employ in the future. The legacy these two leave behind or 'seeds' as Turner put it, will continue to grow over time.

They have definitely proved to me that Greenland techniques have many advantages over euro methods for teaching 'finesse' in kayaking rather than muscle. I believe that there will be a quantum shift in the perception on Greenland paddling and more VSKC members will get into this style of paddling. I think it will take some time until the instructor group hone their skills enough to become good instructors in this but there is still lots to pass along.

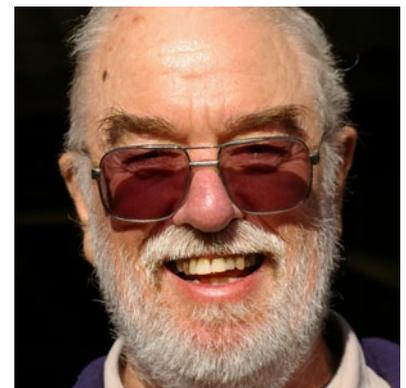
Perhaps this could begin with running some rolling clinics and Greenland paddle stroke development days. As Cheri pointed out you learn heaps by teaching so it may be good for all of us. For club members who are perhaps reluctant to try Greenland paddles I would offer this advice-- Don't knock something until you have tried it for yourself with a good teacher. Judging it by the performance of

others is not necessarily a true indicator of its merits.

Greenland paddles won't be for everyone or every occasion but they definitely have a place in the VSKC and anyone who puts in the time and effort will find it a rewarding experience which at the very least will add to your paddle expertise with a euro blade. The exposure to Cheri & Turner for me has opened up yet another chapter in kayaking which I look forward to exploring.

JOHN WOOLLARD

I had no expectations prior to the weekend, but I was extremely impressed with what I learnt. For me the highlight was how great that magical little stick felt to paddle with.



We now have to take account of Greenlandic techniques and realise their application to all styles of kayaking.

Perhaps the biggest legacy will be a change in our thinking about and credibility given to Greenland techniques. I think there will be an increase using Greenland paddling skills. But we will have to let things evolve to find out where it will lead.

I would recommend anyone to give paddling with a stick a go. Paddling with a stick has revitalised my interest in paddling and given me lots of new skills to acquire, both as a paddler and a student of physics trying to workout how and why they work.

TONY CHICK

The Cheri and Turner visit confirmed a couple of my long held

beliefs. Firstly; the well known fact that people with beards paddle better--roven conclusively by watching Turner's kayak handling skills pushing into 25knt Corner Inlet sloop, using only a stick for propulsion! The subtle skill of compensating for the capsize potential of a wet swinging beard in a gale is not widely appreciated.



Secondly, you can't expect to evaluate the merits of Greenland paddling techniques until you are exposed to people who are really on-top of their skills, willing to share their deep understanding and commitment to their art. Cheri and Turner certainly delivered in spades. To be honest my prior exposure to much stick paddling had generally left me underwhelmed.

The Instructor weekend only scratched the surface of Greenland techniques, the focus being basic essential skills and developing a foundation to build on. Personally I came away from the weekend with different priorities of what skills I need to develop. For example, the concept of properly utilising the body's floatation through rolls etc. is huge when you think about it.

What is considered a basic skill set in Greenland paddling had much merit. For me this was a bit of an eye opener, raising the bar and turning things on its head a bit. Cheri and Turner's well thought-out content and teaching style was by far the best I have seen. The VSKC can only benefit from this.

On the Instructor weekend I was out of my comfort zone (and loving it!), realistically I can't compare performance between a paddle that has been in my hands for years to a radically different "stick" that I have not developed any level of skill. I did use a variety of sticks in a range of conditions and now have a fair idea of what is possible. A well foiled stick behaves exception-

ally well underwater. For starters I will hunt one down to learn some basic Greenland rolling skills.

Finally the low point of the weekend: looking at the smirks on the faces of certain regular VSKC stick paddlers as they left me in floundering their wakes.

TINA ROWLEY

Before the weekend began I had no expectations as I thought that I would be using my euro paddle because I did not own a greenland paddle (GP). I was pleasantly surprised to be granted use of Turner's GP collection.

I felt excited to use a GP given that everyone else was using one, although at first I had my doubts. Over the course of the weekend I realised that the GP has lots of benefits. For example, it's easy to use in windy conditions because it does not catch the wind; it's easy to use rolling up; easy to float with; can use many paddling styles to suit the conditions and I found out that I can perform "many tricks with the stick!"

The highlights for me were when Cheri taught one-on-one the first



stage of the storm roll. Other highlights were the whole weekend, the group worked well, were relaxed,



most were taken out of their comfort zone and were willing to learn – no one claimed to be the expert, and the yoga session and off water sessions were brilliant as it gave me a good idea as to how my body should behave whilst in the kayak.

I also realised that as an instructor group we all need to learn more and practise more in the skill department. I identified for me that I needed to practise a particular technique, learn how to break it down and learn how to communicate the steps clearly and efficiently.

Perhaps my biggest surprise for me was the power of the stick! I now have new admiration for GP and how it can perform. I found it useful to meet Cheri and Turner, hear about their ideas of kayaking, training and teaching and learning from them. Their DVD is also one of the best training DVD's out as it demonstrates what is good technique and bad technique. The other point is that as a club we need to get better at instructing and being capable paddlers.

I believe that the individual instructor needs to be responsible for up keeping their skills, passion for the sport and consider how they might best transfer the skills learnt from Cheri and Turner and to disseminate them to the wider group. I don't think any one person should be telling others what they should be doing. I think we all need to have an open mind about learning or trialling new techniques/styles of paddling and give it a go

Finally, I miss C&T's black stick and am still traumatised by Bob's flatulence in the yoga session!

Lynn Atkinson



I arrived at the Boydtown caravan park, just before dark, excited about my first Winky's weekend and delighted that the weather forecast had been wrong about the rain. I selected a flat piece of ground, pulled out my tent, and started to erect it. That was the signal: it started to rain. The tent and I hastily retired to the car to wait for the shower to pass, as surely it must. The break came, the tent went up, and then came the deluge. At the next break I noticed that the level ground I'd chosen appeared to be the bottom of a swimming hole. I floated the tent to higher ground and one thoroughly wet VSKC member retired to the Sea Horse Inn, where I joined the other 35 or so damp members of the VSKC for a delicious meal and a warm, convivial evening.

Getting wet became a bit of a theme for me (and some others who shall be nameless) that weekend. The organised paddles all took off from the beach at the caravan park, which on this weekend had quite a surf break in swirling brown water from the rain-filled rivers draining into Twofold Bay. On Saturday morning one group paddled over to the Old Port at Eden, and the other group went in the other direction to Fisheries Beach near the woodchip facility. The leader of the Port paddlers had a commitment back at camp so left and returned early with his paddlers: David had casseroles and cakes to prepare for the wonderful meal he laid on for us all that evening.

The Fisheries paddle had a few casualties getting through the breaks,

one of whom was me. The word 'carnage' started to be bandied about around about this time. **Lesson number one: take off your hat and glasses and stow them before entering surf, and remember the paddle leash.**

Wet and dry paddlers eventually assembled out the back and the trip south west from the camp ground was underway. The conditions were almost perfect: no rain, no wind, overcast and a swell to make the paddle interesting. It was decided we wouldn't enter the Kiah River, which had significant surf at the entrance, so we carried on to Fisheries Beach for lunch and a gentle, eery roller-coaster ride lengthwise under the woodchip jetties. Thanks Terry for a really lovely paddle.

I noticed a funny thing as we neared the shore on the return trip. There was no surf! I paddled confidently into shore until something made me look over my shoulder and I saw the wave that was about to break over me and a vision of the inevitable capsizes. **Lesson number two: you often can't see surf from out the back.**

Dinner that night took place in the magnificent wedding marquee that David had so thoughtfully brought. Members contributed salads and desserts and we had a wonderful feast. A relaxed sleepy state came over us (was that the wine taking effect?) which resulted in there being no takers for the 6.30 a.m. breakfast paddle to Mowarry Point. Late morning an alternative, strangely more popular paddle with

21 boats in all, set off for Eden in search of fish and chips. A few capsizes, including me, and we were on our way.

On the way back from the fish and chip lunch a group called into Quarantine Bay for some rolling practice and instruction. **Lesson number three: don't eat chips and potatoe cakes before repeatedly trying to roll.** Thanks Tony and Bob for some wonderful instruction and for stopping at the right time!

We paddled back to camp. Fourth time lucky and the landing – finally – was 'carnage' free. Not so for all the surf-addicted paddlers who spent the next hour or so taking on the waves, with some magnificent spills duly photographed by members of the on-shore cheer squad.

Local people started to drift home on Sunday afternoon, while most of the Melbourne contingent spent an enjoyable evening around the heat bead camp fire in the marquee, before the long drive home on Monday. Stories, laughter, warmth, food and wine. The perfect ending to a delightful weekend.

Thanks to David especially, and to the other leaders and instructors who helped make it such an enjoyable and memorable weekend.

Maggie McPherson

I really enjoyed the weekend despite the challenge of getting out through the breakers and back in again. I learned quite a bit about bracing, although I need to do a lot more of it. The terrific thing about the weekend was the amount of willing help given to those of us with not much experience in the surf. I really appreciated the help, expertise and at times muscle-power both in the surf and back on the beach and it is that willingness that makes our club such a terrific one to be a part of.

While we were having fish & chips at Eden on our Sunday paddle, David Winkworth taught us something about surf that we had not realised, and it made SO MUCH SENSE : he said that coming in to



shore through the waves, to choose which side we are going to brace before the wave chooses for us, and then we are ready to brace and lean when the time comes. This made it so much easier, although the last and smallest wave still choose for me and caught me coming back in just when I thought I was in for a happy landing. So thanks David and thanks for organising a very special weekend for us.

Sue Mountford

April 2012 was a month packed full of learning new sea kayaking skills; thanks to the encouragement of my VSKC friends.

Firstly my good friend and paddling partner Maggie suggested I join her in a Saturday rolling class with Turner Wilson and Cheri Perry, which led me to also apply to do their strokes paddling training. The strokes paddling session gave me a whole new perspective on sea kayaking using a Greenland paddle. I found the paddling strokes worked more naturally and

sympathetically with the movement of your body. Initially Turner explained how the Greenland paddle should be sized to fit you and worked as a force field in the water. We then trialled using the strokes demonstrated by Turner by walking through the water paddling with the Greenland paddle. From this exercise I could feel how the wrong strokes could have you in the water in a flash, and wondered if I was going to get the stroke together in my kayak.

Once we were all on the water Turner had us moving through the various forward paddling strokes and then bracing and turning. Many of the skills and body positioning for strokes I found relevant for Euro blade paddling. I was surprised how solid the Greenland paddle felt in the water when leaned on for a brace stroke. By the end of the session I was a real fan of Greenland paddling.

Cheri's approach lived up to the high expectations I had from my session with Turner. The first half

of the training day was devoted to understanding and stretching the muscles used for rolling and included an assessment of the fit of thigh braces in our kayaks for rolling. Thank goodness the hours of cutting and filing my thigh braces were not in vain.

In the afternoon Cheri took us through the rolling movement by breaking down the key movements of the roll by having us rehearse these movements separately before combining them in a full roll. It was a great way to learn. Cheri ensured we were comfortable by dressing us in tuliks to ensure we were warm throughout the training. Cheri also maximized our ability to achieve a roll by initially training us in Bob's kayak which is lighter and a more compact fit than our own kayaks. By mid afternoon it's fair to say Cheri had worked us hard, and I for one would have happily called it day however Cheri firmly pressed on training us in our kayaks. Needless to say I was pleased she did, and I will continue learning in my own kayak. I couldn't have asked for a better introduction to rolling and Greenland paddling.

The following week Maggie and I travelled to Twofold Bay for Winky's weekend. Once there Terry took time out to train us in surf paddling. We learnt so much in half a day, and having time over the weekend to be coached as we paddled was invaluable. Dave's good food, and marquee provided a relaxed space to enjoy the company VSKC members.

The generosity of Terry, Dave W and many other VSKC members over the weekend makes it such an outstanding experience.





In the last issue of SeaTrek, Grant explained the early stages of building replica skin-on-frame Aleut and West Greenland kayaks. In this article he continues the story (Ed.)

Having assembled the frames, we began to get an idea of the lines our respective crafts would have and were keen to get on with the skinning and “gooping” process.

After some conversations with other SoF (Skin on Frame) builders and having done a fair bit of on-line research, we decided to depart from the Chris Cunningham skinning method and instead use the more highly recommended Skin-Boat School technique. In our case we had decided to use a woven Ballistic Nylon cloth of about 8.5 oz thickness.

Ballistic Nylon is a very strong and durable fabric (I’m told it is used in the production of bullet-proof vests), and when coated

with the two-pack Polyurethane ‘Goop’ provides a very durable and waterproof finish. Those who had used it were adamant that it was capable of a fair bit of abuse. The only proviso being it’s tendency to breakdown and become “chalky” over a period of several years due to UV degradation.

There is lots of debate about the best way to skin these kinds of boats – given that seal-skins are no longer readily available, let alone environmentally acceptable (Bob’s suggestion of Penguin skins were rejected for the same reason). All kinds of fabrics have been trialled, with varying degrees of success. Some die-hard traditionalists shun the use of more modern materials and stick with canvass or natural fabrics. Others lean toward the more exotic, combining Kevlar or even carbon in their constructions. There appears to be endless debate on the various websites as to what



fabric works best, but we thought we would stick with Cory’s goop for our first attempt.

Having oiled, and in my case stained the frames, they were now ready for the application of the fabric. The fabric was first rolled out over the inverted frames and one end roughly stitched to make a kind of a sock, hooked over the bow. The aft end is then stitched about 200 mm forward of the stern. Subsequently, two brawny VSKC paddlers are assigned the task of stretching the recalcitrant fabric so as to ‘hook’ it over the rear end of the boat. After several abortive attempts (with much grunting and no small measure of frustration), the stern was restitched a little less aggressively and a satisfactory placement was achieved.

The boat was then turned right side up and the work began to mechanically stretch the fabric tight by way of an ingenious stitching technique devised by Cory. The seam up the centre of the boat turned out remarkably well, though we both reckoned it would be a lot quicker next time! We used a synthetic sinew, a strong waxed polyester thread to do the stitching which turned out to be ideal for the task. Both ends were finished off with an over-locking stitch and a gap was left near the centre for the cockpit rim.

We laminated the cockpit rims from some left over hoop pine,



heating the timber in our trusty water trough and then bending the lengths around a form marked out with screws on a thick board. They turned out remarkably well, though mine did require some additional reinforcing later on. The rims were drilled at 40 mm intervals around the circumference and then stitched in place. We were both surprised at



how strong these turned out. The hard part had been trying to determine the location and dimensions of these cockpits in relation to the expected trim of the boat and where we would actually sit. We decided to use a keyhole cockpit about the same size as our other boats so we could use existing gear, but in hindsight we might have achieved a better 'fit' and better knee/thigh bracing if we had made a more 'ocean-cockpit' kind of shape.

Once everything was stitched in place (the bow of the Baidarka being especially challenging!), we were almost ready to apply the goop. But despite our best efforts, the skins still were a little wrinkled and 'baggy' looking. So, the spare steam iron was brought to bear and a little judicious water spray with a

hot air gun did the rest with the resulting shrinkage ensuring a drum tight finish to the covering.

And so to the infamous Cory's goop. Accompanying instructions were a little vague and it became a matter of trial and error to get the required three coats right. The Urethane goop comes as a two pack with no solvents and so is very viscous (thick). We discovered, post application, that great care needs to be taken to ensure that Parts A and B are fully mixed before applied. Failing to do so means that, instead of the mix going 'off' in several hours, it can take several weeks!

The goop is applied by screeding it into the mesh of the fabric with a wide bladed spatula and building up thin subsequent coats carefully to ensure a watertight seal. We had decided to add some colour to the translucent goop by adding some rare earth pigments, a better option by all accounts than dyeing the fabric first. This turned out to be a good option, but the learning curve for these first-time goopers meant that some parts of the boats were decidedly sticky and non-cured – a challenge when some of the particularly sticky parts meant that Bob's cockpit and tuliq did not want to part (and allow him to exit) on the maiden voyage!

We were overall very happy with the end result of our first attempts in to the world of Skin on Frame construction – the problem is that you keep thinking how you will improve it the next time... Ah well, sounds like another project is needed. Now I just have to persuade my long-suffering wife that she really doesn't need to use the garage for another few weeks...



BOOK REVIEW

'Fearless' by Joe Glickman

I guess there isn't a sea kayaker in Oz who hasn't heard of Freya Hoffmeister. Circumnavigating continents has got to be the 'nutso' pinnacle of our sport. Canvas any group of Oz Sea kayakers there will be many and varied opinions on Freya's Oz circumnavigation. Like many I followed Freya's blog. She presented a public profile the likes of which has never been seen in sea kayaking in this country before, narcissism, larger than life confidence. The "race"! Was the holy grail of Oz kayaking treated with due respect? Maybe unfairly, Freya never really grabbed my full attention at the time, where Stuart Truman's recent unsupported Oz circum had me cheering on his every move!

Without a doubt Freya more than lived up to her hype and has pushed sea kayaking where it has never been before. I'm in awe of Freya's achievements but also curious to what this woman is really like. I read Joe Glickman's book mainly out of curiosity--how is he going to write this book? What material other than Freya's blog is available? Her blog was admirable for being written progressively on the fly, but hardly publishable material.

I think Joe Glickman has pulled off an interesting book. Different to the usual expedition format as a large portion of the content is the author's observations, (and he wasn't there on Freya's trip!). I was left with the impression that Freya had minimal input into this book. For me this was unexpected but added interest.

The author appears to have mixed and changing opinions of Freya. Material sourced from sponsors, supporters and her inner circle, is interesting and new. Strong views are presented of the Freya approach, both good and not so complementary. Glickman has opinions and doesn't pull punches either. He covers many of the same sentiments that get trotted out regularly in conversation by bunches of we opinionated kayakers, when mulling over Freya's OZ Circumnavigation.

If you are expecting an enduring classic of expedition and of country like Paul Caffyn's Dreamtime Voyage, Fearless is not it. Fearless will polarise opinion, some will really like it others may hate it. Read with the benefit of local knowledge, this book is an interesting observation of the Freya phenomenon while in OZ. I recommend giving it a go. It's a quick read. A few VSKC celebrities and sausage dogs are in print too!

South America--half completed already! Now that really is mind boggling!

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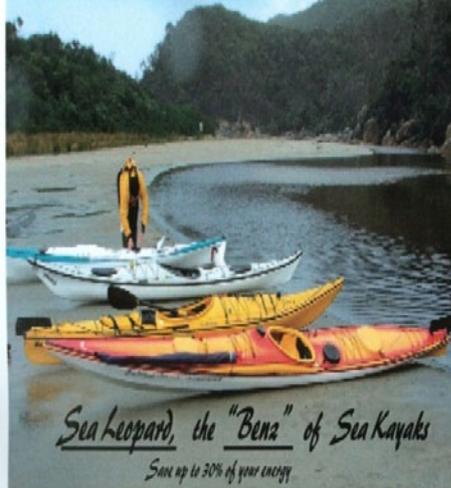
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Updated VSKC Training Competencies booklet – out now

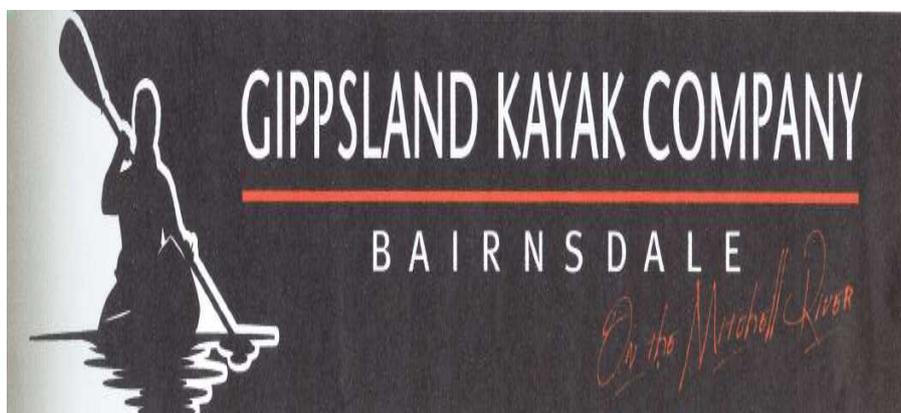
The training group has been busy re-writing the Level 1, 2 & 3 competencies. This follows on from the good work carried out by Tony Wennerbom where he completed an audit of the VSKC competencies against the Australian Standards. The result is a new booklet to replace the older VSKC Log Books issued to each member on joining. The new "VSKC Competencies" booklet contains all the competencies for levels 1 & 2 with a much clearer and more detailed explanation of the standards and conditions expected.

Each competency can be individually signed off by a club instructor as was the case in the older booklet. The new booklet also has detailed competency descriptions for level 3, which hopefully will enable prospective candidates to have a clearer understanding before committing to this course.

Members who currently have competencies signed off in the older log books will be able to present these along with their new booklet to an instructor to have them transposed.

It is hoped that the new Competencies will make club standards clearer to both members and instructors. Please note that the new booklets do not contain a log. You will now have to make up your own, although a sample log is available on-line in the documents and downloads section of the web and you can print from it if you wish. It is a prerequisite to maintain a log to progress through levels 1-3.

Be sure to carry your new Competency Booklet in the car so you can get signed off on paddles. Current club instructors are: Terry Barry, Tony Chick, John Evertze, Tina Rowley, Greg Murray, Peter Treby, John Woollard, Dave Winkworth, Raia Wall and Robin Boundy



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