

ATLANTIC

Coastal Kayaker



October 2010
Volume 19, No. 7



The Lakes of October
The Seven Carries
Lake Champlain Circumnavigation

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Coastal Kayaker

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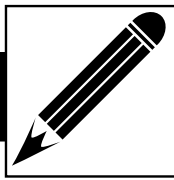
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Subscribers may go to our website atlanticcoastalkayaker.com, to see the full-color version of this issue! Email us at ackayak@comcast.net or dweden@atlanticcoastalkayaker.com for the password.



In 2009, your regular editor and publisher, Tamsin Venn, asked me if she thought it would be possible to revamp the ACK website, which had been moribund for several years. I was enthusiastic about the idea, and we spent many weeks cleaning up and modernizing the look-and-feel of the site and updating all of the information. It was a great adventure for me, as it was the first time in over 10 years that I had worked on a website. I had built the original ACK site on the website of the company I then worked for, but was asked to take it down when it started receiving far more hits than the company site!

In the intervening years, many changes had come to the web. Sites were far more sophisticated, with many more bells and whistles than had existed when we first put our little pages out. Programming languages and techniques had changed, become more formal, with volunteer governing bodies to maintain programming standards. Features of websites had gone through several generations of change, and what was once considered pretty cool is now considered poor programming. Pop-up windows and frames (separate areas of control) on a web page are now internet no-nos.

We realized, as we faced this daunting task, that we were trying to build a space capsule with cardboard and craft glue. Still, we struggled on and, using the new tools when we could figure out how they worked, and the old when we had to fall back on the familiar, we came up with a web page that we are pretty proud of. If you haven't dropped by to atlanticcoastalkayker.com, you should!

As part of the research in our design process, we looked at a lot of sites belonging to various kayak magazines, outfitters, and suppliers. We looked into the future of publishing, which seems to be heading

more and more towards an online world. We looked at the cost of printing, which is skyrocketing. We thought, "In order to stay competitive and even alive in the future, we need to go online."

And so was created our Great Experiment of 2010, in which Atlantic Coastal Kayaker went completely online for four issues. We managed to find affordable password and flipbook software. We made some mistakes, swiftly caught by our readers, and made many changes in the effort to make the online experience as easy to use and interesting as possible for our readers.

We were fairly sure that our readers would have a positive response to the changes. We knew that some would be very upset, some would be neutral, and a few would be very happy. This was, indeed, what happened. We received a small number of complaints and cancellations, including one from a reader who stated he would not subscribe to anything he could not roll up and kill a fly with. On the other hand, many subscribers wrote expressing their delight with the new format. One reader, who spends several months a year in Japan, was very happy that he could access his magazine on the other side of the world. Most of you seemed content with the change, judging by the fact that we did not hear from you.

We are now ready to resume printing. We hope that we will be able to continue to do so without another interruption. We will continue to offer the magazine online, in full color, and will be instituting a two-layer pricing policy, with those who wish to receive only the online version paying significantly less. This reflects the very large printing and mailing costs that are our main expense and that in the former case have risen nearly 100 percent in the past year. All subscribers will continue for the present to have access to the online version of each is-

sue, which will be in full color, unlike the printed version, which will revert to our traditional black-and-white inside pages. One advantage of the online version is that the PDF can be downloaded to your own computer, and individual pages printed out. Location information could be printed on waterproof paper to take with you on your next trip! We will also be reverting to the vertical format of the pages. The reason for this is that both the online and printed versions rely on the same PDF file, and vertical format is far less expensive to print. It would be nice to maintain the landscape format for the web pages, but producing two different magazines is just far beyond our capabilities now.

We will be continuing to try and improve the online experience for our readers. Future plans include creating an online subscriber database, so that each user may create his or her own password. We also will try to streamline the online subscription process. Readers should be aware that events, club information, and Klassifieds can already be entered without a password online, and we will be adding the ability to generate and send a letter to the Editor on the "Contact Us" page.

Once again, we would like to thank our faithful readers for sticking with us this past year. We will be continuing to strive to bring you the best in local trips, events, and places information, as well as tips on technique, kayak camping, and safety that we know you enjoy and value. Happy fall paddling, and don't forget your wetsuit or drysuit.

David Eden

On the cover: Cathy Mumford at the end of the Northern Canoe Trail. Photo by Julia Bayly.

Letters From You



Demuth Circumnavigates Great Britain

Sea kayaker Marcus Demuth finished his circumnavigation of Great Britain on Sunday, July 25, 2010 in 80 days, a record for a solo circumnavigation, five days faster than Nigel Dennis and Paul Caffyn's circumnavigation in 1980, and matching the existing record circumnavigation of a trio of three British paddlers in 2005.

The expedition started with two days off due to gale force winds only four hours after launch on May 6th in Skegness, on the East Coast of Great Britain. However, the weather improved quickly and provided most of the time the low winds a UK circumnavigation needs in order to be successful. Since 2005, all 12 attempts to circumnavigate the UK by kayak proved unsuccessful due to bad weather. Thus, despite being tired and having a sore bum, Marcus is relieved that the 2,540 Mile expedition is complete.

Marcus would like to thank the countless people he met along the way who helped to make this expedition to make a success, and who brightened his day after a rainy day, or a day full of headwinds by opening their homes and refrigerators for Marcus.

Marcus Demuth

NY, NY

www.marcusdemuth.com

New Online Version

I have looked at the ACK on-line mags and it is looking very nice. I know the work to keep my web site up-to-date so I know how much work this must take. Thank you for including the announcement of the new video.

Wayne Horodowich, President

University of Sea Kayaking (USK)

Mill Creek, WA

New Club

Will you be kind enough to add our club to your listing under "South Atlantic" on <http://www.atlanticcoastalkayaker.com/clubs.htm>.

Our club is WNCKayaking (Asheville,

NC). The website is <http://www.wnckayaking.com>. Drawing paddlers from Asheville, the Upstate, and surrounding areas in their love for sea kayaking and whitewater.

Thanks.

Caffyn Reissued

A small bit of news, Paul Caffyn's book *Dreamtime Voyage* is back in print about his circumnavigation of Australia in the early 80's. I just got a copy directly from Paul - might be worth mentioning that it's available again. Link for ordering is <http://boatbooks.co.nz/canoe2.html#20203>

Jim Nash

Mamaroneck, NY

Iceland Expedition

Thanks for the press coverage. (Expedition Watch, "2010 Iceland Sea Kayak Circumnavigation," July/August 2010). I wish you had let me know you were going to cover more than just the press release material. I would have been happy to provide you with more of the story. It kind of sounds like I went to Iceland and then didn't paddle around Iceland and came back home. At any rate, I do appreciate the press coverage for the charities I represent.

John Peaveler, U.S. and Kuwait

www.johnpeaveler.com

Ply Boat from Scratch

I would like to subscribe to your magazine. I was given a March copy by a friend aware of my sea kayak addiction. I built my own kayak, a ply boat, from scratch, and its paddles. I am looking for back-copy articles/letters/reprints from John Heath, a hero of mine? I was able to correspond a little, but not long enough.

Am putting together a small collection of prime-source information on sea kayaks, intending it to be a gift to a college that once tried to educate me. Given the duration of your own experiments/travels, have you a tried-and-true favorite boat-for-all-weather? A paddle?

John Willey

Waterville, Maine

Editor replies: We published quite a few articles by and about John Heath. Go to our website and look under back issues. One notable issue is when Heath helped bring several Greenland paddlers to Fort Devens, Mass., for a demonstration (See ACK October 1994).

You should also try Qajaq USA, and the Greenland Kayak Assn. with which he was very involved. The best kayak is the one I will paddle tomorrow! And for a paddle? The lightest I can find!

Our 24th Year

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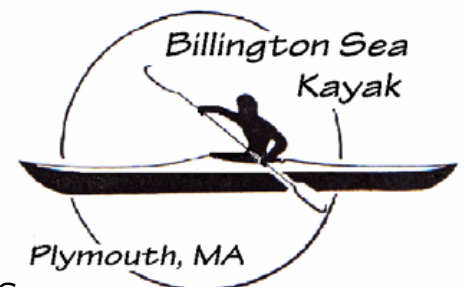
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Poetry Page

Poem by John Willey

New to paddling West Penobscot
I don't recognize the ease
With which the ebb can tease;
It pulls me quick from where I think
I am to nearly past
The place I mean to be.
(below Number 9 buoy)
The cormorant will churn and fly
As Leaf and I draw near,
The solitary sanctuary gull as we go by
Nods, one eye for fish,
One eye for fear.
This glimmer moon pulls tide
Across the bottom,
My blades my slender craft across the tide;
My odd life pulls me through
This autumn,
With nothing in my work
Quite satisfied.

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Last month, we published part of a poem by Walt Whitman that mentioned his native Long Island, Paumanok. Here is another segment from his longer poem, "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," from *Leaves of Grass*. Most of us on the Atlantic coast know of such sandy shores as he evokes here, with briars and fields beyond.

Out of the cradle endlessly rocking,
Out of the mocking-bird's throat, the musical shuttle,
Out of the Ninth-month midnight,
Over the sterile sands, and the fields beyond, where the child, leaving his bed, wander'd alone, bare-headed, barefoot,
Down from the shower'd halo,
Up from the mystic play of shadows, twining and twisting as if they were alive,
Out from the patches of briars and blackberries,
From the memories of the bird that chanted to me,
From your memories, sad brother—from the fitful risings and fallings I heard,
From under that yellow half-moon, late-risen, and swollen as if with tears,
From those beginning notes of sickness and love, there in the transparent mist,
From the thousand responses of my heart, never to cease,
From the myriad thence-arous'd words,
From the word stronger and more delicious than any,
From such, as now they start, the scene revisiting,
As a flock, twittering, rising, or overhead passing,
Borne hither—ere all eludes me, hurriedly,
A man—yet by these tears a little boy again,
Throwing myself on the sand, confronting the waves,
I, chanter of pains and joys, uniter of here and hereafter,
Taking all hints to use them—but swiftly leaping beyond them,
A reminiscence sing.

Once, Paumanok,
When the snows had melted—when the lilac-scent was in the air, and the Fifth-month grass was growing,
Up this sea-shore, in some briars,
Two guests from Alabama—two together,
And their nest, and four light-green eggs, spotted with brown,
And every day the he-bird, to and fro, near at hand,
And every day the she-bird, crouch'd on her nest, silent, with bright eyes,
And every day I, a curious boy, never too close, never disturbing them,
Cautiously peering, absorbing, translating.

Shine! shine! shine!
Pour down your warmth, great Sun!
While we bask—we two together.
Two together!
Winds blow South, or winds blow North,
Day come white, or night come black,
Home, or rivers and mountains from home,
Singing all time, minding no time,
While we two keep together.



Till of a sudden,
May-be kill'd, unknown to her mate,
One forenoon the she-bird crouch'd not on the nest,
Nor return'd that afternoon, nor the next,
Nor ever appear'd again.
And thenceforward, all summer, in the sound of the sea,
And at night, under the full of the moon, in calmer weather,
Over the hoarse surging of the sea,
Or flitting from brier to brier by day, I saw, I heard at intervals, the remaining one, the he-bird,
The solitary guest from Alabama.

Blow! blow! blow!
Blow up, sea-winds, along Paumanok's shore!
I wait and I wait, till you blow my mate to me.



News & Notes



New Smart Buoy, Little Choptank

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration deployed its ninth Chesapeake Bay smart buoy in late July, just west of the Little Choptank River.

The new buoy, launched in partnership with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, is located near the Dominion Reef at the Gooses, an 80-acre artificial reef constructed with materials from the old Woodrow Wilson Bridge.

It is the latest deployment in NOAA's Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System, a network that provides scientists, boaters, and educators with real-time data about the Bay.

In addition to monitoring water quality at the surface, as do all CBIBS buoys, the newest buoy also tracks water quality at the bottom.

"Data from this buoy's water-quality sensor on the Bay bottom will give us an unprecedented look at the health of the Bay in this location," said Peyton Robertson, director of NOAA's Bay Office.

CBIBS buoys collect weather, oceanographic and water-quality observations, and transmit the data wirelessly to users in near-real time. The information may be accessed at www.buoybay.org, or by calling 1-877-BUOY-BAY.

Buoys in the system also mark points along the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. The buoy was fund-

ed by a \$200,000 grant from the Dominion Foundation.

From The Chesapeake Bay Journal, September, 2010. www.bayjournal.com



Georgia Coast Outing

Sea Kayak Georgia Guides and Instructors invite anyone interested to join them for an "end of the summer, welcome fall" paddle along some of the wild undeveloped parts of the Coast of Georgia. The trip takes place

Nov. 13-17, mostly front side as long as the conditions stay within the set boundaries.

Skill level needed for this trip: solid roll, rough water skills, ability to paddle in up to 20-25 knots of wind and 3-5 feet of swell, basic navigation skills, primitive camping skills, good sense of adventure and humor, love of the outdoors.

SKG will take care of logistics, trip planning, shuttles, reservations. You will provide your own camping gear, meals, snacks, water, kayaking gear and kayak. You can also rent kayaks: Sea Kayaking UK (Nigel Dennis Kayaks), Valley Sea Kayaks, Impex Sea Kayaks available for hire. If you need assistance with equipment details kayaking or camping, give a call (888) KAYAKGA or www.seakayakgeorgia.com

Volunteers Awarded

The Maine Island Trail Association hon-

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Tom Mckinney, Liz Fitzsimmons, Bob Arledge.



Dorrie Getchell, Tom Franklin, Dave Getchell, Doug Welch.

ored volunteers at the Annual Meeting and Stewardship Party held in Rockport, Maine, Aug. 19.

Tom Franklin (Portland) was awarded the Dave and Dorrie Getchell Award, MITA's highest honor. Tom first became involved with MITA in 2004 as a volunteer Marketing Director. He created MITA's boat donation program, securing more than \$200,000 in revenue for the organization. He also has managed MITA's outreach efforts to yacht clubs, businesses and boat shows, and has provided excellent legal advice to the staff drawing on his decades of legal experience.

Henri Gignoux (Steuben) received the Margaret C. Emerson Spirit of Giving Award for his immeasurable contributions to MITA's stewardship programs and fleet. In addition to being a valued monitor skipper and cleanup crew leader, Henri spends countless hours annually commissioning, outfitting, and winterizing MITA's stewardship boats.

Liz Fitzsimmons (Belfast) was awarded MITA's Spirit of the Trail Award for her contributions to MITA newsletters. In 2008, Liz began writing historical profiles of Trail islands. In 2010, in addition to these profiles, she wrote new regional section introductions for the paper and online Guides. These new introductions add fascinating historical details and vignettes, making the newest version of the guide delightful to read while at home or on the Trail.

Mike Duffy (Falmouth) was the recipient of MITA's Spirit of Stewardship Award. Mike has been an active volunteer for years and is always ready for a challenge. Mike selflessly volunteered to work at the Bar Island cleanup on the shore unloading derelict/rusted/tangled lobster pots, which shredded his foul weather gear, gloves and skin. Mike has gone beyond being a cleanup volunteer by helping park cars for spring fundraisers. Neither snow, sleet, driving rain, or gale winds has hampered Mike's volunteerism and support of MITA.

Bob Arledge (West Bath) was awarded MITA's Spirit of Partnership award for his work with the Southern Maine Sea

Kayaking Network (SMSKN). This spring SMSKN, under Bob's leadership, adopted several MITA islands and participated in work parties to clear campsites and remove trash. In addition, Bob has personally planned and led five joint MITA/SMSKN sea kayak trips, with participation on each trip in the high 20's, including two with a lobster bake at the end!

Tom McKinney (Brunswick) was awarded MITA's Spirit of the Trail Award for the countless hours and variety of ways he helps the organization. When he's not on a monitor skipper run or island cleanup, visiting his adopted islands with SMSKN, working at outreach booths or in the office, you can find Tom keeping MITA workboats and their trailers in good working order.

Awardees received custom MITA hats and a woven doormat from the Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation made from floating groundline. Buying floating groundline from the lobstermen allows them to switch to sinking line, and helps prevent whale entanglements. For more information on the mats visit www.gomlf.org.

Maryland Kayaker Perishes

Fairfax County police say the body of 46-year-old Kenneth Huggins of Suitland, Md., was found Sunday morning, Aug. 1, near Dyke Marsh, about a mile south of the Belle Haven Marina, Fairfax, Va.

Fairfax County police officer Bud Walker says officials received a call from a person who saw two kayakers fall into the water at about 12:15 p.m. Saturday.

Crews found the first kayaker in ten minutes, then searched for nearly five hours by water and air for the second kayaker, but changed the mission from rescue to recovery late Saturday evening. Crews recovered the kayak.

Crews from the U.S. Coast Guard as well as from Alexandria, Prince William County and Prince George's County aided the search. *ACK* will provide more in depth coverage in a future issue.



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Expedition Watch

N.J. Mom First Woman to Solo Paddle 740-mile Water Trail



Cathy Mumford at the end of her epic solo paddle, in Fort Kent, Maine. Photo by Julia Bayly

A 50-year-old New Jersey woman on Aug. 16 became the first female to complete a solo end-to-end paddle of the 740-mile Northern Forest Canoe Trail (NFCT) from New York to Maine.

Cathy Mumford of Colts Neck, N.J., set off from Old Forge, N.Y. on June 19, paddling, wheeling, and dragging her nine-and-a-half-foot-long Perception Sparky kayak to the northern terminus of the trail at Riverside Park on the St. John River in Fort Kent, Maine. The NFCT opened to the public in 2006 and Mumford is only the third solo kayaker to complete a through paddle of the recreational waterway.

Mumford's adventure included paddling across the eastern half of Lake Champlain on her 50th birthday, taking a wrong turn on the Missisquoi River in Vermont, and having to repair her broken kayak wheels. Family members and friends paddled beside Mumford on two sections of the trail, and followed her progress in real time on

her SPOT Satellite Personal Tracker Web page.

The graphic designer and mother of two started kayaking a few years ago while living in Tennessee. She went on weekend trips with groups, then began taking overnight trips alone. Last year she moved back to her New Jersey hometown and set the goal to be the first woman to solo paddle the NFCT.

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail follows historic American Indian paddling routes on the major watersheds of northern New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and a portion of southern Quebec, Canada. It is the longest inland water trail in the northeast.

Nearly 30 people have finished an end-to-end paddle of the trail in a canoe or kayak. The majority of trail users spend a day or weekend exploring one of the 13 sections of the waterway. Learn more about the Northern Forest Canoe Trail online at

www.northernforestcanoetrail.org or call (802) 496-2285.

About the Northern Forest Canoe Trail:

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail is a 740-mile inland paddling trail tracing historic travel routes across New York, Vermont, Quebec, New Hampshire, and Maine. NFCT, Inc. is internationally regarded as the preeminent water trail organization in North America, and connects people to the Trail's natural environment, human heritage, and contemporary communities by stewarding, promoting, and providing access to canoe and kayak experiences along this route.

About the photographer:

Julia Bayly is a freelance writer/photographer living in Fort Kent. Her photos and story appeared in the Bangor Daily News web edition August 16 and in the print edition August 17.

jmbayly@fairpoint.net

Changing Feather Angles

by Wayne Horodowich

I am a fan of the feathered paddle, because I find it more efficient for my paddling style. I first learned how to paddle with a one piece, very heavy fiberglass paddle with a straight tip covered in metal. The paddle had a 90-degree feather. Since it was a one-piece paddle I could not change the feather angle if I tried. The best I can find from my research about feather angles is, the primary reason for the 90-degree feather was for racing to decrease wind resistance on the non-working blade as one paddled forward. In addition, it gives less resistance in a head wind.

Over the years paddle manufactures were able to make two-piece paddles that were reliable even though there was a center joint. In addition, they added a second and third hole in the joint so the consumer could buy one paddle that could be feathered right or left or set unfeathered. The adjustability of the paddle feather now gave the paddler options. Presently there are numerous two-piece paddle joints that allow setting any feather angle you desire.

There are strong opinions about which feather angle is best and whether one should paddle feathered or unfeathered. Each of these topics deserves their own article. I will share with you why my preferred feather angle is 90-degrees. I learned at 90-degrees and started reducing the angle as paddle manufacturers started reducing the feather angle to address overuse wrist

injury concerns. Then I went back to 90-degrees as I started incorporating extended paddle techniques into my regular paddling. Paddling with a 90-degree feather or paddling unfeathered has an advantage in extended paddling techniques, because you know the exact orientation of the working blade when you are holding the non-working blade. Any feather angle between 90-degrees and unfeathered means you are guessing at the feather angle of the working blade when you hold the non-working blade in an extended paddle position. As for feather angle being blamed for overuse wrist injuries, I believe improper paddling technique is more the culprit for wrist injuries than feather angles. Rather than address that issue right now, I want to focus on the concept of changing one's feather angle as environmental conditions change.

I still hear instructors and guides recommending that one should change feather angles as wind direction changes to reduce the resistance on the non-working blade. The resistance on the non-working blade can slow you down in a head wind and/or knock you over in a crosswind. The concept makes sense when you look at it from the viewpoint of wind resistance on the blade only. If you paddle a high angle feather with a high angle stroke and the wind comes from the side, the wind resistance on the flat of the non-working blade can blow your paddle over, if it is strong enough, which means you can end up capsizing. That is not only true in concept; I experienced that very thing on a windy day trip when I was still a novice paddler. As a result of that experience I tried learning how to switch from feathered to unfeathered when the need arose.

Paddling unfeathered eliminates the wind resistance, on the flat of the blade, when the wind comes in from the side. Keep in mind that head winds may create resistance, but normally do not knock you over, because

the winds alone cannot cause you and the kayak to go end over end. Even though I was able to switch back and forth, between a 90-degree feather angle and unfeathered, I have to disagree with the premise of changing feather angles to meet the wind conditions.

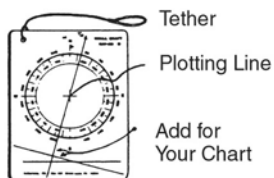
Over the years I realized that my paddle manipulation skills became set into my body. This means I have a default setting. My experience has repeatedly shown me that when one gets nervous one usually reverts to one's default programming. Therefore, if the wind were blowing strong enough to knock you over, one would think the seas are pretty rough too. If that is true, the average paddler's anxiety level will increase. Here is where the default setting comes in to play. Since the likelihood of needing a brace in rough water conditions increases, how will you brace on your offside when you are unexpectedly thrown off balance? I know I will go to my default setting, which is expecting my offside paddle blade to be at 90 degrees. My experience of watching paddlers over the last 25 years tells me the average paddler is going to forget they changed their feather angle. As a result they end up with a diving blade rather than the brace they were expecting on their offside brace, if they changed their feather angle due to strong winds. Now they end up underwater either having to roll up or wet exiting. If they wet exit and then perform a capsize recovery a lot of time is wasted aside from getting wet from immersion. The original premise of changing the feather angle was to avoid capsizing. I strongly believe you have a greater chance of capsizing by changing your feather angle instead of leaving it at your preferred default setting.

Instead of changing your feather angle to decrease the wind resistance on the non-working blade, I suggest two alternatives. The first and highly recommended alterna-

THE SMALL CRAFT NAV-AID

enables mariners in open boats to easily and accurately determine course bearings from charts while underway.

Great for kayakers. It is a compass rose on a 4x5 in. plastic plate with a flexible course plotting line. Instructions are included. Make checks \$8.- to C. Sutherland. Postage paid. Write: C. Sutherland, 2210 Finland Rd., Green Lane, PA 18054.



tive is to lower your stroke angle. This not only decreases wind resistance on the non-working blade, it also allows you to perform supportive strokes, which may be needed on the rough water caused by the winds. See my previous article, "Supportive Forward Sweep Stroke" in the June 2010 issue of *ACK*. Paddling with a lower stroke angle keeps the non-working blade from getting into a vulnerable position from cross winds if you paddle feathered.

The second alternative, which is only a band-aid measure, for those who insist upon using a high angle stroke with a feathered paddle, when paddling with a cross wind, is to let go of the top hand if the paddle gets blown over. The reason one usually capsizes, when their paddle is blown over in a crosswind, is because the body will follow the paddle if the top hand is still attached. The same result can happen when you over-run your paddle when performing a draw stroke. Even though letting go of the top hand may prevent the immediate capsize, you are now in a vulnerable position, because you only have one hand on your paddle, which is not conducive to a brace or any other stroke if you needed it. Remember, the water around you is rough due to the strong winds. In addition, how many times will the paddle be blown over if you continue to paddle with a high angle stroke in those winds? Even though this is an alternative, it is not the way I want to spend my time paddling in crosswinds.

Personally I prefer to lower my stroke angle for the reasons mentioned above. I just returned from a trip to the north east coast of England. I went out for a paddle on a windy day where the water was very confused so I could capture some video footage of paddling in following seas and beam seas. I was in a kayak that was a little too small for me so it felt a bit twitchy on calm water. In the rough water around me, I only remained upright by paddling with a lower stroke angle. I found myself regularly brac-

ing in these confused seas. If I had switched my feather angle, when I was paddling in beam seas and the crosswind, there is no doubt in my mind I would have capsized.

Paddling with a high stroke angle is done for greater power and speed. It also puts the paddler at greater risk of capsize if the paddle is feathered in crosswinds. In head winds it is not a problem, from a wind resistance standpoint. Paddling unfeathered with a high angle stroke in head winds may slow you down a bit, but you will have your off-side brace ready in the rough water.

You may travel a slight bit slower with a lower stroke angle, but you lose a lot more time if you capsize. Remember, paddling a high stroke angle has your paddle blade pointing straight down for most of the stroke, which does not allow for a quick brace. Therefore, you need to decide if support is more important than speed. I believe most paddlers will opt for support. Keeping a familiar feather angle and a low stroke angle can only improve your support.

I have a great story that exemplifies my feelings perfectly. I was teaching a clinic in another country on a slow moving river. A student asked to use my paddle during our lunch break. I didn't realize he changed the feather angle to zero when he used it. When I returned to my kayak I went through my regular launching routine. As I pushed off from shore I went to do a low brace turn on my offside to turn and look back at shore to see my class. My muscle memory expected support from my 90 degree feathered paddle. My paddle was set unfeathered (by my student) thus giving me a knife edged blade for my low brace instead of the flat blade I was expecting. As I went over I started to laugh, because I knew exactly what happened. The next thought through my mind was the questionable quality of the water I was about to enter. I had seen upstream the day before and the sanitation conditions were very suspect. As I went underwater I exhaled out from my nose and did the fast-

est roll I could to get back upright. When I came up I remember saying to myself, "this is why I don't recommend changing feather angles."

As your braces become habits, you know you will be able to depend on them. By changing feather angles, you are altering the start position on which your habit is based. Will your brace be as dependable if you change your feather angle? You know my feeling. Keep one feather angle, lower your stroke angle as needed, and get good at your bracing skills.

Wayne Horodowich is the founder of the University of Sea Kayaking and has been teaching Sea Kayaking since the mid 1980's and is the producer of the "In Depth" Instructional video series on sea kayaking. Visit www.useakayak.org for more articles by Wayne Horodowich.

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Wheels are handy to have for carries.

The Seven Carries - The Adirondacks

(Have you taken your kayak for a walk today?)

Story and Photos by Chuck Horbert

As usual, we planned our next day of paddling around the campfire. We had all enjoyed a good meal of pasta with healthy servings of salad, and had arranged the camp chairs around the fire pit, gazing into the flames as exploding pine knots launched glowing sparks skyward while we enjoyed an after-dinner cocktail. The Almighty Map was unfolded amongst us and half a dozen headlamps focused on paddler eye-candy: blue lakes and ponds connected by rivers, and red-dashed lines designating carry trails, surrounded by closely spaced concentric topographic lines depicting the many hills and mountains of the northern Adirondacks of New York.

Occasionally suggestions were offered. "A trip to the lock below Middle Saranac Lake would be nice tomorrow, maybe all the way to Lower Saranac." A couple non-committal grunts from the assembled group. "How about Raquette River up to the falls

from Axton Landing?" someone hazards. "Too much rain over the last couple days...I don't want to paddle upstream against high flow" is the reply.

And so it goes until two words are softly uttered from the shadows to the left of the fire: "Seven Carries." There is a hush. About half the group has done this Adirondack classic. The rest of the group has only heard it spoken of in reverent tones, but secretly believe that they are ready for it. We all know what such a venture means: at some point over the route we will be taking our boats for a walk. Seven times. But enjoying ten different lakes and ponds for the price of seven short carries really is a bargain. "Let's do it."

The route of the Seven Carries has been a classic for more than 100 years, dating back to the well-known and fashionable resorts of Paul Smith's Hotel and the Saranac Inn, which used to lie at each end of

the route. Parties of hotel guests were sent out with guides and lunch baskets to make a day of it, paddling and walking through the wilderness. All of the carry trails were meticulously maintained (and still are) in excellent condition, with most of them far shorter than the longest one, which itself is only 0.6 miles of easy walking.

The next morning dawned bright and sunny, but honestly none of us actually saw the dawn; they don't call us the "Crack o' Noon" club for nothing. Nevertheless, after shuttling vehicles to the take-out at Paul Smith's College campus, we managed to assemble ourselves at the parking lot at Little Green Pond in the St. Regis Canoe Wilderness Area by 10:30, enjoying the sunny skies. Although most of us had kayaks, we did allow one token canoe on the trip, in deference to the canoeing history of the Adirondacks, as well as to the owner of the canoe, who happened to be The Keeper of

The Almighty Map.

This pond is pretty small, and the tall pines on shore cast long shadows across the water as we quickly paddled our way to the eastern shore. It was a decent warm-up, allowing us to limber up muscles that hadn't been used since...uh...yesterday. The first carry of the day was also easy on us, leading to Little Clear Pond a little more than 200 yards away.

Little Clear Pond is home to the Adirondack Fish Hatchery, and thus is very popular with the loons. But leave your fishing pole in your boat; fishing is not permitted by humans on this clear-watered pond. We headed north, past a couple small islands and rounding a prominent point that pinches the pond down at its northern end, almost breaking it into two ponds. From here there are a few carries leading to other ponds in the area, but we chose the one at the northwest corner near a marshy inlet. This was going to be our longest carry of the day. So we downed some water, and got to it.

There are many ways to do a carry. Admittedly, the guy with the canoe had it easiest...he just flipped the boat over, set the carry yoke on his shoulders, and moseyed on down the path. Many of us had portage carts of varying designs, allowing us to simply roll the boats down the path at our heels like obedient pets. Neither my wife nor I had carts, but found that attaching short straps to the grab loops of our twin boats allowed us to comfortably carry both boats at once, one boat on each side of us, with our arms comfortably dangling at our sides. In no time, we found ourselves walking along a plank bridge leading to a dock on a small stream. Frogs scattered for cover as we each got back into our boats.

We paddled north, past purple pitcher plants and the blue blooms of pickerelweed, and in minutes were paddling into St. Regis Pond with stunning views of St. Regis Mountain ahead of us. Here we encountered other paddlers, including one group that was camped at a point on our right as



Negotiating the passage through the Leatherleaf, Bog Pond.

we entered the large part of the pond. There was a slight breeze, but nothing that kicked up any waves of concern. We turned eastward at this point, paddling just south of a large island and aiming for Carry #3 at the eastern end.

A short, somewhat swampy 200 yard carry got us to Green Pond, which is actually only half the size of the Little Green Pond where we started but is, as the name suggests, a nice shade of green. Blue dragonflies and emerald damselflies populated the skies as we made the brief paddle across to the next short (quarter mile) trail leading to Little Long Pond. This next pond is a true gem, ringed with pine trees and full of nooks and crannies to explore. We stopped for a lunch break at an unoccupied campsite near where a small outlet flows to Roile Pond. A loon called from somewhere around another point.

After lunch, we continued north, passing a point where the pond is nearly bisected by a narrows, and then turning east. The next carry, to Bear Pond, was only slightly longer than our last but ended up being the toughest since, near the end, we came across a couple of trees that had recently fallen across the trail. Fortunately there were no branches to deal with, and lifting over the tree trunks did not significantly dim our moods. Those of us without portage carts secretly grinned, strolling past people busy unstrapping their wheels, and



We paddled past purple pitcher plants.

stepping lightly over the trunks.

Paddling across the calm waters of Bear Pond towards a prominent point brought us out of the St. Regis Canoe Wilderness area and into privately owned lands, which we would be paddling through for the remainder of the trip. We turned to the east and headed to an obvious low point in the horizon, where we found the short 100-yard carry to Bog Pond. The pond is more of a narrow open water area fringed with a broad bog mat that is home to plenty of rare and interesting plants such as sundews, leatherleaf, Labrador tea, bog rosemary, and pitcher plant. A true floating garden.

The paddle across Bog Pond is not much longer than the carry to get there, and soon enough we reached the seventh and final carry, leading into Upper St. Regis Lake. This lake was far larger than any of the ponds we had yet encountered, and infested



Homing in on the carry to Green Pond.



Approaching the inlet to St. Regis Pond.

with motorboats.

In the late 1800's, all of the surrounding area had been owned by hotelier Paul Smith, who had bought it cheap after it had been logged, and then sold off lots to the wealthy visitors of his hotel. These newcomers then built large, complex lodges on the lake shores, many of which are still there and some of which are still owned by the descendents of the original families. There is a stunning variety of Adirondack lodge architecture in this area.

As we paddled across Upper St. Regis past Birch Island, we ogled at boathouses that looked nicer than our homes. The former housed beautiful boats, including hand-

made wood strip Adirondack guideboats, Chris Craft motorboats, and many sailboats.

It was nice to have a large lake to pace the kayaks up to a quicker speed. Due north of Birch Island we paddled into the narrow inlet and were soon gliding past Rabbit Island into Spitfire Lake. The variable winds that had been teasing us most of the day now had a larger fetch to play with, and we encountered some mild chop in addition to the occasional boat wake to contend with

This lake also has a number of Great Camp lodges nestled amongst the pines. We speculated as to the ownership histories. Which camp was owned by Frederick Vanderbilt? At any rate, we all agreed that it

was a little over the top to build a boathouse with the look of a castle, complete with turret.

The chop died down as we entered the marshy waterway known as the "Slew" which separates Spitfire Lake from our last lake of the day, Lower St. Regis Lake.

Red-Winged Blackbirds fluttered around, flashing their crimson epaulets, and cackling their "conk-a-REEEE" calls. A great blue heron lifted majestically off a grassy point, headed towards a leaning gray snag. A group of American coots kept pace with us near the reeds, keeping a suspicious eye on us to make sure we didn't make any sudden moves.

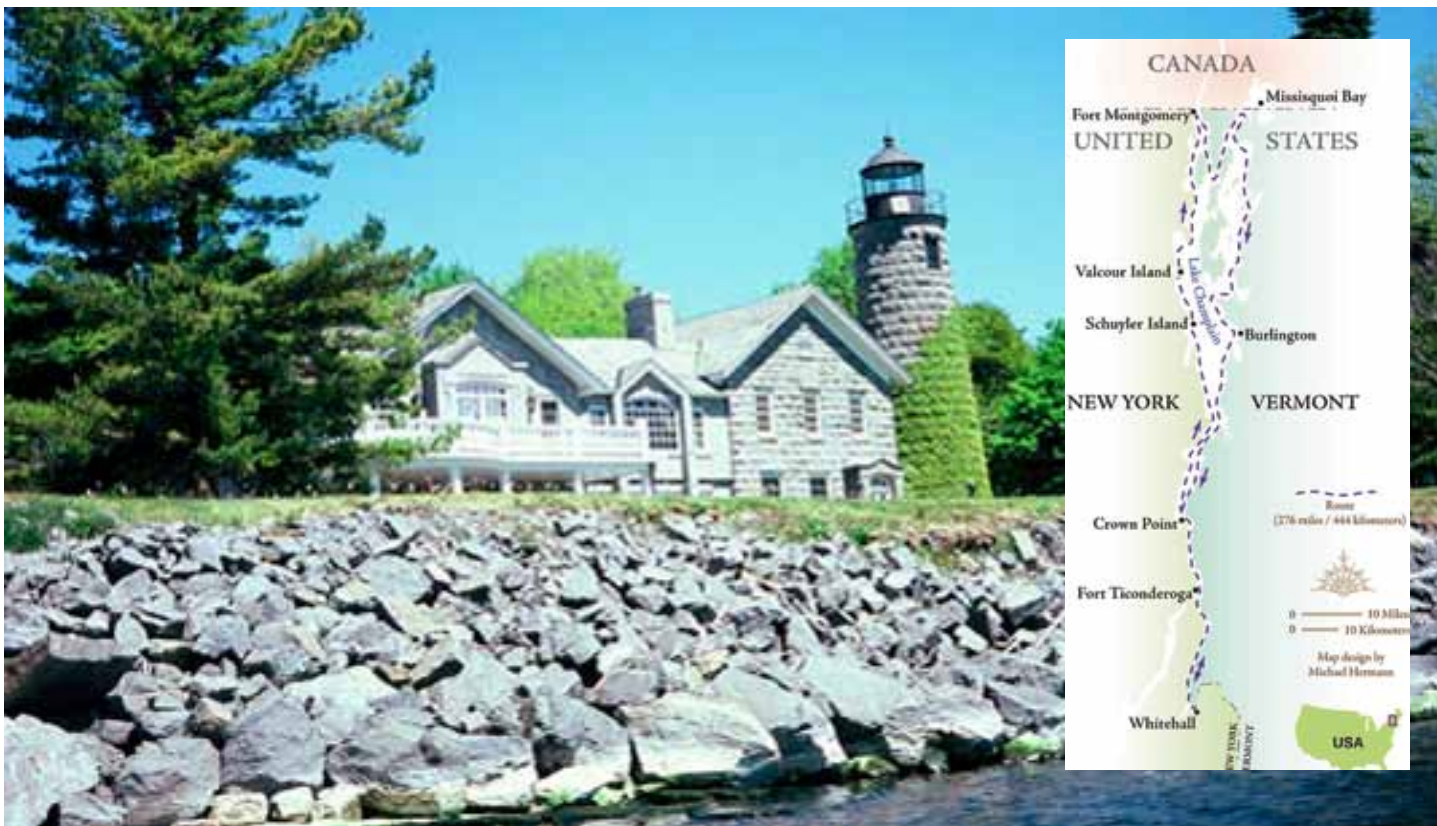
The picturesque campus of Paul Smiths College appeared dead ahead of us as we emerged from the Slew. This small college, the only four-year institute of higher learning located within the boundaries of the Adirondack State Park, specializes in forestry, wildlife management, and similar disciplines, and is also known for its degrees in culinary art and other tourism-support industries.

I cannot imagine how any of their students manage to get any studying done with all the world-class paddling and hiking opportunities right outside their doorstep.

About halfway across the lake, someone notices that clouds have been gathering. It looks like the Adirondacks are preparing to serve up one of the usual afternoon rain events to clear things out. The weather in this area certainly keeps one on their toes! The first fat drops are falling as we make our landing at the public boat ramp located on the campus.

After the boats are loaded, someone makes a motion to go in search of an ice cream stand. The motion not only carries, but is passed unanimously.

A few hours later, as the sun is going down, we are reliving the day around the campfire. Bottles clink as they are removed from coolers. A loon quails from the nearby pond. Someone unfolds The Almighty Map...



Cumberland Head light, N.Y.

Around Lake Champlain Solo by Sea Canoe

Story and Photos by Reinhard Zollitsch

Living in the northeast of the U.S., it was hard not to notice that 2009 was the Henry Hudson as well as the Samuel de Champlain year, if you are interested in boating and early explorers, that is. While Hudson sailed straight north (!) up the Hudson River as far as Troy, N.Y., in search of the Northwest Passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean (in 1609), Champlain had sailed southwest (!) up the St. Lawrence River as early as 1602, initially with the same goal as his French predecessor Jacques Cartier (in 1534/5). But Champlain soon changed his focus and put all his energy into establishing trading posts and minimal colonies in the new world. In 1600 the first fur trading post was established in Tadoussac, Québec, at the mouth of the Saguenay Fjord, about 130 miles downstream from Québec City (see my trip report in *ACK* December 2009). But to be successful, Champlain needed the

cooperation of the native tribes along the St. Lawrence River. They unfortunately were in a bitter dispute with the Iroquois nation along the Hudson River and Lake Champlain. Here now begins our story.

To cement his trading treaties with the Montagnai and Algonquin people of the St. Lawrence, Champlain had agreed to help them fight their war against the Iroquois. So in 1609 Champlain and 11 men sailed up the St. Lawrence from Tadoussac to the mouth of the Iroquois/Richelieu River, just a tad downstream from Montreal, where they would join the native warring party. From there they would go straight south for about 170 miles, up the Iroquois/Richelieu River and down Lake Champlain, to about where Fort Ticonderoga sits today. And since Champlain's heavy boats could not make it up the rapids of the river, they transferred to birch bark canoes. Champlain asked for

volunteers and got two brave French sailors/soldiers to accompany him – whoopee! The remaining nine stayed with the heavy sailboats and the supplies. And so the war party of 60 men, including the three Frenchmen, set out in 24 canoes.

In order to keep the attack a surprise, they only traveled at night. But Champlain saw enough to comment on the lake and the surrounding mountains, even on plants and a “monster fish” (long-nosed gar) in the water. He liked what he saw and thus named the lake after himself. And if the Champlain Canal to the south had already been built and Champlain had traveled just a bit farther, he would have bumped into Henry Hudson coming up from the south – what a historic coincidence that would have been!

The skirmish was decided by two shots fired from the two French guns, followed by the usual cruel burning, looting, maiming,



Heading north through the river-like Dresden Narrows.

and killing, and then another long 170-mile paddle back to their sailboats waiting for them on the St. Lawrence. I wonder what would have happened if Champlain's powder had gotten wet or he and his fellow soldier had missed their target? In any case, I/we cannot ignore the fact that the whole trip was never designed as a peaceful, exploratory trip, like the one by Lewis and Clark out west (1804-06), and that the peace between the tribes did not last longer than a couple of years. To me, the trip seemed like a very long, risky, and cruel venture just to secure trading favors in the Tadoussac area. I am also disappointed that Champlain never returned to check out this big lake by day, at a later date, but rather chose to quest for the real Great Lakes, Georgian Bay off Lake Huron, that is. Many articles written for the quadricentennial celebration tried to whitewash the real intent of Champlain's trip down the lake. I grant you, that's better for tourism, but not historically accurate.

Lake Champlain, the Sixth Great Lake?

I had canoed north from Whitehall, N.Y., into the St. Lawrence River and beyond in 1999, but I had never paddled all around the entire lake, all 276 miles (444 kilometers) of it. And since I like circumnavigations and like the ease of the car shuttle, and needed a break from tide-ridden, far-away

coastlines, I decided that 2010 was going to be my year on the big lake.

And a mighty big lake it is (about 120 miles long and up to 12 miles wide). On March 6, 1998 President Clinton even declared it to be the sixth Great Lake (see attachment to Senate Bill # 927, National Sea Grant Program). However, its Great Lake's fame was short lived. On March 24, 18 days later, the vote was reversed, doubtless due to the five Great Lakes' unwillingness to share designated federal funding with the "newcomer." But nothing changed the fact that Lake Champlain is still the sixth biggest lake in the U.S. and shares much of the same geological history as the other five lakes.

In May 2010 I hoped the 400-year hoopla of 2009 was over. I had further decided to paddle the lake before Memorial Day, in order to avoid summer boat and people traffic, so that the lake was as uncongested and natural as possible.

As in 1999 and 2005, the traditional Finch and Chubb Inn at the Lock #12 Marina was again my chosen point of departure, since I was able to leave my car there for the duration of my trip. It was May 18, 2010 as I pushed off before sunrise for my first seven-hour (26.5 miles) day to Five Mile Point, five miles north of Fort Ticonderoga, the first stop on the "Lake Champlain Paddlers'

Trail" heading north.

I had joined the organization because I like the concept of a water trail, I support our Maine Island Trail (MITA) and the Hudson River Water Trail (HRWA), and I needed help finding legal overnight camping spots along the shores of Lake Champlain for my little Eureka tent. I found the Lake Champlain trail guide book quite helpful, but do not think everybody can push 26.5 miles or even more between stops, especially in a group. But then again, not everybody is paddling around the entire lake like I was, but mostly only loops onto it for a few days. I for my part made it around the entire lake without having to pull out on private land or being ousted, a great achievement on a popular lake bordering New York State and Vermont.

My first stop was just what I had hoped for – an almost level seawall of small, flat slate rock pieces off a point of rising shore. It required only minimal landscaping before pitching my tent right there at the water's edge. No portage and no tides to worry about, as I had on my last year's trip down the St. Lawrence to Tadoussac and up the Saguenay Fjord.

Day two started rainy and windy (N 10 knots), but clad in my Gore-Tex suit and hat, I made it fine to the narrows at Crown Point, which have turned into a major construction site. The old bridge is being replaced, and busy pontoon cranes, tug boats and two ferries cross the tight narrows below the old fort, while an over-sized statue of Champlain looks on. And then the wind cranked up in earnest, straight down the lake from the north, with a very long fetch. It blew a good 20 knots, and I had to dance in parallel breaking waves with foam streamers attached. Once I reached the New York shore at Port Henry, I was tempted to pull out and call it quits for the day, but I eventually clawed my way up along the steep New York shore, ducking behind every point, till I came to Northwest Bay and the even steeper shores of Split Rock Mountain. I

had chosen Barn Rock Harbor, another Paddlers' Trail overnight stop. It was again a 27-mile paddle and took me eight hours, including a few minimal breaks.

This area can be one of the most spectacular along the lake, but with a driving rain and my being stiff and tired from sitting in a small, bounding boat for eight hours, I just set up my shelter, had a belated PB&J lunch and warmed up in my sleeping bag with coffee and cocoa cooked on my little one-burner propane stove right beside me in my tent – and it felt good.

Schuyler and Valcour Islands

The fog of the next morning burned off quickly as the sun came up, and a nice SE wind blew me past Essex and across Willsboro and Corlaer Bay to Schuyler Island, another official stop on the trail. The sun was fully out as I stepped ashore at 1:30 p.m. for a late lunch, a swim, and some reading and writing my trip log. What a difference a day makes! My 5:00 p.m. safety check-in via satellite phone worked flawlessly as on previous trips, and talking with Nancy for three minutes wiped away all pain from the first two days – remember, I just turned 71!

The noisy night-winds in the seven huge poplar trees I had camped under calmed down almost completely in the morning. It was “A perfect day for banana fish” (remember the J. D. Salinger short story? I never knew what it meant, and I still don't, but it's a memorable title, don't you think?) as I paddled towards Valcour Island, where I stopped for lunch. In 1999 I had spent my fourth night here, so I was half a day ahead of my trip 11 years ago. It made me smile.

I noticed that the mountains north of Port Kent had moved back a bit, and the shore had gotten flatter, inviting lots of vacation homes to crowd right down to the water's edge. But I also noticed that I did not remember this developed shore at all from my previous trip. At first I feared my memory was failing me. And then it came to me: human habitations do not interest me on a

canoe trip. I only take them in peripherally and turn my view towards the open water, the islands, distant peninsulas and the opposite shoreline, i.e. turn towards a cleaner, more natural horizon.

Since the weather was perfect, I headed straight across Cumberland Bay past Crab Island to the point of Cumberland Head, and from there across yet another bay, Tredwell Bay, to Long Point and into Conner Bay. The Paddlers' Guide describes an overnight beach “just north of a rocky point...in a beautiful grove of white cedars...” Well, I had a hard time finding it, not just because Conner was misspelled “Conners.” North of the distinct rock outcropping I found a breakwater and a large marina, but no beach and no cedars nowhere, nohow. So I backtracked, and voilà, there it was: a thin stretch of sandy shore line tucked away just south of that rock outcropping, and in front of poplars, cut-leaf maples and a few ash trees; and all that in front of a murky and smelly mosquito pond. (I'll see to it that the guidebook will be corrected.) By then I had spent another eight hours paddling in my boat and was tired, hot, and hungry and needed to take care of those physical needs. By 5:00 p.m. I was a relaxed, normal citizen again, phoning Nancy.

To and Along the US/Canadian Border

The western shore the next morning turned absolutely flat, like a big flood plane. This reminded me of what I had read about the history of Lake Champlain. From about one million to 12,000 years ago, a huge Pleistocene glacial icecap covered North America down to Long Island, N.Y. The weight of the mile-thick ice-shield deflected the earth's crust, allowing ocean water to fill the indentation when the ice finally melted and drained away to the north. Thus for a brief time Lake Champlain became an inland ocean arm off the mighty St. Lawrence, which explains why fossilized salt-water fishes and even beluga whales have been found in the sediments of the lake. Only Champ, a relative of the Scottish Loch Ness Monster, has not yet been found. So keep looking, folks!

I made it to the Canadian border near Fort Montgomery, but then turned east, towards the Vermont side. Just before I reached the dual bridges, the old, low, broken down wooden one and behind it the elegant, much higher modern road bridge, I felt the pull of the flow out of the large lake into the Richelieu River and the St. Lawrence eventually. It was significant – watch it! However, before I reached Missisquoi Bay (formerly



Lunch stop across from Fort Ticonderoga.



Striated rocks on Appletree Point.

known as Masipskiwibi, but Mrs. Quoi in my lingo) at the top right corner of Lake Champlain, I first had to scoot straight south for 13 miles and then ten miles up again in a northeasterly direction to get around the long Alburg Tongue sticking out into the lake, like a big nasty tongue, of course. Two overnights later found me at the edge of the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge.

South Along the Vermont Side

I then had a wonderful time paddling straight south for 24 miles along the very pretty and mountainous side of Vermont to Sandbar State Park on the route #2 causeway to Grand Isle/South Hero Island. Brilliant sunshine made up for a light headwind, which at least kept me cool. Since it was before Memorial Day and the park was still closed, the resident ranger did let me camp there, after I helped him launch his rowing dinghy and gave him a hand into his boat. A recent hip operation on one leg and knee operation on the other made that hard for him. He was a tough but kind old fellow, and we got along fine. (There is no camping allowed in the park, except for boaters in an

emergency; normally day use only.)

I was glad I was again using accurate nautical NOAA charts, not road or hiking maps, because I had to get through the two dams/causeways to Grand Isle. On my chart both dams showed a low bridge (or opening in the latter dam) near the island. So I opted to follow the SE shore of the island and then paddle south again on the outside of the 3.25-mile-long “Marble Dam” to Colchester Point. I enjoyed stunning views both to the west (the New York shore) as well as to the east (the Vermont side), not to mention marveling at the highly unusual slabs of white marble in the dam itself. I noticed bikers on the former railroad dam. So I noted it down in my trip log as a thing to do for the future: take Nancy for a bike ride on “Marble Dam.” It’s the closest thing to paddling this beautiful stretch of lake, and it’s not too far from Burlington.

Big Town Burlington, Vt.

Approaching Burlington wasn’t half as bad as I had feared. The shoreline from the marble dam past the mouth of the Winooski River and around Appletree and Lone Rock Point was quite pleasant, as was the long granite breakwater of the harbor. I refilled one of my two 10-liter water tanks at a convenient marina and paddled on towards the tip of Shelburne peninsula, where I stopped for lunch on a lovely beach filled with stunning black and white striated rocks. Shelburne Bay behind it is one of the oldest natural harbors of the lake, with noble estates from the turn of the century and one of the oldest yacht clubs in the country. I found a secluded pocket beach with a steep shore behind me on the open lake side of this peninsula, not an official overnight stop, which I did not mind sharing with a group of raucous ravens.

Next day took me 24 miles, almost straight south again, past a very pretty and very thinly settled Vermont shore with spectacular views of the opposite western shore of New York, especially the Split Rock Moun-

tain range. I finally pulled out in Arnold Bay and wondered what exactly Benedict Arnold had to do with the name. He may have anchored his small fleet of boats here on his way to the battle of Valcour Island in 1776 with the British, or anchored what was left on the way back to Whitehall.

Anyway, I got hammered here also - by a horrendous thunderstorm. I had to hold my tent up from the inside to keep it from buckling. Everything got wet inside, even my sleeping bag. Ah well, it’ll dry tomorrow, me hopes.

The Home Stretch

Another 27-miler straight south, through the narrows at Crown Point and past Five Mile Point to another Paddlers’ Trail site at East Creek, across from Fort Ticonderoga. The portage up the path to the edge of the slanting field, covered by three-foot high rye grass, did not appeal to me, and I pitched my tent right at the mushy take-out. But I enjoyed a great view of the fort with Mount Independence to my left and a field of bulrushes to my right, while listening to a chorus of catbirds, mockingbirds, cardinals, orioles, and many more. Several flocks of Canada geese flew noisily overhead, honking their way along this major north-south flyway. The local geese already had their four to six gangly goslings in tow. Thus the migrating flocks must have been non-breeding juveniles, I gathered. At night the bullfrogs were very vociferous.

I had again planned in one wind day for the trip, but since I never felt I needed it, I had a rest day on my hands, since I did not want to drive home to Maine on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend. This rest day was the hardest day of the entire trip for me. In all my previous trips, I had never taken off an entire day, and only had one severe wind day on the Baltic Sea. Since the weather was fine that morning, I was itching to get going, but I forced myself to sleep longer, have an extra mug of coffee and cocoa and finish reading the two books

I brought along. I never took a nap, though. Maybe next year.

My last day on the water was somewhat anticlimactic. It was overcast with a light headwind, and the lake turned more into a tight river, which I already knew. It was Saturday, and only fishermen were out, some even in those super-fast bass-boats, barely touching the water as they sped along from one bend to the next. I guessed there was a fishing tournament in progress, because everybody seemed to be in a real hurry to get to the right spot, get their lines in the water, and watch and reel in their lines – totally mesmerized in their obsession. Only very few noticed me paddling by or said hello. And so ended my trip at the Lock #12 Marina and the Finch and Chubb Inn.

I found my car in perfect order where I had left it, washed my gear and boat, loaded up, took a shower and got dressed up for a celebratory dinner in house. The 370-mile trip home to Maine the next day, on a Sunday morning, was extremely smooth, as I had hoped it would be.

Summary

When I planned this trip I was looking for a break from my usual far-away, tidal ocean canoe trips, and I found just that. Lake Champlain is big, real big in places, and could dish out big waves in anything over 20-knot winds, especially when it blows from the north or the south. But lake winds only create wind waves, which never get exacerbated by a tidal flow, or worse, a tidal rip. There are also no big swells from distant storms superimposing themselves over the wind waves. When it blows on Lake Champlain, it gets rough in a hurry, but it also calms down quickly. This is the character of wind waves. Fortunately, the NOAA marine weather reports are extremely accurate in this area, since the weather systems approach over land from the west, where there are plenty of observation stations, unlike Cape Breton Island or Newfoundland in the open Atlantic. Everything is much



Lone Rock Point, approaching Burlington, Vermont..

more predictable on this lake, except for the wild, erratic and noisy Sea-Doos, which have infected even these big waters. So make sure they see you or that you have an air horn handy.

So if you think you cannot handle the wind and waves of this lake at a specific point, get off the water and wait a while. It will get better in a hurry. And one more suggestion: If you do not like developed shore, look the other way, 12 miles across the lake at its widest point, to the 80 islands, significant peninsulas, and distant shores. Long stretches of the almost 600 miles of shoreline are steep and natural, without a house in sight.

Here and there, though, the shore has been protected from erosion by big chunks of natural rock, often from quarries, ranging from granite to marble. They are the waste product of a former viable industry, cut-offs, culls, broken slabs, often still showing the drilled blast-holes. You get used to that.

All in all a very scenic, enjoyable and predictable 276-mile (444 km) circumnavigation of 25 miles per day (11 paddle days). Thanks to the tireless work of the Lake Champlain Committee, who put out the

Lake Champlain Paddlers' Guide, you can now plan your trip with more confidence as to where you will be able to spend the night. I felt welcome on this lake and had fun. I'll be back

Information:

Wikipedia (on the web): Basic info on Lake Champlain

Gear:

17'2" Kevlar Verlen Kruger SEA WIND sea canoe (www.krugercanoes.com)

Carbon fiber canoe racing paddle by Zaverall (www.zre.com)

Deck-mounted, passive radar reflector from West Marine and bicycle wiggle stick with orange flag (to enhance my visibility in any weather)

Beach camping gear with one-burner propane stove and all food from home

Two 10-liter water bags by Dromedary (with one refill)

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The 24th Annual Blackburn Challenge

The Blackburn Challenge is a 20-plus-mile race around Cape Ann, Mass. Most of the race is through the open ocean waters off the cape. Any paddle- or oar-powered boat that is seaworthy enough to face the open ocean can enter the race.

The Blackburn Challenge commemorates

the 1883 rowing of a fishing dory from the Burgeo Bank to Newfoundland by Howard Blackburn in mid winter. Blackburn and his dory-mate, Thomas Welch, had become separated from their schooner during a squall and decided to make for the coast. Welch died during the ordeal, but Black-

burn allowed his hands to become frozen to the oars and continued to row for five days before he reached safety. Despite losing most of his fingers and toes, he continued his adventures on the sea by soloing the Atlantic twice in a small sailboat. For complete results: www.blackburnchallenge.com

Blackburn Challenge 2010				Categories
Official Times				33
No.	ENTRANT AND CREW NAMES	Elapsed Time	Order	Boat Type,Manufacturer
SEA KAYAK DOUBLE				
Boat		Elapsed Time	Order	
92	Steve Fagin, Ian Frenkel	3:10:02	First	necky nootka
95	Gary Williams, Robin Francis	3:21:00	Second	Current Designs Unity
93	Amy Ellertsen, Ralph Hoehn	3:41:55	Third	Pakboats XT-19 (prototype)
94	Tom Gates, Pat Loftus	4:02:31	4	Perception Caretta Double
223	John Hafemann, Tona Wolf	5:40:13	5	17.5' Prestige
FAST KAYAK DOUBLE				
Boat		Elapsed Time	Order	
98	Edward Hemingway, Tedra Hemingway	4:52:42	First	Current Designs Kestral 170T
96	Sarah Evertson, Karen Ristuben	DNF		Guillemot Fast Double
97	Michaela Gaaserud, Peter Gaaserud	DNS		Nelo Waterman
HP KAYAK DOUBLE				
Boat		Elapsed Time	Order	
99	Steve DelGaudio, Jim Hoffman	2:52:25	First	Fenn Elite Tandem
101	Mark Ceconi, Sean Milano	2:54:41	Second	Fenn Mako XT
102	Mike Falconeri, Philip Warner	3:27:32	Third	Guillemot Fast Double
100	Emilie Phillips, Tyson Sawyer	3:50:07	4	West Side Boat Shop Bullitt
SEA KAYAK SINGLE MEN				
Boat		Elapsed Time	Order	
121	Tucker Lindquist	3:23:18	First	Surge Surge
109	Joe Ervin	3:24:49	Second	pigmy coho
119	Jonathan Kilroy	3:33:18	Third	Tiderace ExploreS
107	David Clarke	3:34:22	4	Surge 17' 8"
108	Eric Ekman	3:41:59	5	Current Design Gulfstream
110	David Fasulo	3:46:30	6	NDK Explorer
118	John Karoff	3:46:49	7	Perception Carolina
122	Scott Lundquist	3:50:41	8	Impex Susquehanna
111	David Filosa	3:51:51	9	Necky Looksha IV
115	Brandon Gunderson	3:59:04	10	Valley Nordkapp LV Nordkapp
SEA KAYAK SINGLE WOMEN				
Boat		Elapsed Time	Order	
137	Pam Browning	3:40:44	First	Surge Sea Kayak
141	Nicole Sherf	4:06:09	Second	wilderness system sealution
139	Johna Till Johnson	4:08:05	Third	Valley Avocet
138	Mary Beth Gangloff	4:17:36	4	Valley Nordkapp LV
140	Tracy Keller	4:25:39	5	Perception Sealion S



b01-Cyndi Jenetzko first place FSK womens.. Photo by Ruth Sespaniak

No.	ENTRANT AND CREW NAMES	Elapsed Time	Order	Boat Type,Manufacturer
FAST KAYAK SINGLE MEN				
Boat		Elapsed Time	Order	
150	Roger Gocking	3:03:07	First	Epic 18X
161	Hugh Pritchard	3:03:10	Second	Kayakpro Nemo
149	Dana Gaines	3:10:08	Third	Epic 18X
156	Greg Leshner	3:16:51	4	QCC 700X
146	David Crocker	3:22:15	5	Seda Glider
154	Jim Kowalski	3:24:33	6	QCC 700X
155	John LaGrassa	3:28:35	7	Tide Race Explore S
142	Ralph Abele	3:29:30	8	Epic Endurance 18
151	Leon Granowitz	3:31:26	9	Epic 18X Ultra
159	David Moore - New Jersey	3:35:30	10	seda glider
FAST KAYAK SINGLE WOMEN				
Boat		Elapsed Time	Order	
166	Cyndi Janetzko	3:32:51	First	Kayakpro Nemo
165	Lisa Huntington	3:37:07	Second	QCC Q600X
168	Beth Umland	3:56:53	Third	Epic Endurance
167	Kathy Kenley	4:50:18	4	Kayakpro Nemo
164	Amelia Hassler	DNS		Seda Glider
HP KAYAK SINGLE WOMEN				
Boat		Elapsed Time	Order	
169	Stefani Jackenthal	3:11:02	First	Think EVO
170	Margaret Mann	3:19:13	Second	Epic V10
171	Kathleen McNamee	3:21:32	Third	Epic V10
172	Julia Townsend	3:35:16	4	Huki S1 R
HP KAYAK SINGLE MEN				
Boat		Elapsed Time	Order	
190	Craig Impens	2:46:23	First	epic V-12
198	Eric McNett	2:47:18	Second	THINK Legend
189	Brian Heath	2:48:20	Third	West Side Boat Shop T-Rex
188	Joe Glickman	2:48:55	4	EPIC V10
184	Timothy Dwyer	2:53:16	5	Epic V12
204	Rowan Sampson	2:53:39	6	Fenn Mako 6
185	Wesley Echols	2:53:54	7	Stellar SES ULTRA
207	Mike Tracy	2:56:17	8	Fenn Elite
202	Kirk Olsen	2:57:15	9	Huki S1-X
192	Dean Jordaan	3:00:15	10	Stellar Stellar Elite



HPK class start. Photo by Donna Lind.



This man finished the course in an old whitewater kayak! Photo by Donna Lind.



Nicole Sherf second place SK womens. Photo by Ruth Sespaniak.



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Gary Williams and Robin Francis second place SK doubles. Photo by Ruth Sespaniak.



Men's FSK taking off. Photo by Donna Lind.



Al Pierce coming in 11th out of 33 boats in his class. Photo by RuthSpespaniak.



Timing crew at work. Photo by Donna Lind

Capsized

By Ellen Ruppel Shell

The State of Maine, it's often said, is a state of mind, a state sometimes inscrutable to relative newcomers like my husband, Marty, and me. So we were not surprised to be the only boaters heading out from the dock near Damariscotta on a gorgeous Saturday morning last November. We launched onto calm seas, so confident of the weather that we didn't bother to check the forecast or pack our safety gear — the extra paddles, whistles, radio, and flares. But half a mile from shore, we learned why no one else was out. The wind blew up, as did the chop. Our boats got skittish. Marty's Red Sox cap blew off, and I begged him not to circle back for it. He assured me that we had seen much worse, that we would be fine. It was the response I had come to expect from him.

Marty tends toward the analytical: he believes what he deduces but not always what he sees. A reflexive logician, he plays the odds, and the odds were good: in nearly a decade of kayaking, we had never run into trouble. Still, my look of terror persuaded him to turn around. Just as I came about, a gust dumped me head down into the 47-degree surf. I surfaced sputtering. Hypothermia takes the lives of a number of kayakers every year. Marty worked the odds: without a wetsuit, I had about 40 minutes. After guiding me back into my flooded boat, he calmly handed me the water pump. He waited until the boat was almost drained to tell me the bad news: in the rush, he lost his paddle. With every passing second, we were being pulled farther out to sea.

We spotted an island maybe 100 yards away. Abandoning the kayaks was risky, but it seemed so close. I saw no choice but to make a jump for it. Marty objected, but be-

fore he could make his case, I rolled back into the water and began hauling against the waves. I looked at Marty pleadingly, but he was still weighing his options.

Marty grew up in an apartment in Far Rockaway, a few blocks from the boardwalk. He loved the beach, and still does, but he hates the water, especially cold water, and it was against all instinct that he dumped his boat. But then he didn't swim; he thrashed. The look on his face read, "This time, the odds stink." Suddenly I was the calculating one — the water was freezing and rough, but we could do this, for our daughters if not for ourselves. I screamed encouragement. Angry, he barked, "Just go, now." It flashed through my mind that he was right, that the kids would be better off with one parent rather than none. Then it flashed through my mind that our life insurance was paid up and that our kids — one a college grad, the other well on her way — would be fine. And that I would not be fine without their father. I decided to stay.

And then I heard a motor.

A skiff was off in the distance, with what looked like a grizzled figurehead standing watch in the bow. As it approached, the figurehead lighted up a smoke and then, suddenly, was upon us — reaching down to pull me up and out of the waves, while Marty clawed up into the hull. The skiff rode low in the water with our weight and that of five grown men. They wore camouflage garb. The deck was piled deep with carcass, a tangle of white-tailed deer. One guy laughed — my shivers, he said, were strong enough to power the boat, which was good because they were almost out of fuel. Another guy, also laughing, said, "We've

got enough to get these fools home."

A joint was lighted, and offered, as were bottles of Twisted Tea. Someone threw a blood-stained blanket around me. The figurehead was a retired iron worker, now a dealer in lobsters. The other men were his sons and friends. The lobster dealer had only one good eye, and it was that eye that spotted the red hull of Marty's kayak as he rolled it. What dumb luck, we agreed. The dealer cleared his throat; it had been a bad year for lobster, he said, and they barely broke even. They would need a lot more deer to fill their freezers, more than the legal limit. "We'd be grateful if you didn't mention the hunting," he said, as we putted along toward his dock.

The lobster dealer's wife lent me some dry clothes and drove us back to our car. She asked what possessed us to go out on a day when the winds were strong enough to shift the docks on their moorings. She told us her brother lost his life on such a day, but at least he was working — fishing — at the time. I guessed he had no life insurance.

The hunters went out and found our kayaks. We knew they would, and we returned to the dock with cash. The lobster dealer accepted it gladly. Then we strapped the kayaks to the roof of the car, got in and sat for a long time, heater blasting, weighing our options.

Ellen Ruppel Shell, a correspondent for The Atlantic, is the author of Cheap: The High Cost of Discount Culture.

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Paddling Long Island's South Shore Inlets

By Jim Nash

As many sea kayakers do, most of my paddling takes place in waters closest to home which for me is the western end of Long Island Sound. Although this region offers great paddling opportunities, unless there's a "weather event" that happens to coincide with one of my weekend days off, it doesn't have much in the way of moving currents or rough water to play in. So ever since I began sea kayaking, I've made it a priority to paddle in open ocean waters off nearby Long Island. A good number of these trips have included exploring the inlets in Long Island's barrier island chain.

Why paddle out one of the Long Island Inlets?

Pros:

1. Access to the ocean (often more launch points on the bay side than at the beach itself)
2. Bumpy water and predictable currents to play in
3. Interesting things to look at – a venue not many kayakers seem to paddle
4. Avoids launching directly into beach-breaking waves
5. It's fun!

Cons:

1. Boat traffic
2. BOAT TRAFFIC
3. Did I mention boat traffic?

I had some reservations writing this article due to the inherent dangers of kayaking in areas of heavy boat traffic. These inlets are few in number and are the primary thoroughfares for boats to access the ocean. As a result, in the summer months the inlets and the narrow channels of the bays leading to them can be like motor boating highways, no exaggeration. Keeping a watchful eye and going on non-weekend days can minimize the inherent risks of paddling in high traffic areas. And of course paddling in a group is always safest. One of my more hair-raising kayaking experiences was crossing the channel at Fire Island inlet on the 4th of July weekend. Enough said.

As for positive attributes of tidal inlet paddling, gaining access to the ocean is the primary one for me. Access to the outer coast



Jim paddles the shore break.

is not easy in the New York metropolitan area. Even where launching a boat may be allowed, most beaches aren't set up to launch a kayak close to a parking area. And hauling a long sea kayak several hundred yards to the ocean is more difficult than carrying a beach umbrella. By contrast, launch sites are typically easier to find on the bay side of the outer beaches, so if you launch near one of the inlets, with a bit of paddling you can reach the outer coast.

A second attribute of barrier inlet paddling I like is the opportunity to find a variety of dynamic water conditions. Yes there are days when the ocean is pretty tame. But more often than not there's something fun to paddle through no matter what is going on with the weather and tides. Due to the accumulation of sand in different parts of the inlet environment, shallow bars inside and outside the inlet mouth are often places to find kayak-friendly waves to play in. If conditions are small, head out to the near-shore sand bars beyond the mouth of the inlet or hit the inlet at time of max ebb current to see how it's affecting incoming swell. If conditions are bigger, the inlet provides an area of deep water where waves are (typically) not breaking and, if you decide, allows you to bypass beach-breaking surf to more sea kayak-friendly conditions

beyond. When breaking waves are big, I just head out far enough to feel the swell – a good exercise in reading sea conditions.

All this being said, tidal inlets should not be visited cavalierly. If the surf that is breaking onshore is too big for you to safely handle, you shouldn't use the calmer waters of the inlet to get out into conditions beyond your abilities.

Form/Function:

As shown in Figure 1, Long Island has six inlets or breaks in the barrier island chain. These are, listed from west to east including inlet channel width (2010):
Rockaway Inlet: 5000'+
East Rockaway Inlet: 750'
Jones Inlet: 2100'
Fire Island Inlet: 1700'
Moriches Inlet: 750'
Shinnecock Inlet: 750'

Although not an expert in coastal morphology myself, the south shore inlets have some common physical features worth noting:

Barrier islands run the length of Long Island from New York City all the way to Southampton, roughly 75 miles. Long Island owes its form to the last glacial period, when the island and its offshore environment ac-

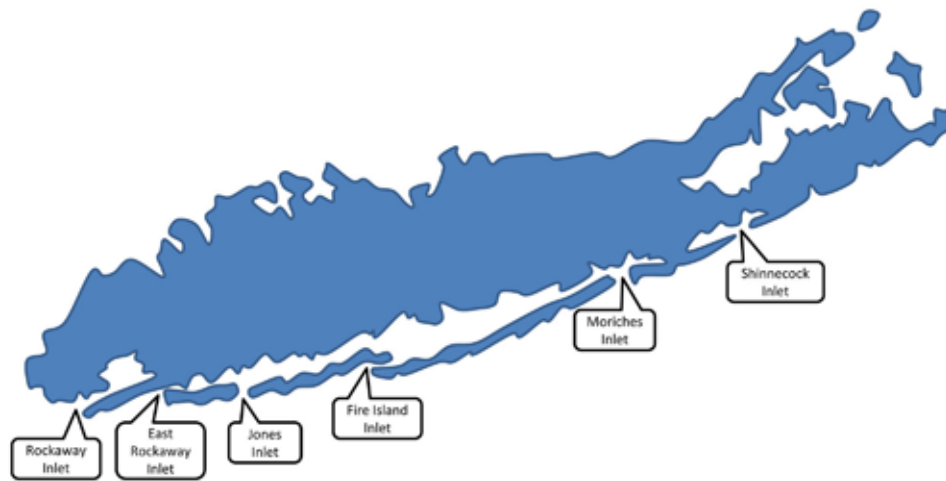


Figure 1

accumulated sand at the terminal moraine of the southward advancing glacier. After the glacier receded, offshore sand and sediments were deposited by wave action along the new coast line. This formed (and continues to sustain) the barrier islands along the south shore.

The creation of tidal inlets - openings in the barrier island - is typically caused by overwashing during large storms. The two easternmost barrier inlets in Long Island formed in the 1930's as a result of storm surges that overtopped and broke through: Moriches Inlet was created in 1931 after a Nor'easter and Shinnecock Inlet was created by the great hurricane of 1938.

Under natural conditions the shape and behavior of barrier islands changes from year to year. Inlets form and refill and the length and shape of barrier islands are in constant flux. An interesting demonstration of this can be seen by looking at aerial photos online - google or yahoo maps. As you zoom in you can see the changes in their size and shape because each level of magnification is often a different aerial photo taken in a different year, revealing the islands evolution over time. One recent change I've seen myself when paddling in Cape Cod is the formation of a new inlet in Little Pleasant Bay - the "North Inlet" formed in 2007 after a storm event. One year it wasn't there, and the next it was. All of Long Island's inlets have been reinforced on one or both sides with shoreline armoring (stone rip-rap) in recent years in order to halt their natural tendency to migrate and

fill up with sand. The dominant wave direction reaching the south shore of Long Island is from the southeast - from storm events in the tropics and South Atlantic. This causes "longshore drift" that moves sand generally from east to west along the shore. To stop the westward movement of sand along the shore, armoring along the eastern side of most of the inlets has been extended as a jetty south out into the Atlantic. Although such jetty structures keep the inlet clear, they do upset the natural sediment balance of barrier island environments by robbing sand from the stretch

of beach farther west.

Features for Kayaking:

Whether armored or not, the tidal inlets accumulate sediment in flood and ebb shoals. (See Figure 2). These shoals are created over time by currents flooding into and out of the inlets, dropping their sediment load at either side of the inlet mouth. It is this process that naturally closes up an inlet over time. As far as kayaking is concerned, the accumulation of sediment north of the inlet mouth can build islands inside the inlet, which are handy to paddle by to avoid boat traffic. Sediment deposited immediately south of the inlet creates shallow sand bars at the mouth that can farther constrict current flows thereby "jacking up" the flood and ebb current a bit. Sand bars beyond the mouth, further south of the inlet, also create swell-generated waves well offshore. In my experience, all of these inlet features facilitate kayak-friendly surf.

Inside the Inlet:

Weather and waves coming from the SW or SE can bring waves capable of breaking against the armored sides of the inlets. In my experience, this is most often on the interior eastern side of the inlets as the predominant NW traveling swell bends around the eastern stone jetty. Striking the balance between

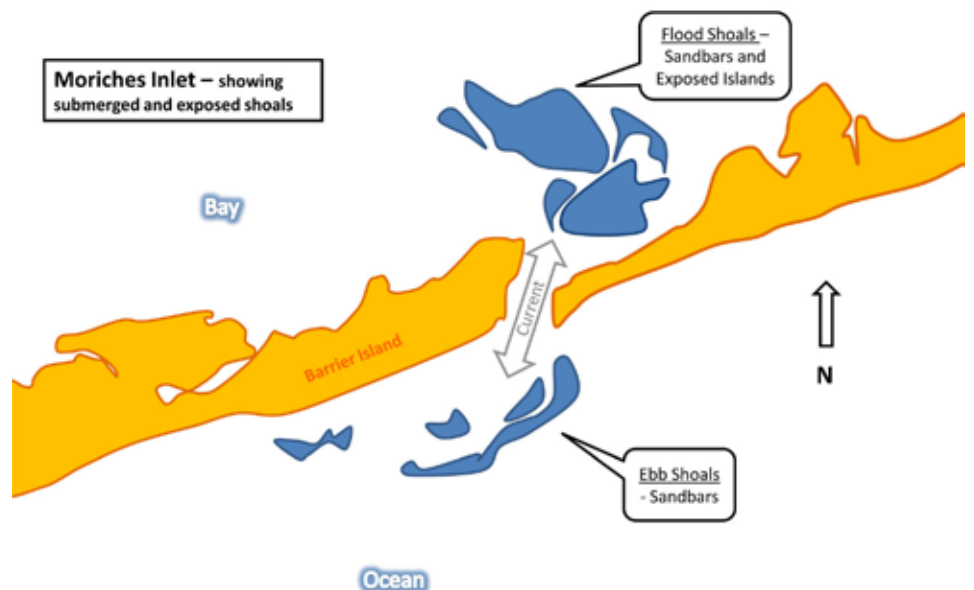


Figure 1

staying out of the central boat channel but not too close to the breakwaters can require sharp attention. On the plus side, if boat traffic is low you can often ride this incoming swell as it wraps around and enters the inlet. Further inside the inlet, local wind-generated waves can be fun to play in near the flood-water shoals.

Western Side of Inlet – offshore sandbar-generated surf:

At some of the wider inlets, including Jones and Rockaway, the area west of the inlet is where ocean swell encounters shallow sand bars creating ride-able waves far enough from shore to be fun for extended periods. I've hit these areas at various tide cycles and they always have something to offer. At the wider inlets, the wave train breaking on this sandbar is a fair ways SW of the inlet, perhaps 1/2 mile or more offshore. The great advantage of these offshore sandbars is that you can surf without fear of being washed (or smashed) up onto the beach. Long rides that dissipate their energy well offshore are the plus side of these zones. One minor down-side to these areas is that jet-skiers know about them too and ride against the waves to catch air. This creates a potentially dangerous conflict with sea kayakers who ride in the opposite direction – with the waves. Lastly, East Rockaway Inlet has submerged piles west of the inlet just off Rockaway Beach to be avoided.

Eastern Side of Inlet:

East of the inlets, beach breaking surf is often no different than elsewhere along the coast. Fire Island Inlet is an exception. It was formerly armored on its eastern side. But as seen on aerial photos, sand has accumulated beyond the armoring and has extended the barrier island to the west. Due to the accumulation of sediment here, a very gradual slope has developed which offers a nice place for friendly waves to spill gradually onto shore.

This is generally not the case for the other inlets whose stone jetties are intact. However, if “nothing is doing” in the inlets, the zone east of the eastern jetty is the closest place to find out what the swell is up to. In fact, one of my best days on the Long Island barrier beaches was “saving” a previously blah, flat



In the surf zone.

water paddle by sharing some superb long-wavelength spilling waves with a few stand-up paddle boarders just east of Shinnecock Inlet.

Ebb Current – tide race play:


Among the six Long Island inlets, it's generally the narrower ones that produce currents sufficient to have a noticeable effect on incoming swell at the mouth of the inlet. Also the volume of water retained in the bays behind each inlet differs which can affect their hydraulic behavior. Jones Inlet and Rockaway Inlet are wide so have no obvious current-enhancing effect on incoming swell. By contrast, Moriches Inlet and Shinnecock Inlet are narrower and from my experience can produce ride-able standing waves at the mouth of the inlet during max ebb with a moderate amount of incoming swell. But this may not last long – I've arrived at the tail end of the ebb to witness an active wave train become calm in just the time it took to offload my boat and get dressed. Fire Island Inlet is one of the wider inlets at 1900 feet across, yet probably due to the barrier island's overlapping configuration here and the volume of water it discharges, the ebb can enhance incoming waves as the current races around its eastern side. Be forewarned though that Fire Island Inlet's overlap in the barrier island “arms” has necessitated a long, narrow channel that motor boaters travel at full throttle – wait your turn and look both ways before crossing.

Landing/Launching Sites:

As a general rule, landing at all swimming beaches (places with lifeguards and parking fees) is not allowed. Such beaches are usually discernable from the water. Breezy

Point at Rockaway Inlet is a special case – it's part of the Gateway National Recreation Area and, from personal experience, the National Parks Service isn't happy with “boats” landing on their beach. But I'd say if you're respectful of the needs of other beach users and keep off vegetated dunes and sensitive areas, you'll have few problems landing on the outer beach for lunch or a rest break.


Public boat launches or public beaches are generally NOT willing to let you launch



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Jared on his Stand Up Paddleboard

car-topped boats. An example of this is Cap-tree State Park at Fire Island Inlet which has a boat launch and plenty of parking right near the inlet but prohibits launching of paddling craft! After being told “no,” I’ve managed to huff my boat down some treacherous rip-rap under the parkway bridge underpass or off

Oak Beach Drive in the off-season. Which illustrates the general rule at all of these inlets – you have to get creative to gain water access but if you look around you can usually find a spot on the bay side. The aerial photos on googlemaps are helpful in exploring launch options beforehand. Off-season

(before Memorial Day and after Labor Day) is clearly the best time to visit these popular beach spots from a parking standpoint.

To reach Rockaway or East Rockaway Inlet your best bet may be to get a hand launch permit for kayaks and canoes from NYC Parks. It costs only \$15 and is good for one year. It authorizes permission to launch and land at any of the sites on the New York City Water Trail. <http://www.nycgovparks.org/facilities/kayak>. Also, I’ve launched from a small parking lot off the Belt Parkway called Plum Beach to reach Rockaway that is quite nice. For East Rockaway, in the off season I’ve launched from the county park at Atlantic Beach, but it is unlikely to be doable after Memorial Day. At Jones Inlet, there’s a town marina that provides good access in the low season.


Taking the time to visit these inlets has been a great diversion from the venues I typically paddle. And although I’m unlikely to make it a regular habit due to the bridge and expressway traffic, I’m sure to visit them all again in time.

Information:

- Great wave/swell info from Maine Island Kayak Co. website: http://www.maineislandkayak.com/waves_swells.html
- Info on inlet formation and coastal geography: www.csc.noaa.gov/beachnourishment/html/geo


Jim Nash has been sea kayaking since 1996 and lives in Westchester, N.Y.

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Suzanne Hutchinson, Kokatat New England Sales Rep and Team Paddler for P & H Sea Kayaks, near Somes Sound (ME). Photo: © Werner Maas

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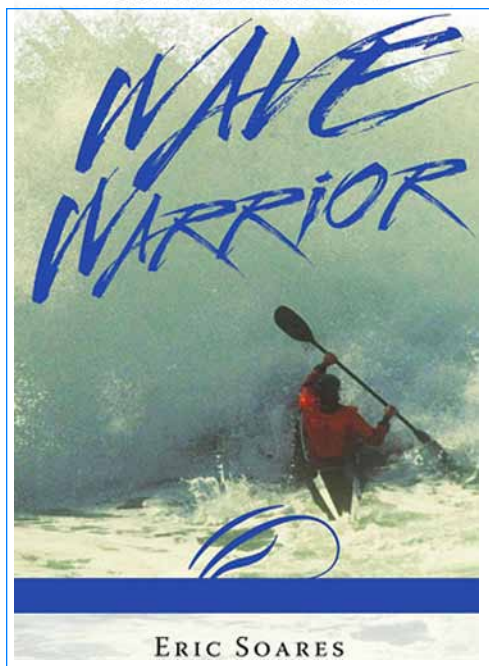
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Confessions of a Wave Warrior

Reviewd by Paul Caffyn

CONFESSIONS OF A



Published: 2010

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Eric Soares is a larger than life character who, through his articles, books, and DVDs, always left me with an impression of a gung-ho nutter who enjoyed trying to smash himself and his kayak to pieces on the rocky coastline of the western seaboard of the USA. I felt the messages conveyed – putting on helmets and body armour before launching into kayak and body crunching caves and slots – were not conducive for safe sea kayaking. The situations he described were those that I went to exceedingly great lengths to avoid, such as huge reef breaks, or ploughing into caves with a big swell running and no opportunity to turn around. In the back of my mind always, a sneaking suspicion that the poor

buggers paddling on the western seaboard of the USA were so lacking in wonderful paddling destinations – sheltered landings, clear waters, spilling surf – that they resorted to trying to maim themselves and their kayaks in appalling coastal conditions.

When I met first Eric at Coastbusters, earlier this year, I told him that I had fully expected to meet a seven foot tall Rambo man, with mountains for muscles, teeth broken, and face scarred by encounters with numerous reefs. Apart from a huge vertical scar on this chest, Eric was a mere mortal, shorter in stature and with far less muscle than Crocodile Wimpy. He was a very entertaining speaker, and his extrovert, exuberant personality shines through in this self-published autobiography.

In four sections, each with shortish chapters, Eric vividly recounts in graphic, often humorous, detail the watery adventures that have given him so much pleasure from childhood up to when he had to pace himself after three episodes of open heart surgery. The writing style is one I like, not introspective or esoteric, but graphic in your face stuff, tinged with heaps of dry humour and occasional sadness at the loss of a fellow paddler.

The early chapters, often involving the school of hard knocks, have lessons learned at the end, showing Eric's willingness to keep learning. A really tough chapter is about a disastrous surf instruction session: when weather conditions begin to deteriorate, the class separated and, with poor communication between Eric and the other instructor, Eric left the group to battle his way into strong winds to reach the start point. Several paddlers were rescued, some made it to the beach - it was lucky no one drowned, but the lessons learned are applicable to all instruction situations.

The third section has vignettes of some of the hard core rangers. It includes Kiwi

Mark Hutson and Jim Kakuk and Deb Volturmo who instructed at the 2008 Coastbusters.

The fourth section, 'Take Heart' has a warning for readers who are 'faint of heart' – three open chest operations to correct a dicky ticker, a weak genetic aorta valve connection. I retain a very clear picture of the chest saw in use, when fortunately Eric was under some serious drugs. His physical and mental rehabilitation give hope to all the poor buggers who have some affliction which hinders or prevents paddling.

The section on competitive Sea Gypsy races I found tedious going. It might hold more interest to those who were there. But the last section makes up for that a list of Eric's top 20 Water Story Books.

Black and white photos are inserted into the text, and relate nicely to the written word. Photos do lift a book and too often these days, kayaking tales are devoid of such photos. The cover design is very appealing to the eye, and I like the book layout – plenty of space on the pages, the text not crammed to save cost.

Saving the best bit for last – two chapters titled 24 Hours and Sex, Lies and Video Tape describe a Tsunami Ranger retreat on a remote surf beach backed by steep cliffs. Eric's brand new kayak is borrowed by Dave and holed, while Eric has gone walk-about. Dave pretends a rock had fallen off the cliff and holed the deck of the kayak, when Eric demands decapitation for the perpetrator. The dry humour in these two chapters, the second written by the Dave to avoid decapitation, brought tears to my eyes. Eric notes in a P.P.S. that he got his revenge on the hole perpetrator two years later. They were sitting around a camp fire drinking 151 rum. Dave, sitting opposite Eric told a funny, to which Eric spluttered with laughter. The fine mist of rum, ignited by the fire, torched Dave's eyebrows.



GET LISTED!

Send calendar listings to ackayak@comcast.net or ACK Calendar, P.O. Box 520, Ipswich, MA 01938, or enter them online at www.atlanticcoastalkayaker.com.

NORTH ATLANTIC

RACES

October 2: The Great Pumpkin Race

Empire Kayaks. Two-miles. Mid-race, beach your kayak, grab a pumpkin, and paddle back to Empire. T-shirts, awards, pumpkins, post race buffet. Empire Kayaks, 4 Empire Blvd., Island Park, NY 11558; (516) 889-8300; www.empirekayaks.com

October 10: The Pumpkin Classic

Farmington River, Simsbury, CT. Start and finish at Curtis Park (out and back course). Mild current, beautiful foliage. Prizes: Pumpkins! www.neckra.org or jimmycanoe@comcast.net

November 7: The Great Potato Race

Connecticut River, Hadley, Mass. New England Canoe & Kayak Racing Assn. annual banquet follows the event. www.neckra.org

CLUBS

For a complete list of clubs, go to our website at www.atlanticcoastalkayaker.com

Brattleboro Outing Club Brattleboro, VT

The Brattleboro Outing Club will host nine canoe and kayak outings May to October. All paddles are free and open to the public, and all are suitable for family canoeing and kayak touring. Life jackets (PFDs) are mandatory. Reservation priority goes to BOC members. Membership information is available at the BOC website. For more information, contact Larry McIntosh at (802) 254-3666, or Lmacyak@yahoo.com.

Oct. 4 – Sommerset Reservoir, Sommerset, Vt.

TRAIL NEWS

Maine Island Trail Assn.

Island Clean Ups:

Oct. 2 – Stonington

Oct. 9 – Muscongus Bay

Oct. 16 – Casco Bay - FULL; e-mail for alternate list. Please e-mail pkennan@mita.org or use online signup form at www.mita.org

MID ATLANTIC

October 1-3: 21st Annual Delmarva Paddler's Retreat

Camp Arrowhead, Lewes, Del. The premier gathering of those interested in Greenland pad-

dling skills and craft. Shared learning experiences. Guest instructors from Greenland. Space is limited! Go to www.delmarvapaddlersretreat.org

GREAT LAKES

October 8-10: West Michigan Coastal Kayakers' Assn. Annual Meeting

Northern Exposure Campground, Mesick, Mich., north of Grand Rapids. The lake at the campground is approximately 6 miles long and about a mile wide. It is surrounded by beautiful pine and hardwood forests. The lake's waters are clean and clear. In addition to paddling on the lake, there is an opportunity to paddle on the Manistee River above or below the dam. For anyone interested in paddling on Lake Michigan, it is approximately 25 minutes to a launch site. Call the campground ahead for reservations and use the WMCKA name to ensure that everyone is in the same area. The campground phone numbers for reservations are toll free: (800) 563-7425 or (231) 885-1199. For more information www.wmcka.org/events

SOUTH ATLANTIC

October 1-3: 20th Annual Born to Raise Sail

Celebrate with the new owner of Balogh Sail Designs (BSD) David Valverde. Kayak and Canoe Sailors gathering. Cedar Island, N.C., Driftwood Motel and Campground. Weather permitting sailing in Pamlico Sound, Cedar Island Bay or Core Sound. Socializing, idea exchange, rigging/sailing techniques. Buffet seafood dinner Sat. night. Come to the gathering and meet some of the most interesting and friendly people in the sport of kayak and canoe sailing.

For more information, David Valverde, (718) 548-1188, davev@baloghsaildesigns.com.

October 9: Paddle for Sargent Library

Caney Creek, Sargent, Matagorda County, Tx. boiled shrimp lunch, auction, raffle for new kayak, free T-shirt and whistle, music. Minimum donation \$25. Contact kayakfunfete@yahoo.com

October 21-24: Florida Paddlers Rendezvous

Annual gathering of canoe and kayak clubs, sponsored in 2010 by the Florida Sport Paddling Club. From a base camp at Silver River State Park, paddle central Florida's finest waterways. Come for one day or four. \$3.50 per person for USCA event insurance. You pay camping or lodging, launch or parking fees. For more info: Florida Sport Paddlers, <http://fsp-club.com> or <http://paddlersrendezvous.com/schedule.html>.

October 27-31: Sea Kayak Georgia Skills Symposium and BCU Week

Tybee Island, Georgia. BCU courses as well as skills training courses developed by Sea Kayak Georgia and some of the world's leading kayakers. 4 Star Sea Training & Assessment, Level 1 Coach, Level 2 Coach Training & Assessment. Courses are available for all skill levels and everyone is invited to attend. Naturalist Day Paddle. Exploration Series. For more information, www.seakayakgeorgia.com, or call (888) 529-2542; info@seakayakgeorgia.com

October 29-31: Corpus Christi Halloween Paddlefest

Sponsored by the Corpus Christi Kayak Club

(about 100 members) at IB Magee Beach Park (Friday-Sunday), Port Aransas, Texas. Invited are kayakers from 18 other Gulf kayak clubs. Highlights include guided kayak tours Shamrock Cove birding refuge, historic Lydia Ann Lighthouse, Harbor Island circumnavigation for dolphin viewing, Padre Island canal homes, or Corpus Christi Bay around the city and Lexington Aircraft Carrier. Group camping on the beach or nearby hotels. Demo kayaks, tips and advice to new kayakers, group dinners. For more information, johnsonkw@earthlink.net or www.hask.org

October 29-Nov. 7: Calusa Blueway Paddling Festival

Southwest Florida's Gulf Coast. Ten-day festival with speakers and instruction, races and tournaments, paddlers get-togethers, and green activities. Guided tours, fishing tournaments, photo contests, and more. Many events at public parks, resorts, campgrounds along the 190-mile Calusa Blueway Paddling Trail. Festival details are available at www.CalusaBluewayPaddlingFestival.com, including entry forms; listings of other activities, hotel packages and national ride-share options. For trail information, check out www.CalusaBlueway.com. Online interactive maps, suggested routes, outfitter and put-in locations, wildlife tips, and a social media site are included at the web site.

November 6: PaddleFest 2010

Hunting Island State Park, Hunting Island, Beaufort, S.C. 3 and 6 mile kayak and canoe races begin and finish in the Lagoon at Parking Lot J. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. at Parking Lot J. Cookout and Awards Ceremony will follow the races. Register in person at Higher Ground, 2121 Boundary Street, Beaufort, or online at www.active.com. Contact Ashley or Shelby at Higher Ground of the Lowcountry, 843-379-4327, or Dinah at 843-252-4820. Email higherground@hargray.com or dinahbrock@me.com. Or www.HigherGroundBeaufort.com.

November 7-10: Paddlesports Pro 2010

Conference and trade show sponsored by The Paddlesports Industry Association and the Trade Association of Paddlesports, Paris Landing State Park, Buchanan, Tenn. www.paddlesportsindustry.org

November 12-13: Paradise Coast Kayak Symposium

Naples, Fla. Includes tours, instruction, kayak fishing, skin on frame building instruction, nature talks, handmade boat show, Marco race, reggae beach party. www.saltwatersportsflorida.com

15th Annual Sweetwater Kayaks Symposium

BCU and Greenland Week: February 22-27
Kayak Symposium Weekend: February 26-28
Ft. Desoto Park, Tampa Bay area. Classes: with world class coaches. Evenings: dinner & slide shows. Geared to the beginner to the experienced. For details and registration go to www.sweetwaterkayaks.com; email jean@sweetwaterkayaks.com

Klassifieds

SKIN ON FRAME. Western Greenland style. 17x19 approx. wt. 48 lbs. Made of #10 duck canvas. Color dull red. 2nd owner. Used for rolling practice only. \$500.00 (Bill) (401)397-9622 (11)

THREE RUSSIAN BAIDARKAS - circa 1984; collector's item

Folding double baidarkas direct from the Soviet Union - brought here by members of Physicians for Social Responsibility who bought and sold them to help pay for their trips. We bought 3 - now there may be 2 with spare parts. They are not really salt water worthy and it's shows - although we had a great week-long paddle in the Sea of Cortez in them! We had spray skirts made for them (which cost nearly as much as the boats!). If interested, let's talk.

DRYBAG MATERIAL: Seattle Fabrics (www.seattlefabrics.com) item # 6830. Ultratex: 100% supplex nylon; microporous coated back. Recommended for dry bags, 60" x 20 yards. \$20. Call 207 255-0532 or email beeegrant@gmail.com (10)

VALLEY CANOE PINTAIL. 'C' cockpit, blue over white, rope skeg, compass, cockpit pump. Exc. condition. Great playboat for experienced paddler. 100% dry hatches even playing in the gardens or rolling all day. 207-787-3620 or email to suap@roadrunner.com. \$1500.00 (9)

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2006, 16'x21.5", 54 lbs., Dayhatch, with extras, Like New, \$2875, Albany, NY Area, Call Charlie @ 518-234-9235 or hac58@hughes.net (9)

NDK GREENLANDER PRO. Yellow over white, keyhole cockpit, slider skeg, deck mounted compass, good condition, original owner, LI NY, \$1200. Jim, (631) 680-5828 or pintail99@gmail.com (9)

NECKY LOOKSHA IV HV. Kevlar, dark blue over white, with custom installed Valley skeg system. Light, stable, responsive and great in rough water! \$1800 or best. Located in Vermont. jduqhoff@gmail.com (8)

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BETSIE BAY ARAL. Greenland style kayak 18' X 20 1/2" 33 lbs. Purchased new Jan. 2007 and is in excellent condition. Located in Grand Rapids, Mich. Asking

\$3,500. Contact Dale @ 616-868-6745 or email: dreidsma@buistelectric.com (3)

KAYAK CAMPING on Cross Island Farms, 102-acre organic farm. Just one mile from launch into St. Lawrence River on beautiful Wellesley Island, N.Y. Paddle around pristine Canadian islands in fresh water. Run by kayaker and ACK photographer Dani Baker and David Belding. Refuel on organic veggies and pastured pork. Call or email (315) 482-FOOD (3663), organic@crossislandfarms.com or www.crossislandfarms.com (8)

VINTAGE KLEPPER AERIUS. Bought the same year Hans Lindemann used his to cross the Atlantic Ocean. A true classic. Needs TLC and new sails. Your chance to own a classic at the very reasonable price of \$350. Located in Ipswich, Mass. Tamsin Venn, ackayak@comcast.net

SEA KAYAKING ALONG THE NEW ENGLAND COAST 2nd edition and Sea Kayaking Along the Mid-Atlantic Coast, by Tamsin Venn, published by Appalachian Mountain Club BOOKS. Send \$18.95, plus \$1.50 postage and handling to Tamsin Venn, POB 520, Ipswich, MA 01938.

Check out our recently revamped website with up to date calendar, classifieds, and Atlantic Coast resources for kayakers. You can submit a classified ad online or email to ackayak@comcast.net.

SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

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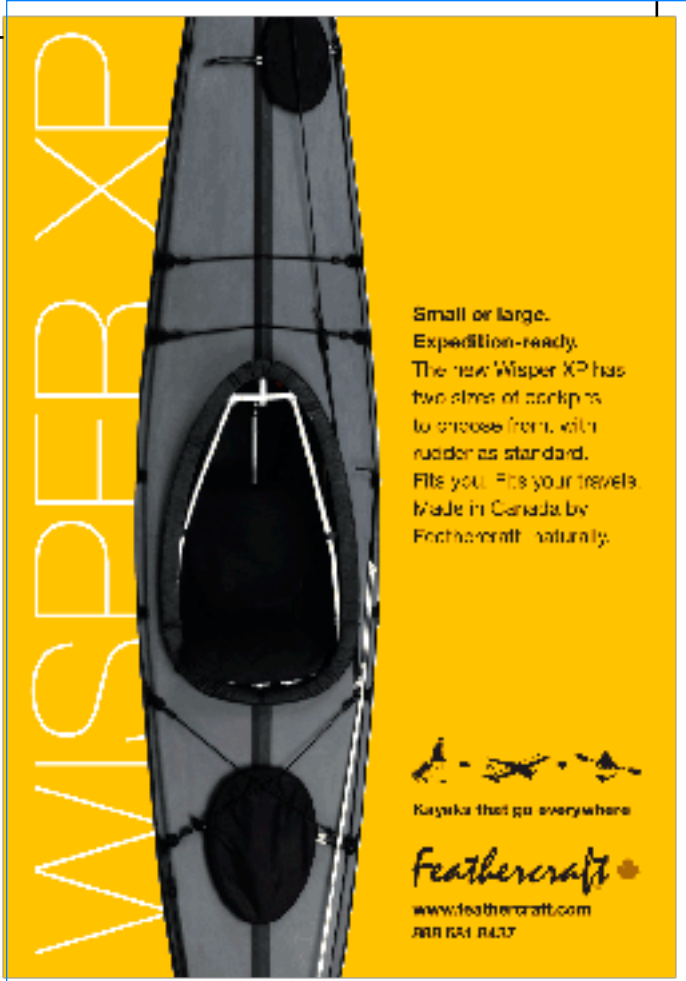
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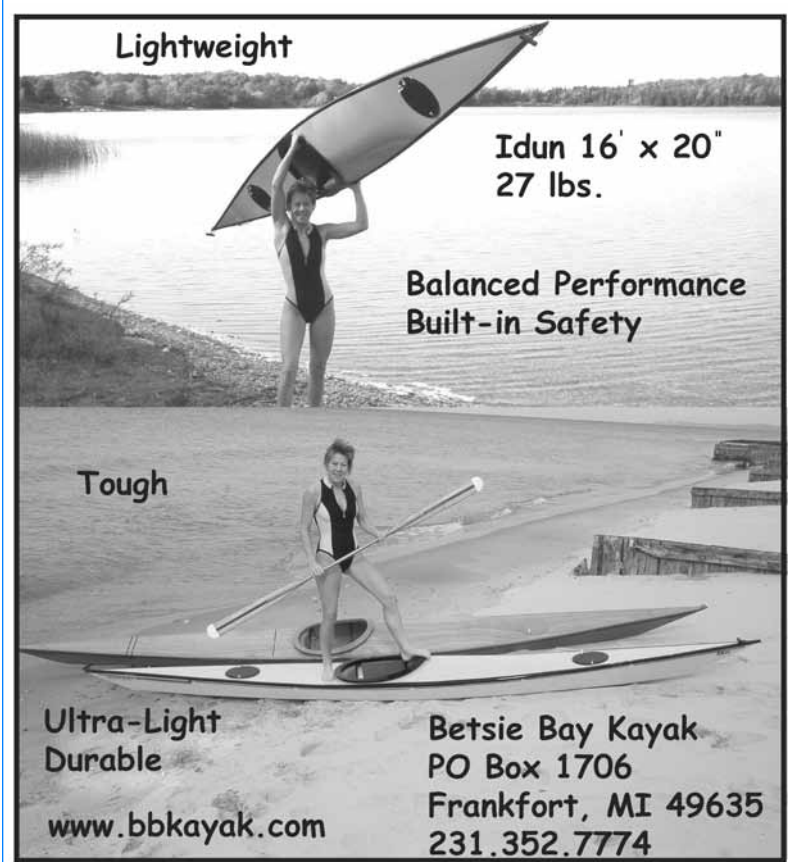


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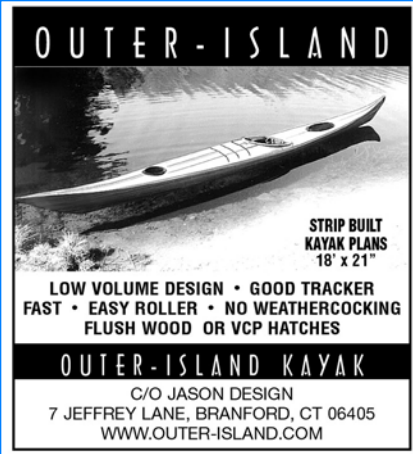
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