



AUCKLAND CANOE CLUB NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 1999

Well summer is just around the corner, a long corner that is.

Time to start thinking about your onslaught on the multisport season. Unless you're one of those hardened souls who keeps at it all year, with a spot of snow skiing down Ruapehu and the like. Sounds like fun, but personally my skiing isn't up to that standard, and it gets a bit cold, doesn't it?

I've had a multisport boat for a few years now, but I've been too timid to use it in races. I'm too scared of making a fool of myself. Every year I think to myself that this'll be the one. Then a while ago I started swimming more seriously, and I realised that if you start the race with swimming that gets a big worry out of the way - you start and finish swimming, you don't accidentally start swimming in the middle.

I've also worked out that if you don't do races you don't have to do so much training. I don't want my kayaking to get to be a chore. I like to go out and tootle around on the Harbour without having to measure my distance and speed, length of stroke, amount of oxygen taken in, heart rate or fast twitch muscle activity. Girls just want to have fun. That's my excuse for not being very good, and I'm sticking to it.

But then I often feel I'm missing out on something. Multisport races are usually held in such neat places. In the mountains or on the coast, that sort of thing. You can make a weekend of the event and it feels like a holiday. If you're not competing, anyway. I think my problem is that I'd like to complete the courses of lots of these races without having to be competitive about it. That isn't always possible, because of the remote areas the routes venture into - unwise to tackle alone, and the element of backup required.

The big attraction of multisport is the variety it offers. You don't get bored with any one of the disciplines. And if you're hopeless at one of them it doesn't usually matter. Anyway, I'm hopeless at all of them and I still aspire to do it!

And you're not so dependent on the weather. Rainy? Head for the pool. Windy? Leave the bike/kayak and run it. Low tide? Go for a bike/run instead.

Plus it gives you the chance to invest in all sorts of new toys, and that can't be bad.

Matt Grant had a real go at it. Read what he has to say over the page!

Yours in paddling

Intro to Multisport Paddling

By Matt Grant

Several months ago I found myself looking for a challenge, something more than trying to get through the IRD's voice response system, more extreme than trying to find the perfect latte in Ponsonby, more adventurous than looking sideways at a police patrol as you edge past him doing 56 in a 50 zone. Something really exhilarating.....like the Coast to Coast. So egged on by a little peer pressure from messrs Buckley, Wylder and Robinson, I sent away my cheque and started planning.....and spending!

First came a pre-loved bike, complete with leggings, snug fitting padded pants that still feel a little wierd, figure hugging tops, pumps, lights and the ultimate accessort to fair weather riders, the windtrainer to allow multi task training exercise and watching the idiot box.

Running was cheap - a few pairs of sox and shorts and a revival of my smelly old runners with a couple of days' soaking in napisan - no worries mate.

And most important of all according to popular lore, you need a really tippy boat. The sort that you can't take your eyes off the horizon without falling in. The sort that makes you slightly tense in a buttock clenching way as you anticipate a dunking at any moment. Even pathetic tests like putting your spray deck on become fraught with danger. I tested several different models, and was extremely fortunate not to make a real prat of myself as I wibbly wobbled my way around Okahu Bay in one particular model named after the famous sword....Damocles would have been much more appropriate. It was thus I discovered the secret that makes these boats so quick - the faster you go the more stable you are. Which explains why all those multisporters go like stink. They are paddling like eggbeaters in overdrive just to stay upright.

I finally settled on an Opus, for a number of reasons. 1. I found one in my favourite colours yellow and blue (I lived in Otago for a while and it's not poofy for a bloke to care about colours if they're associated with his football team) and 2. they have a reputation for being an intermediate boat with more stability than most and 3. they are also pretty quick. I have seen them finish in the top placings in several events. This is not good. I have a hot boat and a wing paddle. When I finish in the middle of the pack I have no excuses to fall back on except the usual athlete's ones like *Too much multi chain polymer glucose in that sports drink I'm using, I think I peaked mid week* or the classic blokey one *Must have drunk too much last night*.

One of the joys of paddling a boat such as this is how light they are. The usual clean and jerk onto the roof rack is now a piece of cake. And of course as you all know, light boats go quicker for less effort.

After paddling it around the Harbour a bit and feeling somewhat cocky I decided I needed to test it in conditions that would simulate what the Waimak might offer during the 'Coast'. I should point out here that these abbreviations are all part of the multisporters lingo and designed to make it sound as if you've done the event three times before and find it a bit of a yawn. So after a split second decision one Saturday night I drove helter skelter to Napier for the Ngaruroro Classic - 36 braided km of robust Grade 1 (according to local organiser and personality Chester Burt).

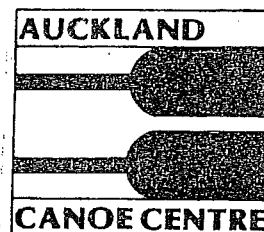
The tag of Grade 1 lulled me into what proved to be a false sense of security. The race turned out to be quite an education for this sea kayaker. But being quick on the uptake I immediately realised that shortcuts are a great way to overtake your more conservative opponents. Yep, they marvelled at the cunning of this Auckland kid as he dodged ahead in his slippery new boat. The first two shortcuts were a spectacular triumph, leaving the country kids gasping at my audacity and daring. The next ten shortcuts were unmitigated disasters. Gushing sidestreams

dehydrated into pathetic and rocky trickles, wreaking havoc on the virginal undersides of my new boat. I could see my opponents slipping away. The final shortcut swept, no, thrust me into some overhanging trees. Keith Bishop's cautionary words about this sort of peril rang in my ears, too late - way, way, way too late - as the vines and branches clutched at my arms and paddle like a demented triffid. Being a plucky fellow I decided in the nanosecond before disaster to execute a premeditated (gullibility test here) roll upside down. The first half of the roll went with breathtaking precision. I paddled upside down for a few yards as I surveyed the lie of the river bed. Like Steve Gurney, the multisport master himself, I am not afraid to try new techniques and push the edges of the performance envelope.

Predictably, in hindsight anyway, this technique sucks big time. I spent five minutes emptying my boat, and wringing out my soggy ego, and the next 90 minutes thrashing away after my more seasoned fellow paddlers. I stuck to the main channel like sticky tape to a blanket all the time and resisted all short cuts. The finish line saw me warmly welcomed by the locals with coffee, homebaked bikkies and Napier friendliness. Many thanks to Chester and co.

The race proved an excellent education in reading rivers and currents, picking the right line into bends, and served to whet my appetite for other paddles such as the Wanganui, and Waikato, where Aucklanders can gain an appreciation of the whitewater skills they need to tackle the Waimak with confidence. It was also a helluva lot of fun.

If you have always thought these boats are only for the big bicepped blokes, think again. (*Editor's note - females are allowed to do this too*) There are boats stable enough not to spill your Chardonay, and they are less expensive and lighter than our sea kayaks with all the bells and whistles. They are great for racing and practising paddling technique, and you can get team members to do the running and cycling for you. Team entries in these events are heaps of fun. Multisport and downriver are another fun type of paddling that teach new skills, take us to new places and help us meet new friends.

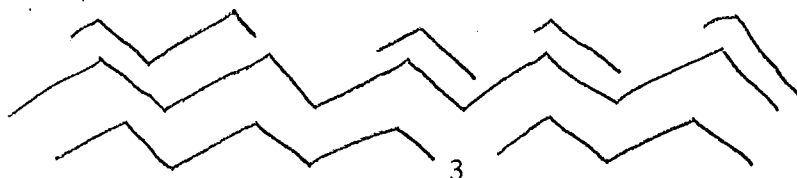


Klepper Folding Kayaks - September Special

Auckland Canoe Centre is offering exceptional deals on Klepper Folding kayaks during September. The packages consist of kayak, paddle(s), rudder, spraydeck and packing bags. Models offered are Aerius I and II, AE 2000 Single and the new Alu-Lite Recreation Single with aluminium frame. Prices start from \$4520, plus freight.

Please contact Peter at **AUCKLAND CANOE CENTRE** for documentation.

Phone 09 815-2073, e-mail: peter@kayak.co.nz.



More about the Manukau

By Rona Patterson

At 10.30 am on Sunday 25 July with a forecast of 10 knot winds, a party of two women and nine men launched into calm water at Cornwallis wharf. This was to be a day of occasional gentle rain, sun, wind, sand, swells, sails and seals.

From Cornwallis, we headed straight for the opposite side of the harbour looking for shelter from the wind. After an hour's battle into a strong head wind we landed at Colin's small and sheltered bay near South Head, and because of the gentle ten knot winds, it was deemed appropriate to tie the kayaks together to stop them from blowing away.

It was now time to put on more clothes to keep warm while we walked up the beach to find the place where we were to make a track half way up the cliff face to eat lunch. Here it was relatively sheltered and sunny, so it was time to take the extra clothing off again. It was during lunchtime discussion that Trevor made us aware that in certain circles kayaks were known as '**long, skinny things with sticks**'.

All good things come to an end and it was soon time to put the extra clothing on again and go on Colin's **walk**! The walk consisted of a perpendicular climb to the top of South Head and walk through fields to the edge of nowhere, and then jump off. I have to admit that the view was to die for, but did one really have to die for it? I had heard about this wonderful experience of leaping and bounding down the side of the cliff face, but at the top of the cliff it didn't look too much fun to me. Most of the party had done it before and I reasoned that they were still alive - perhaps I may also survive it.

The first part was a breeze, with a small landing at the bottom. Besides, I had slipped that far on my seat. From there, I could see no visible landings for the rest of the way and it took much encouragement from Colin to get me going.

Two thirds of the way down I froze! There was now a drop of about 14 feet where it was not possible to walk or slide - jumping was the only way. It was here I decided to go back the way I had come but looking up, I knew that was not possible on that vertical face of sand. Thanks to calm words of encouragement from Glyn and Colin, and Trevor guiding my feet, I slid over, and the worst part was over. After that, the rest was a breeze. Now I am ready to have another go!!!

All that lay ahead now was a leisurely stroll along the beach to meet up with those members of our party who didn't go on the '**walk**'. **Wrong!** Once around the head, there was a twenty minute scramble over rocks with an incoming tide before we were to meet up with our friends again. This was easy - even the highest of the rocks was no more than five feet from the ground.

Our kayaks were where we left them, albeit covered in black sand. Wind and lack of time were against us going over to Whatipu, so we headed for a sheltered bay along the coast for afternoon tea - not in the normal manner but with paddles aloft being used as sails, making use of wind and tide. (Quite a spectacle).

A little further along the coast I became concerned for Roger paddling so close to the rocks in choppy conditions. Once around the head and into calm water he asked if I had seen the seals. Having been hell bent on reaching calmer waters, I hadn't, so together with the rest of the party which had given the rocks a wide berth we did an about turn and battled the wind back to see what we had missed. What a treat! Three seals were sitting on the rocks watching the long, skinny things with sticks. They were a fussy trio. Trevor offered them his freshly caught fish, which they refused.

Back around the corner for afternoon tea and we were rewarded with another two seals playing in the shallow water.

The day's excitement was not yet over. It was now time to head for home and the thought of the current and strong winds had me a bit wary, but concern soon turned to exhilaration. Once into the middle of the channel it was time for surfing and this continued for about thirty minutes until we were safely around the head at Cornwallis again. It was almost a relief to get a rest from the concentration and hard paddling necessary to make the most of the conditions.

Waiting for us in the calm waters were three more seals. While sitting watching, one seal dived under my kayak on his way out to play with his friend. I will never forget the wonder of these amazing creatures.

What a magical day, in perfect company. As I left the beach with a few aches and a million memories, Roger's billy was just coming to the boil.

Sea Kayak Racing - the latest

With our very own Roger Lomas

On a recent club trip a new recruit to our ranks remarked on the number of Sea Kayakers in our group who were wielding wing bladed paddles. This observation is a reflection of a trend towards the flightless propulsion method which must have the retailers rubbing their hands in glee as the cash register rings up another \$300 sale (some have \$500 tags).

Another more common comment that I hear comes from the masters of the featherless foil as they lament the lack of technique demonstrated by these fledglings as they froth about their way. To paraphrase "All show and no go".

Many compliments have been made to Margaret in the albatross on the good turn of speed she is able to maintain in spite of her slim build, and my spies tell me that Amanda is out there building up speed in the slinky green slingshot. They have both made the effort to have a mentor for their paddle technique and it shows.

Our last race in the winter series was event no 18 and a good entry and a big crowd of supporters saw over 30 people throng the after race BBQ. Our main prize as usual did not go to the outright winner (Dave P). A good performance is also rewarded and Ryan Whittle in his albatross was a popular choice.

When Ryan goes out for a training paddle now he just pops across to Rangitoto like many others. Unlike many others that's not far enough so he pops around the back of Rangitoto and then for good measure right around Motutapu before heading home. Ryan's looking for some training companions, any takers?

It's the turn of the big doubles next month on the 9th of October. Make up a duo and come on down. The usual age and gender handicaps will be used and Div1, 2 & 3 classes will be applied to the double kayaks.

We have negotiated a discount on Ferg's hire fleet and the Barracudas and Packhorse express are waiting for you. If you want to race your own double we will give it a fair handicap and let it join the race as long as it's a sea kayak. If time permits we will run a fun race after the main event and mix up the combinations. As usual a BBQ will follow the race. This is going to be an exciting and fun morning so come on down even if it's only to watch and join the BBQ. Please note the early start time.

Your Club Officers

President Trevor Arthur 817 7357

Secretary.....Margaret Thwaites 292 7883

Canoe hire/storage..... Bruce Bugbee 570 1134(day)

Editor..... Julia Thorn 575 3099

White water..... George Gerard 818 5066

The Club's *official address*, if you need to write to the Club - but this does not affect the address for Newsletter material - is c/o Margaret Thwaites, Auckland Canoe Club, William Potter Lane, Karaka, RD 1 Papakura. If you want to tell us about a change of address or phone number please inform Colin Quilter, tel 630 2219, as he maintains the data base for the Newsletter.

CALENDAR SEPT - OCT

26 September, (Sunday). Clean up Browns Island.

Yes, I know, you thought you were going to **Crusoe Island** as advertised in the previous newsletter. But we have been informed that this day is clean-up day for the Hauraki Gulf, and Brown's Island is traditionally our responsibility. So there has been a change of plan. Bring your lunch, walking shoes, two plastic rubbish bags and join us for a pleasant day on Brown's Island. Last time we did this it took us a couple of hours

After the clean up we'll paddle back to Okahu Bay for a barbecue, courtesy of your Club. This'll be a late lunch, or afternoon tea, your choice.

Meet at Okahu Bay at 8.30am. Phone **Colin Quilter (630 2219)** on Saturday night if the weather looks uncertain.

2 Oct Canoe Showdown APCC race at Warkworth, 15 km starting at 10.30am at the boat ramp, Percy St. Contact Jim Sonerson tel 09 425 7371

9 Oct Double Sea Kayak Challenge Meet at Okahu Bay ramp behind Fergs to register at 7.30am for race start at 8am. Cost is \$5 per person, and kayak hire available at \$5 per seat too. Entry includes post race barbecue.

Contact Roger Lomas tel 625 8924.

10 Oct Lake Pupuke APCC race 10 km team race (3 person) starting at North Shore Canoe Club rooms at 10 am. Contact Alastair Small tel 309 3551

9 / 10 October (Sat / Sun). Overnight at Rangitoto. This is our fourth attempt, (the previous ones being thwarted by double-bookings and bad weather). Join us for a convivial Saturday night in the Scout hut near Rangitoto Wharf. Meet at Okahu Bay at 5pm on Saturday. Bring your own dinner and breakfast. You will need a gas cooker, sleeping bag and the usual overnight stuff. In the morning we'll walk to the summit and probably be home by lunchtime, but those who want to can plan a full day away on Sunday if they wish.
If you want to come be sure to contact **Colin Quilter (630 2219)** in case there's a change of plan, and also because numbers are limited.

17 Oct Expedition to search for the long lost salt ponds of Rangitoto

Our club will embark on an all out effort to find proof positive of the remains of this turn of the century venture to harvest salt on the rocky foreshore. A base camp will be established and search parties will embark to the hostile coast armed with maps and information. An attempt will also be made at locating the salt spring a short distance along the coast.

The expedition will also venture into the forest to view remote baches hidden amongst the trees. Sustenance will be provided at the base camp before the expedition returns, hopefully successful.

Permission to enlist on the expedition can be obtained by contacting Prof. Whittle 419 2672 or Dr. Lomas 625 8924. Expedition assembles at Takapuna boat ramp 0800 hrs for 0830 dept. Bring stout shoes and provisions for 5 hours.

23/24/25 Oct - Labour Weekend at Whangapoua Join us for a long weekend at Margaret's bach on the Coromandel, a truly lovely spot. Not many details as yet, but give Margaret a call if you're interested, tel 292 7883.

Advance notice: Tiri Tiri Island Our Club's annual trip to this fabulous destination will be the first weekend in December, a three day weekend that is. Hope you can make it.

ASKNET trips We usually list ASKNET trips in this Newsletter. Here is a summary of what they have planned: 26 Sept Paddle to & climb Rangitoto from Takapuna, leader is Kerry Howe tel 09 478 9952

REGULAR EVENTS

Evening paddles occur on **Tuesdays and Thursdays** at 5.30pm from Okahu Bay. You can simply turn up for these trips, and if you want to hire a kayak you should phone Bruce Bugbee 570 1134. **We** prefer novice kayakers to come on Tuesdays and tend to keep Thursdays for more experienced paddlers so the group can go further faster.

Please note that these are just **informal paddles** where you travel at your own risk and responsibility. We cannot guarantee that there will be someone there to hold your hand, although in practice there is almost always a **selection of well worn Club members** at these evening outings. We're not trying to put you off at all, but hey, things can happen out there on the water.....

Destination is by consensus and the group will usually appoint a trip leader and tail ender.

Kayak hire arrangements for the *weekend* remain as for weekday paddles, and Trevor Arthur can also **arrange assistance** with this. Phone 817 7357. Please remember to pay your fees.

Our Fleet

At present the following boats are available for hire:

- 1 Storm
- 1 Squall
- 2 Puffins
- 2 Breezes
- 1 Sea Bear double
- 1 Corsica
- 1 Pirouette

These last 2 are whitewater boats.

The rates for hireage are: for evening Club paddles on Tuesdays and Thursdays the charge is \$3 per seat. For full day hire, or part thereof, the charge is \$15 per seat.

The majority of members are excellent at paying for hireage. Sadly a few need chasing up. Come on guys - the Committee are here to enjoy paddling not to play debt collectors. It's no fun for anyone when you don't pay up. Don't short change your Club.

DIPS N DUNKS

Your Editor

My name is Julia Thorn and I can be reached at 447A Riddell Road, Glendowie, tel 575 3099. Give me a call or drop me a line when you have something to tell or ask. How about a trip report or suggestions for improving the Newsletter?

Thank you for the recent good response to my pleas for Newsletter material. It has been great to receive so much mail. If you don't see your piece in print straight away it is because I am saving it up for later. Keep the stuff coming!

Subscriptions

Club subscriptions are due for the year to March 2000.

Yummy food

For all of you who've been looking for some good affordable freeze dried food to take with you on kayaking or tramping trips, there's a new product on the market, locally produced from near Invercargill. Head down to Canvas City at 171 Hobson St, where Brendan will point you in the right direction.

Rona's Favourite Paddle

I have been asked to write something about 'my favourite paddle'. That's an impossible task because every paddle is exciting though some are better than others. The most exhilarating are definitely being driven by a tail wind with a good wave behind. For me, this takes considerable concentration and effort, and if the wind and waves continue for any length of time, it turns into quite a work-out.

Both ends of the day can be beautiful with sun rises and sun sets. I have only had one truly horrible experience, when the kayak was upturned in surf and I couldn't get myself free. When gulping down salt water, I really thought I had breathed my last, and trust I will never get myself into such a predicament again.

There has to be some indefinable pleasure which makes me get into my kayak on a regular basis, or perhaps I have a masochistic streak, because in the last 19 months since my first timid outing on the harbour, I have found many negatives such as lack of space in the garage, wet gear hanging all over the place, struggling to get the kayak on and off the roof of the car, smelly boots, a kayak wanting to take off in the wind while it is still on the hard and me not yet ready to get in it, landing on the concrete at Okahu Bay when a huge boat has just gone up the harbour, trying to fit everything a girl needs for a weekend into the hatch, and the biggest negative of all is that I have not yet learned to ignore housework and gardening.

On top of that there has to be some driving force to make me want to be out on evenings like last Tuesday evening, with a weather forecast of 20-35 knot winds, heavy rain, rough seas and a temperature of eight degrees. Again, I plan to be out at 8am tomorrow morning which promises to be as cold as it was this morning at only six degrees.