



ROLLING BOGGING

Why learn to roll the kayak? ...because we can!



Dean Bertoldi hand rolling.

There are only two boats that can do an eskimo roll. The kayak and the Coast Guard 49 ft. cruiser. Yes, crew and all, the 49 footer is capable of doing a complete "360". Part of that crew is actually on the deck, strapping themselves in and hanging on for life. (*By the way, it's mandatory for all Coast Guard Captains to do this during their training exercises held on the coast of Washington.*) Yeah, Yeah, I know, a canoe can also do a roll - but it has to be loaded with two giant inflatable devices so it can pretend it's a kayak.

There's some really neat features that kayaks have that lend themselves to their sea-worthiness. The closed deck and sprayskirt keep water off us, even if it's just an occasional wave or the drip from our paddles. It also keeps our bottom halves nice and warm and protected from the wind. It also feels cozy and secure to be encased in this protected enclosure.

The sleek design of our crafts allows us to glide through the water with much less effort than our canoe counterparts but also makes us a bit more vulnerable to capsize. The idea of rolling this craft back up makes it totally unique and separates it from all it's look-alike counterparts. Rolling is truly an enormous advantage and part of the intended nature of our craft.

How hard is it? If you learn the extended paddle roll (holding the paddle by its blade) it's really easy. Most people learn

to do their first roll in about an hour. A few people get a little confused up-side-down and some people just don't like to be under water, but most people are astonished at how simple and effortless their first roll is. If you're the kind of person who likes to swim and enjoys being in the water, you'll glide through the procedure.

Once you learn to roll, it becomes something that you practice regularly like a tennis backhand or any other sports discipline. After a while it becomes second nature and you're heart is no longer pounding as you enter the water and that total confusion you experienced becomes a thing of the past.

Trick Rolls?

Once you learn the extended paddle roll you can move on to the shortened grip and the paddling grip rolls as well as some of the trick rolls you see some of the paddlers performing. Although it's not

necessary, these are fun to do, and the pay-off is that you get used to being in weird positions underwater and recovering from them - sometimes. Many times at the lake we try new rolls which land us with our head in the mud and our paddle caught in the weeds only having to bail it out with our good old trusty normal roll. (*sounds like fun, doesn't it?*)

Recovery is as important as the roll. If and when you should ever go in, you can be guaranteed that it will be in some strange position and you'll have to rely on some determination and fortitude to get yourself and your paddle in position to roll up. Knowing a basic roll is no guarantee that you'll never wet exit. I had to wet exit a few weeks ago while trying another ridiculous and useless trick roll. I accidentally threw the paddle away, had no spare to grab, no spotter and couldn't hand roll it. It wasn't pretty. I hung in there a little too long and by the time I came to the surface I was really gasping for breath. It can get very confusing under there, especially if you're running out of air and there's turbulence bouncing you around. There are safe ways to practice and that's not one of them. You just have to laugh at these things and move on.

We all have to start somewhere and once you do your first one, you'll find that other techniques will suddenly start falling in place as well.

Is it necessary to know how to roll in sea kayaking? Absolutely not. It sure is a great security device and unless you have some massive phobia to the water, I would encourage you to give it a try.

The boat.

Unfortunately, we all start out with wider boats, simply because we need them. We're not born with paddling skills



Pete Smith

and we definitely like the security of greater stability in the beginning. Wider boats are just harder to roll. However, everyone does it, and so can you.



Tom Dittrich

The most important thing is that you have some kind of thigh braces and support so you can twist the boat which is really necessary for good paddling technique as well.

Most sea kayak manufacturers do a half-hearted attempt at thigh braces. I guess they assume you don't need them very much for sea kayaking while the same manufacturers will do a terrific job on their whitewater boats. Ideally, you want your thighs to be held so you can't touch your knees together unless you drop your legs to do so. This way, when you're over on your side or upside down, your thighs will not slide out from their grip when you try to twist the boat up. Almost all the people who roll regularly pad their boats along these lines. Look in their boats to see what they do. I think a lot of manufacturers are just afraid to commit to something that will not fit everyone and possibly lose a few sales. The one thing you can do when learning, is to back your foot pegs one notch so it forces your thighs tighter against whatever braces you do have.

The payoff at Essex

Who would have ever thought that a capsize would occur on the CT River paddle on a beautiful calm day. After re-crossing the river at Essex on the return trip, we encountered a small rip which the majority of the 30 paddlers passed through effortlessly. There were about two ft. standing waves in one area about 100 yards square. While three of us were trailing behind having conversations, several large cruisers suddenly passed behind us throwing 4 foot wakes into the rip which we were in. After riding a few huge swells, Tom Dittrich was suddenly lifted almost into an ender and into a capsize. With one day of rolling experience under his belt, the paddle slowly came to the surface and I could see him trying to

adjust it's position. Then in about two seconds he executed an extended paddle roll and was up. Ed Milnes and myself were shouting encouragement while he

setting up and cheers after he made it. We were about 20 ft. away and also bracing to keep ourselves upright.

If he had to wet exit it would have been a tough rescue and maybe

impossible for him to do a paddle float re-entry if he was alone. However, once the boat wakes finally subsided there was really no problem. Nobody was happier than Tom.

Later when his heart stopped pounding, he told me that he took off the dry suit bottom (two piece dry suit) at lunch because he was hot and the conditions were so calm.

- Jay Babina

Rolling like a whirling dervish.

For the last 3 years or so I have been sitting in my boat watching other people execute all these beautiful rolls, all the while believing them to be



Ed Milnes

hard to learn and difficult to do. Wrong!

The most difficult part was overcoming my apprehension. You know: the fear of failing, the fear of getting trapped in the boat, an ugly wet exit struggling to the surface gasping for breath kind of fear. However, learning to roll is not an effortless, get-it-first try thing. First, I had a very good teacher, (thank you Jay).

Second, I learned with a Greenland paddle which I'm sure simplified matters and lastly my boat rolls easily (Romany 18). I also have been persistent; rolling is fun, so I did it at every oppor-

tunity I had. Another byproduct has been; when I do blow a roll and wet exit, I get to practice other rescue techniques. Which means the people with me get to practice their end of the rescue - beneficial for everyone! When I started, I practiced in shallow water and then moved to a spotter (bow rescue) and now I practice in a group but by myself.

It has also opened up new vistas. Contrary to popular belief, fish are not always scared off by splashing - they sometimes get curious and come over for a look. "Look Junior, another stupid kayaker hanging upside down in the water". Seriously, if the water is clear enough you can see all sorts of interesting things. For instance, have you ever seen raindrops hitting the water, from underneath? Its beautiful!

Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying rolling is for everyone. You could go your whole paddling life and never learn how to roll. I just think it adds a new dimension to paddling. Just because I can roll in controlled conditions doesn't mean I have a "combat roll". I have yet to be knocked over unexpectedly, so I don't know how I will react in that instance. I hope that I will at least have a shot at rolling up thus avoiding a wet exit and subsequently some sort of assisted or self rescue. For example: Tom's successful roll on the CT River illustrates the point. A little effort put in yielded a great result. Now, Tom may be the exception, but still, it got him upright and at least half-dry almost

immediately. That was a potentially serious situation averted in seconds rather than a cold swim and rescue in the river.

All things considered, I don't believe learning to roll is harder than learning to do any other rescues effectively. In fact, a reentry and roll is faster, and gets you out of the water quicker than other assisted or self-rescues, (my opinion).

For me, learning to roll has been an uplifting experience. It has given me a sense of accomplishment; greater confidence in my paddling ability, and a better chance at getting myself out of trouble. It

is also great exercise. If you ever get the opportunity or have ever considered learning to roll, I urge you do it.

With a good teacher, patience, persistence and practice, learning to roll is not as hard as it looks and the benefits far outweigh the efforts. So far I have learned the extended paddle roll, storm roll, one-handed roll, half paddle roll, re-entry and roll, the sculling brace and the balance brace. This has all been accomplished since the beginning of August of this year, under the patient tutelage of Jay Babina with assistance from, Dean Bertoldi as well as the welcome critiques from Dick Gamble and Phil Babina.

- Ed Milnes

CONNYPAC ACTIVITY COMMITTEE FORMED

In the spring of 1994 the founders of the Connecticut Sea Kayak Club got together and imagined how they might provide opportunities for paddlers from around the state to connect with one another to enjoy sea kayaking. One of these wise souls suggested the ingenious ConnYak name for the group; then they elected Stan Kegeles, president (for life) and the club was off and running. The ensuing years have been great fun by any measure, and good for the sport by stressing educational programs and on-the-water training by professionals and experienced fellow club members. Now we have over 230 members and we are continuing to grow. The club's bank balance is \$6,939.79 at this time, with no outstanding debt, so we are solvent to say the least.

As 1998 comes to a close, it is time for us to contemplate an even more successful 1999 for ConnYak! We have been fortunate in the past to have a good supply of distinguished speakers and instructors many which were arranged by Terry Harlow, who now has a business interest that is not likely to allow him to continue. So, at the October meeting, the continued vitality of the club was discussed. Stan proposed that a committee be formed to plan and schedule club events for the coming year. The ideas for club activities will be generated by the committee, by club members, and by any other external source. For starters, it is intended that the number of scheduled paddling trips will be increased for 1999, and it is hoped that Mike Falconeri will be able to set up four pool sessions at the Sheehan High School (Wallingford)

again this winter. The members of the ConnYak Activity Committee, are: Phil Warner, ConnYak Vice President and Chairman of the Activity Committee, Jim Mathews, Jay Thomas, Ed Milnes, and Dave Hiscocks. It is important that you give this important matter some thought and then contact any one of the committee members with your suggestions.

- Dick Gamble

IT'S A VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION

This year was a pivotal year for a great many members in our club who learned some valuable lessons on the water. The events have humbled us and strengthened us both as a club and as individuals.

For the past 6 years as our club has increased exponentially in size from 10 founding members to over 230 current paid members, it never ceases to amaze me that the same 10 to 30 people show up for meetings and paddling events. If you are one of the absentee paid members of whom I speak, this is addressed to you. Where are you, and what are you currently getting from this club in the way of benefits? What other things should we be doing that we don't do now? I always hear from most of you whenever something goes wrong, but nada when things are status quo.

If you're new to the sport, get lessons, come to our pool sessions, and go on our group paddles. It's the only way to improve your paddling skills, meet other paddlers and have a lot of fun. If you have some new ideas, by all means bring them up at a meeting or call me.

For most of you, the end of warm weather is the end of your paddling season. For those of you who continue to paddle through the winter, get those drysuit seals 303'd & have at it. See you on the water!!

Stan Kegeles

CONNYPAC MEETING

WED. NOV. 18, 7:30 PM
WALLINGFORD PARK & REC.

WALLINGFORD PARK & REC

Exit 15 (Rt 68) off I-91 in Wallingford. West on Rt. 68. (toward Wallingford)

Approx. 3/4 mile take a right at the Fire Station (Barnes Road). Take your first Rt. off Barnes on to Fairfield Blvd.

Wallingford Park & Rec. is the 2nd building on the left.

PADDLING



EAST RIVER - GUILFORD

SATURDAY, NOV 21 - GUILFORD

Inland waterway paddling - pack lunch.

In the water by 10. We want to depart at 10 to keep the tide in our favor!

NOTE: NEW LAUNCH SITE ...DIRECTIONS

Patty Klindienst - a Guilford resident, got us permission to launch at Guilford.

Exit 58 off Rt. 95. Head (south) toward water on Rt. 77. Take a right and left around the Town Green and continue on Rt 77 to the end of the Green. Continue Straight ahead on Whitfield street to the end where there's a launch ramp.

Cold water paddling-

This is cold water and possibly cold air if we're un-lucky. Dress for the water. Drysuits, Wetsuit Farmer Johns, Paddling Jackets, Hats, Hoods and back up clothing for everything. Don't forget your hands. Paddling gloves, mitts or pogies. Hot soup is also a good idea if you're going to pursue cold weather paddling. Although the water in the estuary is dead calm, it doesn't mean you can't accidentally go in!

Note: All paddlers on ConnYak trips must wear the appropriate CG approved Personal Flotation Device and wear a spray skirt. The boat and equipment must meet CG requirements, including an appropriate signaling device. All paddlers are responsible for their own safety, including dressing for immersion. Beginners must have taken a basic course and be proficient in performing a wet exit. (always carry extra dry clothes)

Trip Cancellations - In doubt due to weather? call 203-481-1881 - a message will be on answer machine.

LOST AND FOUND

Found: Paddle boots - Low cut "Rafters" at the launch ramp after the ConnYak party at W. Hill Pond. Call Phil Warner at 413-566-8524

CLASSIFIED

Feathercraft K1 Expedition Single (foldable kayak) 15' 11" x 25", costs \$ 3850.00 sacrifice \$3500.00. Never in the water. 203-772-3174.

2 Woman's Kokatat drysuits, med & small - Bib style, boots incl. New \$275. 860-693-9625

Women's feet heaters, size 5 - \$15. Women's wet suit, sm. farmer John & Jacket \$100. 203-481-1912

Necky Sea Kayak Looksha IV. 16' like new, used one season. White and Turquoise. \$1800.00 860-228-0105

Wood Strip built, Laughing Loon "Panache" 18' x 21" totally glassed. \$2300. 203-481-3221

Wanted, used double Kayak Call 203-426-2414

Wilderness Systems 3yr old Sealution—Kevlar w/ rudder, blue/ white. Includes Werner 2-piece Camano paddle, Spray Skirt, Bilge pump, Paddle float, Yakima saddles. \$1500. 860-485-9173

Thule rack system, complete with 2-58" bars, 4 saddles without straps, 4 gutter feet with locks. \$150. Call 860-613-0622

Necky Arluk 1.8 18' x 22", white, glass, includes spray skirt \$1100. 860-747-1223

Betsie Bay Manitou - fiberglass 22" x 18', excellent cond. \$1400. 203-269-0569

Kokatat Dry suit- woman's medium, never used (tags still on it) \$150. Kokatat Dry Suit, men's sm. - New neck seal. \$80. 860-537-5385

Wilderness System Sealution. Glass - all Gray w/ red deck lines, rudderless, VCP hatches, Suunto Compass, Spray skirt, very good condition. \$1100 (860) 521-9054

12 ft Pirogue (flat bottom canoe) Stitch and glue construction in marine grade plywood. Epoxy/glass. Good for quiet lakes/ swamps etc. Used twice. \$250 (860) 521-9054

Reiver - Derek Hutchinson design, 17' 1 1/2" x 22" - fiberglass, Day hatch, spray skirt. ex. cond. \$1600.00 (203) 457-0149.

Nigel Dennis Greenlander kayak, white over white with skeg \$1350 .860 659-1223

P&H Capella, poly, blue, \$1000 860 659-1223

Orca, Royalex 16' with rudder, demo red over white, \$1400 860 659-1223

Nigel Foster VYNECK, red over white, \$700. Kayak Trailer for 6+ kayaks and gear box, \$860 659-1223

\$650 Primex Kayak cart. Paid \$119, asking \$80. Used twice. 203 426-8286

Aquaterra Chinook, 16' x 24" plastic, \$495. 203 481-1881

Toksook demo paddle, 2 piece, \$150. Ainsworth 1 piece paddle, \$50 860 659-1223

Wanted: Lightweight folding kayak in good condition: \$500 or less, please call 860-872-0812. Also looking for used Keowee or Otter.

Nordkapp HM Loaded; day hatch, foot pump, compass, knee tube, large cockpit, yellow over white. \$1600.00 Day (860)441-8416 Evening (860)535-8087

Please contact the Newsletter when items are sold.

KAYAK SKILLS & ROLLING

Urban Eskimo Kayaking - Mike Falconeri

Skills Workshops and Eskimo Rolling

On-going pool lessons and trips by appointment. Call Mike at 203-284-9212

TO JOIN CONNYAK...

ConnYak is a non profit club that is open to all paddlers interested in sea kayaking from any location. ConnYak annual membership fee is \$15. Members can join the ACA with a club discount for \$15 which entitles you to full insurance coverage on trips as well as a full subscription to PADDLER Magazine. (a \$15 subscription) Send inquiries to: Stan Kegeles P.O. Box 2006, Branford, CT 06405 e-mail Connyak@mindspring.com

Website: mindspring.com/~connyak

Send newsletter articles or classifieds to: Jay Babina e-mail Jbabina@snet.net 7 Jeffrey Lane, N. Branford, CT 06471 203-481-3221 Fax 203-481-1136



ConnYak
CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

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