



SOUTHERN MAINE SEA KAYAKING NETWORK

October 2005

Mission Statement

The Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network is an association of paddlers interested in connecting with others who enjoy the sport of sea kayaking. Our purpose is to promote safe and responsible practices, and, at the same time, to have fun.

Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network
P.O. Box 4794
Portland, ME 04112
www.smskn.org

Officers

Michael Charek	President
Chick Carroll	Treasurer
Jayne Engel	Secretary
Sandra Hodge	Board Member at Large
Sarah Knock	Board Member at Large
Reed Markley	Board Member at Large
Anne Weigel	Board Member at Large

Newsletter Editor

David Lay

Membership Committee

Reed Markley	Chairman, Database Mgr.
Susan Payne	
David Lay	

Librarian

Lee Bumsted

President's Notes

Mike Charek

As the season winds down, a couple more trips are still available on the calendar, including a Pumpkin Hunt at Fort Gorges in Casco Bay on October 22.

The membership meeting on October 20 will be a membership forum where we will have a moderated discussion of issues of interest to club members: what we're doing right, and what might need improvement. Please refer to the notice on page 5 of this newsletter for details.

The meeting on November 17 will feature a slide presentation by Deborah Walters on paddling around the world, including the far northern parts of Canada.

The November meeting is when we also elect the SMSKN Board of Directors for 2006. The proposed slate at present looks like this:

President	????
Secretary	Jayne Leiner
Treasure	Chick Carroll
Member at Large	Sandra Hodge
Member at Large	Reed Markley
Member at Large	Sarah Knock
Member at Large	????

We need to replace those question marks with someone's name. If you want to pitch in and get involved with running the organization, this is the way to do it.

As always, if you have ideas or suggestions for the Board, let me know at president@smskn.org or call me at 761-0556. See you on the water!

See page 5 for a special meeting notice.



Late Notice Website Use

David Lay

I have noticed that most members who sign up to participate in posted events do not call until the Thursday or Friday prior to the event. This pattern is good to know of, because it is an opportunity for you. If you decide with short notice that you would like to gather some Network friends to go out for a paddle, it is likely that you will get participation even if you list your event late. It works! On my most recent event, I listed it on Wednesday, and had 4 people call or email me before we were on the water.

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail

Kay Henry

A unique paddling project is underway in the Northern Forest region of New York, Vermont, Québec, New Hampshire, and Maine. Communities across this four-state region are working to establish the Northern Forest Canoe Trail (NFCT), a 740-mile water trail from Old Forge, New York to Fort Kent, Maine. The NFCT links the watersheds of northern New England and the Adirondacks by following the historic settlement patterns through the rivers of the region — from Native Americans to European settlers, through the development of mill towns and the timber industry.

When the Northern Forest Canoe Trail is complete, it will be a recreation trail complete with portage trails, access points, and overnight sites. The trail will be managed and maintained by local community stewardship organizations and volunteers, in cooperation with the nonprofit Northern Forest Canoe Trail organization. "We're creating a long-distance water trail stewarded by citizens and paddling enthusiasts," explains Kate Guinness Williams, NFCT Executive Director, "and at the same time, we're telling the rich cultural history of the Northeast."

With a goal of completing the trail by 2006, the NFCT, its partner organizations, and volunteers have much to achieve. Partner organizations in Maine include Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust, Flagstaff Area Business Association, Natural Resource Education Center in Greenville and Town of Fort Kent and in New Hampshire Tri County Community Action Program. Community-based groups are working throughout the region locating appropriate carries and campsites, working with landowners for permissions, and creating color, waterproof maps for each of the 13 sections of the trail. The NFCT also plans to publish a history booklet and a guidebook of the trail.

The idea for the Northern Forest Canoe Trail began in 1976 through Native Trails, Inc., which researched and validated the concept of the trail, firmly establishing its vision. In 2000, Rob Center and Kay Henry, the former marketing and management principals of Mad River Canoe, brought the NFCT into its own as a nonprofit organization. Today, the NFCT is a member-based organization with a board of directors, state coordinators in each of the four states, and staff.

Although it offers some of the best paddling in the Northeast, what makes this paddling trail unique is its celebration of the history and heritage of the Northern Forest, passing through cities such as Plattsburgh, New York, rural farmland in Vermont, old mill towns of New Hampshire, and the working forests of Maine. The trail overlays many existing trails and recreation areas, traversing popular regions such as the Fulton Chain and Raquette and Saranac Rivers, the Lake Champlain Paddlers' Trail, the Rangeley Lakes area, and the Allagash Wilderness Waterway.

Those wishing to paddle the entire length had better be ready for a challenge -- paddling, poling, and portaging, big lakes, flat water, white water, and rapids from class I to class V. There is, however, a piece of the Northern Forest Canoe Trail for most everyone: beginners, experts, canoeists, and kayakers. While the NFCT is a recreational trail, it is also a vehicle for heritage and eco-tourism, education, and revitalization of Northern Forest communities. NFCT supporters are eager to see local stewards adopting the trail, telling the story of the old canoe routes, and pointing the way for paddlers to use and enjoy this unique heritage trail for generations to come.

To become a member and to learn more about the Northern Forest Canoe Trail visit www.northernforestcanoetrail.org, call (802) 496-2285, or write to P.O. Box 565 Waitsfield, Vermont 05673.

What rivers does the NFCT follow from New York to Maine?

New York (147 miles): From Old Forge, New York the NFCT runs along the Fulton Chain of Lakes, down the Saranac River to Lake Champlain.

Vermont (174 miles): After crossing Lake Champlain, the NFCT takes the Missisquoi River to connect with Lake Memphremagog. It then follows the Clyde River, and goes along the Nulhegan River to the Connecticut River.

New Hampshire (72 miles): Up the Upper Ammonoosuc and Androscoggin Rivers to Rangeley, Maine.

Maine (347 miles): Down the South Branch of the Dead River to Flagstaff Lake, north through small streams and ponds to the Moose River and on to Moosehead Lake, across Northeast Carry to the West Branch of the Penobscot, to Chesuncook Lake and into the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, to the St. John River ending at Fort Kent.

Learning to Roll

David Lay

I have been rolling now for a few years. Being able to do so has returned to me a confidence on the water that I had lost after going over a couple of times in wind and waves some years prior. The confidence I lost was derived from inexperience. The confidence that I have gained is much more valuable.

Learning to roll was difficult for me. I found myself seriously uncomfortable being upside down in my boat with a short time interval for action. I had to get help, and I had to recall lessons from my years of experience in teaching a martial art (Aikido). Help came from friends in the pool sessions and at Range Pond. I found the methods used by Greenland style paddlers the most useful, and so chose finally to practice with a Greenland paddle.

For me, Aikido training strives for a similar goal as does kayak roll practice. Through repetitive practice of a sequence of motions, I strive to be able to perform a sequential skill-set with no analysis. If you have ever tried to learn to dance, it is much the same. If you are thinking about your next step, it is likely you will not feel that you are dancing very well. The motion and sequence of steps must be practiced to the point of being nearly automatic and beyond analysis. In Aikido, if you are thinking of what you should do as an attack comes, you will likely not do anything before it is too late. If you must wonder about the position of your knees in your boat, and your paddle in the water, you will likely run out of air before you carry through the necessary sequence correctly. With practice again and again, your mind becomes patterned, and eventually, if you find that you are upside down, you will also find that you start your roll sequence without thought, and thenyou are up. It works!

As with learning a dance, one cannot immediately know all of the steps. The steps must be practiced in short segments until familiar, and then elaborated upon. For a roll, the same is true. I found in practice that I could break the roll into the following segment exercises:

1. Knee, hip and torso position practice.
2. The hip snap/rolling up.
3. The paddle sweep.
4. Putting it together.

Practitioners who roll with a Greenland paddle often start with lying in the water while still anchored within their boat. It's a bit of a contortion to twist your body, but with a little help by a spotter, you can learn to lie on your back adjacent to your boat with your face out of the water.

I prefer the spotter to be on the side of the boat away from the paddler lying on the water. That way, there is little interference, and the spotter will find that pulling the boat up towards himself is less difficult than lifting from the same side. Pulling the boat up towards yourself is

inherently more stable. With a small loss of balance, lifting the paddler from the same side can quickly begin to feel like you are pushing the boat away rather than lifting.

1. The spotter holds the boat on edge while the paddler tries a series of exercises starting with simply lifting the down-side knee to turn the boat right side up while floating face up. (Hip and knee position.)
2. Add a paddle float to your paddle for lift, and you can use it to brace and hold the floating position adjacent to your boat. You can also push up to an upright position. Your spotter is still nearby, so you can practice in confidence. There is a sequence of body motion to be followed as you come up. The boat must be returned to an upright position first by turning the hips to upright the boat. This is done first, and then like a wet branch being dragged from the water, your body follows with hips, torso, shoulders, and lastly, head. If you lift your head first, your visit above the surface will be brief. Practice with your spotter first from the float position, and then from underwater a little, and then more. (Hip snap/roll up.)
3. Next, lose the paddle float, and still with your spotter, try sculling the paddle to hold the boat while you float face up. While sculling, exaggerate the motion, and at the stern end on one sweep lay back towards your boat back deck. You should be able to come up!
4. The sweep is used to sequence the events that are needed, and gives you a place to start when you are upside down. Start by exaggerating your sculling as noted above, working towards turning it into a single long sweep from bow to just past perpendicular to the boat. At the end of the sweep as you lay back on your rear deck, come up.

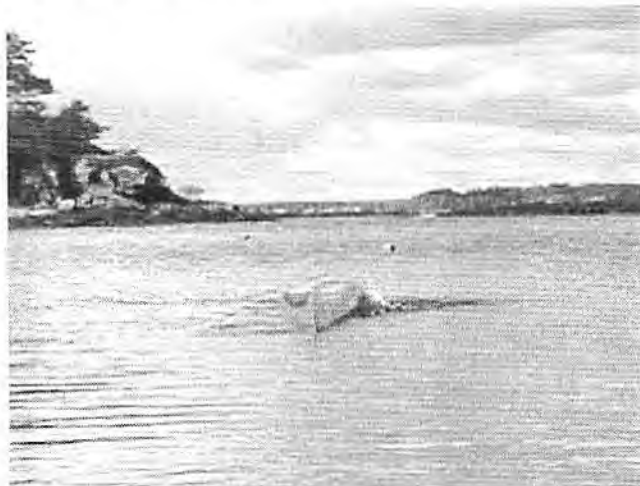
A good underwater start position is with the paddle parallel to the boat on the water surface ready to sweep. As you start the sweep, you "snap" your hips to roll the boat upright, and as your sweep continues, you lay onto the back deck, and with the last of your sweep, your head comes out and you are up.



This is your paddle position for starting when underwater.



By going over cued up for the roll to start, you skip the underwater set-up. You will need to practice that, however, for the day that the real-world event comes.



K-plunk.



Lay back on that rear deck. The paddle should be on the surface of the water rather than plunging as deep as it is here. Move your close hand to your chest to fix this error.



Inhale-exhale, ...thank you, that's better.

I have not had to use my roll yet in an emergency, but I do practice about 50 rolls each year to keep it available. In order for your roll to be there when you need it (as you are using your last inhalation up), you must practice. By training your intuition and body memory, it can be your solution a capsize. No thinking – just doing!

Here are some resources. To make your own paddle:
<http://www.qajaqusa.org/OK/makegreen2.pdf>

Here are two short videos you can download:
http://www.seakayaksc.com/video/tom_roll1a.html
http://www.seakayaksc.com/video/steve_roll.html



Vinalhaven Sunrise