

Inside: Lochy, Motu, Karangarua, Blue Grey, Maruia, Upper Toaroha, Pukaki, Tekapo, Buller...

New Zealand Canoeing



Editorial

Amazing how fast three months go by! Welcome to another edition of NZ Canoeing. It's been another awesome summer for paddling. There's been good times and bad, setbacks and bold new explorations, new boats, new people, new moves. The last newsletter received plenty of positive feedback, and the flow of potential newsletter material has been impressive - thank you all for your support. Please keep it coming!

The newsletter has undergone a few changes- consider it a work in progress. I'm still learning at this, and things are bound to change further next time around.

Over the next few months, the NZRCA will be developing further policy regarding wilderness areas, conservation, access and membership. The next newsletter will be coming out shortly before the NZRCA AGM in July, so please be ready with those Canoeist of the Year nominations, and policy issues for discussion at the AGM.

In the meantime, make the most of the summer weather and get out on those rivers before it gets too chilly!

— Jonathan



Murchison local Nick Kouka competes in the Richard Brewster Memorial Rodeo at BullerFest '98. Full story, p4.

Photo: Jonathan Hunt.

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About NZ Canoeing

New Zealand Canoeing is the official newsletter of the New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association. NZ Canoeing is published quarterly and distributed free to over 1,000 members of the NZRCA throughout New Zealand/Aotearoa.

The views expressed in Canoeing New Zealand are those of the individual authors. They do not necessarily represent those of the Executive of the New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association Inc.

NZ Canoeing welcomes advertising from organisations associated with recreational canoeing. Please contact us for our advertising rates, and find out how to show your products and services to kayakers around NZ.

Thanks to Keith Riley, Kaye Martin, Steve Garside, Erik Bradshaw, Tony Ward-Holmes, Maree Baker, Janette Kear, Paul Macey, Graham Charles, for their contributions to this issue of NZ Canoeing. May the rivers flow for you!

Contributions of articles, trip reports, classified advertisements, and letters for publication are gratefully received.

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The deadline for material for the Winter newsletter is 1 June 1998.

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as at 4 March 1997

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Wanted...

The NZRCA needs a new Safety Officer. This volunteer role involves setting safety policy and distributing safety information. If you're keen to be involved, please contact the NZRCA!

New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association Inc.

Our purpose is to preserve New Zealand's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely.

Conservation

preserve NZ's rivers and lakes

- Maintain national river database
- Monitor threats to resources
- Provide information on river conservation
- Technical advice to local groups
- Work with government agencies, iwi and other river users
- Initiate or support legal action

Access

ensure public access

- Ensure public access to whitewater rivers
- Preserve rights of public passage on waterways
- Negotiate recreational releases with dam operators
- Collect data on river usage
- Support local access initiative

Safety

promote safe, enjoyable canoeing

- Facilitate the provision of independent advice
- Maintain incident database
- Maintain uniform national grading system
- Publish and promote safety code
- Maintain kayak river safety and competency syllabi and approve course providers

Education

foster the kayaking community

- Publish information on rivers, safety, techniques and equipment through a regular newsletter and web site
- Provide information on and liaison with clubs and education providers
- Preserve NZ's canoeing heritage
- Award canoeist of the year
- Fundraising
- Kayak tests
- River racing certificate



News

Tragedy on Roaring Meg

Southland paddler Matt Daly died in a kayaking accident on the Roaring Meg section of the Kawarau River on February 8th. The Kawarau was flowing at over 300 cumecs, which is high for the section. It appears Matt paddled up from the put-in, eddy hopping to a micro-eddy on river right in the gorge below Natural Bridge. Somehow he ended up exiting his boat in the eddy downstream that collects driftwood. It is an innocent-looking eddy, but powerful currents kept Matthew underwater for some time, possibly as long as five minutes. His friends spotted him drifting in the river, and administered CPR, first on two kayaks rafted together, and later on the river bank, unfortunately without success.

Friend Ellen-Mary Pullar wrote "Matt had a large part to play in the Southland kayak club, he held the position of president, treasurer, secretary, editor of the newsletter and member of the committee, and at times he had all of these positions rolled into one! He had a significant role in organising club and national slalom events at Mavora, Kawarau and at Waipori as well as organising and coordinating canoe polo in Invercargill."

"What can we take from Matt's death? He died doing something he loved with people he cared about. Matt's death hits us all especially deeply as we know it could have been any one of us. We could choose after this, to be scared of the water. I believe we must look at this with open and clear eyes in a positive light. We can learn and grow from this experience. No matter how comfortable and competent or confident we are, we must have a healthy respect for the river, we must keep thinking of others, and looking out for them."

Continued on page 4

[Ed: On behalf of the NZRCA, I would like to extend my sympathy to Matt's family and friends, some of whom I met at BullerFest. Thanks to Craig Adams, Ian Logie and Ellen-Mary Pullar for sharing their memories of Matt.]

NZRCA submission on road reform

On behalf of the NZRCA, Adrienne Jones submitted comments on the Roothing Advisory Group's Final Report to Government entitled "Road Reform - The way forward". The NZRCA is concerned that access to rivers is maintained, and that any future model for road funding does not involve (a) running down or closure of little-used terminal roads in rural areas due to their use profile not fitting a given economic model, and (b) loss of partly-formed or unformed road reserves which presently provide four-wheel drive or foot access to recreational canoeing areas.

Access threats in Kahurangi National Park

The Kahurangi National Park Draft Management Plan released by the Department of Conservation contains several proposals that could adversely affect opportunities for recreational canoeing within the park boundaries. Proposals include limitations on helicopter concessions and landing sites, the boundaries of the Tasman Wilderness area and removal of huts along the Karamea river.

See the NZRCA submission on the Draft Management Plan on page 11.

BullerFest '98 a big hit

Hundreds of kayakers and raft guides from around the country converged on Murchison for the annual Buller Festival. The focus of the weekend was the slalom race and Richard Brewster Memorial Rodeo competition, coordinated by the Canterbury Whitewater Water Racing Group (CWWRG). Both events were held on O'Sullivan's rapid on the Buller. The rodeo was won by Dave Mills and Simone French, and handsome carved trophies were awarded to Dave and Simone by Richard Brewster's parents.

The placings for the Sunday slalom were: Womens: 1. Simone French, 2. Kelly Hansen, 3. Melanie Grant. Mens Div 1: 1. Peter Micheler, 2. Mike Walker, 3. Graham Charles. Mens Div 2: 1= Richard Coadwell & Craig Thomas, 3. Niall Mueller.

As well as competing on the water, most paddlers got to enjoy the hospitality of the Commercial Hotel and the whitewater on local sections like Granity and Earthquake.

Rafts raced each other down the Earthquake section on the Buller, getting to Iron Bridge in just over 40 minutes. The next day teams paddled a slalom course on O'Sullivan's. The rafting event was won by the Kaituna Cascades "B" team.

The festival was sponsored by Canoe and Outdoor World, Quality Kayaks, Palm, Prijon and Thule. Key helpers included Dr. Scott, Keith Murray, Dave Mills, Kate Arnold, Ian Huntsman, Katherine Karman, Murray Watson, Julia Simmons, Paul Simmons and Paul Carnaffan.

New Stealth from Quality Kayaks

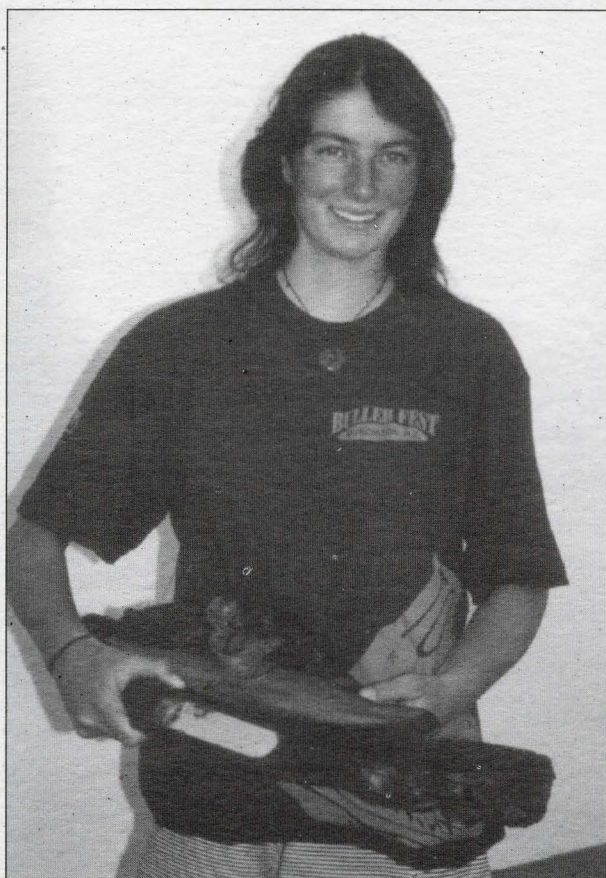
Ashhurst-based Quality Kayaks have launched a new rodeo / play boat called the Stealth. The new boat comes in radical colours and one was offered as the major spot prize at BullerFest.

Logo competition closed

Thanks to all those who entered the NZRCA logo competition. The executive will evaluate the entries over the next month, and the winner will be announced in the next newsletter. In the meantime, the mystery prize will be dispatched to all those who entered.

Pukaki

The annual Pukaki release was held over the weekend of the 21st and 22nd of March. Due to



Simone French with the Richard Brewster Memorial Rodeo Women's award.

Photo: Jonathan Hunt.

high lake levels, the river was flowing on both days at 270cmecs. On the Sunday, there were an estimated 150 kayakers who went down the river, with many doing the section twice. The higher flow meant some bigger waves and great surfing, although some play spots were hard to paddle back to. The water consent comes up for renewal next year, and the high numbers of kayakers will be a great support to ensure releases in the years to come.

Steady progress on Tekapo slalom site

After intensive negotiations with ECNZ regarding funding options, and additional consultation with Ngai Tahu, a start on construction of the Tekapo slalom course is imminent. We hope to report further on progress in the Winter newsletter.

Upper Toaroha paddled

On February 27, Canoeist of the Year Graham Charles and Mick Hopkinson demonstrated that the youngsters have no monopoly on 'keenness' by snatching a first descent of the Upper Toaroha river on the West Coast. They spent about seven hours, which involved tight, technical paddling and a mandatory portage around a gorge section.

Huka Falls 'race'

The extreme race series organised by Andy Uhl was disrupted when ECNZ refused to guarantee a safer flow for the final race leg on the Waikato river, over the notorious Huka Falls. The final race was cancelled, but six kayakers chose to run the falls anyway, despite the high flow. All of the kayakers completed the run without serious incident. It remains to be seen whether ECNZ will cooperate with race organisers for future races. (Info from Christchurch Press 28/1/98).

Classifieds

2-person inflatable kayak for sale

I want to sell a Yukon 2 person inflatable kayak. It comes complete with two split-paddles and carry-bag and it's great on whitewater and on lakes. I also want to buy a Turbo 2nd hand (North or South Island). I'd swap the Yukon for a Turbo. My phone no. is 03-4776514 evenings best, or email dianna.caird@stonebow.otago.ac.nz.

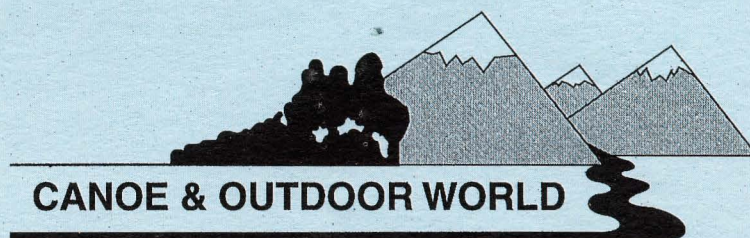
RPM Wanted

Also wanted a Dagger RPM (2nd hand, North or South Island). Phone Hayden 03-4737552, or email dianna.caird@stonebow.otago.ac.nz

Paddle Nepal - Discounts available

A delightful letter has been received from River Trails Kathmandu (P) Ltd., informing us that due to a tourism promotion in Nepal in 1998, their company is offering information and discounts to NZRCA members. Contact River Trails at 5/65 Jochhen, PO Box 6342, Kathmandu, Nepal. Email: river@trails.wlink.com.np. Tel: 244739, 247972. Fax: 977 1 224621.

Remember: NZRCA members can send in classified-style advertisements, free! Do you have gear for sale? Get in touch!



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The Lochy River

Keith Riley

Many skilled kayakers have come to Queenstown with the intention of paddling the Lochy river and left with an identical intention. Mutterings of descending the mighty and mystical Lochy river have been circulating Queenstown's shores since before the high-telemark turn era. Strangely enough, these mutterings never became actions until recently when a band of young and keen river runners joined forces and formulated a plan that would see Queenstown's nemesis whitewater kayaked.

The mastermind behind the successful expedition, Tim Barry, spent many sleepless nights pouring over old maps, fisherman's reports and aerial reports as if he were to be tested on the river. When he felt conditions were prime for a descent, he gathered the finely tuned four and entered the Lakes District.

Expedition #1: Cancelled due to poor weather conditions and the group peaking too soon.

Expedition #2: Reshuffling of group organiser—omitted due to commitments in the Buller region. Replaced with professional kayaker Jarod Renolds, an expert in the field of Central Otago river characteristics, accompanied by Nat Anglem, Graham Wesley and myself.

Two weeks after the unsuccessful attempt, early on a Sunday morning, our selection of kayaks were strapped to the struts of a THL chopper, then almost suddenly we were hovering high in the air gazing excitedly at the countless rapids below, willing to challenge any keen boater.

The pilots suggestion to drop us off below what he termed the rugged section of the river was quickly extinguished and so at the head of the Lochy we were dropped.

With eager anticipation we threw ourselves into the first gorge which proved itself to be little short of excessive fun. Within its sides were ample drops, chutes and rapids, one after the other, all boat scoutable, and highly exciting, yet not nerve-wracking. After a good hour of this carry-on, plus a fairly compulsory short portage (on the right), we found ourselves in calmer waters, a great spot to kick back, enjoy the surrounds. The river's gorge-like nature, clear pools and rapids in the class II category provided us with a valuable opportunity to prepare ourselves, physically and mentally, for gorge number two.

The water here was truly fine, more continuous and more full-on, possibly even nearing class V. There is another portage (short and compulsory) in the gorge; should others venture into the area, the portaging and scouting is best done on the left.

After upwards of 1.5 hours in gorge two, things began to mellow out, heart rates lowered and we jumped aboard for a swift ride to Lake Wakitipu, and the finishing point of an almighty expedition. The paddle across the lake only took 30 minutes (in a Topolino).

All up a truly magnificent day, smiles were plentiful and skin was peeling. The river is destined to become a classic. ♣

Golden Bay - Under development

Steve Garside

In 1990 rock-climbers discovered the wonders of the Bay; beautiful weather, great camping and some of the best steep climbing in the country. Since this time a team of Nelson paddlers

often inspired by Rob Bryant has been exploring the creek boating in this area. The results will become classics.

Before the word 'creek' was trendy, Rob and a team from Nelson, including Brendon Barry, Jimmy and Don Allardice were paddling Combats from Flora carpark down the Takaka, the Waingaro from Stanley Hut and the Stanley from Lake Stanley. With gradients up to 100m/km (which is mostly paddleable at the right flow), these rivers were bound to become classics, even if little known and seldom paddled.

With an enthusiastic helicopter pilot on the scene the development has continued. In the last year many other rivers have seen their first kayaks, including the Slate, the Upper Waingaro (below the 17m waterfall) and the jewel-to-date, the Anatoki river from Anatoki hut. The Anatoki includes some of the most consistently steep and paddleable boating in the country. With an average gradient of 55m/km for 20km and steepening to 100m/km, this two-day trip has enough to challenge the most ardent paddler.

A lot of the paddling is more grade IV than V, including most of the Takaka (from half-an-hour up the Asbestos track, both sections on the Waingaro (above and below Stanley hut) and the Slate. Almost all of these trips have still been paddled less than ten times and have an untouched mystery about them.

Kayaking in the Nelson area is under threat from the Kahurangi park. See page 11 for the NZRCA submission on the plan. ♣



Steve Garside on the Waingaro, below Stanley Forks. Photo: Dean Parker.

Every kayaker's dream - an inflatable friend!

Erik Bradshaw

As well as having been an enthusiastic kayaker for many years I've also been an avid mountain climber and trapper. The second pursuit has provided me with many hours of walking beside tumbling mountain rivers thinking "If only I had a kayak!". My intention was always to build a high performance inflatable kayak. After spending five years thinking about how to make one I heard that a guy called Richard Sage had produced one which was being manufactured by Incept Marine Ltd. After the purchase I was \$1,400 poorer but all the richer for not having spent many years prototyping such a boat. So the big question is, how does it really stack up?

The boat

The boat is constructed from high-quality West German-made 1100 dtex polyester-reinforced PVC. The valves are also of high quality and the boat seams are vulcanised (stronger than gluing). The boat is made up of an inflatable floor with inflatable sides (sponsons), giving a total of three separate air cells. When inflated, the boat is shaped a bit like a Bandit except with a shorter, more rounded back deck. The hull has a lot of rocker which makes it easy to turn but a bit more prone to backward looping in a big drop. The hull also has ribs running lengthwise, similar to a lilo, which gives some interesting characteristics. When paddling in a straight line the boat is surprisingly fast for its length, but once you lose your line it slows quite quickly, probably because of turbulence around the ribs.

The boat has a huge cockpit with a spray deck that works just like a hard-shell one. Inside the boat, inflatable air bags make up the foot rests and a strap runs over each thigh to provide bracing.

The boat itself weighs about 12kg and by the time you include your spray deck, split paddle, buoyancy aid and helmet the total weight is about 15kg. After a lot of experimenting it appears that the best way to carry the boat is to use an old 80 litre pack. For those knobbly-kneed kayakers who find it exhausting to struggle from the car to the pub it is actually possible to carry this kayak for several days and still have enough energy to use it.

Overall the boat is brilliantly made and I'm very much in admiration of the design and workmanship. My only criticism is with the internal strapping which seems to lack the design quality and manufacturing standard of the rest of the boat. Not to worry though, it's easily fixed.

My modifications

The first thing I modified was the back rest as I found it was attached too low and tended to push me forwards and out of the boat instead of making me secure. My solution was to make up an adjustable back-rest comprised of three parts. The central part is made of wide webbing and closed-cell foam, with narrower webbing leading to a large plastic clip at each end. The other side of the clip is attached by some more webbing which is sewn onto a piece of repair patch about 4x8cm. The patches are glued to the top of the sponsons just back from the valves. The result is a very good back-rest which provides support at the top of my hips and keeps my back straight.

The second thing I did was to fix the thigh straps. On the kayaks my friends and I bought there was only just enough tape to double-back through the buckles. A couple of frightening experiences where they suddenly slipped undone right when I needed them convinced me that a bit more length on the end was necessary.

I've also found that instead of using the inflatable foot-rests that come with the boat, stuffing the pump down the front makes a more solid thing to press against.

How it paddles

For an inflatable boat, the Sage paddles amazingly well. It cuts in and out of eddies nicely, can boof drops, loop in holes, side surf and roll well. Be aware though, it's no hard shell. If you expect to get out of your hard 270 or whatever and jump into one of these and paddle the same rapids, you're in for a bit of a surprise. The main things you notice are that the bracing isn't solid, it doesn't have rails and you need to think a little more to get where you want to go.

The boat is very bouncy and in big water you get bounced over waves more than going through them. It handles steep drops and aerated water very well and is surprisingly stable.

With an inflatable boat you have a lot of padding around you which can make some drops that would be painful in a hard-shell quite fun. I can remember running one steep drop which involved crashing forwards into an unavoidable rock. In a hard shell you would have had problems walking afterwards but in the trusty inflatable the front foot or so 'concertina'd up and boinged me backwards – really quite fun!

One thing to be aware of is that the boat's fabric is very grippy on rocks, which increases the chance of being pinned especially in steep creeks. But it's not too stressful because the boat has such a huge cockpit.

When I bought my Sage I sold my plastic. My thinking was that if I was going to spend that much money I better make sure I used it. I also think that you should concentrate on using one thing well and that swapping between a hard shell and an inflatable leads to confusion. It's

taken about five river trips for me to feel 'solid' in my inflatable.

Over the last year or so a group of us have taken these boats to some unusual places - here are some of them:

Callery

Well, we paddled a bit of it and carried our boats for five days. We helicoptered into the snow (DoC will not let you land near the river) and spent three days struggling to this un-kayaked river over mountains and through the jungle only to get wet and chicken out! – anyone who has been there will understand!

Arrow

It flows past my house so I had to do it! There are two bits, one above and one below Arrowtown. It has lots of trees, some great rapids, a few bits that are not kayakable and needs spring flows to be any fun.

Greenstone – above Caples confluence

This rates - if it was next to a road it would be one of NZ's classic III/III+ runs. I've paddled it from about 2km below Sly Burn Hut. The water is crystal clear, the rapids are continuous Class III and great for playing, and if you also like fishing then you'll have even more fun.

Upper Maruia

We carried the boats to above Cannibal Gorge and paddled out to the Maruia Hotel. The best section is the gorge below the road leading to Lewis pass. It contains a couple of good Class III+ rapids, the best is saved until the end with a soak in the hot pools.

Blue Grey River

The best rapids are within the first hour's walk from the road; above this you get into log-jam hell. The section starts with good continuous Class III and ends with a great Class IV.

Karangarua

If you were allowed to fly into this river it would be a classic like the Perth or Whataroa. Unfortunately DoC will not let you, so you have to carry. It's glacial, it's steep, with big boulders and it's a lot of fun. It was flooding when we paddled so it was rather exciting. There were a few rapids we avoided since it was a first descent, and hey, dead kayakers can't tell big stories! ☿

[Ed: Incept Marine can be contacted at PO Box 26, Taihape. Ph: 06 3880729. Fax: 06 3880747.]

Upper Maruia and Blue Grey

Tony Ward-Holmes

A couple of less common walk-in rivers were paddled with inflatable kayaks just after the Xmas rains.

The Upper Maruia was accessed from the Lewis Pass carpark end of the St James walkway, walking for a couple of hours and getting in above Cannibal gorge. The guts of the river is below the swingbridge however, only 20 minutes easy walk from the road. The get out is at Maruia Hot Pools, a big plus.

CLASS:	At 15-20 cumecs III, one of III+
LEVEL:	Needs rain
GAUGE:	visual
LENGTH:	9-10 km
GRADIENT:	20m/km
TIME:	couple of hours
PUT IN:	St James walkway bridge or higher
TAKE OUT:	Maruia Hot Pools!
SHUTTLE:	5km back to Lewis pass
MAPS:	NZ Topo M31 Lewis
CHARACTER:	Steep, continuous, low volume

The Blue Grey is an upper tributary of the Grey, 20 minutes drive from Springs Junction. Put in was three hours walk up from the road bridge to near the underground outlet from Lake Christobel. The first half of the river turned out to have a dozen bank-to-bank log jams and is not recommended. The last half (getting in at a large steep slip which washes away the track) is much more fun, with the crux rapid resembling a longer version of Granity at the flow paddled (very high as the lake was swollen from Christmas floods). ¶

CLASS: At 40 cumecs, III with single IV
 LEVEL: Needs rain
 GAUGE: visual
 LENGTH: 9-10 km
 GRADIENT: 16m/km
 TIME: couple of hours
 PUT IN: 1 hour's walk from road bridge at slip
 TAKE OUT: Road bridge
 MAPS: NZ Topo L31 Springs Junction
 CHARACTER: Fast flowing



Eric Bradshaw runs a drop on the Karangarua. Photo: Tony Ward-Holmes.



From the prez...

Paul Macey

The NZRCA has been in existence for over six months now, and is already more focussed on recreation than the old NZCA. I see the NZRCA becoming more and more active in the conservation and access areas. As well as the Conservation Officer and Access Officer, many volunteers around New Zealand are doing the work. There are already many dedicated paddlers working locally to save their rivers, negotiate water releases with dam owners, or lobbying for access. However, many paddlers are working by themselves, and the NZRCA helps by giving these people the backing of a national body. We also arrange expert advice on

writing submissions, as the NZRCA has contact with many experienced people. The key is communication: having the NZRCA talking to local clubs and paddlers.

A part of being a powerful representative of recreational canoeing is having a large membership and a high profile. This newsletter is aimed at increasing our profile, and providing value for our members. The more value we provide, the more members we are likely to have. The next important step for the NZRCA is to offer individual membership, and to do that, we need a person to take on the role of Membership Officer. We are also looking for a person to create the newsletter, thereby leaving Jon Hunt free to be Communication Officer.

I am off to paddle the Pukaki tomorrow, which should be flowing at 300 cumecs—yippee! I will stop in and look at the site of the Tekapo slalom course, which is likely to be started in the next month. These rivers serve as a great reminder of the need for a strong voice to represent kayakers—without the old NZCA, there would be no Tekapo releases, no slalom site, and no Pukaki releases.

— Happy paddling! ¶

Conservation

Maree Baker

Monitoring

Good decisions depend on good information. It is essential that Councils and kayakers know where natural resources are and what is being done to them, so that we can adequately protect their values. This can be achieved through the establishment of appropriate databases and monitoring strategies. Of specific interest to kayakers is the monitoring of the natural flow of rivers and the quality of the water.

Councils have been traditionally reluctant to spend money monitoring the environment they help manage. They are often unaware of the natural resources and habitat areas within their jurisdiction. Often environmental degradation goes largely unnoticed. For example if groundwater is not regularly being monitored for chemical pollutants, irreversible contamination may occur before the problem is discovered.

Councils are now required to monitor the environment and the effectiveness of their resource management plans and administration. They should be encouraged to adopt the policies and methods outlined below to ensure that they are fully informed of the river resources in their region and district. In your submission on their plan you could include exactly what is written below:

Policies and methods for monitoring and databases

Policy

Monitor natural and biological resources in order to maintain a current database of the natural and biological resources of the area, providing information that will assist the council in undertaking its functions under the Act.

Methods

Establish and maintain a database of all natural and biological resources, including the following:

- habitats (areas of indigenous flora and fauna).
- water bodies including wetlands, ponds and streams; and details of riparian vegetation.
- monitor and record the varying flows of rivers and the water quality.
- natural landscapes;
- hazard areas, e.g. areas at risk of inundation during floods.
- potential wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors.

Information to be captured for identified areas or ecosystems will include type, location, condition, abundance, vulnerability, ecological connections, protection status and restrictions on use (these may apply to areas and wildlife). The database will present information on specific sites in the context of their wider ecological connections, showing the health of each ecosystem type within the ecological district and region.

The database will be established with the assistance of the Department of Conservation, relevant environmental and community groups such as canoe clubs and the New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association, and the general public.

The production of natural resource databases and monitoring of the general environment is a case where a joint effort by district and regional councils is the most efficient.

The amenity value of rivers

Under the Resource Management Act councils have certain obligations to protect the amenity values of rivers. Check that the Plan identifies the correct amenity values for the rivers in your area. They may not be aware of which rivers are valuable to kayakers.

It may be necessary to provide them with an inventory.

If your council is not placing any value on the recreational values of rivers point out to them that they are obliged to under the following sections of the RMA:

s.5(2)(c) environment is defined to include 'amenity values' which in turn is specifically defined to include recreation attributes (s.2(1)).

s.7(c) amenity values. Amenity values requires those exercising functions and powers under the Act to have particular regard to the maintenance and enhancement of Amenity values. Amenity values are defined in s.2 of the Act as "those physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes."

Recreational values have been debated extensively in Water Conservation Order hearings (for example, in the Buller and Kaurau Water Conservation Orders). The Water Conservation Order process provided much key information on what constitutes recreational values for rivers. In addition the New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association has commissioned its own recreational river survey which assesses specific characteristics and use patterns for whitewater canoeing.

They must have 'particular regard' to the recreational value of a river when considering anything that affects it. If you feel they are not paying enough attention to the river's value, point this out and prove to them just how important it is locally and nationally. If you get to this stage and are still facing resistance please get in touch with the NZRCA for help. (Well, get in touch with us at anytime of course).

That's all I have come up with so far. The general areas that you will want to assess plans on are things like minimum flows, access to rivers, discharges into rivers, damming rivers, diverting rivers, use of rivers (eg. jetboats). Assess all these factors to see how they will effect Jo and Mary Bloggs kayaker. To help us assess these factors and make it easier to make submissions and fight court cases, over the next few months the NZRCA will produce and publish our official policy on all of these issues and more. These will be able to be cut and pasted into any submission or argument and should make conserving a little easier.

I welcome any feedback on the above article, as I am learning too!

Happy conserving.

Access

Jonathan Hunt

Back in February, the NZRCA made a submission on the "Kahurangi National Park Draft Management Plan", October 1997, outlining our concerns over continued access to rivers like the Karamea, Waingaro, Anatoki and Stanley. All page references in the text below are to the Management Plan document, which is available on the World Wide Web at www.doc.govt.nz.

4.1 Visitor Services and Management / Issues and Opportunities / Facilities (p59).

Table 6 shows Kahurangi Hut maintenance priorities; Luna and Roaring Lion hut are both listed as *3 (close / low), and Greys Hut has no maintenance priority (p59). These huts are convenient stopping places for multi-day kayak parties on the Karamea river. The spacing of huts at Luna, Venus, Roaring Lion and Greys mean that kayak-only expeditions can be mounted, overcoming the limited cargo capacity of kayaks. The

Karamea is a world-class whitewater and scenic experience and the presence of the huts listed means kayakers have access to shelter and cooking facilities. Removal of the huts would require kayakers to carry additional shelter and cooking equipment, raising the cost of expeditions and making the multiday option impractical for most. This would be a tragedy as there are only a handful of rivers in New Zealand offering multiday whitewater trips.

Removal of these huts would impact kayakers disproportionately and would therefore adversely affect the recreational value of the Karamea. The huts should continue to be maintained to a basic level.

4.1 Visitor Services and Management / Issues and Opportunities (p61-63).

Kayaking is not mentioned in the list of issues and opportunities which raises questions regarding the extent to which DoC understands or recognises the needs of recreational kayakers. Kayaking, like caving, climbing and fishing, has specific impacts on the park, and these need to be managed. Kayakers tend to use helicopter access since it is impractical to carry a 4m kayak and associated equipment into the New Zealand bush. Once on the water, kayakers tend to have minimal impact (ie. almost no use of tracks)

Kayaking should be recognised as a legitimate recreational activity and kayakers should be consulted over any issues (such as hut closures, wilderness area boundary changes and air access policy) that may affect them.

4.1.1 The Tasman Wilderness Area / Issues and Opportunities / Boundaries (p67).

A suggestion has been made to move the Wilderness Area boundary to include the Roaring Lion hut, which would then be removed. As previously stated, the Roaring Lion hut is ideally

spaced from other huts and easily accessed from the Karamea River.

The proposed boundary change would be detrimental to kayakers as outlined above, and should not proceed.

4.1.1 The Tasman Wilderness Area / Issues and Opportunities / Implementation / Item 1. (p68).

There is a proposal to limit landings on the border of the Wilderness Area. This could limit the ability of kayakers to arrange food drops at strategic points on the Karamea (often required due to the low cargo capacity of kayaks).

Any changes to air access on the boundaries of the Wilderness Area should be assessed for impact on kayakers.

4.2 Concessions / Implementation / Items 10, 12, 13, 14 (p76).

All of these implementation items raise concerns regarding the continued availability of helicopter access to existing whitewater rivers such as the Karamea, Anatoki, Stanley and Waingaro.

Also, limitation of helicopter overflight and landing would severely limit the discovery of new kayaking resources. Limiting the total number of landings will reduce the ability of future kayakers to access Kahurangi's unexplored rivers. Kayaking is a growth sport, and 'wilderness' paddling particularly so. New equipment, techniques and attitudes are opening up many small and remote rivers that would never have been considered only ten years ago.

DoC need to recognise the criticality of helicopter access to the viability of recreational kayaking. Kayaks are large and unwieldy, and are particularly unsuitable for foot access.

Limitations on air access would have a particularly detrimental impact on kayakers (unlike hunting, climbing, caving and tramping).

Any changes to huts, helicopter access, landing sites and wilderness areas should be negotiated with local kayak clubs (Nelson Canoe Club, Westland Canoe Club) and the NZRCA. ¶

[Ed: Do you have any comments on the NZRCA's position regarding kayak access in Kahurangi National Park? Please write and let us know your views...]

Education

Janette Kear

The assessors of the NZRCA / NZOIA Kayak Instruction Scheme (plus one interested Level 2) met in Murchison in December. I also attended the meeting to raise concerns and review policy.

The concern was over 'old' NZOIA Level 2's who had not yet upgraded to the 'new' standard. The meeting recommended that these instructors upgrade, and be given clear guidelines on the standard required.

After discussion the policy on recommended ratios for river safety courses was changed from one Level 2 instructor to six clients to 1:8. It was felt that teaching points and safety issues for clients on courses could be equally well covered with clients clients and that some activities were more effective with eight clients. If more than eight clients attend (the maximum allowed is twelve) a second instructor, who must be a L2, must be employed.

It was also agreed that the maximum ratio for River Rescue courses (the more advanced course) would be 1:8.

Various assessment pre-requisites were clarified, and information for instructors intending assessment can be obtained from NZOIA, PO Box 1065, Nelson. A major recommendation for assessment candidates was that they attend instructor training and river safety courses well before their assessment (eg. at least one paddling season prior to assessment).

The meeting recommended that the Technical subcommittee of NZOIA communicate with the NZRCA on a more regular basis. NZRCA undertook to maintain better liaison with NZOIA. ¶

Letters

Congratulations

At a recent committee meeting of Nelson Canoe Club, our committee asked me to write congratulating your executive and officers on the formation of NZRCA and to offer support for the objectives as outlined in the Summer 1997 edition of the newsletter. [Abdridged]

Anne Thomson
Secretary, Nelson Canoe Club

Water, water everywhere, but not a drop to paddle...

Allen Hills (on the edge of the polar plateau) Temp: -17C Alt: 7,500ft!!!!
Wind: 20kts SE. Windchill - 35C

Received a copy of the latest NZRCA newsletter today on a re-supply flight which dropped mail, food and beer into our deep field camp.

Firstly thanks very much for the nomination as Canoeist of the Year. It's nice to receive recognition from

time to time for jobs done and efforts put in. As a nation we are not particularly strong in this area. I hope the new organisation continues with the award no matter how inconsequential it may seem to some people.

The irony of receiving a kayaking mag while in my present location is not lost hence my need to put pen to paper. In Antarctica you can count the number of rivers which actually 'flow' enough to float a kayak on one hand. All this on a continent the size of Australia and almost completely covered in 'whitewater'. Needless to say canoe sport is not a big seller down here.

We all have different reasons why we go kayaking. The reasons I am in Antarctica and enjoying the polar plateau are not far removed from the same reasons I chose to go paddling. Essentially I believe the ethos of adventure in wild places promotes an atmosphere to understand self and others which cannot be easily equalled. Yes of course I'm biased, but not dogmatic—at least not yet.

I have spent the summer on the most awesome continent in this world. Antarctica is often referred to as a global barometer. The sheer mass of water and land untouched on this continent is beyond comprehension. This untouched nature means that changes in global climate and the impact of humans on delicate ecosystems can be measured here knowing that you are looking at a pure system.

The other major area this barometer responds to is attitudes. Invariably our attitudes drive our actions. If enough attitudes change, for good or bad, certain actions will follow. The resultant actions, therefore, sustain the prevalent attitude. If people believe in, or encouraged into a 'good attitude' group behaviours supporting a prevalent attitude become the norm. Once a norm is established (for good

or bad) it is generally self-generating and so the cycle continues.

As kayakers and river users we represent a group of people faced with similar opportunities and threats with regards to attitudes as Antartica.

We can be proactive with access issues, safety and responsible user attitudes. We can be reactive when others go wrong or work against our attitudes and norms. But I believe a key to continued positive norms (and the benefits which result) within our user group is a process of establishing attitudes in our own minds which fit within the range of 'accepted good practise'.

Now I'm not idealistic to the point where everybody is going to see things exactly the same way. I don't even want this. This is why a 'range of accepted good practise' is used. This provides a continuum to allow for the scope of commitment levels found in any group of human beings. People need to investigate the boundaries for themselves then, and only then, should they decide/choose to what level they are going to buy into the prevailing attitude and norms.

The job of defining the boundaries of the continuum belongs to everybody. The job of publishing this definition becomes that of education and media. To make informed investigations and choices people need education and a media source. To this end I give my full support to the NZRCA mag and the potential at hand to shape what we want and need.

Thanks again and see you on the river— as long as I make it back from here.

Caio
Graham Charles

Kayaking Season

Kaye Martin

It's *that* time of the year again— kayaking season! There are four easy ways of knowing it's kayaking season:

1. The telephone

All of a sudden the answer phone system which was set up so I wouldn't miss important business messages (yeah— right!), becomes a canoe club message board.

2. That smell

Come on— I know you all know what I mean. The smell that starts wafting around mid-week— the 'wet polypropylene thrown out of the car and left rotting somewhere' smell. Yeah— THAT smell. (Knew you'd know what I meant!)

Don't worry too much if you can't locate the source of THAT smell— usually the culprit locates it on the next paddling day— 5 minutes after rumaging through the *clean* washing asking "where's my polypropylene?".

3. Conversation

This becomes particularly limited to the one topic (and we all know what that one topic is!). Words for having a conversation with a kayaker are:

a. **Cu Mecs** (looks and sounds like foreign word). Used in the phrase "How many Cu Mecs was the river running at?", it can keep a kayaker talking for at *least* 5 minutes.

There's even a Cu Mec line that Tasman District Council have that you can ring up and see how many Cu Mecs various rivers are running at. To be honest I don't know why TDC bothers. *Every* kayaker I've heard ring it says "that can't be right" or "that's wrong"— or something similar.

b. **Eddy's**. No, not a fellow kayaker who is always around the corner to tip you out, but some little swirly thing the water does, and if you lean the wrong way, you roll or...

c. **Swim**. This is the *best* word to use to keep a kayaker talking. Used in the phrase "Did anyone swim today?" it *will* keep the conversation going for at *least* 10 minutes (and no— I'm not joking!).

4. The weather.

It suddenly, *every* weekend, turns to &*^(&ç*)@#!— you know what. Enough said!

Once you know it's kayaking season, the following tips are useful for "the other half":

(a) Book in.

I mean 'book in' the family birthdays, weddings, outings with friends etc... and *don't* negotiate. It is just plain stupid to arrange anything for the evening after a kayak trip because the kayaker is usually:

- Limited to kayak conversation.
- Asleep.
- Late.
- All of the above.

Speaking of lateness— be warned— when you ask "what time will you be home?" the response is *always* wrong (usually about three hours wrong). "Because it was a really GREAT trip... and everyone was really HUNGRY and THIRSTY" (you know what I mean!).

(b) Forget it.

Kayaking season that is. It's like a bad flu— very intense over a short period of time and then it goes away. The good thing though— it *isn't* contagious!

Happy paddling, and to the kayaking widows— good luck! ¶

A Motu Trip

Paul Macey

During a trip down the Clarence in December, we hatched the plan to do the Motu over Christmas. Six people were keen to take a raft down, and with four other paddlers we had ourselves a team.

The river was not exactly high. Driving to the get-in, we were looking at something that resembled the Avon River in Christchurch but the road signs assured us that it was indeed the Motu... We drove as far as we could and proceeded to have lunch in the sun while we waited for the others to arrive. Eventually we got the crew together, and three or four hours after we arrived we started down the river. Now, the amusing thing was that the raft (called "Pinky") was rather large and rather heavy—perfect for South Island rivers but, well, the Motu is a tad shallow and a tad narrow in places. Us kayakers had a rather entertaining time floating down watching the rafters push the raft (with our gear on board, of course) down the river. Still, the Motu is a beautiful river, with clear water and

bush all around, and it was great to relax after the hussle and bussle of Christmas. We found a campsite up a 15m steep bank, and with the help of throwbags we hauled the barrels off the raft and up the hill. After hot food and a sip of Mike's Medicinal Mixture, it was off to bed.

The next day we found some rapids. Nothing was too hard, but sometimes there was enough of a drop to think

"hmmm, I wonder what's down there?" The raft was actually floating for some of the time, but in the rapids it tended to get pinned. In fact, it seemed to get pinned in any rapid that had a rock and a narrow channel—in other words, pretty much all rapids! The rafters, in particular Kevin and Ned, became expert at leaping into the river to try and haul the raft around. They actually seemed to enjoy it. In one of the rapids Ritz had a bit of an upside down adventure, just enough for her to want to go for a swim. Luckily for her, we were there to rescue her! We came upon the famous Motu Slot, and decided to have a look. It was about half a raft-width wide, but not to be deterred, down went Pinky and crew. Not very long after, the Motu Slot was blocked with one swamped raft. Everyone had their own idea on how to move the raft so everyone had a go at moving it at the same time. After three or four D-rings were ripped off, the team decided to try one idea at a time. Eventually we stuck the raft on its side and slid it along with no major problems. The kayakers followed next taking a variety of lines. My own one consisted of going over the drop in the Slot and smearing upside-down along



Contemplating the next move on the Motu.
Photo: Paul Macey.



Paddling on the Motu.
Photo: Paul Macey.



*"The rapids were bigger and bouncier."
Photo: Paul Macey.*

the rock wall, and eventually rolling to find some missing skin from my hands. Others attempted to punch through the rock wall (without success), and some just went straight down. After this little adventure, we paddled on down to a nice grassy campsite and relaxed around a campfire that evening.

On day three the flow picked up, much to the relief of the rafters. The gorge was much larger than on the first two days, with some spectacular waterfalls. The rapids were bigger and bouncier. Usually we would eddy out above a rapid, pick a line, and then jump onto the hydroslide. I remember lots of waves, rocks and whitewater coming at me while I was busy shaking my head to see what was next. The raft was only occasionally getting stuck, but on one occasion it got well and truly stuck. We kayakers jumped out of our boats and rushed up with glee carrying all our throwbags, slings, crabs and other hardly-ever-used rescue gear. Most of the rafters collected on the bank to watch while we connected ropes, pulled in various directions, and cut the barrels free. Kevin ended up cutting a throwrope to free the raft

(never did learn those knots that undo under tension), and soon after we were moving again. There were plenty more rapids but they eased off in difficulty. The raft did manage to get smeared vertically up a wall, spilling all of its contents, but the kayakers quickly gathered everyone and everything back together. A few more waves, a few more play holes, and it was out the last few kilometres to the getout. We spent that night, New Years Eve, mellowing out at the getout. All it all it was a great trip, with beautiful scenery and fun rapids. Having a raft to carry gear and provide rescue practice was also a bonus! ¶



*Ritz tackles a drop on the Motu.
Photo: Paul Macey.*

*Have you been
on a great trip
recently? If so,
write it up and
send it in!*



New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association Inc.

*Our purpose is to preserve New Zealand's whitewater resources
and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely.*

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