

# T H E B L A D E

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SEBAGO CANOE CLUB

VOLUME IX, ISSUE #1

FEBRUARY 27, 2004

## WINTER PROJECT

### Building a Greenland-Style Skin-On-Frame Boat

by Steve Heinzerling



This winter I'm finally getting around to building a skin-on-frame boat, something I've wanted to do for some years now. As my guide I'm using the book by Robert Morris, *Building Skin-on-Frame Boats*. The book is very helpful in executing and understanding the process of building a "skin" boat.

This is the third kayak I'm building. The first was a tortured plywood design by Chesapeake Light Craft, a double kayak that my wife and I paddled for about three seasons. The second boat I built was the Coho single by Pygmy Boats, which is what I paddle now.

Building a skin boat is a slower process than the stitch and glue method of boat-building, because working with plywood, you see your hull come into shape in no time at all, but with a skin boat you actively create the shape of your hull as you go along. The measurements you use to determine the boat's length, beam, and depth are all based upon your body size. The length of your boat is three arm spans, the beam is your hips plus two fists, and the depth of the boat is your fist with your thumb sticking out. All of the measurements you adjust to what you're looking for in your boat in terms of performance and function. The final result (I hope) will be a boat that fits like a glove, is easy to maneuver, paddles like a dream and is a snap to roll.

I'm about halfway through the project now. I've formed the gunwales, the deck and the keel stringer. My next step is to steam-bend the ribs and to install them. Robert Morris, the author of the guide I'm using, is sending me rib stock cut from green yellow cedar. All of the other wood I found by looking through the piles at Home Depot. You want to use green wood, not kiln-dried wood. The green Douglas fir 2 x 4 x 16 they have can be really good or really bad depending on when you look; try to pick through it before everyone else does. I was also lucky to find some nice 2 x 8 ends being thrown out on a construction site. They were perfect for the masik (deck beam) and knee rest I built. This kind of urban beachcombing is fun and all part of the boat building process.

I have to thank Sebago member Paul Banks for phone advice and encouragement. I'll write a follow-up article for the next *BLADE* on my progress. Until then, happy paddling and boat-building to all.



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**New Members**

*Welcome to Sebago Canoe Club!*  
**Robert Kent**  
**David and Diane Stenglein**



**Commodore's Report**

*by Phil Giller*

Hello everyone, I hope that you are keeping warm and looking forward to a great season of paddling. We are currently in recharge mode but hope to get the season in swing during April.

Just to catch everyone up on some of the things that have been happening. We have filed all past returns and are currently working on the past year return which is due soon. Sebago was assessed a fine of \$1,600.00 by the IRS for filing past tax returns over a year late. Sebago appealed the fine

and I am happy to say that it was dismissed and we owe nothing. We have amended our incorporation papers to meet the current IRS language and have submitted all the additional information requested by the IRS. We hope to have a favorable ruling on our 501(c)3 status sometime in April. New York State, as of January 2004, has listed us as a charitable organization.

The architects have had an initial meeting with the Parks Department and the DEC to present the preliminary designs to them and get approvals. I am pleased to say that the Parks Dept. was very enthusiastic once they saw the design and have given us a green light to continue. The DEC has some issues with the design and has given us a clearer guideline on what they expect us to accomplish on the waterfront, and we look forward to the next meeting with them to continue the discussion. I hope that everyone has gone to the link provided by Holly Sears: <http://sebagocanoecub.org/pdfs/ProposalSebago.pdf> and downloaded the design and taken the time to study it. Everything is still open to change and the architects are looking for your feedback. This is especially true of the Activity Chairs who should meet with the architects to ensure that all of their requirements have been met in the plan.

We are looking into grants but will not actually apply for any of them until our tax status is confirmed. We have met with the Brooklyn Borough President's office and we look forward to continuing our relationship with them as well as to their continued support of Sebago. We will be setting up meetings with our local assemblyman, councilman and state senator to introduce them to the great work that Sebago continues to provide to the community.

We have begun the calendar for the 2003-2004 seasons and hope to have it formalized by April 2004. Look for an increase in co-sponsored trips between Sebago and other kayaking clubs and non-profit groups.

Our rowing program will be coming together this season as we begin to develop it along the lines of our successful kayaking and sailing programs. Joe Romano has agreed to be the Rowing Chair and will be setting up meetings for interested members in the next month.

Our kayaking and sailing programs look like they will be bursting at the seams this year and we look forward to seeing how they shape up. At the moment I need 1 kayaker who would like to help organize our Saturday paddles so that once again we can invite guest paddlers/speakers on many of our trips. Thomasina Webb is in charge of recruiting trip leaders and assistant trip leaders. Please contact me if you would like to help.

Our canoe program will get back to basics this season and will introduce some new aspects like canoe fishing. We are currently working with our Canoe Chair

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Andy Novick on setting up a fishing competition in Jamaica Bay in late May or June of this season. Look for details.

Our membership committee, headed by Tony Pignatello, is currently updating the club brochure. Wait until you see the new design! They are also planning a large membership drive this season. Please take the time to fill out and return the questionnaires that the Membership chair has sent out.

As I've preached many times before, we want to do much more but can only do more with help from the membership. Remember: this is a volunteer club, so volunteer.

The biggest change you will see this season is that starting in May at the Open House until the end of September, we are going to make a concerted effort to keep the gates open on Saturdays and Sundays. We will accomplish this by having an Officer of the Day (actually half day) who will be at the club to answer questions and represent us to the public. There is a requirement in our lease that we stay open during the paddling season on weekends. I need someone who would like to setup a calendar for those weekends and keep track of the members that have volunteered for this important job. For more information, please see the separate article that I have written in this issue of the Blade.

See you when the ice melts.

## “Officer of the Day”

by Phil Giller

Sounds like a military term doesn't it? Don't worry, Sebago will not be asking you to run 20 miles or get down and give us 20 pushups. An “Officer of the Day” is a person who is the official club representative to the public or to other club members.

Here is how it will work: every Saturday and Sunday, starting with our Open House until the end of September, we will have the gates open from 9am-5pm for members and the general public. We will ask members to work a 4-hr shift from 9am-1pm or 1pm-5pm. To start I am going to ask that the volunteers be Senior members although we will let Conditional members who have been around for a while participate. Your responsibilities will be to generally know about the club, hand out brochures and application forms, give people a tour of the grounds and handle general questions. You will be the club representative and should be familiar with the club Constitution and the Operating and Safety Rules (both of which are always in the clubhouse). If there is a policy question that comes up, you will be the person that answers it or refers the member to the correct individual—or Committee Chair—who can answer the question



## Membership Report

by Tony Pignatello

Hi All. It was great seeing so many of you on New Year's Day for the Frostbite Regatta. The Membership Committee starts it's work in earnest next month and once again we will begin the process of having brochures printed and holders assembled for distribution. We will be asking members to place

these brochure boxes in your local neighborhood venues—in bike shops, bakeries, bagel shops, gyms, sporting goods stores, health food stores, coffee shops, etc.—whatever place seem like a logical choice, then follow-up by keeping the box well stocked. If anyone has a special relationship with a merchant, regardless of the type of store, that would also work. I plan to list all stores that display our brochures in a future issue of *The BLADE* to thank them, and to give us a chance to follow up.

I'm really looking forward to the spring and summer paddles, seeing old friends and signing up new ones. Until then, stay warm and don't shovel too hard or too long.

best. This will be a great way to get your work requirement completed and at the same time hang out in the sun and fun at Sebago. This will also give new Conditional members more predictable access to the club.

We have 19 weekends in the season—38 days and 72 Officer of the Day slots available. If you volunteer for three slots over the summer you complete your work requirement with no muss and no fuss. Of course that means that spaces may fill up very quickly—so look at your calendar and reserve those prime spots now.

I need a member to volunteer to make up a calendar and keep track of which member has volunteered for what slot so that there is no overlap and all the slots are filled. Please contact the Commodore.



## Rowing Report

by Joe Romano

Well, at least with the temperatures so low, I don't feel I should be out rowing rather than writing my first report about rowing at Sebago. Just to put things in perspective, for those of you that didn't see my e-mail note, I volunteered to be Rowing Chair at the last Board of Directors'

Meeting. The club had an opportunity to acquire another rower from a member, but the Board questioned whether we should buy it if we didn't have anyone coordinating the club's rowing activities. Since I like rowing, and do it regularly (barring ice and frigid temperatures), I agreed to try and organize the club's efforts to support rowing at Sebago.

I'm certainly far from an expert on rowing. Over the years I spent many enjoyable hours rowing rowboats. In fact one of the proudest moments in my life was when I was around seven years old and my parents let me pull up the anchor of our rowboat so I didn't have to row around in circles anymore. Several years ago, when I learned that Sebago owned several single sculls, I decided it was time to learn how to row a single scull. With reading and practice, the skills developed, and now, conditions permitting, I feel quite comfortable spending an hour or two rowing around the basin and bay. I don't think you could want a better place to enjoy a row while getting an excellent workout. I hope many of you decide to try it this summer and we'll make sure there is someone available regularly to help you develop your skills.

From the responses I received to my e-mail, I've begun putting together a list of rowers and those interested in becoming rowers. At the very least this list could encourage

the exchange of knowledge, ideas, experiences, equipment, safety tips, etc. So if you're interested in rowing and haven't contacted me yet, please send me an e-mail, or give me a ring. There's no obligation, and the club will have a better idea of who the rowers are. With your support the club may channel more resources into rowing at Sebago, and maybe we'll all help each other to enjoy this wonderful activity even more.



## Treasurer's Report

by Zachary Abrams

The Dues Bills for Junior, Conditional and Senior Members have all been mailed out. Booster Bills will go out later.

I apologize for the lateness of the bills especially since the bills say at the bottom that payment is due by February 1st. Really, however, we want full payment by

April 1st—no kidding. Members who do pay in full by April 1st will get a free Sebago Water Bottle as a premium.

Please remember to sign and date your checks and to explain any corrections so I can understand if you send an amount different from what is listed on your bill.

Thank you for your cooperation.

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## Sea Kayak Committee (SKC) Report

*edited by Thomasina Webb*

Our Committee Chair, Ilene Levenson, has her priorities in the right place and is away for the month of February paddling and kayak fishing in a warm sunny place—so, as Assistant Chair, I volunteered to pull together this SKC report . . . and I've done so by reaching out to just a few of you, to hear your voices as we get ready for warmer weather, the paddling season, and more time on the water. Here goes—Ilene is first:



### *Sea Kayaking in the Sea of Cortez*

*by Ilene Levenson*

February is an excellent time to escape from New York and get an opportunity to do some serious paddling. I will be in Mexico for the month and will be prepared to give a full report at the first Sea Kayaking Committee meeting\* on Friday night March 12. I will also report on the indoor kayak polo season going on now at the Roosevelt Island Pool. Please come to the meeting to share stories about your adventures and bring your ideas for the upcoming paddling season at Sebago. It is my hope that the SKC can spread its wings a little and try new things, go new places and get more people involved.

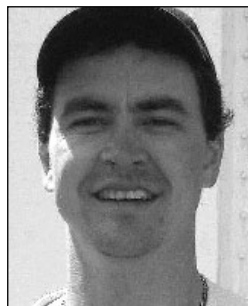
See you in March!

\* Thank you Steve Heinzerling for hosting the first SKC meeting—for details please see the Calendar, page 9.

### *Moving Forward and Looking Back...*

*by George Sullivan*

The upcoming season will be my tenth season paddling. The first couple of years I just paddled my Feathercraft



around the local waterhole (Gerritsen Beach). As a result I'm not as good a kayaker as I think I should be after ten years. I am however, trying to improve. At the end of last year I started surfing my whitewater boat on ocean waves and this year I tried kayak polo at Roosevelt Island with the Downtown boathouse.

These diverse activities are forcing me to improve my skills or find myself upside down. (Thanks Tom P.) I think now is a good time for every kayaker to write down three things they would like to try this season to improve their skills and enhance their fun on the water. Your list could include trying kayak polo, some spring whitewater runs, or maybe get together with other members and try some rescue drills. Do yourself a favor and make that list today, and see if you accomplish your goals by season's end. This way, when you look back on ten years of paddling, you'll be as good a paddler as you can be.

See ya on the water!



### *With a Break From the Books...*

*by Louis Demarco*

I have two weeks off in April and hope to get out on the water then at least a couple of times. Perhaps soon I'll be able to put a gift membership at the gym to some use in preparation for Spring paddling. I'm pretty sure that all the holes in the kayak hull are patched up.



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## Training and Saturday Paddles

by Thomasina Webb

I remember my first paddle at Sebago. . . Captain Queeg led it and I was bewildered by all the "rules" and the time spent on land waving the paddle forward and back. Since then I've understood the critical need for training—to be safe—and more training—for the fun of it. Training frees us to paddle with confidence. Tom Potter and Ilene will soon be setting up the class schedules for this season and I sincerely hope that all of the newer paddlers will take advantage of this great opportunity. It's not something to be shy about. I think I took Star 2 four times and I might even do it again.

But beyond the Star 1, 2, & 3 classes I heartily recommend that *everyone* take Canoe Safety—and if you haven't taken it in a few years—*please take it again*. I feel this strongly because I'll be "managing" the Saturday paddles again this year, and I need you to lead these paddles. We need "canoe safety consciousness" as our second nature whenever we go out—and if we haven't practiced it, how can we know what it is?

*Saturday morning paddles:* My thanks to everyone that stepped up to the plate and led paddles last summer—with special thanks to John and Lucille Wright for covering it so many times. After the rain finally lifted I went down for the count with Lyme disease and lost the summer. When I finally went out, at the beginning of September, I learned this: *we always need two leaders!* We always need to have one leader prepared to stay back with a slower group—even if that group is a single person.

If we don't plan for a second leader the Saturday paddle can be a drag for everyone because: 1) stronger paddlers will be frustrated by having to hold back; and 2) newer paddlers could be put at risk by pushing them beyond their strength.

It can be very hard to evaluate a newcomer's strength—You ask someone how they are, they'll say "fine." You make sure they eat, drink water, rest, and they'll say "fine." Then the sea air and sun, poor posture, poor paddling form, and a low fitness quotient combine to drain their energy and—suddenly—they're going in circles not able to lift the blade out

of the water—which means someone has to be watching and ready to tow. A single leader can be overtaxed by having to supervise a large group of beginner-level paddlers, especially if they have to tow.

Please sign up for Canoe Safety. We need our core membership ready and able to co-lead. I'll be asking for two volunteers for each Saturday morning paddle. . . and I know you won't let me down.

*One last wish for the Saturday morning paddles*—I would dearly love it if someone would put together a stretch and warm-up exercise routine that any leader could use. If you have the knowledge, I'll work with you to make up the printed guide for the SKC locker.



*Thoughts first presented on the Yahoo Group—no decision made by press time*

*On February 25 Tom Potter posted the following:*

I've got an idea that I'd like your thoughts on. I've run this idea by a few people, but I'd like to widen the

discussion a bit. I'd like to propose that the club allocate up to \$4,000 to buy 4 kayaks to reside at the Lake. They could be new or good condition used (so long as they have bulkheads). We've got the donated paddles and pfd's from AKT to equip them. Caring for them at the lake would be the joint responsibility of the kayak committee and the cabin steward. Rules for use would be similar to JBay policies, with appropriate modifications.

Having 4 boats at the lake would dramatically upgrade the attractiveness of our facility there. It would also make it much easier to conduct smaller, more frequent kayak instruction classes.

I know this is a large request, especially at a time when capital improvements are rightfully on the front burner. However, the boats could pay for themselves fairly quickly by generating instruction fees. I think the kayak committee

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could return the whole \$4,000 to the club within two seasons.

The kayak instruction program has a good record in generating money for the club. Over the last four years I believe we've averaged over \$2,000 a year. This money goes back into the general club coffers. Even after accounting for all club boats purchased or repaired over the years (purchase decisions which are always made by the Board, not the kayak committee), the club is way ahead.

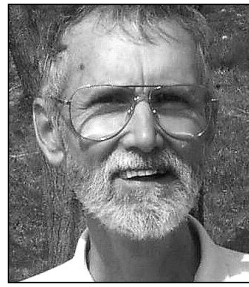
Although the kayak instruction program has done well financially for the club, it relies on a lot of totally volunteer labor. Ilene, George and I are willing to volunteer our time again this year, but the club could make our lives easier, and help avoid instructor burn-out, by providing 4 lake boats to use.

What do you folks think? Anyone have any thoughts, pro or con, that they would like to share and post?

Depending on how this on-line conversation goes, I would point toward the March board meeting to formally consider the proposal. Cheers!

*On February 26 John Wright posted this response:*

I favor an investment in better kayaks for training and group use, both for Jamaica Bay and at the Cabin site. A variety of style and size makes training more encouraging as you experience the potential to improve skill and enjoyment. Some of



our current fleet is adequate for beginning experience and appreciated for stability, but some are dogs that go in slow circles and frustrate both the suffering paddler and the impatient group.

The Cabin Committee anticipates having the space ready for the season and the schedule of more frequent trainings and outings. Is it necessary or optimal to keep the better craft there when the current pattern of utilization has favored more Jamaica Bay based scheduling? . . .

*Yvonne Collery added*

If I were still a Board Member I would surely vote for buying 4 kayaks to be kept at the cabin. Besides for being good for instruction purposes they would encourage members to spend more time at the lake. Since these kayaks will never see the ocean, I think we should just buy 4 cheaper kayaks that people can tool around the lake on.

Now that John and the cabin committee have spent so much time fixing up the cabin I hope that more members will use it. I would also like to see canoeing instruction held there, as well as some rowing clinics.



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# EVENTS & NOTICES

## Paddlesport—March 26 to 28

The Club will have an exhibit table at Paddlesport again this year. Paddlesport is the largest canoe and kayak show in the Northeast and gives the Club an opportunity to be noticed by many prospective members.

We need about a dozen members (or more) who are willing to sit at our table for a couple of hours to pass out flyers and talk to the people who stop by. This service counts for your Work Requirement and you will get into the show for free if you sign up soon.

Paddlesport 2004 will be held at the Garden State Exhibit and Convention Center in Somerset, New Jersey on Friday March 26 (12noon–9pm) also Saturday March 27 (9am–6pm) and Sunday March 28 (9am–4:30pm). Please contact Phil Giller ([briogg@yahoo.com](mailto:briogg@yahoo.com)) or Zachary Abrams ([Zja43@aol.com](mailto:Zja43@aol.com)) if you can help.

More information (including directions) is available at the Jersey Paddler website at [www.jerseypaddler.com](http://www.jerseypaddler.com).

## Corporations Donate

Did you know that many corporations give donations of money to nonprofit groups where their employees spend time as volunteers? In fact, many businesses will only consider contributing to an enterprise that they feel personally involved in – through their workforce, perhaps. Investigate this possibility at your place of business. You don't have to work for a huge company. Just ask around. And if you need some help finding out if this applies to you, email [BethBloedow@netzero.net](mailto:BethBloedow@netzero.net) and we'll do some research for you.

## Canoe Sailing for Beginners, Spruce Run, NJ April 30–May 2

A perfect opportunity for you to try the beautiful art of canoe sailing. We will bring the boats and all the equipment needed. You only have to show up with a change of clothes. We will be on a small pleasant lake, ideal for learning and for veterans to practice or cruise. You can come just during the day, or camp with us right on a point at the middle of the lake. Contact Bob & Elsie Celifarco (203) 838-5907.

## Canoe Sail Camping, July 3–6 Little Tupper Lake, Adirondacks, NY

This is a small wilderness lake we will camp on for the first time. Since it is a Wilderness Area nothing motorized is allowed. This makes it ideal for sailing canoes, but any canoe or kayak would be great. We'll be camped on a beach with no facilities, so remember to bring everything you will need. Contact Bob & Elsie Celifarco (203) 838-5907.

## Thule Equipment—For Sale

The following equipment is for sale:

Description	Model #	Asking
Load Bar, Pair, 58 in.		\$40
Roller Bar for Rear Load Bar ( <i>attached</i> )		\$20
Rain Gutter Mount ( <i>Set of 4</i> )		\$20
Foot Pack ( <i>Load Bars slide through.</i> )		
Tracker Feet, for Factory Luggage Rack Track ( <i>4</i> )	400	\$50
Door Mount Clamps ( <i>Set of 4</i> )	Kit 060	\$10
Canoe Gunwale Stops with straps ( <i>4</i> )		\$50
Hydro-Glide Rear Saddle ( <i>Pair</i> )	875	\$50
Kayak Saddles ( <i>2 Sets of 4</i> )	1050-40	\$20/ea
Outrigger ( <i>For solo lifting</i> )	547	\$20
Bicycle Carrier ( <i>4 Sets</i> ) <i>Never used</i>	1050-19	\$30/ea
"J" Bars, Set of 2, with Rack Clamp		\$10

If you are interested, or have any questions, please contact us: Steve and Mary Keller—(201) 236-8427, or, via e-mail—[doublekayak@yahoo.com](mailto:doublekayak@yahoo.com). We're located at 65 Maple Street, Ramsey, NJ 07446.

## Racers and Racer-Wanna-Bes—Take Note

Sebago has recently purchased a new fiberglass 'double' trainer boat with overstern rudder. This boat will accommodate most sea kayakers who have the ability to maintain a steady stroke, the desire to move faster, and the desire to improve their technique. We hope this new boat attracts more paddlers to the racing program group sessions—which will be Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings, either at the club or up at the lake, dependent upon where the racing committee chair(s) are that week.

This new boat, with a Sebago red deck, will be a great way to develop a base of skilled paddlers so we can get more people into the club's four person racing boats. We were able to purchase it—at cost—from the South African manufacturer for \$650 (plus \$300 for shipping). A comparable boat would cost at least \$2000, but this manufacturer is hoping that our use of it will expose North American paddlers to the quality of their product, and help to develop a market for them.

Paddling a racing boat, even a trainer like the one we are getting, takes much less brute effort than other types of canoes/kayaks since they move more smoothly through the water. The seat and footbrace positioning also enables the paddler to easily utilize their legs and upper body rotation. The boat should arrive at the marine port in Savannah, Georgia, towards the latter half of March. Any member who knows anyone that may be able to pass through Savannah to pick up the boat, please contact Mike Boxer, (718) 241-9130.

# Calendar

## March to June 2004

**THE SEBAGO CANOE CLUB**  
 1400 PAERDEGAT AVENUE NORTH  
 FOOT OF AVENUE N  
 BROOKLYN, NY 11236-4181

**BROOKLYN PHONE: 718-241-3683**  
**LAKE SEBAGO CABIN: 845-351-9802**

*NOTE: Events published are based on information available at the time this publication goes to press and are not necessarily inclusive of all activities in this time period. We suggest confirming dates with the contact person listed for each event.*



<b>MARCH</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>7-9</b>	<b>Board Meeting</b>
	<b>12</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>6-9</b>	<b>First Sea Kayak Committee Meeting</b>
			BYOB	Come see the progress of the skin boat at Steve Heinzerling's house—455 Westminster Road, Brooklyn: 718.462.6606. <i>If you plan on attending please RSVP Thomasina 718.243.0785 or e: thomasinaw@mac.com by March 11</i> —we need a count of people so we can order enough pizza. If you need a ride and need to buddy up let me know. (Q train to Cortelyou Road.)
	<b>26-28</b>	<b>Friday-Sunday</b>		<b>Paddlesport Show</b> —see Events & Notices page (opposite) for time and place.
<b>APRIL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>7-9</b>	<b>Board Meeting</b>
	<b>17</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>10-4</b>	<b>Season Opener</b>
				—potluck lunch
	18	Sunday	10-4	Season Opener rain date
	24	Saturday	10-12	Rowing Committee meeting
	25	Sunday	10-4	First Workday of the year
			—Come early—pizza lunch will be provided.	
	28	Wednesday	6-8	Wednesday Flatwater Paddling begins (PRC)
	30-May 2	weekend		Canoe Sailing for Beginners, Spruce Run NJ
				—see Events & Notices page (opposite) for time and place.
<b>MAY</b>	1	Saturday	9-12	Flatwater paddling begins (PRC)e
	<b>5</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>7-9</b>	<b>Board Meeting</b>
	16	Sunday	10-4	Second Workday of the year
				—Come early—pizza lunch will be provided.
	<b>22</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>10-5</b>	<b>Open House</b>
<b>JUNE</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>7-9</b>	<b>Board Meeting</b>
	<b>6</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>9-12</b>	<b>Jamaica Bay Blessing of the Fleet</b>

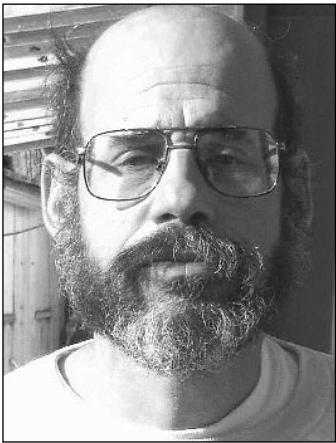
**The Board and Committe Chairs will be meeting very soon to prepare the extended 2004 Calendar. Look to the next issue of The BLADE—due out the last week of May—for a complete list of events.**

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## Sailing Rules Myths

by Bob Celifarco

**MYTH 1. "If a capsized boat accepts outside help, she must retire."**

*Not necessarily true.* A sailor in danger may receive all possible outside help. I would say if a capsized sailor accepts help only to get his boat upright and bails it to the point where he is stable

enough to be left alone, he can continue in the race. (Rule 41 OUTSIDE HELP & Rule 1.1 Helping Those in Danger)

**MYTH 2. "When you stop to help a boat in distress there is no way to recover your lost positions"**

*Definitely false.* Simply take note of your current position and whatever may be happening and be prepared to make a request for redress in writing to the person running the race, right after you land. (Rule 60.1 preamble and (b); Rule 62.1 preamble and (c); Rules 62.2 & 61.3)

**MYTH 3. "It is illegal to repeatedly move the rudder back and forth"**

*Not necessarily true.* The rudder may be jerked continuously to the same side (may damage rudder) to turn the boat, as when trying to round a mark or get out of "irons". But be careful not to be guilty of sculling. (Rule 42.2 Prohibited Actions (d) Sculling; see also both paragraphs of (d) Sculling; p. 224 of Dave Perry's UNDERSTANDING THE RACING RULES OF SAILING THROUGH 2004)

**MYTH 4. "A boat moving backwards has no rights over other boats"**

*Not always true.* A boat moving backwards only loses her rights if the crew has backwinded one of the sails. Otherwise the vessel is considered close-hauled on one tack or the other, depending of course on which side the wind is coming from. Or if right into the wind, on whichever tack she was last on. Then, all other rules apply. (Rule 20 STARTING ERRORS; PENALTY TURNS; MOVING ASTERN)

**MYTH 5. "You should hit a keep clear boat to prove she failed to keep clear"**

*Bad idea.* Firstly, it is unnecessary. If the right-of-way boat feels a need to take avoiding action, then the keep clear boat has not kept clear and can be penalized. (See "Keep Clear in Definitions"; see also Dave Perry's "Interpretations of Keep Clear" on pages 71 & 72 of his UNDERSTANDING THE RACING RULES OF SAILING THROUGH 2004—especially

the first full paragraph on page 72.) Secondly, if a right-of-way boat fails to take action to avoid contact and damage results, she may be subject to being penalized, including disqualification if the damage is serious. (Rule 14 AVOIDING CONTACT; see also Rule 44.1 Taking a Penalty)

SOURCE: American Canoe Association. *The Racing Rules of Sailing 2002.*

Perry, Dave. *Understanding the Racing Rules of Sailing through 2004.*

Long-time Sebago member Bob Celifarco is currently Chairperson of the National Sailing Committee of the ACA



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## San Diego Paddle

by Charles Egleston

On 10 January 2004, when the air temperature in Canarsie was in the single digits and the water in Paerdegat basin was in the thirties, I and my Feathercraft Kahuna folding kayak (in its backpack) went to San Diego, California, for the day and I went kayaking in Mission Bay, where the water temperature was in the upper fifties and the air temperature was

in the mid seventies. When my 7AM flight was taxiing out to the runway for takeoff, I looked out over the waters of our Jamaica Bay and saw it covered with wisps of sea smoke fog. (Sea smoke forms when the air temperature is below ten degrees Fahrenheit, and the cold air mass sits quietly over warmer waters.) The smoke rose in thousands of steam clouds over a Jamaica Bay that stretched out endlessly, like a great bowl of soup, barren of boaters and sea birds. My plane lifted off to the east and circled around to pass over Long Beach Island and from 5,000 feet the sea smoke on the open ocean was patterned like altocumulus clouds, the ones high overhead in the jet stream that presage rain, but these clouds were sitting just over the surface of the water in an unending pattern of striation, highlighted by the rays of the rising sun. It was one of the most remarkable sights of nature I have ever seen, and to me it presaged a good day of boating in California.

I landed in San Diego just after 9:30 am Pacific time. In New York I'd been out in bone-chilling cold lugging my heavy Kahuna backpack and sitting in unheated buses (the Airtrain hadn't operated due to cold.) Now I was in California and I was hot. I stopped by a restroom and took off my silk long underwear pants. At baggage claim I put them and my other winter clothes into my Kahuna backpack. The sunshine outside the terminal was bright, and the sky cloudless.

The bus route into town is alongside the harbor. There is a maritime museum there, which has sailing ships, and at the North Embarcadero the carrier Midway was being moved into a permanent berth by tugboats. A fireboat alongside was shooting out streams of water in celebration of the landing of this future maritime museum of the city.

Mission Bay Park in San Diego consists of 4,236 acres and is approximately half land and half water. I had heard about Mission Bay kayaking for years, and I figured that

with its warm, protected, shallow waters, and because it was such a large venue for watersports, I would be able to figure out how to paddle there with a minimum of effort. I had to be in the city for a committee meeting from 11:30 to 12:30; the best part of the meeting was noticing from the flags on the building next door that the breeze was off the ocean. I returned to the airport again to get advice as to where in Mission Bay I should go so that I could easily return to the airport by taxi when I had finished paddling.

The west side of Mission Bay was recommended to me, near the Bahia Resort, and a cab dropped me off at Ventura Cove. A broad grassy margin above a long and gently sloping sand beach provided a comfortable platform on which I could put together the Kahuna. As I assembled my boat, I was heartened by the sight of many kayakers and sailboats enjoying the warm waters of the bay. By 2:15 pm my boat was assembled, my drysuit was on (I hoped to practice my Eskimo roll and I knew the extra warmth would make that easier), and after shooing a seagull from my deck, I launched. My down coat, my dry clothes, and my wallet were packed safely in a drybag behind the seat of the kayak.

After about an hour of attempting to make slight modifications in the boat to make a roll possible, I gave up trying to roll and decided instead to explore the bay. Most of the kayakers I had seen were coming and going around the point to the right and south of Ventura Cove. I decided to follow. I had no map, which was an oversight on my part, but there were many kayakers and I knew I would have no problem with getting lost. My tentative plan was to work myself south towards the city center in the hope that I could find a bus into the city or at least find a cab closer to the airport. I crossed under the West Mission Bay Drive Bridge and entered Bonita Cove on my right, following two kayakers who looked as if they knew their way. By the time I fully

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entered the cove they were too far away to hail. At that point I paddled over to a fisherman, who caught a smelt as I came closer. I asked him if it were possible for me to paddle down the coast to the airport, and he told me that it would be at least a five hour paddle, and that the open ocean was just around Mission Point and through Mission Bay Channel. I decided to paddle out to the open ocean and see where that put me.

The channel was busy and I stayed against the north jetty, well outside the path of boat traffic. There were many seagulls and one very bored pelican that I passed. I went almost to the end of the jetties. Near the end of the jetties, the offshore wind coupled with an outgoing tide was bringing in swells twenty feet high, and the danger of dumping or being pushed into the rocks was present. I decided to retreat.

I continued my explorations in south Mission Bay. I returned under the West Mission Bay Drive Bridge and then crossed under the Ingraham Street Bridge and headed south, passing through Pacific Passage alongside Sea World, where I heard the announcer for the aquatic show.

Pacific Passage brought me to a boat ramp, where a recently landed power boater told me that he did not know of any buses in that area, and he suggested I return to the Ingraham Street Bridge, where I could find a bus outside of Sea World, although he did not know how long the buses continued to run on Saturdays. I decided instead to return to Ventura Beach. At least there I could get a cab. The sun was setting over the Pacific as I paddled north. At this time of day, I had Ventura Cove to myself. The tide was six feet lower than when I had launched, confirming my suspicions about one cause of the swells in the channel. Mud flats greeted me, and I had the fascinating sight of a scallop rapidly propelling itself in the shallow water. How fitting, I thought. A scallop shell is emblematic of Saint James, "San Diego" in Spanish.

Night was falling as I carried my gear up to the grass, but I had enough light to disassemble the Kahuna, pack it, and get dressed. While I was considering whether or not to phone for a cab from the Bahia Resort next to Ventura Beach, I saw a city bus pass down West Mission Bay Drive heading north. Oftentimes, where a bus travels north it also travels south; such was the case on West Mission Bay Drive and I caught a southbound bus into downtown San Diego. There was time for a Johnny Walker Black at the bar in the U. S. Grant Hotel (which contains a full-length portrait of its founder, the son of the general and president.) I was at the airport by 8 pm.

A few hours later and I had settled-in for my four and half hour nonstop flight to JFK. We arrived at 6 am of a very cold Sunday morning. The Airtrain broke down on the way to Jamaica station, but I was warm and napped for the half hour delay.

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A local fishing village among the islands in Ha Long—Hania Midura in foreground.

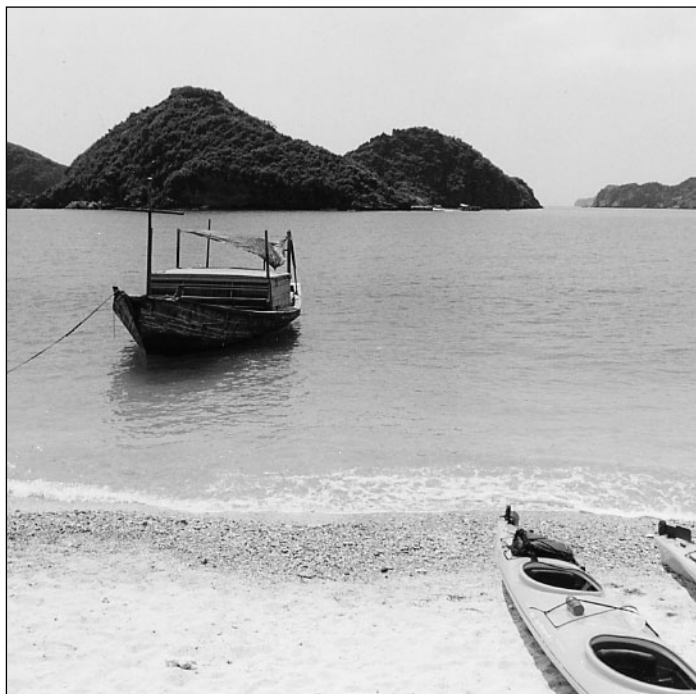


## Kayaking in Ha Long Bay

by Michael Midura

In late September 2003 my sister and I had the good fortune to spend three days kayaking in Ha Long Bay in northern Vietnam, not far from the border with China. “Ha Long” (“descending dragon” in Vietnamese) is named after the fantastic limestone formations jutting out of an intensely green sea. They are said to resemble the thrashings of the mythical beast as it was cast into the water eons ago.

These limestone formations were surreal, like something out of a Chinese landscape painting. They would undulate up and down and left and right and after awhile it was very easy to lose all sense of direction. The bay sees a fair amount of tourism, from the day-trippers who go to see the more accessible caverns, to the multi-day junk trips run from nearby Cat Ba Island that anchor for the night among



View from the beach and the “boat home.”



Kayaks and the Dining Hall.

the islands. We were in a quiet area, without too much traffic aside from the occasional putt-putt of a fishing boat or trawler. This allowed us to take in Ha Long's charms with relative tranquility.

Most of the bay consists of a national park. Our outfitter, Handspan Travel, had rented an island from the park authorities on which it had erected something like a "Fantasy Island" for paddlers: bamboo huts, a shower, a chemical toilet, a neat row of one and two person sea kayaks and other amenities. Like the two area gentlemen who lived there in shifts, cooked local delicacies for the guests and sucked *very* strong tobacco through an enormous bamboo bong whenever they had a spare moment... yes, it was tobacco...

The kayaking itself was incredible – calm water for the most part, with occasional winds and strong tides to make it challenging. One of the highlights of the trip was the ability to paddle into a few of the caves eroded into the limestone. In certain instances we would glide out the other end, entering vast circular pools ringed with rock that rose

directly from the sea to great heights above.

Another highlight was the possibility of diving into the soup-warm water and swimming around whenever we needed to cool off – definitely an asset when the conditions were similar to a mid-July paddle on Jamaica Bay. We learned very quickly to seek out the shady side of any channel, and to apply and reapply sunscreen regularly.

The trip itself was very well run. Our guide, Thieu (pronounced Twee), had led the same itinerary several times a month for several seasons. He was very knowledgeable about the area and his English was excellent. All departures and pickups to and from Hanoi were punctual. And the price was very, very reasonable.

So if you ever find yourself in Hanoi, by all means get out of the city and onto the water. One of the world's great paddling destinations is not too far away. And if things work out right, you'll soon be dipping your paddle into the Gulf of Tonkin.



*Padding through the caves—Michael Midura front right, friend Brandon near left, guide Thieu in back.*



*Padding among the islands.*

*The Blade*

**The BLADE**  
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