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In This Issue

This issue features articles on two kayak gatherings, two interviews, two teaching articles, a short guide for travelers to Greenland, a paddle survey, and an article on tuilik-making.

Bill Samson, frequent forum contributor and native of Scotland, describes the UK Traditional Kayak Meeting held in 2009 — evidence for the growth of Greenland-style kayaking. Jeanette Rogers, who competed in Greenland last year, highlights the virtues of SSTIKS, the South Sound Traditional Inuit Kayak Symposium, held in Washington State. A popular event, SSTIKS's greatest asset may be its kid-friendliness.

Further evidence of the growth of Greenland-style kayaking can be found in Greg Stamer's interview (transcribed by Dubside) of Mr. Tanaka Toshihiko, current president of Qajaq Japan. Mr. Tanaka describes the traditional paddling scene in Japan, the competition held in Japan, and the hope that members of his club will someday be able to compete in Greenland.

Niels Thomassen, current president of Qaannat Kattuffiat, details, in an interview with Dubside, several of the challenges involved in running an organization spread along the coast of Greenland. This interview, along with Jeanette Rogers's guide to traveling in Greenland, should help potential visitors know what to expect when they compete.

Two articles on teaching offer insight on beginning rolling and ropes gymnastics.. Helen Wilson explains her unique method of teaching the standard roll, and Dubside gives fundamentals of *palluussineq*, "the act of lying on one's stomach" — a great first maneuver to learn on the ropes.

Roy Martin's paddle survey gives anthropometric details of the participants and the paddle sizes they use. The survey is evidence of the not only of the paddler's measurements and the size of the paddle used, but also of the personal nature of this choice. In Greenland there are regional variations regarding general paddle size, and a glance at *Kayaks of Greenland* reveals tremendous variety over time. Kamp Absalonsen once said that kayaks were designed for one individual; it seems paddles may be as well.

Last, Jersey Shore Sea Kayak Association member Dana Rutherford has written a comprehensive article on making your own tuilik and other neoprene gear. Well written and copiously illustrated, the article should inspire those without traditional gear to consider making their own.

Cover photos and the image on this page were taken in Ilulissat by Sandy Noyes



Dave Robertson and the 1950s slalom kayak that he restored.

Photo by Bill Samson.

by **Bill Samson**

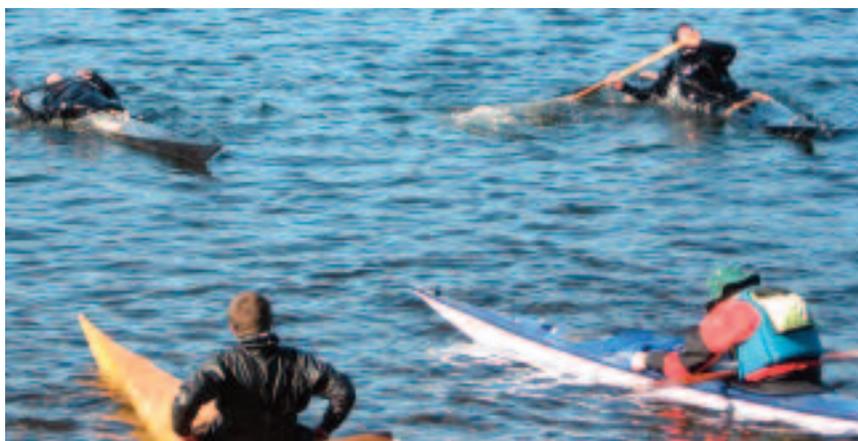
Back in the days when the Baidarka List was the Internet forum for traditional kayak nerds, I made the acquaintance of Richard Best. I live in Dundee, Scotland, and Richard in Ashford, Kent, which is nearly 500 miles away, so we didn't actually meet until much later.

Nevertheless, there was always this idea nagging away in both of our minds about how great it would be to have a get-together of traditional kayak people in the UK.

At that time there were very few of us around — in fact, I think that Richard and I were at that time the only people actively building traditional skin-on-frame kayaks in the UK that either of us knew.

As the years went by, some more people became active in traditional kayaking — either as builders or as Greenland-style paddlers or both. A number of UK-based “lurkers” on the Qajaq USA Web site rose over the parapet and made themselves known.

By chance, 4 years ago, I was at the Paddle '06 symposium in Perth, Scotland, when I bumped into Duncan Winning. Duncan mentioned that he knew a woman who had recently launched a skin-on-frame kayak in Scotland, having built it with Anders Thygesen in Norway. By good luck, she was at the symposium too, and Duncan introduced me to Sue Ellcome — a kayak builder and skilled Greenland-style paddler. Sue, it turned out, had been to Greenland and had paddled with another woman who knew Richard, and so the network began to form.



Synchronized rolling.

Photo by Bill Samson

In 2008 I had a phone call from Richard, telling me that he and James Song were in Scotland, having just paddled around

Jura. Could they drop by? We hit it off instantly, finding that we had and very similar interests and shared sense of humor.

Early in 2009 Richard contacted me to see if I had a reasonable number of kayak builders in my email address book to add to his own collection. It turned out we had a viable number between us, and Richard took on the job of organizing a meeting.

He knew a perfect campsite on the banks of Ullswater, in the English Lake District, and we homed in on the last weekend in September 2009 to give people the longest possible lead time and to avoid the school vacations when the campsite might have been overcrowded.

“The organizational side was flexible in the extreme — no fixed program of events, no registration; just turn up at the campsite any time after the middle of the preceding week and there would be somebody there.”

The organizational side was flexible in the extreme — no fixed program of events, no registration; just turn up at the campsite any time after the middle of the preceding week and there would be somebody there.

Over an interval of about a week, centered on the last weekend in September, about 30 people, including James Song, who traveled all the way from the U.S., came along bringing a fantastic variety of kayaks. Richard himself brought three Greenland-style kayaks and three baidarkas. I brought one Greenland-style kayak, a King Island kayak, and a replica of a Bristol Bay kayak. Sue Ellcome came with two Greenland kayaks, one built specifically for rolling, and Clive Leonard also came with a rolling kayak. Ben Blackburn brought a very finely crafted Greenland kayak that he had built from Chris Cunningham’s instructions. Andy Bien had a Greenland kayak based on the Tyne model.



Richard Best and Raquel Carballal test out the capacity of a Bristol Bay kayak. Photo by Bill Samson

Dave Robertson brought a 1950s Mac-2 slalom skin on frame that he had restored and re-skinned.

We were particularly fortunate to be joined on one of the days by Derek Pembleton — a pioneer of sea kayaking in the UK and builder of several stitch-and-glue kayaks, most notably the “Angmagssalik” model designed in 1960 by Ken Littledyke. He had his own with him.

In addition to these traditional kayaks, there were a couple of Feathercraft; a Klepper, complete with Balough Batwing rig and trimaran configuration; and several hard-shell kayaks. Most people, regardless of kayak type, were using traditional paddles, but several were using modern feathered paddles by Lendal, Werner, Klepper, and so on.

The great pleasure of the meeting was being able to try other people’s equipment. Of course, several of the Greenland kayaks were so small that only the most flexible could squeeze their knees under the masak.

The weather was kind — not too cold and mostly sunny, with clear, dark skies in the evening when Andy Bien and I helped people to pick out the constellations as we sat around eating and chatting.

It will be a hard act to follow, but we’re going to try again in 2010. This meeting will be at Tayvallich, Argyll, Scotland, centered on the first weekend in October, with people simply turning up.

Dr Bill Samson is a retired astronomer and has been involved in making kayaks for the past 10 years, his first being a Brinck baidarka. Since then, he has built a Greenland-style kayak, a Morris Recovery kayak, and most recently the Bristol Bay kayak. He worked with Inupiaq builder Sean Gallagher on the construction of a King Island kayak. He has also built a variety of stitch-and-glue kayaks and Percy Blandford’s PBK designs. He lives with his wife, Sheila, in Broughty Ferry, on the east coast of Scotland. Additional pictures from the event can be found in the QajaqUSA gallery.

Teaching Rolling

—The Human Kayak Method

·by Helen Wilson

All photos by Marcella Humphrey

Introduction

Many of my rolling students have come to my classes with preprogrammed phrases and advice that they have heard from friends, read in books and magazines, or seen on one of the many YouTube or rolling DVDs that are currently available. “Shed the resistance,” “keep your head down,” and “hip snap” are just three of the phrases that my students ask me about that I tell them to forget, which often ends in either a panicked expression or some kind of mild argument. I tell my students that a roll is a simple thing... all you have to do is curl up to the surface, turn your kayak the right way up and slide your body onto the back deck. That’s it...really.

Body and Water

The first thing that I do when I teach rolling is to have my students notice the relationship that their body has with the water. The best way to do this is to take away their paddle and kayak and have them float on their back, pointing out how the water supports them. I tell them to put their eyebrows underwater (or their chin in the air—it’s the same position). This not only puts their head in a wonderful position for rolling, but it puts a necessary arch in their back as well. Then I have them notice

their shoulder position. In a floating position, both shoulders should be flat and parallel to the sky. I have my students twist their shoulders a little, lifting one out of the water. This will make floatation difficult. Then I have them tense up their entire body and notice how difficult it is to float. I have them close their eyes and relax again, emphasizing the importance of using the water to help and not hurt the roll, and memorize this position. At this point, without even realizing it, the student has learned the correct shoulder and head position of any layback roll. The next step is to add a paddle and a “human kayak.”

The Human Kayak

With the students floating on their backs in the water, I hold their feet, acting as a “human kayak,” so that the “paddlers” are now laying on their imaginary back deck. I have the paddlers hold an extended paddle across their chest (if they are right-handed it’s extended to the right, and vice versa for left-handed individuals) and tell them to glue it to their body, noticing how both their shoulders and the palms of their hands face the sky or ceiling. If the paddle is positioned correctly across the chest, then twisting the body right and left makes the paddle move, even though essentially it is only the body that is moving and the paddle is just going along with it.



Learning to roll a “human kayak.”

I have the students twist at the waist to move their body out to the side of their imaginary kayak (if they are right-handed they twist to the right, and vice versa for left-handed individuals). I have them keep their legs somewhat straight and their shoulders flat on the surface. This will put their body in an “L” shape. Once in the correct position, I have them simultaneously lift their knee (on the side that they are twisted to), put their eyebrows underwater and slide their body onto the imaginary back deck. I have them do this until they are comfortable with it.

Before the students get in their kayaks, I demonstrate the same exercise with the addition of the kayak. I twist my body out to the side into the “L” shape, keeping my shoulders flat on the surface, the paddle across my chest and my palms facing up. I talk to my students while demonstrating and show them how my knee controls the rotation of the kayak. I demonstrate this by turning it over on top of me and then bringing it back to an upright position. Then I ask my students what I need to do to come up. The answer, as my student will usually tell me, is, “Lift your knee, put your eyebrows underwater, and slide onto the back deck.” I demonstrate this. Then I show them a complete roll as slowly as I can so that they can break down all the pieces. While I am in my kayak, I also demonstrate a balance brace and a butterfly roll, both with and without a paddle, to emphasize that any roll has way more to do with body mechanics than whatever the paddler is holding. Before finishing the roll, and once my mouth is above the surface so that I can speak, I talk to my students, asking them for the pieces to finish the roll. By this point they know, and are ready to get in their kayaks to try it.

In the Kayak

Once in their kayaks, I have them put a fully inflated paddle float on each end of the paddle. I support them while they lay out to the side of the kayak in a balance brace (the “L” shape). I have them hold their kayaks upright using their knee and tell them to make sure that their shoulders remain flat. For students that are having difficulties holding their kayak upright, I have them sit up and rock the kayak



Teaching the balance brace and correct shoulder position for a standard Greenland roll.

back and forth using only their knee. This exercise reinforces the control that the knee has over the angle of the kayak. For students that are having difficulties keeping their shoulders flat, I have them put the hand that is closest to the stern underneath the kayak. I also emphasize that both palms should be facing up. To recover from the balance brace I have the student lift their knee, put their eyebrows underwater, and slide their body onto the back deck. Once the student is somewhat comfortable doing the assisted (paddle float) balance brace alone, then I have them start to let air out of the paddle floats.

After a few minutes, many students will be able to do the balance brace without a paddle float or other assistance. At a very minimum they will have developed a better understanding of the relationship between the water, their body, and the kayak. This is when I have the student remove the paddle floats. Using an extended paddle I have the students once again get into the “L” position, holding the kayak as upright as possible using their knee. I hold onto the shoulder strap of their PFD on the side that is closest to the bow (this will help keep their shoulders square to the surface). I have them check to make sure that their palms face the sky. If their body is fully extended to the side, then the paddle float will be very close, and parallel, to the bow of the kayak.

I count to three, and on “three” I have the students sweep their body onto the back deck, putting additional pressure on their knee and keeping their eyebrows underwater. After a few tries I am able to let go of them as they begin the sweep. I slowly start letting go of the student sooner, although I



Helping a student keep his shoulders flat by holding the right shoulder strap on his PFD.

if the student is having difficulties. A common problem that sometimes develops is that the students begin to push their hand out while sweeping. A reminder that the paddle is irrelevant and to keep



Demonstrating “curling up” to the surface before beginning the roll (set-up position)

Helen Wilson is a sea kayaker who lives in Arcata, California. She has instructed and performed rolling demonstrations in several countries. Helen competed in the 2008 Greenland National Kayaking Championship. For more information, visit www.greenlandorbust.org.

continue to have them wait until “three” before they begin. Soon, I am letting go of them so quickly that their face will go below the surface, and they will need to curl up to remain in “set-up position.” The students begin to count in their head, since being underwater will prevent them from hearing. I might have them straighten their bow-side arm a little, so that the paddle is at, or above, the surface when they go underwater. Once they are sweeping successfully even after their face is slightly underwater, I have them start turning the kayak over on top of them before they begin. Then I have them begin capsizing alone (onto the same side that they’ll be rolling up on and facing up the entire time).

At this point the student will most likely be rolling, although reminders may be needed though reminders may be needed their hands on their chest with their palms facing the sky will fix the problem. It often helps to tell the students to turn their “knuckles to their nose.”

Lessons Learned

The students are now tired, but most rolls will be successful. This is when it is time to quit. Once my students are on dry land and warm, I have them tell me one of the elements of a roll. More often than not they will describe the one part of the roll that they found the most difficult. This is a good thing because it reinforces what they need to work on. I also remind them to practice often but to quit when they get tired. My students are always encouraged to e-mail me with questions.

EDITOR'S LETTER

My father taught elementary school for several years, at the beginning of his career in education, before I was born. Although his teaching career didn't last long (he eventually became an administrator), it made a strong impression on him. Over the years he'd remind me of two things that struck him most as a teacher. The first was that people have different learning styles. I think he was always appalled that everyone was expected to follow the same schedule and be taught the same way. Second, he loved telling me about that moment when a child makes the connection between the sound of individual letters and the words they form. If a child is taught that C – A – T is “cat” and B – A – T is “bat,” the magic occurs when he takes the intellectual leap and discovers that H – A – T is “hat” and thus starts to read.

Those of us who have struggled with rolling can perhaps relate. I remember having trouble simply capsizing when learning a new roll; I remember how disorienting the reverse sweep was. But at some point the lessons stuck and the basic rolls were no longer a struggle. And when a roll isn't a struggle, capsizing is easy, the time underwater doesn't seem so daunting, and your body responds as you expect it to.

The point isn't to brag — I'm a flat-water paddler with more fear of conditions that I like to admit — but to suggest that you have your own learning style, you should seek out mentors who support it, and there's a little magic in learning a new roll.

Tom Milani
August 2010

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to the authors for their timely contributions. Between their travel schedules, jobs, and their own writing, they managed to take the time to write for The Masik and share their experiences and expertise. Thanks also to Alison Sigethy for her tasteful and creative layout of this issue.

Share those happenings — publish your experiences in *The Masik*.

Any material related to traditional kayaking is encouraged, and queries are welcome. Articles may be edited for length and clarity. Please send photos with your submission in JPEG format. Stand-alone photos and captions are also welcome. Materials should be sent to thomasm@qajaqusa.org or mailed to Tom Milani, 1211 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

The seed for Qajaq USA was planted in Delmarva in 1999. That was the year that Kaleraq Bech, then President of Qaannat Kattuffiat (QK), announced that the Greenland championships would be opened to outsiders for the first time. Everyone was invited! This was just 1 year after Maligiaq Padilla first visited Delmarva with a sealskin kayak and, with the help of John Heath, traveled and demonstrated Greenland kayaking techniques across the country.

Greenland-style kayaking outside of Greenland was in its infancy at that time. There weren't instructors teaching these techniques as there are today. You were on your own and had to either travel to Greenland or figure it out yourself from watching videotapes. It was time for a better way.

During Delmarva, I posed the idea to Kaleraq for an American chapter of QK that would strive to keep Greenland as its focus and would teach by mentoring. He was intrigued, and the following year the board of QK voted and Qajaq USA was approved. Keith Attenborough was tireless in his role as our first VP, and I am indebted to his energy and efforts. Our forum was created in 2001 and was an instant success; its volume exceeded our most optimistic projections. We incorporated and accepted our first members the next year.

Over the past 10 years I have been honored to serve as president and watch Greenland kayaking grow from what was largely perceived as a curious fad to a well-accepted branch of kayaking. It is now much bigger than just "rolling" and continues to grow.

An organization is only viable as long as new people infuse it with their unique passion and energy. A founder also has to be careful not to overstay his or her welcome. To that end, I'm pleased to hand over the reins of Qajaq USA to a new president in January of 2011. If all goes as planned, we will announce the name of the next president at Delmarva. I will remain very active with Qajaq USA. I will continue to maintain the Web site, serve as one of the forum administrators, and serve as a board member.

I have enjoyed addressing you, the members, through this column in *The Masik* and look forward to playing a supporting role to the next person who pens this column. An organization's future is dependent on the passion and enthusiasm of its members, and that is something that the traditional kayaking community has in abundance! With your support Qajaq USA will continue to remain vibrant and serve a much needed role in the paddling community.

Greg Stamer

Getting Started on Ropes



Clive Leonard shows us the ropes.

Photo by Bill Samson

by **Dubside**

Introduction

Considering how complicated and time consuming the decision of which model kayak to buy or build as your first is, Greenland ropes are much easier to get started on. You won't have to fret over things like rocker, initial stability, hip room, or Kevlar. Nor do you need to commit yourself financially. About all it takes is rope.

Based on what we can glean from Inuit history, the activity known as *allunariaqattaarneq* was traditionally used to train and condition for kayaking. Yet the precise methods and learning progressions connecting on-water techniques with rope exercises aren't fully documented. It's quite evident from observations at the Greenland games that kids there often pursue ropes for many years before they try rolling. Karen Marie Jensen, from Ilulissat, started when she was 5 years old. For the last several years she has been the highest scoring female ropes competitor. She is now 19 and learned her first

roll last July. She came to the 2009 Delmarva retreat in October and had a fairly consistent hand roll by the end of the weekend. The fact that she was so spry and limber from years of ropes no doubt had a lot to do with it.

In the U.S. we seem to have discovered these two disciplines in reverse order. Greenland-style rolling has firmly established itself as a major component of the traditional kayaking field, but ropes have only more recently overcome obscurity. It's logical to conclude that each roll on the competition list must have a corresponding rope move. But, with a few exceptions, they have only a general relationship. Rope exercises hone one's coordination, flexibility, and body awareness, all of which come into play in rolling.

Learning *palluussineq*

Whether learning or teaching ropes for the first time, the maneuver known as *palluussineq* makes a very good starting point. It's done stretched lengthwise face down, with each leg wrapped in one rope. In fact, if you can get someone onto the ropes and into the setup position you've overcome the biggest obstacle. Start by having her stand between the two ropes, grabbing one in each hand, then lean forward while raising one leg behind her, up between the ropes until her toes can slip over the rope, catching it on the top of her foot. Now do the same with the other leg so that both ankles are on a rope.

Next have her lean forward, shifting their hands more in front of them so they can then bring their knees over the ropes on each side enough to take each ankle to the outside, around and back up between the ropes. Her head will then need to lift clear of the ropes so that each hand can grasp both ropes, palms up, one at the chest, the other reaching past the head. To put the finishing touches on the setup, make sure the legs are relatively straight, knees not too bent. The toes should point straight to the ground as much as comfort allows. Wearing shoes is a good idea.

"In the U.S....Greenland-style rolling has firmly established itself as a major component of the traditional kayaking field, but ropes have only more recently overcome obscurity."

As with all the other rope moves, the object is to rotate completely around and return to the starting position. Getting upside down in *palluussineq* is fairly easy. But make sure the arms don't let the body hang loose under the ropes. The ropes should be held tight to the chest all the way through. To get back upright, start with just the ankles. They should twist first, then the knees bend a little, then the thighs and waist twist so that the legs are back over the ropes, and finally the head and shoulders come back into the original position. Think of a corkscrew action. The more flexible a person is, the more she can twist her way up slowly and pull off *palluussineq* with ease. As with rolling a kayak, you know you've got the technique down if you can do it nice and slow. It gets more efficient with practice, as your body learns exactly where and when to exert force and eliminates superfluous effort.

If there's a problem of feet coming loose and falling out of the ropes, make sure the ankles are bent at 90 degrees and try to keep the legs close to each other. If keeping the body held close to the ropes isn't working well, make sure the top hand hasn't slipped down to below face level. It should be grabbing the ropes above the top of one's head. Sometimes it is also helpful to have an assistant partly support a person's weight as she hangs below the ropes and gets a feel for the twisting motion. Like learning a first roll, *palluussineq* can seem impossibly difficult initially, but feels surprisingly easy later on.

Incidentally, there are eight different variations:

- (1) One hand high, the other at chest level done rotating in one direction.
- (2) Then rotate back around the other way.
- (3) and (4) The same two moves done after switching the left hand with the right.
- (5) and (6) Both hands held high, above head level, rotating forward then backwards.
- (7) and (8) Reverse the position of the left hand with the right and rotate forward and backwards again.

Running through all eight variations is a good workout in itself. It can be exhausting at first but gets less tiring with every practice session. If you need a goal to work toward, be advised that seasoned ropes competitors can rip through all eight variations of *palluussineq* in less than half a minute.

Rope maneuvers and rolling

I have only found a few instances where a rope technique can be applied directly to a roll. *Palluussineq* is one of them. Practice it enough to where the ankle-first corkscrew idea comes naturally. Then get in a kayak, set up for the standard roll and capsize. Now from the upside-down position get the paddle on the surface, begin to sweep it, and think of that same ankles-first idea. Corkscrew your body around, bringing your head up last. It's more or less the same motion you may have been doing before, but it feels different because you're thinking about it in a different way.

"I have only found a few instances where a rope technique can be applied directly to a roll. Palluussineq is one of them."

With your legs braced solidly inside the kayak, you can't actually twist your ankles without twisting the whole kayak, and that's the point. Phrases like "hip snap" or "knee lift" refer to the same concept, but you can just as easily imagine it initiating from all the way down at your toes. *Palluussineq* lets you isolate and hone this motion without having to hold your breath. Whether you perceive it as ankle, knee, or hip initiated, the kayak has to come up first. Just like on the ropes, if you struggle and pull your head up prematurely, you'll use way too much effort and seldom succeed.



McKinley Rodriguez doing palluussineq at SSTIKS '09, while John Pedersen from Ilulissat looks on.

Photo by Dubsid.

Say the word

Palluussineq isn't complete without one last finishing touch. Get in the habit of referring to it by its Greenlandic name: "PAH-SHLU-SSIN-NUCK." Don't worry if the pronunciation isn't perfect. Actually "SHLU" is a crude approximation of the Greenlandic double-L. We don't have the true sound in the English language. Check the Qajaq USA Web site to hear a recording of a native Greenlander saying this word. You'll find it in the rolling list as the second entry. That's right, you get two-for-one credit learning this word because the rope move and the chest scull have the same name. The verb *pallorpoq* describes

laying on one's stomach, which is the facedown orientation for both maneuvers. The ending *-neq* makes the verb a noun, so *palluussineq* becomes "the act of lying on one's stomach."

Ropes and competition

Since I started going to Greenland competitions, the ropes rules have gone through a few changes, sometimes making it hard to know what to expect next. *Palluussineq* has a competition point value that has fluctuated between 1 and 2 points. At the moment it is 2 points per variation, making the full set of eight good for 16 points. I have been informed that as of 2009, Qaannat Kattuffiat has decided not to make any changes to ropes rules for the next 2 years.

The distances and dimensions for setting up the ropes have also varied a bit at the competitions. However, if you are just getting started these details don't matter too much. You can let your trees, rafters, or wall hooks dictate the specifications. Anywhere between 12 and 20 feet wide will work. Make sure the rope, the knots, and the support structure aren't going to break, and make sure you've got padding or soft ground below you just in case they do.

If you had a set of ropes instead of a couch in front of your television set, do you think you'd be in better shape than you are now?

Dubsid competed at the Greenland Kayaking Championships in 2004, 2006, and 2009. His knowledge, expertise, and enthusiasm are captured in two instructional DVDs, "Greenland Rolling with Dubsid" and "Qajaasaarneq—Greenland Rope Gymnastics." He favors folding kayaks, always wears black, and has been encouraging others to learn the Greenlandic names of the competition rolling and rope moves, as he has done.



Niels and Daisey in Greenland,

Photo by Dubsided.

Dubsided talks with the President of Qaannat Kattuffiat

Niels Thomassen lives in Upernavik, in the northern part of West Greenland. In 2009 he was reelected to a second 2-year term as president of Qaannat Kattuffiat. He is trained as a plumber but currently works as a property manager. His daughter Daisey spent time in the U.S. as an exchange student and served as the translator for this interview. Niels knew enough English to understand the questions but was more comfortable answering in Greenlandic. The interview was held on 13 July 2009 in Ilulissat, one day after the national championships took place. Thanks to Marcel Rodriguez for input on selecting the questions.

“We need more contact with other people from outside Greenland.”

Dubside: You have been the president of Qaannat Kattuffiat for two years now. How are things working out overall?

Niels: *The people who do kayaking, it's the same every year, but it's doing good, and the clubs in Greenland, they're the same too, but they can be better.*

Dubside: OK, like having different people?

Niels: *We need different people, new people.*

Dubside: What is the most difficult part of holding the competition every year?

Niels: *The most difficult is the transportation with kayaks and people.*

Dubside: The cost?

Niels: *Yeah, and there's no ship to Upernavik or north. [In the last few years the passenger ferry discontinued service on the northern end of the route.]*

Dubside: That's too bad.

Niels: *And some of the people don't follow the rules. They need (to know) more rules.*

Dubside: OK, rules?

Niels: *Of kayak competition — Qaannat Kattuffiat's rules for competition in kayaking.*

Dubside: OK, people aren't understanding the rules well enough?

Niels: *No.*

Dubside: All right, any specific rules you want to mention or just rules in general?

Niels: *Some of the people don't use...harpoons...*

Dubside: They aren't the proper harpoon, the proper weight or size?

Niels: *Yeah, a lot of people don't have the as-sagiklut [deck-mounted harpoon holder].*

Dubside: As Greenland moves closer to full independence from Denmark, how will this affect Qaannat Kattuffiat in the coming years?

Niels: *It won't be affected.*

Dubside: Not even better or worse, just pretty much...

Niels: *It will be better.*

Dubside: Is there anything else you'd like to say to Qajaq USA and all the English-speaking people interested in Greenland kayaking?

Niels: *Qaannat Kattuffiat hopes that Americans or other foreigners send a message or call or do something when something is going to happen, like there will be a competition in the USA and they call Qaannat Kattuffiat so they can have contact. We need more contact with other people from outside Greenland.*

Dubside: OK.

Niels: *Directly to Qaannat Kattuffiat, not to the individuals in Greenland.*

Dubside: Yeah?

Niels: *Qaannat Kattuffiat doesn't get more information enough, so they want...*

Dubside: People are doing things or organizing things but you never know about it, but you want to be aware of?

Niels: *No, not only like that. Like they're going to have competition here in Greenland, here in Ilulissat, and people come but they didn't inform Qaannat Kattuffiat.*

Dubside: Oh, the people that are coming. I guess that sometimes it's gotten a little informal, when people from the U.S. just show up and say, "Here I am," rather than register ahead of time through the official procedure. [Note: The interviewer himself is quite guilty of this, and has made the mistake of thinking that because someone in Greenland such as Kamp or Maligiaq or John Pedersen knew of his plans to come, this information got passed along to Qaannat Kattuffiat. However, the proper way to register is to get in touch directly with Qaannat Kattuffiat ahead of time.]

Niels: *Yes, but also when they are going to have a competition in America, we want to know so maybe we can come.*

Dubside: So Greenlanders can come. OK.

Niels: *We can have a dialogue going on.*

Dubside: Are there Greenlanders who are ready to come other places who can afford it? Because that's always an issue for us. We

would like to have lots of Greenlanders coming to our events but we can only afford so much. Are there Greenlanders who would pay their own way to come to those things?

Niels: *When there's a competition in America, Qaannat Kattuffiat can pay some of the money, not all but some. [Niels was advised of the planned competition in Washington state for November 2010, and the commercial versus nonprofit tradeoff as it relates to Qajaq USA and the Seattle-area business operation that is hosting the event.]*

Niels: *At this competition maybe some of those that are very good kayakers in Greenland can go to USA, maybe as a prize. We will pay some of it. That's our goal in Qaannat Kattuffiat. And not just to USA but maybe to other countries.*

Dubside: Everybody outside of Greenland, they'll have little competitions, but the main thing is they want to eventually be able to come to Greenland to compete.

Niels: Yes.

Dubside: Is it hard to find enough different cities in Greenland to have the competition? It can't be in Upernavik because the ferry doesn't go there.

Niels: *Yeah. Nuuk, Ilulissat, Sisimiut, Qaqortoq, Paamiut. Well, Paamiut not so good. [This leaves just four or five possible towns. There have been affiliate clubs in several other places such as Aasiaat, but most of them are either functionally inactive, or are presumably lacking the necessary re-*

sources (personnel, facilities, or accessibility) to successfully stage the National Championship.]

Dubside: How is your son, little Niels? He was with you at the 2004 competition and he was a small boy.

Niels: *He's thirteen now.*

Dubside: What's he doing?

Niels: *He's not so interested in kayaking anymore. Maybe it will come again.*

Dubside: He's in Upernavik?

Niels: *Yeah.*

Dubside: Is he the youngest one?

Niels: *No. I have two younger, a little son and a daughter. I have many— I have six children.*

Dubside: It looked like the Qaqortoq team this year had lots of new young kids, more than before. That's good to see.

Niels: *I hope that we will have more contact from other countries to Qaannat Kattuffiat.*

Dubside: The way to contact is?

Niels: *E-mail (upernavik@greenet.gl)*

Dubside: There are people in Japan who are really interested in Greenland kayaking. Maybe at some point they will come to the competition. We'll see about that. I guess our biggest obstacle, our biggest difficulty, aside from the cost of going to Greenland, is the language. We don't speak Danish or Greenlandic so it's that much harder for us.

Niels: *And I will take some courses [on] speaking English. [Note: The 2010 Championship will be held in Nuuk, Greenland's capital city and by far the largest concentration of people in the country. The competition was last held there in 2003, when media coverage and public interest seemed to hit a peak. In the intervening years, the event hasn't had quite the high-profile image it previously enjoyed. With Greenland's historic 21 June 2009 vote for full independence and the increased attention on the Arctic in relation to global climate change, the 2010 Kayaking Championship in Nuuk promises to be an important showcase for traditional kayaking and an opportunity for both Qaannat Kattuffiat and Qajaq USA to rise to the occasion.]*



*Flags of many nations flying over the Greenland Games
Photo by Alison Slgethy*



The author throwing the harpoon at the Greenland Championship

Photo by Matthew Walls

Preparing for Greenland

by **Jeanette Rogers**

For many kayakers, going to Greenland for the National Kayaking Championship is the adventure of a lifetime. For Americans, it is a long and expensive trip just to get there, so it is important to make sure you are fully prepared for all aspects of the trip. If you have the privilege of going to Greenland for the games, here are some key items to consider.

Events/Gear

- Familiarize yourself with guidelines for all of the events: harpoons, short and long race, portage, individual and team rolling, ropes, and team relay.
- Expect the unexpected; rules and event times can change at any time.
- If at all possible, bring your own kayak. Options include making one there, or shipping a folder if you don't want to ship a full kayak. While you may be able to borrow a kayak, it may not be the best kayak for all events (I was loaned a racing kayak that definitely wasn't built for rolling).
- Bring a drysuit; water tends to be 1–2 degrees Celsius and you likely won't find a suit to borrow.
- Pack layers of clothing so you can be prepared for all types of weather. Note that loose clothing is better for mosquito protection – they bite through polypro or other tight clothing! Bring a mosquito net too.
- If going with multiple people, see if you can share gear — see *Getting There & Cost – Baggage*.
- Depending on event location you don't need a PFD or flashlight (midnight sun)

Getting There & Cost

- Airfare: Air Greenland or Iceland Air will get you to Greenland. You will have to fly through either Copenhagen or Iceland. Expect to pay up to \$2,000 per person.
- Baggage: Air Greenland Baggage limits really are extremely serious:
 - Checked baggage up to 20 kilos (44 pounds) – number of bags doesn't matter, but don't go over the total weight limit or you'll pay a lot extra per kilo you go over.
 - Carry-on bag really is only 1 bag — 8 kilos (17 pounds) — and beware that if you are taking a flight within Greenland, the bag size limits might be smaller than posted on the site.
- Consider trip insurance or integrate extra time in layover cities in case of flight or game delays.
- Cost: Greenland/Denmark is expensive. Bottle of water? Soda? Snack? \$5.00 US. A hostel in Ilulissat (very touristy city) cost \$100/night, hotels were more.
- Competition fee: Each team is supposed to pay \$1,000 for the first 5 members (2009). Individuals might be able to just pay \$200 each. Note that this is a huge bargain since you will be saving on hotel and meal costs by staying at the school (mattresses provided) and eating meals there.
- Wire transfers: Booking some things in advance may require wire transfers to Greenland. Purchasing airline tickets may require a call to your credit card company. Notify appropriate financial institutions to avoid delays or blocked credit cards while abroad.

Language

- Danish and Greenlandic are spoken in Greenland. Some people are trilingual, but don't expect everyone to speak a lot of English.
- All competition announcements and handouts are in Greenlandic.
- At least learn the Greenlandic names of events and maneuvers for ropes and rolls.
- Be prepared to struggle with Greenlandic and have everyone correct your pronunciations. Say everything with a smile and they'll appreciate the effort.

Introduced to a Greenland paddle in late 2007, Jeanette Rogers quickly became an avid fan of traditional kayaking. After building a qajaq and learning multiple rolls, she and her husband set their sights on the 2009 Greenland Competition. Going to Greenland to participate in the games opened their eyes to the full culture of Greenlandic kayaking. For photos and stories about the 2009 competition in Greenland, go to <http://kayakgrl.livejournal.com/tag/greenland>. Jeanette lives in Seattle with her husband and helps with SSTIKS and Greenland Week.



Greg Stamer talks with the President of Qajaq Japan

transcribed by Dubside

Editor's note: Since this interview was conducted, Qajaq Japan has become a member of Qaannat Kattuffiat.

Japan has a small but dedicated group of paddlers interested in traditional techniques. Referring to themselves as "G-Style" (the G stands for Greenland), they recently marked their 10th anniversary. At the G-style 2009 gathering they staged their third annual rolling contest, called "GUTS 3rd," or G-Paddle Users' Trial Stages. Their modified rolling rules allow 10 minutes to do ten rolls on each side. From the Greenland competition list of 35 moves, each contestant must do 5 of the basic rolls and select, ahead of time, the remaining 5 to attempt. The Japanese have also added one additional roll as an option. The "Original Roll" is any innovation not already included on the list, which depending on how impressed the judges are, can earn between 2 and 10 points.

This interview was conducted in Japan in September of 2009 with Mr. Tanaka Toshihiko, the current president of Qajaq Japan (who incidentally came in at fourth place in the rolling competition, just behind Greg). Mr. Nobumasa Kashiwagi did the translating for Mr. Tanaka. Also present were Dubside and Don Beale.

For more information about Qajaq Japan, see <http://www.qajaq.jp/index.html>.

Greg Stamer: So when was Qajaq Japan formed?

Tanaka Toshihiko: Three or four years ago.

Greg Stamer: And who originally started it?

Tanaka Toshihiko: Eiichi. [Mr. Eiichi Ito has been the main driving force in organizing Japan's traditional kayakers. He secured their impressive waterfront clubhouse building, otherwise known as G-base, and arranged to bring Maligiaq and Greg Stamer to Japan in previous years. Recently, Eiichi scaled down his active participation and turned over the reins to Tanaka.]

“Qajaq Japan is an organization which has laws, or policies, they follow, which they have made themselves. Enjoying the kayak is a baseline...”

Greg Stamer: And who leads it now?

Tanaka Toshihiko: Tanaka.

Greg Stamer: How many members does it have?

Tanaka Toshihiko: Thirty to forty.

Greg Stamer: How does Qajaq Japan differ from the “Greenlanders”? [The traditional kayak community in Japan has another group known as “Greenlanders,” which has its own logo, T-shirt, and stickers.]

Tanaka Toshihiko: *Qajaq Japan is an organization which has laws, or policies, they follow, which they have made themselves. Enjoying the kayak is a baseline...*

Greg Stamer: Let me change the question, what is the goal, the mission or goal?

Tanaka Toshihiko: *The Japan team [eventually] goes to the Greenland championship. And we want to know Greenland cultural stuff to learn about — to know Greenland culture first — and gradually the goal has to be a Japanese team goes to the championship.*

Greg Stamer: When will Qajaq Japan approach Qaannat Kattuffiat in Greenland and ask to be part of Qaannat Kattuffiat?

Tanaka Toshihiko: *Right now we are not ready for the offer but...maybe. Right now they didn't offer to us yet so...*

Greg Stamer: My recommendation would be to ask them because you want to get in. There's different groups of Greenlanders, some that are open to foreigners, then some others that are more closed to foreigners. The skills levels are high enough in Qajaq Japan, so I'd recommend you to...

Tanaka Toshihiko: *On skills, some people's are very good, but kayak championship has to be like not only rolls, it is also ropes and harpoon and long distance race. We need more time to do it, not only rolls, more care about the culture, or the championship.*

Greg Stamer: I don't know if Mr. Tanaka knows, in Greenland there's a group of people that are very open to foreigners, and a small group of traditionalists that don't want that, so depending on the year it's either, you're welcomed or...

Tanaka Toshihiko: *Is it the years?*

Dubside: Yeah, it changes from time to time.

Greg Stamer: So just understand that.

Tanaka Toshihiko: *How do we know that [which*

year is which]?

Greg Stamer: You won't.

Tanaka Toshihiko: *We don't know?*

Greg Stamer: No. It depends who's in control one year and the next. Now, that said, I would think the Japanese group would be more welcome than an American group, We're seen as foreigners, but I think you're seen as like brothers.

Dubside: Long-lost family, I think. You look like Greenlanders. [Everyone laughs.]

Tanaka Toshihiko: *Yeah, we appreciate that.*

Greg Stamer: In the Greenland championship you have people of all levels, and they really want you just to come and participate. Otherwise, it's like giving a party and nobody comes. They want anybody to come no matter what your

"A skin-on-frame kayak is kind of a more living thing or, you know, there is something more you know, power."

skill level. But, that said, you should come when you want to come. What is the biggest obstacle, challenge, or hurdle to going to Greenland? Is it vacation time or expense? Is it the 2 weeks of vacation you would need? Or money?

Tanaka Toshihiko: *Two weeks [is a problem].*

Greg Stamer: Do most Japanese, I hear, only get one week off a year? Is that true?

Tanaka Toshihiko: *Yes, only 1 week.*

Greg Stamer: So that's part of the trouble.

Tanaka Toshihiko: *How to get there and see the championship. We would like to see the other ones...don't know how to do it, because we really want to see.*

Greg Stamer: The Greenland championship?

Tanaka Toshihiko: *Yeah, what's it doing. He [Mr. Tanaka or whoever goes there] can tell the other people. Or he can find someone who can go to the championship and see what's going on and see, video camera or something to get back to Japan, tell the people. There's no image right now.*

Greg Stamer: Is there any way Qajaq USA could help you understand what happens at the Greenland championship. For example, on our Web site, is the schedule that lists every day what is done. I don't know if Mr. Tanaka has seen that.

Tanaka Toshihiko: *He saw the schedules, everything, but other people, he [doesn't] know....He wrote down on the Qajaq Japan's forum, when the championship was going on a little bit, but not so deep. But it helps, very well.*

Greg Stamer: Do you have anything, Dubside, to add, or does Mr. Tanaka?

Tanaka Toshihiko: *Someday someone from Japan has to get up to see the championship, to accomplish that kind of mission, but you know in Japan it is tight schedules and everybody has their job; it's kind of difficult. We'd like to have more people use the Greenland paddles and build skin kayaks, to spread those you know...because in Greenland, they hunt, you know they used to hunt the seals. That's connected to their culture directly. So first to spread those aspects to the Japanese people, more use of the Greenland paddle, make more kayaks.*

Greg Stamer: I notice Mr. Tanaka paddles a skin-on-frame kayak. Does he see a difference between skin-on-frame kayaks versus, say, all the carbon-fiber Qaanaaq's you see on the beach? [The popular "Qaanaaq" is made in Japan by Waterfield kayaks and seems to outnumber the skin-on-frame kayaks at G-base.] Does he favor one over the other? Or are they both good?

Tanaka Toshihiko: *Those carbon kayaks, there's no soul...[Nobe tries to find another word for what Tanaka said in Japanese] Not like ahh, [a carbon-fiber kayak] — it's just a thing [laughs]. A skin-on-frame kayak is kind of a more living thing or, you know, there is something more you know, power. That's why he built the kayaks. He thinks that something, some energy on it stayed there. He studied books and stuff, everything but he has not seen the real sealskin kayak or Greenland paddle so that's his, I don't know, his sad part, I mean he thinks [it's] sad. Although he has information from the Internet, he wants to see — his eyes to see the real things.*

Greg Stamer: Are there any Greenland kayaks, paddles in museums in Japan?

Tanaka Toshihiko: *In the northern parts there are Aleuts, only Aleuts, not Greenland. It's hard to get those, so... He wants to touch.*

Tanaka Toshihiko: *Harvey..site... [Here, he's referring to Harvey Golden's Web site (www.traditionalkayaks.com)].*

Dubside: At the Delaware event coming up in 2 weeks or so, the president of Qaannat Kattuffiat is coming there, so is there anything specifically you would like us to tell him or ask him?

Tanaka Toshihiko: *Could you inform him that Japan has the Qajaq Japan, the team doing the*

same thing as in Greenland, let him know the Japanese information.

Dubside: I was pretty much going to tell him that anyway [all laugh]. But yeah, I will tell him I came and what I saw.

"...and gradually the goal has to be a Japanese team goes to the championship."

Greg Stamer: We'll get a feeling for how he feels about bringing in Qajaq Japan, but it would be up to them.

Tanaka Toshihiko: *In Japan, the sea kayakers who use Greenland paddles and roll, gradually it's growing.*

Greg Stamer: Keep in mind even in the USA, Greenland paddle use is only a small piece of the whole. It's accepted now. It used to be considered something like you were crazy to use it but now it's accepted. But it's still a small part of the whole, OK.

Tanaka Toshihiko: *In Japan also yes.*

Greg Stamer: Don, did you have anything to ask?

Don Beale: In Japan is it growing — is the percentage of traditional kayaking growing as a percentage of kayaking in general?

Tanaka Toshihiko: *The total of the people who do kayak is many. New people are coming because we do this kind of thing. It's difficult to pick the numbers as a percentage. The numbers of people may be spread out, but it is growing. Many people look at the Web page, and it's gradually growing.*



The author works on her rolling at SSTIKS.

Photo by Bob Burnett

Experience SSTIKS

By Jeanette Rogers

Ninjas in kayaks? Seals? And is that a stick? Just what are those people doing out there dressed like that? There are plenty of curious onlookers when the South Sound Traditional Inuit Kayak Symposium (SSTIKS) occurs at Twanoh State Park each year. What those passing by are seeing is a family-friendly kayaking event celebrating traditional kayaking.

Many of the kayaks seen at SSTIKS are skin-on-frame. The paddlers often use traditional gear, including a tuilik (a full body spray skirt that can give the appearance of a Weeble in a kayak) and a paddle

made of wood, sometimes referred to as a “stick.” The 3-day SSTIKS event, occurring this year from 18–20 June 2010, is a perfect opportunity to try these interesting kayaks and learn more about the vibrant traditional culture.

“...one thing that makes this event stand out is the kid-friendly environment.”

Some who enjoy the culture talk passionately about multiple ways to roll a kayak. While SSTIKS is conducive to learning 1 or more of the 40 types of Greenland rolls, this event is more than just rolling a kayak. Over the course of 3 days, through hands-on and demonstration opportunities, participants continually learn both on and off the water. A group of experienced instructors teach about basic and advanced kayaking strokes, rescues, building paddles and kayaks, and even harpoon throwing and constructing outfits from neoprene.

And this isn’t just for the adults — one thing that makes this event stand out is the kid-friendly environment. A kids’ track is specifically designed to get children started kayaking. Watching this program, you’ll see that the kids are having a delightfully chaotic time with the variety of games — including barge building and kayak polo — that expose them to core kayaking skills in a fun way.

If you don’t have the gear already, don’t fret. Many participants have built their own kayaks and love to talk about them and will let you try one out (ask first!). And if you catch the SSTIKS fever, several skin-on-frame kayak builders are often present and will happily talk about how you can build your

own kayak. SSTIKS also offers some traditional gear that participants can borrow.

“While SSTIKS is conducive to learning 1 or more of the 40 types of Greenland rolls, this event is more than just rolling a kayak.”

When you aren’t in a class, you’re also interacting with a group of passionate paddlers and eating great food. Potluck meals, presentations, and a silent and live auction encourage additional interaction and fun. Throughout the three

days, you’ll repeatedly discover that SSTIKS, a Qajaq USA event with no corporate sponsors, is about a community of paddlers. This follows from the Qajaq USA mission to “study and promote the traditions and techniques of Greenland kayaking while seeking to further the appreciation and development of Greenland-style kayaking in the United States.”

The community atmosphere supports the belief that instructors as well as first-time attendees have something to contribute to the event. Everyone brings something, and even the teachers are learning, so sharing your knowledge and experiences is strongly encouraged.

Learn more about SSTIKS at www.qajaqpnw.org. By participating in this family-friendly, event you’ll leave Twanoh State Park with many new skills as well as multiple new friends who are passionate about traditional kayaking.



Making a Tuilik, Akuilisaq, & Cockpit Cover

by Dana Rutherford

Making a Tuilik

Making a tuilik can be a very enjoyable and fun experience. Compared with buying a tuilik, it is less expensive and gives more options to customize. So far I have made two tuillit (plural form). The following is the process I used to make them and a few things I've learned along the way. There are tons of other ways to do it, so do whatever you feel will work best for you. Good luck, and I hope you have fun making your tuilik!

Neoprene

Neoprene is a type of closed-cell rubber foam, which means it doesn't absorb water. Most neoprene that is used for wetsuits and tuilik has nylon on both sides. Neoprene also comes plain, which is smooth soft rubber and with a smooth skin on it. The smooth skin neoprene is often used as the seals around the coaming and face.

Neoprene comes in thicknesses measured in millimeters; 3 mm is common for farmer john style kayak wetsuits and tuilik. It's great for colder weather and water. Tuilik can also be made from thinner (2 mm) neoprene. When choosing a thickness, consider the weather, water, and what you will be wearing under the tuilik. For me, a 2 mm tuilik over a drysuit for mild winter days (I don't roll much in winter at all) is plenty, while 1.5 mm neoprene is comfortable for summer. When choosing neoprene also think about color. Black neoprene looks cool but can be very hot, which is great in winter but not so great on a sunny 90 degree summer day. For warmer temperatures, lighter colors will be cooler. For me, light blue works well for summer and black for winter. Neoprene also comes in a variety of colors and even patterns (like my flowered sprayskirt).



Supplies

Many of the supplies needed for a tuilik depend on the methods you use and the size of the tuilik. In general, you will need a sheet of neoprene, grippy neoprene, neoprene glue, bungee, cord, and a clip for cord (to tighten the face seal). Other supplies necessary are a good pair of scissors and a pen or chalk pencil for tracing. Optional supplies could include a sewing machine, thread, needle, seam tape, gloves for gluing, and zippers for pockets. No matter which method you use, you will need a way to attach and seal the seams.

Layout

You can either buy a pattern or copy an existing tuilik. I used a pattern for my first tuilik. The pattern came in one condensed size and needed to be scaled up to fit. I did this by figuring out what percentage it needed to be scaled by and taking it to a print shop. For my second tuilik I used my first tuilik as a template. I placed it on the new neoprene and traced the left half. Then I cut that half out, folded it over, and traced it to make sure the two sides were symmetrical. A few things to keep in mind:

1. It is safer to make the tuilik pieces bigger than you think you need. You can always cut some off to make it fit. You can't make a too small tuilik bigger. This is especially true for the hood (at least for me).
2. Check to make sure the pattern will fit your cockpit, especially for a keyhole cockpit, which some tuilik patterns aren't designed to fit.
3. Using the pattern, consider making a mock-up of the tuilik with plastic sheets or bags so that if it doesn't fit, you only waste some plastic and not neoprene.
4. A chalk pencil works great on dark colors, and a pen works great on lighter ones.



Pattern scaled, printed to size, and cut out



Use an existing tuilik as a pattern

Attaching the Pieces

There are numerous different ways that the pieces of a tuilik can be attached together. No matter which method you choose there are a few things to keep in mind:

1. Make sure to measure. It's easier to measure to make sure the pieces will fit before you attach them rather than halfway through.
2. Use a chalk pencil to make reference marks while laying the pieces flat to ensure that the pieces will line up when you're attaching them together.
3. Neoprene, especially thinner pieces, stretches rather easily. Be careful to keep even tension on both pieces being attached together.

Machine Sewing

The method that I prefer is to use a sewing machine. I find that it is quick and efficient, and alterations are easy to make. I also really like the clean appearance of the seams. To sew the seams you will need a sewing machine that can do a zigzag stitch. It is a pretty basic stitch, so many machines have it. Practice on some scrap material to adjust the settings. I find that the widest setting of the stitch is the most forgiving as far as having the seam centered in the stitches. Adjust the length to whatever you prefer. The tension should be tight enough that you cannot pull the two sides apart but not so tight that you can see the neoprene being pulled. If you make a mistake, you can easily remove the seam by sliding one blade of a small pair of scissors under the seam and cutting.

1. Placing the two pieces of neoprene flat, with the outside of the tuilik face up on the machine, with the joining edges butted up against each other.
2. Center the seam under the stitch.
3. Sew forward and reverse to lock the stitch at both the beginning and end.



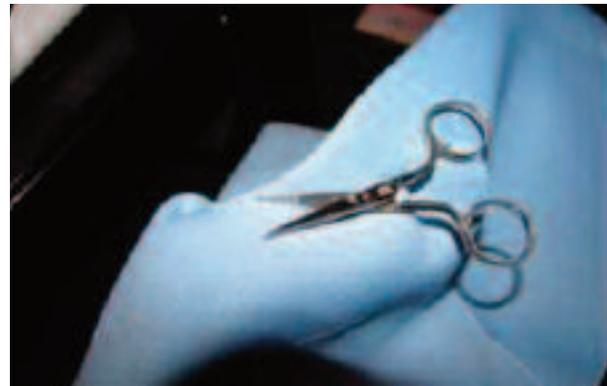
Settings I used on my sewing machine



Sewing two pieces together



Close-up of zigzag stitch

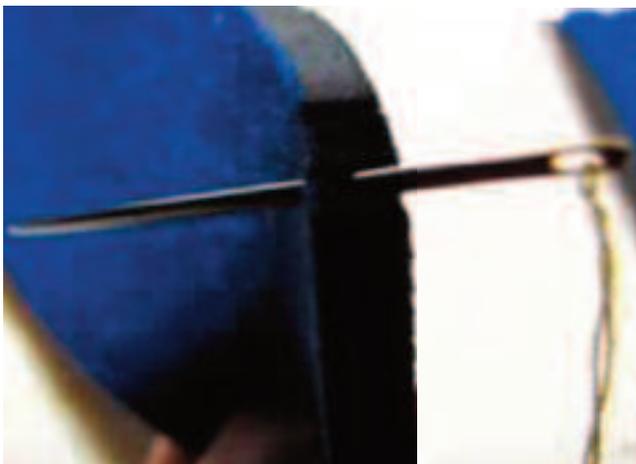


Small scissors make it easy to remove seams

Hand Sewing

Hand sewing is done with a running whip stitch. It will take much longer than sewing with a machine, but is still very forgiving. The stitch can be done completely through the neoprene or only halfway through, which is also called a blind stitch.

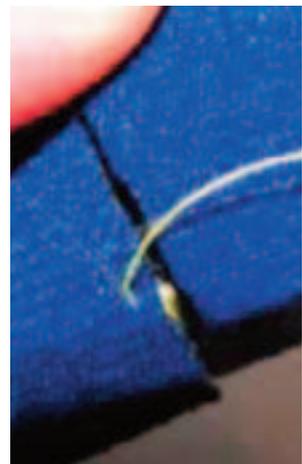
1. Start by holding the two pieces side by side with the edges touching.
2. Knot the end of the thread.
3. Insert needle through one piece of neoprene from top to bottom, pointing toward the other piece.
4. Then insert the needle from the bottom of the other piece to the top. For the blind stitch, instead of going all the way through, only go halfway so that the needle emerges on the flat edge. Then insert it through the flat edge of the other piece and out the top.



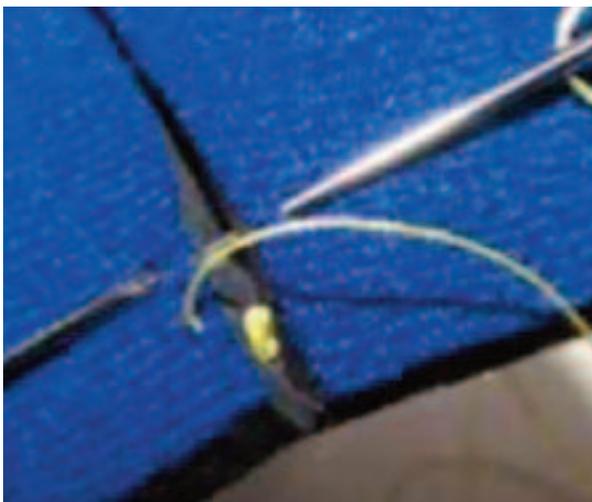
Insert the needle into the side of one piece



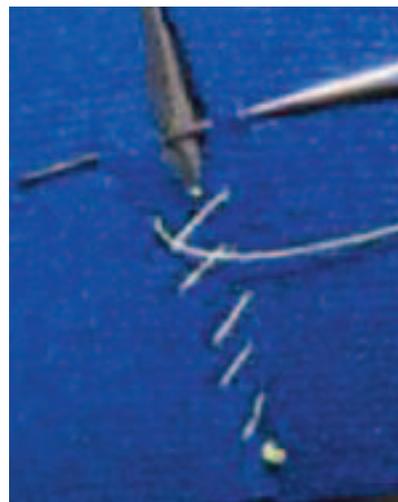
Knot end of thread



Put pieces side by side



Insert the needle from one side to the other



Continue. The needle always goes in the same direction



Needle never goes all the way through

Gluing

Gluing can be a fast alternative; however, it can also be the least forgiving. Once a seam is glued, the only way to remove it is to cut out the seam. When gluing it is extremely important to make sure the pieces fit and are lined up correctly. Most neoprene glues come with directions, which is probably what you should follow. For me, the general process I used is as follows:

1. Mix the glue.
2. Apply a thin layer to both surfaces, about 1–2 feet at a time.
3. After it's dry to the touch apply a second layer.
4. When the second layer is dry to the touch, press the two surfaces together tightly.
5. Test to see if the glue is dry enough. If gentle tugging pulls the pieces apart then the glue is not dry. Wait another minute or two before continuing.

Order of Attaching

The following is the order that I found worked best for me:

1. Attach the shoulder portions of the front and back.
2. Attach the two sides of the torso.
3. Close the outside seam of each sleeves. (If machine sewing, finish the last few inches at the wrist end where the machine may not reach by hand.)
4. Attach the sides onto the center of the hood.
5. Close the front seam of the hood.
6. Attach the sleeves to the body.
7. Attach the hood onto the body.



Attach shoulders and sides



Make sleeves and hood



Attach sleeves to body

Face and Coaming Casings

The face and coaming seals can be made with either neoprene with nylon on both sides or neoprene with nylon on one side and a smooth skin on the other. I prefer the smooth skin. I feel it creates a tighter seal and grips better. The two casings are attached the same way. The coaming casing uses a piece of neoprene 3 inches wide, and the face seal uses a thinner strip — around 1-3/4 inches worked well for me.

1. If necessary, cut the strips to the correct widths.
2. Cut the strips to approximately the right length. Longer pieces will be harder to work with.
3. Lay both pieces on a flat surface, with the outside of the tuilik and the smooth skin side of the strip facing up.
4. Glue (see section above) the two edges together.
5. When you finish attaching the strip to the tuilik, glue the two end edges of the strip together.
6. After the strip is glued on edge to edge, turn the tuilik inside out.
7. Folder over the casing with the nylon side facing in.
8. Use a small brush to brush on the glue 1/4 inch on each side of the glued seam and 1/2 inch on the free edge of the casing.
9. After the first layer of glue dries for a minute or two, paint on a second layer.
10. When the second layer of glue is dry to the touch, fold the casing over and press down.



*Glue the grippy strip on
(pictured on a black tuilik)*



Grippy strip glued on



Put glue on the edge and seam



Fold over casing

Sealing the Seams

Just as there are numerous ways to attach the pieces of neoprene together, there are many ways to seal the seams. Having the seams sealed will help to keep water out of the tuilik.

Seam Tape

I prefer to use seam tape to seal the seams. Since the zigzag stitch goes through the neoprene on both sides of the seam, a wider seal is needed. Seam tape will easily cover both sides. Seam tape also has no smell compared with glue.



Ironing on seam tape

1. Turn the tuilik inside out to seal the seam from the inside and leave the stitching visible from the outside.
2. Lay the tape over the seam with the end of the tape at one edge of a seam.
3. Starting at the end of the tape, iron the tape with an iron set on medium.
4. Slowly move the iron back and forth until the tape adheres to the tuilik. Neoprene can handle a fair amount of heat, but test the temperature on a scrap piece.
5. After it cools, test the edges by running your fingernail along it.
6. Some areas that didn't completely adhere will start to come loose after a few uses. Simply iron these back on.

Glue

For blind-stitched seams, neoprene glue can be used. With the tuilik turned inside out, run glue along each edge of the two pieces of neoprene. After the glue dries to the touch, press the edges together.

Aquaseal

Aquaseal can also be used to seal the seam of a machine-stitched tuilik. With a small brush, brush the glue over the stitching and into the holes created by the thread.

Finishing: Threading the Bungee

To insert the bungee around the cockpit:

1. Cut a small hole in the front of the casing.
2. Insert one end of the bungee to one side.
3. Push the bungee in as far as possible.
4. When it doesn't go any farther, keep moving it by holding one hand about an inch from the end of the bungee and the other hand a few inches in front of it on the casing. Push the hand with the bungee toward the other hand. With the other hand, pinch the end of the bungee and let go with the hand on the bungee side.
5. Continue until the bungee emerges on the other side.

Tying the Knot

I like to have a grab loop in the bungee and have the knot easy to remove so it can be adjusted to different sized coamings.

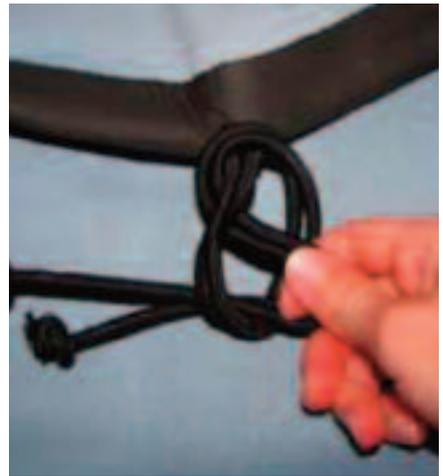
1. Begin by tying a knot in the end of each piece.
2. Bring the ends over the top of the opening in the casing to create a loop.
3. Reach through the loop with two fingers and pinch the bungees.
4. Pull the pinched bungees back through the loop.
5. Pull until the knot tightens, but be careful not to pull the end knots. Once the knot is tight, they will keep the ends from pulling through the knot.
6. To remove the knot, pull both knotted ends away from the larger knot.



Bring the bungee over the top



Pinch the bungee



Pull the bungee through the loop



Keep pulling to tighten the knot



The finished knot



Remove knot by pulling ends

Threading the String

To thread the string through the face seal:

1. Cut a small hole at each temple.
2. Thread a thin wire from one hole, down toward the chin, and back up the other side, around the top to the starting hole.
3. Attach one end of the string to the wire and pull it back through.
4. Thread the wire from the other hole to the hole with the two strings.
5. Pull the string that comes from the chin side back through the casing and out the other hole. You should have two strings through the casing across the forehead and one by the chin.
6. Last, thread both ends of the string through a clip to tighten.



Thread a thin wire through the face casing

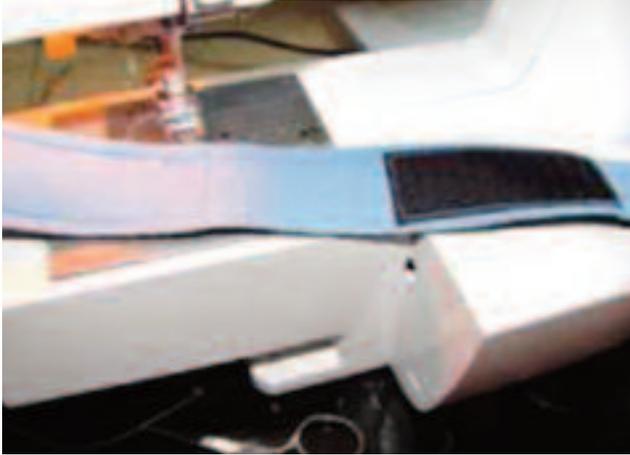


Use a clip to adjust the tension of the string

Wrist Straps

To ensure a tighter seal and better fit at the wrists, I find wrist straps to be helpful. They can be made out of neoprene or elastic. Neoprene works well in thinner thicknesses, but I find heavier neoprene, like 3 mm, restricts wrist movement too much.

1. Cut a piece of elastic or neoprene long enough to go around your wrist and overlap about 1/3 of the way. This is where the Velcro will be.
2. Set the sewing machine to a standard straight stitch with zero as the width.
3. Sew one side of the Velcro onto the underside of the free end of the strap and the other side onto the top side of the attached end. I prefer to attach the loop piece to the free end of the strap because it won't get caught on nearby material like the hook piece.
4. Attach the strap to the sleeve about 1/2 inch from the end. You can glue a neoprene strip or sew on the Velcro strip. You can also sew a small piece of neoprene onto the end of the elastic strap and then glue that onto the sleeve to keep from putting any stitching through the neoprene.



Attach velcro to strap



Finished Strap

Adding a Pocket

A pocket is very useful when wearing the tuilik with either a PFD underneath, where its pockets are useless, or with an inflatable PFD.

1. Cut a piece of neoprene, can be thinner than the tuilik, the size you want your pocket to be plus 1/2 inch extra all the way around for gluing.
2. Mark where you want the opening of the pocket to be on the tuilik and cut a slit.
3. Sew a zipper into the new opening. If it's an opening zipper, attach end stops.
4. Glue on neoprene reinforcements at each end of the zipper on the inside and outside.
5. Glue the neoprene piece onto the inside of the tuilik to make the pocket.
6. Cut one or two small holes at the bottom edges of the pocket on the outside to let any water drain from the pocket.
7. Sew on a flap of matching neoprene with Velcro closures to hide the zipper.



Inside pocket glued on



Detail: zipper, reinforcements, flap, & velcro



Flap hiding the zipper



Making an Akuilisaq

Compared with a tuilik, an akuilisaq is a much easier and faster project. Making an akuilisaq is much like making the bottom half of a tuilik. For my akuilisaq, I used the tuilik pattern from the bottom up until a few inches below the bottom of the arm openings.

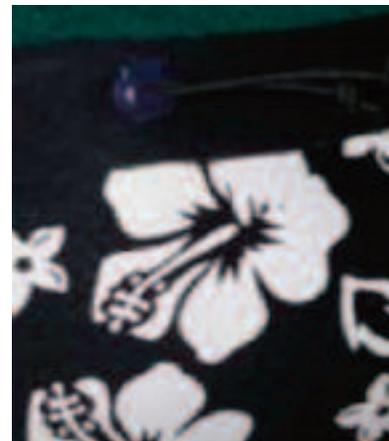
1. Trace the bottom of a tuilik or tuilik pattern.
2. Make the shape more cone-like, with the small part of the cone being at the top. A tuilik fits much looser in this area, but the akuilisaq should have a closer fit here.
3. Cut out the pieces.
4. Attach the front and back along the sides and seal the seams.
5. Glue on the bungee casing, and thread the bungee through.
6. To make the waist adjustable, fold over and glue down the top of the akuilisaq to create a casing. It can be folded over to the outside or inside, depending on which look you like.
7. Thread a bungee through the casing.
8. Attach a clip to the bungee to adjust the tension.
9. Optional— attach suspenders made from webbing to right and left side from front to back to help keep the akuilisaq from falling down. The webbing can be stitched directly onto the akuilisaq or stitched to a piece of neoprene, which can then be glued on. You can make these adjustable by including a buckle on each one or make it removable by using a button to attach them to the akuilisaq.



Lay out pattern



Bungee casing



Detail of adjustable waist

Making a Cockpit Cover

Cockpit covers are a fairly easy and quick project that requires a smaller amount of neoprene. They are very useful for keeping dirt and rain out of the kayak while keeping gear like seats in the kayak when traveling.

1. Lay the piece of neoprene over the cockpit with what will be the inside side facing up.
2. Tie a piece of bungee so that it fits snugly around the cockpit.
3. Slip the bungee over the neoprene.
4. Cut the neoprene following the outline of the cockpit while leaving 1 inch extra.
5. Glue the overhanging edge over the bungee. Start by attaching a section ever few inches. Then stretch the neoprene so that each side is straight and press together. This helps avoid wrinkles. Try to leave as little open space around the bungee to keep the bungee from sliding when you try to put the cover on the kayak.
6. Take off and flip over.
7. Add design if desired.



Neoprene held on by the bungee and cut to size



Gluing the casing. Stretch both sides until they are straight before pressing together.



Finished cover with the first part of the design glued on.



Final design made from 1.5 mm light-blue neoprene

Other Tips

1. If you find yourself getting frustrated, walk away. Your tuilik will wait for you. Sometimes it's better to take a break than to keep working. Trust me.
2. Don't rush. Take your time and the appearance of your tuilik will benefit.
3. Make sure there is enough ventilation when gluing. If you're stuck inside, a bathroom with an exhaust fan and window works great.
4. Practice! There will be plenty of small scraps to practice on.
5. Be creative with the scraps! There are plenty of small projects that can be made with leftover pieces of neoprene. These also make great practice projects.



Neoprene thermos cover made from leftover neoprene from an akuilisaq.

Cockpit cover design made from leftover neoprene from a summer tuilik.

Links

1. Qajaq USA—Great source for patterns and grippy neoprene
http://www.qajaqusa.org/QUSA/merchandise_online.php
2. Foam Order—Plenty of different neoprene and great bulk discounts
<http://www.foamorder.com/neoprene.html>
3. Seattle Fabrics—Expensive neoprene and can have slow shipping times, but the absolutely greatest one-stop shopping for other supplies (glue, tape, clips, string, bungee, etc.)
<http://seattlefabrics.com/>
4. Alleda Wetsuits—Great price on neoprene sheets
<http://www.aleeda.com/>
5. Ebay—Surprisingly good source for neoprene
www.ebay.com

Dana Rutherford is a member of the Jersey Shore Sea Kayak Association. She had built several kayaks and paddles, in addition to the gear described in this article. She will be teaching a tuilik-making class at this year's Delmarva Paddler's Retreat. See <http://www.delmarvapaddlersretreat.org/ez/> for more information.

Paddle Survey

Roy Martin has collected data on some two dozen kayakers and the paddles they use. The tables show paddler height and weight, along with measurements used in some anthropometric systems (cubit etc.). Also included are details on the paddle itself: the shape of its shoulders and dimensions of its loom, among other variables. For a subset of the data, Alex Ferguson has provided the metric equivalents.

The original spreadsheet from which these data were taken has been broken down to facilitate viewing and printing. Note that the metric data are a subset of their English equivalents.

The purpose of this survey is to provide some insight into paddle preference based on body measurements. Paddlers' names have been included with the permission of the paddlers. This survey will be updated periodically and will appear in future issues of *The Masik*. Thanks to Roy for collecting and collating the data and to Andrew for providing the metric equivalents.

Paddler—Physical details.

Paddler	Height	Weight	Span	Cubit	Length
#1	5'	?	?	?	82
#2	5' 3 1/2"	?	?	?	88 &(86)
#2.5	5'4"	118	?	?	84
#3	5'4" 1/4"	117	63	17 1/2	80
#4	5'4 1/2"	137	65 1/4	16.75	84
#5	5' 5"	155	63	16 1/2	84
Steven Sweeny	5'6"	178	65 3/4	17 1/2	86
Bill Samson	5'7"	168	69	16	85
#6	5'7"	175	68	18	86
#6.5	5'8"	145	?	?	84
#7	5'9"	145	71	18 1/2	84
Bruce Stits	5'9"	150	67	17	84
#9	5'9"	150	72	17	89
Wes Ostertag	5'9"	175	68	18	85 1/2
#11	5'9"	240	69	18 1/2	87
#12	5'9"	215	71 1/2	17 1/2	87
#13	5' 91/2"	199.99	69	18 1/2	87 3/4
Phelps Holloway	5' 10"	150	71	19 1/2	85
Duane Strosaker	5' 10"	160	?	?	84
Alex Ferguson	5' 10"	170	74 3/4	19 3/4	86 3/4
Mark Whitaker	5' 10"	195	70	18	86
#15	5' 10"	195	?	?	83 1/2
Roy Martin	5'10 1/2"	200	71	19 1/2	86
Toni Vakiparta	5'11"	165	75	19.9	86 1/2
Don Jay	5' 11"	200	72 3/4	18 1/4	91 3/8
#18	5'11"	180	72	19	86
Christopher Crowhurst	6'	175	76	18 3/4	86
					84
John Van Buren	6'	195	6'		85-88
Bill Hamm	6'	195	6'	18	84
#20	6'1"	190	75	19 1/2	87 1/2
#21	6'2"	165	?	?	90

Paddler—Paddle details 1

Paddler	Loom	Width	Loom	Shoulder Style
#1	15	3	1 1/4 X 1	none
#2		2 7/8 to(3)	4 1/4 circum	slight to none
#2.5	19	3 1/4		slight
#3	17 1/2	3 3/8	1 1/2 x 1 1/4	slight
#4	17 1/2	3 1/4	1 1/4 x 1 1/8	soft,rounded
#5	19	3 1/2	1 1/2 x 1 1/4	none
Steven Sweeny	20 1/2	3	1 1/2 x 1 1/4	very slight
Bill Samson	20	2 3/4		soft
#6	20	3 1/2	varies	some with/without
#6.5	19 1/2	3 1/4		slight
#7	18	3 (3 1/2)	1 3/8" x 1 1/8"	subtle shoulder
Bruce Stits	20	3	1 1/2	
#9	22	3 1/2	1 1/2 x 1 1/4	small mild shoulder
Wes Ostertag	19 1/2	2 9/16 (2/3 blade)	1 1/2 x 1 1/4	slight
#11	20	3 3/4	1 1/2	undecided
#12	22	3 3/16	1 1/2 x 1 1/4	very soft
#13	20 1/2	3	1 1/2 x 1 1/4	soft
Phelps Holloway	20	3 1/8		continuous transition
Duane Strosaker	24	3 1/2	1 1/2 x 1 1/4	none
Alex Ferguson	19 1/3	3 1/3	1.4 X 1.3	shouldered
Mark Whitaker	19	3 1/4		long and soft
#15	20.5	3 1/2	?	shouldered
Roy Martin	20 1/2	3 1/2	1 1/2 x 1 1/4	very slight
Toni Vakiparta	23	3	1 1/8 x 1 1/8	sharp
Don Jay	19	3 1/2	1 1/2 x 1 1/4	distinct 3/8" shoulder
#18	21	3 1/8	1 1/2 x 1 1/4	soft
C. Crowhurst	21	3		soft
	20	3 1/2		soft
John Van Buren	18-18 1/2	3 1/4-3 1/2	1.25-1.5 X 1.25	soft
Bill Hamm	23	3 3/4	1.125 x 1.25	soft
#20	21	3 1/4	7/8 x 1 1/4	well defined
#21	20	3	1 1/2 x 1 1/4	shouldered

Paddler—Paddle details 2

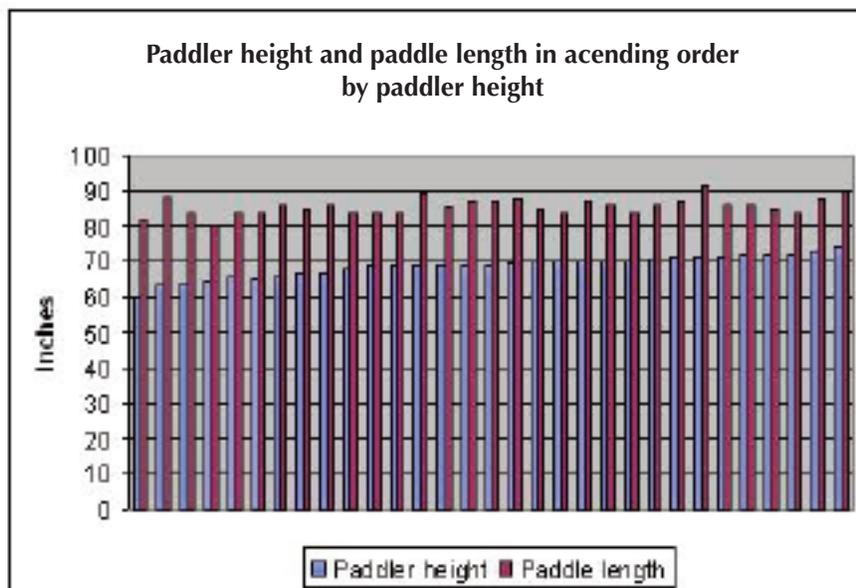
Paddler	Paddle Use	Paddle Maker	Paddle Composition
#1	General Use		
#2	General Use	Lumpy	
#2.5	General Use	Don Beal	
#3	General Use		WRC/carbon
#4	General Use	self	
#5	General Use	Harbor Freight	laminated wood
Steven Sweeny	General Use	self	
Bill Samson	General Use		
#6	General Use		
#6.5	General Use	Don Beal	WRC
#7	General Use	self	WRC
Bruce Stits	General Use		
#9	General Use		
Wes Ostertag	General Use		Alaskan yellow cedar
#11	General Use		
#12	General Use		
#13	General Use		
Phelps Holloway			
Duane Strosaker	General Use	self	carbon
Alex Ferguson			
Mark Whitaker	General Use		
#15	General Use		
Roy Martin	General Use	self	carbon
Toni Vakiparta	General Use		
Don Jay	General Use		
#18	General Use		
Christopher Crowhurst	Distance Days for Speed Days		
John Van Buren			
Bill Hamm	General Use		
#20	General Use	self	spruce
#21	General Use		

Paddler—Kayak and other details

Paddler	Model	Deck Height	Ht. to Collarbone	Width
#1				
#2				
#2.5	Vela/Advocete LV			
#3	Anas Acuta/Nordkapp	11",13"		20 1/2
#4				
#5	SOF (Monkcraft)			
Steven Sweeny				
Bill Samson				20
#6				
#6.5	Nordkapp LV			21
#7	Artic Hawk (kit)			22
Bruce Stits				21
#9		11 or 12		22
Wes Ostertag				
#11				
#12				
#13				
Phelps Holloway			24"	20
Duane Strosaker	Anas Acuta			
Alex Ferguson				20
Mark Whitaker				20 1/2 to 21 1/2
#15				
Roy Martin	Anas Acuta,Nordkapp		24"	20,21
Toni Vakiparta				20
Don Jay				19 5/8
#18				
Christopher Crowhurst				
John Van Buren				
Bill Hamm				
#20				
#21				

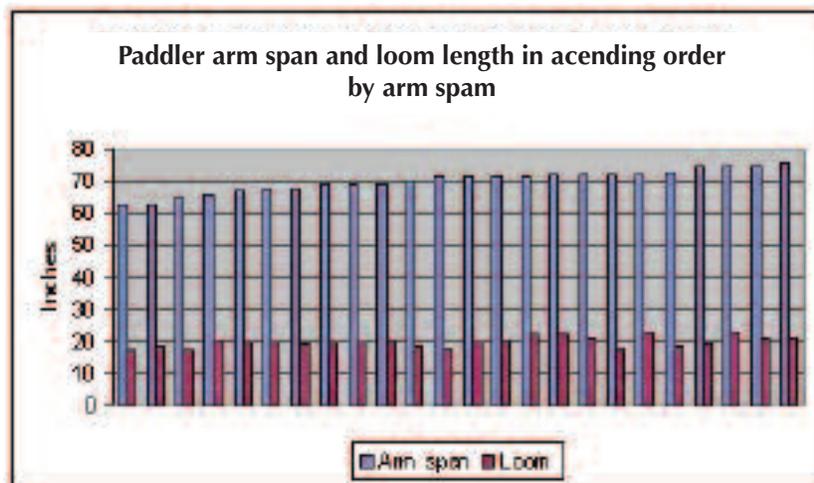
Paddler—Metric equivalents 1 (all measurements in millimeters or kilograms)

Paddler	Height	Weight	Span	Cubit	Paddle Length	Loom Length
1	1524	?	?	?	2083	381
2	1614	?	?	?	2235	?
3	1625	53	1600	445	2032	445
4	1638	62	1657	425	2134	445
5	1676	81	1670	445	2184	521
6	1701	79	1727	457	2184	508
7	1752	66	1803	470	2134	457
8	1752	68	1701	432	2134	508
9	1752	68	1829	432	2261	559
10	1752	79	1727	457	2174	483
11	1752	109	1753	470	2210	508
12	1752	98	1816	445	2210	559
13	1765	91	1753	470	2229	521
14	1778	73	?	?	2134	610
15	1778	88	?	?	2120	520
16	1791	91	1803	495	2184	521
17	1803	91	1848	464	2333	483
18	1803	82	1829	483	2184	533
19	1829	88	1829	457	2134	584
20	1854	86	1905	495	2223	533
21	1880	75	?	?	2286	508
Ferguson	1825	77	1900	500	2205	490



Paddler—Metric equivalents 2 (all measurements in millimeters)

Paddler	Width B	Loom section	Shoulder style	Kayak Beam
1	76	32 x 25	none	
2	76	?	slight to none	
3	76	38 x 32	slight	
4	83	32 x 28	soft rounded	
5	76	38 x 32	slight	
6	89	?	some with/without	
7	76	30 x 28	subtle	
8	76	38	x	533
9	89	38 x 32	small mild	
10	66	38 x 32	slight	
11	95	38	x	
12	76	38 x 32	v soft	
13	76	38 x 32	soft	
14	89	38 x 32	none	
15	89	?	shouldered	
16	89	38 x 32	very slight	
17	89	38 x 32	distinct	
18	79	38 x 32	soft	
19	95	32 x 28	soft	
20	83	32 x 20	defined	
21	76	38 x 32	shouldered	
Ferguson	85	36 x 32	shouldered	510



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- One high-quality tan Qajaq USA hat
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