



SUPERIOR KAYAK & OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CLUB

SKOAC
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Winter '03-'04 Newsletter

Note from the Editor:

Hopefully the majority of you reading this are viewing it as a freshly e-mailed PDF. Yep, you are looking at the **first (finally) digital SKOAC Newsletter**. Anyone paying any attention to past newsletters knows we have been promising this technological leap for quite some time. We have finally been able to iron out the wrinkles and now have the ability to **quickly and simply e-mail the newsletter** (and any other timely Club news) to our membership list. This means you will be hearing from us more frequently with updated news on trips, skill sessions and trip reports. Gone are the days of expensive, time-consuming mass mailings just to communicate with members. Gone, too, are the e-mails that make it to some, but not all, of our membership because of out-of-date e-mail addresses. You have probably already noticed an increase in Club-related e-mails in the past few months. **This is just a taste of what is to come.**

If you do not have a computer and/or e-mail, you will continue to receive a **snail mail** copy of the newsletter. You are missing out, however, in SKOAC's powerful new powers of communication. Our web site is under new management and will play an ever-increasing role in helping us be a more active, informed and effective organization. E-mailed newsletters and event reminders will keep everyone tuned in to upcoming events.

As always, I welcome feedback, articles, and anything else related to sea kayaking or the outdoors. I don't care whether your adventure is a "club trip" or not. We want to hear about it. Don't hesitate to call me at (612) 823-1272 or e-mail me at brock.hunter@justice.com with any ideas, questions, or concerns.

Brock Hunter

Board News:

1. Last Board Meeting

The Board of Directors met on December 3rd at the Green Mill in Minneapolis. Present were board members **Bill Newman, Adrienne Madson, Jerome Rausch and Brock Hunter**. Club member **Patrick Maun** also attended the meeting.

2. Annual Party

The Board approved a date and location for the annual party. The party will be held February 28, at 7:00 p.m. at the same location as last year -- Jim Davis's office at the old **Grain Belt Bottling House** at 79 13th Ave. NE in Northeast Minneapolis.

Last year's party was the biggest yet with 50+ SKOACers in attendance. We enjoyed a huge potluck, kegs of Summit, and

slide shows of past trips. The Disco Tipi even made an appearance. If you didn't make it last year, don't miss it again. Please bring slides or pictures of your paddling adventures to share with everyone. Also, please bring folding/camp chairs as seating is limited. Check the Calendar for additional info. See you in February!

3. Board Elections

The Board also discussed the upcoming elections. We have **two Board positions up for election** this year. Current Board member, **Lynn Jacobs**, has announced she does not intend to run for reelection. **Bill Newman** plans to run again for his slot.

So far, we have two new candidates, **Patrick Maun** and our new web master, **Rich Cook**. We are hereby calling for additional nominations. Any nominations can be made to me (Brock Hunter) by phone, e-mail or letter. The deadline is January 31st.

Do not be afraid to nominate yourself if you have interest in serving on the Board.

Once all nominations are in, we will collect candidate statements and send them, along with ballots to all of our membership. You can cast your ballot at the annual party on February 28th or mail it in. The deadline for mailed in ballots will be printed on the ballot form.

4. Kayak Trailer Update by Jerome Rausch

We indicated in an earlier newsletter our plans for investigating the acquisition of a kayak trailer for use by club members. The board would like to take this opportunity to bring you up to date on our considerations and plans and to solicit any feedback from club members regarding this matter. This would be a significant financial decision for the club and we really want to know what you think – let's hear from you!

Why should SKOAC consider purchasing a trailer?

The board believes the availability of a trailer would be a great asset in planning, coordinating and executing club trips. It could be especially beneficial for larger group trips and trips to more distant destinations as well as local excursions (Utah, Canada, Apostle Islands, Lake Calhoun! etc). It could help facilitate car-pooling on any trip of more than 2 paddlers or 1 vehicle, potentially helping us all save vehicle wear and tear as well as gas money.

What kind of trailer are we considering?

We are focusing on a better quality trailer that could haul up to 8 boats. It needs to have certain basic features including: a tongue extension to allow hauling of the longer boats we all use; upgraded wheels and bearings; effective padding on the cross arms and uprights; etc. We will likely pass on a lockable oar storage box due to its cost and instead enlist an industrious club member to build something suitable! Trailers generally have 60" or 80" cross arms (for kayaks and canoes, respectively). The wider trailers would allow two kayaks per section and this could allow us to select a shorter height trailer that could still carry the number of boats desired. A shorter trailer would also be easier to load/unload and would incur less wind resistance.

What might such a trailer cost?

Depending on the exact configuration, a good quality trailer (without the oar box) might approach \$1,000.

How can the club afford a trailer?

While we do have a certain amount of funds on hand, it is not enough to cover the cost of a trailer. We are taking steps to reduce certain club expenses, like implementing the email newsletter! (The newsletter copying and mailing costs are the single most expensive thing we do – that's why we really would like to get all our members' email addresses as well!) These savings will add up over time. We probably would need to do some fund raising or request a club member capital contribution – say a nominal amount of \$10 or a bit more. A capital contribution would be optional now but might be required of any

member utilizing the trailer. IE if your boat will be hauled on the trailer, the capital contribution would be required at that time, if not previously made.

Would members be charged anything to use the trailer?

We would likely charge a minimal "rental" fee for the use of a trailer. Maybe a daily rate of \$7 - \$10 and a weekly rate of \$40 - \$60. We want the rate to be cheap enough to encourage use of the trailer but also be some amount to help ultimately pay for a portion of its cost.

How would the use of the trailer be managed and what about ongoing maintenance? We would need to set up a "reservation" system for use of the trailer. You know, like 30 day advance booking. Any member using the trailer would be responsible for its condition on return. Ongoing maintenance should be minimal and mostly concern the bearings and tires.

So there's the update. Please let us know what you think, especially concerning the capital call idea, or if you have other fundraising ideas! Contact us at info@skoac.org. Your feedback is important in order for us to move ahead and possibly acquire a trailer for the coming season.

5. Email Address Requests

Any member receiving this newsletter by posted mail - please provide SKOAC your email address, if you have one. We communicate with our membership via email to keep us all informed of developing events and activities and also to disseminate newsletter information. You can provide your email address to Jerome Rausch (Membership Director) at rauschja@isd.net in order to receive email communications you are currently missing!

6. Membership List

In addition, we recently distributed a current member list with phone number and email address information. Please review your information and advise Jerome of any necessary corrections. This list contains both adult members of Household Memberships but generally only has one common email address for each adult. If you prefer separate email addresses for each adult member, please advise Jerome. As always, we do not provide or sell this information to any outside parties. It is recorded in the SKOAC membership database and only used to facilitate club communications.

7. Organizing a Trip?

For those interested in organizing a SKOAC Club trip, your life just got a whole lot easier. Stellar Sager has generously offered to pioneer the new club position of Trip Coordinator. Stellar will now be the sole contact for anyone planning a Club trip. She will work with the trip organizer and the Board to assess the difficulty rating of a trip and ensure the trip is posted on the Calendar and Club website. See the web site for more information on the Trip Coordinator, trip planning and the use of the new [Trip Submission Form](#).

Club News:

Trip Reports

1. Fall Ball IV

This year's Ball was the best yet. We had great weather and over 20 paddlers joining us on Sand Island for a relaxed weekend of socializing. Check out more photos of the event at skoac.org.



2. Devil's Island – October 10-13 by Jerome Rausch (with Brock Hunter)

(Editor's Note: For some time now, several SKOAC members have been itching for a late season trip to Devil's Island. Lake Superior's unpredictable nature this time of year makes such a trip a bit of a crap shoot. Last year we planned a Devil's trip to coincide with Halloween, but called it off due to a nasty forecast that ended up being quite benign. This year the forecast was relatively tame but ended up anything but. We landed on Devil's just ahead of a fast moving storm and ended up with a front row seat to Mother Superior's wild side. Brock Hunter)

Participants:

Jerome Rausch, Brock Hunter and Bill Newman
Brian Kaibel

Camp/Overnight Sites:

Little Sand Bay
Devils Island (2 nights)

Trip Highlights:

Brock and I drove up Friday night (10/10/03) and set up camp at Little Sand Bay next to a "Mega Camper-Bus", complete with an awning and lit entry area. Big Mistake! Unfortunately, a second camper showed up at about 3 a.m. accompanied by boisterous, drunken bellowing that seriously disturbed our beauty sleep. An admonition from Brock finally quieted things down.

The next morning we were hoping to see **Ellen Nacik** and **Bill Newman** arrive but only Bill made it – around 9 a.m. no less! After breakfast we **set off for Devils Island on a roughly 12 mile route** that took us around the west end of York and to the north end of Bear, then on to Devil's. We decided to take a lunch break in the bay on the north end of Bear and do a little looking around. This bay has a nice sand beach (although a bit steep) and conceals a decent wilderness campsite location. Further west of this is an old cabin that is still standing. The wilderness site might be a good location for a future trip. It started drizzling after our lunch as we embarked on the final three-mile crossing to the south end of Devils. We had **reasonable surfing waves** to push us along and we were all very grateful to be in drysuits which kept us warm and comfy!

Reaching Devils we entered the protected breakwater only to see a **kayak already at the landing**. Oh no, another paddler had already claimed the one site on the island! Suddenly Brock indicated that he was pretty sure he recognized the boat and lo and behold, club member **Brian Kaibel** made his way down the hill and **greeted us as we landed**. Just our good fortune to have the site all ready for us!

Brian helped us drag our gear up the steep hill to the campsite. I **immediately set up my tent and changed clothes**. Bill, uncharacteristically, quickly followed suit. **Brock mocked our industriousness** as he caught up with Brian. A half hour, or so, later we headed back down the hill to view the wind and waves on the lake and noticed a **solid gray wall marching toward us** from the south. It hit us 30 seconds later with a **fierce sheet of wind and rain**, forcing us to take refuge against the old boathouse at the landing. The wind suddenly changed direction and we had to move to the other side of the boathouse. The **waves quickly grew into steep breakers**. **The temperature also dropped dramatically**, from the forties to the thirties within minutes. We were **thankful we were not still out on the lake**.

The extreme winds let up a little bit and we headed back up the hill to the campsite. **Brock was now eating his words**, still in his dry suit with no tent pitched and the howling wind and rain showing no signs of letting up. **We were all cold and hungry** as the sun set and we **hovered over the struggling fire** that Brian had thankfully started before the storm hit. We forced ourselves to set up our stoves, knowing a warm dinner would improve our dispositions. It did. So did the **Crown Royal** Brian shared from his flask.

The rain continued for the next several hours, **forcing Brock to pitch his tent by headlamp and in the driving rain**. I helped him out and we were able to get the tent up pretty quickly and with a minimum of wetness inside. The rain let up around midnight, but the **winds** continued, quickly **drying out all of our soggy gear**. We bedded down to the sound of wind in the trees above and **waves crashing over the dock** below.

Sunday morning we discovered the wind had not let up a bit. In fact, the forecast on our VHF radio called for **very strong westerly winds and BIG waves all day**. After a discussion we decided the 12-mile paddle back to Little Sand Bay in near-freezing conditions would be an exhausting grind, not to mention dangerous. We made a tentative **decision to stay put an extra day**. Bill took off up the hiking trail to the lighthouse for a better view of the weather conditions. Brock and I followed a short time later. The trail was wide enough for an automobile and the hike was a bit over a mile. At the lighthouse grounds we took the trail to the west shore and were treated to **awesome views of the big waves crashing up and over the cliffs!** It was beautiful. (Check out the photos at skoac.org) The view confirmed our decision to stay put for the day. We then checked out the east landing area and found the outline of the Devil that had been carved into the sandstone some years ago.



Waves pummeling Devil's cliffs

Later in the afternoon, with the westerly wind and waves still pounding the island, **Brock, Brian and I launched to paddle up the protected east side**. The first stretch of sea caves, along the northeast shore, were well protected from the wind and it was dead calm. As we neared the north end, Brock and I made the **spontaneous decision to tackle the rough west side**. Brian held up and decided to retrace the east side back to camp, wisely

judging his big Current Designs Expedition would be difficult to handle in those conditions. Brock and I rounded the northern tip of the island and immediately found ourselves in some **big, nasty clapotis near the mouths of the biggest caves**. The waves were very steep and seemed to be coming from every direction at once. Our **adrenaline was running strong** as a rescue in these conditions would have been precarious. We fought our way to a safer distance off-shore then headed south along the west side of the island. Once we tuned into the **rhythm of the waves**, we relaxed a bit and enjoyed the **roller coaster ride**. The conditions moderated as we neared the southern end of the island. Our brief adventure ended as we **surfed into the protected harbor on waves tinted by the first hints of sunset**.

After catching the **amazing sunset** from the dock, and a great dinner, we enjoyed a far more pleasant (and dry) evening around the fire. Later, we were fortunate to witness a **rare occurrence**. The strong westerly winds had blown away any hint of haze from the lake, allowing us to **clearly see individual lights in Grand Marais, MN, over 40 miles away**.

Monday morning revealed diminished but still steady winds. After a quick breakfast, we packed up and launched into moderate waves. We made a direct shot past Bear Island, toward the eastern end of York Island, contending with **front quartering waves the whole way**. Brian decided to power his **sleek Expedition** straight through to Little Sand Bay, while the **rest of us decided to stop on York for lunch** and a look around. After much tromping through the woods we finally located the **memorial stones** for a son killed in Vietnam and his parents. We also noted areas where people had wilderness camped on this section of York despite the fact that the whole island is off limits to such activity. Launching again we battled the winds for our remaining paddle to Little Sand Bay. With boats and gear loaded on our cars, we headed to **Fitgers in Duluth** for our traditional post-trip beers and food.

3. Upcoming Winter Wilderness Treks

Check the calendar for SKOAC's two main winter treks this season. Trek I is happening as I write this and Trek II falls in mid-February. Both trips will be into the Boundary Waters, though the exact routes and destinations will be determined closer to the departure dates and based on local ice conditions.

SKOAC 2004 WINTER CALENDAR

How to sign up for a trip:

- ❖ Check the trip rating system at the end of the newsletter to see what skills are required for a trip. Please remember to check the trip distances to see if they are within your range. If you are unsure about a requirement, please talk to the organizer about it.
- ❖ Contact the trip organizer to sign up for the trip and get more specific information about meeting time and place.
- ❖ Official club trips have "SKOAC" next to the date and generally require participants to be members of SKOAC and are covered by ACA and club guidelines. Non-official trips/events are not sanctioned by the ACA or SKOAC, and membership is not required.

SKOAC	Jan. 23	Pool Session - Brooklyn Center Pool , 8:00pm - 10:00pm This session will include a rolling class. FMI: Bill Newman 763-585-6191
SKOAC	Feb. 8	Pool Session - Brooklyn Center Pool , 11:00am - 1:00pm FMI: Jerome Rausch 612-925-1710 or rauschja@isd.net
SKOAC	Feb. 13-16	BWCA Wilderness Trek II Meet in Ely on Friday, Feb 13 for a stay at one of the motels and snowshoe to a base-camp on Saturday. Exact route to be determined depending on snow and ice conditions. FMI:email Sarah Ohmann at sarah@skoac.org or call 612-789-2338.
	Feb. 28	SKOAC ANNUAL PARTY The annual potluck get-together is at Jim Davis' office again this year in the Grain Belt Bottling House at 79 13th Ave. NE. Festivities will begin at 7PM. Please bring slides or pictures of your favorite paddling adventures to share with everyone. Also, please bring folding/camp chairs as seating is limited. Hope to see you there! Directions: From downtown, take 94 and turn right onto Broadway, then left onto Marshall, and then one more left onto 13th. FMI: Contact Jerome Rausch at 612.925.1710 or by email at rauschja@isd.net or Jim Davis at 612-331-4467 or 612-239-4303.
SKOAC	Mar. 14	Pool Session - Brooklyn Center Pool , 11:00am - 1:00pm FMI: Brock Hunter at 612-823-1272
	February 2005	Kayak, Scuba Dive, Camp in Antarctica: Level II Cruise from Ushuia, Argentina to the Antarctic Peninsula via Quark Expedition's ship Professor Multanovskiy. Join Chris, Sarah and Bill for the trip of a lifetime! Imagine yourself..... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Paddling a 15-foot Prijon Double Barge, er, kayak in the company of penguins. ➤ Diving under the Antarctic ice in tepid 28F waters. ➤ Winter, er, austral summer camping on the ice pack. ➤ "Feeding the fish" from the deck of a Russian ice breaker. Due to the expense of this trip and SCUBA diving qualifications necessary, we are publicizing it far in advance. FMI: Contact Chris at webmaster@skoac.org

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT OUR WEB SITE FOR ADDITIONS: WWW.SKOAC.ORG

SKOAC GUIDELINES FOR OFFICIAL CLUB TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES:

Individual Equipment Required for Club Trips Rated Level II or higher and Great Lakes or Ocean Paddling:

- Sea worthy Sea Kayak with floatation bags or watertight bulkheads – preferably 16 feet or greater in length
- Spray Skirt
- Personal Floatation Device (PFD) with whistle – PFD's must be worn at all times on club trips
- Paddle Float
- Bilge Pump
- Map/Chart and Compass – required on Great Lakes and Ocean Trips
- Wet Suit or Dry Suit for all Superior trips
- Waterproof Flashlight or Headlamp for night paddling

Recommended Group and Individual Equipment for Club Trips Rated Level II or Higher and Great Lakes or Ocean Paddling:

- Water bottle and food within reach of the cockpit (energy gel, power bars, etc.)
- Tow line for towing tired or injured paddlers
- First Aid kit
- VHF Radio
- Repair Kit for Kayak and other important equipment
- Sunscreen
- Sun Glasses
- Extra food to allow for waiting out bad weather
- Extra clothes, sleeping bag, tent or bivy sack – even for day trips; in case of bad weather
- Paddle leash and/or spare paddle
- Strobe light and/or reflective tape on PFD
- Flares and signal mirror – required on Great Lakes and Ocean Trips
- Way-cool dork-hat for shade or warmth
- Helmet for surfing

Skill Requirements for Club Trips:

Each club trip differs in the kayak skills that will be required for participants to have a safe and enjoyable experience. Skills required for a club trip are determined by the trip organizer and/or the TCSKA Board using the following lists as a general guide only. Participants are expected to self-assess their abilities and take responsibility for themselves on club trips. Trip organizers help organize trip logistics and coordinate club activities – do not expect them to act as guides on trips! Note also that the focus on the rating systems requirements is on skills rather than on the number of years of experience in kayaking. a paddler with ten years of experience would still be qualified only for SK I trips if they had not developed, for example, reliable self-rescue skills.

Level I: No previous paddling experience is required for club trips with a level I rating. Examples would include club-sponsored skill sessions on inland lakes and winter pool sessions. Level I trips or skill sessions will be used to help new paddlers develop the necessary skills to participate in more advanced trips. Level I trips will be limited to sheltered waters and short distances with few significant hazards.

Level II: Level II trips may include less sheltered open water paddles and longer distances. Participants are expected to have a working knowledge of kayak paddle strokes and braces. They also must be able to demonstrate a self-rescue technique such as a paddle-float rescue and have experience using at least one assisted rescue such as a T-rescue or rafting-up. a trip organizer may require a demonstration of both a self-rescue and assisted-rescue before allowing a paddler to come on a Level II or higher rated trip. Participants are also expected to have a working knowledge of basic navigational skills such as using a chart and compass, and basic knowledge of the effects of weather on paddling conditions and how to obtain marine forecasts prior to starting a trip. It is assumed that participants can maintain a reasonable pace for trips of up to ten miles per day in good weather.

Level III: Level III trips may include open water paddling in challenging conditions and longer trip distances. On Level III trips, participants should have well developed paddle stroke and bracing skills. Participants should not only have good high and low bracing skills, but should be working on a strong sculling brace and learning to Eskimo roll. Paddlers should be comfortable paddling in higher winds (over 15 knots) and traveling in waves of 2-3 feet. They should be comfortable launching and landing in moderate surf when breaking waves are 3 feet or less. Participants in Level III trips should have a good working knowledge of navigation including strong piloting and dead reckoning skills. On Level III trips participants should have the endurance to paddle up to 20 miles per day in good weather with a fast, efficient forward paddle stroke.

Level IV: Level IV trips may include open water paddling in very challenging conditions over long distances. Participants should have very strong paddling and bracing skills, be comfortable paddling in rough conditions (waves 4 feet or greater and winds up to 30 knots), have mastered group and self-rescue techniques, developed a reliable Eskimo roll (preferably on both sides). Participants should also be comfortable with landing in larger surf with 3-6 foot waves. As a rule, trip organizers would avoid setting out to paddle in the above conditions, but, for example, a late-Fall trip on Lake Superior might be rated a Level III-Level IV rather than a Level III in recognition of the greater chance of running into sudden Fall storms.