

My Pad, or Yours?

By Georgianna La Peer

I have come to realize that not all kayak cockpits were outfitted with me in mind. Thank goodness for yoga, but with some boats it just doesn't matter how many twisted configurations I contort myself into; I just can't get into the cockpit. Or if I do, my legs fall asleep, or the thigh hooks are hooking my kneecaps instead, or my hips feel like they're in a vise. If this sounds at all familiar to you, then take heart! You can change it without buying another boat.

The best way to get this perfect fit is to outfit your kayak yourself. Outfitting a kayak isn't rocket science,



Creating the Seat Template



Rough Seat Cut

though it can turn into a hobby unto itself. It's fun, and it doesn't take a lot of specialized equipment. Never again will I choose, or give up on, a boat based on its factory-issued outfitting.

All you really need is: a couple of days, a sense of humor, a bread knife or hacksaw, cardboard for templates, water-based markers (I like the scented ones!), some sandpaper or Dragonskin (for cutting and shaping minicell foam), duct tape for holding things in place, and waterproof contact cement to secure things once you've figured out where you want them.

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Calendar

- Saturday, March 3 - Paddles Demystified Lecture (FREE) [Kayak Zak's (KZ)]
- Saturday, April 14 - Mad River Slough [Explore North Coast (ENC)]
- Saturday, April 14 - Eel River Scouting trip in preparation for the Scotia to Fortuna section of Paddle to the Headwaters [Adventure's Edge (AE)]
- Sunday, April 15 - Forward Stroke Clinic (\$30) (KZ)
- Monday, April 16 & Tuesday, April 17 - Banff Mountain Film Festival (\$8 in advance, \$10 at door) (AE)
- Saturday, April 21 & Sunday, April 22 - Paddle to the Headwaters
- Saturday, April 28 - Rescue & Recovery Class (\$40) (KZ)
 - Sunday, April 29 - Trinidad (ENC)
- Sunday, April 29 - Kayaks Demystified Lecture (FREE) (KZ)
- Sunday, May 6 - Klamath Glen to Klamath Estuary (ENC)
- Sunday, May 6 - Kayak 101 at Adventure's Edge Demo Day (FREE) (KZ)

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Submissions for future newsletters can be sent to:

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- Saturday, May 12 - Women On Water - WOW! (FREE) (KZ)
- Saturday, May 19 - Paddling In Wind Clinic (\$30) (KZ)
 - Sunday, May 20 - Trinidad Whale Watching (ENC)
- Saturday, June 2 - Big Lagoon to Maple Creek (ENC)
 - Sunday, June 3 - Advanced Rescue & Recovery Class (\$50) (KZ)
- Saturday, June 16 - Paddling With Joint Pain Lecture (FREE) (KZ)
 - Saturday, June 16 through Tuesday, July 3 - Northern Mountain Supply Anniversary Sale
- Saturday, June 23 - Sunday, June 24 - Stone Lagoon Overnighter (ENC)
- Saturday, June 30 - Balance & Bracing Clinic (\$35) (KZ)

For more information about Explore North Coast events, visit explorenorthcoast.net.

For more information about Kayak Zak's events, visit kayakzak.com. (Kayak Zak's prices do not include kayaks and gear.) For more information about Adventure's Edge events, contact Larry at (707) 822-4673.

The Jefferson State Slalom Race will be held on Saturday, May 5 on the South Fork of the Smith River. Youth under the age of 18 can enter for free. There is a \$5 fee for adults and a \$10 insurance fee for non-ACA members. No charge to spectators. All proceeds will go to the Del Norte High School Kayak Club. For more information, contact Gary Hull at (707) 458-3017 or gmhull@delnorte.k12.ca.us.



Carving out the Butt Dimples

The best way to start is to look at what other people have done with their boats, and then to try stuff out in your own boat.

Kayakfit.com has excellent, illustrated step-by-step instructions for creating

custom seats, hip pads, thigh hooks and other modifications for comfort and performance. They also sell outfitting kits, foam and tools.

A well-fit cockpit will make a world of difference in your paddling enjoyment as well as your stability and boat control.



Finished Foam Project

Each year our club organizes a great kayak expedition. In years past we have explored the South Puget Sound, the San Juan Islands and even went en masse to the West Coast Sea Kayak Symposium. This year we've decided to keep things a little closer to home so that more members can enjoy the fun. From Thursday, Aug. 16 through Tuesday, Aug. 21, we will hold base camp at Mendocino Woodlands group Camp Three. Camp Three has 16 four-bed tent cabins, two toilet facilities, a kitchen and fire ring at the creek. Check out the amenities at mendocinowoodlands.org. From here we will have easy access to paddling on Big River and the wonderful coastal features that Mendocino has to offer. The cost will be divided pro rata. You can come for the whole time, or just a couple of nights. We will be getting organized and assigning tents/nights sometime in early summer. Mark your calendars!



Kayak Zak's

707 498-1130

info@kayakzak.com

www.kayakzak.com

\$ 5 coupon

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includes classes, clinics, guided tours, and rentals
not to be used in conjunction with any other discount.

Sunrise at Hookton Slough...



On Sunday, Feb. 4, Explore North Coast members dragged themselves out of bed early for a 6:45 a.m. launch at Hookton Slough. Steve and Tracy Smith led this paddle to watch the morning goose flight at the refuge. Birds that were spotted include the Aleutian subspecies of Cackling Canada Goose by the tens of thousands, Ross's Goose, Tundra Swan and various ducks including Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck and Green-winged Teal. The raptors included Northern Harrier, White-tailed Kite and Peregrine Falcon. Among the shorebirds were Willet, Marbled Godwit, Long-billed Curlew, dowitchers, Dunlin, Western and Least Sandpipers. The group also saw Belted Kingfishers, egrets and herons.



Photos by: *Charlotte Cerny, Georgianna La Peer and Steve Smith*

Samoa Beach to Breakfast...



On Sunday, March 18 Explore North Coast members launched from the Samoa Boat ramp by the Coast Guard station and paddled across the entrance of Humboldt Bay continuing on to eat breakfast in King Salmon at Gil's by the Bay. **Photos by: Mark Lufkin**



A fund has been set up at Coast Central Credit Union to raise funds for fellow kayaker, John Wright. John's house burned to the ground with everything except his kayaks, vehicles and the clothes he was wearing. His motorcycle and kayak trailer survived, but he has no kayak gear, bike or poi gear. He will also be needing basic stuff once he finds a place to live. You may deposit directly to account number 38065s7.1 or send a check to: M. Powell, PO Box 68, Orick, CA 95555. For more information, call (707) 498-1130.



“ *John Dayism*

May your stokes be strong and your maneuvers lack malfeasance

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