

KAYAKING INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Keeping in touch with Kayaking?

Kayaking has evolved as a sport at an exponential rate in the last decade. For some this has been an exciting whirlwind of new ideas and fun. For others including many instructors it has become a frustrating time to try and “keep up” with what is current or best practice. It is fair to say many of our traditional instructional resources are best used as historical documents to see where the sport has come from. Many of these older resources also offer excellent ideas beyond technical stroke or boat control concepts.

No longer do we need to rely on international roving instructor’s word of mouth or secret whispers. Modern kayaking developments can be explored through the MANY excellent instructional and inspirational resources out there. These gems are a total must for a kayak instructor’s continuing professional journey. Here is a quick heads-up on a few goodies...

Current useful resources for instructors

Instruction videos...

“The Kayak Roll” by Kent Ford.

This teaches the Sweep Roll. Great for instructors learning the progression or a personal roll tune-up. Excellent concepts well explained and role-modelled.

“Grace Under Pressure” by “Kathy Belyn and Joe Holt.

This teaches the C-to-C roll. Excellent progressions and concepts (if a little cheesy...).

Liquid Skills by Ken Whiting and Chris Emerick

A good package of information. Watch Ken for the good images, Chris looks a bit stiff! Their eddy turn demonstrations are all good however many instructors in NZ at present are favouring a quality “sweep to stern draw” or just forward paddling for beginners. Definitely safer for shoulders in shallow rivers/creeks and provides solid drive and stability. It can be hard to pick out the good stuff in this video as Ken doesn’t always prioritise the important points. Good current information.

Breakthru by Kent Ford

All the basics broken down to detail with some excellent role modelling of techniques. A good resource for those aiming to sit Kayak I. Have a good giggle about the mighty Scott Shipley referring to the RPM as a play boat.... Times change! Explains carving, forward paddling, sweeps and draws well. Excellent general breakdown of information and easy to understand. Total winner.

SOAR by Ken Whiting

Great mix of instruction and inspiration with some fantastic Kiwi creeking footage. Good intermediate and advanced material. Not so hot as an introductory heads up on basic kayaking techniques.

Whitewater Self Defence by “Kent Ford”

A very good resource and role-modelling of river rescue relevant to kayakers. Great to see a kayak specific resource full of quick-fix tips and tricks. Take a look.

Books

“The Kayaker’s Playbook” by Kent Ford

A great little resource. Clear up to date info. Get into those carving drills! Not the best explanation of vertical strokes but excellent in all other areas. Especially clear about forward paddling, edging and sweeps.

“Every Crushing Stroke” by Scott Shipley

An inspirational piece of work aimed at the intermediate to advanced paddler. A must for those heading for Kayak 2, training for slalom or just hungry to get better at classical paddling skills.

“Whitewater Paddling: Strokes and Concepts” by Eric Jackson

An excellent resource, very up to date. The info is all good. Especially well done is the section on vertical turning strokes (gliding draws). The concept is well explained and gets away from ambiguous “duffek” terminology. It’s a little hard-line on where to look with sweep strokes, practice looking on and off the stroke. A good resource.

But wait there’s more...

There is also a bunch of amazing play boating books/videos – check out Eric Jackson’s latest – Wow! A modern combination of inspirational footage and technical instruction. Wherever you are at the knowledge is there for the taking so rip into it. In terms of NZOIA assessments/training all the info you need is out there waiting. All good kayaking outlets stock or can order the material mentioned in this article. Enjoy taking that new knowledge to the river.

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