

# NZOIA Quarterly

Number 33

Newsletter of the New Zealand Outdoor Instructors' Association

June 2005

## 2005 TALL TOTARA AWARD

Nominations are requested from the membership for this year's Tall Totara Award.

This award is presented annually at the AGM to a member who best fulfils the aims and objectives of our association, recognising the outstanding quality of their instruction and their contribution to the development of outdoor education.

Last year Mark Jones was presented with the Tall Totara Award, and previous recipients have included: *Bev Smith, Hazel Nash, Ray Button, John Davidson, John Skilton, Lindsay Simpkin, Don Paterson, Mick Hopkinson and Jo Straker.*

Please send your nomination in by 31st August with supporting letter to: Steve Scott, NZOIA Administration Officer - email: [ao@nzoia.org.nz](mailto:ao@nzoia.org.nz)

## 2005 NZOIA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Saturday  
10th September  
WELLINGTON**

*in conjunction with the*  
**OUTDOORS NZ Forum**  
**9-10th September 2005.**

~ full details, including the formal notice of the meeting, will be advised to all members when arrangements are finalised.

## NZOIA Annual Subscriptions

Yes, your annual subscription is now due and your invoice is included with this issue of the Quarterly.

You can pay **ONLINE** via the **NZOIA website** - [www.nzoia.org.nz](http://www.nzoia.org.nz), or by cheque.

**AND** remember - **there is a 10% discount if paid by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2005**, and you go in the draw for a specially designed **NIKE Snowboarders Backpack**

**AND** full members renewing membership this year will receive a **NZOIA Cap** with their 2005/2006 membership pack.



# The NZOIA Quarterly

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## PRESIDENTS NOTES

The outdoor community has something of a reputation for being disjointed and difficult to deal with. We are seen, by some, as a collection of independent organizations all heading in different directions. Outdoors NZ was set up, in part, to try and address this issue. At a personal level I take our membership of ONZ and representation on the Board very seriously. There are two concepts promoted by ONZ that I regularly remind people of: 'Pulling Ourselves Together' and what I call 'The Non-proliferation Treaty'.

Pulling ourselves together is all about cohesion within the sector, working collectively to common goals, presenting the outdoor community in a more consistent and unified way to Government agencies and funders. To this end NZOIA has made a commitment not only to support ONZ but also to work more closely with our stakeholders. Our aim is to send representatives from our Executive to meet our counterparts in allied organizations at least once a year. For example, this means liaison with NZRCA, SKOANZ and KASK in the kayak sector. This is one way that we can demonstrate our willingness to seek and respond to the views and needs of others while keeping the sector informed of our direction & strategies.

The notion of a non-proliferation treaty is all about qualifications. In our sector there are too many, there are areas of overlap, and confusion exists about the relative merit of both similar and different awards. New qualifications are being set up right now that serve only to duplicate what already exists and further muddy the waters.

To address this issue NZOIA has established new joint awards in sea kayaking with SKOANZ and KASK, and is working towards alignment and joint awards with Mountain Safety Council where duplication exists in bush, alpine and abseil. For a long time NZOIA and MSC have been running parallel schemes since failed attempts to work together in the past. Duplication makes no sense and neither is it reasonable in the current climate for non-vocational instructors to be working to different standards than their

vocational counterparts. If we are successful in our negotiations with MSC we could see five or six joint awards replace twelve that exist already.

These are two key areas in which NZOIA as an organization can show leadership and make a difference that will benefit the entire sector. As members I encourage you too, to contribute to this process through your interaction with other individuals and organizations.

Matt Cant  
President

## Congratulations

*to the following members who recently gained NZOIA Awards*

### Alpine 1

Tony More

### Bush 1

Howard Manins

Tony More

Keri Wingate

### Rock 1

Trudie Baker

Fraser Champion

Kelly Drummond

Nicholas Hanafin

Tim Lempriere

Clen McGavock

Logan McKelvie

Alastair McWhannell

Sarah O'Donohue

Blake Reid

Cameron Trott

### Rock 2

Ray Hollingsworth

Michael O'Brien

Scott Sambell

Scott Taylor

### Kayak 1

Malaika Davies

Jaron Frost

Bruce Inwards

Hayden Titchener

Ben Yates

Ollie Yeoman

### Sea Kayak 2

Todd Jago

## Sir Edmund Hillary opens the Genesis Energy Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Leadership School

Sir Edmund and Lady June Hillary officially opened the Outdoor Pursuits Centre's new Genesis Energy Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Leadership School on Saturday 28 May.

The Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre was founded in 1972 by Graeme Dingle OBE with Sir Edmund Hillary as its patron.

The new multi million dollar building helps OPC maintain its reputation of being New Zealand's premier centre for leadership training in outdoor education. The original structure of the building was kindly donated by Genesis Energy.

The Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Leadership School is designed to accommodate students studying to become educators and leaders in the outdoor industry.

The new building will provide students with accommodation and lecture facilities, using the latest AV equipment and computers.

## FOR SALE via the NZOIA Website

- NZOIA Logbooks  
~ every instructor needs to maintain one - its your professional CV
- Waterproof Notebooks  
~ no more soggy notes after that 'wet' day outdoors.
- NZOIA Thermal Mugs  
~ keep that drink /soup hot for longer.
- Getting it Right  
~ how to successfully run your outdoor business.
- NZOIA T-Shirts

## From the Annual Assessors Weekend

The annual assessors moderation weekend was held recently in Christchurch. Attendance at this is a requirement of being an assessor (at least every 2nd year). A review of NZOIA's assessment process has recently been undertaken by Stu Allen, and the recommendations from this report were discussed, as well as the revised Assessor Handbook. The aim is to improve the quality of what we do.

### NEW ASSESSORS

Welcome to new assessors:-

Penny Holland (Rock 1), Timaru  
Chris Wynn (Bush 1), Tihoi.

### NEW AWARDS

Linda Wensley has been working on a new **Multi Sport Instructors Award** - for those who instruct and lead multisport kayaking on flat water and moving water up to and including class II. *NB:* This includes instructing and leading on sheltered flat water environments, for example: lakes & estuaries, where wind and waves may have an adverse effect on paddlers. Multisport kayaks typically are 4.5 to 6.5 metres in length and constructed of lightweight materials e.g. kevlar, carbon or fibreglass.

The syllabus is at present with NZRCA for their comments and the first assessment is expected to run later this year.

### CLIMBING WALL AWARDS

The Climbing Wall awards were given a revamp and workover and have re-emerged as Sport Climbing Instructor Awards. Mike Atkinson is heading the team and the syllabi are being reviewed as we speak. More details are expected on this soon, but briefly:-

#### Sport Climbing Instructor 1

Scope - for those persons who instruct top rope climbing on artificial climbing walls, where fixed anchors are easily accessible or accessed by leading.

These sessions are expected to be safe, well managed, fun, challenging and educational experiences for those client groups.

#### Sport Climbing Instructor 2

Scope - for those persons who teach all aspects of sport climbing at both artificial and natural crag environments where the natural crag climbs are single pitch and no more than half a rope in length. There is easy access to the bottom of these climbs.

These sessions are expected to be client centred, safe, well managed, fun and educational experiences for the client groups.

## Booking for a NZOIA Assessment

### September ~ December 2005

Current and prospective NZOIA members are advised that **advance** bookings for the NZOIA assessments scheduled for the latter part of 2005 (September/December) are already being received.

Some assessments are already over 50% full and indications are that most will be full within the next month or two.

If you are considering participating in an assessment later this year, please advise us of your intention to book for an assessment as soon as possible so that we can accommodate as many people as possible - by scheduling additional assessments if necessary. And please remember that bookings are accepted on a first in with deposit, first confirmed.

**Don't be disappointed, register early.**

~ please see page 14 for full details



**John Entwisle - author of "Snow Anchors"  
climbing in the Dolomites.**

*Photo - Brede Arkless.*

# Tech Notes

## Snow Anchors

by John Entwisle

There's fresh snow on the hills. Winter is coming. Time for me to escape to Europe for another summer, but before I go a few hints about snow anchors which I've gleaned from assessing on NZOIA Alpine 1 and 2 courses over the years, a NZMGA Seminar last spring (thanks to Don Bogie for his thoughts) and years of grovelling in snow teaching on mountaineering courses.

Let's start with the easy one: hard snow by which I mean the well and truly frozen stuff that one can crampon on. Take an old fashioned snow stake with a sling attached at the top and pound it into the snow slightly angled back uphill from the 90 angle to the snow surface and with the V pointing downhill. The crucial word here is pound. How many blows depends on your hitting power. My standard 60 kg weakling one is 15 hits. If you want to reinforce the stake then knot the sling about 30-40 cm from the stake and hammer your axe in below this knot so that it shares some of the load.

Please note that only abseil anchors are "backed up" which means a secondary anchor will save the situation if the primary fails, so there is slack between them to see where the load falls. The last abseiler makes the decision whether or not to remove the, often expensive, back up anchor. Hence on this type of snow you may choose to rap off a bollard which can be "backed up" by a snow stake.

That was how. When is different. If doing Alpine 1 wanderings which don't usually involve crampons I'd expect to use this anchor occasionally, say, to get my party up a steep step out of a ravine or down a slippery slope to easier ground. On Alpine 2 terrain either climbing or teaching this would be a common anchor, say on a 4/5 pitch climb on the Mount Temple Gullies in Arthur's Pass. It's a quick and easy anchor and usually indicative of safe snow conditions and great for students to get lots of rope work. A hint, if there is no rush, is to use only 25m of rope so that students get slick with their belays. On a personal level modern ice axes enable one to move on intermediate ground without belaying. I wouldn't dream of pitching up Zurbriggen's on Aoraki. So teach your students good technique so that they too can achieve the same freedom of movement.

And now to soft snow anchors. Frankly I'd rather not. Cold soft snow is for skiing and boarding on and the wet soft stuff is best left to get on with melting while one rock climbs, tramps, fishes and even possibly kayaks. But as this is a professional publication about work I'll try to be helpful. If you are building soft snow anchors on ascent, STOP NOW! Go home.

Sequence for making a vertical 'soft snow' anchor.

**Fig. 1**

a T-slot reinforced with an axe.



**Fig. 2**

a modern stake with V open end downhill. Only half way in to show position of the V and the sling



**Fig. 3**

a trad stake reinforced by an axe



**Photos** - in the sand at Redcliffs, by John Entwisle

You are climbing a potential avalanche slope. If you have just topped out on an ice climb or have to get a group of students down a horrid slope before dark then read on.

You have several options. One is the "Touching the Void" technique. Shovel or kick or somehow make a bucket seat with foot rests and then lower the students from either an old fashioned gortex ruining waist belay or some belay device off your harness. Works well if you can see all the way down the slope, have a good run out and have no person more then 30 kg heavier than you are. As every cinema goer knows not great if you have to escape the system. The stomper belay falls into this category too. But it works provided that you do a session of stomping on the snow before you plant your axe.

Now this heavy footed approach deserves its own paragraph or two or three. It used to be a sacred rule that the snow in front of an anchor was sacrosanct. Don't walk there! Forget it. If you can't walk on the snow in front of an anchor then it isn't strong enough to make an anchor. So I'm including breakable crust snow in this section. If your snow isn't the bullet proof stuff of paragraph 2 then give it a damn good thrashing. I like leaping up and down on the pack to compact it. Don Bogie gives it a heavy handed smacking.

Once your snow is whacked into place then the reliable T-slot anchor will work. Dig your slot in the worked snow as deep as possible, usually between elbow and shoulder deep will do, and use a snow stake or whatever you like to bury as normal. Except that it doesn't matter which way you place the V on the stake. Another sacred cow dead. If you wish to reinforce the stake with your axe you can incorporate it either below or above the stake in the clove hitch, both of which I find fussy so I put it below a knot in the sling as I do for a traditional snow stake.

Personal confession time - I've never liked T-slots. They are awkward and slow to build, cause as much nose to snow contact as my skiing used to do and will soak any gloves. I like snow pigs. These truffle hunting little creatures, with a slight genetic modification, are back in. If you don't own one then modify your snow stake by giving it a mid point attachment. Spectra cord or tape will do.

Once you have done your jumping/smacking job stick your pig/stake into the snow at the appropriate angle. Don't ask me what it is, because with this stake configuration it isn't that important. Anything between a trad snow stake angle and the official pig angle will work provided the snow has been compacted. Next cut a slot for the sling/wire and once you are certain that the pull is downwards back fill this slot patting the snow firmly into place.

Pull on the sling to test the placement and to settle it in, but beware, don't commit your full weight to the anchor until you are confident about it holding.

## Construction stages of an upright snow stake or snow pig anchor with mid attachment point. - photos by Don Bogie

Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



The same goes for testing any snow anchor. V point uphill is better for a static stake and V downhill for a pure pig. Another word of caution, pure pigs in soft snow are dynamic anchors in that a correctly placed one could travel down and into the snow and may have to be dug out after several lowers. Make sure that your pig can do this and is not going to slide out on an ice layer or bounce off rocks.

So far I've only mentioned bollards in passing. I like them. They are light to carry, cheap and often nature does most of your building for you. Hard snow ones are easy. Pull on the sling to test the placement and to settle it in, but beware, don't commit your full weight to the anchor until you are confident about it holding. The same goes for testing any snow anchor. V point uphill is better for a static stake and V downhill for a pure pig. Another word of caution, pure pigs in soft snow are dynamic anchors in that a correctly placed one could travel down and into the snow and may have to be dug out after several lowers. Make sure that your pig can do this and is not going to slide out on an ice layer or bounce off rocks.

So far I've only mentioned bollards in passing. I like them. They are light to carry, cheap and often nature does most of your building for you. Hard snow ones are easy.

Soft snow ones need more hard work or cunningness. Sometimes firmer snow lurks in wind scoops, schrunds or shady gullies. If not then use the trampling technique and make your bollard large, up to 2m in diameter will usually do it. Putting rocks (if available) where the rope cuts in will give you more security and back the bollard up until you are sure it can take the weight of the last abseiler.

Finally the horror show. The bad day when you have to get a group down a slope and your only anchor possibility is bottomless porridge. A terrifying thought! So far I've assumed that you can lower the clients directly off the anchor rather than have several 100 kg rugby players testing the resilience of your kidneys. Now you can't. So create the anchor of your choice, I'd go for a pig/mid point stake, but a T-slot is OK, fasten yourself tightly to it while seated in a bucket and using a smooth running belay device on your harness lower your clients to a safe spot. This is the classic ABC of basic climbing which we, hopefully, try to instil into our students. I once did this with 4 clients coming off the E. Ridge of Dixon and finished 1m further down the slope as my stance gradually collapsed and the pig travelled. Still it worked and the clients were kind enough to dig me out after I'd jumped the schrund.

*John Entwisle is one of the NZOIA originals, a TSC member and Assessor over a many years, with Level 2 Awards in Alpine, Bush & Rock.  
Ed.*

## Letter to Editor

### Tech Notes - Top Rope Rescue

In response to Kip Mandeno's article on the top rope rescue...

Kip raises some good points on the TR rescue. I have a different perception to Kip of the role of the TR rescues in the Rock 1 assessment.

There is a lot to cover in two days on the Rock 1 assessment. Only one day is devoted to all the technical skills of climbing instruction. I have always considered the top rope rescue and variations of it (as sometimes requested) to be a means of assessing a range of competencies and a candidate's ability to think through a technical problem. In a ten-fifteen minute exercise I can discern something of a candidate's competence prusiking, ability to safeguard whilst using prusiks, transferring load, sometimes transferring a belay, managing a patient whilst abseiling with them, and using self protection whilst abseiling.

There are a multitude of potential rescue scenarios that could occur within the scope of a rock one climbing day, however bizarre and unlikely, including Kip's lightweight-student-with- broken-ankle-stuck-in-crack-and-heavy-belayer set up. No one rescue will be the best fit to all situations (even Kip's suggested technique is of little use in his own scenario without the ability to rig a quick Yosemite hoist or similar to unweight the trapped ankle to free it) and while the assessor could devote an entire day to rescue I think it is better to throw one scenario at them, see how they deal with it, and by questioning, draw some conclusions as to how they might deal with other potential scenarios. The top rope rescue has never to my knowledge been suggested as "the way" to rescue a client, just "a way".

Personally I've had to "rescue" students on one or two exceptional and very undramatic situations. On both occasions the TR rescue as described in the syllabus and Kip's suggested replacement for it would both have been over-kill. Let's face it, real rescues are very rare. I just don't think the scope of the award warrants a greater focus on rescues and would rather see more on appropriate climb selection, good progression, etc to reduce the likelihood of the need for rescues.

I take Kip's point that the TR rescue may not be the most commercially robust system to use, but in recreation training and guiding we have always operated well outside of commercial rope work regulations and I think we should fight to preserve that. Otherwise my students will need full body harnesses, multiple ropes, and all manner of high-tech gizmos that simply don't have a place in outdoor education and recreation training from where I sit. Despite not having the above the TR rescue is a very safe system. You have to do a lot wrong to endanger the patient, especially if you have a belayer on the end of the system.

What clearly ought to happen is for some of these other rescue techniques/options to be shared as Kip has done so people have an idea of some of the rescue options at their disposal to best fit to the given situation.

**Mark Jones**  
NZOIA Award Holder & Assessor

# RATIOS ... AN ELASTIC BAND?

by Mick Hopkinson - New Zealand Kayak School

## Consider this situation.....

Last spring I was hired by a Polytechnic to do "a couple of days" as a fill in for a staff member. The course arrived in Murchison and I wasn't needed the first day as it was "only flat water". Day 2 dawned in the Swimming Pool and it started to dawn on me what I had let myself in for: Two L2s, myself and the Polytechnic lecturer, plus an L1 acting as L2, six third year students and 20 plus 1<sup>st</sup> year students. Fortunately I knew the names of the other two staff but that was it. There were only 26+ names to learn without the formalities of a meeting or a name game. The third years were teaching the first years. Everybody seemed to have a handle on it except me. (I wasn't there the first day, remember!)

Came the afternoon it thinned out and we went to the Buller. I now had "only" 10 students:- two third year students who I had never seen paddle but was assured were competent and eight "other ranks" who I have seen in the midst of 20+ people in the swimming pool and again never seen on the river. My job was to give feed back to the two "instructors in training". Fortunately they turned out to be good paddlers but I didn't know that until we were on the river. So now I was responsible for two groups of five...two courses!

To complicate matters the trainee instructors had spent the previous weekend scoping out river runs appropriate to the students' ability. So now I was buying into a second set of value judgments; not just that the trainees were personally competent but also that they had good judgment skills re river runs and the first years ability. The Buller was running at spring flows (not surprising since it was spring!) and consequently every eddy turn spread the two groups out over a half a kilometre.

In theory I was to watch one trainee, give him feedback, then ditto with the second group. At the flows we had I found this job impossible bearing in mind the fact that I was trying to assess the abilities of ten people at once. So I quit my teaching role and took on the job of backstop. I told the two groups to stay close together and took the position of being the bottom boat if all else failed. At least I could pick up the pieces. (lets not talk about any of the students getting stuck in trees upstream of me. I had to mentally foreclose on that option.)

In the end nothing happened. Nobody swam, got pinned, no yard sales, nothing. But my whole trip involved lots of head counting and mental gymnastics and "how long would it take to get out and run back upstream here" etc. I was stressed and said so to my employer at the end of the day.

The second day was better especially as we went on the Mangles at rapid and pool level. I even managed some feedback for the trainees.

But we had a swim that involved a comedy of errors whereby the swimmer ended up river right and the trainee instructor ended up with the boat and gear on river left a couple of hundred metres downstream. (The trainee instructor had failed to do up the buckle on his rescue jacket at the put in and as a result his first rescue of the "airbagless" kayak failed and he ended up bumping it into the eddy). Needless to say it was worth pointing out that had the same combination of events happened on the Buller the previous day:- swim, failed towline, no airbags, victim on one bank, boat on the other we would have been looking at a yard sale over a couple of kilometres with the trainee instructors 3 remaining students hopefully sitting in a boilly eddy for the best part of half an hour on their own and hopefully not adding to the confusion by paddling downstream. Don't mention the second course.

All good learning?

## Accepted Professional Practice

At this point it would perhaps be useful to quote Cathye Haddock "Accepted professional practice is safe practice in accordance with a profession's stated standards" The accepted safe practice for kayaking is a one to four ratio. One instructor to 4 students. NZOIA regularly stretches this ratio for assessment purposes. On a level one kayak assessment it is theoretically possible for an NZOIA assessor to be responsible for 3 assessees and 12 students on a river trip.

But in these circumstances the assessor has certain checks and safeguards:-

1. The assessee has already been accepted by NZOIA as at or near the standard of a level one instructor.
2. The Assessor then has the whole of the first day of the assessment to rigorously check out the personal paddling and rescue capability of the assessee to see if he/she can safely underpin the instructing segment of the assessment.
3. Day two of the assessment process is another chance for the assessor to evaluate the assessee in controlled environments:- the pool and flat water.
4. Day three provides a further chance for evaluation, the moving water session, before the river trip.
5. And because it is an assessment the assessor is under no obligation to continue with the assessment if he feels the assessee is under performing particularly with relation to client safety.



I was stressed because I hadn't had days one, two and the morning of day three to make the necessary evaluations of assesseses & clients. I "got away with it".

But I COULD NOT JUSTIFY MY ACTIONS on day one of that polytechnic course.

### In the interim

I further had my professional thinking tuned by attending the second day of the coroner's inquest for Tim Jamieson and by an incident on the Buller that is worth sharing with you.

Intermediate kayak course. Day one session 3 a short class 2 river trip, after the swimming pool and flat water.

**The client**, 10 year paddler currently working as full time instructor at a centre in Malaysia. The client had not paddled cold white water for two years and was here for a refresher.

**The instructor**, NZOIA level one, very experienced instructor and rescuer having been involved in near fatal incidents on class 5 rapids.

**The incident:-** On the Dr. Creek Section of the Buller at LOW flows. The client, having demonstrated the ability to roll EXPERTLY in the swimming pool failed his roll in the cold water two rapids down from the put-in and swam. The instructor went for the gear which she rescued and dragged ashore. Looking upstream she was astonished to see the client trapped about one third of the way out from the right bank. The client in the white water swim position had swum on to a log, about 10 cm in diameter and about 2 metres long pointing upstream and hidden underwater. The log had inserted itself into the clients shorts. (In a similar accident at Glengarry in 1991 a school student swam onto a hidden branch which inserted into the boys rugby jersey. Despite the best efforts of the staff and the boy's father he drowned). We had a more fortunate outcome. The client was an experienced outdoor instructor in his own right and managed to struggle to a breathing position. He remained calm. The instructor ran up the river bank and rescued the client with a throwbag from upstream.

Years of training paid off!

Footnote: Next day two very experienced NZOIA instructors went to remove the log. The log was located when the first instructor pinned his foot under it! He was rescued by the second instructor and together the two of them wrestled with the log and removed it from the river.

Food for thought. I analysed it to DEATH! I came away thinking that there was nothing in my power that I could have done before the incident that would have had any bearing on it and I was extremely grateful for the quick reactions and state of training of my instructor.

I COULD JUSTIFY MY ACTIONS AND THOSE OF MY INSTRUCTOR, even if the incident had resulted in a fatality because it would have been totally outside my control and within the acceptable parameters of an adventure sport.

So when a second major Polytechnic Outdoor Programme ran a five day kayak instructor training course for 12 level 7 students I had already done some serious thinking on the subject.

To facilitate the instructor training component of the week a local high school ran a five day school kayak programme "in conjunction" (my brackets) with the Polytechnic. There were 30 school students on the course.

**Staffing:** The Polytechnic provided 2 NZOIA level 2 instructors both of whom are assessors. They requested the services of a further level 2 instructor via sub contract from the New Zealand Kayak School. The High School provided 3 teachers who "could kayak" who were operating under the Schools Safe Operating Policy.

The Polytechnics Safe Operating Policy stated that the Polytechnic was only responsible for the safety of its 12 students and the safety of 18 of the high school students. The school and the polytechnic signed an agreement to this effect. The remaining 12 school students were operating under the high schools Safe Operating Plan.

### The Theory:- (the paper plan)

3 NZOIA L2s supervise 12 Level 7 students instructing 18 high school students on an introductory kayak course for five days on the Buller and its tributaries, (including the same run where the "log incident took place.)

3 High School teachers run a "separate" course for 11 students independent of the Polytechnic course

### The Reality

Despite the protestations of the Head of Department of the Polytechnic and the head of the school course that the two courses were independent they were in fact run as one course.

The first day of the course the sub contractor L2 was given the day off (cost cutting?) and the remaining 46 people went to the lake for a flat water session. What were the ratios on that day? Had the subcontractor L2 been deprived of his chance to see what he was letting himself in for?

The subsequent four days were run as one course under two umbrellas with polytechnic students assisting non qualified teachers from the high school to run what was presumably their once a year week of white water instruction.

The two groups shared instructors, vehicles and shuttles.

### Questions arising:

- Should “Best case” Accepted Professional Practice used in NZOIA assessments be applied to training courses?
- In theory could the 3 school teachers be covered under the NZOIA assessment model if they hadn’t signed a piece of paper that said they were operating independently of the Polytechnic? In other words could each L2 Kayak instructor be responsible for three trainee assesses and 12 school students if the trainee assesses included the non qualified kayaking teachers.

If this was acceptable professional practice then we could look at 3 groups each of which included :- one NZOIA L2 instructor, 2 polytechnic trainees, a non qualified paddling teacher and 12 students (The 6 surplus Polytechnic instructors get to be students again.) Total capacity 48! Voila, all in a day’s work. But for this to work The L2’s should put all their trainee instructors through the NZOIA assessment model ..two and a half days of assessment. The L2’s in this case have had three years to evaluate their L7 students but have they had the two and half days to evaluate the non qualified teaching staff that they are working alongside?

- The school and the polytechnic have agreed that the polytechnic has no legal responsibility and the two are operating under separate safe operating plans. So the School Teachers are running 3 courses for 11 high school students independently. The L2 instructors are now well inside NZOIA assessment standards but were these standards meant for training?
- Are the L2 instructors morally absolved from any concern re the safety standards of the 3 non qualified teachers? After all the NZOIA code of practice admonishes our members “to alert organisations and individuals when unsafe practices are noticed that could cause injury to others and if necessary take direct action to protect the public from imminent danger.”
- In the case of the Polytechnic students instructing under the auspices of the NZOIA L2 then the chain of responsibility seems clear. But in the case of the Polytechnic students operating under the auspices of the non qualified teacher who is responsible? Just supposing that the polytechnic student is a more skilled kayaker than the non qualified teacher? Who is responsible for the actual physical safety of the high school student? This leads us to the question -

### What is an instructor?

In this case we seem to have different categories of instructor:-

There is the NZOIA instructor.

The trainee instructor approved by the Polytechnic.

The School teacher approved by their school.

The school teacher approved by the Polytechnic L2 as “having been assessed by him as capable of running the course alongside them” and .....

The Polytechnic student who has been approved by the non qualified teacher as capable of working alongside them.

(This in itself is all quite interesting, given the context of two organisations that have legally tried to dissociate themselves for what ever reason.)

Isn’t this why NZOIA was invented .....

to promote Professional Instruction?

Grant Davidson provides us with food for thought in his article on “Unaccompanied Activities in Outdoor Education- When can they be justified”. He cites the case of Nathan Chaina an Australian student who died on bush walking expedition “where no skilled and qualified instructor was accompanying the group.” The group consisted of two fourteen year old and a fifteen year old boy and the fifty three year old father of one of the fourteen year olds. Despite repeated shouts from the father not to do it, the fifteen year old Nathan Chaina attempted to cross a flooded creek on a log. He was washed to his death by the flood surge. As Grant would have it the father was not an instructor because in this case he merely offered what turned out to good advice which the boy failed to act on.

Apart from the myriad of skills listed and core competencies listed by Cathye Haddock, an instructor according to Grant must be “in such a position in the group to be able to intervene and manage any hazards should they develop.” I think we are talking rescue here both before and after any possible incident,

Should whoever wrote the High School Safe Operating Plan have actually physically checked out the ability of the teachers to “Intervene”? Their paddling ability, their rescue capacity, their currency?

Should the NZOIA L2 instructors from the Polytechnic have checked out the teachers to run the course that had nothing to do with them (on paper) and assessed the high schools’ staff’s ability to intervene.

This process takes two and a half days on an NZOIA assessment.

If we take my log scenario would the retro status of “who was the instructor” have been decided by whether the Polytechnic student or the non qualified teacher was the person most skilled at effecting (or not effecting) the rescue?

- What were the High Schools criteria for allowing their teachers to take students on class 2 water.

Why doesn't their Safe Operating Plan stipulate NZOIA qualifications? If they are SFRITO "equivalent" instructors does SFRITO check them out as capable of intervening on Class 2 Water.

- Is there a chain of command here? Who would you assume was running the whole course? The Senior NZOIA L2 present? The teaching staff? The Head of Department back in the office? The School's governing body? Generally the question the Police ask is "who was in charge?". (Conversely in the Tim Jamieson case NZOIA argued that each instructor is responsible solely for the four students in his or her direct care, that the "Course Director" could not be responsible for the actions of a sub contracted NZOIA L2).
- What place did the "ghost course" run by the unqualified, but school approved teachers have in the Polytechnic programme? Who were the real clients on this course?
- If a parent of a child from the High School reasonably asked the question "just who was actually responsible for my child" (legally, morally and physically) at any given moment on the river trip? What would you answer?
- If you were one of the NZOIA instructors working on this course **COULD YOU JUSTIFY YOUR ACTIONS?** Is this an acceptable work load?
- How would all this go down at the coroner's inquest given the intense scrutiny into the death of Tim Jamieson. The CIB sergeant who interviewed me after Tim's accident was a well informed EXPERT on safe operating plans and Risk Management Theory! And on paper the organization of the Tai Poutini Polytechnic course had none of the grey areas referred to in this article.

### What did I do?

On the second day of the course I intervened on the behalf of my sub contracted L2 and asked for certain provisions:-

That he be given a separate and independent group. (This group was to consist of 2 polytechnic trainees and 6 high school students.)

That this group was to operate independently including using its own shuttle vehicles.

That the L2 could use his first day, the second day of the course, to assess his group and could if necessary ask the kayak school to provide a second L2 instructor as back up if safety considerations dictated this at any point in the next four days. This is Standard Operating Procedure at NZKS.

I also rang the Head of Department of the polytechnic to point out that I felt my Sub contractor L2 had been placed in an invidious professional position and that the Course, or courses were not being run to Accepted Best Practice, particularly in the grey area of working "alongside" non qualified staff.

I seriously considered pulling out my instructor entirely and that left me in another moral quandary. Would that course of action further jeopardize the course ratios? Conversely have I given my tacit approval to what I obviously consider to be unsafe ratios?

~~~~~

Meanwhile the two erstwhile separate and independent groups from the school merged to run a course for the remaining client group:- 2 L2s, 3 kayaking teachers, 10 trainee instructors and 23 high school students of which only twelve are under the aegis of the L2s.

(Remember on paper it's Polytechnic: 2 L2s, 8 trainees, 12 students and a separate group of 3 teachers and a further 11 students.)

But on the river it's a group of 36 people with an NZOIA ratio of 2:34, exceeding the best case NZOIA Accepted Professional Practice for ASSESSMENTS (not training) by 4 people.

~~~~~

Does NZKS operate "alongside" non qualified staff? No! We incorporate teachers into our Safe Operating plan and we take responsibility for them. Typically we try and lower the ratios to 1: 3 and we have the back up of qualified staff on site to plug any gaps.

If you have followed all this so far good for you! If you found it complicated just imagine trying to explain with the added complication of a high school student drowned on that same log.

If you have opinions on the subject please comment. Do we want our professional ethics to develop as a result of case law, Coroners' Inquests and budget constraints or do we want to take some control of our working environment?

### How far can we stretch that elastic band?

*Mick Hopkinson is one of the NZOIA originals, with Level 2 Awards in Alpine, Cave, Bush, Kayak & Rock, and a NZOIA Assessor over a number of years.*  
Ed.

## Letter to Editor

### Tech Notes - Skills and judgment- not all in the assessment

I read Kip Mandeno's article in the last quarterly with some interest, unconsciously nodding in agreement at many of the points he made regarding top rope rescue.

Kip made some important points regarding current best practice and industry standards. In attending SARINZ training last year with the Queenstown ACR, I noted in particular the value of the two point (two line) system in rescue.

The details of individual points can be tossed around forever as they invariably are, but can the system, (Instructor qualifying) be improved. I see the 'counter balance' rescue component of the NZOIA Rock I assessment syllabus as just that, a component of the syllabus.

In general practice an instructor may never choose to use the 'counter balance' technique to rescue an injured student or client. However, understanding the components of that system and the technique has some merit when it comes to skills and that ever important 'bag of tricks'. As it has been pointed out to me many times, education has no limitation.

I have from time to time used the counter-balance technique to sort out situations on crag and mountain that have had the potential to become a problem, but never in rescue.

If an NZOIA Rock I instructor does not have sufficient experience and judgment to determine the best technique for a small crag rescue, I ask, what are they doing on the job?

In the job department I would proffer my NZOIA Alpine II assessment for exactly what it is, an assessment of 'X' of my skills and judgments over a 4 day period. For a prospective employer to find out who I really am, read the X pages of my CV, contact the referees, read the log book etc, then conduct some staff training to the skills and levels of ability required.

I find it a bit scary to think that NZOIA Rock I assessment holders 'limit out' at the content of their assessment, how did they qualify their prerequisite??

While looking at the Rock I components, I guess I should mention one that drew my attention, - building top rope or abseil anchors with 'natural gear' eg: cams, stoppers, nuts rocks etc etc. All rock one persons should have a sound knowledge of all equipment, but using natural gear to top rope from seems to me to be outside the general skill range of what the level one assessment should encompass.

I have met many young instructors in the outdoor industry who do very little climbing on 'natural' gear, and in fact they don't own a 'rack'. OK, I have no problem with that, but I believe we should all be endeavouring to top rope only from 'bomb proof' anchors, eg: bollard, tree, fence posts, etc.

I find the potential for natural anchors to fail, (receiving alternating forces from a large group of students over a half day of top roping and lowering) too high, to be placed by someone only moderately familiar with that equipment.

Placement and monitoring would be uncomfortable for a very experienced person as they would know about the potential failings. Even the manufacturers of the hardware are quick to point out, they are temporary anchors and should not be fallen on!

In the end, if no 'bomb proof' top anchor exists, get one built (if suitable) or find a safer site.

'Feel the fish' and keep those lines tight!

Play safe – work safer.

**Chris Prudden**

**NZOIA Alpine II**

**20 years guide/instructor and SAR**

### Contributions to the NZOIA Quarterly

The NZOIA Quarterly welcomes articles, photos, letters, news, details of coming events and bits & pieces from all readers. Submissions may be edited.

Please forward all items to: Administration Officer, PO Box 11-090, Manners St, Wellington or by email to: [ao@nzoia.org.nz](mailto:ao@nzoia.org.nz)

### NZOIA EMAIL to members

- are YOU receiving the "NZOIA Info" emails?
- **NO!** ~ have we got your current email address?

# From Polytech to Politics –The Environment is Everything!

By Natalie Cutler-Welsh (B.A, Dip O.Rec, M. Env'tl Ed)

'Attitude is Everything' used to be my little mantra back in the Polytech days (Aoraki '97-'99 –Ah the memories!!!). But as I've changed and aged through the years (as you do) I've come to discover that it is 'the environment' that is everything. Related to everything we do, not just from a recreation or instruction point of view, but from a transportation, consumption, entertainment, education, economic, society... perspective.

With my recent 'expedition' into politics, this is becoming even more apparent. As a Candidate for the Green Party, I am often confronted by comments along the lines of: "All you guys care about is the environment...the economy is what's important!". But my response/question is 'how can you separate the economy from the environment?'. The economy is dependant on finite resources. Look around, the chair you're sitting on, the food you're eating, the computer, the backpack, the kayak... From production to use to disposal, the environment is integral to everything. Take oil for example, 'Peak oil' refers to the point where supply outweighs demand. The concept of 'Peak oil' is slowly coming into the media and is something that will drastically affect the way we spend, travel and behave both in an urban and outdoor environment.

As outdoor educators there is so much we can do ranging from instruction to consumption to voting! We can encourage others to value the natural environment through our instruction and ideally we can also facilitate transition of this knowledge into our students'/clients' lives in the urban environment. (Something we continuously strived to do while I was working at Outward Bound).

## 'Conscious Consumerism'

We can shop with 'conscious consumerism' (awareness of the social,

economic and environmental impacts of our purchases). Supporting local businesses and buying local NZ products for example, can minimize 'fuel miles' (oil required to get the products to you). For example, if you are buying biscuits, choose 'Griffins' brand (NZ made) instead of 'Arnotts' (Australian). Same deal with cereal, buy 'Sanitarium' instead of 'Kelloggs'. The list goes on and on for products from toothpaste to shampoo to ice cream. Looking at the 'country of origin' on products and choosing the local option can have enormous impacts on the environment and the economy as you will be supporting Kiwi businesses and Kiwi jobs! If you are buying international goods, choosing 'Fair Trade' coffee, tea or chocolate can help ensure that workers get pay and conditions that are fair. There are countless social, economic and environmental spin-offs to this 'conscious consumerism': Reducing foreign debt, not supporting sweatshops, cut fossil fuel use and reduce green house gas production, not endangering fragile forests and species overseas... Here are two websites that can help you make your grocery list more environmentally-friendly: the GE free food guide link: [www.gefreefood.org.nz](http://www.gefreefood.org.nz)

and the 'best fish guide' which lists the best and worst fish to eat ecologically (i.e.. do the most damage to bird and marine life and the ocean floor): [www.forestandbird.org.nz/bestfishguide/howto.asp](http://www.forestandbird.org.nz/bestfishguide/howto.asp)

Buying Organics is another far-reaching way to make a difference. They are a bit more expensive than regular veggies but they don't have the 'hidden costs' of pesticides that end up in the environment and in you!

## Stay Inflated

One of the easiest and effective things you can do is to keep your car tyres properly inflated. This will make your driving more efficient by

saving fuel and therefore costing you less & emitting less CO2. Other fuel saving tips can be found at <http://www.gosmarter.org.nz/> and [www.energywisely.org.nz/fuel/fuel\\_tips.asp](http://www.energywisely.org.nz/fuel/fuel_tips.asp)

## Support Organisations

Since our time at Aoraki Polytech and Outward Bound, Matt and I have found heaps of organisations that 'do good'. CAN –Cycling Advocates Network, CAFCA –Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa, Forest and Bird, UNANZ-United Nations Association of NZ, Green Party, NZAEE –NZ Association of Environmental Education, Greenpeace... If you are interested in finding more info on these organisations look them up on google or email me for details.

## Get on the Roll

Our recreational and vocational future is dependant on Government. Access issues, water quality (and quantity), biodiversity, tourism, foreign ownership, student debt, child benefits... Voting in the upcoming election is another significant way that you can influence the future of NZ by support policies that work towards a more sustainable society, economy and environment. To get on the roll or confirm your voting status ring: 0800 36 76 56, or visit: [www.elections.org.nz](http://www.elections.org.nz). Remember, it's the party vote that decides on the shape/makeup etc of the next government. I'll leave it to you, but if you have any questions regarding the Green Party philosophy and policies please send me an email: [natclimbing@hotmail.com](mailto:natclimbing@hotmail.com)

*Natlie has been a NZOIA member since 1998 and holds NZOIA Rock 1 Ed.*

# NZOIA Assessment Calendar for 2005

Course & Location	Course Date	Closing Date	Course & Location	Course Date	Closing Date
<b>Kayak Flatwater</b>			<b>Rock 1</b>		
Auckland	October 29-30	Sept 29	Christchurch	October 26-27	September 26
Christchurch	November 5-6	October 5	Dunedin	November 12-13	September 12
			Central NI	November 26-27	September 26
			Auckland	December 1-2	November 1
<b>Kayak 1</b>			<b>Rock 2</b>		
Christchurch	November 7-9	October 7	Christchurch	October - TBA	to be advised
Central NI	November 23-25	October 23			
<b>Kayak 2</b>			<b>Bush 1</b>		
~ contact Admin Officer for information.			South Island	Oct 29-31	September 29
<b>Sea Kayak 1</b>			South Island	Nov 2-4	October 2
Auckland ~ Christchurch ~ Dunedin	November 12	October 12	North Island	Nov 19-21	October 17
<b>Canoe</b>			<b>Bush 2</b>		
South Island	December 10-11	November 10	South Island	November 19-21	October 17
<b>Abseil 1</b>			<b>Alpine 1</b>		
Auckland	December 3-4	November 3	South Island	September 3-5	August 3
			North Island	Sept 16-18	August 16
			South Island	October 15-17	September 15
<b>Cave 1</b>	On request		<b>Alpine 2</b>		
<b>Cave 2</b>	On request		North Island	Sept 10-13	August 10
			<b>Climbing Wall</b>		
				On request	

PLEASE check the NZOIA website for additional assessments that may have been scheduled since the publication of this Quarterly. The current Assessment Calendar is on the NZOIA website at: [http://www.nzoia.org.nz/qualifications/assessment\\_calendar.asp](http://www.nzoia.org.nz/qualifications/assessment_calendar.asp)

## Booking for a NZOIA Assessment

### Booking Routine

You must have completed the prerequisites before applying for assessment; check the syllabus - they are all available on the NZOIA website at: [www.nzoia.org.nz](http://www.nzoia.org.nz). You must also be a current member of NZOIA as at the date of the assessment.

To apply for a place on an assessment, obtain an assessment application form, from the website (or the administration officer) and forward it to NZOIA by the closing date with:

- a \$100 deposit;
- a **copy** of your log;
- a **copy** of your current first-aid certificate, (and the application form).

**APPLICATIONS normally close one month before the assessment date.**

We allocate places on assessment courses on a first-in, with deposit, first-accepted basis. After the closing date, we will send you confirmation of your booking. You must pay the balance of the course fee before the assessment. If we cancel the course, we will refund all fees.

The deposit will be refunded in full if you withdraw from a course four weeks or more before the course start, (or you can transfer to another course). Deposits will not be refunded where the withdrawal is within four weeks of the course, but may be transferred to another course. Where a withdrawal occurs within two weeks of the course 50% of the course fee will be charged.

Course fees:	Two day	- \$370
	Three day	- \$495
	Four day	- \$640

### Assessment by special arrangement

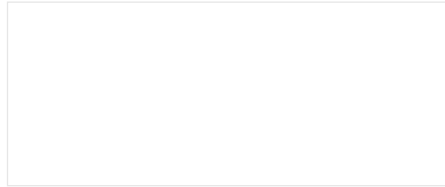
It is possible to arrange assessments on dates other than those scheduled (generally subject to the availability of assessors). Please contact either the Assessment Co-ordinator (email - [assessment@nzoia.org.nz](mailto:assessment@nzoia.org.nz)) or, Administration Officer (email - [ao@nzoia.org.nz](mailto:ao@nzoia.org.nz)). Telephone 04-385 6048.

**If you are wishing to participate in an assessment on a particular date, don't be disappointed  
~ please secure your place early ~ don't delay in forwarding your application and deposit.**

### NZOIA Cave 1 & 2 and Climbing Wall Assessments

These assessments are conducted "on request". If you are interested in participating in one of these assessments, please contact the NZOIA Administration Officer at: [ao@nzoia.org.nz](mailto:ao@nzoia.org.nz). When we have sufficient interested persons, we will organise an assessment.





The NZOIA Quarterly is the newsletter of the New Zealand Outdoor Instructors' Association Inc,  
 PO Box 11-090, Manners Street, Wellington 6034, New Zealand.  
 Phone 04 385 6048, Fax 04 385 9680 Email ao@nzoia.org.nz



## Supporting NZ outdoor instructors

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