

Fast Tippy Boats

After paddling and racing proboats for years, and still loving them, I've been messing about in kayaks the past couple of seasons. Different muscles, different sensation, and as I learned last year, different speeds!

I'd always been a little leery of fast kayaks. Watching people go swimming trying to paddle the Jaguar that has floated around here (very fast, very unstable) nearly convinced me that kayak racing was for gymnasts. Boy, was I wrong! It does take about 20 hours to get comfortable in a fast kayak, but after that, look out! You'll be hooked. Flatwater speeds of 7-7.5 mph are normal, and it's not unusual to see 9 or 10 when surfing!

Around here, there isn't any flatwater sprint kayaking. Maybe someday, but not right now. So I'll limit this to the boats we do paddle. Mostly what you find around here are performance sea kayaks, surf skis, ICF Marathon Kayaks, and maybe an odd outrigger canoe. With the exception of the ICF boats, these are at home on bigger water - Lake Superior, Mille Lacs, St Croix, Lake Pepin - places like that. The ICF boats are typically not well suited for bigger waves (dang tippy and big cockpits), so very few people will take them out when it's rough.

The real distinguishing characteristics are: long, pencil thin, and pretty light. Oh yeah, and very tippy for most folks.

Bottom line, several of us have these boats. If you want to try one, just ask - the answer will usually be 'sure!'. Always looking for more converts:-)

Marsh