S7 Ep2: Master Your Kayak and the Environment with Doug Cooper!

Georgina Maxwell: 00:11

Hello and welcome to this episode of the coaching podcast. My name is Georgina Maxwell and I have a special guest today called Doug Cooper. Now Doug Cooper is going to talk to us all about the technical and tactical considerations for working in your kayak and in the environment and how to make it easier for you. So welcome Doug. Would you like to introduce yourself?

Doug Cooper: 00:34

My pleasure. Thanks, Georgina. And thanks for asking me to come along, kind of looking forward to this conversation. It would be great to introduce myself. Where do we start? I guess I've been paddling and coaching for a little while now. kind of since leaving school and my careers advisor told me not to do anything in the outdoors, I started doing stuff in the outdoors and over 30 years on I'm still doing it and loving it. My background is very much working in mountains and on water. But for me the heart of it is just working with people in the outdoors inspiring, coaching, educating to enable them to enact their dreams, we could say. These days I spend a lot of time on the sea and that has been the case for again a number of years now. and my sea work has taken me all over the world. It has taken me all over kind of the UK, primarily based in Scotland now. Yes delivering qualification courses but kind of also a lot of kind of private coaching and private guiding. So, a lot of environments with a lot of people over a lot of years, and all about helping people, get a little bit better.

Georgina Maxwell: 1:44

Great. So, I think you've slightly undersold yourself there as well, Doug. There's a number of books that he's created out there and and I once well, I bought his old sea kayak and I was paddling it and some lady came over to me and went, "Is that Doug Cooper's kayak?" I was like, "Well, it was

Doug Cooper: 2:03

Yeah. Yeah, you're right there, George. I have kind of written a few books and kind of written quite a few articles. But it all comes down to my passion is just supporting people to learn and supporting people to develop. And if I can do that by selling them one of my kayaks a bit cheaper, if I can do that by writing a few books, writing a few articles, or been out on the water sharing information, it's just great.

And and and across all spectrs. But this weekend I was out with a group of absolute beginners. They had never paddled before and I was in getting them started in their sea kayaks for the first time. So that's what I was doing this weekend. The weekend before I was running a coach training course developing the coaches of the future. The weekend before I was up on Orkney guiding people around kind of the tidal waters of the Pentland FTH off Orkney. So it's all the variety, it's all the environments with lots of different people, but it's all about just supporting people getting better. I still love it. Kind of over 30 years on, I'm still loving it.

Georgina Maxwell: 3:00

Amazing. And that's where it's at, isn't it? So, let's think a little bit about where the direction of this podcast is going to go today, then. So, Doug's going to talk to us a little bit about dealing with wind. So, , my experience of wind is paddling across the Aegean Sea with my good friend Erin and, having wind from all directions and basically just winging it and paddling forward.

That's all I did. So, how about we talk about some good tactics to help us with the wind and what can we consider there to make it less of a fight when we're paddling into side wind, headwind, downwind, whatever you name it. So, go for it, Doug. What have you got?

Doug Cooper: 3:45

Absolutely. So, kind of the wind for the sea hikers, the wind is the thing that we will never kind of avoid. it's always out there and and I hear so often people kind of challenged in the wind and it's often trying to maneuver or turn their kayak or have control of their their kayak in the wind and I kind of coin a phrase that I try and help

people to paddle smarter and by paddling smarter what I mean by that is kind of getting to to know your kayak and getting to know your environment and then I encourage people to then listen to their kayak and listen to the environment to try and get things working together.

I often think if you you feel you're fighting your kayak or fighting the environment, then just stop and pause and think. And if we can paddle a bit smarter and listen to those environments and kayak we we might be to make life easier for ourselves and and the wind is a great example of that and in the wind it's about kind of paddling smart, thinking what to do and then considering what outcome you want considering how the environment's impacting on that and then adapting to to achieve. So so so as a smary for me most of my coaching themes is also usually about paddling smart and introducing people to their kayak and their environment to to to kind of get us going.

Georgina Maxwell: 5:06

Yeah, I like that. I like that. Yeah, listening to the environment, watching what's going on around you and that whole situational awareness. , where does the SKG come into that? So, I remember when I was out there, I was, "Oh, do I put it down? Do I put it up? doesn't seem to be doing anything and it feels the wind's strong. I I don't know, maybe I was overwhelmed with the environment to

actually understand and see what was going on there. But have you got anything on that topic for us?

Doug Cooper: 05:32

 I certainly have the SKGs absolute core and the SKGs not really about kind of keeping us straight. It's about kind of adapting the boats to work better in the wind. and perhaps to unpack that a little bit, I'll maybe start the conversation if you don't mind. Kind of the the things which impact tactical things which impact most kind of when we're paddling in the wind. , and the the two starters for me is understanding how speed and how trim affect the boat and and I think if we can build up an understanding on how speed and trim affect the boat, then how we then utilize the SKG becomes kind of far more obvious if that's all right.

So, do you mind if I steer the conversation about kind of how we can perhaps consider speed and trim in our boat and then

Georgina Maxwell: 6:20

Please do

Doug Cooper: 6:21

links to helping you with your SKG?

Georgina Maxwell: 6:22

Yeah, please do.

Doug Cooper: 6:24

Great. Great. So so kind of a we exercise I love to get people to do I'll try and I'll try and answer these questions practically if you like so we can imagine ourselves on the water and and what I'll often do is get people to sit in their kayaks kind of side on to the wind if you can imagine that and when you're sat in your kayak side onto the wind doing nothing kind of what happens and and what happens is you just get blown kind of downwind kind of stay you take stay side onto the wind and you get blown downwind. , but then I get people, well, let's see what speed does to that. And if you instead of just sat still in your boat, you then actually paddle forwards on your boat, kind of side onto that wind, i.e. you put a bit of speed on paddling forwards, side onto the wind.

Well, then what happens? And I'm sure you'll be able to relate to yourself when that happened to you. Then yeah, your boat naturally feels like it turns up into the wind. , so by adding speed onto a boat when you're side onto the wind, , the outcome is that the boat will end up kind of pointing more up into the wind or or weather cocking is is kind of what it's known as. , and and that that speed's quite critical and the the understanding a little bit is kind of what why does it do that? I always get people, well, okay, Doug, the nose of a boat ends up pointing up wind, but why does it doing that? and that will help us a tiny bit with the the Skeg if you don't we'll kind of come we will come back to that don't worry so so if I kind of paddle my boat forward the

nose of the boat kind of cuts through the water so if we can imagine I'm paddling side onto the wind as I'm paddling side on the the wind is most probably moving the whole boat slightly kind of downwind but the nose of the boat kind of cuts through the water and as it cuts through the water it kind of pins the nose and anchors the nose And the tail of the boat and the stern of the boat is far freer and gets blown downwind. So as I add speed onto the boat, the bow cutting through the water is anchored, the tail is freer and the tail starts to kind of blow down wind. So we can start to see why if I sit doing nothing, the wind just blows the boat. If I start moving the boat forward, then the nose gets anchored as it cuts through and it's the tail that kind of blows down wind and the outcome therefore is that my nose goes into wind.

Georgina Maxwell: 8:43

Great. Is that similar to a well-trimmed canoe?

Doug Cooper: 8:48

yep, very similar if you're kind of working kind of in canoe and kind of how you kind of move you you've used the word trim there as opposed to speed a little bit. So,

Georgina Maxwell: 9:00

Okay.

Doug Cooper: 9:01

So the trim will be very similar to them. , and the pinning of the nose will perhaps be a little bit more on a kayak than a canoe because of the keel, the more extreme keel on it. That's I think I'm not an out and out canoist, but that the trim is very similar, but how it pins is perhaps not quite so so much. ,

Georgina Maxwell: 9:20

great. Okay. Do you want to move that on to how that's affected with waves then? Does that affect the where that nose is anchored or

Doug Cooper: 9:31

Well, if we kind of keep back from the waves at the moment, there's still still a bit to understand because we've not helped you with your Skeg yet, have we?

Georgina Maxwell: 9:37

No?

Doug Cooper: 9:39

Don't forget your Skeg. So, so, so if you imagine you're paddling side on into the wind, , and you're paddling, , at a little bit of speed and your tail's getting blown down wind. If you drop the SKG a little bit, what does the SKG actually do? Can you answer that one?

Georgina Maxwell: 9:56

Keeps you straight.

Doug Cooper: 10:00

Keeps you straight and it keeps you straight by kind of anchoring that tail and stopping it getting blown down wind.

Georgina Maxwell: 10:06

Yeah.

Doug Cooper: 10:08

So as you side onto the wind, it's the tail that's getting blown down by the wind. So by dropping that SKG, it kind of it pins anchors the tail of the boat a little bit and stops it going, blowing down wind, which therefore enables you to go straight.

Georgina Maxwell: 10:22

So it stops you losing ground as well. So if you're aiming for a feature on a crossing for instance, how do you maintain that ground with a side wind without losing the ground? Are you starting to do more of a fairy glide?

Doug Cooper: 10:36

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. So, so again, that will be that will be kind of maintaining a ferry glide angle to stop kind of getting blown down wind. So, if we just use the SKG to keep us going straight, we will still be losing ground on the wind. So to kind of do a crossing and counter at the wind, we'd need to proactively put our nose up into the wind to use a ferry glide if you use the feraglide language to maintain a transit to ensure that you're keeping a straight line as you go across.

Georgina Maxwell:11:10

Good. So I see that I see you wanted to talk about angle. Do you want to talk any more about angle then?

Doug Cooper:11:17

I I going to steer us back to to kind of how we kind of can best use the the boat and the wind and we we've kind of talked about speed and we're kind of starting to get an idea of how speed can move by move putting speed on the boat it gets the boat moving up wind. so to now start paddling smart if we sometimes we don't want to have boat to go upwind as we've just discussed and we can perhaps use the SKG to stop it kind of turning up wind and that helps us go in a straight line. So that's fantastic. but there's other times we're going to want our boats to turn up wind and we're going to want to affect an upwind turn. , and that's when we can use that speed to our advantage and we can paddle smart and and what we then I get folks to perhaps kind of work out is in their specific kayak is what's the optimum speeds to paddle which then helps the boats turn up winds the quickest. , and different boats will turn up wind at different optimum speeds. Now it's pretty sad that I know this but when I used to paddle your boat as now that 8.5 kilometers an hour is the optimum speed to kind of get that turning up wind. It's pretty sad that isn't it? But we did some video analysis for that. But then we try it with other boats and some boats it's perhaps only four or six kilometers an hour, get it upwind the quickest and other

boats need to go a bit faster. Fascinating is some boats if you paddle really fast they start straightening up again and they stop turning up wind. So if we want to paddle smart and we perhaps start understanding speed we can understand as soon as there's speed on the boat the boat will want to turn up wind. we can stop that happening perhaps using our SKG which is great. But if we want it to happen, we can then think about applying just the right amount of speed to to get the boat moving upwind and

Georgina Maxwell: 13:19

So if you go on a trip with a friend, is it better to have two same boats? Otherwise, one might be at a disadvantage.

Doug Cooper: 13:25

No, not at all. Not at all. It's just about getting to know your boat and how your boat works in the environment. So, this kind of goes back to paddling smart is getting to know your boat and how your boat works in the environment and therefore knowing if I want to get my boat turning up wind, this is an optimum speed for me to paddle to to help it turn up wind.

Georgina Maxwell: 13:46

So, are you using something like Straa to find out your speed or what devices are you using to find could the listeners use to find out their speed of their boat?

Doug Cooper: 13:57

Any kind of GPS on your phone. So it could be strava, it could be memory map. There's kind of anything which is kind of linked to a GPS speed would be that. But to know the exact speed, it doesn't really matter. It's just getting a feel of it. And I just get people to say, do you feel you're paddling slower than normal? Do you think you need to paddle normal speed? Is it paddling a bit faster than normal? or is it paddling as fast as you can? So, don't get too hung up on the exact speed. is just getting a feel of do I does it good for me to accelerate lots accelerate a little or kind of how

much effort do I need to put in to kind of to get the speed which helps my boat turn up win the

Georgina Maxwell: 14:36

So, back to my experience, these big crossings in the Aian Sea, how much gear changing should I have been doing in and does the wind speed as it changes throughout the day you know, if we've got some of the crossings there were 40 kilometers. so, you have to conserve your energy. , but at the same time, you're saying you have to work with the wind and use that speed and so yeah, how much of the changing of speed would you think you'd be doing on a big open crossing?

Doug Cooper: 15:05

Well, it goes back to the outcome. So, your outcome of a big open crossing is to paddle in a straight line. So, therefore, you'll set your SKG and then you can at a height which allows you to paddle at your most sustainable pace and go in a straight line. So, if you're talking about the big crossing, you're just paddling in a straight line. So therefore set your SKG at just the height which kind of allows you to keep going in a straight line paddling at a pace which is really comfortable and sustainable for you.

Georgina Maxwell: 15:34

Yeah.

Doug Cooper: 15:35

And that might not be the SKG all up or all down. It's just tweaking the SKG to get it set at just the right angle which keeps your boat tracking at your most comfortable speed.

Georgina Maxwell: 15:44

Great.

Doug Cooper: 15:45

And the only time we'd then be changing the gearing is if we want to change the outcome i.e. we want to turn the boat. So, I set the SKG at a height which allows me to paddle really comfortably for my 40 km or my 4 km, whatever it is. But then if I want to perhaps turn my boat up wind, that's when I'd up the gears and those really paddle a bit faster up to that optimum speed, which then helps the boat kind of turn up wind

Georgina Maxwell: 16:11

That makes total sense. I should have spoken to you before I did that trip.

Doug Cooper: 16:16

So, and that kind of introduces that concept of paddling smart and and being aware of what can help us and and so if I'm wanting to turn upwind as the example, then I can put an extra bit of speed on my boat. But the other thing I can utilize and consider, as you've always alluded to, is the trim of the boat.

Because if I'm wanting to kind of get the boat to go upwind, I paddle a bit faster and that kind of anchors the nose a bit more and allows the tail to blow down wind. but if I move my body a little bit further forward and just kind of lean forward a little bit further, then that will affect kind of a more bowheavy trim and that will help the boat turn upwind even easier.

Georgina Maxwell: 17:07

Great.

Doug Cooper:17:08

So the turning in wind, we can see speed and trim is really quite key. , and for this upwind turn example, as I'm paddling across the wind, then to make life easy for myself, if I just paddle a bit faster to optimum speed, if I move my body , a little bit forward for a bit more kind of a forward trim, then I might not need to do any kind of strenuous turning strokes. The boat will might just then just turn by itself by me just putting a bit of extra bit of speed or an extra bit of trim

Georgina Maxwell: 17:36

Great. That's all great stuff then, Doug.

Doug Cooper:17:46

And to to keep on those tactics. Again, oh, I could chat about this for hours, so I'll try and phrase it to keep on those tactics. It is all well and good then. Yes, I've got the optimum speed and I've got the optimum trim, but the boat still might need a little bit of help to get it, in this case, turned up wind. So, it's then, well, what's the optimum stroke to use? Because some strokes will help the boat turn and some strokes will have turning strokes will have completely opposite effect. ,

Georgina Maxwell: 18:12

So, is that because you're killing the speed as well? Is

Doug Cooper:18:13

Absolutely.

Doug Cooper: 18:14

So, if I was to use a turning stroke that killed the speed or trimmed the stern of the boat, then that would actually kind of inhibit or kind of make my upwind turn kind of harder. So, what I'm looking for is the choice of turning stroke is one that tries to help me maintain my speed and is a stroke that turns and still anchoring perhaps the front of the boat. So, something like a forward sweep stroke then that's all kind of keeping stuff at the front and keeping it anchored. and a forward sweep stroke style. , we're then actually going to add speed to the boat as well as opposed to stalling it.

Georgina Maxwell: 18:54

No big dirty backstrokes.

Doug Cooper: 18:55

There we go.

Georgina Maxwell: 18:57

Oh.

Doug Cooper: 19:00

Dirty backstrokes are really good if used at the right time. So, you let that one nicely. So, if we go back to our outcome, so if our outcome is now wanting to turn downwind, so this time we're paddling side onto that wind and we wanted to turn downwind. If to turn upwind we need to go a bit faster, we want a little bit of forward trim and we want kind of more forward strokes, then to turn downwind is going to be the opposite. We actually want to go slower and we actually want to have anything which is kind of trimming the back of the boat. So that's where a dirty backstroke as you so eloquently described will actually slow the boat. It will kind of anchor the tail of the boat and that will help kind of with that downwind turn.

Georgina Maxwell: 19:46

very good.

Doug Cooper:19:47

And again, we'll keep on this paddling smart because paddling smart isn't all about paddling forwards. Paddling backwards is really smart as well, and if you ever want to get the nose of your boat downwind, the easiest way to do that is just to paddle backwards. Because if you paddle backwards

Georgina Maxwell:20:07

Of course it's a long way to go in a sea kayak to get round.

Doug Cooper: 20:08

Yeah. So, if you So, kind of the easiest way to get the nose of your boat downwind is if you just paddle backwards, well then that arch goes the tail of the boat and then that allows the nose of the boat to blow down wind. So, I'll do a lot of work with folks kind of playing with paddling forwards, paddling backwards and see how the

environment affects the boat. , playing with different speeds and how the optimum speed is to achieve the outcome you're wanting, an upwind or a downwind turn. Playing with the trim, a little bit weight forward, a little bit weight backwards, and see how that helps with the trim. And then thinking smart and choosing the stroke which then complements that. And a is a complimentary stroke slowing the boat and anchoring the tail of it like a kind of a kind of a handbrake bracing turn or is the complimentary stroke warm which is kind of more anchoring the front of the boat and adding speed to it like a sweep stroke. So paddling smart when there's just wind around for me speed and trim are the core tactics and then choosing the optimum stroke which complements the environment and the outcome works really nicely. And as you we started the conversation that understanding of the skeg and that's great for those big crossings and just keep us tracking in a straight line but it's helps us to understand that what that's doing is stopping the the tail blow down wind and we might need to adjust the height of that skeg depending on how fast I'm paddling and how strong the wind is.

Georgina Maxwell: 21:38

Yeah. So on on the wind strength for example on on the river because that's my experience if we're going to try and practice crossing eddy lines we can almost do anything on grade one and get away with it and we don't really see the true effects of what we what we would require to use on grade three or grade four. Do you see what I'm saying? So, is there an optimum wind speed where people will actually get the most learning to go and practice these things? , or can they learn this stuff on really light winds? Yeah. What?

Doug Cooper: 22:14

So, I always advise and when I'm helping people, I'll start with nice light winds initially. So, a force two or a force three wind is absolutely perfect. So, when there's no real white caps, there's no real waves, it's just the wind. And that way what we learn is purely the effect of the wind on the boat. So the best way to start is actually in just a nice force two or force two three breeze and we'll then learn the purity of how the wind is affecting the boat. and we're usually quite relaxed. We can then be quite subtle in our movements and see how the subtle movements affect it, how the

subtle changes of speed kind of affect it and you need next to no wind for it to have some form of effect on the boat. So that force two three is absolutely perfect to understand what the wind does because as soon as it gets a bit stronger wind, we're then starting to get waves and then that has a different effect on the boat which we need to consider as well if we're going to be smartly interacting with waves.

Georgina Maxwell: 23:19

That sounds like a great segue to discuss wind and waves. Do you want to talk about that?

Doug Cooper: 23:25

Absolutely. So once we've kind of got a handle on what happens with our boat and purely the wind then as soon as we kind of get waves into play then the waves I mean we in my mind we then need to consider timing. So that the tactics of speed and trim are really key in the wind but when the waves come into play the timing of when we do things becomes really kind of quite critical. , and if I can try and describe this , verbally, it's far easier when I can just demo this. I've got to say. I'm finding this really quite awkward because I've got no pictures, no demo, and your listeners can't even see my kind of wild hand signals that you can see at the moment on the screen. So, I'm finding this is quite a challenging medi for me to coach in, but I'll give it a go. So, when we got waves involved if we imagine if I can time it so I can turn more on the top of a wave then that unlocks the stern and the bow of the boat and has a pivot point more kind of underneath my b so to speak and the boat will turn easier. Whereas if I conversely tried to turn the boat in a trough of a wave at the low point of the wave, then the bow and the stern would be kind of stuck in the wave so to speak and make it incredibly difficult to turn. So

Georgina Maxwell: 24:45

Would that be like skiing on a mogul?

Doug Cooper: 24:47

Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. So if you're a skier, then you can ski on the top of the mogul and your skis will turn easily versus in the bottom. So, from this we can now suddenly see how the timing is quite impactful because if I'm down at the bottom of the wave, my whole boat, in particular my bow and stern is locked by the wave either side of it. , and if I'm at the top of the wave, my bow and stern are free and it will turn a lot easier. So, so we then in waves and wind a starting point is to be timing. So we're turning when our bow and or stern is kind of free of the wave and released. And then that will help that way.

Georgina Maxwell: 25:26

Would it be more challenging to, you know, how you're talking about understand the wind and get the feel and sit in your boat so that you know which way the wind is going to affect the boat?

Doug Cooper: 25:37

Mhm.

Georgina Maxwell: 25:38

Now that we've got waves, is that now more challenging to get that feel of where they are in the Yeah. where they need to sit.

Doug Cooper:25:45

It's very difficult to kind of get a feel of the wind effect on the boat in waves because if you think about it, when you're on the top of the wave, you're exposed to a lot of wind. When you're in the trough of the wind, you're exposed to no wind. So, you're going in and out of the wind all the time in the waves. So, as soon as you get waves, the wind is very variable because sometimes you're sheltered by a wave, sometimes you're more exposed than the top of the wave. And on top of that, your bow and your stern is often kind of caught a little bit more or less depending where the wave is. And that's what I'd encourage people to be learning how the wind affects your boat with no waves and then add the wave dynamic into it. And that way we can then start adding timing to help with it with a bit of an underlying understanding of the wind will

have effect as well, and and we can when I'm timing with the the waves, then I'll time thinking about when my bow or my stern is free and it's going to be easy to turn. But I'll also be timing the waves as to when my bow can perhaps catch more wind or catch less wind. , so if I'm trying to turn my bow down wind, I'll try and make sure that it's sticking up off the top of the wave so it's catching lots of wind like a flag up there. So, there the bow is not only free of the wave, so it's not locked by the wave, it's also catching all that lovely wind, which will help it kind of perhaps blow around as well. So, so we can see when we get waves in there, it's quite a complex dynamic environment to tune into.

The the starting point is understanding how the wind affects but then realizing when there's waves that will start kind of lessening the wind effect and we then need to be considering the timing as well to try and ensure our bowel stern is is freed up for example or catching the wind or not catching the

Georgina Maxwell: 27:32

So, all that feel and intuition, you know, being intuitive with this, does this just become absolutely autonomous or is there still quite a process that an experience seeker is going through to get this just right?

Doug Cooper: 27:53

As with all skills as you well know from your river paddling George then it does become autonomous but even when it's autonomous I always encourage performers that if it's if it's feeling hard work then just stop and adapt or change or think about what changes you can make because it's easy just to do the same things of that's the way I've always done it. And if it feels a little bit harder work, then I'd always encourage people to think, well, if it feels harder work, just take a moment to consider perhaps why it's feeling harder or just adapt something and see if that makes it feel a bit easier and then maybe kind of learn from it. So, yes, it does become autonomous. But for me in my sea kayak every day, if I go out when it's fully loaded, if I go out the weight, the boat's a different weight, then perhaps what worked last time won't work quite so well this time. So then I'll need to adapt something. Either adapt the speed a little bit, adapt the timing of when I'm doing

things a little bit just to make it a bit easier for myself. So, so, so I would say to paddle smart, then have that little bit of understanding, but be prepared to always kind of perhaps consider adapting things and feel if those adaptations make it a bit easier or kind of a bit harder.

Georgina Maxwell: 29:10

Yeah, because what I did notice was with food actually on the bigger crossings when I was starting to become less energetic. I felt like my flow had broken and suddenly things felt just a little bit more tricky and I don't feel like the conditions had changed. So I'm wondering maybe with the low energy perhaps things feel very different as well as when you know you're fighting fit everything feels different as well. So how much are we missing when we're feeling quite strong and well fueled is what I'm trying to say.

Doug Cooper: 29:53

And I think that as I'd expect from yourself a super pertinent point is brilliant and that kind of for me goes into the physiological and the psych psychological aspects of performance. , and as you, if I'm feeling tired because I'm under my nutrition isn't kind of quite up to play because I've had a poor night's sleep because I've been on the go for a long way then sorry I don't know how to turn.

We were chatting about the nutrition and kind of how if we are feeling tired or nutrition's not quite in play then that will affect kind of performance and will affect kind of our perhaps capacity to notice things and adapt things as we go. , and I'd kind of also say from a psychological point of view, sometimes if we're feeling a little bit kind of nervous or kind of , apprehensive about something or we're in an environment we've never been in before or paddling with a group of paddlers we've never paddled before, we might be that slight more anxiety again will sometimes kind of I'd say deaden our senses a little bit to noticing the environment and listening to our boats. So, it's great to be aware that if we are tired, if we are a little bit anxious, then we perhaps won't be able to listen to our boat or listen to the environment quite as well as if we're well fueled or more relaxed.

Georgina Maxwell: 30:53

I find that topic fascinating. , so we haven't got much left of this podcast, Doug. , and I was wondering if you had anything else to add on the wind and waves or whether you're able to do a very short snippet on the following topic, which would be into rocks. Is that correct?

Doug Cooper: 31:16

Yeah, absolutely. I guess

Georgina Maxwell: 31:17

You haven't got long. You haven't

Doug Cooper: 31:18

Yeah. No, so so by kind of introducing in depth with the wind because that's what we deal with. It's just opened our thinking that to whatever environment we're in, there's some key tactics for I'd say our listeners to go away and explore. And yes, we could be in the rocks. Yes, we could be in the tide. Yes, we could be in the surf, but I'd be encouraging everybody just to listen to the environment and listen to the boats. , and a little bit of a template that can help is if I'm in in rocks again, I'd be playing with, well, how does speed affect? If I go slower, does that actually give me more time to do more effective and efficient maneuvers? , I'd get people to think about their angle of approach and does if they angle maneuvering between some rocks, if they enter a little bit wider, what outcome does that have? If they enter coming into the rocks a little bit narrower, what impact does that have? , and likewise in the tide, like again, , tune into the tide and be experimenting. Perhaps kind of do different angles make things easier for us as we're kind of crossing into the tide. Different speeds make things easier or harder for us going into it? Does timing is that key? So, you can see the theme I'm kind of taking here. , in summary, whether it be rocks or tide or surf, , I'd get folks to be tactically playing with perhaps the trim have effect, does timing have effect, does angle have effect, does speed have an effect, or maybe I need my edge. , so, so play with those things and listen to the results and what feels easiest.

And that that for me is the tactics. And on top of that, to be thinking about stroke work, what strokes complement what you're looking to do as opposed to going to make it a wee bit harder.

Georgina Maxwell: 33:10

Great. That sounds great. Is that where we want to close this?

Doug Cooper:33:17

I think that works. So, I think if people reflect back to the wind and the detail I went into the wind, and I'd encourage people to approach that same level of detail as they're maneuvering through rocks or trying to get into a flow or catch a surf waves and kind of just try and paddle a bit smarter. Have a have a we think about, have I got the right blender tactics? Are the strokes kind of complementing the outcome I'm trying to achieve? And fundamentally, am I listening to the environment? Am I listening to my boat? Am I trying to work with it as opposed to work against it?

Georgina Maxwell: 33:49

Oh, thank you very much, Doug. There's so much information in there.

I'm sure our listeners will be able to go back and forth and dissect and go and practice all the things you've been talking about. So, thank you very much for being involved in this podcast. It's been a pleasure to have you on board. Okay.

Doug Cooper: 34:09

That's great. Thanks. Thanks a lot for inviting me. I've loved the chat.

Georgina Maxwell: 34:10

All right. Thank you. Goodbye everyone.

END.