

KataKanu



A Users Guide

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The Designer's Vision for the KataKanu

All equipment must be fit for its intended purpose.

The purpose of the KataKanu, is to provide an easy to use group activity that reduces the fear of getting afloat.

Where can it be used:

The KataKanu has been designed for use on placid water (up to grade 2 rapids) canals, rivers, lakes, estuaries and sheltered coastal water.

The KataKanu is a new activity. It provides a different set of opportunities and outcomes to other water sports, thus increasing the range of activities that can be offered by a wide range of providers.

The KataKanu is not a canoe! It is not even two canoes bolted together. The hulls have been designed to work as a catamaran. They are slim for speed and have the right compromise of rocker for tracking / manoeuvring and the correct volume and buoyancy to safely support its recommended load even if swamped.

It is designed to give a professional and reassuring appearance to the user.

For Activity Centres: It is a boat from which teamwork can be learnt experientially. A different set of activities for novices can be offered e.g. natural history, orienteering, and river trips. BCU NGB touring awards are available for this craft. One group paddled 35 miles in one day, showing that this is a serious touring boat.

For hire companies: It is a boat where all the crew can be involved in paddling, many will consider that they have been canoeing, but they can stay dry and continue with their day out. It is a 6 seater queue buster for busy days and has a large sun bed in the middle for lounging on, storage or the family dog!

For Canoe Clubs: It is a boat that will appeal to family members and visiting friends who want to get afloat. It is fantastic for club open days and makes links with schools, guides, scouts, disabled etc. a real possibility. It has the potential to open up your junior section and makes parent participation a reality.

For Clubs and Organisations: Low level coaching qualification requirements will give the opportunity for more leaders to provide a water based activity for their group.

Ideal for expeditions, water sports weekends, summer camps and evening games on the water!

Coaching Guidelines

The British Canoe Union acknowledges the KataKanu as a paddlesport and recommends that a:

Level 1 coach or Bell Boat Helm can supervise 1 KataKanu.

Level 2 coach can supervise 2 KataKanu's.

Level 3 coach and above can supervise 3 KataKanu's

As the KataKanu is only intended for use on 'placid water', the placid water coaching scheme is also suitable for supervising.

It is also accepted that the KataKanu is in fact a boat and as such any organisation can train staff to supervise this activity in accordance with their own risk assessment and safety policies.

Advice on the Use of the Drain Bungs

The KataKanu is a 'sit on top' design. One of the advantages of the double skin is the opportunity to fit through hull drainage bungs to the floor of the cockpit areas.

With no additional weight on the boat, it will float with the bungs above the outside water level. This means that if the bungs are left open, any water in the cockpit area will drain out. However, it is advised that the bungs are closed when a load is put onto the boat as this will push the bung below the outside water level and water will come into the cockpit area.

The bungs should be left open if the boats are stored upright, rain water will then drain out.

Advice on Safe Conditions for Use

Pedalos, gondolas and paddled craft are excluded from the Recreational Craft Directive.

I have produced a generic risk assessment for the KataKanu, (page 12)

This does not take into account your local conditions and it is strongly advised that you produce a site specific risk assessment.

This document is intended to provide you with the information that you will require to produce your site assessment.

Craft must be fit for their intended purpose.

The KataKanu's intended purpose is to provide a water based activity with a lower fear level and higher safety level than existing craft.

It is intended for use on placid water. As always the question a supervisor must ask is "Can I cope with these conditions, or am I relying on nothing going wrong?" It is your call.

The maximum recommended load for the KataKanu is 500Kgs

Advice on Swamping and Capsizing

What happens if the boat is swamped?

The KataKanu is a 'sit on top' design. The decision to make it in this way was taken to ensure that the boat could still be paddled safely with a full load even if the cockpit areas are full of water.

Our tests have shown that with the maximum recommended load of **500Kg** and the drain bungs left open, that at a point before the gunwales go under, the KataKanu will stop sinking. The reason for this is the **850 litres** of air encapsulated in the double skin.

If the cockpit areas are flooded it is possible to drain them without the use of a bucket, by opening the bungs in one hull and shifting weight into the other hull until the level of the water inside the cockpit area is higher than the level of the water outside the boat. It is quite possible to continue paddling the boat whilst doing this. Reverse the process to empty the other hull.

If the outer skin of the boat is holed, the buoyancy chamber will fill and the boats safety will be severely compromised. Regular inspections of the buoyancy chamber must be made. Captive buoyancy; foam, bottles or air bags can also be fitted into the chamber if required.



These 6 youngsters represent a load of ~300Kg that is 50 kg more than 50% of the maximum recommended load. The drain bungs are all deliberately open and the boat is as swamped as it is going to get.

What happens if the boat is capsized?

The KataKanu has been designed with safety in mind. Our tests have shown that you would not want to be out in the conditions that might capsize the KataKanu involuntarily. Please remember that canoes and kayaks are excellent tools for providing a fear based challenge. The KataKanu's intended purpose is to provide a different set of challenges, on 'placid water'. If you believe that there is a chance that conditions will capsize the KataKanu, you should not be out there.

It is possible to capsize the KataKanu, but it will require the co-operation of the whole crew.

Due to the 425 litres of air encapsulated in each hull, it has proven to be impossible for a crew to push one hull underwater. However, by all standing on the outside gunwale and pulling on the beams or a rope attached to the 'other hull', it is possible to pull the 'other hull' over. Extreme caution must be taken as the 'other hull' will fall from a height of 2 metres onto the crew.

It would be even more difficult to capsize the KataKanu if just one member of the crew stayed in the 'other hull'.

If having capsized the KataKanu due to severe conditions, you will find that it floats very well upside down, the trampoline deck will be just below the water level, making it very easy to slide onto. It is possible to either sit astride the hulls and paddle the boat, or await rescue.

It is also possible to right the craft by submerging the stern of one hull and pulling a rope attached to the bow of the 'other hull' and corkscrewing the boat upright.



This young and relatively light weight crew could not capsize the KataKanu. The hull that they are in was deliberately flooded and the other hull is empty. With water or crew evenly distributed it is hard to imagine how or why the KataKanu could capsize involuntarily.

Advice on Launching, Embarking, Disembarking, Recovery and Loading onto a Trailer

- The KataKanu is a 6 seater boat, capable of carrying 500Kg.
- It weighs 100Kg.
- It is not two light weight canoes strapped together.
- It is recommended that the portage trolley be used if it is to be carried any significant distance.
- Land is the bit that causes damage to boats!
- Care should be taken to minimise wear caused by dragging the boat across hard surfaces.
- Always ensure that the KataKanu is securely moored before embarking and disembarking.
- No more than one person should move at any one time.
- The boat WILL NOT capsize if everyone gets out of or into one side only.
- The boat works much better with the heaviest people at the back.
- Always trim the boat bow high.
- When loading / unloading the boats from a trailer, it helps if you can raise the jockey wheel to its maximum. This will lower the height of the back of the trailer.
- Always load the top boat first and unload the bottom boat first.
- Make sure you refer to moving and handling regulations and your risk assessment.

Advice on Maintenance

Always check buoyancy chambers before and after each session.

It is common for some water to be in the chamber. This can either be siphoned out through the stern deck drain, or roll the boat over to drain it out. Refer to moving and handling regulations and risk assessment.

If there is a significant amount of water in the chamber, support the boat on two blocks and check for water coming out of a hole in the hull.

If there is no apparent hole in the hull, after draining the buoyancy chamber, fill the cockpit area with water to see if it is getting into the chamber that way.

Always notify the next user of the condition of the boat.

Advice on the Trampoline Deck

Firstly it is not a trampoline! It is not recommended to be used for jumping on. It does not provide any structural integrity to the boat but it does provide considerable security to people who would be nervous if surrounded by water. It is strong enough to stand on but it is recommended that it is used for sliding across to the other hull, lying on or for storage space.

The KataKanu and Special Needs



The KataKanu is a mainstream boat that is enjoyed by a wide range of people and is being used for a wide range of activities.

During demonstrations and special needs sessions, the KataKanu has proven itself to be an ideal craft.

Advantages listed by carers include:

- 1) Ease of moving around the boat to tend to clients needs.
- 2) The speed and manoeuvrability of the boat.
- 3) The deck space is very comfortable to lie on.
- 4) Clients sit high up, not on the bottom of the boat.
- 5) Its professional appearance.

The KataKanu is not meant in any way to replace 'canoeing for the disabled'. It is a new activity that is enjoyed by all.

A high backed seat is currently under development. It will have head support and harness, will fit onto the middle seat of the boat and be easily removable.

We would like to think that families with special needs will be able to share this activity together and that the KataKanu might level out some of our physical differences in a non patronising craft for all.

Advice on Cleaning

The inside of the KataKanu is a non-slip textured finish. By far the best way of cleaning this is with a pressure washer; just open the drain bungs, make sure the bow is higher than the stern and blast away. To clean the outside, use a cloth and soapy water.

On scuffed / scratched surfaces, gently blow over with a hot air gun followed by a wet cloth. Be very careful doing this or you might end up with a large hole in the boat!!

Use any proprietary plastic cleaner.

Advice on Storage

The KataKanu is a large 6 seater boat. Wherever possible it is recommended that it be moored afloat with the drain bungs open. An open-weave boat cover is very useful for keeping debris out. If stored on land, either upside down, or if stored upright, ensure that the hull is supported along its length, as polythene tends to mould itself to the bars of a rack!

Ideas for Activities

People all acquire skills at different rates. The KataKanu puts a mixed group into one boat, those slower at acquiring, say, paddling or boat handling skills, will be happy not to be exposed and those to whom it comes naturally will be happy because, they will all be able to go and do something together.

A major skill that will be learnt is team work, it comes as standard with every trip. Leaders, followers, workers, thinkers and coaches will all emerge during the session.

The KataKanu is a relatively easy boat to use and is ideal for experiential learning.

I strongly recommend that KataKanu session coaches take the opportunity to stand back and supervise, let the group learn experientially.

It is very important to replace the usual skills teaching with a task orientated activity. In this way the boat becomes the vehicle which is used to achieve the objective. Along the way, the group will continuously improve. They will gain confidence in being afloat and start to appreciate the complexities of team work. Most importantly they will all have taken part.

Some suggestions:



- 1) Go on a trip! The inherent group control and speed of the KataKanu enables complete novice crews to undertake impressive journeys. BCU touring awards are available for this craft.

- 2) Orienteering.
- 3) Treasure hunt / paper chase.
- 4) Collect the components of an improvised sailing rig from clues on a map, rig the boat and sail back.
- 5) Races can be very successful with a crew boat as no one individual loses so nobody is made to feel bad. There are all sorts of ways of doing this and courses can be designed to test the crew's boat handling skills.



Spares, Accessories and Prices

The following items are available to buy:

- Standard KataKanu
- Paddles
- Buoyancy aids
- Road trailer
- Launching trolley
- Replacement Trampoline
- Bungs / o rings / hatches / toggles / shock cord all available

For the latest prices, please check our website:

<http://www.katakanu.com/prices.shtml>

Risk Assessment - Katakana

Risk / Hazard	Cause	Controls in place?	Action needed?
Slipping and falling whilst embarking and disembarking and whilst moving around on the boat.	Slippery loading area. Excitement. Tripping hazards.	Inspect embark / disembark ' Points. Group control & briefing.	Carry first aid kit.
Man overboard.	Crew moving around in the boat.	Brief crew to exercise caution when moving around in the boat. All crew to wear a buoyancy aid. Carry a throw line	Training in the use of a throw line. Check buoyancy aids.
Capsize.	Extreme weather conditions. Extreme horse play.	Do not use in extreme conditions. Check weather forecast. Only use for intended purpose. In the event of a capsize the crew can stand on the trampoline deck or sit on the hulls.	Paddle upturned boat to shore & turn over. Carry signalling equipment to call for rescue.
Swamping	Extreme weather conditions. Extreme horseplay. Wave height. Over loading boat.	Check weather forecast. Brief crew on use of drain bungs. 850 litres integral buoyancy tanks. Option to fill buoyancy tank with foam etc. Do not exceed recommended capacity for the craft of 500Kg.	Carry a bailer.
Hypothermia/ hyperthermia.	Weather conditions / immersion in water.	Check weather forecast. Appropriate clothing to be worn. Brief crew on symptoms.	Spare clothing / survival bag etc. Sun hats sun block & drinks. As applicable to conditions.
Collision .	Poor observation / control of boat.	Waterway code / boat handling training.	Training.
Overhanging trees.		Boat handling skills, observation.	Avoid by manoeuvring boat.
Running aground.	Shallow water.	Wear suitable shoes for wading in cold water.	One crew member at a time to get out on the upstream side.

It is recommended that you also work to your own site specific risk assessment