

REVIEW

SEA KAYAK NAVIGATIONAL AID - SKANA

It's rare these days to find an innovative new product for coastal navigation that's isn't just designed for yachting and is actually for sea kayakers. However, sea kayak legend Howards Jeffs has done just that with the Sea Kayak Navigation Aid or SKANA.

Howard has spent many years paddling, guiding and coaching on the sea, as well as developing sea kayaks, and he has clearly thought through this product. It works in a similar way to a tidal plotter but is much more practical for navigating from the deck of a sea kayak – it's a more deck-friendly size and is flexible enough to mold to the curve of the boat.

It includes features for taking bearings, measuring distances in KM and Nautical miles and has a OS 1:50'000 Romer scale marked on, as with a standard Silva compass. It also features some really useful navigational information; you can tell it's been designed by someone who has spent a lot of time planning trips and navigating from a sea kayak!

Although it's made of flexible plastic, it is still durable and robust enough to take a lot of wear & tear. Plus, all the ink is etched into the surface, which means it will stand up to all the sand, salt and general sea-based abrasion you can throw/rub at it.

For taking bearings, rather than the usual rotating bezel there is a beautifully simple and incredibly effective 'plotter string', which is threaded through the centre of the compass rose.

This allows you to take bearings and measure distances, including measuring wiggling coastlines. You can even mark the KM or NM scale onto the string to make it even easier.

You think that would be enough for most navigational devices, however, the SKANA has one more trick up its sleeve – it's flexible enough to be duct-taped over a hole in the hull. You don't get that with a Silva compass!

VERDICT

Overall this is a great new product that is simple to use, takes up very little space and makes sea kayak navigation easier to manage.

RRP: £14.95 incl P&P

For more info, including an instructional video, or to buy a SKANA (trade enquiries welcome), visit www.howardsjeffs.org

