

TBSK Member Survey Conducted In June 2016

Survey Conclusions – For Newsletter

Conclusions Revised Sept 24, 2016

Introduction

In June 2016, TBSK did a survey of our members to determine in which areas we needed to improve. The following information is intended as a summary of the survey and the actions which the TBSK Board is taking. In the interests of brevity, not all questions and answers are included here. If there is a specific question which is not answered here, and you would like to know if TBSK is planning any action, please email Hank Brooks at jbrook5@tampabay.rr.com

Executive Summary

- About 50% of club members responded to the survey questions.
- Overall, most of our members were satisfied with the services we provide our members. However, it was pointed out that we can improve in some areas.
- Some members want slower/ more leisurely paddles which go only a few miles. We have scheduled a Level 0 paddle in September and October and will following to see member interest and attendance.
- It was suggested that we find new places to paddle. Our web site has a section called “Paddle Places” with over 100 places to paddle. All members are encouraged to contact the Trip Coordinator with suggestions and the Trip Coordinator will be suggesting new/ different places to paddle to our trip leaders.
- We recognize the need for more trip leaders. So we are being pro-active by contacting all members with Level II skills and asking if they would like to be a trip leader.

Interesting Survey Basic Info

Question	Summary of Survey Answers
• In which county do you live?	Pinellas County (56%), Hillsborough County (25%)
• How long have you paddled?	Five years or more (80%)
• How long have you been a TBSK member?	Four years or less (52%)
• What is your occupation?	Retired (70%)
• What is your paddling skill level?	- Novice/ Advanced Beginner (25%) - Intermediate (45%) - Advanced/ Expert (30%)
• How did you find out about TBSK?	- From member/ friend/ relative (30%) - Website/ Google/ Facebook (25%) - Kayak Outfitter (20%) - TBSK brochure (5%)
• What type of boat do you paddle?	- Fiberglass/ composite 16 ft or longer (40%) - Plastic 16 ft or longer (20%) - Recreational/ sit-on-top less than 16 ft (20%)
• How often do you paddle with TBSK?	- Two or three times a month (32%) - Once a month (16%)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Every once in a while (40%) - Never (12%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did you join TBSK? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interesting paddle places (20%) - Skills development (18%) - Find paddle buddies (16%) - Guided paddles (15%)

Survey Results	Conclusion	TBSK Board Comments/ Actions
Defining Our Club		
Keep up with changing times and make it a paddle club. Sea kayaking is a dying sport,	These two member comments show the range of possibilities for the direction of TBSK.	We are a sea kayak club which welcomes all boats & all skill levels. Our club revolves around our trip leaders and the types of trips they enjoy leading. Our trip leaders go paddling when/ where they normally would paddle and invite others.
Just focus on SEA kayaking and provide a place for paddlers serious about the sport. Don't try to appeal to everyone.		
Suggestions To Make Our Club Better		
1. Trip Difficulty/ Speed		
- Went on a Level I trip – but it was so fast I could not keep up	The biggest "disconnect" between TBSK and our members appears to be that new members are finding out that Level I paddles are not leisurely strolls.	Listening to our members, on an trial basis, on Sept 24, we had a Level 0 Leisurely Paddle. Another Level 0 paddle is planned for October. Future plans will depend on attendance at these paddles.
- Tone down the speed on Level I paddle, make it less hectic		
- Level 0 paddles (sub 3 miles). Also... every Level I paddle I've been on has been longer than advertised and faster than advertised.		
- You advertise all levels - went to my first paddle, a level 1 and it was clear this was not for recreational paddlers.... Would like recreational paddler activities		
3. Where We Paddle		
- More kayak venues, including urban ones	People are tired of paddling the same old places	We will take the follow actions to improve the variety of places we paddle: a. Our website currently has a list of paddle places which can be reviewed by members & trip leaders. b. New places to paddle can be recommended by any member by sending an email to the Trip Coordinator.
- More exploration of coastal waters and more open water paddles		
- Need new places to paddle rather than just the same old places		
- It would be fun to explore some of the many lakes in central Florida, e.g. Winter Haven or plan camping outings in State/National Parks.		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. All members are welcome to contribute to a list of paddle places on our web site. d. The Trip Coordinator will encourage new/ unique paddle locations when requesting paddles each month.
4. Types of Trips		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How about planning some family trips so that the kids can join the adults, get out in nature and meet other kids that kayak 	<p>We should try trips with themes accompanied by a local expert in ecology, nature or fossils, might be of interest</p>	<p>Recent creative trips include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In July, two of TBSK trip leaders, who are master naturalists, led a nature paddle on Frog Creek in Manatee County. • In August, we have had an early morning paddle (meet at 6:30 a.m. and launch at 7 a.m.). • In Sept we had our first Level 0 paddle • In October we are having an overnight camping trip.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Add bike and paddle trips - not more than 5 miles 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Themed trips - maybe hook up with ecologists, botanists, marine biologists - more than just a paddle. 		
Would You Like to Volunteer To Help	Conclusion	TBSK Board Comments/ Actions
<p>Answers ranged from, “Yes I would like to help” to “Been there, done that”</p>	<p>There are some people who would like to volunteer – we need to reach out to these people</p>	<p>We will put an ad in the newsletter and make announcements at the Monthly Meetings that volunteers simply need to make themselves known and we can find some way they can help.</p>
If You Are An Intermediate Paddler, Do You See Any Barriers in Becoming A Trip Leader?	Conclusion	TBSK Board Comments/ Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Get a trip leader development program going. Be more encouraging to possible trip leaders. Have members with outgoing personalities be more welcoming to new members. Be more explicit in what is needed to become a trip leader. Also be more explicit in what members should and should NOT expect from a trip leader 	<p>Some members believe we need a more formal trip leader recruiting/ encouraging program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Trip Coordinator and fellow board members are on the constant look-out for possible trip leaders, encouraging any Level II member interested to just ask and they will be considered. - We will encourage Trip Leaders to assign capable paddlers as Assistant Trip Leaders on their trips in the hopes of encouraging more trip leaders.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unclear requirements; no encouragement of those who might be so inclined, no 'assistant leader' role for one to grow into leader role 		

- Lack of skill and knowledge of the areas to paddle	None of these barriers should be “long term” reasons why someone cannot be a trip leader.	All members should be encouraged to become a trip leader, if they possess Level II paddling skills.
- Too many rules		
- I'm a snowbird		
- I use an inflatable life jacket		
- Need more practice, only 6 months in a sea kayak		
- No barriers I can think of		
- Sit on top paddler		
Paddle Trip Requirements		
The requirements about boat length are too limiting. I would like to go on Level 2 paddles and not just Level I paddles.	Both of these issues are not club policy, but restrictions required by trip leaders on a specific paddle to ensure a safe paddle supervised by the trip leader.	We will communicate to: 1) Membership so they realize it is up to the trip leader on inflatable PFD's & boat length. 2) Trip Leaders so they realize that some paddlers can keep up with any Level II paddler in a 14 ft boat with bulkheads.
Allow inflatable pfd's except in surf and rough water.		

How Many Trip Leaders Needed?		
Need more trip leaders	These two suggestions on the quantity of Trip Leaders.	We are constantly looking to qualify more trip leaders and have assistant trip leaders. While it would be nice to have two trip leaders per paddle, this requirement would drastically reduce the number of trips led.
Require two trip leaders per paddle		
Website Workings		
- Allow trip leaders to post impromptu paddles on the website, that auto generate email notice to members. Provide online template for paddle announcement.	Unfortunately the website software that we “rent” does not allow either of these suggestions and does not allow us to make software changes.	We will investigate if there is another way of satisfying these requests.
- A meet-up page on web site so members can join other members in unofficial TBSK paddles		