

CPA Paddler Profile ~ Paula Hubbard

Interview by Rick Wiebush



Paula Hubbard on Dillon Beach,
Marin County, California

Name: Paula M. Hubbard

Lives in: Chestertown, Maryland

Real job: Technical Consultant, NetCracker Technologies (Customer Care and Billing)

Member of a Piracy? Pirates of the Eastern Shore

Paddling Buddies: Rich Pieper (Husband), Sue Byerly, Laura Ventura, Marshall Woodruff and the KIPPers.

Number years paddling: 8

How did you get involved in kayaking? I started in California. I had a solo canoe in Florida but when I moved to California it was obvious that San Francisco Bay was not a good place for an open canoe, so I made the switch to sea kayaking and fell in love with the sport.

How did you learn to sea kayak? I started taking an intro to sea kayaking class with California Canoe and Kayak (CCK) and bought my first boat (the Andromeda that I still paddle) soon after. I joined Bay Area Sea Kayakers (BASK) and found lots of people who were also addicted to paddling. Between classes, club trips and club events, I spent lots of time on the water and had plenty of mentors. I received such incredible support from the BASK when I was learning that I continue to volunteer for CPA events to pay it forward.

Formal training or ACA/BCU certifications: I strongly believe that training plus practice is the best way to advance skills. I started with CCK (Marce Wise and John Lull) – Intro to Sea Kayaking, SK 102, Intro to Surf, and Open Water. BASK also sponsored several skills sessions including their six week Skills Clinic. Then I

took classes with Roger Schumann including Surf Zone, Rock Gardening, Rolling Clinic, and Instructors Workshops to move up to a more advanced level. I received my Level 3 instructor's certification from Roger in 2008, then recertified with Ben Lawry this past summer. I took several open water classes with Rick Wiebush last summer and received my ACA Level 4 assessment from Tom Noffsinger last fall at Kiptopeke. This summer I received the BCU 3* assessment from Tom Nickels.

Boat usually paddled: Current Designs Andromeda 17'3" teal over white for longer trips, and NDK Romany 16'1" blue over white for playing or teaching

Type paddle used: Euro – Werner High Angle blade

Do you do any other type of paddling besides sea kayaking? I still have my canoe but it hasn't seen much action since I started kayaking.

Do you regularly do any other outdoor activities? I try to get outside as much as possible. I go biking, mostly recreational on back roads or bike trails. Regular gym workouts help me stay in shape between paddles.

How often do you paddle in summer? At least twice a week unless I'm traveling. I would like to do more but work still gets in the way.

Do any winter paddling? I try to paddle at least once a month in the winter and would do more if the weather and work cooperate.

Go to pool sessions? I love pool sessions but they've been hard to find this year. Distance and timing haven't worked.

Favorite local paddling location: Kent County has free launch points along the Chester and Sassafras Rivers and there are many creeks that open into the Bay. When the bay gets too hot, Cape Henlopen is an easy day trip and has excellent open water paddling.

Favorite non-local location: You can't beat the Pacific Coast for coastal scenery and rock gardening. I love the Mendocino area, either Russian Gulch or Van Damme state parks have good launch points. On the Atlantic Coast, my favorite is Kiptopeke for the variety of paddling opportunities, both flat water marshes and interesting surf and open water.

Best paddling trip/experience ever and why: My best trip is frequently the one I'm on – enjoying the moment. One of the most rewarding was last September's KIP Final – going around Kent Island in less than ideal conditions in about 11 hours. The most exhilarating was my last trip to Mendocino where I did my first combat roll in the surf then had to do it again 10 minutes later. Most memorable were the coastal trips in California, especially around the Mendocino area.

Scariest/most dangerous trip/experience and why: The open coast trip where we nearly lost a paddler was the scariest. It was a relatively calm day (for the Pacific at least) and we were playing in the rocks north of San Francisco Bay. One paddler was having

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