

## Xtreme

by Tiderace

The design brief for the Xtreme was to build a touring sea kayak that excelled in rough water. Our specification was to make a sea kayak that could tour at a speed of 3 to 4 knots easily and keep pace with a group on a typical day trip. Secondly, to build the most forgiving hull shape, one that easily and smoothly transitions from paddling forward to sliding sideways in rough water. This gives the paddler a great degree of control when surfing waves, but more importantly, progressive feedback allowing the paddler time to react in broken water. Thirdly, to build it "bomb-proof"—there's more strategic reinforcing in an Xtreme than any other Tiderace boat. This construction has to perform in the heaviest water and not oilcan. Last, and certainly not least, to bring a huge smile to the face of those who dare catch the biggest wave!

—Aled Williams, designer

### REVIEWERS

SR: 5' 11", 160-pound male. Day trip. Wind to 12 knots, waves less than 18", current to 2 knots. Trials with no cargo and with 50 lbs.

GL: 5' 11", 165-pound male. Day paddles. Waves 2-3 ft, 6-knot tidal current, wind to 15 knots. Trials with no cargo and with 60 lbs.

TE: 6' 1", 200-pound male. Day trip. Winds to 15 knots. Wind waves and tanker wakes to 1 ½ feet. No cargo.

Length overall	16' 11 ¼"
Beam	21 ⅝"
Volume	13.16 cu. ft.
Cockpit size	16 ½" x 30 ½"
Cockpit coaming height:	
Forward	11 ⅞"
Aft	7 ⅞"
Height of seat	1"
Weight	61 ¾ lbs.

### THE REVIEW

#### First Glance

The Xtreme "has a very pronounced sheer line and a very low deck that give the boat a wasp waist in profile" (TE). "Layup was solid; couldn't find any drips or blemishes" (SR). "Inside the glasswork looks first rate, with considerable reinforcing and seams glassed the full length" (GL). SR found the Xtreme an easy carry: "Solo portaging is great. It does not feel heavy and the cockpit rim is comfortable." TE, like GL, found the Xtreme balanced on the thigh brace flange: "It was much easier to carry the Xtreme upside down with the thigh-brace flanges resting on my shoulders." "The toggles can either hang down or clip into bungees on the perimeter line. First time I've seen that bungeed feature with the option to unclip them. Nice" (SR).

#### Fit

"This boat fit well right out of the box. The foredeck is nice and low and did not interfere with strokes. It leaves a very open and over-the-top feeling of control" (SR). The cockpit opening is "a pronounced keyhole so I had to get in and out one leg at a time. There was good foot room for size-13 booties. The aft edge of the cockpit coaming is quite low and allows a full head-to-the-deck layback" (TE). "The cockpit volume is low, with minimum of extra space in front of the foot pedals. The hip room was good and could easily be padded out for a bomber fit" (GL).

The seat is slightly contoured and has a ¼-inch foam pad. TE "had no pressure points but the lack of support under my legs led to fatigue." The back support is a plastic band with "a series of bolt holes to move fore and aft

to fit the paddler. It flexes just enough to work well and get out of the way for laybacks" (GL). GL had some "contact with the knees up front of the thigh braces—an inch or two of foam would be enough to spread the load" but for TE "the thigh braces made no contact with the knees and lie mid thigh. The contact is perfect and makes for great control of the kayak." SR also had "great contact and comfort. This boat yields confidence."

The semi-recessed deck fittings provide for stowing a spare split paddle on either deck. "A nice touch is a tensioner on short shock cords fore and aft, where a spare paddle shaft can be quickly clamped for a more secure carry" (GL). "The perimeter lines are solid, easy to use and mounted at a good tension" (SR). The Xtreme's skeg is deployed with an "easy-to-use slider" (SR).

#### Stability and Maneuverability

The Xtreme's initial stability was rated "high, very solid" by SR, "low" by GL and "good, not twitchy" by TE. Secondary stability was, respectively, "high," "moderately-high, a fun boat to put on edge" and "good. Only with the coaming touching the water does the secondary start to soften."



The Xtreme got mixed reviews for tracking. "It is not a tracking machine; it veers noticeably" (SR). "It tracks pretty well with a small amount of yaw, but I didn't feel I needed the skeg" (GL). "The Xtreme tracks well and kept a straight line even when paddled at top speed" (TE). There was no disagreement about turning ability: "Pure fun. It does not take much angle to initiate carving turns at all. A little more angle and it likes to slide around quickly. It's easy to spin with a few strokes" (SR). "Steering with leaned turns is over the top! Almost 90 degrees in one sweep, a very quick turner" (GL).

### Speed

For SR "the top speed was just under 6 knots. Cruising at 3.5 feels fine; 4 adds a noticeable amount of effort. It's quick off the line." GL noted "very good acceleration, decent cruising speed. At about 4 knots, the Xtreme paddles effortlessly. Pushed much faster, you hit the top end fairly quickly" (GL). TE "could hold 4.25 knots at a relaxed cruising pace, maintain 5 knots at an exercise pace and hit 6 knots in a short sprint."

The Xtreme "accelerates nicely and is quick to catch wind waves. I didn't have to face the kayak straight down the waves while catching them; a strong stern rudder would correct course. I didn't broach at all" (GL). On overfall waves it was "easy to maneuver and pivot when you can get the cockpit onto the shoulder. Once engaged and dropping in the hull feels like it is beginning to plane up and gives a ton of pivot control. Easy to lean into and carve hard then return on the same wave. The boat surfs equally well backward and is predictable when it wants to engage an angle and turn" (SR). GL "crossed eddy lines at high-volume flow. Leaning way out 'mooning' the flow, performance was very secure and predictable." The Xtreme offers a "nice dry ride, with the boat riding up over the top of waves and splash mostly deflected away" (GL).

The Xtreme had "only moderate weathercocking that was easily remedied

### BEST FEATURES

- Maneuverability
  - Ease of rolling
- ### TO IMPROVE
- Seat's leg support



The pronounced thigh-brace flanges require you to get in and out one leg at a time.

by dropping the skeg or with edging and a sweep. Its good response to turning will bring the bow away from the wind. With the skeg fully deployed the Xtreme will leecock slightly and make heading downwind courses easy" (TE).

### Rolling and Rescue

The Xtreme is "very easy rolling, locked in with the thigh braces and solid foot pegs, low back deck for laybacks" (GL). It is "quick to return to initial stability with minimal effort. I was able to do rodeo (back deck) rolls in this boat, rolls I don't normally do in a sea kayak" (SR). "Layback rolls are a breeze, like rolling a Greenland kayak. Lovely!" (TE).

SR found it "easy to wet exit" while TE noted "that the thigh braces make wet exiting a conscious act. You have to stay relaxed." "A scramble reentry was a snap getting aboard and sliding up the low rear deck" (GL).

### Cruising

The Xtreme's "stowage volume is good enough for multiday trips. The four hatch openings are all round, necessitating mostly small packaging" (GL). "The bow compartment is voluminous but the aft compartment is more compact because of the low deck. There is some useful space aft of the skeg box that will take some slender dry bags and a bit of planning to take advantage of" (TE).

The KajakSport rubber hatches are all tethered and "went on and off easily and felt secure. All compartments were dry after rescue practice, except the deck

hatch, which had a few drops" (SR). GL and TE found no water in any of the compartments. The bulkheads are composite and honeycomb cored, glassed on one side and caulked on the other.

With cargo aboard the "top speed, cruising speed, maneuvering and stability were not noticeably impacted" (SR). "A 60-pound load improved initial stability to moderate; secondary to high—a very secure feel. A little sluggish to accelerate but I still could catch a wind wave or two" (GL).

### The Bottom Line

"The Xtreme lived up to the designer's intentions. Very playful and completely responsive to maneuvers and rolls; it inspires confidence and would make anyone who paddles the surf, tide races, rock gardens and even rivers very happy. Great boat. I want one" (SR). The Xtreme "trades a little speed for a big bang in maneuverability, and delivers as a multiday play boat. While still a sea kayak, it hits the mark for surfing and rock gardening, and will make a fine rolling machine. If that's your passion, the Xtreme is tough to beat" (GL). "I'd be quite happy to take it out again and push it harder to see where its limits might lie. It would suit all levels of kayakers and it's not a boat anyone would soon grow out of" (TE).

## MANUFACTURER'S RESPONSE

We wish to thank the reviewers for their positive comments about the Xtreme. At Tiderace we strive to build boats that both we and our customers enjoy paddling. The Xtreme is a specialist boat—a touring sea kayak shaped for maximum play performance. The key to creating a successful design that performs in rough and moving water is to engineer in what we call "performance head room." This is a margin above the standard expectation of performance which may be employed as a protective buffer and as a creative zone for learning. The buffer in this case is the progressive feedback that is presented to the paddler from the boat—a stream of information that is clear and timely and allows paddlers to make adjustments to their

performance. The learning zone is where aspiration turns into reality—a kayak that does not stand in the way of you realizing your performance in rough and moving water; an easy-to-use paintbrush waiting to be applied on a blank canvas. The Xtreme has become the boat of choice for kayakers from the discerning guide who leads day trips in advanced conditions and the committed rock-hopper who wants a strong and agile sea kayak to the adventurous play paddler who carves an expression on the green wave face. The reviewers obviously gained empathy with the Xtreme and it makes us proud to see our products performing in the way we intended.

—Aled Williams, designer

# KAYAK REVIEWS

## XTREME

### MANUFACTURING DATA

**Designed:** 2011

**Standard construction:** Classic—multilayer laminate with unidirectional woven fiberglass epoxy resin

**Optional construction:** Hardcore—woven fiberglass deck and hybrid of fiberglass and Kevlar/carbon in the hull. Epoxy resin.

**Standard Features:** Overlapped seam for increased rigidity and strength, Tiderace Comfort Cockpit, laminated bulkheads—curved behind seat, reflective bungees, four-hatch design, retractable skeg

**Options:** keel strip, electric pump, compass

**Weight:** Classic 58.5 lbs.; Hardcore 55 lbs.

**Price:** Classic \$3,749; Hardcore \$4,199

**Availability:** See website for a complete list

**Manufacturer:** Tiderace Sea Kayaks, +44 1768 840179, info@tideraceaskayaks.co.uk, www.tideraceaskayaks.com

### SPEED VS. RESISTANCE

Resistance in pounds.

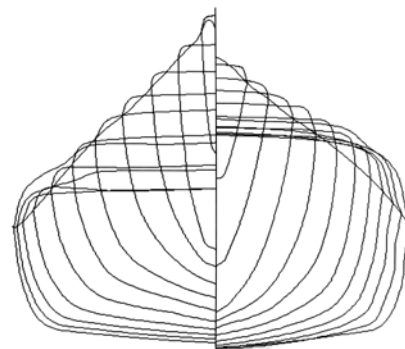
Speed	Winters/KAPER	Broze/Taylor*
2 knots	0.92	0.89
3 knots	1.92	1.93
4 knots	3.64	3.63
4.5 knots	5.39	5.46
5 knots	8.28	8.72
6 knots	14.29	15.55

\*Automated with the Gertler program by Robert Livingston

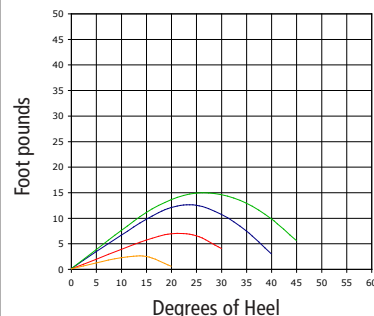
### HYDROSTATICS

Waterline length	14' 6.3"
Waterline beam	20.8"
Draft	5.3"
Prismatic coefficient	0.50
Wetted surface in sq. ft.	21.08
Center of buoyancy	56%

(Hydrostatics calculated with a 250-pound load.)



### Righting/Heeling Moments (Fixed-weight)



### Stability Curves\*

- 150 lb. paddler, no cargo
- 200 lb. paddler, no cargo
- 150 lb. paddler, 100 lb. cargo
- 200 lb. paddler, 100 lb. cargo

\*Formula revised December 2009. (Not comparable with stability graphs generated prior to December 2009.)

**TECH TALK:** Readers interested in the full set of hydrostatics can find them posted on our website at [www.seakayakermag.com](http://www.seakayakermag.com) along

with additional data. An explanation of the terms and procedures used in the kayak test program is also available on the site.

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