

Iluka Sea Kayak

At 575mm beam this is a sea kayak for the enthusiasts, and they will find the veed hull shape quite controllable, without needing a rudder or skeg for directional stability. Such simplicity makes for a reliable craft when you are exploring wilderness areas, one of the appeals of the sport. This design, at 5.2m or 17 feet long, is a good sized craft, able to maintain a handy cruising speed with a useful carrying capacity. The simple but elegant lines give it a handsome appearance too, without sacrificing seaworthiness.

The hull uses two sheets of 4mm marine grade plywood while the deck uses two sheets of 3mm, and the remaining structure comes from the unused portions, it's an economic craft to build compared to buying a production boat at retail prices. Construction for the hull is stitch and glue. The panels are cut to the offsets provided, wired together, the hull aligned and then filleted, it's a simple and speedy process. The exterior is reinforced with a covering of fibreglass cloth. Bulkheads divide and support the hull and deck, the ends are foam filled for added buoyancy. Details are provided for coamings and hatches, even a skeg if you decide you do want more control. The advantage of building your own design is that you can fit out the boat to suit your preferences.

A skilled kayaker will appreciate the qualities of the Iluka, particularly the balance of stability and freeboard, which should allow this craft to do the Eskimo roll manoeuvre whenever needed. A beginner will enjoy the challenge of learning how such a simple boat is handled and then quickly move out onto open water with experience.

The two drawings include construction details, layout, panel layout and offsets, bulkheads and stem profile. There is also a set of instructions. Boatcraft Pacific Qld, (07 3806 1944) can supply plans and a kit of materials including paint.

LOA 5.2m, Beam 575mm.

