

# ADVENTURE KAYAK

THE KAYAK TOURING MAGAZINE

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KAYAKER'S  
journal



INSIDE OUT BY ALEX MATTHEWS

## Looksha Elite Composite BY NECKY KAYAKS

FOR NECKY, the new Looksha Elite represents a return to its roots. Not another British-style kayak or "poke around the bay" rec boat, this is a true North American-style touring kayak, complete with a rudder instead of a skeg.

The Elite has a distinct Swede form, meaning its widest point is aft of the seat. While this creates a lot of volume for storage, racing kayakers also favour the shape for a number of other reasons: better stability; longer, more slender hull entry for increased speed and efficiency; narrower foredeck for a closer, more vertical stroke; tighter turns because the greater curve to the stern lifts more of the stern keel free of the water when edging; and less tendency to "pound" when paddling into oncoming waves and chop due to the finer bow entry and stern-biased volume distribution.

The Elite is built in Thailand, and while not particularly light (ours was 57 pounds), the build quality is excellent. A honeycomb foam core is used for stiffness, and everything is very nicely put together, with no leaks, rough edges, or imperfections. Hatches remained bone-dry after extensive rough-water play and rolling.

The fit accommodates a wider range of sizes. There's lots of foot and legroom, but smaller paddlers won't feel dwarfed. Optimal paddler

weight is about 170 to 220 pounds, but at 150 pounds I thoroughly enjoyed it. The seat is comfy and the back-band adjusts easily to provide solid support. The thigh hooks and the underside of the deck create a nice knee pocket for a very positive grip with the legs.

Initial stability is very comfortable and there is a ton of secondary.

Because the rocker is very pronounced, the Elite has very light tracking and benefits from being paddled actively, or else paddled with the rudder, which uses a SmartTrack pedal system. The downside is that with the rudder up, the Elite has a definite tendency to wander and blow around. The upside is outrageous manoeuvrability! Edging away from a turn will have you immediately carving a hairpin. It's a hoot in rock gardens and tight channels, and due to its speed is very quick to accelerate onto waves and swell, while the pronounced rocker makes the boat a blast to carve around on a wave. The clipper bow does a great job of staying on the surface even on steep waves.

If you can't imagine ever using a rudder, then this is not the boat for you. However, if you like efficient touring, carrying big loads, and accelerating down waves in a following sea along an open coast, then you will love the Elite.

### CUT IT OUT!

Cutaways in the front deck allow for a closer, more vertical paddle position for an efficient catch at the start of each stroke. Large oval hatches (rigid shells over neoprene gaskets) provide easy access to storage.

### SWEET SWEDE FORM

The Swede-form shape and "humped" stern deck create awesome cargo capacity in excess of 200 litres.

### BOW UP

The Elite has a clipper bow (more vertical rather than long and overhanging) which extends the waterline for increased efficiency and provides more volume for better rough-water performance.

length ..... 17 ft 6 in (536 cm)  
as measured

width ..... 22 in (56 cm)

cockpit ..... 32 x 16 in (81 x 41 cm)

weight ..... 57 lbs (25.8 kg) fibreglass  
as measured

49 lbs (22.2 kg) carbon

price ..... \$2,999 US fibreglass

\$3,999 US carbon

neckykayaks.com



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