

## A Scandinavian High



A large, high pressure system established itself over Norway and the weather for the past 2 months has been remarkable - and atypical; this Scandinavian High has seen light winds and buckets of sunshine and daytime temperatures reaching about 6 Celsius – which is better than the usual gale force winds and heavy, persistent rain. Indeed, there has been so little rain that Stavanger has declared a barbeque ban and they have only just managed to extinguish a gorse fire a couple of square kilometres wide, which was burning over Easter. So, what of our early adventures?

Those who read 'Sheltered Norwegian Waters' will recall my 'candy floss' philosophy and the dilemma about getting a spine for this season. Against those who would have me paddling in the wind and rain I have maintained my philosophy..... but got both Ali and I backbones for our kayaks. Mine is fitted to my AdvancedFrameExpedition and Ali's to her AdvancedFrame. I hoped we would use them before May but, knowing how bad the winter/spring can be in Stavanger, this was more in hope than expectation. And then the jet stream moved south!



I was so impressed with the backbone – added speed, better tracking and no perceptible loss of stability – that I promptly ordered Ali's; it makes her kayak markedly faster and gives her AdvancedFrame a much cleaner appearance. I highly recommend this accessory to anybody who wants better performance from their kayak. Like the Greenland Ice Sheet Expedition 2012 report, I agree that dripping zips is annoying and have rigged us both a simple contraption that rests on the floor between our knees and supports the foredeck; the water now flows overboard not inboard!



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Stavanger is a fine archipelago for any water-based activity, particularly when the sun shines. The photograph of my inflatable rose - sitting between two thorns - taken in late February marked the start of our season. Chris and Ali framed against the snow-capped mountains to our east, and of us entering Stavanger Harbour to our south, sums up the variety of kayaking in Stavanger. What a way to top up your Vitamin D levels.

Once again, my thanks to Nick and Vortex for their excellent (pre-season) service.

Mark from Stavanger.  
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