

# KAYAK REVIEWS

As seen in

**Sea Kayaker**  
Magazine

[www.seakayakermag.com](http://www.seakayakermag.com)

## XT-15

by Pakboats

The XT-15 was designed to be a pleasing touring kayak for paddlers with a wide range of experience. It works best for paddlers up to 200 pounds. The emphasis is on comfort and convenience, and we have compromised somewhat on heavy weather capability. However, safety is enhanced by ample flotation that is placed to make the XT-15 float stable and level even when flooded.

Consistent performance characteristics require a stiff hull, and maximizing stiffness in a lightweight structure has been a major design objective. The desired stiffness was achieved by connecting gunwale and chine rod on each side to form structural I-beams.

—Alv Elvestad, owner, Pakboats

### REVIEWERS

JK: 5' 6", 140-pound male. Day trip. Calm conditions, boat wakes to 1 foot. No cargo.

SR: 5' 11", 160-pound male. Day trip, Wind to 12 knots, waves to less than 1 foot, occasional boat wakes. Float bags and gear weighing 30 pounds.

TE: 6' 1", 200-pound male. Day trip. Wind to 12 knots waves to 2 feet and whitecaps. No cargo.

Length overall	15'
Beam	24¾"
Cockpit size	18" x 32"
Cockpit coaming heights:	
Forward	13"
Aft	10"
Height of seat	2.5"
Weight	41.5 lbs.

### THE REVIEW

#### First Glance

The XT-15 has a frame of anodized aluminum with sides built as diagonally-braced trusses. They are supported by six transverse frames and are joined at the ends with stem pieces that lever outward to tension the skin. Three internal air tubes running the length of each side further tension the skin and provide buoyancy. "Assembled, the XT-15 feels quite solid" (TE). "The deck is secured by Velcro. I could put the frame together in about 20 minutes. The side panels fold into a fairly thick stack, adding some bulk to the packed boat" (TE). The XT-15 has a "nicely designed duffel bag to carry the boat in. It is not that heavy but it feels a bit awkward to carry as it is rather bulbous" (SR). The XT-15 is "pretty light. It balances well for a solo carry, and is comfortable on my shoulder. The handles on the ends of the top deck are comfortable for tandem carrying" (JK).

#### Fit

"The cockpit is comfortable. I can get in seat before feet. The foredeck seems a little bit wide, and occasionally my paddle would hit the deck. The fit does not feel very secure yet works for edging and rolling" (JK). The coaming is an aluminum tubing frame set into an open sleeve in the deck.

The seat "is quite comfortable. It has an inflatable cushion on the forward end that offers good support under the thighs. The backrest is a wide panel, comfortable for relaxing in the boat" (TE). "It flexes out of the way when doing layback rolls. The back band adjusts easily



with sliders on the straps on either side" (JK). The thigh braces resemble backpack straps and are difficult at best to adjust to give you control" (SR). For JK they "took a little adjusting to get them right, and they felt quite loose, but they work well for edging and rolling." The XT-15 has no foot braces. The kayak "worked well enough without them, but including some would probably increase the usability of the kayak" (JK). There are a number of D-rings along the sheer line that can be used to lace deck bungees across the decks.

#### Stability and Maneuverability

The initial stability was rated "good" (JK), "high" (SR) and "excellent" (TE). "The secondary stability is very solid. It takes some body lean using the thigh straps to get the XT-15 fully up on edge" (JK). TE thought the secondary stability was "very good and kicks in with just a slight bit of edging. It supports the boat well even with the coaming at the water's surface. The XT is a relaxing boat to sit in and a good platform for activities like fishing and photography."

JK noted "the XT-15 does not yaw much with each stroke, but it seems like tracking is not its strongest feature." In contrast, SR thought the XT-15 "holds course remarkably well for a 15-foot boat. I found the tracking refreshingly good." "The XT's response to edging and sweeps was very good. The secondary stability offers good support and the XT-15 turns quite smartly" (TE).

#### Speed

"The XT-15 is quite fast for its length, and accelerates well. Cruising speed by GPS is around 3½ knots. Exercise pace brings it quickly to 4½ knots. I could sprint to around 6 knots. Not bad, especially considering the lack of foot braces" (JK). "Three-knot cruising was the best I could do for extended stroking; 4.8 knots at a sprint" (SR). "With a GPS logging speed I did 4 knots at a relaxed cruising pace, 4¾ knots at an exercise pace and peaked at 5¼ knots in a short sprint" (TE).

TE "was surprised to get some good wind-wave rides. The XT-15 could be a

#### BEST FEATURES

- Stability
- Tracking

#### TO IMPROVE

- Provide foot braces

bit squirrely on takeoff, but once up to speed on the wave face the bow engages the water and holds its line down the wave. I had to put a moderate effort into accelerating to catch waves and to maintain speed, but I caught some nice long rides on wave sets. I was surfing a wind wave and raced through a boat wake moving the opposite direction. The XT-15 bounced over it like a rubber ball with some spray out to the sides but nothing coming over the deck" (TE). "The designers have done well in making a stiff frame. I hardly noticed any flexing as I paddled over boat wakes" (JK).

#### Roll and Rescue

"Once you get the knee straps out of the way a wet exit is easy, though the aft end of the spray skirt is some distance aft of me and I had to reach back to get it to release" (TE).

"Getting in is pretty easy, except the tall seat-back gets in the way. It is stable enough that I could do a cowboy re-entry without difficulty. Paddle float reentries work well also, but the paddler has to hold the paddle shaft onto the coaming. Since there are no bulkheads a lot of water ends up in the kayak after rescues, although it does not adversely affect stability. The integral flotation keeps the kayak stable even when flooded with water" (JK). "You need float bags to counter the lack of bulkheads" (SR).

SR found rolling "extremely difficult, too sloppy a fit to do much with." On the other hand, JK "was surprised how easily this kayak rolls despite the loose fit and somewhat wide feel. Laying back is



The seat has an inflatable forward end to provide leg support and padded thigh-brace straps.

aided by the flexible seat-back which folds down. Unfortunately, water comes in with each roll." For TE "the XT-15 rolled just fine. Upside down I lowered into the knee straps and they became more effective for rotating the kayak. I rolled up, shifted to one side and had to hitch myself back to the middle of the seat. An inconvenience only."

#### Cruising

SR thought the XT-15 could hold enough gear for "multiday trips. The room available dwarfs even full-size touring boats" (SR). "The deck comes off easily, and allows for access to the entire interior. It takes a little fussing to get the deck reattached smoothly, so it is not the most convenient way in. It might work at camp at the end of the day, but I would not want to remove the deck during the day" (JK).

#### The Bottom Line

The Pakboat XT-15 "would be a good choice for paddlers looking for portability and taking jaunts on protected waters" (TE). It is "good for a wide range of paddlers looking for the portability of a folding kayak. It could probably handle occasional rough water. I would probably keep it in protected water" (JK). The XT-15 "is built well and from quality materials, handles well and is actually fun to paddle once you get to know it, which doesn't take long. Definitely not for big water or exposed coastal tripping. It works great for mellow environments and is very stable for photography or even fishing" (SR).

#### MANUFACTURER'S RESPONSE

We are pleased to see that the testers' findings are very close to our design objectives, and we only have a couple of comments: We agree that the XT-15 needs foot braces. The foot braces will be available for 2010, and they will fit all XT-15 kayaks, including those sold in 2009.

Self-inflating hip pads are now available to secure a snug cockpit fit for different size paddlers.

It is not convenient to remove the whole deck to access gear, but it is very easy to open and close the rear deck. We recommend that the bow area is used for gear that will not be needed during the day. There is ample storage in the stern for gear that will be needed more frequently.

—Alv Elvestad, owner, Pakboats

# KAYAK REVIEWS

## XT-15

### MANUFACTURING DATA

**Designed:** Released to market in 2009

**Standard Construction:** Separate hull and deck on tubular aluminum frame. All aluminum parts anodized and fastened with stainless steel pins.

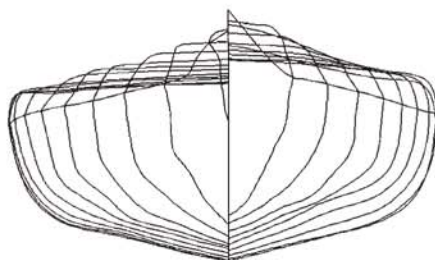
**Standard features:** Hull complete with skin, deck and frame. Sling seat with back band. Delivered with storage bag, pump, and repair kit.

**Options:** Thigh straps, self inflating hip pads, foot braces, rudder, deck bag/paddle float.

**Weight:** 40 lbs. (this is the weight of the boat without any options, ready to go on the water).

**Availability:** Sold through paddlesports retailers.

**Manufacturer:** Pakboats/ScanSport, Inc.  
234 May St. (P.O. Box 700) Enfield, NH 03748  
(603) 632-9500  
info@pakboats.com  
www.pakboats.com



### SPEED VS. RESISTANCE

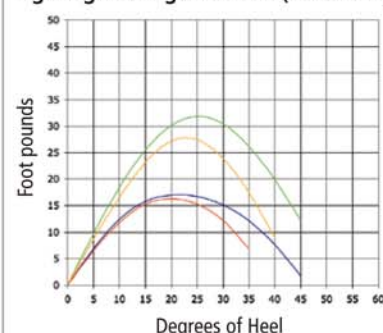
Resistance in pounds.

Speed	Winters/KAPER	Broze/Taylor
2 knots	1.00	1.01
3 knots	2.13	2.09
4 knots	4.06	3.99
4.5 knots	5.70	5.57
5 knots	8.48	8.75
6 knots	14.51	15.30

### HYDROSTATICS

Waterline length	14' 4.5"
Waterline beam	23"
Draft	5.1"
Prismatic coefficient	0.55
Wetted surface in sq. ft.	22.8
Center of buoyancy	45.6%

### 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.

Kayak Reviews  
XT-15 by Pakboats  
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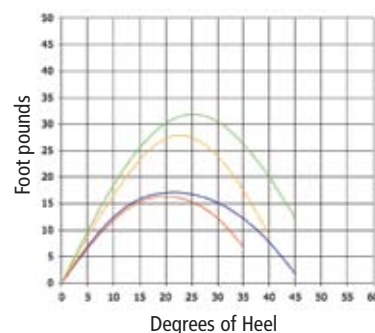
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## XT-15 by Pakboats

Tech Specs				
Paddler Weight	150 lbs	200 lbs	150 lbs	200 lbs
Cargo weight	none	none	100 lbs	100 lbs
Waterline length	14.19	14.29	14.38	14.44
Waterline beam	1.86	1.89	1.92	1.94
Draft	0.34	0.38	0.43	0.47
Prismatic coefficient	0.51	0.54	0.55	0.57
Block coefficient	0.34	0.36	0.39	0.41
Wetted surface in sq. ft.	19.80	21.43	22.84	24.15
Pounds to immerse one inch	93.83	99.29	103.21	106.20
Effective waterline length			14.14	
Volume, cu.ft.			14.64	
Center of buoyancy, % of length from bow			45.60	
<b>Metric equivalents</b>				
Paddler Weight	68.04 kg	90.72 kg	68.04 kg	90.72 kg
Cargo weight	none	none	45.46 kg	45.46 kg
Waterline length	4.56	4.65	4.73	4.79
Waterline beam	0.56	0.57	0.57	0.58
Draft	0.10	0.11	0.12	0.14
Prismatic coefficient	0.48	0.49	0.50	0.51
Block coefficient	0.37	0.39	0.41	0.42
Wetted surface in sq. meters	1.84	1.99	2.14	2.27
Kgs to immerse 2.54 cm	41.02	42.94	44.46	45.66
Effective waterline length			4.61	
Volume cubic meters			0.50	

Righting/Heeling Moments (Fixed-weight)



Stability Curves\*

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- 150 lb. paddler, 100 lb. cargo
- 200 lb. paddler, 100 lb. cargo

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Measurements	
Length overall in decimal ft.	15.08
Beam in inches	24.75
Volume in cu. ft.	14.64
Cockpit width in inches	18.00
Cockpit length in inches	32.00
Coaming height forward, inches	13.00
Coaming height aft, inches	10.00
Height of seat in inches	2.50
Weight in pounds	41.50
<b>Metric Equivalents</b>	
Length overall in meters	4.60
Beam in meters	0.63
Volume in kiloliters	0.41
Cockpit width, cm	45.72
Cockpit length, cm	81.28
Coaming height forward, cm	33.02
Coaming height aft, cm	25.40
Height of seat, cm	6.35
Weight in kg	18.82