

Board in suitcase

Terry Kavanagh

LONGBOARD surfers face many annoying hassles out of the water because of the length of their surf craft.

Air travel causes one of the biggest headaches as many airlines slap hefty surcharges on mals which range from 8ft to 10ft long. In some cases they have banned surfboards altogether.

More problems arise at the destination when longboarders try to find transport from the airport to their hotel. Forget about hiring a cab or even a mini-van, only large vans can accommodate such a long load.

The Pope Bisect longboard promises to solve the problem with an ingenious yet simple two-piece surfboard which packs into a suitcase that presents as normal airline luggage and also fits inside a family-size car.

Veteran Californian surfer Karl Pope first developed the idea in the 1960s with Tom Morey, the famous surfing innovator who later invented the boogie board.

The idea didn't take off back then, but new technology in surfboard construction, using carbon fibre and epoxy materials, gave the idea fresh appeal in the late 1990s.

About eight years ago Pope began refining his original concept with the help of hi-tech computer models and space-age materials.

According to Pope Bisect's Australian agent David Quon, the idea has come of age and the boards deliver in the surf and the suitcase.

Tasmanian-based Quon says he has been travelling to Bali and other overseas wave havens to surf every year since 1974.

He was sold on the Bisect idea when he read about it in *Surfer's Journal* magazine. He ordered a Bisect board from the US factory and was "blown away" by how well it performed and how easy it was to dismantle.

"I'm in my fifties, so I have progressed to a longboard but I still like to go overseas," Quon says.

"It can be a real hassle to travel with a longboard coming from Tassie but this idea solved the problem."

Quon says he ordered his board at the perfect time, about two years ago, when Pope had perfected his formula.

"It's a very smart piece of technology," Quon says.

"The epoxy versions came about in the past two years. They have a



TRAVEL problem solved ... David Quon with the Pope Bisect which packs into a suitcase.

Waverider

THERE'S an easterly swell of about 1m running this morning, that will swing to the south tomorrow and drop to under 1m before picking up on Sunday to 1.2m from the SE. The winds are light offshore this morning before a NE sea breeze this afternoon. Tomorrow a southerly change will sweep up the coast and the winds will be fresh SE for the rest of the long weekend and the tides are high mid to late morning.

On the **Sunshine Coast** this morning, try the open beaches early on the incoming tide. Later today Kawana and Kings Beach at Caloundra will be worth checking. On the weekend from Moffats to Currimundi, Alexandra Headland to Maroochydore, Coolool to Peregrin and Alexandria Bay will be the pick early with the point breaks at

Moffats, Point Cartwright, Alexandra Headland and the outer bays at Noosa the only options later.

On the **Gold Coast** this morning, check the points early from Snapper Rocks to Greenmount, Currumbin Alley and Burleigh and along the open beaches as the tide rises. On the weekend, Duranbah and South Straddie will pick up more of the southerly swell and there will be small waves on the points with more size on Sunday.

On the **Tweed Coast**, the beach breaks will be fun this morning before the NE winds get up. On the weekend the points at Cabarita and Fingal will be the best value and picking up more swell than the Gold and Sunshine coasts.

John 'JC' Charlton

carbon fibre rod down the middle of the epoxy two-piece board, with two stainless steel clips on either side that hold the board together.

"The removable carbon fibre rod

gives it more strength than a normal board.

"It surfs brilliantly. The feedback has been fantastic. Everyone who has bought one says they thought

they'd have to keep their normal board as well. But they prefer to surf the Bisect all the time.

"You can put it together in 15 seconds."

Quon says Bisect boards also are becoming popular with surfers who live in high-rise apartments. A normal longboard has to be secured somehow in an underground carport, yet a Bisect can be washed down, put in its custom case and brought upstairs.

"It's also great if you want to stop for a beer on the way home after a surf," Quon says. "You can lock it in the car and not have to worry about it being stolen off the roof."

Bisect Australia now has four models ranging in length from 8ft 2in to 10ft.

Each weighs slightly less than the equivalent fibreglass longboard. The designs are by Californian longboard shaper Wayne Rich.

Bisect boards cost about \$600 to \$800 more than custom-made fibreglass longboards but Quon says regular travellers will come out ahead after a few trips.

A couple of shortboard models, including a retro fish shape, will be coming out soon.

More information: www.bisectaustralia.com.au

Ranger diary

News

THE recent wet, wild weather has affected a number of national parks and forests, especially in southeast Queensland. Check local conditions and weather forecasts before heading bush this long weekend. Drive carefully in case of track damage, slippery surfaces, tree falls and localised flooding. Park visitors are reminded to keep to walking tracks and don't attempt to cross fast-flowing streams. Please observe safety warnings and restricted areas. Areas affected this week included Fraser Island, campsites in the upper Noosa River, and parks and forests in the Sunshine Coast hinterland. At Main Range National Park, the western approach to Spicer's Gap is closed beyond the park boundary. Rangers expect it will be closed for the next week depending on rainfall. Conditions on all Gold Coast hinterland walking tracks may be hazardous. North of Yeppoon, roadworks on the Five Rocks access road in Byfield National Park will continue until Tuesday. Road conditions are poor. Information on park access and closures is available at www.epa.qld.gov.au

Camping:

Camping credits are a quick and easy way to pre-pay for your next camping trip. Credits are like vouchers and can be purchased in amounts of \$45 (10 camper nights) and \$90 (20 camper nights). They can be used within 12 months to pay camping and vehicle access permits. Credits are available online at www.qld.gov.au/camping, by phoning 131 304, over the counter at a number of EPA district offices and at selected visitor information centres.

What's on:

Celebrate Queensland's Centenary of Parks at Eungella National Park near Mackay on Sunday and Monday. Historical displays and talks will showcase Eungella's rich and varied past, while guided walks and activities will show the beauty and diversity of its rainforest. Family activities include birdwatching, platypus viewing, spotlighting and a junior ranger program. For more information or to register for birdwatching, phone EPA Eungella on 4958 4753 from 8.30am-4.30pm today.

Wildlife:

The grey nurse shark, one of Australia's most endangered marine species, is a migratory animal that can be found in Moreton Bay Marine Park during winter. Despite not being a threat to humans, it was hunted almost to extinction during the 1960s. Today, activities such as fishing and diving continue to affect these sharks. There may be fewer than 500 left along Australia's east coast, and research indicates that without extra protection, the species could be extinct within 40 years. You can help protect this species. Observe dive restrictions, carry out a volunteer survey and email any information about the grey nurse shark to greynurseshark@epa.qld.gov.au. More facts about grey nurse sharks are available at www.epa.qld.gov.au

Compiled by the Environmental Protection Agency.

WIN A LUXURY CARAVAN



The Queensland Caravan, Camping & Touring Holiday Show is on again at the RNA Showgrounds from June 4-10, highlighting everything we love about the great outdoors.

The Sunday Mail and RACQ are giving one lucky reader the chance to win a Paramount caravan valued at \$40,990 thanks to Brisbane RV's.

Plus five runners-up will win a Tom Tom GO720 GPS unit and five subscribers will receive an Australia Road Atlas.

See The Sunday Mail on June 8 for your chance to win.



thesundaymail.com.au

