

## Bliss Stick Mystic Review

Quinton Bray

**Looks:** This boat looks like it means business. The lines and curves of the boat look brilliant and unique, so when sat next to other creekers, the mystic always has a head above the rest when it comes to style.

**Hull:** While I was looking for a boat to upsize to from my river play I realised I wanted a kayak which had a enough rail to carve and provide speed, but for the chines to be forgiving enough to not punish you on funny water, or whenever you make a mistake. This boat is that perfect medium, allowing for a fast, stable ride which responds perfectly to every movement. The ample rocker allows for the mystic to float over holes and rocks other boats have trouble with and allows for predictable, fast resurfacing.

**Outfitting:** Well thought out and comfortable. This is the best bit about the boat in my opinion, many manufacturers fall short at this hurdle, but Bliss Stick seem to have been able to provide a simple, comfortable and highly adjustable system. The back rest sits high up the lumber area providing great support, while being free to move with your body and working well in conjunction with the seat and hip pads. At first (after demoing other creekers) I was surprised at how high out of the water the seat feels, and took a while to get used to but it enables fast, smooth edge to edge transitions and a better paddling position. The highlight appears upon inspection of the thigh braces. These are amazing, they rotate to your preference and hug your legs perfectly, allowing for a snug fit into the cockpit and for the boat to feel like an extension of yourself; giving a sense of confidence that other systems simply can't achieve. This kayak was obviously designed with the modern boater in mind, providing a large space in between the legs conveniently shaped for a pelicase to fit perfectly... coincidence? I think not. Everybody knows that there's no point in kayaking unless there's someone with a DSLR on the bank taking photo's of you stomping your favourite stout naked. All of this and there's still enough room behind the seat for a small child.

**On the river:** It's fast and does exactly what you want it to do. It's enabled me to push my boundaries further than ever before, filling me with confidence and providing me with the ability to boat chase and safety effectively for my club.

Bad points: Nothing from my point of view. Many people will say it's a bit heavy, but as this doesn't effect the way it handles on a river, personally I don't care. It could get a bit weighty on long walk in (rocking up at 21-22 kg), so maybe the outfitting could do with a tweak to make it more comfortable to carry, but I've never had any problems.

All in all: If I lost this boat I wouldn't think twice in investing immediately in another one. It will never let you down, the only limiting factors being your own ability and the size of your cojones.

Paddler stats.

Height: 6'0"

Weight: 72kg

Experience: Paddling for 1.5 years, most of which in a river-play. Grade 3-4

Location: Yorkshire and Devon.