

Greenland Kayaking Technique

Capsize Maneuvers Performed at the Greenland Kayaking Championships



Click on the Greenlandic Term to hear it spoken by Maligiaq Padilla. Literal translations courtesy of Birgit Pauksztat. For more detail on the translations please refer to the [Greenland Rolling Term Translations](#).

1. Side sculling

[Innaqatsineq](#) — "lying on the back".

Performed as a high brace (palms facing upward). To make this more difficult the judges for 2002 preferred to see the participants keep their kayak deck at right angles to the water (outside of the competition it is usually preferred to keep the kayak as flat on the water as possible, done by arching your back). *Two points/side.*

History/Purpose: Resting pose, capsize prevention, roll training.

[Video Clip](#) [Article](#) [Artwork & information by Eiichi Ito - Qajaq JPN](#)

2. Chest sculling

[Palluussineq](#) — "lying on one's belly".

Some judges allow you to turn your outboard hand so that your thumb points toward the outboard paddle tip, but in 2003 you were required to keep your normal paddling grip. You may keep your head immersed during the scull (much easier than keeping your head raised). *Two points/side.*

History/Purpose: Used to prevent a capsize if pulled over with the torso facing one side (e.g. fishing).

[Image](#) [Artwork & information by Eiichi Ito - Qajaq JPN](#)



3. Standard Greenland roll (Buure Rolle)

[Kinnguffik paarlallugu/nerfallaallugu](#) — "coming up on the other side, on one's back" .

Start tucked forward, finish leaning aft, recover to start position). You are optionally permitted to finish in a low brace, sweeping forward, as shown in the video clip. *Two points/side.*

History/Purpose: All-purpose roll. Very easy on the body yet very powerful.

[Video Clip](#) [Artwork & information by Eiichi Ito - Qajaq JPN](#)

4. **Rolling with paddle held in crook of elbow**

Pakassumillugu/unermillugu — **"(holding the paddle) in the crook of your arm"**.

Inboard hand grasps the paddle blade as per a standard roll, outboard hand holds the paddle clamped in the elbow. After rolling return to initial setup position with the paddle still held in the crook of your arm.

Three points/side.

History/Purpose: Recover with something held in the hand, or with one hand injured or entangled with line.

[Image of Setup](#) [Image of sweep](#) [Artwork & information by Eiichi Ito - Qajaq JPN](#)



5. **Storm roll (normale Rolle)**

Siukkut pallortillugu/masikkut — **"leaning forward, at the masik"**.

Start tucked forward, finish tucked forward. The inboard hand stays in contact with the deck/hull throughout roll and is often levered off the hull during the hipsnap. This is a low brace roll (palms down).

There is a misconception that this roll must be performed in a combat (non-extended) paddle position. Like all of the rolls, you can extend the paddle as much or as little as you wish. *Three points/side.*

History/Purpose: Excellent roll in high winds; brings you up in a very stable, strong position.

[Video Clip](#) [Image of Finish](#) [Article](#) [Artwork & information by Eiichi Ito - Qajaq JPN](#)

6. **Reverse sweep roll (ähnlich Rodeo Rolle)**

Kingumut naatillugu — **"(holding the paddle) pointed/touching aft"**.

Sweep from stern to bow in a low brace, finish tucked forward). You do not need to return to the original setup position upon recovery. *Three points/side.*

History/Purpose: A very popular roll in Greenland. This technique admits very little water into the cockpit even with a skirt open at the top.

[Video Clip](#) [Article](#)

7. **Spine roll**

Aariamillugu — **"touching the area between the shoulder blades"**.

Start with paddle behind your back, along spine and projecting over your head (or over your shoulder).

Tuck forward, finish leaning aft, recover to start position. The back of the hand grasping the paddle should face your back. You may or may not get points for cupping your hand around the end of the paddle, depending on the judge. After rolling, return to your initial setup position with the paddle still between your shoulder blades. Failure to do so will disqualify your attempt. *Three points/side.*

History/Purpose: The setup position was used to allow the paddle to act as a sail, to push the kayaker along in a strong tail wind. This roll grew out of this practice (source: Pavia Lumholt).

[Image of Setup](#)

8. **Paddle held behind back**

Kingup apummaatigut — "(holding the paddle) at the stern-gunwale".

Start with paddle behind back, against gunwale leaning aft, finish with paddle behind back leaning slightly forward. Forward or reverse sculling motion for recovery is permitted. Different variations are cupping your inboard hand around the paddle tip (easiest), holding the paddle tip palm-up (slightly more difficult) or holding the paddle tip palm down (most difficult). The palm-up version is expected for competition. You are not required to return to the original setup position upon recovery. *Three points/side.*

History/Purpose: Useful if kayaker capsizes with the paddle held behind the coaming as an outrigger (source: Pavia Lumholt).

[Video Clip.](#)

9. **Standard roll with paddle behind neck**

Siukkut tunusummillugu — "forward, touching one's neck".

A variation of roll #3. You are not permitted to cup your hand around the end of the paddle. After rolling, return to your initial setup position with the paddle still behind your neck. Failure to do so will disqualify your attempt. *Four points/side.*

History/Purpose: Entanglement, skill building.

Images: [Setup](#) [Adopting Setup](#) [Finish](#)



10. **Reverse sweep roll with paddle behind neck**

Kingukkut tunusummillugu — "backward, touching one's neck".

A variation of roll #6. You are not permitted to cup your hand around the end of the paddle. You are not required to return to the original setup position after rolling up. *Four points/side.*

History/Purpose: Entanglement, skill building.

11. **Armpit roll**

Paatip kallua tuermillugu illuinnarmik — "using only one arm, with the paddle touching the shoulder".

For the setup the paddle tip is pressed against your chest near your armpit (but not under your armpit). The paddle is swept palm-up with one arm. The lift and buoyancy from the extended paddle powers this roll, no hipsnap is necessary. Keep the paddle in your "armpit" until you sit-upright. You do not need to return to the initial setup position. *Three points/side.*

History/Purpose: Recover with something held in the hand, or with one hand injured or entangled with line.

[Video Clip](#) [Image of Setup](#)

12. **Vertical sculling roll**

Qiperuussineq/paatit ammorluinnaq — "sculling with paddle held vertically".

Hold the paddle in an extended low brace position and raise your upper hand so that it is close to your forehead, your palms face toward the gunwale, capsize and scull up with the paddle held vertically. You must scull with the paddle face held parallel to the keel. Finish in a strong forward tuck. If you allow the paddle to become horizontal while underwater (which makes the roll easier), the judges will disqualify your attempt or deduct points. *Four points/side.*

History/Purpose: Entanglement, skill building.

[Video Clip](#) [Article](#)

13. **Sculling roll with paddle held horizontally on the foredeck**

[Masikkut aalatsineq](#) — "sweeping the paddle at the foredeck (masik)".

Paddle is kept in contact with the foredeck. Best form is to scull completely around with the paddle horizontal. If you "reach up" with your paddle to brace for final recovery, some judges may deduct points. *Four points/side.*

History/Purpose: Probably entanglement, or capsize with the paddle held under the forward deck lines.

14. **Sculling roll with paddle held horizontally on Isserfik (deck beam at your back) NEW!**

[Isserfikkut aalatsineq](#) — "sweeping the paddle at the Isserfik".

Paddle is kept in contact with the isserfik. Best form is to scull completely around with the paddle horizontal. If you "reach up" with your paddle to brace for final recovery, some judges may deduct points. *Four points/side.*

History/Purpose: Added at the Qaannat Kattuffiat general meeting 2005.

15. **Rolling with the arms crossed**

[Tallit paarlatsillugit paateqarluni/masikkut](#) — "holding the paddle with arms crossed, at the masik".

Similar to [storm roll](#). To setup on left side, right arm is crossed over left. For best form, lift the paddle upward upon recovery to show that your hands are crossed. You are not required to return to the initial setup position after rolling up. *Five points/side.*

History/Purpose: Entanglement, skill building.

[Video Clip](#) [Image of Setup](#) [Article](#)



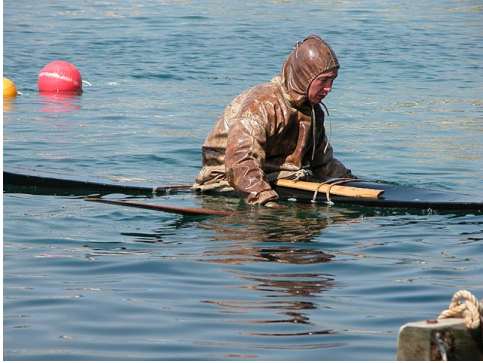
16. **Sculling roll with paddle held under the kayak.**

[Qaannap ataatigut ipilaarlugu](#) — "rotating (the paddle) under the kayak"

Forward leaning recovery with the paddle sculled under the kayak. Some judges require that the paddle is sculled at least three times or more (this is not a problem for most rollers!). *Five points/side.*

History/Purpose: Entanglement, skill building. David Crantz in 1767 wrote that this roll might be used if the capsized kayaker spied the paddle floating above him.

[Video Clip](#) [Image of Setup](#) [Article](#)



17. **Quick succession of [storm rolls](#)**

[Pallortillugu assakaaneq 5](#) — "forward rolling, round and round"

Performing as many storm rolls as possible in 10 seconds. To earn three points you must complete at least three rolls in ten seconds (if you don't complete three rolls you don't get any points). You get an additional point for each additional roll completed (e.g. 4 points for 4 rolls, etc).

History/Purpose: Skill building.

18. **Quick succession of [standard rolls](#)**

[Nerfallarlugu assakaaneq 5](#) — "rolling, lying on one's back, round and round"

Performing as many standard rolls as possible in 10 seconds. To earn three points you must complete at least three rolls in ten seconds (if you don't complete three rolls you don't get any points). You get an additional point for each additional roll completed (e.g. 4 points for 4 rolls, etc).

History/Purpose: Skill building.

19. **Roll with hunting float**

[Avataq isserfiup taqqaanut qaannap sinarsuanut qilerullugu](#) — "with a hunting float tied to the deckline at the isserfik (deck beam immediately behind the cockpit) at the side of the kayak (i.e., as opposed to putting the float on the aft deck of the kayak)".

For a roll starting with a capsiz on the left, the float is tied to the right side of the kayak, and vice-versa. Float is tied tightly with one line to the decklines aft of the cockpit and another line to the decklines at the stern so that float rides in the water on the side of the kayak just aft of the cockpit. Once float is rigged, perform a standard roll (with paddle), the float provides strong resistance to test your roll. Five points/side.

History/Purpose: Hunting hazard; capsiz with full hunting gear with float impeding roll.

20. **Throwing stick, start tucked forward, finish tucked forward (Handrolle mit Holzstock)**

[Norsamik masikkut](#) — "with a norsak at the masik (forward)".

Hold your off-hand against the hull during the roll. *Six points/side.*

History/Purpose: Recovery without paddle.

[Video Clip](#)

21. **Throwing stick, sweep from stern to bow, finish tucked forward**

[Norsamik kingukkut](#) — "with a norsaq, starting aft".

Hold your off-hand against the hull during the roll. *Six points/side.*

History/Purpose: Recovery without paddle.

[Image of Setup](#)



22. **Throwing stick, start tucked forward, finish leaning aft**
[Norsamik nerfallaallugu](#) — "with a norsaq, lying on one's back".
 Your sweeping hand must be palm-up during the roll. In execution, this roll is very similar to roll #11, the "armpit" roll. You may "throw" your off-hand over the hull on recovery. You must sit-upright to win points but you do not need to return to the original setup position. *Six points/side.*
History/Purpose: Recovery without paddle.
23. **Hand roll, start tucked forward, finish tucked forward**
[Assammik masikkut](#) — "using your hand, at the masik (forward)".
 Hold your off-hand against the hull during the roll. Six points/side. *Seven points/side.*
[Linked images of setup,capsize,recovery](#) . See the [video clip for roll #19](#). The hand rolls and throwing stick rolls share the same mechanics.
History/Purpose: Recovery without paddle or throwing stick.
24. **Hand roll, sweep from stern to bow, finish tucked forward**
[Assammik kingukku](#) —"using your hand, starting aft".
 Hold your off-hand against the hull during the roll. Six points/side. *Seven points/side.*
History/Purpose: Recovery without paddle or throwing stick.
25. **Hand roll, start tucked forward, finish leaning aft**
[Assammik nerfallaallugu](#) —"using your hand, lying on one's back".
 Your sweeping hand must be palm-up during the sweep (palm down on the deck for the initial setup). In execution, this roll is very similar to roll #11, the "armpit" roll. You may "throw" your off-hand over the hull on recovery. You must sit-upright to win points but you do not need to return to the original setup position. *Seven points/side.*
History/Purpose: Recovery without paddle or throwing stick.
26. **Hand roll with a clenched fist, start tucked forward, finish tucked forward **NEW!****
[Assak peqillugu masikkut /Qilerlugu/poorlugu](#) —"making a fist (binding it/ wrapping it), at the masik ".
 Participants hold a Ping-Pong ball to ensure fist remains closed. Off-hand can be flung over the hull as a counterweight. *Eight points/side.*
History/Purpose: Added at the Qaannat Kattuffiat general meeting 2005.
27. **Hand roll with a clenched fist, sweep from stern to bow, finish tucked forward **NEW!****
[Assak peqillugu kingukku /Qilerlugu/poorlugu](#) —"making a fist (binding it/ wrapping it), starting aft ".
 Participants hold a Ping-Pong ball to ensure fist remains closed. Off-hand can be flung over the hull as a counterweight. *Eight points/side.*
History/Purpose: Added at the Qaannat Kattuffiat general meeting 2005.
28. **Hand roll with a clenched fist, start tucked forward, finish leaning aft**
[Assak peqillugu nerfallaallugu /Qilerlugu/poorlugu](#) —"making a fist (binding it/ wrapping it), lying on one's back ".

Participants hold a Ping-Pong ball to ensure fist remains closed. Off-hand can be flung over the hull as a counterweight. *Eight points/side.*

History/Purpose: Skill building/hand roll recovery without losing an object held in the hand.

29. **Hand roll holding an Eight kilogram brick or stone, tucked forward, finish tucked forward** **NEW!**
[Ujaqqamik tigumisserluni "masikkut"](#) —"holding a stone in one's hand, at the masik".
Nine points/side.
History/Purpose: Added at the Qaannat Kattuffiat general meeting 2005.
30. **Hand roll holding an Eight kilogram brick or stone, sweep from stern to bow, finish tucked forward** **NEW!**
[Ujaqqamik tigumisserluni," kingukkut"](#) —"holding a stone in one's hand, starting aft".
Nine points/side.
History/Purpose: Added at the Qaannat Kattuffiat general meeting 2005.
31. **Hand roll holding an Eight kilogram brick or stone, start tucked forward, finish leaning aft**
[Ujaqqamik tigumisserlunii "nerfallaallugu"](#) —"holding a stone in one's hand, lying on one's back".
The off-hand can be flung over the hull as a counterweight. *Nine points/side.*
History/Purpose: Skill building/hand roll recovery without losing an object held in the hand.
[Video Clip.](#)
32. **Elbow roll**
[Ikusaannarmik niaqoq/pukusuk patillugu](#) —"only with the elbow, touching the head/ neck".
Start tucked forward with one hand clasped behind neck, finish leaning aft (the off-hand can be flung over the hull as a counterweight). After rolling you must sit-upright with your elbow still behind your head to win points. *Ten points/side.*
History/Purpose: Skill building, possibly entanglement.
[Article w/drawings](#) [Image of Setup](#)



33. **Straight jacket, no hands-roll**
[Tallit paarlatsillugit timaannarmik](#) —"crossing the arms, only with the body".
Roll with the arms crossed, arms must stay pressed to chest. If you work into the final recovery by floating in a "balance brace", some judges may not award points. You must sit upright after rolling with your arms still pressed against your chest. *Eleven points/side.*
History/Purpose: Skill building, possibly entanglement.
[Video Clip](#) [Image of Setup](#)



34. **Paddling upside down**

[Pusilluni paarneq](#) —"paddling with the kayak turned upside down".

You must travel a straight, marked course while capsized. The paddle must be held above your upturned hull. Forward progress is made by tucking forward and making a back-paddling motion. After you capsize, additional breaths are not permitted while underway. Scoring is one point for the first three meters and an additional point for each two meters traveled.

History/Purpose: Skill building

[Image](#)



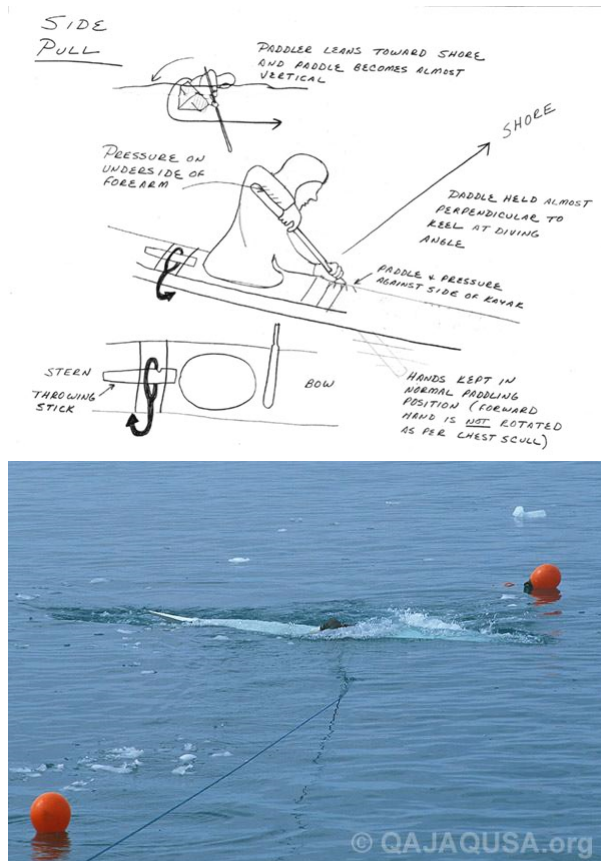
35. **Walrus Pull ("Pulling")**

[Nusutsinneq kinngunani iluarisamut](#) —"pulling as long as possible without capsizing".

Prevent a capsize with five men pulling the kayak sideways from shore. Line travels from attachment point just aft of the cockpit, away from shore, under the kayak, and into hands of the men on shore. You must steer to keep kayak and line perpendicular or control will be lost. Steering is done by twisting the paddle and/or by sliding the paddle forward or backward along the gunwale (the shaft is held against the gunwale). A detailed article on the technique is found in the first volume of the [Qajaq USA Journal](#). Kayak must be pulled at least fifteen meters. This is a very dangerous maneuver and injuries have occurred. Paddles and kayaks are occasionally damaged. Nine points, perform one side of your choice.

History/Purpose: Direct holdover from the hazards of hunting large marine mammals with line.

[Video Clip](#) Images: [Setup and Notes](#) [Starting Pull](#) [Submerged](#)



Notes on Scoring and Rules

- View the [Translated_rolling_scoresheet](#) based on the Qaannat Kattuffiat scoresheet for event scoring. Also view the [Untranslated Greenlandic scoresheet](#). To use the score sheet, if a roll is done perfectly on the first try, the "More" value is circled. If the participant barely makes it up on the first try, or has to resort to a second try, the "Less" value is circled. Left and Right refer to an attempt on either the paddler's left or right side.
- Your roll is not completed until you sit upright. For some paddle rolls you must return to the initial setup position upon recovery. For example, if you roll up with the paddle behind your head, and then, upon

recovery, bring the paddle over your head and into your lap to brace, you earn no points. Likewise, if you roll up, and then capsize as you lean forward to adopt the setup position, you earn no points.

- You have a time limit of 30 minutes to perform as much of the routine as possible. After this time expires, judging of your rolling ends.
- Should your tuilik hem release from the coaming, intentional or otherwise, judging of your rolling ends.
- Paddle-extension is not an issue. For any roll listed you can choose to extend the paddle as much or as little as you wish.
- Please note the the hand and norsaq rolls are one-handed rolls. For the forward leaning rolls the best form is usually considered keeping your off-hand against the hull. For aft recovery (layback) rolls you can throw your off-hand over the hull as a counterweight on recovery.
- Except for paddling upside down and the side pull, each maneuver is performed on both your right and left sides. Each side is scored separately. In other words you are scored for performing almost sixty maneuvers, not thirty.
- Except for the two rolls noted above (#7 and #8), you are not permitted to cup your hand around the tip of the paddle blade. Even for these two rolls, different judges may or may not award points for "cupping". Avoid if you can.
- If you fail your first attempt at a maneuver/side, you may try again. If your second attempt is successful, you are awarded one point less than the point values listed above. If your second try fails no points are awarded for the attempt and you must move on to the next maneuver or side.
- If you succeed at rolling up for a technique, but barely make it up, the judges can deduct points.
- You can perform as many or as few of the maneuvers as desired. You can skip entire rolls or just pass on performing the roll on one side. It is considered good manners to stop once you can no longer perform additional rolls, in order to save time.
- If two kayakers finish with the same score, the competitor who completed the rolls in the least amount of time is ranked higher.
- Paddles can be replaced if broken during the rolling competition. Paddles can contain plastic only if used as a substitute for bone (paddle edges and tips).
- Greenlandic competitors are required to wear a sealskin [tuilik](#); foreign competitors are permitted to wear neoprene or other materials.
- PFDs are not permitted for the rolling event.
- Gloves/mittens may be worn for the rolling competition, including the hand-rolling maneuvers. Greenlandic competitors are required to wear sealskin mittens; foreigners are allowed to wear neoprene.
- All rolling kayaks must have at least 1.5 centimeters of freeboard, with kayaker seated in kayak. Rule added after the competition.
- Foreign paddlers were aided with interpreters on shore, when available. When no interpreters were available, the judges "mimed" the motion of the expected roll.
- Competitors are permitted to wear nose clips, although most participants did not use them.
- Several of the best rollers advocated learning the rolls on your off-side first. This way the hardest task is accomplished first. If you learn on your strong-side, it is all too easy to move on to a new roll after initial success, before mastering your off-side.