

Eddyline

VANCOUVER KAYAK CLUB



October 2006

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Photo by Claudia Schwab - Bruneau (Idaho)

Photo by Darrell Wotzke - Clearwater

Cover Photo by Claudia Schwab
Layout Design by Megan Thomson

Events

VKC Video Night (and FREE PIZZA)

Tuesday, October 24, 7:30 pm
The Anza Club
3 West 8th Ave at Manitoba

Bring your own videos or images in digital format (on CD or DVD) or on your laptop. If you have any whitewater-related video or slides that you want to share, then take this opportunity to present them on the big screen! Phil Morley will bring some European footage (not his own work).

Contact Patrick Chiasson at (604)244-2911 or pchiasson@telus.net

VKC Christmas Party

Friday, December 8, 8:00pm
Rick Sheppard's Place
4460 Welwyn, Vancouver
West of Victoria, South of Kingsway

Bring a present for the "revolving" draw.
BYOB



Photo by Claudia Schwab - Cataract Canyon (Utah)

VKC Annual General Meeting
Featuring Phil Morley's Exploits in Switzerland

Tuesday, November 21, 7:30pm
The Anza Club
3 West 8th Ave at Manitoba

Vote for this year's exec!
THE VKC Needs executives! All positions from President to Director at large are available. In particular we require a secretary, treasurer and social coordinator. Please stand for nomination to help the club continue.

Bring your ideas on how to improve the VKC!



Photo by Peter Chisholm - Nahatlach

2006 Canada West Paddle Surf Fest: Presented by the Vancouver Island Whitewater Paddling Society

By Christian Vogl

This years Paddle Surf Fest was blessed again with glorious sunshine and wonderful temperatures all weekend long. Participation was excellent, and all categories were well represented, including C1 and C2. The surf on comp day was okay, mixed and changing through out the competition. Sunday's surf was higher and harder.

The VKC was well represented and the winners list included Vanessa Columbo in Women's Sport, Dagne Rayson in Women's Beginner, and Rodney Faulkner placing 3rd in Men's Beginner. Congratulations!

The VIWPS puts on a great, very well organized event. Heats were running about an hour behind by 3pm, but were well coordinated and communicated. Rob Cartwright ran a Freestyle and Don Barrie from Warm Rapids Inn was doing beginner lessons. The BBQ and awards took place Saturday night at the campground. Karma style prizes instead of trophies kept the spirits good. Lots of excellent sponsor prizes were drawn, and almost everyone took home some swag. The BBQ was deluxe – Ciabatta burgers, 3 different salads, an entire table of veggies and dip, and plenty of cake for everyone. BYOB kept the crowd happy until midnight. Special thanks should go to all the volunteers, Don Barrie and Rose Sirios, Willie and Christine Brice, Shayne Vollmers, Sean Plecas, Rob Cartwright and many more whose unsung work makes these things happen.

Camping moved this year to Surf Junction just left of the Ucluelet / Tofino highway junction. This campground is well priced (free for competitors), has good sites with treed privacy, nice washrooms with showers and good group facilities. An added bonus, the campground has a hot tub and a pool table room. Have a look at <http://www.surfjunction.com/> .



Photo by Christian Vogl

We stayed at Kvarno guesthouse. Kayakers Christine and Willie (winner of the High Performance category) are great hosts. This is one of the best options for lodging on the west coast. Special rates for kayakers are available. A look through their guestbook tells that several VKCer's have enjoyed Kvarno. It's 5 minutes towards Ucluelet from the highway junction, and features 2 bedrooms, room for 6-8 total, a full kitchen, gear drying area, and a brand new hot tub! Check them at <http://www.island.net/~s-kayak/>

The westcoast is a long trip, 5 hours from ferry departure – and \$80 with reservation each way for car + driver + 1. But it is definitely worth a visit and Surf Fest would be the weekend to do it. Carpool, stay as above, enjoy the surf and make new friends!



Photo by Dagne Rayson

Kudos to the Squamish Kayaking Club for organizing yet another very successful Ashlu River Festival! The festival attracted a large number of kayakers with paddlers from Alberta and Washington also in attendance. The crowd was very efficiently catered to by a very dedicated group of volunteers. Stuart, Angie and Dagne seemed to be tireless in preparing the salmon barbeque, the concert, and the pancake breakfast. What made this festival a bargain was the transportation provided to the put-ins. The shuttle to the extended mine run truly extended the life span of many vehicles and the van and trailer transport on the Elaho road was much appreciated. The shuttles were also a good way to meet and socialize with other paddlers.

There was something for every-one at the festival. Advanced paddlers could try Commitment Canyon and the Mine Run and there were introductory lessons for beginners and a run down the Cheakamus for new paddlers. The trip down the Elaho was a joy. Over 30 of us paddled in brilliant sunshine down large bouncy waves enjoying the spectacular mountain scenery. There were some baptisms in holes near Log-jam corner and Steamroller provided thrills and some spills. Thanks to Dave Beresford and Dave Morris for shepherding this large party safely down river. The only sad note is that the IPP on the Ashlu is under construction.

Clearwater: Right Channel of "The Wall"

by Tom Hoskin



Top ledge (left) with river-wide, multi-stage, "will-keep-you-'till-Thanksgiving" hole beside it (Photo by Phil Morley)

Recently, Phil and Tom ran the right channel of the "Wall" drop on the Clearwater. Tom scouted it from the island on Saturday at a level of 1.5. The ledge drops didn't look big, but I knew they had to drop as far as the right channel, which is a lot. One easy riffle bypassed the first little entry wave. I had to make sure I would not mistake this minor feature with another, and lose my bearings. Yes. I could see all the way upstream to the approach.

You could land on river right further upstream, climb up and scout downstream. You could land on river right below the riffle and portage the two major ledge holes. You could eddy out on river left above the first ledge at this level or lower. You could NOT easily get out on river left of this right channel. The first rock ledge was partly out of the water on the left and you could paddle on to it, hump over and down a 1 metre drop into a pool. The best line was to be in the middle with left momentum, kiss the edge of the exposed rock, skirting the wide ugly hole and eddy out in the pool on the left.

Walking downstream on the island, to the second ledge, I couldn't see a line on the left without a lot more walking, and my group had already gone down to surf Tsunami. I could see a line on the right and the waves below looked OK. The ferry across to an eddy on the right above the second ledge looked OK. I hurried to catch up to the group. Looking upstream from my boat, the runout from the two ledges looked fine.

Sunday, I hiked Trophy Meadows and ridge. Monday the level was down to just over 1. I eddied out on the right bank to have a look.

From above it looked good. Phil decided to join me, probably to pick up the pieces. We ran the easy riffle and eddied out on the right. The first ledge looked a lot bigger from river level. We discussed carrying upstream and aborting, but decided to go for it. I thought I might just hump over the rock on the left, but Phil wanted to go first and try to kiss the edge of the exposed ledge on the left. He went, disappeared from view for a while. I could see a paddle thrashing then move downstream then back up to the pool eddy. Then a definite paddle signal: LEFT!

I went left and paddled my bow onto the exposed ledge. Phil said, "I caught the edge of the hole!" I humped over and dropped into the pool. Hmmmm. The current is going downstream but UPHILL from the first ledge hole. If we ferry right too high, we risk getting surfed into the first hole. If we ferry too low, we may be swept into the second hole. Phil went first and did OK. I went a bit lower and just made an eddy on the right. I described the line I'd seen from the island. There are two large exposed rocks in the water on the right. The one further right and upstream has shallow still water between it and the shore. The lower rock has some current to its right at 1-2 feet. The line is just left of the lower rock.

Strangely, Phil said he trusted me and wanted to go first. It went fine. Catching up to the group, Ken smiled and said, "We were just wondering if we had to send in the undertaker." Back at camp, Rick said, "I heard the line is all the way down on the left."



Tom (x 2) dropping-in over the first ledge beside the gravity inducing, tree swallowing, "Gateway to China" river-wide hole (Photo by Phil Morley)



Tom (you guessed it!) running through the third and final drop on river-right (Photo by Phil Morley)

Vancouver Island 2006

by Christian Vogl

We made several trips this year to Vancouver Island and greatly enjoyed ourselves. In brief I'll tell of our trips and encourage everyone not to forget our neighbours across the straight.

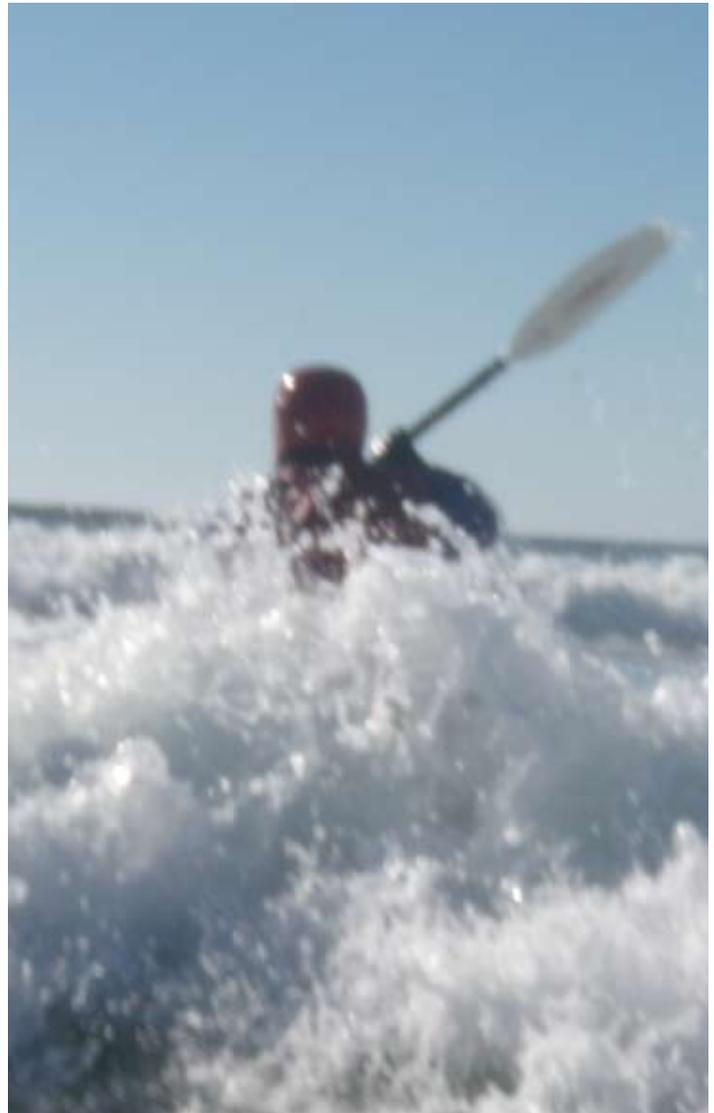
Early season can be cold and nasty here, making you want to stick to skiing – but we enjoyed a great weekend at the Warm Rapids Inn on the Cowichan River in March. The Cowichan river offers 2 to 3+ paddling fed by a temperate lake. Don Barrie and Rose Sirios are both excellent instructors, and know the river top to bottom. Their B&B has a pool and hottub, and great breakfasts. An excellent way to get back in the boat, get a few pointers and avoid the early season freezing. (<http://www.warmrapidsinn.com>) April and May can bring some great storms in, and a great time to hit the westcoast for some bigger waves. Jordan river is always another option.

June 2-4th brought the 2nd Annual Puntledge River Paddle Festival in Courtenay. Organized by the Vancouver Island Whitewater Paddling Society (VIWPS), this festival featured camping at the takeout, a Rapid Media sponsored Film Festival, freestyle clinics, beginners classes, and excellent shuttle setup. Paddling ranged from floats to 3+ waves and holes right up to 4/4+ Browns river and cl. 5 Puntledge falls runs. Water levels were higher than preferred due to a week previous of rain, but there were few complaints. Rafting and the Puntledge river falls race (4+/5) were 'officially' cancelled due to insurance issues. Rumours of an 'honours' race persist... We enjoyed a great courtesy raft ride thanks to Destiny river rafting <http://www.destinyriver.com/>. This festival was very well organized, and efficient shuttles and close proximity meant everyone spent a lot of time on the water. Definitely booked into our calendar for next year.

End of June, time to try sea-kayaking. 4 days up from Tofino around Vargas Island and up to Whaler island with Wildheart Adventures (<http://www.kayakbc.com/>). Excellent weather, great guides we'd highly recommend, gourmet beach food and a true westcoast experience. If you never go touring, this is a great way to get paddling in a different way. Don't forget an extra day to surf cox bay, because you're there.

Summertime as everywhere, the water drops and so does the surf. Waves can still be found at several spots, depend ant on the swell. A good time for novices, as you can get rides without getting pounded working for it.

The Island isn't that far away, and offers so many paddling options, many more than mentioned here. It is worth the trip, and you're sure to enjoy the whole experience and make some new paddling friends too.



Photos by Christian Vogl

Pointers for Paddlers

by Tom Hoskin

1 Learning or teaching rolling USE A CANOE PADDLE. This makes it much easier as you don't have to worry about sliding the "inactive" end across the bottom of the boat, or getting it stuck against side of steep-sided boat. It also eliminates lift by the boat edge as you pass 1/2 way up. Watch a slow motion video and you will see how the boat edge lifts a kayak paddle, forcing the active blade down and deeper. A wider boat lifts the paddle even more. Using a canoe paddle also makes it unambiguous which blade is "active." "Reaching up" is easier, and a paddler can more easily "reach air," making errors in blade angle during the sweep unimportant.(if using sweep)

Learning how to do that exciting "first roll" can be much faster; and once the concept is mastered, you can then move on to a kayak paddle. It may help to paint or put a dust tape on one side of the canoe paddle blade to display which side is the power face.

2 A well-padded narrow, round-edged and longer boat makes learning to roll easier, even if the advanced paddler says they find no difference. A short small-volume boat may sink at the stern during roll attempts.

3 Buy some loop-side Velcro to put on accessory Velcro hook sides when not in use so they don't stick to everything in your dry bag or other storage. This is particularly useful for accessories like visors and padding where the loop side stays on your helmet or boat.

4 Learn how to catch diagonal surf waves like the "Jolly Green Giant" on the Thompson. This wave slopes downstream to river left or surfer's right. The current above the wave kicks river left. Eddy out far upstream on river left. Paddle far out towards middle of the river and allow for the current to push you back left. Set up to engage the wave paddling hard and sliding to the river left shore. If you point straight upstream, you will likely just wash over the wave. Once you catch this diagonal wave, cut you bow to surfer's left away from the shore or you'll slide off the end. Shorter boats may need to aim for a breaking shoulder to catch the wave.

5 Scouting. Depending on the situation, you may want to make more detailed observations than just picking a line. See "Right Channel of the Wall." You may want to know if you can portage, or get to a trail or road. Can you paddle back to the starting eddy if you need to? Where can you set up safety? If you miss your line, what is plan B?

For beginners: This run may look easy at this level, but can you see those potential sweepers on the gravel bars? Consider what the river may look like at a higher level, Could those sweepers end up in the main channel if the level rises and then drops again by next week?



Photo by Peter Chisholm - Nahatlatch



Photo by Peter Chisholm - Nahatlatch

Cathartic Kayaking

by Megan Thomson

I arrived at the pool for my second kayaking lesson feeling disgruntled and upset, with all the positivity of Eeyore, the result of a day where everything had gone wrong. I left feeling calm and balanced, having discovered the benefits a boat and paddle can have on mental health and that catharsis can be found upside down under water.

The object of the lesson that evening was to learn not to panic when upside down. We were told to flip over, and instead of following basic human instinct and getting the hell out of the boat, to 'hang out' for as long as we could before exiting. Oh yea, and to relax while upside down.

So I took a deep breath, flipped over and started to count. Something happened in the thirty seconds that followed. It occurred to me that if I could relax while hanging upside down under water in an overturned kayak, without the little luxury of oxygen, the rest of life should be easy. What's tight deadline compared to not being able to breathe?

The more I time I spend in a kayak, the more I discover the benefits of this sport as stress relief and distraction. There is something cathartic about making your way through rapids with only a plastic boat and a paddle. What's more, it offers little time to think about anything other than the next rapid, providing needed distraction from outside stresses. And if you're a small girl like me, there is also something empowering about being a little boat in a big river, and being in control (well mostly. I'm still learning).



Photo by Phil Morley - Vorderrhein (Switzerland)



Photo by Phil Morley - Vorderrhein (Switzerland)

Summer/Fall 2006 in Pictures



Photo by Dagne Rayson
Ashlu Festival



Photo by Dagne Rayson
Ashlu Festival



Photo by Christian Vogl - Canada West Paddle Surf Fest



Photo by Megan Thomson - Vorderrhein (Switzerland)

Closing Notes and River Notices

Please see the website for Trip List, Message Board, Meetings, Executive List, Links, Courses and the Capilano Camera. <http://members.axion.net/~vkc/vkc>.

Join the Yahoo Mailing List to connect with fellow members and plan river runs.
<http://groups.yahoo.com/vancouverkayakclub>

Submit articles to megan@gomeg.ca. The Eddyline is posted to the VKC Yahoo group files.
Next Eddyline: December 2006

Paddlers planning on doing the Bridge River are asked to get permission from
Chief Jock Bradley Phone 250-256-7423 Fax 250-256-7999

Check to see if the Seymour Gauge is functioning.

The WKABC needs directors. For more information please visit www.whitewater.org