

Eddyline

Vancouver

Kayak Club



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Photo: Darrell Wotzke

Editor's Notes

The new paddling season has finally arrived and to celebrate the Vancouver Kayak Club has brought you a special print edition of the Eddyline. Be sure to check out what we've been up to over the winter and what we have planned for the new season!

Call for Entries

Want to be published? Send your paddling stories, tips, tricks, trip reports and whatever else you can think of to eddyline@gomeg.ca. Paddling photos are also always welcome so get out those cameras!

Disclaimer

Whitewater kayaking is an outdoor sport with inherent risks. The activities described here should not be attempted without proper training. The Vancouver Kayak Club, its volunteers and affiliates accept no liability for the information provided in this newsletter. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Vancouver Kayak Club or its affiliates.

Upcoming Events

2007-2008 Season Kick-Off Event!

Join us April 7 to celebrate the start of a new paddling season with the launch of a new guidebook for BC rivers (by our very own Claudia Schwab).

2007 Beginner's Course

Got a friend who wants to paddle? Tell them about our beginner course! The course consists of two pool days, a classroom session, one day on open water and finishes with a run down an easy river. The cost of the course is ... and includes membership in the club for a year.

Thursday Night Cap Sessions

Join us Thursday evenings in May and June at the bottom of the Capilano River. Play on the wave or work on skills. Volunteers will be available to help you work on your skills. Participants should know how to roll.

Nicola River Trip (class II) May 12-13

Great weekend trip for advanced novices and anyone wanting to get away from the wet coast.

Wenatchee River Trip (class III) May 19-21

We have once again booked the Tumwater campsite. There is something for everyone on this trip: a fun play river with some more challenging rapids and an easier stretch which could be paddled if there's interest as well as mountain biking and climbing.

Puntledge Festival May 25-27

Great festival put on by the Vancouver Island Whitewater Paddlers. Check out www.surfkayak.com for more details.

VKC Summer BBQ

Dates and location to be announced.

Similkameen River June 23-27 (class II)

Great family and beginner friendly trip including a barbecue. Don't miss this one!

Dates and times of all events are subject to change, be sure to check out www.vancouverkayakclub.com for the latest information.

Announcements

Introducing the new Vancouver Kayak Club Forum!

The VKC has created a new way for members to keep in touch. The forum features useful information and discussion boards including trip reports, river information, trip planning, training and more. Non-VKC members can join the forum but only members can post messages. The trip planning board is also restricted to current VKC members only. The forum also features a gallery and live chat. For the rundown on how it all works visit www.vancouverkayakclub.com/forum and check out the forum information board. Comments, questions and concerns can be directed to vkweb@noit.ca. Enjoy!

It's Time to Renew Your Membership!

With the new season, it's time to renew your membership. Remember, members have special privileges on the forum, get discounts at select paddling shops and schools and also have access to a variety of training opportunities. Be sure to fill out the membership form included with this Eddyline or download it from the website!

Beginner's Course Volunteers and Boats Needed!

The beginner's course will need volunteers to help out at the pool and at the two river days. The course is a great way of introducing new paddlers to the sport so if you can help out contact Tudor Davies at 8888888888. We will also need to borrow some boats and other gear so if you have stuff to spare we'd greatly appreciate it.

Trip Organizers Needed

The 2007-2008 trip schedule is now available on the website. Volunteers are needed to organize the trips. Organizers do not have to be trip leaders. If you want to organize a trip on a river you're not comfortable leading on, you can appoint a trip leader. The trip schedule is only a guide, if you want to run a trip on a different river or date, let us know and we'll add it to the schedule. The new trip schedule is available at www.vancouverkayakclub.com/schedule. Or on page % of the Eddyline.

Wood Report: Proceed with Caution

This winter, the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island experienced several violent wind, rain and snow storms. As a result, we are seeing more wood than usual on local rivers. The Lynn was among the hardest hit, with river-wide logs making a lot of the run unpassable. The Chilliwack Canyon has also experienced some serious wood problems, including some logs that are difficult to see.

With all the wood, it is particularly important to be cautious and scout thoroughly. For the latest updates on the wood situation visit the river information board on the forum.

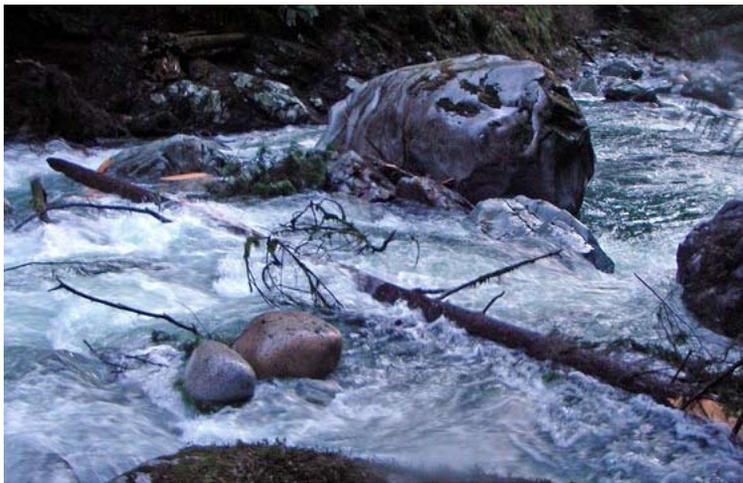


Photo: Phil Morley

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Near Misses

by Keith Witney

In industry a "near miss" is a term used to refer to an incident that while it did not result in a "lost-time" injury, could have had serious consequences. In kayaking, an example of a near miss would be being swept under or too near a tree with no more than a swim or lucky escape. There seems to have been an increase in these types of incidents which indicate a potential problem with safety.

Often the near miss has been related to how trips are being run. For example, boater number 1 is leading and looking for hazards and a less cautious boater behind them does not see that boater 1 has paddled hard for an eddy and misses the signal to walk or take a different route. Boater #2 then has no choice but to go under the log. Other examples are less experienced paddlers in front or last and out of sight boaters.

In industry this would be seen as a problem in need of a remedy but kayakers tend to ignore them or they become harrowing tales to tell at the end of the day. We need to take these more seriously or sooner or later we will have a serious incident.

Back in the day, there were pre-trip meetings, sweep and lead boaters, partners for "weak" paddlers and more scouting and setting of safety. Perhaps we need to re-emphasize the importance of safety. One thing in particular to think about is determining whether a paddler (be they ourselves or someone else) has the skills to be on a particular run. Ultimately, individual paddlers are responsible for themselves and should be able to determine whether or not they are ready for a particular run however when organizing trips, we should be considering whether or not the river can be run safely by all the participants. Here is a suggested formula for assessing a group. If the total points is a positive sum, the trip can be run safely:

- Likely to need rescue, subtract 2 points
- Needs to be watched, subtract 1 point
- Probably ok, but not useful in a rescue, 0 points
- Will assist in rescue add 1 point
- Likely to lead in rescue add two points.

On an individual level, we should all be aware of any 'near misses' we may have had recently and what we could be doing differently to avoid them in the future.

Gear Review: Werner Shogun Paddle

by Ryan Bayes

This year for Christmas, much to my delight, there was a shiny new Werner bent shaft double diamond paddle under the tree for me. The first time I got to use it was New Year's day on the Chilliwack. My first impression wasn't great. At first, I didn't like that I had to widen my hand grip to have my hands on the bend in the shaft. I now realize that I probably should have had a wider grip all along. I love the foam core and how stiff it is. My old paddle would flutter sometimes when really pulling on it; not the case with the new paddle. I also like the bent shaft because it's made my low brace more comfortable at the expense of my high brace. The low brace is less likely to cause shoulder injury so this is also a welcomed change. I would like to think that the added flotation in the blades has given me a stonger stroke and little cleaner roll but it could be just in my head. I can confidently say that my back stroke is more efficient. I decided to go with a small shaft which is an option on most Werner paddles and I quite like it. Not only do I have a better grip and more control with the small shaft, but it's also a lot more comfortable when wearing gloves on these cold Chilliwack mornings. Aside from being a great looking paddle, Werner has made ,what so far, is the nicest paddle I've ever used.



Allison Pools on the Chilliwack Photo: Ryan Bayes

Gear















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Running Dogleg on the Cap

by Tom Hoskin

The key to this drop is mastering your lean. The lean is relaxed, not tense and "tripping" over waves. Loose hips allow the lean to adjust to waves, keeping your center of gravity over the center of buoyancy. The idea is to prevent your upstream edge from catching current.

When you want to catch the eddy on the left, your instinct is to paddle straight down the left and turn left into the eddy. A more controlled way is to start center right; turn left early with your bow pointing far above the eddy and paddle forward developing left momentum. Keep the angle to the current constant as you drift downstream. The momentum helps you punch the eddyline and carry you past the rock causing the eddy. This is the way most leaders will do the Dogleg Drop because they want to catch the eddy on river left to surf. It also follows the path of least resistance on the diagonal.

At a level of 3, the Dogleg has a small hole on the right at the top and a diagonal wave off the right wall. The name "Dogleg" comes from the bends in the channel below House Rock, but the bends start in pools, not in the middle of rapids. It is not one of the hardest drops; but if 10 novices follow the momentum description above; 2 will go through the hole on the right and 6 will tip upstream (left) on the diagonal. It is not a good place to tip as there are sometimes shallow rocks. In December 2006, the rocks were not bad and it's better to point straight down the middle and punch through the diagonal wave. Then catch whichever eddy you can. If there are no rocks on the left, you could start left and point right to meet the diagonal perpendicularly. Your first time down, a novice could ask the lead paddler to show you the way straight down the middle, and "Please don't line up to catch the eddy on the left." When you reach the diagonal lean right onto it and keep your hips loose so when the wave floats up your right side, it doesn't translate into tipping your body left upstream.

When you're ready to try using left momentum combine a right lean with left bow angle. What the lean is not is shying away from the diagonal wave nor bracing on the upstream (left) side. When you get to the diagonal your first time, brace on it with your right paddle blade. Next time when you feel more comfortable, you can keep paddling. If you do flip, you'll be drifting at almost the same speed as the current; but upstream will be on your right side, so roll to the "left." When this gets too boring, you could run the drop backwards and try to surf the diagonal to the river left eddy. There you can squirt and surf another wave.

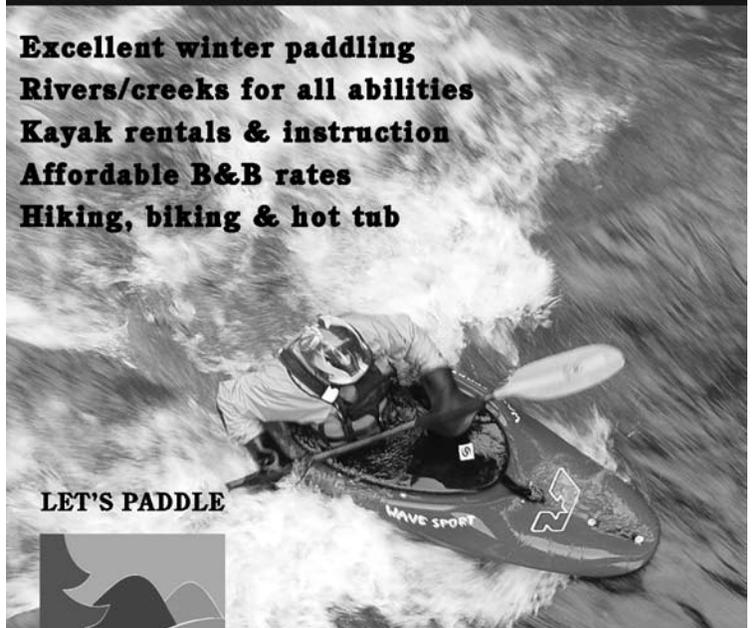
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What to Practice in the Pool

by Tom Hoskin

Stopping. Paddle forward. Stop by placing paddle blade in water so shaft is perpendicular to boat and horizontal while blade is vertical. Hold it there. In a loaded boat or to keep straight, swap sides a few times.

Paddling in a straight line. Start slowly looking at landmark straight ahead. Correct your course early with a forward sweep on the side you've turned to. The longer you wait to correct, the harder, as more water catches your bow. If you start flailing hard, you'll go faster making the next yaw off course harder to correct. Try a stern draw on the opposite side as it's easier than forcing the bow back in line. Lean into your turn as you veer off course to prevent catching an edge and capsizing. Once you get the feel you'll be able to anticipate what the boat will do and catch it early. Try it faster now. There will be more force on the bow and quicker action required. No one told you you must take complete and alternate strokes. If necessary, take another stroke on the same side, or shift to a stern draw at the end of your stroke. You may wish to stop half way through a stroke and do one on the other side. In the "old days" in long boats, students would fail to correct their course with a series of sweeps and believe their instructor had misinformed them. Anticipation and early correction is needed. Avoid the backsweep "Turkey Stroke" to correct your course unless you want to slow down or stop.

The stern draw works well to hold a course or ferry angle. In a pool, place your paddle blade behind you so that the shaft is parallel to the boat, near horizontal and the blade is vertical in the water. Push out on the shaft and in on the blade then quickly reverse the motion so the boat turns slightly each way. Now paddle forward to gain momentum and repeat the motion so your paddle acts as a rudder in the "moving water." You should be able to get three or more course changes if you keep the movements small to minimize drag. This is also a good way to learn how to steer when surfing. Body rotation can be used instead of arms.

Swimming. Practice swimming as you tow your boat and paddle. Time yourself for one length compared to a repeat where you wait for a tow. Unless you are exhausted, or don't know which way to go, you can often self-rescue on a river. If you abandon your gear, there is no need to float on your back in most situations. For our liability, I won't recommend this; but swimming face down, head up works well to ferry and pass over rocks, and is a necessity to climb onto a logjam. Without your boat, you may well be able to swim faster than a kayaker can tow you. There is the school of thought where rescuers

shout at you to abandon your boat and accept a tow. In easier water, hold onto your gear.

Loose hips. In shallow water, have someone straddle your boat and grasp the sides. Then they quickly tip it part way. At first they can warn you which way and you can practice bracing. Then have them surprise you. You should be able to escape most of the torque by just relaxing so your body stays still as your hips do a hula dance in the boat.

Rolling. Besides all the usual drills, you can try using a canoe paddle. This greatly simplifies things so you learn the kinesthetics before using a kayak paddle.

Swimming in your boat. If you are flexible enough, it is never necessary to bail out in a pool. You can twist sideways and do a downwards sweep with both hands to get a breath of air. You can then dog paddle head under, to pool edge and self rescue.

Towing. Have the someone tow you. As they paddle away, shout "Hey, I wasn't ready!" Next try, shout, "I've got it." Have them tow you while you keep your head down and do sidestroke with one hand and kick furiously. Then lift your head and let your feet sink. If you have your paddle in your "boat" hand, turn it sideways. Then ask the student how they like it now. This should provide some clues on how to be tow and be towed.

New Logo!

The VKC recently held a competition to see who could design the best new logo for the club. Jeff's Scott's entry was chosen as the winner. Thank you to everyone who participated by submitting a design and thanks to everyone who voted!



The Birth of the VKC

Today it is inconceivable to think that B.C. was a disoriented province in canoe and whitewater sport but in 1955 the B.C. public was not canoe or kayak oriented as compared with Ontario or other provinces. A kayak was an inevitable object to many questioning onlookers and a canoe-topped car was a very rare sight.

Few owned or knew anything about kayaks and even fewer people had ever seen such a craft. From "hear-say" it can be assumed that in 1954 less than one dozen people throughout BC owned a kayak and only three that first could be contacted joined the new club. It is difficult to estimate any number of possible canoe owners outside the first club members as on my travels throughout B.C. I observed only two or three canoe-topped cars and in each case were used for fishing only.

A general interest in canoeing and whitewater sport was not apparent, as on occasion was reflected when embarking on some whitewater and often spectators' actions lead to police involvement in attempts to prevent our paddling. In recollection of some earlier verbal information there had been some rare individuals who canoed the B.C. waterways and even a "canoe club" at Deep Cove (near Vancouver) prior to WWII. The local Indian canoeing activities remained an interest within their Indian communities. The public concept of whitewater is not the same as it is conceived today. Rivers such as the Chilliwack or the Capilano were considered not navigable and suicidal

Confronted with this unfavourable situation for the first years it was very difficult to promote the whitewater sport or initially to interest anyone to take up the sport. I started first to seek potentially interested paddlers to form a group in 1954 and 1955 through newspaper publicity but the results were negative. Realizing that the sport was unknown and had to be introduced first to stimulate a future interest for any kind of canoeing, newspaper announcements of my intentions were not enough to stimulate interest to form a club.

In 1955 I began to import many whitewater kayaking films from Europe. Occasionally some of those films showed short parts of C2 and C1 canoe handling in whitewater as well. For several months of that year I gave numerous free public film lectures which were publicized but attracted no more than 20-50 people at one time.

The first results were no encouragement but eventually some individual response from "newly interestes" future paddlers was received and some contacts made with canoeists. In late summer of 1955 the first meeting was held, attended by a dozen enthusiasts to form B.C.'s first paddling club to be known as the North-West Waterways Explorers (sub-named B.C.

Kayak and Canoe Club). The following years from 1956-60 I much continued with importing films for public and club benefits and being involved with other promotional activities to facilitate the sport's development. It may be of interest to know that during this period of time the kayak was the dominant craft in use and a canoe was still a less frequent sight.

1956. The N WWE was active as a touring and whitewater club and combined its club activities with that of the Canadian Youth Hostels. Its total membership had increased to about 20-25 members, of which 75% represented kayak enthusiasts. It was a year filled with weekly paddling activities. The majority of the more popular wild waters were locally explored for the first time and the whitewater exploration continued as the most intense activity until 1957. On October 14, for the first time, a small slalom course was set up on the Seymour river and club slalom activities took place for the full day.

1957. The BC boat house facilities were made available though my direct personal efforts over a two year period in searching for such facilities, which finally and after several meetings and negotiations with business, government and municipal officials came about through considerations by the Vancouver Parks Board, who made the Old English Bay Aquarium building available to us first and replaced it later with the present boat house facilities, when the first building was demolished. For the first boat house I provided some plumbing materials and donated a table and chairs. Al Gaenshauer contributed a great deal of working time to install boat racks, painting etc at both facilities and at earlier times had drawn up plans for some boat house for which we could not raise sufficient funds but were assured the property.

The American Whitewater magazine Vol 3 no 1 (Spring Issue) featured an announcement that the N WWE scheduled racing events as well as touring activities. It is interesting to note that in 1956 I was responsible for the N WWE affiliation with the American Whitewater Affiliation (AWA). The CCA did not accept our request of affiliation in support of our touring and whitewater activities. However, some years later (as grants became available), the CCA did refer to that activity with excerpts from my letters and photographs I sent in an article published in the Canadian Paddler '65. In 1957 I also made first contact with the OVKC, the WFC and many others.

In conjunction with the upcoming centennial celebrations for 1958, G. Hilker of the organizing committee had plans for a Fraser River canoe race. Being approached with this intention I promoted the concept of making it an international whitewater racing event through the canyon, and assisted the committee in primary preparations.

1958. The first ICF sanctioned international whitewater kayak race was held in Canada. The course was divided into daily racing distances from Lytton to Vancouver's Kitsilano beach. The NWWWE played a major part in assisting and hosting competitors of seven nations (5 from Europe, USA and Canada). Many of the contestants held one or several World WW or Slalom Championship titles, amongst them was Eric Seidl with his most impressive competition records. Canada was represented by four members of the OVKC, amongst them George Siposs (founder of the OVKC), Charlie Graber who placed first in the section from Lytton to Boston Bar, and Vern Rupp (NWWWE) who was prevented from starting for personal reasons. Overall, the Europeans placed in all sectional distances as well as in overall time for the entire course.

New name, old club. 1958 was not the year the B.C. Kayak and Canoe Club was funded! However, the constitution of the NWWWE was revised which involved the adoption of its existing subname, being B.C. Kayak and Canoe Club and to eliminate the previous principal name of Northwest Whitewater Explorers. The revised constitution was adopted as such by the general membership at about the beginning of August, however, to commemorate the centennial, was officially dated as July 2, 1958.

1959. June 21. The Western Canadian Slalom and Downriver Races were officially held for the first time and were sponsored and organized by the BCKCC. The slalom course was located at Vedder Crossing, Chilliwack River. Some 15 contestants entered the race, with a first entry from the U.S. The best time of the event was in slalom 239 points and downriver 27 minutes for the approximately 10km distance.

1960. May 14-15. The second Western Canada (International) Slalom & Downriver Races were held and located at Shellers Bridge and rapids above. With some 30 entries, it was one of the best attended competitions with two entries from Europe, 15

from the U.S. and 13 from BKCCC. The B.C. Canoe Racing Association sent a team from Prince George. Unfortunately, the slalom course was considered too rough and the club withdrew its entry, although the racing committee eliminated some of the gates to ease the course to establish a C2 and C1 champion. One B.C. Canoe Racing Association member entered the downriver event. June 10-12. Canada and the BCKCC was for the first time officially represented in an ICF sanctioned, international whitewater event abroad by myself, competing in both the slalom and 26 mile downriver racing events.

1961. May 13-14. The third (and final) Western Canada International Slalom & Downriver Races were staged at

Shellers Bridge location. With approximately 20-25 entries, over half were U.S. competitors.

1962. April 28-29. A CKCC team entered the first WFC (Washington State) organized slalom event in Washington, held on Cedar River. The B.C. team placed 1st and 3rd in K1 men and 1st in the team event. 1965. BC Paddlers competed in the Cle Elum slalom and downriver events and placed 1st in the downriver team event. June 26-27. Organized the BCKCC sponsored Squamish River Derby, a 30km downriver racing event and inter-club competition.

1964/65. The BCKCC formed the nucleus for the newly organized BC Kayak and Canoe association and in its formation Robert Holicza was instrumental in obtaining the first government sport grant of \$2500. The B.C. Kayak and Canoe Association was the forerunner of Canoe Sport B.C.

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Water Levels for Selected Lower Mainland Rivers

by Claudia Schwab

River	Section	Class			Gauge	Unit	Levels		
		Low	Medium	High			Low	Medium	High
Capilano		III	III	III+	Cap Cam	foot (approx)	1.5-2.5	3-4	5-7
Lynn		IV-	IV-	IV	Stick at take-out	inch	10-15	15-20	20-25
Seymour	Lower	II+	II+	III-	Rock above Seymour Parkway Bridge			3	6
Mamquam	Lower	II	II+	III-	None				
Cheakamus	Paradise Valley	II	II+	III-	Environment Canada: Cheakamus at Brackendale	cms	20	60	?
Seymour	Upper	III-	III-	III	same as Lower Seymour			3	6
Elaho-Squamish		III	III+	IV	Environment Canada: Elaho near the mouth	cms	60	150	300
Chilliwack	Slesse to Tamihi/ Tamihi to Point Vista	III (Tamihi Rapid III+)	III (Tamihi Rapid III+)	III+ (Tamihi Rapid III+)	Environment Canada: Chilliwack above Slesse Creek	cms	1.1	1.4	1.7
Chilliwack	Pointe Vista to Vedder Bridge/ Vedder Bridge to Camp-ground	II	II	III-	same as above	cms	1.1	1.4	1.7

Recommended 'runnable' water levels do not constitute a determination of conditions under which a stream is 'safe.' Rating is always subjective and may not correspond to everybody's expectations and experience.

2006 Beginner's Course Recap

by Megan Thomson

It's chaos outside Sea to Sky kayak at the end of April. New paddlers with anxious faces assemble in the parking lot and gather up the gear they'll need for their first river run. For most it is only their second day outside the comfort zone of the pool and they are wondering what they have gotten themselves into. It is the VKC beginner's course "final exam," a run down the Lower Mamquam river.

The morning begins with a taste of one of the more challenging aspects of kayaking: shuttle arrangements. With eight students and several more support boaters, it takes some time to figure out the best configuration of vehicles but after some discussion, the convoy is on its way to Squamish. The beginners are quiet, watching out the window nervously while the more experienced talk about recent trips on more challenging rivers. Today their excitement will come from chasing after students and boats.

After the scenic drive to Squamish, the group reassembles at the put-in. The instructors go over the important safety concerns once again before pairing each beginner up with a more experienced paddler, who will look out for them on the river. Before setting off, we get an introduction to scouting. Now the real fun begins. After watching a few pairs set off, it's my turn. Here goes nothing. My "buddy" goes first, choosing a nice easy line. Despite my efforts to follow, I find myself taking the more challenging route (those little boats are harder to control than you'd think) but I arrive and the next eddy in one piece and upright, though a little dazed. Talk about an adrenaline rush!

We stop at the beach eddy to practice eddy turns and ferrying. The experienced among us make both look effortless. I on the other hand am a terrible ferryer. Practice, practice, practice. Whoops, over I go but the supports are on the ball for a T-rescue. After a quick break and a snack we set off again, in a section of calm water, we can enjoy the scenery. One of the perks of kayaking is getting into places you can't reach on foot.

Before we know it, we've reached the last drop and the take-out. Time flies in whitewater. The day ends with some rope throwing and swimming practice before returning to the cars to get dry. All in all, a great day, thanks to the efforts of the instructors and all the volunteers.

Registration for the 2007 beginner's course has begun. Course will be held Mar... For more details visit www.vancouverkayak-club.com/training.html

If you are able to volunteer to help out during the course, especially as support on the river, please contact davies@canada.com



Photo: Tudor Davies



Photo: Tudor Davies



Photo: Tudor Davies

Photos wanted!

Do you paddle with a camera? If so, send your snapshots to eddyline@gomeg.ca and you might see them in an upcoming issue.



Photo: Megan Thomson



Photo: Darrell Wotzke



Photo: Peter Chisolm



Photo: Megan Thomson

Special thanks to Western Canoeing and Kayaking, The Warm Rapids Inn, Middleton's Specialty Boats, Purple Hayes School of Kayaking Inc and the Kvarno Guesthouse for sponsoring this issue.