

Sea Kayak from Deep Creek to St Helens


Where: NE coast – Deep Creek / George Rocks Reserve / Eddystone Pt. / Policemans Pt. /Ansons Bay/ The Gardens / Binalong Bay / St Helens Barway

When: Fri 24/6/11 – Sun 26/6/11

Who: Tineke Morrison; Peter Sebbage, Dave Hugo, Gavin Bye, John Purtell; Claye Mace

Conditions: Light winds, <1m swell → 30-knot winds, really lumpy waves, 2+m swells

Gear: Tineke, Claye, Dave – paddling the notorious Tassie predator – the Sea Leopard, John and Gav – Mirage; Pete –object d’art Cape Charles fire lighter.

Thursday: 23rd	
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After a few pizzas and a slow start, sadly James had not managing to locate the Club sea kayak, we eventually left town – sans James. Arrived at Deep Creek camp ground 11pm (3hrs) no dead animals and a fire going, thanks to Dave and John. A cold clear night, stars sparkling and a steady NE wind.

Friday: 24th	
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Overcast and windy, packed up and on water by 1000. 15kn N-NW, 1m swell and confused wind waves. Ploughed up the coast to George Rocks nature reserve, approx. 1 hour. Sailed part of the way, but Dave is never happy unless the cloth is up, so went high to catch the wind. Bit cold for sitting on the beach, but took a short break and looked around. Not as picture perfect as last time I was here. Back in the boat and a tricky sail with following sea, boys up’d sail and gone – Tineke and I steady pace back to Deep Creek for lunch on the veranda of a shack. Then onto a great sail to Eddystone, wind now right behind us. Passed the tourists at the lighthouse and foolishly gave John the nod when he pointed out Eddystone Rock.



We were there in but a few minutes, said good day to the friendly seals and then slogged for 30 minutes into a roaring headwind and wave back to the coast. Pete took the scenic route back to the lighthouse to try and get out of the wind. It was then a nice sail down the Bay of Fires. The beautiful white sand beaches rolling passed by the kilometre. Still a bit overcast with passing showers but pleasant enough. At Policemans Point 1630, couldn’t resist a few nice surfs on the break into the river mouth. Pyro Dave had the fire going and just as well as we got cold very quickly once the set at before 1700.

Saturday: 25th	
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Overcast by relatively warm. On the water 0930. Paddled up Ansons bay to check out the local shacks. Enjoyed the sunny light breeze as we sailed back across the bay to Policemans Point. Back on the water at 12-ish after a quick feed and drinks stop. Comfortable sail past beautiful beaches of the Bay of Fires. Passing light showers and still overcast.



Lunch in an idyllic cove in the sunshine. John fired up the cooker for a cuppa. Nice! More relaxed sailing, passing by coastal beauty, passed Sloop Rock and watched some protective gulls warding off a big sea eagle. At Jeanneret Beach 1630. Cooling off quickly, we got changed and tents up. Dave retrieved car from his place and did car shuffle as Tineke was leaving us here. Gav had a fire going nicely when they returned about 2 hours later. We all cooked up dinner in the dark and enjoyed a port and lively chat around the fire. It was



at this point that Pete

enlightened us about rare-earth magnets. His thoughts started at a water-proof/rust-proof/bomb-proof bilge pump switch, then, not holding back with his creative juices (or was it the fermented grape juices?) we could repair boats with them, propel our craft, fly to the moon, solve world poverty and even, but not least of all, improve your sex-life. Sadly, after a quick Google on John's iPhone, discovered an authoritative reference which stated that rare-earth magnets, whilst a great marketing

ploy for talking up the price, were neither rare or earth. This deflated Pete's bulging great story like a cold spoon. Bed beckons.

Sunday: 26th



Strong wind warning 15-25kn N winds, with strong gusts blowing spray from the tops of waves, 2.5m swell + 1m wind waves. Left the shelter of the bay with sails already set for take-off. Got an incredible turbo-boost, hang on tight. My sail kept coming nucleated in the strong gusts so I preferred to take it



down. The lads disappeared into the distance.

Dave/John/Gav's sail tips were just visible over the crests of the waves. Just past Boat Harbour Point, Pete was blown flat. Managed a fairly quick rescue in trying conditions. Looked out for the rest of the group and only saw Gav waiting for us at Skeleton

Rock, or so I thought. Getting closer we realised Gav was out of his boat and swimming. By the time we finished the rescue and got some of the water out of the boat, we were only 10m from the rocks! We ducked around the corner out of the wind to find Dave and John hiding out of the wind. Now heading along behind the land and out of the strong winds we tootled along to St Helens barway. Small breaking waves about 1m, just right to surf. We all spent an hour surfing in and the running with the tide back out and doing it all again. I had to finally pull the pin when I got dumped and bent my rudder. With all the playing done, we landed at Dora Point. Damage for the day: Dave - broken sail; Claye - bent rudder; Pete and Gav - swim; John just grinning. We finished off our trip with a very pleasant and yummy lunch and coffees at the Binalong bistro.

A great winter trip, short days, interesting and exciting weather, great company, campfire banter. Enjoyed it all.

Claye

