



# Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club Newsletter

Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club  
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Phone: 361-4238 (Info only)  
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March 2007

## **General Meeting March 6, 2007**

### **“The Galapagos Islands” Visiting a Naturalist’s Paradise**

Michael Jackson is a keen naturalist who has been visiting and working in the Galapagos for over 25 years. His book, “Galapagos, A Natural History”, has been one of the main guidebooks to the Galapagos since 1985. Michael regularly leads groups to the Galapagos and has taken thousands of photographs from which he will develop his talk.

## **25<sup>th</sup> Year VCKC Paddle for the Kids Coming up Saturday, March 24**

**See Page 3 for details**

**and**

**Practice Reports  
Pages 3, 6 & 7**



Moving Water Paddle  
Chemainus River  
Saturday, January 20

## **Message from the President**

Greetings,

We had a good General Meeting at the beginning of February. Laurel Archer gave a wonderful presentation on the rivers of Northern Saskatchewan. We enjoyed listening to her talking about the different rivers, particularly the Churchill. What impressed me was the way she did the presentation. It was full of humour as well as historical background on the vegetation and animals and the different Native bands who live there as well as the history of the people who explored that area. Laurel still does guiding in Northern Saskatchewan and has books available on the trips she has made. This book, "Northern Saskatchewan Canoe Trips" is available at Bolen Books.

Right now, one of the things we are working on at the executive level is finding a new tenant for the upstairs of our clubhouse. Brandy and Eric are moving at the end of this month and we have a committee in place to choose the new tenants.

A theme that comes up for me personally is the way we can support each other or, more accurately, a way that I can support different Program Directors or different members of this Club. Sometimes it is difficult to support somebody when you don't agree with what they are talking about. I am not speaking here about anyone in particular, but rather in general terms and, for me, it is always a source of, not necessarily struggle, but that I have to put an effort in reminding myself to support someone; beginning with my own relationship and supporting Lorna when she wants my support.

People don't always exactly tell you, "I would like you to support me in this particular area." However, it is ongoing for me and I am aware of that. However, the conclusion I have come to is that I don't always have to agree with somebody in order to support them. This doesn't necessarily mean that they will get what they want. However, it is an opportunity for me to show them they are important enough and that I will support them. When I miss that opportunity, then I am sort of on the lookout for the next one.

I think this is pretty important to consider as a Club. We have something in common in paddling so we need to support each other regardless of what kind of boat we are paddling. And this extends to the executive level; supporting each other, especially now when we are dealing with the budgets and when we are dealing with the different requests from different Program Directors. We need to consider what is best for the Club and sometimes put our personal feelings on the side for the moment.

I don't mean to sound like a preacher or to lecture you on these things or to overspill my wisdom (which I

don't deny to have possession of); however, the hope is to remind myself and possibly some who have forgotten that the most important thing here is the relationships that we have with each other and with the Club and that the decisions we make are secondary to that.

Having said that, it was impressive that the Kayak Program Directors, Glynis and Susan have decided that the Kayak Program would like to support somehow and in some way the "Paddle to Port Angeles" and, more specifically, the kids at Shawnigan Lake. They are going to start organizing fundraising for that soon.

Until next month.

Mile Petrovic  
President, VCKC

PS: I especially wish all the female members of our Club (and females everywhere) Happy International Women's Day on March 8.



## **LOOKING ....**

Club member, Bertrand Girard, is looking for one or two fit canoeists to join his team on April 29 for Courtnay's 'Snow to Surf' race. 'Snow to Surf' is a relay race involving two skiers, two runners, two cyclists, one kayaker and two canoeists.

Bertrand says he may also need one skate skier, one runner and one kayaker. Minimum 40 years old, preferably 45 to 55,

If you're interested contact Bertrand preferably by telephone at 752-4427 in Qualicum Beach or by e-mail at [berdia@shaw.ca](mailto:berdia@shaw.ca)

# 25<sup>th</sup> Year VCKC Paddle for the Kids Coming up Saturday, March 24

## VOYAGEURS NEED VOLUNTEERS

On Saturday, March 10, the Voyageur Canoe paddlers will be hosting a public and media event at the Clubhouse from noon until 2:00 pm Our volunteer communications co-ordinator (extraordinaire), Nancy Pearson will be directing our efforts. Nancy has over nine years in the communications field and has aptly put together a plan to bring more awareness to our 25th Anniversary paddle on March 24.

We need members to welcome the public, solicit donations for the "Kids" and help people sign pledge forms, collect donations, organize teams to take people on a paddle, help with the draw for door prizes and, of course, clean up.

Invitations are going out to local Mayors, MLAs, MPs, Parks Department and the BC Lions Society. We are hoping for wonderful weather as well as a great turn out. It's only two hours of your time and it will certainly be appreciated by "the Kids".

If you are interested in volunteering please call Barb McEvoy at 391-1739, leaving your name and phone number where you can be reached. We need all Club members, as well as Voyageur paddlers, to pitch in.

## Practice, Practice, Practice

- Mar 04: Nanaimo - Newcastle, Protection Islands, Bring lunch;  
Mar 11: Portland Is. to Rum Island and back to Sidney. Bring lunch;  
Mar 18: Thetis and Kuper Island from Chemainus with lunch and refreshments stop at Pub;  
Mar 24: SATURDAY, Port Angeles and back. Meet at VCKC at 6 AM. Bring snacks and refreshments for the round trip.

## SUNDAY PRACTICE ROUTINE:

Meet at the clubhouse at 9 am for each training practice and DON'T FORGET TO BRING a paddle, lifejacket/PFD, rubber boots, rain gear, hat, gloves, water, snacks and a change of clothes in a watertight container (dry bag).  
VOYAGEUR CLOTHES: Consisting of different weights and layers of Fleece or Wool covered by a Gore-Tex Jacket is a good combination because they have a way of wicking out any moisture and keeping you warm. No Cotton!

You don't have to make every practice but you should try to make at least two depending on your experience and physical condition. Paddlers who come out to the practice paddles must commit themselves to FUNDRAISING FOR THE KIDS AND THE PADDLE TO PORT ANGELES. TRAINING SITES MAY BE CHANGED DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS.

For further info. Contact Don Munroe at 385-2268 or Alan Thomson at 592-4170.

## Voyageur Training Session: February 18, 2007 Maple Bay to Cowichan Bay via Cowichan River Observations by Laurie Flahr

The day started off with a good adrenalin rush for Patti and then myself, as we both almost "missed the boat" so to speak, by arriving at the VCKC clubhouse after 9:00a.m. Thankfully we managed to flag down the last vehicle load of other paddlers as they were leaving the parking lot, do a mad dash to the clubhouse to grab the all important paddles, and squeeze into the last two seats in Bruce's van. No sooner had we caught our breath than we learned that Susan had forgot a little something - a completely optional piece of clothing that no one would have noticed missing had it not been brought to our attention... more on that later.

Our voyageur put in spot was Maple Bay - many thanks from all of us for the use of the local rowing club's biffies. Our tour of Maple Bay included a welcome by some local children who may or may not have had clothes on. They waved at us through their large window overlooking the water. As we set off we encountered buffleheads, grebes, eagles, kingfishers and a sea lion and seals amongst the contingent of local critters that inhabit the waters, islets and shore en route. After a brief a pull-in at a rather smelly fish farm, we paddled on and came across a beach where we stopped for lunch. It provided comfy logs upon which to seat ourselves, time for rest, nourishment, and some switching up of positions in the boats.

Back on the water again all was smooth sailing until we pulled around the point into Cowichan Bay. Then holy headwinds! The paddle took on a new thrill dimension, with good chop on the points and lots of wave action. The skills of El Capitan kept the Flag Ship Blue Heron hugging the rock wall out ahead of the rest of the pack, and a strong crew provided tips and encouragement to keep this rookie stroke person on track with a reminder to maintain long, steady and deep paddle plants while taking slaps of water on the face, which found a way to trickle on down to nether parts. All boats and teams survived exhilarated and unscathed.

Next we zipped up the Cowichan River for some sightseeing and R & R, where we were greeted by cheering, or hoots and hollers anyhow, from local folks. We took time for a photo op, checked out some salmon skeletons, and meandered back out to the Bay which we crossed for the final leg of the journey. After milling about, finding coffees, and loading the boats, we snuggled into our spots in the van and headed back to VCKC. The conversation en route was subdued, but included some debate on the benefits of being nude as opposed to layered under our outerwear. We seemed to come to the consensus that it really is a matter of personal preference. Dinner in celebration of Chinese New Year completed the day, and what was one of the soundest sleeps of the year followed. Thanks to all for a great experience!

**Pledge Forms available at the Clubhouse  
and on-line at [www.vckc.ca](http://www.vckc.ca).**

# Program Reports

## Sea Kayaking

We would like to raise our program's profile within our club community as well as in the public community. For a start, we are proposing to have a Kayaker's Fashion Show in April to raise funds for the kids at Shawnigan Lake Camp. There will be "celebrity" models showing off the latest in gear and paddling wear, snacks and drinks and hopefully tons of fun. It looks like a great evening. But we need lots of support to make it happen. If you have some time and energy to help organize, you will be ensuring that this is the club effort that it should be.

Our meetings have become standing room only and so we are investigating the feasibility of renovating and reorganizing the main floor to make it more efficient and give us some more space. Again there is a need for members with expertise in this field to join us in this endeavour.

At the program meeting on Wednesday, March 21st, Caroline Geofroy C.A.T., a Sports Therapist and Kinesiologist from Omni Rehab, will be showing us exercises, particular to paddlers, to strengthen muscles and help avoid injury. Join us then for an informative evening and help yourself to become a more efficient paddler. As usual it will start at 7 pm

We'll be starting a Sea Kayaker's Recipes column next month. So if you have a special recipe that you use on your trips, please send it in to one of us and we'll make sure it gets in the newsletter.

Sheila Hartling has kindly volunteered to maintain and continue to update the Paddler's Contact List. If you want to add your name to the list so that other sea kayakers looking for paddling buddies can contact you, please send your name to her at [vckcpaddlinglist@gmail.com](mailto:vckcpaddlinglist@gmail.com).

Last month's paddles were very well attended as usual and the weather was unseasonably kind on both days! There are two more planned for March. Dennis McMillan will be doing a Get Together paddle and Dorothea Hoffman will do an Energizer paddle. See the Trip Planning page of the newsletter (page 8) for full details.

We are both available by phone (Glynis at 655-1272 and Susan at 361-4738), email (Glynis at [gnewmandvm@shaw.ca](mailto:gnewmandvm@shaw.ca) and Susan at [seduhamel@yahoo.ca](mailto:seduhamel@yahoo.ca)) and at the monthly meetings held the third Wednesday of each month.

See you all, whether it be on the water or at the clubhouse. Safe paddling!

Glynis Newman and Susan Duhamel

## Trip Report

### Inaugural Energizer Paddle: Saturday, January 20, 2007

Twenty-seven kayakers arrived at Cheanuh Marina at Becher Bay, Metchosin to participate in the first of hopefully many club "Energizer Paddles". It was sunny enough for me to put on my #30 sun block. The wind forecast was 25 knots SE, predicted to ease to 20 knots by mid morning.....quite a stiff breeze coming into the Bay!

Susan Duhamel as leader and Dan Gedosh as co-leader did a good job of coordinating the paddlers and other assistants. As usual there was a wide range of paddling skill levels and it is always reassuring to know that there are experienced rescuers in the group! Mike Jackson was the lead kayaker as we headed out and then turned right, making our way towards Wolfe Island. This route was chosen because of the strength and direction of the wind. At the first headland we confronted a strong headwind which was creating some waves with whitecaps. A few of the paddlers struggled to get their kayaks to turn the corner. It was a good example of cornering winds and of kayaks wanting to head up into the wind!.

Some of the large group enjoyed manoeuvring around rocks near shore, practising their kayak control using only forward strokes. Others were enjoying going in a straight line, further from shore. Once we were in the protection of Wolfe Island, suddenly the seas were calm....a good example of just how much the land formations affect wind on water. In the bay at Wolfe Island we saw two Bald Eagles and heard their distinct call; Kingfishers guarding their territory; a Cormorant drying its wings; and two Trumpeter Swans keeping a close eye on us! Some members also saw River Otters.

Our lunch stop at Alyard Farm Beach was very pleasant. There was minimal surf with the landing...maybe a new experience for some members? The sun was surprisingly warm, the company good, and then Glynis Newman facilitated an interesting and educational "show and tell" session, with us looking at some interesting accessories on various kayaks. The gear collectors were in Heaven!

After battling a head wind on the way out, we had a tailwind pushing us back "home". The return trip seemed all too short, with a few exciting moments surfing the following seas around the point!

Twenty-three of us then met at My-Chosen Café where we surprised Duncan Pennington with a birthday cake with an undisclosed number of candles( thanks Neil Solomon), a card signed by everyone (thanks Peter Ridley) and a Roast by myself.

# Program Reports (Continued)

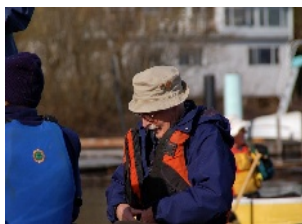
## Canoeing

The next Canoe Program meeting will be held March 19th at 7.30 pm at the Clubhouse. The speaker will be Chris Yorath who will give a talk on D'Arcy Island, site of B.C.'s leper colony from 1891 to 1924. Mr. Yorath has written a book on the history of the colony. 'A Measure of Value' was published by Touchwood Editions in 2000.

## Trip Report

### Shawnigan Lake Saturday, February 10, 2007

I'd thought that with the Paddle to Port Angeles practices in full swing, we'd have smaller turn-outs for the flatwater paddle trips in February and March, but not so far. We had 19 paddlers out in 8 boats, and were rewarded with a great day on Shawnigan Lake. It was deep fog on the Malahat as we drove up from the Clubhouse and wisps of fog were hanging over the lake as we reached the put-in. It seemed to follow the contours of the hills around the lake – quite beautiful.



Doug & PFD

We set off in an anticlockwise direction, by Mason's Beach and Shawnigan Lake School boathouse round into the West Arm. The water was flat calm, so the reflections were perfect in the quietness of a Saturday morning –

where were all the chainsaws? There seemed to be plenty of people around in the houses, but they seemed to be enjoying the quiet as much as we were – a change from the summer when there are many power boats out.

After paddling down the arm and back out, we headed down the west shore of the lake to Angus Road, where we picked up Doug Collis. Doug is now in his mid 80s, so we'd taken the Club freighter canoe on this trip as it is a stable craft for Doug to get in and out of – and it needs regular outings, too! For newer members of the Club, Doug is presently the only Life Member of the Club, something he earned by his membership for well over 30 years, the countless courses he has taught and trips he has lead. He has also made many beautiful wood and foam paddles which are treasured and used by many Club members, including me and Linda – we have 5, I think. Doug and his wife Shirley have lived on the

shores of Shawnigan Lake for more than twenty years, and he has paddled the waters of the lake countless times over his years as director of canoeing and other shore activities at Camp Pringle, just up the shore from their house.

We paddled from Angus Road over to Jill's Galley, the restaurant on the East Shawnigan Lake Road, where we had a good lunch, looking out over the Bay and listening to Doug's stories about the Lake and the people who live round about it.

Lunch was leisurely – 19 people turning up at the same time at a small restaurant can't all be served at the same time – but the food was good and the view and company, too.

After lunch we lost a few paddlers who had to get back early, but the rest of us paddled down the eastern shore of the lake, past the Easter Seals Camp, where our Paddle to Port Angeles money goes and on to Memory Island, the provincial park in the middle of the lake. We couldn't land as the winter storms had blown over a tree across the landing spot – I knew I should have brought my bush saw with me.

And so back up the west side of the lake, with Doug giving us the low-down on many houses and their occupants as we passed by – always helps to have an expert guide in the boat. Then back to the put in, where there were plenty of helpers to get the big canoe back up onto the van – at 200 lbs, it is not a portager's delight, but it is a lovely boat to paddle and a great tripping canoe.

Thanks to all who turned out, especially Sonya, Doc and 'Biner' dog – their first Club flatwater trip, and I hope it won't be their last. We had a much better day than forecast and the group was as relaxed and companionable as almost any I've been out with recently; good conditions do help.

Alan Thomson



Doug & Shirley on dock  
(Photos: John Forish)

# Trip Report

## Paddle to Port Angeles Practice #3 Sunday February 11: the countdown goes on

The original trip plan, drawn up by Master Mariner Munroe, was to paddle down the east coast of the Saanich Peninsula from the bucolic pastures and sandy beaches of East Saanich (Island View Beach) to the suburban enclave of Oak Bay (Willows Beach). The currents were favourable, thus diminishing the work required: all that we needed was weather like last year, when we followed the same route, but via D'Arcy Island. A minor modification of the route had crept in - Don's well known predilection for hostelries meant that we were scheduled to succumb to the siren call of the Smuggler's Cover Pub in Cadboro Bay and the Smugglers Arm Inn, a tad short of Oak Bay.

But as they often do, the weather gods (why not goddesses?) intervened, and a forecast of strong south easterly winds caused us to revise these plans. Although the paddle was probably still possible, with the wind and the forecast rain plus the long shuttle which meant leaving most paddlers standing outside for an hour, it would have meant a rather miserable start or end to the trip. So, on to Plan B, which involved launching at the Tsartlip Boat Ramp by Brentwood Bay and paddling in the sheltered waters of Saanich Inlet, protected from easterly winds. So we did that.

There was a fine drizzle as the boats were unloaded but it cleared up and got dry for the rest of the day. Some paddlers remembered a similar Plan B trip from this spot some three years ago, when we paddled in a snow storm with strong winds and damn near froze to the bench seats of the voyageurs. Maybe next week? The paddle route for the five voyageurs followed the shore of Brentwood Bay round to Tod Inlet, with a side trip into the Butchart Gardens wharf with its multiple buoys for yachts in summer and the tie rings bolted into the rock walls to stop the yachts swinging in the wind and tide. Tod Inlet was deserted as far as boats were concerned - we had the water to ourselves, with only a few dog walkers on the shore. The old wharves are gone but the concrete pilings that Butchart made are still standing in the water, well over 50 years after they were put in place - in fact probably closer to 100 years, as the cement plant was moved from the Saanich side over to Bamberton in the 1920s. With a high tide, we could approach Tod Creek, but the presence of numerous boulders deterred all but the most intrepid (aka stupid) boats from getting too close to the little waterfall near the delta. Some ducks and mergansers laughed at our manoeuvrings - and probably seals did too, but they kept their heads down if they did.

Heading back up Tod Inlet, under the Partridge hills, we

passed one of the last places where semi-derelict floats and boats can still be found in the Victoria area. West Bay and the Gorge have been emptied of these interesting eyesores, and I wonder where they will go next (other than to the bottom, of course)? On to Senanus Island where we stopped for an early lunch. This disturbed a large flock of Canada Geese that honked in indignation at being disturbed as they flew away, reluctantly, out to the safety of the inlet's waters. A bald headed eagle sat on a tall snag on the island - no threat to the large geese; but wait until they have goslings....

There was a little wind from the north as we left the island, but not enough to cause more than ripples, not real waves or whitecaps. We paddled up the Inlet to Yarrow Point, just before Pat Bay, stopping to sing Happy Birthday to Doug Hull, who promptly handed out some rather nice chocolates to everyone, generous man that he is. Diane followed up with some pre-Valentine Hershey kisses wrapped in red paper, so the chocolate carvings were satisfied for the rest of trip. They certainly set a high standard for whoever else in the teams has a birthday in the next 5 weeks (hint, hint).

Back along the coast line, ogling the large and small houses on the Peninsula and speculating on the average occupancy of each mansion. We thought two to three people at most, but there was no way to prove this - most seemed empty of any sign of life as we glided by. And so back to the boat ramp by 3pm, with a final spurt by three of the boats, just for fun. There were 28 paddlers who took part in this pleasant and easy practice trip. Next time - the hard work.

Alan Thomson

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### For Sale

Whites dive shop full Dry Suit \$500, good condition, neoprene hood, full booties, one cuff seal needs maintenance;

Farmer Jane Wet Suit with booties \$25, Fits a women's Medium (approx) suit is in good condition with a little wear on one knee (not really noticeable), booties are very well worn but still good to use;

NEW!! Never used, Predator white water helmet (red) \$35. Women's Sm/Med (with the extra padding in), has removable padding (to fit larger). Bought it new for \$55. Call 250-213-1984

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## **African Aids Angels**

VCKC Club member, Joan Fox, has initiated a work party to make African Angel dolls. If you've never heard of this initiative, you can go to the following websites for in depth information.

<http://africanaidangels.googlepages.com>

<http://aidsangelsvictoria.blogspot.com/>

Briefly, the African AIDS Angels group began in 2001 following the visit of a group of Canadians to South Africa. The volunteer groups create small dolls (Angels) from wooden pegs wrapped in colourful scraps of cloth. Each angel is given an African name (with the English translation) in memory of a child who has died of AIDS. The angels are made by volunteers of all ages who are concerned about the AIDS pandemic in Africa. All product is supplied to the volunteers by what we'll refer to as "Head Office" here in Victoria.

The job would be to cover the head, which is painted brown and has a simple face, with curly black wool for the hair and subsequently cut material to a pattern and dress the dolls. There is plenty of material and lots and lots of "bling" available. Once dressed with halo and wings, the Angels would be delivered to "Head Office" where they are then distributed to craft fairs and stores throughout the Island. They sell for \$5.00 each and all funds raised (except for minimal expenses) are sent to the project contacts in Africa.

If you would like to join this small group please email Joan at [joanfox@shaw.ca](mailto:joanfox@shaw.ca) or phone 391-0160 to get on the mailing list. Gatherings will be held at VCKC (approximately 3 hours during the day) and you would be notified of the date and time of the next get together. Both men and women are invited. No creative talent needed but a good sense of humour is a must.

### **MORE FOR SALE**

White's Drysuit XXL \$175.00

White's Drysuit MED \$175.00

Farmer Jane wetsuit MED \$60.00

Both drysuits are in excellent condition and have new latex ankles.

Away on holidays until March 12. Please call after. **PH: 383-5555**

## **More Voyager Season**

### **First Outing - Sunday January 28**

Our Voyager Season started early this year on Sunday, January 28. The Super Bowl hadn't even been played! The usual kick off breakfast was held, once again, at Spinnakers. However, this year, the time rather discombobulated our Voyageur Guy. We all know Don is heavily into tradition and changing the time of the get together did bad things for his system. Seems Spinnakers is renovating their downstairs area so we had to be in and out by 11:00 AM. The breakfast was once again terrific. The staff at this event are always in wonderful spirits and seem truly honoured by our presence.

When breakfast for 35 people was over, we had our encouragement speech from Shannon of BC Lions. This year being the 25th Anniversary and Voyageur Guy's 25th trip, we hardly needed any encouragement.

We went back to VCKC for our rules, regulations and safety talk from Voyageur Guy. He was still discombobulated as we were shown the same ol' dirty laundry from his dry bag as we saw last year! The Pledge Forms were given out and Mavis was headed out the door to her first of many churches before one could even say "God Bless You"!

Finally we hit the water. The day could not have been more beautiful. Sun shining, temperature perfect and muscles started saying, thank you, thank you - we needed this! It was a wonderful short day for our first outing.

### **Second Outing**

Oh, groan! We certainly were not as fortunate with the weather as we had been the week before. It was pouring rain most of the day but we had some excitement in store for us.

Mile and Don had planned a salute to "Roger" (apparently one of Mile's old buddies) and some of Roger's friends at William Head Prison. Roger was responsible for crafting the little canoes to hold coins which will be in some liquor stores and grocery stores for the next two months. The inmates were gathered on the beach and we gave a 3-paddle salute to Roger. It seems they thoroughly enjoyed it as there was lots of waving and yelling and, fortunately, no swimming. Someone mentioned there was a guard there but I certainly didn't see one. We also passed the "Hot Tub Gang" as we paddled past the prison. (About 10 inmates standing on the shore in their bathing suits with steam rising from them.) They too were a happy lot. So much for incarceration being a punishment. We were now heading to Race Rocks.

Mile had also planned and sponsored our breakfast (eggs benedict) at Pearson College. Thank you, Mile and Lorna. It was wonderful even though we were soaking wet and steaming. After breakfast we went to a small theatre and had the opportunity to listen and ask questions of five students. Too bad Don, they didn't seem to even wonder why we were there!!!! Some did a short tour of the college grounds but most of us donned our wet clothes and were ready to head home. After 55 minutes of heavy paddling we were back at Weirs Beach. As always the toughest job of the day was positioning the canoes on the trailers. That finally done, we were off. Then it was hot toddy, beer and Superbowl time for some of us.

Another great, wet practice.