



Tardy winds can't keep Hood River Huckfest down

Big-air kiteboarding competition has biggest year yet despite reluctant winds

By **BEN MITCHELL**
News staff writer

The winds may have taken their sweet time getting to Rufus this weekend for the annual Hood River Huckfest competition, but for both participants and spectators, it was worth the wait.

Nearly 60 competitors and numerous spectators headed out to the eastern part of the Gorge on Sunday to watch the third annual running of the big-air kiteboarding competition, which attracts both pros and amateurs who compete against one another to see how high they can launch themselves off the surface of the Columbia River. The event was originally supposed to be held on Saturday, but was pushed back to Sunday morning and then to Sunday afternoon as the winds were either non-existent or non-compliant.

"We were getting pretty nervous about it all," said event organizer Mike Duhaime, who noted that the event's three-day permit window ended that evening, "but we had a show-must-go-on attitude."

Despite the setbacks and a "super-light first heat," the wind gradually got cooking by late afternoon/early evening, with sustained speeds of around 25 mph and gusts over 30. Moreover, the 58 competitors who turned out were the most in the event's history and Duhaime said the spectators were the most he'd seen as well — likely attributed to the fact that this year's Huckfest was the first to be held on a weekend.

The event was started back in 2013 as a way to lend some credence to the "fish stories" kiteboarders might spin from time to time about how much air they've gotten off a jump. In the first two years, Huckfest used a telemetry device called Xensr that could accurately record kiteboarders' leaps and other data, settling once and for all the question: Who jumped higher?

For this year's event, kiteboarders used a similar device called the "WOO," which records height, along with hang time, G-force, and other data. Duhaime explained the gadget clips onto the rider's kiteboard, similar to a GoPro, and the data can be synced with the rider's iPhone through an app. After a run, the competitor sends the WOO device back to the

judges, who download the data, and then post the results to social media.

"It was a very connected event," Duhaime said. Huckfest attracts people from all over the world (the winner of the men's final, Ewan Jaspen, who had an event-high jump of over 45 feet, hails from Australia), but a fair amount from the Gorge entered as well and finished near the top of the heap (top five results are at right). Though the event is growing, Duhaime said that it is still very much a "grass-roots, community event," that has a "low-key, good vibe" quality to it.

As Huckfest is organized in a heat/elimination format, sometimes the biggest jumps of the day don't happen during the finals. But one of the advantages that came out of having some late-arriving wind was that Huckfest ended with a more of a bang after starting with more of a whimper.

"We peaked right around the finals," he said. "We didn't set any records this year, but we were able to have a proper big-air event by the end of the day."

For more info, head to Hood River Huckfest's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/hoodriverhuckfest.

HUCKFEST TOP FIVE

Men's final	Women's final
1 Ewan Jaspen (45 foot, 6 inch jump, 10-second hang time)	1 Colleen Carroll (37-8, 4.7 seconds)
2 Cosmo "Guacamole DJ" Noonan (45-2, 5.8 seconds)	2 Cynthia Brown (32-5, 6.1 seconds)
3 Adam Withington (40-0, 6.3 seconds)	3 Laura Maher (32-2, 4.7 seconds)
4 Philipp Schonger (39-6, 5.9 seconds)	4 Tonia Farman (31-1, 4.4 seconds)
5 Mike Haase (37-0, 5.2 seconds)	5 Rachel Callahan (29-2, 4.6 seconds)



Photo by Jim Stringfellow

HOOD RIVER HUCKFEST competitor Drew Christianson soars high above the Columbia while spectators watch from the river's banks.



Photo by Ben Mitchell

KAYAKING ON THE CALM

The incessant Gorge winds finally took a break Friday evening, which made for great late evening kayaking nears Wells Island, as seen in the above photo. On Saturday, the water was smooth as glass, and while the Hood River Waterfront wasn't packed with kites, it was packed with kayakers, stand up paddleboarders, swimmers, and other people who were out to enjoy the water and stave off the hot temperatures that climbed into the mid-90s. The winds returned by late morning Sunday and appear to be here for the remainder of the week, according to Temira Lital's "The Gorge is my Gym" forecasting blog (thegorgeismygy.com).

Fried fish: heat brings more fish kills, regulations

By **BEN MITCHELL**
News staff writer

In the wake of continued above-average high temperatures, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has instituted new fishing regulations to help mitigate the stress on salmon and other fish that has been caused by the heat and low water levels.

We reported last week about how hatcheries around the Pacific Northwest had released fish early due to the heat. On Saturday, the ODFW added new regulations that prohibited anglers from fishing for trout, salmon, steelhead, and sturgeon from 2 p.m. to one hour before sunrise on "all waterbodies defined as streams in the 2015 Oregon Sportfishing Regulations... above tidewater."

The regulations, which went into effect Saturday, did spare some rivers that "are less prone to high water temperature risks due to springs, tides, cold water releases from some dams and high elevations." Examples included the Hood River and its tributaries, the White River and its tributaries, and portions of the Deschutes.

The mainstem of the Columbia River was not affected by the ruling, although soon after the regulations were announced, ODFW closed the Columbia River upstream of

Bonneville Dam to the Oregon/Washington border upstream of McNary Dam to sturgeon fishing after fishery managers reviewed "survey reports that showed increased sturgeon mortality as a result of the drought conditions in some of the mid-Columbia River reservoir."

The regulations came just a day after ODFW announced that a die-off of 109 wild spring Chinook was discovered in the upper section of the middle fork of the John Day River. According to ODFW, the fish kill was "apparently due to low river flows and warm temperatures," although it was noted that the section of river already consisted of a wide and shallow channel and a lack of riparian vegetation that can cause fast changes in water temperature.

The announcement of the John Day River die-off comes a week after ODFW announced a somewhat related die-off in the Deschutes, where 45 dead or distressed sockeye salmon were discovered afflicted with a bacterial infection normally associated with high water temperatures.

To help reduce fish impacts, ODFW has encouraged anglers to fish for warm water species and to keep fish in the water for as long as possible when doing catch-and-release fishing. For more info on these tips and the new fishing regulations, head to the ODFW website at www.dfw.state.or.us.

Jake Morgan named 2015 ICMGA Club Champion

Indian Creek Men's Golf Association offers congratulations to Jake Morgan, the 2015 ICMGA Club Champion. Jake continued his outstanding play on the third day of competition with a 70-stroke game and finished with a three-day total of 212, four strokes under par. ICMGA Secretary Paul Armerding said that Morgan is the first champion in recent memory, possibly ever, to finish this "demanding" three-day tournament under par. He took a commanding nine-stroke lead into the final round and kept the pressure on, with his closest competitors finishing 13 strokes behind. Jake joins his father, Kevin, in becoming the first father-son duo to both earn the ICMGA club championship. Roger Barry is ICMGA's Senior (55 and over) Champion, and Phil Cannell is the club's Super Senior (65 and over) Champion. Prizes were awarded to the top three gross scores and top net score in each of the three flights. Winners: Overall Champion: Jake Morgan (212). A Flight: Low Gross: Mitch Huru, Travis Erdmann (tie, 1st, 225); Eudoro Cervantes (3rd, 228). Low Net: Roger Barry, Paul Armerding (tie, 1st, 214). B Flight: Low Gross: John Garcia (1st, 234), Phil Cannell (2nd, 238), Jim Slusher (3rd, 241). Low Net: Pat McAllister (214). C Flight: Low Gross: Matt Mesa (1st, 250), Matt Stoneberg (2nd, 258), Eric Voigt (3rd, 259). Low Net: Jann Halstead (209). ICMGA's next event is a two-man event on Saturday, August 8. On Aug. 15, Indian Creek Golf Course will also sponsor the Second Annual Battling Bob (Hanel) Scramble.



Submitted photo

IN THE CLUB: From left to right are Phil Cannell (Super Senior Champion), Roger Barry (Senior Champion), and Jake Morgan (Overall Champion).

SPORTS BRIEFS



14U baseball team headed to state tourney

The Hood River Senior Federal Baseball team is headed to the Junior Baseball Organization (JBO) state tournament in Forest Grove at Pacific University this week after placing second in the district tournament in Silverton. The team beat Oregon City, Tualatin, and Cleveland before falling to the No. 1 seed, Clackamas. Hood River is the No. 2 seed from the Clackamas County JBO district and will face McMinnville at 12:30 p.m. Thursday. Hood River's overall record on the year is 31-11. Pictured above are, front row: Coach Victor Flores, Carson Flores, Brandon Rivera, Michael Hasagawa, Juan Jimenez, Ryan Gray. Back row left to right: Manager Rob Leiblein, Greyson Losee, Caden Leiblein, Chris Mcelwee, Jacob Enriquez, Ben Routson, JJ Mears and Coach Darrin Routson.

Youth football camp coming up

Hood River Valley youth football is coming up soon and registration is now open. Two options are available: grades 1-2 flag football and grades 3-8 tackle football. The HRV Blue & Gold Football Camp is August 3-6, with team practices starting August 10. Register online at www.hrcommunityed.org; scholarships are available by contacting Community Ed at 541-386-2055 or community.ed@hoodriver.k12.or.us.

10U Softball All-Stars compete at state tourney

Hood River Valley Little League 10U Softball All-Stars competed in the double-elimination Little League state tournament this past weekend after taking first place in the District 5 tournament earlier this month. Team manager Tonya Schroeder said the girls started out playing against Ashland Saturday morning and "lost a great game in the bottom of the sixth (inning)," with the final result being 4-3 Ashland. On Sunday, the team was eliminated in an 8-0 loss. The 10U team was the only one out of HRVLL's four all-star teams to advance to the state tourney.

HRMGA Red, White and Blue tourney results

The Hood River Men's Golf Association held its Red, White and Blue tournament on July 19, at the Hood River Country Club Golf course. Long drive winner was Gary Sollman, with a drive of around 325 yards. KPs holes No. 7 and No. 17, both won by Kevin Hay. Net winners: Bill Payne (1st) and Kevin Hay (2nd). Gross winners: Len Hickman (1st) and Gary Sollman (2nd). HRMGA wanted to thank Kevin Hay and Doug Hamada for being in charge of the tournament and doing all the planning and work involved in running it. The next tournament is the Club Championship, scheduled for August 23. This tournament will be managed by Gary Sollman and Robin Goodyer. HRMGA encourages all club members to sign up prior to August 21.

Wind and water sports events this weekend

The Columbia River will be the place to be this weekend with two world-class wind and water sports events going on. First is the Gorge Downwind Paddling Festival, which features surfskis and outrigger canoes. The highlights of the nearly week-long event will be the North American Championship race, part of the Surfski World Cup series, which will take place Friday afternoon, running from Home Valley to Hood River. That race is followed up by the annual Wildside Relay on Saturday, which will run from Stevenson to Bingen. For more info, go to www.gorgepaddlingfestival.com. The other big event going on this weekend is the 15th Annual Bridge of the Gods Kiteboarding Festival held in Stevenson July 24-26. Pro division riders will try to impress the judges with their best freestyle maneuvers on Friday, starting at 11 a.m., while the amateurs go off at 10 a.m. Saturday. Sunday marks the Blow Out race from Stevenson to Hood River, which is scheduled for an 11 a.m. start. For more info, go to botgkitefest.com or nwkite.com.