

CRAZY HORSE

Russ Tetlow waxes lyrical on one of his favourite windsurfing locations...

rhosneigr rules!

It now feels like my local spot, even though it's a four hour drive away. But it's the place I return to time after time ... after time. And I'm not alone in this. In conditions like today, you would have been hard pushed to find more than a couple of people out on the water last year, not with the wind this strong and the sea pushing big aggressive waves at you. But today, I don't know what's changed – there's even a girl rigging up and going back out! What the hell is going on?

I didn't have the right kit, that's for sure. The forecast was for Force 5-6, not the 7-8 we were actually getting. A year earlier I had persuaded a good friend of mine, Wayne Munden, to buy the same boards as I had – namely the 88 and 68L RRD Wave Cults. At 15 stone I had sailed the 88 with everything from 4m up to 6.5 and I'd never had a better board; the first I'd had that had allowed me room to grow in the wave arena. It had so much range; the harder I pushed it the more it gave, and I never found a weak spot, so the 68 had been relegated to the role of survival-conditions-only board – and I only threw it into the van on the most mental days. Unfortunately, today had turned into one of those days and I didn't have it, so I was getting a drilling. But with the right gear I would still be out there having a ball – and I mean a ball. Wayne was on his 68 and I hate to say this (because he's also one of those weirdos who sometimes wears his trousers over

his wetsuit and flies those stringy things...) but he was by far the happiest one of us out there, putting in some nice moves on the waves (pictured above). Whereas I – supposedly the better sailor – although still going for the bigger moves, was having a pretty nasty time of it. Ordinarily when you do something like a back loop or a push loop on a normal windy day you follow a pretty straightforward trajectory. Turn the wind dial right up but don't decrease your

with two or three weeks later on! There were other tender places, plus I managed to put my harness hook through my sail. All said and done though, my femur was still in one piece which is more than can be said for poor old Martin Francis the day before – nasty.

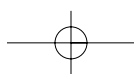
People kept asking one another if they were having a good time; Wayne was the only one of us that genuinely said that he was, for the rest of

“Blah blah **blah** blah blah blah **blah** blah blah
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board size and things start to get very interesting; your trajectories start to go to pieces! Pushies start to go into their second rotation and one-handed pushies just don't bear thinking about...

So anyway, my rewards for an attacking go-for-it-and-damn-the-conditions approach were a black eye with a cut across it, two swollen feet, two of my left toes black and blue, a tender and swollen left elbow and a bruised and cut left hip – and they're just the things that I'm suffering

us is was a sucking intake of breath followed by a “*phew, it's pretty full-on out there!*” All of a sudden it was my turn to join the crowd packing up before the sun went down – and that doesn't normally happen, a stark reminder to anyone who has to sit it out when the big boys are out there; get yourselves a small waveboard for when the action really starts, you truly won't regret it. A sail smaller than 4m is also very handy. I still have a 3.4m in my quiver which →



comes out when the stinky stuff hits the fan. And when it does you'll be more than happy you had this little tissue on board.

I tell you what though, you should have been there. The likes of Horrocks and the Proffitt were out – and if you've ever seen the video footage of the Pozo days where people just keep going up and up and up, well it was like that. They're just back from the Cape, Maui or some other place and they just get better and better and better. What a show they put on, it really was something else. They'll be as good as me soon...

It's about time we started bringing windsurf competitions to the wind, get the cameras in and show joe public what these boys are really all about. It's fantastically entertaining – and that's from the non-windsurfing spectators. For us guys who know a little of what it's about, we just stand in awe. Nice one dudes. Sneakily though, I hear a whisper in the wind that the concept of taking the competitions to the wind could be exactly what may be about to happen ... more about that some other time though, but hey; you heard it here first, maybe?

Even with the battering though, the following day I had to take a visit to the plastic surgeon as I was badly in need of a grin removal service, I was buzzing so much. I carry around a copy of a recent DVD I made showing some of the moves – forwards, pushies – I now have in the bag, and ended up boring half of my window cleaning customers to death by shoving it at them if they asked me why I was looking so hyped up, the mood I was in felt infectious and I just had to spread that happiness around. I punish everyone with that DVD, so if you ever pay me a visit, watch out. If I ever get hold of someone who knows the ins and out of publishing these



things, I may even sell it on and pay the proceedings on to the RNLI or someone, apparently it's pretty good and some of those who have seen it have apparently been inspired to give a couple of the moves a go themselves... Yep, people have actually gone out and injured themselves thanks to me!

Rhosneigr's one of those places we're really lucky to have, it's just a wind magnet. Don't get me wrong, it's never windy anywhere *all* the time, but Rhos is definitely blessed with more than its fair share. It's not the best place in the country for fantastic down-the-line riding but it does have waves – big ones too, only they're not the best for riding as the wind doesn't normally

provide you with the ideal cross-shore conditions. In fact *learning* to ride there is nigh on impossible – but once you've figured out *how* to ride, it's not half bad and like anywhere else on the coast, it has its best days. On those days, well; you'd have to be mad to still be at work.

The road system on Anglesey was improved some years ago and getting there has never been easier. Indeed, Rhosneigr's popularity is probably its biggest downside now – and that's not just with windsurfers. On a busy day it can get pretty chocka out on the water. House prices have shot through the roof in the past 6 years or so as well and going out for a bevvie on a Bank Holiday weekend is a nightmare as it's just *sooooo* busy. There's a multitude of other activities and reasons just to pay Rhosneigr a visit, even if you don't windsurf; surfing, walking, fishing, cycling and so much more. What a place – and as for the people: I start you with Dave Buckland, owner of the windsurf shop Funsport, an incredibly generous and warm hearted fella – if he doesn't turn you on to the place then nobody will. The pros there are all on his books and again every last one of them's a gem, easygoing and easy to talk to. The first time I ever went there – which was ages ago now, when that French bloke Alex Triton was still into windsurfing (kiting was still something you only ever did with the kids in a field; happy days) – I was with the missus and the two binlids, and we were invited to BBQ. And then went out and danced the night away ... well I did at least, whilst the missus baby-sat the kids in the back of the van; happier days...

Anyways, Rhosneigr grows in popularity as well it ought; leave it off your list of places to go and you would be very silly. There's even a lake 500 yards or so from the sea, where you can drop off the beginners – sweet.

Till next time. ☺

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Russ Tetlow is sponsored by Aloha Sailboards & Seasprite

You'll find his profile at www.seaspritesports.com – look under team riders, right alongside Josh Angulo!