

Take off

PURE FUN OVER THE WATER

By John Milner

The shores of Lake Huron can produce “true world class conditions” for kiteboarding, a sport harnessing the wind to propel specially-designed boards across the waves.

“When there’s a good windy day, we have ocean-like conditions,” says Matt Aiken from the kiteboarding brands WMFG and Mystic.

Lake Huron’s shores can’t produce such conditions with the frequency of the ocean but can be every bit as formidable, and sometimes can even rival the ocean in terms of challenges, Aiken says.

“It’s quite a short season here,” Aiken says of the Lake Huron kiteboarding season. The real die-hards don’t limit themselves to the fair weather months of July and August, instead starting their season in mid-to-late April and perhaps stretch it into early November.

“For some people, it’s a little bit like taking on Mother Nature,” Aiken explains.

Kiteboarding began around the turn of the twenty-first century as a crossover sport from windsurfing. Nearly all first generation kiteboarders in Ontario came from a windsurfing background.

“It was going to be something new and interesting and exciting but still had a foot in the windsurfing door,” Aiken says.

Another attraction was the ability to transition from novice to accomplished kiteboarder in a short amount of time. Many felt that “every day they went out, they were learning and getting better at it,” he says. Those pioneers influenced those that followed by making the sport look exciting.

Aiken describes kiteboarding as “part surfing, part wake boarding, a bit like windsurfing, and pure fun.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Southwestern Ontario Kiteboarding
www.pbase.com/grosem/kiteboarding



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