SURFING COMMENTARY

Covert contest draws some of SC’s best

Madeley wins while catching waves between classes at Cabrillo

GRETCHEN WEGRICH
Stoked & Broke

The first annual Sandbar Shootout — an underground surf contest held last Thursday at a secret Southside beach break — was not a typical surf contest. The event had a seven-day waiting period and no fixed location. Didn’t hear about it? Didn’t feel left out. The invitation-only contest featured 20 of Santa Cruz’s best surfers, duking it out in head-high waves for a chance to claim $1,000 and serious bragging rights. Contest organizers also added a twist, the “double whammy,” giving each surfer the opportunity to double one wave score in each heat by raising both fists in the air.

“The basic idea was to get the area’s best surfers in the area’s best waves, and to do it at the beach breaks where there’s not usually

SEE WEGRICH ON D5

Chris Curtis competes in the Sandbar Shootout at an undisclosed beach. The covert contest drew more than 20 local surfers.

WEGRICH

Continued from D1

Competitions,” explained contest organizer Tyler Fox.

“The contest was hosed off the World Championship Tour format where there is a waiting period and the event is mobile,” Fox added.

With 78-degree weather and a solid sandbar pinned down, the Sandbar Shootout was on. Established pros, underground rippers and up-and-coming groms threw down their best hacks, boosted aerials and hunted for a few playable barrels.

Taking the win was southside local Ashton Madeley. 22. Madeley had a freakishly lucky day — despite attending class at Cabrillo College between heats, running late for a heat and missing a chance to claim a double-wave score.

He squeaked through his heats on pure talent and managed to pull off a perfect 10 in the final, scoring two barrels and the respect of the entire crew of surfers.

Rounding out the final were Adam Regojo, second place; and 15-year-old Nic Heez in fourth place.

“We were trying not to blow it up,” explained contest organizer Jon Free.

“It was a contest by the boys, for the boys. It was about big promos or some company giving wild scores to their own riders.”

Supporting the Sandbar Shootout is Santa Cruz Waves, a local business made up of a stoked team of local writers, photographers, web developers, business people, event planners, fitness enthusiasts and surfers.

At its core, Santa Cruz Waves is an online portal to the best that Santa Cruz has to offer, with an emphasis on the outdoors, Santa Cruz culture and healthy living.

The website, www.santacruzwaves.com, was founded two years ago by professional big wave surfer Tyler Fox. Since then, it has grown into a full-fledged business that generates 1,300 page views per day.

The website features popular action sports, nature and nightlife photo galleries, a news section, videos, a local loop section featuring local businesses, food, arts and culture, and a health and fitness section.

Debuting today on the site is the Santa Cruz Waves Shop, an online shop featuring surf and beach lifestyle products.

“We’re really excited about it because we’re partnering with a bunch of really cool local companies to provide awesome products on our website,” said Free, president of Santa Cruz Waves.

The shop will feature products by NSW, iStyly, Buell Wetsuits, Deja Clothing, Rainbow Fins and Amigas Da Annika and Ola Chica bikinis and more.

The online shop is just one example of how Santa Cruz Waves is supporting local business and breathing life into the Santa Cruz community.

The duo behind the business is quick to point out that the site is for everyone, not just surfers.

“This town is just a hotbed for talent and amazing food, events, music,” Fox said. “I really want to show that through Santa Cruz Waves, not only on the website but also through events that are healthy for the community and are bettering our local environment.”

Gretchen Wegrich’s surf column, Stoked & Broke, appears every other weekend in the Sentinel. Contact her at sports@santacruzsentinel.com