Veggie Tour - The Odd Man Out

Contributed by Conor Hurley
Tuesday, 19 December 2006

A simple twist of fate is all it takes to set off a chain of events sometimes. Over the past few days, I experienced one of those instances. After leaving the Sol Mountain Lodge, I got a ride from Aaron up to Revelstoke, BC, where my car was parked.

The Veggie Road

Sponsored by:

The Odd Man Out

Dispatch 6

Revelstoke to Vernon, BC

A simple twist of fate is all it takes to set off a chain of events sometimes. Over the past few days, I experienced o those instances. After leaving the Sol Mountain Lodge, I got a ride from Aaron up to Revelstoke, BC, where my car was parked. The plan was to help him drop off a truck in Cherryville, BC and then get a day of skiing in at Rogers Pass. With a long haul behind me, I had to find a place to crash in Revelstoke for the night; the 7-Eleven parking lot was not going to be high on my list of places to stay, so I figured I’d look around town to try and find a quieter place to park for the night.

On the road. Photo by Dave Waag.

Peering out at the dark morning through the frost on the inside of my windows, I woke up around 6:30 a.m. and ma my way towards one of the downtown coffee shops. The goal was to get a little breakfast and see what the CAA had to say about the conditions at Rogers Pass. On their website you can find up-to-date avalanche conditions and reports on any region in Canada. Although nothing can equal direct knowledge of a snow pack, the information found there can certainly help in making informed decisions on where you want to ski.

Due to the new snow and heavy winds, most of the skiing at Rogers Pass was way out of the question. However t skiing—one of my favorite things to do—was definitely an option. Rogers Pass offers an extensive amount of skiable terrain; in fact, it could be considered one of the centers of the backcountry universe. Directly off of the Trans-Canadian Highway, you can access quick and safe tree skiing and the most hair-raising traverses one could possibly imagine. It’s a place where you have to pay attention to all the elements and make good decisions. At the top of my run, “The Hour Glass” I probed to a snow depth of 280cm.

With a new storm system approaching quickly, I beat-feet for Cherryville; however, a late departure resulted in a t hour drive turning into a six-hour drive. When you drive a car that would rather go any direction other than forwards, you have to adopt some new techniques—like going really slow. Generally speaking the tactic works really well, though I do end up pulling over quite a bit to let the massive lines of traffic pass me by.

Snowstorms coupled with high winds and helicopters always make for an interesting day. In my case, it meant ha around and waiting in a field all day. However, when the helicopter finally arrived, there was only room for four people and there were five of us standing there. I bit the bullet and said I would take a later flight into the lodge.

With a few days to kill before there would be another chance to fly into the lodge, I decided to make my way towa Vernon and ultimately the Silver Star ski area. I had heard through the grapevine there might be a possible vegetable oil supply in Vernon. A possible vegetable oil score, no ski partners on the horizon and some heavy-duty avalanche conditions made the idea seem a whole lot better.

After hitting the grocery store to stock up on some food for the weekend I pulled up to the resort at about 7 p.m. o Friday. Seeing as though I did not have much else to do, night skiing seemed like a good option. So for about two hours I skied laps on one of their night skiing trails.

As the lifts were shutting down for the night, I set out on my next quest—finding a good place to park. It may seem ridiculously easy task; however, you have to remember my car embraces 1982 diesel technology. Every time I want to shut the car off for an extended period of time in cold weather, I have to be able to plug it in for an hour or two before I can start it up again. The other option is to park it and start it up every couple of hours and let it idle for about 15 minutes. Needless to say, that mode of operation makes for a really lousy night of sleep. However, this was one of my lucky nights

and I was able to find a spot close to an outlet.

I’ve become pretty accustomed to sleeping in the car; it is really not too bad. Normally by the time bedtime r around, I am so beat I could sleep just about any where. Once you get over the collective noises of the streets, lights and the occasional drunken, late night reveler stumbling into your vehicle, a good rest is pretty easy to get. With temperatures expected to drop to –15 Celsius, I covered Ealu with a down jacket and buried myself deep into the cocoon of my sleeping bag. It was a matter of minutes before I was dreaming of the turns to come.

The ferry ride out, stage two of our trek out of the lodge.

Conor and Ealu. Photo by Dave Waag.

Photo by Dave Waag.

{easycomments}